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OMNIA VINCIT AMOR: WHY THE *REMEDIA* FAIL

In the early part of his prolific career, Ovid published the *Ars Amatoria*, a witty three-book parody of both didactic poetry and elegy purporting to teach its reader how to become a lover. The first book instructs how to find a girl, the second how to keep her, and the last offers suggestions to women on how to attract and keep men. Several years later, trumping his previous *tour de force*, Ovid wrote the *Remedia Amoris*, which offers to show the reader how to fall *out* of love; it has been noted that much of the advice in the *Remedia* is the reverse of that given in the *Ars*.[1] This article will attempt to show that the advice of the *Remedia* is in no way opposed to that given in the *Ars*, but that, in fact, the two texts work in tandem, pulling their reader into an inescapable circle of elegiac love.[2]

Students of Ovid's didactic works have concentrated primarily on the ways they subvert earlier amatory elegy (and contemporary moralizing, because they appeared during the Emperor Augustus' attempted moral rejuvenation of the Roman people), on the persona of the teacher and his intentions, or on the mechanics of didacticism.[3] The *Remedia* has suffered from a comparative neglect; many older studies of it either dismiss the work as utterly frivolous (and tiresome) or, on the contrary, find in it genuinely useful advice for healing a broken heart (despite the widespread belief that Ovid is never to be trusted).[4] Yet these approaches, as well as those that look for poetic

[1] A. A. R. Henderson *Remedia Amoris* (Edinburgh, 1979), counts fourteen of the forty *Ars* precepts as reversed in the *Remedia* (xvi). See too K. Prinz, 'Untersuchungen zu Ovids *Remedia amoris*', *WS* 36 (1914), 36–83, esp. 36–48 and C. Lucke, *P. Ovidius Naso Remedia Amoris: Kommentar zu Vers 397–814* (Bonn, 1982), 36 for similarities between the two poems. The *Ars* is, as M. Myerowitz, *Ovid's Games of Love* (Detroit, 1985), 41–2, and D. Jones, *Enjoinder and Argument in Ovid's Remedia Amoris* (Stuttgart, 1997), 95, note, predicated on the notion that love is, like farming, a teachable skill. For the reader who has accepted that premise, the *Remedia* is not much of a stretch. G. B. Conte, 'Love without elegy: the *Remedia Amoris* and the logic of a genre', *Poetics Today* 10 (1989), 441–69 (= *Genres and Readers: Lucretius, Love Elegy, Pliny's Encyclopedia* [Baltimore, 1994] 34–65, citations from the former) at 459 and A. Sharrock, *Seduction and Repetition in Ovid's* Ars Amatoria *II* (Oxford, 1994), 3 (among others) observe that the *Ars* is itself a reworking of elegiac topoi.

[2] For a complementary approach to mine, see J. Fish, 'Physician, Heal Thyself: the intertextuality of Ovid's exile poetry and the *Remedia Amoris*' (forthcoming) on Ovid's exilic work as an unsuccessful attempt to follow his own precepts.

[3] E. W. Leach, 'Georgic imagery in the *Ars Amatoria*', *TAPA* 95 (1964), 142–54, reads the *Ars* as deeply subversive in its parody of Roman ideals (154). M. Labate, *L'arte di farsi amare: Modelli culturali e progetto didascalico nell'elegia ovidiana* (Pisa, 1984), on the other hand, sees the text as a more-or-less genuine attempt to argue for the place of love in a moral society (121–74). J. Krókowski, '*Ars Amatoria*—poème didactique', *Eos* 53 (1963), 143–56 is one of the more complete, if idiosyncratic, studies of the poem's instructional capacities. See too J. F. Miller, 'Lucretian moments in Ovidian elegy', *CJ* 92 (1997), 384–98, on the ways the *Ars* subtly undermines Lucretian teachings.

[4] Myerowitz (n. 1) suggests that the *Ars* is genuinely about love, but that modern readers have difficulty reconciling Ovid's humour with a subject we take as seriously as love (24). C. Brunelle, 'Gender and genre in Ovid's *Remedia Amoris*', dissertation (University of North Carolina, 1997), well notes that to the question of the *Remedia*'s efficacy, 'those who answer "yes" will be considered naïve in the extreme, while those who answer "no" will be thought to overlook some obvious points of good sense in the poem' (130).

allusion, do not fully explore the complexity—or the humour—of the text.[5] This piece will attempt both to explain the joke and to move beyond it, examining the ways in which the text of the *Remedia Amoris* repeatedly proves its own incapacity to bring help to the unhappy lover because the very tasks assigned by the *praeceptor amoris* for banishing love are already irreparably contaminated by erotic discourse.[6]

I will concentrate on the specific tasks the *Remedia* offers to the lover in order to forget about his love affair, but first we must clarify the *Remedia*'s desired audience. First, the reader of the poem is assumed to be male; there are only occasional references to a woman who wants to fall out of love.[7] The reader of the *Remedia* is also assumed to have been a reader of the *Ars*. This is made especially clear in the preface of the work, which insists that it is not a palinode: it is designed only to prevent lovelorn suicides of the kind that have long given Cupid a bad name.[8] This assertion is, of course, deliberately—and characteristically—misleading: given the rules outlined in *Ars Amatoria* 1–3 (which had earlier been demonstrated in Ovid's *Amores*), no elegiac lover can ever be happy; *all* elegiac love is unsatisfactory and dangerous, almost by definition. In fact, much of the wit of the *Ars* (and, indeed, of the elegiac lifestyle) had derived from the implausible notion that one should *seek* to fall in love. Love is, to us moderns, a many-splendoured thing, but to the ancients it was a far more ambiguous and destructive force, and Roman elegiac poetry is constantly posing the paradox that an upper-class man should voluntarily submit himself to the (usually cruel) whims of his *puella*.

The unhappiness that is a constitutive feature of Roman elegiac love is a point worth emphasizing as it is often overlooked in studies of the *Ars* and *Remedia*.[9] The student who has successfully found a lover by following the instructions of Ovid's earlier didactic poem (implausible as his existence is) has suffered a great deal of discomfort and even dishonour. Further, given the fine line between pleasure and pain characterizing elegiac love, all Ovidian loves are potentially fatal. The preface, then, while it claims to limit the audience of the *Remedia* to those who have loved unhappily or dangerously, in fact shows that anyone who loves in the elegiac way is in danger of losing his life. Thus *every* reader of the *Ars* is likely to benefit from the *Remedia*, and the *Remedia* is designed specifically for the student who has used the *Ars* to find a mistress (*Rem. Am.* 71–2).

[5] The opinion of J. Barsby, *Ovid: New Surveys in the Classics* 12 (Oxford and New York, 1978), surely representative, is that the *Ars* and *Remedia* are primarily a 'jeu d'esprit' (23). M. H. T. Davisson, 'The search for an *alter orbis* in Ovid's *Remedia Amoris*', *Phoenix* 50 (1996), 240–61, suggests that the 'experienced reader' of Ovid will know not to take the poetry seriously and shows the ways in which the mythological *exempla* tend to undermine the points they claim to prove. A. C. Romano, 'Ovid's Ars Amatoria or the art of outmanoeuvering the partner', *Latomus* 31 (1972), 814–19, attempts to explain the 'rules of the game'.

[6] This portion of my argument is dependent on D. Kennedy, *The Arts of Love: Five Studies in the Discourse of Roman Love Elegy* (Cambridge, 1993), esp. 1–9 on the both necessary and unsustainable distinctions between 'poetry' and 'real life'; the *Remedia* claims to serve both needs. See Davisson (n. 5), 259 on the different kinds of reader of the poem, ranging from those with 'common sense' to those 'alert' to inconsistencies, to those familiar with Ovid's poetry (not mutually exclusive). Jones (n. 1) too discusses 'the lovesick addressee' and the '"literary" audience' as two distinct readers; he suggests that the rhetorical structure of the *Remedia* is designed to appeal to the latter (20–1).

[7] The issue of gender in the *Remedia* is fascinating and well worth exploring. Davisson (n. 5), notes that the 'male bias' of the *Remedia* leaves very little room for women's healing, detailing women's primary function as negative *exempla* (e.g. 242, 244).

[8] *Rem. Am.* 1–19 with Henderson (n. 1), 27–9.

[9] Davisson (n. 5), 240 and Conte (n. 1), 448 and *passim* are notable exceptions.

For our purposes, a more significant feature of the *Remedia* is that it does not offer a way to *stay* out of love.[10] The *praeceptor* does not try to hide the infinitely repeatable nature of love; indeed, he is himself always in love and often miserable.[11] Deriving as it does from such an unreliable and dyserotic source, the *Remedia* is indeed a suspicious text, and the remedies it offers are duplicitous from the start:

> desidiam puer ille sequi solet, odit agentes:
> da vacuae menti, quo teneatur, opus.
> sunt fora, sunt leges, sunt, quos tuearis, amici:
> vade per urbanae splendida castra togae.
> vel tu sanguinei iuvenalia munera Martis
> suscipe: deliciae iam tibi terga dabunt.
> ecce fugax Parthus, magni nova causa triumphi,
> iam videt in campis Caesaris arma suis. (*Rem. Am.* 149–56)[12]

Ovid begins his list of therapeutic suggestions with the courtroom and the battlefield.[13] It is not surprising to find a Roman advocating service to Rome. Yet the fact that the suggestion is made by this *particular* Roman, whose poetry is notoriously uninterested in Augustan reform, *negotium*, or Rome's wars of conquest, should raise an eyebrow. Does the *Remedia* suggest public service seriously, as a way of recognizing that the world of elegy is barren, that the lover must eventually grow up and move on? Or are these suggestions gently satirical, a mere reworking of literary topoi without any intended didactic content?[14] Or are they somewhere in between, recognizing that there may be genuine purpose in taking a break, however brief, from erotic pursuits? The last option, which wickedly refashions Rome's military and forensic prowess as deriving in the main from failed love-affairs, is appealing; but I do not think the answer is so simple.[15] More importantly, the issue of how we are to take these remedies brings us to the heart of the issues the *Remedia* raises. On the principle of *Ovidium ex Ovidio*,

[10] As Henderson (n. 1), xiii, notes, it brings the lover 'back to the starting line' for 'another crack' at love.

[11] See *Rem. Am.* 7–8 *ego semper amavi,/ et si, quid faciam, nunc quoque, quaeris, amo.* Henderson (n. 1) is, I think, exactly wrong when he tells us that the praeceptor is 'by definition, a graduate of love's school and no longer vexed by the emotional problems that he teaches his pupils to solve' (123). The didactic persona of the *Remedia* has gone through these cures not once (which might make him an expert), but many times (which should at least pose the question of his plausibility). It is by no means clear that we should take advice from a man who cannot heal himself (*Rem. Am.* 314) and to whom, furthermore, we owe our current dyserotic situation (*Rem. Am.* 43). See too below, n. 47 on the untrustworthiness of Ovidian *carmina*.

[12] All citations of Ovid are from E. J. Kenney, *P. Ovidi Nasonis: Amores, Medicamina Faciei Femineae, Ars Amatoria, Remedia Amoris* (Oxford, 1961).

[13] These suggestions ('law, legion, and land' in Henderson's formulation [n. 1]) have been generally treated as intended more or less seriously. For example, Conte (n. 1) refers to the remedies as reopening 'all that part of the world which elegy had excluded from its space' (463). If, as Catullus claimed, *otium* is the enemy of one who no longer wishes to be in love (Cat. 51), Ovid's list would seem to show that he agrees (and indeed, he affirms this at *Rem. Am.* 134). See too Labate (n. 3), 85ff. on these issues.

[14] Seriousness of advice: Conte's reading (n. 1), adumbrated by J. M. Fyler, '*Omnia Vincit Amor*: incongruity and the limitations of structure in Ovid's elegiac poetry', *CJ* 66 (1971), 196–203 at 196. Advice 'satirical': Henderson (n. 1), 61. See Kennedy (n. 6), 59–60 on the sexual connotations of *opus* in elegy.

[15] See R. M. Durling, 'Ovid as *praeceptor amoris*', *CJ* 53 (1958), 157–67, for a similar reading of the 'triumph' passage in *Ars Am.* 1.177–228; Gaius Caesar's Parthian victories serve primarily to enable the lover to show off his (spurious) knowledge (161).

let us look elsewhere in the early elegies for other evidence about how we are to understand these tasks.[16]

The notion of spending time in the courts helping friends or attending to public affairs leads the would-be non-lover directly back to the *Ars*, in which the *fora* are cited as ideal for meeting girls: *et fora conveniunt (quis credere possit?) amori,/ flammaque in arguto saepe reperta foro* (*Ars Am.* 1.79–80). Ovid elsewhere claims to have no interest in the law.[17] Be that as it may, the *Ars* passage goes on to suggest that lawyers and lovers require an entirely different set of skills, but even this notion is called into question throughout the *Amores* and *Ars*, most notably by the *praeceptor*'s insistence on rhetorical training for the would-be lover (*Ars Am.* 1.459–68). The *Ars* suggests that someone who wants to find a girl should go to the *forum*. Ovid will later tell the student of the *Remedia* to avoid places where lovers are; yet his own *Ars* had found potential lovers everywhere, even in the law-courts. This is not the only place where the *Remedia* leads directly back to the *Ars*.[18]

The suggestion to go to war (*Rem. Am.* 153–8) is exceptionally ironic because love is *already* seen in elegiac poetry, and particularly in the *Amores*, as military in nature (*militia amoris*).[19] As several have shown, there is a distinction between the two pursuits in elegy that is clearly delineated but always already collapsed: love *is* war (in fact, as even a quick reading of elegy shows, love is more warlike than war), so enlisting in the army will not provide the lover with much variety. Perhaps the student's commanding officer will be less demanding than his girlfriend, but the rewards of military service are also less compelling—at least to the successful student of *Ars Amatoria* 1–3, who is of necessity a lover and not a fighter. Among the many passages in Ovid that point out the distinction between love and war as they elide it, *Amores* 1.9

[16] Although I will not treat those authors, the topoi appear, of course, in Propertius and Tibullus; H.-P. Stahl, *Propertius: 'Love' and 'War': Individual and State Under Augustus* (Berkeley, 1985), offers a sustained reading of *militia amoris* in Propertius, while A. L. Wheeler, 'Propertius as *praeceptor amoris*', *CP* 5 (1910), 28–40, discusses his didactic aspects. (See too A. L. Wheeler, 'Erotic teaching in Roman elegy', *CP* 5 [1910], 440–50, on the earlier sources for elegiac erotic instruction.) P. Murgatroyd, '*Militia amoris* and the Roman elegists', *Latomus* 34 (1975), 59–79, and 'Amatory hunting, fishing and fowling', *Latomus* 43 (1984), 362–8, discusses all three elegists.

[17] *Am.* 1.15.5–6, *Tr.* 4.10.17–20; see too A. S. Hollis, *Ovid: Ars Amatoria Book I* (Oxford, 1977), 48. This is patently not true, as the legal metaphors throughout his *corpus*, discussed by E. J. Kenney, 'Ovid and the law', *YCS* 21 (1969), 243–63, attest. Even *Ars Am.* 1.81–8 are infused with legal metaphors.

[18] See Davisson (n. 5) on the ways the catalogue of which the *Remedia* passage is a part 'is not encouraging about the feasibility of avoiding all dangerous places' (247). Of course not, for *all* places are dangerous to an elegiac lover given his monolithic worldview. Jones (n. 1) seeks to account for this 'paradox' (and others) by appealing to a distinction between different kinds of readers (the 'patient' and the 'reader'); he prematurely closes off meanings in the service of forcing the *Remedia* into a false consistency (see e.g. 68, 70), while Durling (n. 15), perhaps too simplistically, regards the internal contradictions of the *Ars* as wholly subservient to their ludic purpose (165).

[19] Kennedy (n. 6), e.g. 53–5 and Labate (n. 3), 92ff. On *militia amoris* in the elegists, see Murgatroyd (n. 16, 1975), 71–3 (which discusses Ovid's innovations); A. Spies, *Militat omnis amans: Ein Beitrag zur Bildersprache der antiken Erotik* (Tübingen, 1930); E. Thomas, 'Variations on a military theme in Ovid's *Amores*', *G&R* 11 (1964), 151–65; and Hollis (n. 16), 39–40. Kennedy (n. 6), 57–61 discusses the centrality of the trope to Ovidian elegy, and K. Olstein, '*Amores* 1.9 and the structure of Book I', in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* II, Collection Latomus 168 (Bruxelles 1980), 286–300, reads *Amores* 1.9 as the key to the structure of book 1: according to her, the collection is, as a whole, dedicated to 'militant romance' (292).

is perhaps the best known.[20] That poem compares love and war only to claim that the lover suffers more serious deprivations than the soldier, and that the relationship between lover and beloved is more ambiguous, and therefore more difficult, than the relationship between soldier and officer. The reader of the *Remedia*, who is also a reader of the *Ars*, has already learned that the distinctions between the Ovidian lover and fighter are counterbalanced by overwhelming similarities. The circularity adds much to the trope: if the lover who is now reading the *Remedia* sees war as a less-rewarding kind of love and love as a species of war, how will he react when told to enter military service? Has he not already done so, serving under the banner of the *praeceptor amoris*? The ubiquity of warfare in Rome and of love in Roman poetry coalesces them into a single activity. There is only one thing for a good Roman to occupy himself with, *militia*. The question is, what kind?[21]

Despite an identification of lover with soldier, many parts of Ovid's elegiac corpus point to a tension between the lover as soldier and the soldier as despicable boor. For instance, *Am.* 1.10.19–20 notes the opposition between the two, suggesting that they are incompatible.[22] And so, apparently logically, the lover is told in the *Remedia* to enlist, to become his opposite in order to free himself from unpleasant love. Military service may well help to take the lover's mind off of his suffering until he is ready to love again. Yet a contradictory reason for serving in the army was adduced in *Amores* 3 where Ovid, prefiguring his didactic *persona*, advised lovers to train as soldiers to make themselves more attractive to women:

> discite, qui sapitis, non quae nos scimus inertes,
> sed trepidas acies et fera castra sequi,
> proque bono versu primum deducite pilum:
> nox tibi, si belles, possit, Homere, dari. (*Am.* 3.8.25–8)

While poets are little in demand as lovers, soldiers are very desirable. Although the poem as a whole laments the greediness of *puellae*, and is surely at least somewhat tongue in cheek, we, as readers of the *Amores*, are interested in knowing how to make ourselves more attractive to the ladies, and so might well try becoming soldiers ('real' soldiers?). More astonishingly, in *Ars* 3, the book written for women interested in having an affair, Ovid discourses on the advantages of soldiers as lovers:

[20] Especially *Am.* 1.9.1–10, 15–20, and 43–6. On *Am.* 1.9, see especially J. C. McKeown, *Ovid: Amores Text, Prolegomena, and Commentary* II (Leeds, 1989); L. Cahoon, 'The bed as battlefield: erotic conquest and military metaphor in Ovid's *Amores*', *TAPA* 118 (1988), 293–307, esp. 297–8; and Thomas (n. 19), 158–61. For other Ovidian passages on *militia amoris*, see *Ars Am.* 2.671–4: *aut mare remigiis aut vomere findite terras/ aut fera belligeras addite in arma manus/ aut latus et vires operamque adferte puellis:/ hoc quoque militia est, hoc quoque quaerit opes.* (There is some debate, not relevant here, about where these lines belong in the text; Kenney [n. 11] believes them spurious). See too *Am.* 1.2.19–52 (for the lover in Cupid's triumph) with Murgatroyd (n.16, 1975), 69–71; *Am.* 2.9a on Cupid's continued persecution of his soldier Ovid; *Am.* 2.10.31–2, drawing a distinction between the lover who wishes to die in bed and the soldier dying in battle; *Am.* 2.12, detailing Ovid's triumph over Corinna, and suggesting that wars are intimately linked with women (17–24; see McKeown [n. 20], and Cahoon [n. 20], 298–9); *Ars Am.* 1.131–2 on Romulus' cleverness in making women 'fringe-benefits' (Hollis [n. 17], 57); *Ars Am.* 2.233–40 which parallels *Am.* 1.9; and *Ars Am.* 2.563–4 on Mars' transformation from general to lover. See too Olstein (n. 19), 287–9.

[21] B.Weiden Boyd, *Ovid's Literary Loves: Influence and Innovation in the* Amores (Michigan, 1997), notes that the Ovid of the *Amores* can only write about *militia* if they are *militia amoris* (159).

[22] See too *Am.* 3.8.11–22 and Thomas (n. 19), 160 on the tensions between love and war.

ille vetus miles sensim et sapienter amabit
multaque tironi non patienda feret;
nec franget postes nec saevis ignibus uret
nec dominae teneras adpetet ungue genas
nec scindet tunicasve suas tunicasve puellae
nec raptus flendi causa capillus erit.
ista decent pueros aetate et amore calentes;
hic fera composita vulnera mente feret. (*Ars Am.* 3.565–75)

This passage distinguishes between the amatory advantages of 'new recruits' and 'old soldiers': the latter are more long-suffering, less violent, and more dependable than young men. Does the statement that experienced soldiers are willing to put up with more than other men because they have suffered so much on campaign give the lie to the earlier suggestions that love is more difficult than war, or does it simply mean that the two sets of men are very similar? Does this passage refer to the 'literal' or the 'metaphorical' soldier? Are we still/ever able to discern a difference?[23]

Love and war do indeed have much in common, as Murgatroyd and Thomas note in their comprehensive studies of the topos. Ovid is himself a veteran of love, as he tells us in the *Amores*.[24] A question that might be useful to ask at this point is whether the successful student of the *Ars* can now be considered a 'veteran': do besieging, occupying, and eventually depleting the resources of a mistress qualify one as a veteran in the army of love? If so, should the lover, no longer a 'new recruit', expect to put up with even more humiliation the next time he tries his hand at love?[25]

The question of how to interpret this passage and others like it is key to understanding the *Remedia*. To what extent has the lover (that is, the reader) been trained to read elegiac poetry as metaphor? Does he see all mentions of war as references to love, or only those the *praeceptor* has explicitly spelled out as being amatory war (or martial love)? Complicating this issue are both the worry (mine) of ruining the joke by explaining it and the problem (ours) of distinguishing metaphor from 'metaphor' and from reality (and 'reality'). Yet to posit the *Remedia* as 'just a joke' leaves much unexplained, most notably its length.[26] Further, it is the very distinction between the real and the not quite real that I think Ovid elides throughout his poetry for his—and our—amusement. By insisting upon having it both ways we endanger the elegiac ecosystem but simultaneously affirm its hold on us. As Sharrock notes, the duplicity (and, I would add, complicity) of the reader is an essential feature of the *Ars*.[27]

I have left the Ovidian lover in some disequilibrium, showing that every time the *Remedia* sends him to military pursuits, he will have been preconditioned to think of

[23] Women are even, at *Ars* 3.525–30, figured as generals ('generals'?).

[24] Murgatroyd (n. 16, 1975), 59, 72, and 76, and Thomas (n. 19), 158–62. *Am.* 2.9.19–24 and 2.18.11–12 detail the elegiac persona's erotic campaigns.

[25] See Conte (n. 1), 458 on the ways the *Ars*' claim to teach *sapienter amare* is directly opposed to the code of elegy and Sharrock (n. 1), 249 on loving 'wisely' in the *Ars*.

[26] This has not, of course, prevented many from reading the *Ars* as a joke. See Myerowitz (n. 1), 17–24 and Sharrock (n. 1), 1–4 on traditional ways of reading the *Ars*, many of which see it as a tiresome reworking of the *Amores* and/or as preparation for the *Metamorphoses* (so Krókowski [n. 3]).

[27] Sharrock (n. 1), 8 and 21. Cahoon (n. 20), 294 suggests that the equation between love and war serves as an example of the 'Roman *libido dominandi*', which is not wrong, but surely misses the joke. See Kennedy (n. 6), 53–6, to which my understanding of the issue is greatly indebted. See too Brunelle (n. 4), 200, who notes that 'we' have already admitted that we like elegy by reading as much of it as we have.

women; amatory elegy has already conquered the semantic field.[28] I will now suggest (more briefly) that a similar case is true for the rest of the specific tasks designed to take the lover's mind off of love. Significantly, we move from *negotium* to *otium*: Ovid's totalizing discourse has all the Roman bases covered. First, his ode to farming (*Rem. Am.* 169–82), a lifestyle that falls somewhere between business and pleasure (at least for Ovid's wealthy Roman audience). To this urban reader in particular, becoming a gentleman farmer may sound like an idyllic way to heal his wounds (let us leave aside the fact that other texts, the *Eclogues* and even Tibullus, have already demonstrated that leaving Rome for its rural environs is of no practical efficacy for falling out of love).[29] In fact, Ovid treats the activities associated with farming in enough detail that one could easily take the suggestion seriously. The aspiring student would then want to pick up a copy of Vergil's *Georgics* for tips on beekeeping and grafting trees.[30]

The difficulty with treating the arts of farming and the like as designed to be of use is that throughout Ovid's other amatory works, lovers (and especially their girlfriends) have been repeatedly discussed with the very same language.[31] The lover who would like to fall out of love may find himself doing things remarkably similar to what he did to fall in love. As has been noted, women are 'the raw materials of love', and the *Ars* have taught the lover how to farm and tame them.[32]

But Ovid is not done yet; for those who are not willing to commit themselves to the farming lifestyle, he also touts the (less demanding) hobbies of hunting and fishing:

> vel tu venandi studium cole: saepe recessit
> turpiter a Phoebi victa sorore Venus. (*Rem. Am.* 199–200)
>
> lenius est studium, studium tamen, alite capta
> aut lino aut calamis praemia parva sequi,
> vel, quae piscis edax avido male devoret ore,
> abdere sub parvis aera recurva cibis. (*Rem. Am.* 207–210)

Again, it is clear that a hobby, especially one practised outdoors with friends, may provide an excellent way to forget about one's troubles. Yet hunting, birding, and

[28] Kennedy (n. 6) is essential to an understanding of elegy's use of metaphor, well capturing both its fluidity (24–5, 52–4 on the migratory nature of verbal definition) and and its voraciousness (44–5, 51–7 on the difficulties of distinguishing between metaphor and original term of reference).

[29] See *Eclogue* 10, especially 10.60, *tamquam haec sit nostri medicina furoris*, a passage that has a great deal to do with the issues here raised.

[30] It is surely not accidental that this passage mentions grafting, bees, and cows, three of the four topics of the *Georgics*. See Henderson (n. 1) and Leach (n. 3), 149–54 on structural similarities between the *Ars* and the *Georgics*.

[31] For women as animals and land, bare citations will suffice: *Am.* 1.25–32 comparing women (unfavourably) to mares, cows, and ewes because the latter do not seek presents; *Ars Am.* 1.279–80 on the unbridled lusts of female animals (and, by extension, humans); *Ars Am.* 1.391–4 on how it is easier to finish an attempt once made upon an animal (or woman) than to give up (see p. 218 on this passage and Hollis [n.17]); *Ars Am.* 1.627–30 on the characteristic, common to peacocks, horses, and women, of desiring admiration; *Ars Am.* 2.2 on the 'prey' that has fallen into Ovid's traps; *Ars Am.* 2.183–4 on the taming of tigers, lions, and bulls; *Ars Am.* 2.481–8 on how, from the beginning of time, animals (both male and female) have enjoyed sex; *Ars Am.* 2.725–32 on mutual orgasm as similar to a close horse race. Leach (n. 3), 146 discusses the ways that women in the *Ars* are described as animals, 'field, crops, and harvest'. She also notes that women are thereby figured as passive objects, manipulable to varying extents by the amatory cultivator (149). See too Miller (n. 3), 389–91 on the ways this passage refashions Lucretian views of animals.

[32] Leach (n. 3), 144. See too Myerowitz (n. 1), 109–28 on women as georgic and amatory material.

fishing are used with exceeding frequency in the *Ars* to describe how to find and obtain the appropriate woman;[33] among many examples, here is just one (in which the three tasks are listed in precisely the same order):[34]

> scit bene venator, cervis ubi retia tendat;
> scit bene, qua frendens valle moretur aper;
> aucupibus noti frutices; qui sustinet hamos,
> novit quae multo pisce natentur aquae:
> tu quoque, materiam longo qui quaeris amori,
> ante frequens quo sit disce puella loco. (*Ars Am.* 1.45–50)

One traps and catches a girl, apparently, in the same way one traps animals and catches fish; the vocabulary customarily used of animals was first applied to women and is now reversed and used for animals again. Or is it? As with war and farming, it is not clear whether the lover will be able to operate on these two planes simultaneously, or whether his earlier experiences will betray him, causing him to think of women when he ought to be concentrating on game.[35] Perhaps even Ovid's claim in *Amores* 1.3.15 not to be a *desultor amoris*, always taken as metaphorical, should be re-examined: the *praeceptor* of the *Remedia* may suggest precisely that the lover jump from one 'horse' to another.[36]

From the vast repository of metaphors that figure women as animals to be caught, I will treat a single example in slightly more detail: fishing. Two brief passages in the *Ars* talk about women as fish; the former notes that once you have the woman/fish, you must not let go, while the latter discourses on methodology:

> saucius arrepto piscis teneatur ab hamo:
> perprime temptatam nec nisi victor abi. (*Ars Am.* 1.393–4)

> hi iaculo pisces, illi capiuntur ab hamis,
> hos cava contento retia fune trahunt. (*Ars Am.* 1.763–4)

The context of the first passage is whether it is a good idea to rape the slave of your mistress (it is, provided you seduce the mistress first and successfully complete the sexual assault on the slave); the second reminds the student that different kinds of fish (women) must be caught in different ways. These passages are far from unique in the *Ars*, suggesting both that the connection between women and animals is in some way natural (or naturalized)[37] and that we can never be sure when the traditional

[33] And not just in the *Ars*: see E. J. Kenney, 'Doctus Lucretius', *Mnemos.* 23 (1970), 366–92, and Murgatroyd (n. 16, 1984), on the history of the three topoi, starting from Ibycus and continuing through the elegists to Philostratus. Kenney persuasively argues that the concentrated use of metaphors associating love with game derives from Lucretius.

34 Henderson (n. 1) notes that, although hunting and fowling are standard anti-erotic pastimes, fishing is an Ovidian innovation. See too *Ars Am.* 1.263–6, which tells the lover *ubi retia ponas* and *Ars Am.* 1.763–6 on the ways you should vary your approach depending what kind of fish or animal you want to catch (and its age).

[35] All the more so since, in *Ars* 2, the student was advised not to *be* a hunter, but merely to adapt hunting metaphors to his own erotic purposes (193–6). On the hunting passages of the *Ars* and *Remedia*, see Jones (n. 1), 67–8 (who seeks to foreclose the possibility of reading the *Remedia*'s suggestions as anything but literal).

[36] See too *Am.* 2.9.31 and 3.4.13 for the lover as both a horse and a horse-tamer; significantly it is unclear here as elsewhere who is the animal and who the master.

[37] Yet, oddly, in *Ars* 3, the book written for women, *men* are figured as fish (*casus ubique valet; semper tibi pendeat hamus:/ quo minime credas gurgite, piscis erit*, 3.425–6). This passage is not unique: men can themselves be trapped like animals (*Ars Am.* 2.563 on Venus snaring Mars or, on

leisure activities of the Roman élite are being referred to and when their vocabulary is being appropriated

The final suggestion of the *praeceptor* is to take a long trip (*Rem. Am.* 213–24). This example too, at first glance, is unambiguous. Leaving the mistress is, after all, hard to misunderstand. But, although absence may indeed make the heart grow un-fonder, it has been shown that the entire *Ars Amatoria* is conceived of as an extended journey, both a voyage by sea and a chariot race.[38] Thus the exhortation to take a trip away from the beloved, like the suggestions to take up farming or forensic speaking, may reasonably be understood as advice to find a new lover, to start all over again. And if this is so, no wonder the tone of the *Remedia* passage is so insistent: the student may understandably be reluctant to 'abandon ship' and take a 'trip' in another amatory relationship if he is still 'seasick' from his current 'sailing'. The fact that the *praeceptor* does not make any suggestions about where the lover might *go* on this supposed journey suggests that the journey itself is the most important thing, and indeed it is. There are no recommendations, for instance, to see the sights in Athens or to visit friends in the country, because it is the act of travelling, of starting anew the journey of the *Ars*, that will bring the lover the only true respite from his misery.

There is, of course, the possibility that in the *Remedia* the rules have simply changed: to expect consistency from an author like Ovid (and from one poem to another) is unfair. Although fish used to be women and war seduction, in the *Remedia* they no longer are. In the *Remedia*, fish *are* fish and going to war *will* take the lover's mind off of his problems. Unfortunately for this way of reading, Ovid is notoriously intratextual and creates monolithic texts that become more realistic by reference to each other. A more significant problem, however, crops up at *Remedia* 513–16, where the lover learns that he can trick himself not to be in love by not focusing too much on his goal:

> te quoque falle tamen, nec sit tibi finis amandi
> propositus: frenis saepe repugnat equus.
> utilitas lateat; quod non profitebere, fiet:
> quae nimis apparent retia, vitat avis. (*Rem. Am.* 513–16)

Even in the *Remedia*, we are asked to think on several levels, and it is not clear how to determine which is the 'proper' reading.[39]

There are significant implications, well outlined by Sharrock, inherent in the idea of the lover/reader as erotic prey; she examines the ways in which the *praeceptor* ensnares the reader and would-be lover who thinks *he* is the one in charge of the text and of his erotic life.[40] Following her interpretation, I suggest that just like the fish-woman of *Ars*

the human level, Dipsas encouraging Ovid's *puella* to 'ensnare' wealthy men at *Am.* 1.8.69–70) or compared to crops (*Ars Am.* 1.450 on the ways land and men can promise without delivering). *Am.* 1.2.13–16, 3.4.13.16 and 3.11b.36 describe lovers as untamed oxen and horses (cf. *Am.* 2.12.25–8 on them as oxen fighting over heifers). The women of *Ars* 3 are wolves pursuing a whole flock for one good sheep (417–22); they choose their bridles and hide their nets carefully (553 and 592). Ovid even draws attention to his own foolishness in arming the (already well-armed) *puellae* against himself and his poor defenceless bird compatriots (669). Thus while it may be the case that the *Ars* turns women into objects, men do not fare much better.

[38] Myerowitz (n. 1), 79–103 with citations. As she notes, the metaphor of a poem as a journey is a standard one in didactic works (87–90); see too Kennedy (n. 6), 47–51 on the journey of love and poetry and Sharrock (n. 1), 99–103 on the metaphor in the *Remedia* and the *Ars*.

[39] Henderson (n. 1) finds these lines contradictory to Ovid's purposes in the *Remedia*; my reading would suggest that it is not.

[40] See especially Sharrock (n. 1), 21, 27, and 236–7 on reader as victim. Durling (n. 15), 159

1.393–4, who is never to be released once caught, the lover is to remain always a lover and, more importantly, always a reader of Ovid. While the three books of the *Ars Amatoria* have as their explicit goal the teaching of men and women how to love, they also teach that love is inescapable, a message confirmed in the *Remedia*, which sends the lover directly back to the *Ars*.[41]

Furthermore, even the reader who does not intend to take love seriously may become trapped in the world of erotic elegy. The *Remedia* is necessary, Ovid says, because sometimes when you are playing at love you (accidentally, as it were) actually fall in love:[42]

> risi deceptum, qui se simulabat amare,
> in laqueos auceps decideratque suos:
> intrat amor mentes usu, dediscitur usu: (*Rem. Am.* 501–3)

Ovid mentions the importance of habit (and of habitual ways of reading?) as he apparently offers a way out of the morass of love. But changing a habit is not so easy: are we capable of pretending not to be in love? Can we unlearn to read metaphorically, refusing to see everything through an amatory filter, particularly when we are so advised with an image that has been repeatedly used in an erotic sense? Even when Ovid has put so much energy into 'training the perfect reader', who will follow him anywhere?[43]

Where the misery of elegy is but a game, real love is painful and sometimes even deadly (see again the preface of the *Remedia*)—but which one are we aiming for, the real or the fake?[44] There will be no danger of suicide (and so no need for the *Remedia*) unless one can truly fall in love while playing the game of the *Ars*, a game that from the start identifies itself as unreal. The constant elision throughout the *Ars* of the key distinction between 'real' and 'pretend' love means that the reader is never sure whether it is love or 'love', war or 'war' that is being referred to. More significantly, this confusion of metaphor with meta-real may be a way to 'hook' the reader: if love (that is, poetry) is exciting and dangerous, does that not make you want to read/love more?[45]

notes the ways the reader's progress through the poem is compared to an erotic relationship (159). As Cahoon (n. 20), 295 notes, the poet of the *Amores* 'delights in being Cupid's victim because he can thereby victimize others'. The poet of the *Ars*, on the other hand, victimizes men as well as women.

[41] See especially *Rem. Am.* 516 with Henderson (n. 1), 105 on the necessity to the lover of ensnaring himself. Perhaps this is a metapoetic warning to those readers who have convinced themselves that they are more sophisticated than both the model student of the *Ars* and its *praeceptor*? See p. 221 on the love/poetry equation and Brunelle (n. 4, 1997), 138 on how the reader of *Remedia* 757–66 must choose between being a reader (who likes amatory poetry) and a student (who is not permitted to read it).

[42] *Ars Am.* 1.611–18 also notes this danger, at greater length: *est tibi agendus amans, imitandaque vulnera verbis;/ haec tibi quaeratur quaelibet arte fides./ nec credi labor est: sibi quaeque videtur amanda;/ pessima sit, nulli non sua forma placet./ saepe tamen vere coepit simulator amare,/ saepe, quod incipiens finxerat esse, fuit./ quo magis, o, faciles imitantibus este, puellae:/ fiet amor verus, qui modo falsus erat*. See Barsby (n. 5), 20 and Sharrock (n. 1), 22 and 274–5 on the dangers of this erotic game becoming real and Kennedy (n. 6), 66–7 on the 'lover' as the one who enacts amorous discourse – intentionality is irrelevant. Durling (n. 15), 158–9 and Fyler (n. 14), 201 well note the tensions between the position love holds in the Ovidian system (frivolous and secondary to poetry) and the traditional elegiac view of it as all-important.

[43] Sharrock (n. 1), 32.

[44] See too *Remedia* 433, where, with what seems a moral judgement, the praceptor claims that a man disgusted by his lover's *pudenda* was never really a lover in the first place.

[45] See Sharrock (n. 1), 291 on the identification of reading with loving.

The activities detailed above from the *Remedia* are themselves already fit subjects for didactic poetry, and thus their appearance in the *Remedia* may not occasion surprise. They have been appropriated from traditional didactic to stand for amatory principles, and it is surely part of the point of the *Remedia* that its reader is already accustomed to didactic poetry that gives instruction about snares and fishing hooks. But significantly, these skills also lie within the literary experience of the amatory reader of elegy, the reader of the *Ars* in particular. By re-using the erotic staples of the *Ars* in the negative, the *praeceptor* undercuts his recuperative project, showing that it is all-but-impossible not to be in love once you have become an elegiac lover. There is a further complicating factor: 'the rejection of love is part of the discourse of love—it *is* love'.[46] So to admit that you need to read the *Remedia* is in itself a confirmation that you will always be a lover, always be susceptible to a pretty face (and a pretty poem).

My notion that the tasks of the *Remedia* are as amatory in intent as they were in the *Ars* derives from, and expands upon, Conte's suggestion that the rhetoric of a genre is exclusive, that it 'prohibits the belief that there might be anything else outside of the image of that world it knows how to give'. Elegiac poetry not only cannot represent anything outside of the world of elegy, but it insists that there is nothing but elegy. If elegy is (to Romans, or to Ovid) focused on love, then it is a rare elegiac poem that is not, in some way, about love—right down to its metre.[47]

Conte also claims that in elegy, 'the rest of the world, from which he [the elegiac lover/poet] has excluded himself, can be recuperated as long as it is properly translated and relocated within the new system of meaning he has chosen to construct'. Anything outside of elegy, that is, can be incorporated only if it is presented in terms already used by elegy. This seems accurate as an explanation for the superabundant use of figurative language to talk about love (which is not necessarily the real subject of elegiac poetry either).[48] According to Conte, 'the didactic project of the *Ars amatoria* is directed not so much to things themselves but to a rhetoric which has already organized reality and taken its place'. (Is this rhetoric any less real than reality if it can displace it?) Yet he then peculiarly suggests that the *Remedia* is a broadening of the world of elegy, a recognition of the limitations of this world in order to reintegrate the lover into the 'real' world because, according to him, Ovid's elegiac worldview 'had never pretended to totalitarianism or tried to appropriate to itself all those values of external origin'.[49] I, on the other hand, see the *Remedia* as demanding the recognition that the world of the elegiac pupil/reader has been irreparably tainted by the discourse

[46] Sharrock (n. 1), 62.

[47] Love as exclusive: Conte (n. 1), 443. On the erotics of metre, see C. Brunelle, 'Form vs. function in Ovid's *Remedia Amoris*', *CJ* 96.2 (2001), 123–40; he draws attention to the circular (and thus doomed) reasoning of the Ovidian persona in his suggestion at *Rem. Am.* 757–66 that his student avoid reading elegy. An excellent idea this, were it not for the fact that the *Remedia* is itself in couplets (by no means the automatic choice of metre for a didactic work): Brunelle *passim*, especially 126–9; see also Jones (n. 1), 62. Let us remember too Sharrock's (n. 1) reminder about magical uses of *carmen*: the *praeceptor* exhorts the student to avoid using magic in both the *Ars* and the *Remedia*, each themselves 'magical' *carmina* that claim to have the power to keep or banish love (50–78, esp. 56–7, 65, and 75); see too Davisson (n. 5) on *Rem. Am.* 289–90: is the *Remedia* among the misleading *carmina*?

[48] Conte (n. 1), 444. See Kennedy (n. 6), 54 on the lack of 'literal' words for love. Conte (n. 1), 449 notes that the very existence of *remedia amoris* is 'a flagrant contradiction'—in the world of elegy, there is no such thing as not loving (because then there is no poetry—to stop loving is to become extinct as an artist). See too Boyd (n. 21), 132–41on Ovid's poetry as about poetry, and the interdependence of literal and nonliteral narratives.

[49] Conte (n. 1), 458 and 463.

of love, and suggest that the Ovidian worldview is precisely totalitarian. The *Remedia* cannot but be about love, not only because elegy talks about little else, but primarily because its reader has been carefully trained to find little else in elegiac poetry. For the student of the *Ars*, there is no world but elegy and no mode of discourse that is not erotic; the *Ars* has already colonized the porticoes of Rome and the activities of fine, upstanding Romans for its own devious purposes. Conte is therefore wrong in excepting the *Remedia* from his generic logic—it in fact proves his case, as my final example will show.

Given that the remedies suggested by the *praeceptor* in the *Remedia* cannot avoid being deeply implicated in erotic discourse, and therefore, I suggest, cannot work, the only activity with genuine potential for success is to replace your old mistress with a new one (or two) suggested at *Rem. Am.* 441–88:

> hortor et, ut pariter binas habeatis amicas:
> (fortior est, plures siquis habere potest) (*Rem. Am.* 441–2)
>
> quaeris ubi invenias? Artes tu perlege nostras:[50]
> plena puellarum iam tibi navis erit. (*Rem. Am.* 487–8)

At the end of this lengthy passage, the reader is referred back to the *Ars* to find the next woman; the circle is complete.[51] While it would be easy to see this as Ovidian self-promotion (and it surely is),[52] there is a further, more complex purpose. Finding a new lover to replace the old is the best advice the *Remedia* gives because it has trained its reader to be useless for everything but love.[53] All of the advice offered by the *Remedia* is about replacing love with more love; only here does this become explicit (by the repetition of the vocabulary of sailing, fishing, and war).

This final suggestion of the *Remedia*, to replace your girlfriend with another, may well be the most effective remedy, but it is somewhat devious, especially given the explicit claims the *Remedia* makes for 'curing' love. More importantly, there is no guarantee that having two lovers will not simply double your trouble; if you always solve your problems with one girl by trading her in for two more, it is not clear how you will ever win. Moreover, the sheer number of remedies offered throughout the *Remedia* may suggest that the *praeceptor* is not confident in the efficacy of any one of them. If he 'really' knew how to cure love, should it not be simpler? His obfuscating rhetoric serves to mask, but simultaneously lay bare, the fact that it *is* simple: the way to 'cure' yourself of love is to recognize that there is no cure at all and so to throw yourself into the lifestyle (as does Ovid in the first three poems of the *Amores*); resistance is futile. The *praeceptor*'s statement at *Rem. Am.* 465, that he is not advising anything new (*ne forte putes nova me tibi condere iura*), although it makes sense in its context, may also

[50] I follow A. A. R. Henderson, 'Notes on the text of Ovid's *Remedia Amoris*', *CQ* 30 (1980), 159–73, in capitalizing *Artes* (164).

[51] To this compare the mock-lament of *Amores* 2.10, which bemoans Ovid's inability to choose between two mistresses and Ovid's suggestion that it is always better to have more than one lover (*Ars Am.* 2.387–90); Lucke (n. 1) discusses the passage and its parallels at length.

[52] See too the suggestion in *Ars* 3.205–8 to look to Ovid's *Medicamina Faciei Feminiae* for tips on makeup.

[53] Cf. Henderson (n. 1) on the scarcity in non-Ovidian elegy of the topos of replacing one lover with another. Significantly, this advice is also offered in the *Ars*: the *praeceptor* claims that finding a mistress does not preclude one from finding another (*Ars Am.* 2.387–90). In the *Amores*, it is suggested (but by Dipsas, hardly a reliable source) that a woman have several lovers (*Am.* 1.8.53–5). See too Sharrock's (n. 1), 48 observation that the successful reader of the *Ars* will have not a single girl, but '*girls* to the end of his life'.

be read as a covert indication that someone who reads the *Remedia* and then goes fishing to heal a broken heart is being a bit too literal; Ovid never advises anything new. Even the phrasing of the suggestion to distract oneself by hunting (*Rem. Am.* 199–200, text above, p. 217) says that the lover should replace one woman with another, Venus with Diana. And earlier, at *Remedia* 55, the student was warned to avoid being in thrall to particular girls, but not to love itself.[54] And what are we to make of the fact that the *praeceptor* admits that he cannot follow his own precepts (*Ars Am.* 2.547–50)?

As every post-Vergilian (or perhaps post-Gallan) elegiac poet knows, love is incurable. In fact, the only possible cure for love is more love, whether that is directly stated (find a new mistress) or merely hinted at through the use of vocabulary already seemingly reserved for amatory adventures. Similarly (in the event that you are not able to leave the city), to have a surfeit of sex until you get nauseated by the very thought of it, as at *Remedia* 398–422 is, like many of the suggestions offered in the *Remedia*, at least apparently reasonable. But how much is too much for the elegiac lover? Will this excessive sex not draw him more powerfully into his girlfriend's (and the *praeceptor*'s) trap?[55] We readers are once again unpleasantly implicated in this discourse, particularly if we accept the connection between sex and elegy that Ovid offers throughout his *oeuvre*: how much sex is too much for us? How much elegy? Can we ever get enough?[56]

The *Remedia*, then, are disingenuous in their claims to cure love. This is not only because falling out of love is as unteachable as falling in love.[57] It is also because Ovidian elegy has created a world in which there is nothing but love, and, more significantly, a world in which this very poetry is always necessary. Yet since true relief from erotic suffering comes only from new love, a fact that is hammered home with every line of the poem, the student of the *Remedia* will always return eventually to the *Ars*; well might the *praeceptor* reassure Cupid not to worry about losing business. The *Remedia*, in effect, are the *Ars*, and *vice versa*. In genre as in life, *omnia vincit amor*: love defeats every attempt to escape it.[58]

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[54] Presumably it is all right to be, as Ovid is, always a lover (*Rem. Am.* 7–8 with Brunelle [n. 47], 130). See too *centum sunt causae cur ego semper amem* (*Am.* 2.4.10).

[55] Sharrock (n. 1), 59–60.

[56] This paragraph owes much to Brunelle (n. 47).

[57] Interesting thoughts in Myerowitz (n. 1), 36–7 on love as an intersection between nature and culture.

[58] Thanks to audiences at the 2002 CAMWS meeting, the Florida State University, Georgetown University, and New York University for the refinement of several points. As always, John Marincola has been instrumental in the formulation and articulation of my argument; the referee and editor for this journal have also helped me to clarify individual points.