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The Wooden O Symposium is a cross-disciplinary conference that explores Medieval and Renaissance studies through the text and performance of Shakespeare's plays. The symposium is held annually in August in Cedar City, Utah, and coincides with the Utah Shakespeare Festival's summer season. Plays from Shakespeare's canon are performed each summer in the Englestadt Shakespeare Theatre, a unique performance space modeled after the Globe Theatre, Shakespeare's own "Wooden O."

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Shakespeare's Boy Actors and the Ideal of White Femininity

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Throughout its lengthy stage history, Shakespeare's *Othello* startled and sometimes outraged audiences by its juxtaposition of a black (occasionally bronze) Moor with the fair-skinned Desdemona. In performances from the seventeenth-century to the early twentieth, adult actors crafted Shakespeare's Moor through exotic language, face blackening, and prosthetics—wigs, props, and costumes. Early modern race studies often focus on the ways such "blackface" representations of Othello from Shakespeare's era to nineteenth-century minstrel shows created, circulated and solidified racist assumptions.[1] As Judith Butler argued in her study of gender, "repeated stylizations of the body . . , congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being;"[2] in the case of *Othello*, repeated performances naturalized the stereotype of the black, jealous, murderous Moor.

More recently Shakespeareans have begun to explore the ways "whiteness," particularly feminine whiteness, also contributed to early modern conceptions of racial difference and white supremacy.[3] Like the actor who used face paint and prosthetics to perform Othello, boy actors relied on language, wigs, costumes, and, perhaps, make-up to portray the ideal of white feminine beauty. This essay examines how the boy actor embodied feminine whiteness on Shakespeare's stage and in the works of his

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contemporaries at a time when boy actors impersonated nearly all female characters. I conclude with a close examination of *Love's Labours Lost* to demonstrate how these techniques were embedded in a particular play.

In the words of Aileen Ribeiro, the ideal European woman's complexion should be a "confection of white, pink and red: a whitened skin, tinged with pink on the cheeks, and red lips."[4] If the lady has light colored hair, whether blonde or auburn, she comes even closer to perfection.[5] Or, as Gostanzo explains in George Chapman's comedy, *All Fools*, a desirable wife's looks signal her worth:

> Her hair pure amber,
> Her forehead mother of pearl, her fair eyes
> Two wealthy diamonds, her lips mines of rubies.
> Her teeth are orient pearl, her neck pure ivory.
> (1.1. 253-56)[6]

When boy actors appeared on stage wearing white gloves, blonde wigs and white face paint, their representations were often eroticized, idealizing ultra-white skin, like ivory, as an object of desire. In her study of whiteness in *Titus Andronicus*, Francesca Royster demonstrates how Tamora, the sexualized Queen of the Goths, "is represented as hyperwhite," a hue that dramatically contrasts with the black complexion of her lover Aaron, the Moor.[7] Shakespeare's Venus says it best: the lover delights in seeing "his true-love in her naked bed, / Teaching the sheets a whiter hue than white" (*Venus and Adonis*, 397-8).[8]

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The ideal of feminine whiteness emanated from Elizabeth I's court, where her role as the Virgin Queen was itself something of a performance. Elizabeth I likely began to use heavy white make-up after her recovery from smallpox in 1562, and throughout the rest of her reign royal portraits displayed her hyperwhite face and hands. The Queen seems to have used a white paste made from lead and vinegar called ceruse; while its effect on the skin was deleterious, it did provide good coverage. Elizabeth's resort to cosmetics may also have legitimized face painting for other women. By the end of the sixteenth century, even ladies of the middling sort used paints, often called fucus, made from a variety

of ingredients, including "alum, musk, civet, ambergris, mercury, white lead, quicksilver, egg whites and shells, crumbs of bread, almonds, milk, rosewater, storax, lemon juice, lilies, roses and other flowers, turpentine, cinnamon, cloves, aloe, labdanum, poppy seed oil, ground jawbones of a hog or lamb, benzoin (resin from an aromatic tree), rosemary, honey, mustard seed, vinegar, rhubarb, myrrh, frankincense, camphor, sulphur, pearl, gold and silver."[9] Ben Jonson satirized this list of ingredients in *The Devil Is An Ass*, when Wittipol, disguised as a Spanish lady, explains what Spanish women use to enhance their complexions:

> They have
> Water of gourds of radish, the white beans,
> Flower of glass, of thistles, rosemarine,
> Raw honey, mustard-seed, and bread dough-baked,
> The crumbs o' bread, goats milk, and white of eggs,
> Camphor, and lily roots, the fat of swans,
> Marrow of veal, white pigeons, and pine-kernals,
> The seeds of nettles, purslane, and hare's gall.[10]

They sometimes even use turpentine and snake fat to make "an admirable varnish for the face" (4.4.18-36).

The widespread application of such concoctions, in turn, inspired a host of anti-cosmetic diatribes. Thomas Tuke, the best known and most bellicose anti-cosmetic campaigner, wrote in his *Treatise Against Paint[i]ng and Tincturing of Men and Women* that the ceruse women used was, "without doubt, brought in use by the divell, the capitall enemie of nature."[11] The poet John Donne argued the contrary: "That women ought to Paint" and men should "be constant in something, and love her who shewes her great *Love* to thee, in taking this paines to seeme *Lovely* to thee."[12] Donne's tongue-in-cheek argument suggests that it doesn't matter if a woman's fair-skinned complexion is acquired through artificial means, so long as she **seems** lovely in an attempt to please her man.

Still, a lady's whiteness was best if it was natural, her character more virtuous if she did not paint. Shakespeare plays with this assumption in *Twelfth Night* when Olivia unveils her face to Cesario (Viola in disguise) and asks, "Is't not well done?" Viola replies, "Excellently done, if God did all" (1.5.216-18). Given the widespread use of cosmetics among early modern English women, Viola has reason to be suspicious, but she admits that Olivia's face

is the perfect blend of white and red so prized by early modern English ladies.

Petruccio's joking treatment of the middle-aged Vincentio also suggests a skeptical approach to female beauty. Petruccio asks Kate:

> Hast thou beheld a fresher gentlewoman?
> Such war of white and red within her cheeks!
> What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty
> As those two eyes become that heavenly face?
> (*Taming of the Shrew*, 4.6.30-33)

This scene's absurdity underscores Petruccio's characteristic disdain for convention, in this case, the English gentlewoman's ideal white and red complexion.

On the other hand, Shakespeare's works repeatedly praise those very attributes. In three cases, the woman's complexion is associated with her unusual virtue. When Lucrece is fearful for her husband's safety, the narrator explains: "Oh, how her fear did make her color rise! / First red as roses that on lawn we lay / Then white as lawn, the roses took away" (*Rape of Lucrece*, 257-9). Unable to seduce Imogen outright, Iachimo admires Imogen's sleeping face—"whiter than the sheets," her lips "Rubies unparagoned" (*Cymbeline*, 2.2.15-17). The pander Bolt advertises Marina's charms in *Pericles*: "For flesh and blood, sir, white and red, you shall see a rose" (4.6.30-1), yet she is so virtuous that his customers retreat in shame.

A heroine's hands also signaled her beauty, and often they, too, were figured white, an effect boy actors could convey with white gloves. Shakespeare's narrator describes Lucrece as she lay sleeping: "Her lily hand, her rosy cheek lies under" (*Lucrece*, 386), while Biron addresses the woman he thinks is Rosaline as "White-handed mistress" (*Love's Labor's Lost*, 5.2.231). Feste tells us that his mistress Olivia "has a white hand" (*Twelfth Night*, 2.3.26). When Lorenzo receives a letter from his beloved Jessica, he exclaims, "I know the hand, in faith, 'tis a fair hand, / And whiter than the paper it writ on / Is the fair hand that writ" (*Merchant of Venice*, 2.4.12-14). Pandarus observes that the most beautiful woman in the world, Helen of Troy, "has a marvelous white hand" (*Troilus and Cressida*, 1.2.125). Marina's fingers are "long, small, white as milk" (*Pericles*, 4.0.22). Such hands are even more delicate if they are translucent so that one can see the blue veins beneath. Thus,

Cleopatra offers the Messenger "My bluest veins to kiss, a hand that kings / Have lipped and trembled kissing" (2.5.29-30). White hands that are not tanned or calloused with work suggest delicacy and gentility; they are the hands of a lady.[13] As David Sterling Brown explains, "As an appendage of white self-fashioning, the white hand carves out a lady's social place and directs her way of being in the world."[14]

While many of Shakespeare's younger female characters are not specifically identified as "white", they are repeatedly described as "fair." Shakespeare's Words.com counts 766 uses of "fair" in the canon. The *OED* cites two common ways "fair" was used as an adjective: The first is simply, "Beautiful": "beautiful to the eye, of pleasing form or appearance." It is also the opposite of "foul"—as the witches of *Macbeth* know so well. The adjective is used "almost exclusively of women." Secondly, "fair" describes complexions and hair that are "light as opposed to dark," beautiful as opposed to foul. "Fair" also suggests virtue. *OED* cites the Duke's line from Shakespeare's *Othello*—he "is far more fair than black" (1.3.287)—to illustrate the point.[15]

Shakespeare frequently uses the word "fair" to suggest a female character's attractiveness. Witness Hermia, Helena, Hippolyta, Hero, Beatrice, Portia, Rosalind, Olivia, Cressida, Desdemona, Ophelia, Cordelia, Thaisa—all are addressed or described as "fair." This way of greeting a young woman may simply be a conventional form of flattery. But, given the northern European standard of beauty cited above, it seems fair to say that "fair" hair and complexion are also in play. Note that, with the possible exception of Hippolyta, this is a list of young women, roles that would have been performed by boy actors. Older ladies—Mistress Quickly, Volumnia, Cymbeline's Queen, Paulina—who were likely impersonated by adult male actors—are not generally said to be "fair." Lady Macbeth might be the exception because she is referred to as a "fair and noble hostess" (1.6.8), but the phrase is ambiguous and may be more about her hospitality than her beauty or the color of her skin.

Fairness, like whiteness, is disdained if it's artificial. Head over heels in love with the "fair" Silvia, Valentine praises Sylvia's exquisite beauty, but her servant Speed is not so enchanted. He responds that Silvia's beauty is painted and her favor "out of count." Valentine

asks, "How painted? How out of count?" "Marry," replies Speed, "so painted to make her fair that no man counts of her beauty" (*Two Gentleman of Verona*, 2.1.48-64). In contrast to John Donne, Speed thinks that if she is painted, her beauty won't be recognized. Of course, if the boy actor who impersonated Sylvia used white face paint, Speed's comment would seem even more humorous.

Shakespeare also exploits the equation of fairness with virtue, blackness with evil. In a misanthropic rant, Timon of Athens underscores the opposition: "Black white, foul fair, wrong right, / Base noble, old young, coward valiant" (4.3.29-30) A lady's fairness can be highlighted by opposition to something or someone dark, often with racial implications. For example, when Proteus switches his affections from Julia to Silvia, he reflects, "And Silvia—witness heaven that made her fair— / Shows Julia but a swarthy Ethiope" (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, 2.6.25-6). Comparing Cressida with Helen of Troy, Pandarus explains that because Cressida is his niece, he cannot say she is as fair as Helen, but if she were not kin, "she would be as fair on Friday as Helen is on Sunday. But what care I? I care not an she were a blackamoor" (*Troilus and Cressida*, 1.1.70-74). Similarly, the speaker of Sonnet 144 claims two loves, one of comfort, the other of despair: "The better angel is a man right fair; / The worser spirit a woman colored ill" (lines 3-4). "Fair" is the standard of beauty, "color" is "ill." These lines reinforce the racial binary of fair and foul, light and dark, white and black, to establish whiteness as the desirable default position.

Early modern discussions of cosmetics and female complexions frequently consider the meaning of a woman's blushes. What causes the rosy cheeks? Is it the flush of youth? Or is it a psychological marker?[16] Indeed, such treatises often make a connection between a woman's blush and her mental state.[17] Pale skin could denote fear and trembling, yet colored by a blush, a woman's red and white could be read in contradictory ways.

Thomas Wright's influential treatise, *The Passions of the Minde*, explains how blushes betray guilt:

> [Those] that have committed a fault, & . . . imagine they are thought to have committed it; presently if they be . . . of an honest behaviour, and yet not much grounded in virtue, they blush, because nature being afrayd, lest in the face the fault should be discovered, sendeth the purest blood to be a

> defence and succor, the which effect, commonly, is iudged to proceede from a good and vertuous nature, because no man can but allow, that it is good to bee ashamed of a fault.[18]

As I have argued elsewhere, black villains like Shakespeare's Aaron and *Lust Dominion's* Eleazar associated their evil nature with dark skin, proudly proclaiming that they had no shame and could not blush.[19] Yet a blush does not necessarily indicate guilt—it could also signal a modest woman's reaction to a salacious advance or slander, or simply embarrassment.

Shakespeare highlights the difficulty of reading a woman's blushes in 4.1 of *Much Ado About Nothing*.[20] When Claudio denounces Hero before the company assembled for what they thought was to be a wedding, he points to her face: "She knows the heat of a luxurious bed. / Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty" (40-41). But after Claudio leaves, the Friar interprets Hero's blushes differently:

> By noting of this lady I have marked
> A thousand blushing apparitions
> To start into her face: a thousand innocent shames
> In angel whiteness beat away those blushes; . . .
> Trust me not . . .
> If this sweet lady be not guiltless here
> Under some biting error.
> (4.1.156-68)

To the Friar, Hero's blush is not a sign of guiltiness, but the reaction of an innocent woman to public humiliation.

Blushing could thus be read as a sign of a woman's shamefastness, defined in the *OED* as "modesty, sobriety of behaviour, decency, propriety, bashfulness, shyness."[21] Shakespeare's narrator offers just such an explanation of Lucrece's response to the sudden arrival of Collatine. The war of red and white to be seen in her face is a struggle between beauty and virtue:

> When Virtue bragged, Beauty would blush for shame;
> When Beauty boasted blushes, in despite
> Virtue would stain that o'er with silver white.
> But Beauty, in that white entitled
> From Venus' doves, doth challenge that fair field.
> Then Virtue claims from Beauty Beauty's red,

> Which Virtue gave the golden age to gild
> Their silver cheeks, and called it then their shield,
> Teaching them thus to use it in the fight.
> When shame assailed the red should fence the white.
> This heraldry in Lucrece' face was seen,
> Argued by Beauty's red and Virtue's white. (2.52-65)

Lucrece's blush signals the shamefastness that should protect her innocence and "fence the white." Her face's war of red and white proves her virtue. Unfortunately, that war enhances the beauty that so attracts the rapist Collatine.

As this passage from *The Rape of Lucrece* attests, whiteness and fairness are repeatedly associated with virtue. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, both Bianca and Katharine are said to be "fair and virtuous" (2.1.43 and 91). *Measure for Measure*'s Duke Vincentio tells the chaste novice Isabella that "the hand that hath made you fair hath made you good. . . grace, being the soul of your complexion, shall keep the body of it ever fair" (3.1.178-81). When a fair woman lacks virtue, her betrayal of male expectations is especially devastating. *Titus Andronicus*'s Tamora is monstrous despite her hyperwhite hue. Othello is tormented by the thought that Desdemona, whose skin is whiter than snow "And smooth as monumental alabaster" (5.2.45), could be unfaithful.

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As these examples from Shakespeare's texts demonstrate, language was key to the dramatist's representation of white feminine beauty. But how did Shakespeare's boy actors physically embody the connection between appearance and behavior? It remains an open question as to whether boy actors used face paint to impersonate women. It does seem likely that the older actors who portrayed "women of a certain age" needed some cosmetic assistance. Ben Jonson satirizes the use of face paint in several plays, mocking vain older women who dress inappropriately and employ make-up to appear young and attractive. *Epicoene*'s opening scene mocks such women. Clerimont scorns Lady Haughty's "piec'd beauty." She won't appear in public, he says, until "she has painted and perfum'd and wash'd and scour'd" (1.1.80-84).[22] Truewit counters that women should "practice any art to mend breath, cleanse teeth, repair eyebrows, paint, and profess it" (1.1.103-4).

From this short interchange, it seems highly likely that in addition to wearing exaggerated costumes, the actors who impersonated Lady Haughty and the Collegiate Ladies also wore face paint. *Volpone*'s Lady Politic Wouldbe takes pains with her appearance, which includes her make-up. In 3.4 she complains that, "This fucus was too coarse, too; it's no matter."[23] Like Lady Haughty, she must have worn recognizably white make-up.

But what about younger female characters? Thomas Dekker exploits the moralists' view of cosmetic usage in Thomas Dekker's *The Honest Whore*. Face paint, sometimes referred to as "complexion," enables Bellafront to be what she is named, a beautiful façade. As the sixth scene begins, her servant Roger enters

> *with a stool, cushion, looking-glass and chafing-dish. Those being set down, pulls out of his pocket a vial with white colour in it; and two boxes [of cosmetics], one with white, another red painting. He places all things in order and a candle by them, singing with the ends of old ballads as he does it. At last* BELLAFRONT *(as* ROGER *rubs his cheeks with the colours) whistles within.*

Bellafront interrupts Roger as he fools around with her make-up. She asks for her looking glass and her "boxes of complexion," and he replies: "Here's your two complexions." Then, as he looks in the mirror, Roger sees the mess that he has made of his face with her make-up. Why is it that what "makes her face glister most damnably," looks so terrible on him; "there's knavery in daubing!" Bellafront, in turn, sits down and *"with her bodkin curls her hair, [and] colours her lips."*[24] As a professional courtesan, Bellafront may not have the natural red and white of a young girl, but with the help of cosmetics she can imitate the sexual allure of white female beauty.

Thomas Dekker's satiric comedy, *Westward Ho*, performed by the Children of St. Paul's ca. 1604, also suggests that boy actors sometimes did use face paint. The comedy begins with a bawd, Mistress Birdlime and a Tailor. Working on behalf of an Earl, she tries to seduce the wife of the Italian merchant Justiniano by offering her a new gown. If the husband finds her with his wife, Birdlime has a cover: she has brought three or four kinds of "complexion," which she will pretend to sell to the lady. When Justiniano discovers Birdlime, he calls her a bawd and exclaims, "Do not I know these tricks, / That which thou makest a colour

for thy sinne, / Hath been thy first vndoing? Painting, painting." Mistress Birdlime offers him a catalog of her "complexions": "Here is the burned powder of a Hogs jaw-bone, to be laid with the Oil of white Poppy, an excellent *Fucus* to kill Morphew, weed out Freckles, and a most excellent ground-work for painting. Here is Ginimony likewise burnt, and pulverized, to be mingled with the juice of Lemons, sublimate Mercury, and two spoonfuls of the flowers of Brimstone, a most excellent receipt to cure the flushing in the face." As she later tells Mistress Justiniano, "A woman when there be roses in her cheeks, Cherries on her lips, Civet in her breath, Ivory in her teeth, Lilies in her hand, and Licorice in her heart, why she's like a play. If new, very good company, very good company, but if stale, like old *Jeronimo*, go by, go by. Therefore as I said before, strike."[25]

Like Lady Haughty, Mistress Birdlime and Mistress Justiniano are "mature" women, and face paint may have helped young boys to represent older women. On the other hand, boy actors who had not yet attained a beard may have been sufficiently "fair" to impersonate young women without cosmetics. In *King John*, Austria addresses the young Prince Arthur as "fair boy" (2.1.30), suggesting the boy actor has light skin. Similarly, Orlando has no problem addressing the page Ganymede as "my fair Rosalind". He also describes the page to his brother Oliver: "The boy is fair, / Of female favor, and bestows himself / Like a ripe sister" (4.3.89-91). The boy's friend Celia, however, is "browner than her brother" (4.3.84-7). Similarly, Maria says that Cesario [Viola] is "a fair young man" (*Twelfth Night*, 1.5.93). Whether or not they required cosmetic assistance, the boy actors who played these roles must have appeared light-skinned to the audience.

Rosalind and Viola, originally performed by boy actors, are female characters who pretend to be male. Perhaps the default male position made their impersonations more natural. On the other hand, in texts such as *Titus Andronicus* which underscore a female character's hyperwhiteness, the boy actors may have required white face paint. *Lingua, Or The combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses*, a five-act comedy performed at Trinity College, Cambridge, written by Tomas Tomkis and published in London in 1607, hints that cosmetics were used. The clue lies not in a dramatic performance per se, but rather, in the description of what

a boy actor would require to impersonate a woman, including face paint, costumes and prosthetics. Tactus, who represents Touch in the battle of the five senses, is supposed to bring an object on stage that will demonstrate his superiority to the other four senses. He apologizes that he is unable to do so because it took too long to prepare the boy actor he intended to introduce:

> Five houres agoe I set a douzen maides to attire a boy like a nice Gentlewoman: but there is such doing with their loking-glasses, pinning, unpinning, setting, unseting formings and conformings, painting blew vaines, and cheeks, such stirre with Stickes and Combes, Cascanets, dressings, Purles, Falles, Squares, Buskes, Bodies, Sarffes, necklaces, Carcanets, Rebatoes, Borders, Tires, Fannes, Palizadoes, Fillets, Croslets, Pendulets, Amulets, Annulets, Bracelets, and so many lets, that yet shee is scarce drest to the girdle: and now there's such calling for Fardlingales, Kirtlets, Busk-points . . . a Ship is sooner rigd by farre then a Gentlewoman made ready.[26]

Here the author Tomkis satirizes women's fashionable attire, but the passage also suggests that clothing, headdresses, and jewelry were far more important for the boy's impersonation of a gentlewoman than face paint. Yet the mention of blue veins and cheeks (presumably red rather than blue) suggests that some make-up was used, at least in this collegiate setting.

But however intriguing the issue of stage make-up might be, its use may have been irrelevant. If Shakespeare can bring the moonlight into Capulet's garden simply through poetry, why can't his characters' assertions that a lady is fair establish her whiteness, especially if a rosy-cheeked pre-pubescent boy impersonates that lady? The boy actors who pretend to be fair young women **perform** whiteness as a prerequisite for beauty. The assertion that a character is "fair", whether or not the actor is light-skinned, suggests the arbitrariness of skin color as a defining category. It is an attribute imposed by others, not essential. In *Love's Labours Lost*, Shakespeare underscores that arbitrariness through the male courtiers' obsession with their ladies' beauty.

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According to Shakespeare's Words.com, the adjective "fair" is used 52 times in *Love's Labour's Lost*, more than in any other work in the canon. Yet, when one thinks about it, the repetition of "fair

this" and "fair that" is, of course, entirely appropriate in a play that depends for its humor on stale Petrarchan tropes. Indeed, in *Love's Labour's Lost* Shakespeare interrogates more clearly than in any other work the early modern northern European construct of feminine beauty and its power to transform the male lover into slavish subjection. The dramatist may have been influenced by Sir Philip Sidney's sonnet sequence, *Astrophil and Stella*, which circulated in manuscript during the 1580s and in printed texts beginning in 1591. In Sidney's sonnet 7, the male lover Astrophil describes Stella's eyes, which like Rosaline's, are black:

> When nature made her chief work, Stella's eyes
> In colour black why wrapped she beams so bright?
> Would she in beamy black, like painter wise,
> Frame daintiest lustre, mixed of shades of light . . .
> Or would she her miraculous power show,
> That, whereas black seems beauty's contrary,
> She even in black doth make all beauties flow?

In sonnet 2, Astrophil compares himself to a "slave-born-Muscovite" and later admits he has become enslaved to Stella's black eyes (sonnet 47). Similarly, in *Love's Labour's Lost* Shakespeare highlights Rosaline's "black" beauty, plays on contrasts between black and white, and has his courtly lovers disguise themselves as Muscovites.[27] Moreover, the comedy demonstrates how the descriptor "black" serves as a catch-all for any deviation from the white ideal of beauty.

When the King first meets the Princess, he addresses her twice as "Fair Princess," once as "fair madam," and refers to her "fair self." After the King and his attendants exit, Boyet observes that the King is smitten, for "all his senses were locked in his eye," as he looked on "the fairest of the fair" (2.1.240-1). The most important signifier of her "fair" beauty is her white skin. In his love sonnet to her, the King compares her to the moon: "Nor shines the silver moon one half so bright / Through the transparent bosom of the deep / As doth thy face, through tears of mine, give light" (4.3.26-8). During the masque of Muscovites, the King, mistaking Rosaline for the Princess, again addresses her as "bright Moon" (5.2.205), a trope that the disguised Rosaline reiterates by claiming to change like the moon. The unnamed Princess is thus figured throughout as having the white, translucent complexion so prized in early modern cosmetic discourse.

From the French Princess's first appearance in act 2, the text emphasizes that her fair complexion is natural. Boyet flatters her: "Nature was in making graces dear / When she did starve the general world beside / And prodigally gave them all to you" (2.1.10-12). The Princess replies quite modestly that her beauty "Needs not the painted flourish of your praise. / Beauty is bought by judgment of the eye" (2.1.14-15). Later in a conversation with the Forester, the Princess reiterates her distaste for flattery: "Nay, never paint me now / Where fair is not, praise cannot mend the brow" (4.1.16-17). The Princess's comparison of flattery to cosmetic enhancement indicates that she will also reject the courtiers' habit of rhetorical embellishment. Of course, if the boy actor who portrays the Princess wears white face paint, her appearance contradicts her words.

Shakespeare also emphasizes feminine appearance in the Armado–Jaquenetta subplot. Smitten with love for a country wench, Don Armado declares that his beloved "is most immaculate white and red" (1.2.82). Moth's rejoinder to this description of Jaquenetta's complexion echoes early modern anti-cosmetic discourse about blushing, as well as the observer's inability to determine its cause:

> If she be made of white and red,
> Her faults will ne'er be known,
> For blushing cheeks by faults are bred,
> And fears by pale white shown.
> Then if she fear or be to blame,
> By this you shall not know
> For still her cheeks possess the same
> Which native she doth owe. (1.2.89-96)

Jaquenetta's rosy cheeks may or may not be natural, but in either case one cannot tell what her moral status really is.

Rosaline, in contrast to the Princess's moon-like whiteness, is a hybrid, both fair and black. Biron bemoans his attraction to the "worst" of the four ladies. She is "A whitely wanton with a velvet brow, / With two pitch-balls stuck in her face for eyes" (3.1.182-3). While Rosaline's complexion is fair, her eyes are pitch-black, signaling her wantonness. She is "one that will do the deed / Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard" (3.1.184-5). When Boyet teases Rosaline about her ability to strike a deer with

her bow and arrow, he claims "she is hit lower," a double entendre suggesting sexual experience (4.1.117). Here darkness indicates lightness of character, while the pure-white Princess's virtue is never questioned.

The distinction between dark and light, black and white, also serves as a focal point for competition in 4.3 between the four courtiers. After they catch each other reciting the sonnets they have written to their ladies and admit that they are in love, the men contest whose love is the fairest. Biron proclaims that for his love, "day would turn to night! / Of all complexions the culled sovereignty / Do meet as at a fair in her fair cheek" (4.3.227-9). The king demurs: "By heaven, thy love is black as ebony!" (4.3.241). Rosaline does not meet his standard of beauty. Biron insists, "No face is fair that is not full so black" (4.3.247). But, says the king, "Black is the badge of hell / The hue of dungeons and the school of night" (4.3.248-9). Biron answers that at least his lady's beauty is not painted:

> Oh, if in black my lady's brows be decked,
> It mourns that painting and usurping hair
> Should ravish doters with a false aspect,
> And therefore is she born to make black fair.
> Her favor turns the fashion of the days,
> For native blood is counted painting now:
> And therefore red, that would avoid dispraise,
> Paints itself black, to imitate her brow. (4.3.252-9)

Dumaine is not convinced—after all, chimney sweeps are black. Longaville chimes in, "And since her time are colliers counted bright." The king adds a racist trope, "And Ethiops of their sweet complexion crack," while Dumaine continues, "Dark needs no candles now, for dark is light" (4.3.260-3). Biron retorts, "Your mistresses dare never come in rain, / For fear their colours should be washed away" (4.3.264-5). The absurdity reaches its climax when Longaville compares Rosaline's complexion to the leather in his shoe. Both Biron and Dumaine declare their ladies (unlike the Dark Lady of sonnet 130) are too dainty to walk upon mere mortal ground. The biggest loser in this contest might be Petrarch, for the men's false comparisons show just how ludicrous conventional Petrarchan tropes can be.[28] Moreover, if the boy actors who impersonated the Princess and her ladies did wear white make-

up, the men's protestations about their natural beauty further contradict their claims.

While the Princess and her ladies may seem too self-contained for such silliness, they engage in their own competition in 5.2, and once again, the contest centers on Rosaline's dark-light hybridity. When Katherine blithely claims that "a light heart lives long," Rosaline asks, "What's your dark meaning, mouse, of this light word?" Off we go as the two ladies spar:

> *Katherine:* A light condition in a beauty dark.
> *Rosaline:* We need more light to find your meaning out.
> *Katherine:* You'll mar the light by taking it in snuff;
> Therefore I'll darkly end the argument.
> *Rosaline:* Look what you do, you do it still i'th' dark.
> *Katherine:* So do not you, for you are a light wench.
> *Rosaline:* Indeed, I weigh not you, and therefore light.
> (5.2.18-26)

Once again, the text implies that Rosaline is sexually promiscuous, reiterating the link between "darkness" and illicit sex. Nevertheless, Biron writes that she is "the fairest goddess on the ground," and compares her to "twenty thousand fairs" (5.2.37-8). That statement provides Katherine with another opportunity to emphasize Rosaline's dark complexion, for if Biron had drawn her picture in his letter, she must be black like the ink on a copy book's white page (5.2.36-42).

Beginning with the entrance of "Blackamoor" musicians and the courtiers disguised as travelers from the frozen steppes of Russia, perhaps clad in white, the masque of Muscovites embodies the play's ongoing contrast between black and white. It is unclear who the musicians were and what role they played, but there may be a connection with the "Negro-Tartars" who participated along with ambassadors from Russia in the Gray's Inn Revels during the Christmas season of 1594-5, a putative source for Shakespeare's comedy. John Archer suggests that during the 1590s when *Love's Labour's Lost* was written and performed, slavery and a nascent conception of racialized blackness was associated with Russian travel.[29] In any case, the blackamoors and the Muscovites both introduce a foreign, exotic element into the self-contained world of Navarre's court.

Like Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*, *Love's Labour's Lost* concludes with the male lover's frustration. When the messenger Marcadé announces the death of the Princess's father, the play's tone shifts. The Princess and her ladies delay the lovers' suits for a year and assign them tasks in the interim. The comedy ends with two songs, Winter and Spring, both removed from the stylized world of the court and set in the everyday realities of cold and hunger where "greasy Joan doth keel the pot." Unlike the Princess, Greasy Joan, hovering over the fire, is likely to be a bit sooty, certainly not white.

The early modern obsession with whiteness as the mark of feminine beauty is deeply embedded in the language of *Love's Labour's Lost*. Shakespeare plays with the opposition of black and white, fair and foul throughout the play, perhaps indicating its arbitrariness. At the same time, power lies in whiteness. The Princess, perhaps a surrogate for Queen Elizabeth—who saw a court performance of the play—is figured as fair and white like the moon. Like the female figures worshipped in the age's popular sonnets, her beauty can enslave the male suitor. Rosaline is both black and fair: she may have black eyes and eyebrows, but her hands and face are white. She, too, has the power to enslave. The boy actors of *Love's Labour's Lost*, who also portrayed Shakespeare's other "fair" heroines, enacted white skin as the normative measure of attractiveness and virtue against which others could be judged. Their male suitors' enslavement also suggests whiteness as a locus of control and power. Whether or not their roles were performed in whiteface, the boy actors' performances contributed significantly to the solidification of "whiteness" as the desirable norm, "blackness" as its undesirable opposite, in early modern English discourse. The presumed superiority of women's white complexions, reiterated again and again in Shakespeare and in so many other early modern English plays, should be recognized as an important component in the early modern naturalization of white superiority.

Notes

1. Among the many important studies of color, particularly blackness, in early modern England and Europe, see Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Sujata Iyengar, *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Color in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Virginia Mason Vaughan, *Performing Blackness on Early Modern Stages,*

1500-1800 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Noémie Ndiaye, *Scripts of Blackness: Early Modern Performance Culture and the Making of Race* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022); and Ayanna Thompson, *Blackface* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021).

2. I borrow this observation from Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), xvi.

3. While Kim F. Hall's study of darkness sheds light as well on the ways "whiteness" became idealized and normalized, the most recent and pertinent study of whiteness in Shakespeare is Arthur L. Little, Jr.'s collection, *White People in Shakespeare* (London: The Arden Shakespeare, 2023). For an examination of "whiteness" in non-dramatic texts, particularly *The Faerie Queene*, see Urvashi Chakravarty, "Slavery and White Womanhood in Early Modern England," *Renaissance Quarterly* 75 (2022): 1144-79.

4. Aileen Ribeiro, *Facing Beauty: Painted Women & Cosmetic Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 81.

5. See Evelyn Gajowski, "'Staging the Blazon': Black and White and Red all Over," in Little, ed., *White People in Shakespeare*, 45-63, for a discussion of the traditional Petrarchan "blazon," the catalogue of a fair woman's facial features, including alabaster skin and rosy cheeks.

6. George Chapman, *All Fools*, ed. Charles Edelman (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018). Cited by act, scene and line number.

7. Francesca Royster, "White-limed Walls: Whiteness and Gothic Extremism in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51.4 (2000): 432-55, 432.

8. Quotations from the works of William Shakespeare are taken from *The Norton Shakespeare*, 3rd ed., Stephen Greenblatt *et al.*, eds. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2016) and cited by act, line and scene numbers within the text.

9. Farah Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance Drama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 55.

10. Ben Jonson, *The Devil is an Ass*, ed. Peter Happe (Manchester: University of Manchester, 1994).

11. Thomas Tuke, *A Treatise Against Paint[i]ng and Tincturing of Men and Women* (London, 1616), Sig. B3r.

12. John Donne, *Iuvenilia, or Certaine Paradoxes and Problemes* (London, 1633), Sig. B3r. For detailed discussions of the use of cosmetics in early modern England, see Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, and Kimberly Poitevin, "Inventing Whiteness: Cosmetics, Race and Women in Early Modern England," *Journal of Early Modern Cultural Studies* 11 (2011): 59-89. For face-painting's effects on the early modern construction of blackness, see Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender*, 87-89.

13. See Farah Karim-Cooper, *The Hand on the Shakespearean Stage: Gesture, Touch, and the Spectacle of Dismemberment* (London: The Arden Shakespeare, 2016), 55-61, and Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 209-10, for discussion of the signification of "white hands."

14. David Sterling Brown, "'Shake Thou to Look on't': Shakespearean White Hands" in Little, ed., *White People in Shakespeare*, 105-119, 106.

15. "fair, adj. and n.1", *OED Online*. March 2023. *Oxford University Press*. https://www-oed-com.cscc.ohionet.org/view/Entry/67704?rskey=c93y9P&result=2&isAdvanced=false (accessed March 08, 2023).

16. See Sujata Iyengar, *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Color in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), chap. 4.

17. See Iyengar, *Shades of Difference*, 103.

18. Thomas Wright, The Passions of the Minde in Generall (London, 1604), 30.

19. See Vaughan, *Performing Blackness*, 8, and Iyengar, *Shades of Difference*, 103-22.

20. See Iyengar, *Shades of Difference*, 123-30, for a detailed reading of this scene.

21. "shamefastness, n.", *OED Online*. March 2023. *Oxford University Press*. https://www-oed-com.cscc.ohionet.org/view/Entry/177415?redirectedFrom=shamefastness (accessed March 08, 2023).

22. Ben Jonson, *Epicoene, or, The Silent Woman*, ed. I. A. Beaurline (Lincoln Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1966). Cited by act, scene and line numbers.

23. Ben Jonson, *Volpone*, ed. Alvin B. Kernan (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973). Cited by act, scene and line number. 3.4.37.

24. Thomas Dekker, *The Honest Whore*, ed. Nick de Somogyi (London: Nick Hern Books, 1998), 31-2.

25. Quotations are slightly modernized from Thomas Dekker, *Westward Ho* (London, 1607) [EEBO], signatures A4v and D1r.

26. Thomas Tomkis, *Lingua, Or the Combat of the Tongue, And the Five Senses for Superiority* (London, 1607). Sig. I2v.

27. Quotations are taken from *Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

28. Shakespeare's sonnet 130 is also well known for anti-Petrarchan rhetoric that reverses the early modern English obsession with white skin yet, in the process, conflates dark skin with "blackness."

29. See John Michael Archer, "Slave-Born Musovites: Racial Difference and the Geography of Servitude in *Astrophil and Stella* and *Love's Labor's Lost*," in *Playing the Globe: Genre and Geography in English Renaissance Drama*, ed. John Gillies and Virginia Mason Vaughan (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998), 154-75.

Shakespeare's Racial Destiny: Tragic Whiteness and the Spirit-Savage Binary in Edwin Booth's *Hamlet* and *Othello*

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Eight months after John Wilkes Booth shot President Abraham Lincoln, his brother and fellow Shakespearean actor Edwin Booth returned to the national stage as Hamlet. Opening night, January 2, 1866, saw a crowd of hundreds thronging the entrance to the Winter Garden Theatre, clamoring to see Booth's return.[1] According to the *New York World*, as soon as the curtain revealed Booth in the second scene, "applause burst spontaneously from every part of the house. The men stamped, clapped their hands, and hurrahed continuously; the ladies rose in their seats and waved a thousand handkerchiefs; and for a full five minutes a scene of wild excitement forbade the progress of the play." The play eventually proceeded, but each act ended with a shower of wreaths and applause for Booth, and even occasional hisses and groans for the lone New York paper to denounce Booth's return to public life.[2]

What explains this outpouring of support? The public seemed to use Booth's return as Hamlet to turn the page on the national tragedy of Lincoln's assassination, something which reviewers took note of. One columnist wrote, "The peculiar regard in which Edwin Booth is held by all who know him is so strange and unique as to amount to a positive psychological phenomenon—the niche in which his country's heart has enshrined him was never filled before by natural man." Commenting on these striking portrayals,

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scholar Daniel Watermeier captures the sentiment of Booth-idolatry:

> It was as if the American psyche, scarred by years of war and then the shocking assassination of an esteemed president, needed to invest its collective suffering into a single individual. In a paradoxical way, Booth's personal suffering—including the loss of [his wife Mary Devlin]—so nobly borne in the public view, a suffering acted out in *Hamlet*, became emblematic of the nation's suffering. Booth like Hamlet endured the suffering, transcended it and triumphed. …It was …a position greater, deeper than mere celebrity.[3]

In what follows, I show how the Shakespearean performances of Edwin Booth, as effigy of national transcendence from the suffering of the Civil War moment and the politics of slavery, shed light on the construction of a specifically white national identity that would structure the racializing visions of human perfectability and progress into the twentieth century.

This article synthesizes cultural histories of postbellum US national identity, racial scientific discourse, and settler colonial expansion through performance analysis. Historian Reginald Horsman employs the term "racial destiny" to describe how the successful settler conquest of the American continent was used *ex post facto* to evidence theories of the innate superiority of the "Anglo-Saxon" branch of the Caucasian race in the early-to-mid nineteenth century. I take racial destiny and its loose Anglo-Saxonism as a conceptual frame for this article to clarify the anxious postbellum desire for national white reunification rather than realizing Black enfranchisement.[4] Reading nineteenth-century Shakespearean star Edwin Booth's performances of Hamlet and Othello, this article argues that the latter nineteenth century's craze for cultural refinement, which Booth's fame exemplifies, is best understood in the context of attempts not only to distance the white body politic from the perceived savagery of ethnic others such as the American Indian, Black Northern migrant, and European laborer, but also to remove any taint of said cultural inferiority from (Anglo-Saxon) white Americans themselves. To this end, I analyze Edwin Booth's unattainable, self-determined yet universal Hamlet and its tawny double in his self-termed "noble savage" Othello to showcase the same fantasy of white transcendence legible in Manifest Destiny

and racialist justifications of Anglo-Saxon supremacy. I offer the term settler (post)coloniality to describe the cultural inferiority complex legible in the US cultural elite and its alignment with differentiating white Americans from animalized racial others on the one hand and the still-lingering cultural influence of England on the other. Ultimately, I reveal the cultural construction of "humanity" as whiteness in the period, suggesting Shakespeare's crucial role in constructing a liberal white identity consonant with late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century projects of imperial expansion and settler colonial white supremacy.

Shakespeare's transition from popular to high-cultural status in the US clarifies certain cultural hierarchies amidst Booth's rise to fame. Cultural historian Laurence Levine's *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* limns the progress, among other cultural forms, of Shakespearean reception in the nineteenth-century US as he changed from a human figure to the "sacred" Shakespeare, a genius at the pinnacle of human (re: Anglo-Saxon) culture removed from the democratized status of his work in the early-to-mid nineteenth century.[5] Levine notes both that this shift's dates are inexact and that it strongly corresponded to the declining fame of performer Edwin Forrest's emotional and violent acting style to the rising star of Edwin Booth's "more restrained cerebral" style, even after Lincoln's assassination.[6]

Despite Levine's hesitancy, reading this shift alongside the period's racially-informed search for a cohesive national identity separate from English influence provides striking insight. The mid-to-late nineteenth century sought narratives that placed America at the forefront of global civilizing progress, implicitly competing with British imperial strategies of "civilizing" through colonial education. One reflection of the US's postcolonial and racial anxieties at the time was racialist science. Levine oddly delays this crucial foundation to his study for 200 pages: the terms "highbrow" and "lowbrow" that form the blurred binary of his title and conceptual framework stem from racial science. Levine suddenly supplies that the term "highbrow" came into use in the 1880s to describe "intellectual or aesthetic superiority" with its opposite "lowbrow" following in 1900, both terms deriving from a corresponding phrenological taxonomy of progressive racial supremacy beginning from "Human Idiot," the "Bushman" and

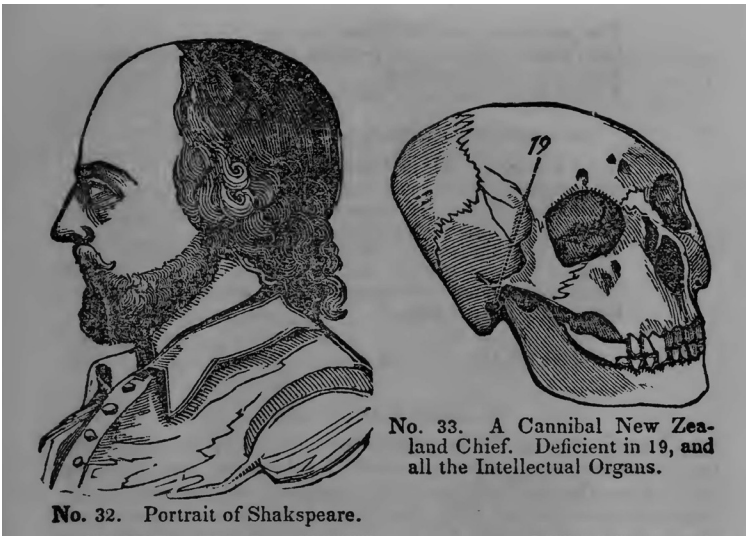

Figure 1: Frederick Coombs, Coombs' Popular Phrenology (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1865), 49.

the "Uncultivated," and culminating in the "Caucasian" and—through even further taxonomical refinement of this highest echelon—the Anglo-Saxon. Even more strikingly, Levine suggests an ultimate origin point in the 1865 illustration of the distinct brows of Shakespeare and a supposed New Zealand Cannibal chief "deficient in. . . all the Intellectual Organs" (Figure 1). But Levine's analysis glosses over just how extensive the connections were between culture's racial hierarchy and what he describes as the period's more general hierarchization of culture along English cultural critic Matthew Arnold's definition, "the study and pursuit of perfection,"[7] which was widely embraced in the US.[8]

So while Levine's work generatively reveals how "culture" came to mean "refinement" and serve as proxy for "class," more must be done to capture the enduring racialization of cultural knowledge that its racial taxonomy implies. Similarly, despite important scholarship on American Shakespeare engaging racial-scientific discourse, nineteenth-century scholarship is generally disconnected from analyses of Progress, Manifest Destiny, and their eventual imposition as global order through US racial imperialism.[9] This deficit is particularly true in the context of increasing anxiety on the part of the white ("Anglo-Saxon") populace to differentiate

itself from various ethnic others such as the American Indian, Black freedpersons, and immigrants from Europe, Latin America, and Asia.[10]

Now-canonical texts in critical race studies can serve to remedy this gap in American Shakespeare studies. Philosopher of race Denise Ferreira da Silva's critical reading of Progressive Era nationalisms (1880-1920), their indebtedness to European Enlightenment philosophy, and subsequent racial-scientific discourse provides a generative theoretical framework from which to interpret Shakespeare's role in the period's definitions of subjectivity and, therefore, white "humanity." She identifies the Enlightenment-era concepts of "universality and self-determination" as key to white Western definitions of what constitutes humanity in the period, and also apparent in post-Enlightenment conceptions of the liberal subject.[11] Secular Reason had begun to assume the place of the Judeo-Christian God as sovereign arbitrator over knowledge and representation; this spiritual "universal" Reason (or Hegel's *Geist*, the translation of which slips between Mind and Spirit) posited a self-conscious and self-determining mind as "always already before" the body and the exterior physical world. If a self-determined mind is supposed to be universal to human experience, then the subjugation of non-white Others could be read as natural to the extent that they are held as determined from without by forces other than Reason, such as the body, positioning them as "affectable" in Western epistemology. For example, Hegel viewed the "Negro" as too mentally deficient to have sufficiently developed self-consciousness and thus self-determination, arguing that, though slavery is inherently unjust, for "the Negro" it could be a "phase of education—a mode of becoming participant in a higher morality and the culture connected with it"; in other words, a mode of assimilation into a sufficiently Universal humanity.[12]

Da Silva thus shows how these inherited conceptions of self-determination render the later racializing "science of man" both possible and necessary. For white (Anglo-Saxon) Americans particularly, however, perceiving non-white Others as affectable produced an anxiety that, due to their distance from Europe, they might slip from self-determination into this abject status themselves. Thus "the articulation of racial difference," da Silva writes, "institutes an ontological account… [which] enables the

writing of the US 'spirit' as a further developed manifestation of post-Enlightenment European principles." In the nineteenth-century, then, racial science accomplishes for those who possess Reason—e.g., white Anglo-Saxon Americans—"a version of the self-determined 'I' that necessarily signifies 'other'-wise" opposed to degradations of this self-determined human subject.[13] The white body thus became the crucial signifier of this spiritual, intellectually-superior self-determination. The US, itself perennially insecure of its intellectual culture contra Europe and competing for national relevance on the global stage amongst European empires, thus could claim to realize the forward progress of Western civilization only by distinguishing whiteness from non-white, affectable others while still claiming shared heritage with Europe.

Analysis of Shakespeare's particular cultural capital in the period also adds nuance to da Silva's framework, particularly through the US's unique position as postcolony of the British empire, for which Shakespeare was a national emblem, and as a settler colonial empire of its own. As we shall see, race and uneducated "savagery" often blurred together in what I term the settler (post)colonial ironies of US imperialism and ever-deferred progress through the frontiers of racial destiny.[14] In turn, the performances of Edwin Booth, icon of Shakespearean refinement, reveal the contours of a whiteness that was based around education of the public away from an "animal" "savagery" toward the higher intellectual, "spiritual" and moral ideals that Shakespeare represented. This less-than-human animality—while markedly racialized—also extended itself toward whites that were deemed unrefined. In Edwin Booth's performances can be seen the reunification of national identity postbellum around the refinement and self-determination that white Anglo-Saxon bodies had come to represent.

Edwin Booth won his widespread popularity while explicitly educating audiences on Shakespeare's intellect with his line-by-line gestural and vocal choices. Booth's Hamlet was pedagogical: it instructed through clear indication—though more subtly and fluidly than his contemporaries—of his Hamlet's interior character. "If the theatre was a school," writes Booth scholar Charles Shattuck, "his performance was an illustrated lecture":

> He cleared the text of obscurities as carefully as he weeded out "impurities," so that even the gallery-gods would understand

> it. If he intended to reduce his Hamlet-in-action to something like the good hero in contest with the bad villain…that was no obstacle to popular acceptance.[15]

Booth's stage pedagogy partly explains the at times jarring superlative critical accounts of his performances that he was the "literal *Hamlet* of Shakespeare" or that if the "Ghost of Shakespeare" were to return, it would claim that Booth "is *my* Hamlet."[16] Through his moral purity, Booth made flesh the ideal Hamlet many had encountered as removed moral pontificator in their common-school textbooks as children, itself a civil education, and thus served as model citizen for a suffering white national identity.[17] This moral dimension added to the "spiritual" sense of intellectual refinement, and in turn the near-religious quality of his performances: Booth "strove with priestly devotion to make his Hamlet an idol of virtue. For many thousands of playgoers it was a lesson and a rite."[18]

Amidst the great national suffering of the Civil War, Edwin Booth's performances of Hamlet were a Shakespearean education in an individual's ability to transcend personal suffering through intellectual superiority and self-determination. Booth's Hamlet was utterly self-possessed: a pure expression of a spiritualized and transcendent, self-determined mind to those who experienced it. Enamored playgoer Charles Clarke, who assiduously documented Booth's Hamlet, summarizes his character as "the Hamlet of a gentleman and a scholar, or a man not apt to fly into a passion abruptly. … In this [first] soliloquy the fitfulness of delivery, though very great, is never savagely abrupt but is always gradated—the passion of one accustomed to self-control."[19] Key to this self-control was his Hamlet's extraordinary intelligence, which dispelled any inkling of madness and perceived all the plot developments almost as the audience did. His motto for the role was "That I essentially am not in madness, but mad in craft."[20] His Hamlet sighted the King and Polonius in the "get thee to a nunnery" scene early on and, according to Booth, "*acts* the rest of the scene… principally for the King."[21] Clarke notes that "Booth's intelligence in playing the madman is conspicuous… The audience is always dexterously made aware that his madness is assumed."[22]

But Booth's Hamlet, its phenomenal success, and the young star's career would all seem doomed even as they began. Within

three weeks of his historic "100 days Hamlet,"[23] Lincoln was dead. Edwin's engagements were immediately canceled. Three Booth family members, including Edwin's two other brothers, were imprisoned and questioned. Edwin himself only escaped arrest through the intercession of friends in Lincoln's administration.[24] Public turmoil led Booth to write a letter, published in several newspapers, in which he announced his retirement from the stage.

The letter, addressed to the "People of the United States," builds upon his public image as Hamlet personified while simultaneously binding Booth and his private suffering to the grieving public through melodrama. Despite addressing the nation, the letter[25] strikes a familiar tone, writing that though "private grief would under ordinary circumstances be an intrusion" when the nation is grieving, "I feel sure that a word from me will not be so regarded by you." Booth continues:

> It has pleased God to lay at the door of my afflicted family the life blood of our deservedly popular President. Crushed to very earth by this dreadful event, I am yet but too sensible that other mourners are in this land. To them, to you one and all, go forth our deep, unutterable sympathy; our abhorrence and detestation of this most foul and atrocious crime…
>
> For the future—alas! I shall struggle on in my retirement bearing a heavy heart, an oppressed memory and a wounded name—dreadful burdens—to my too welcome grave.[26]

Hamlet's words seamlessly interject themselves into Booth's public relations plea, blurring the national and theatrical stage and remixing the play's relationships through metaphor. The phrase "most foul and atrocious crime" evokes the Ghost's description of Old Hamlet's own murder by a brother, specifically the lines "Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder… Murder most foul, as in the best it is" (1.5.25, 27). The late Lincoln thus strikingly figures in these Hamletisms as the murdered sovereign that the reflective, morose and perhaps all-too-Christian Hamlet is tasked with avenging. In Shakespeare's play, the failed surrogation[27] of Old Hamlet by his less-than-Herculean son constitutes the central trouble. In the national tragedy evoked by this metaphor, Claudius's original fratricide figures, on the one hand, as John Wilkes's fratricide of Edwin Booth's career through murder of the land's sovereign. But on the other hand, John Wilkes's political

assassination—through the metaphor's contextual resonance—would have clearly evoked for the public the reality that the Civil War had "turned brother against brother."[28] Edwin's Shakespearean condemnation of his brother can be said to have translated the national drama of Union and Confederacy to a symbolic family drama, in which Lincoln played the Ghost of an ideal patriarch now lost to a rudderless public. Edwin's public grief, then, also expresses the Union's ambivalent attachment to the Confederacy: the reality that other Northerners like him would be grieving fraternity and family lost to war.

Hamlet's haunting of Booth's sentiment reaches near parody in his melodramatic farewell to the stage. Booth writes that he will bear "an oppressed memory and a wounded name," clearly citing Hamlet's dying plea to Horatio.[29] It is hard not to see Booth's phrasing as an explicit plea to his audience to sympathize with his situation and "tell his story," as several newspapers in fact did. Booth had written to a friend later that when he heard of the assassination, he was declaiming a line from *The Iron Chest*, a play he was performing in: "Where is my honor now? Mountains of shame are piled upon me—me / who has labored for a name as white as mountain snow."[30] The public would generally grant Booth's wish to keep his image white and pure.

King Hamlet's ghosting of Lincoln here—within Booth's own implicit plea to take up, as Hamlet, the story of national tragedy—does much to capture the public reaction to Booth's return to the stage just eight months later.[31] The quality of Booth's transcendence from suffering was that of a martyred gentleman, flowing easily from Shakespeare's text, but also clearly evoking the martyrdom of Lincoln—the era's more prominent thoughtful gentleman. Regardless of how consciously Booth had chosen to indulge the popular mythology that he was Hamlet,[32] the public certainly assented to taking up his story as Horatio. Booth's refined Hamlet, his tragic understanding, and his morally-frustrated "will" lent itself to the Christlike adornments in the play's last act.

Yet Booth's *Hamlet* was still Shakespeare's tragedy, and the catharsis the postbellum populace yearned for identified with these noble qualities while still holding out hope for the regenerative militarism that Hamlet so fails to achieve. If anything, Booth's pedagogy instructed in the difficulties of achieving moral justice

through vengeance. Clarke describes Booth in the final scene as "to the very end show[ing] Hamlet's weakness when great responsibilities are thrust upon him." Even after killing the King in desperation, "the instant that deed is done he shrinks from it. His conscience is outraged. His will is appalled, for it has overdone itself… he cannot vindicate himself, cannot assert the justice of his course." Hamlet's "weakness" is both that his excessive conscience impedes his being a man of action, but also as Hamlet's inability to accept these "great responsibilities" and follow them through.[33] For the postbellum North, left with no Captain to guide them through the challenges of Reconstruction and truly realizing equity for freed slaves, Booth's Hamlet expressed a weakness the white populace saw in the nation and in themselves.

Through the contemporary multivalence of the play's final scenes in his return performance, it is impossible not to imagine Hamlet's reconciliation with Laertes being freighted with the wartime significance of brother turned against brother. The various iterations of reconciliation are further emphasized by Booth's curation of the text. Fitting with Booth's interpretation of being utterly self-possessed, he omits the justification of Polonius's murder as "madness" in this speech, leaving only:

> Give me your pardon, sir; I've done you wrong.
> But pardon it, as you're a gentleman.
> Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
> Free me so far in our most generous thoughts
> That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
> And hurt my brother. (5.2.328-334)

This bond between brothers strikes upon self-determined gentility as the means to amends, and though Booth changed "my father's" to "the" house, the resonance of civil strife under one roof clearly sounds. Southern gentility and Northern refinement seem to echo here as the grounds of the coming reunion around white identity in the Compromise of 1877, which effectively abandoned racial justice efforts in the South.[34] Laertes's dying wish that "mine and my father's death come not upon thee; nor thine on me!" is met with a clasp of hands and Hamlet's line, "Heaven make thee free-of-it. I follow thee." The remixed resonances wash the death of Kings and traitors in familial and Christian blood-sacrifice, which the audience (as Horatio) can live on to tell from whichever side

of the conflict.

One such blood-soaked vision of postbellum reunification was explicitly Anglo-Saxonist: reunion justified through shared "Anglo-Saxon" blood. Historians and Black studies scholars alike identify the Emancipation Proclamation as foremost a military strategy, citing it as one reason that emancipation gradually dropped from public Northern discourse in the decade after the war.[35] Toward the mid-1870s, a new political meaning for the North's victory took its place: reunion. As historian Jackson Lears puts it: "As Reconstruction faltered, the politics of regeneration became restricted to whites only… The ideology of reunion was millennial nationalism, celebrating blood sacrifice but adding a racial component of Anglo-Saxon supremacy. Religion and race combined to legitimate the drive toward overseas empire."[36] The War and Reconstruction period clarified whiteness through abandoning freed slaves to their former masters and the extermination campaigns against Native Americans. By 1891, the revision of the war's politics for the nation was complete: rather than being fought over the politics of slavery and its economic implications, the war instead began to be seen as reflecting the very "determination" Booth's morally-impeded Hamlet lacked. The journalist John Robes then described "the War as we see it now" as "an exhibition of the Anglo-Saxon race on trial," one that served "to bring out the resolute and unyielding traits belonging to our race," above all its "unconquerable determination."[37] In striking contrast to the nationally-cherished, muddy-meddled will of Booth's Hamlet, even civil war could be smoothed over through the ideologies of racial destiny, militaristic might here conveying its imperial vision beyond continental borders.

Militarism, gendered masculine, book-ended the mid-century rise of Booth, a change visible in other nineteenth-century theatrical idols. Karl Kippola's performance history *Acts of Manhood* (2017) charts the transition of white middle-class audiences' perception of masculine gender performance through its changing taste from Edwin Forrest's muscular acting style to Booth's new, refined etiquette. Kippola illustrates Booth's return to then-feminized, eighteenth-century modes of gentility and sentiment, and, most crucially, middle-class audience's worship of his refined self-presentation as collapsed with his Hamlet. Booth's self-control

in the face of personal sorrow and repression of emotion—both linked to Enlightenment-era masculinity—gradually became key to the middle-class's sense of gentility and manliness.

While Booth's redefined masculinity illuminates the War's extensive cultural impact, the character of Booth's performances, and their broader cultural significance for this postbellum Northern public, can be misconstrued as too much about "masculinity" if not seen as part of a broader white racial formation. Though Kippola stresses that the models of masculinity he observes are specifically white, not monolithic, and necessarily exclusive of the era's myriad non-white masculinities, the term "white" tends to pull little explanatory weight given the text's well-integrated sources and their contouring of public mid-nineteenth-century American sentiment. In short, Kippola's admirable thoroughness is hindered by its exclusive focus on Booth's masculinity and the subsequent reifying of its object's condition of possibility: the era's racism.

Kippola's epigraph for his chapter on Booth, discussed in the next section, is taken from an oft-cited theatre critic, William Winter, defining Edwin Forrest as "essentially animal." Kippola identifies in this depiction only a "dismissal of Forrest and, by association, the working-class male, as a soulless animal."[38] Granted, intellectual and spiritual progress of individuals as well as civilizations often overlap in nineteenth-century discourse surrounding "refinement," partially due to Hegelian influence.[39] But the repression of the "soulless animal" that Kippola neglects to mark as a specifically *white* middle-class masculinity must be contextualized in scientific racist discourse and narratives of national Progress from the backwoods of uncultivation (and its unsettling proximity to Blackness and American Indian "savagery") into global leadership. Specifically, a lack of "self-control" of the animal passions was the prime tactic in racializing Blackness and, particularly, Black masculinity.

"Self-control," as might be recalled from Charles Clarke's juxtaposition of Booth's Hamlet with "savagery," fit into a racialized notion of intellectual spirit and had in some form since the Enlightenment. Hegel's racist reification of liberal human subjectivity asserted that "the want of self-control distinguishes the character of the Negroes." Grounded in and buoyed by countless

similar formulations, this essential lack of self-determination gave scientific discourse the framing assumptions which the universalizing nineteenth-century science of man sought to prove.[40] And there was still widespread resistance to Darwinism in the US in the mid-nineteenth century, so it is perhaps not surprising that polygenism, the leading alternative "scientific" explanation to evolution, not only found fertile ground in the US, but fit perfectly into Hegel's racist developmental history of human rationality—in which America figured as "the land of the future where…the burden of the World's History shall reveal itself" and to which Africa and its descendants did not belong.[41] Polygenists, the most prominent of whom was close friends with Edwin Booth,[42] offered separate creations to explain the supposed inferiority of American Indian, African and Asian civilizations, now determined more specifically by their biologically-justified *racial* "types."[43] The Caucasian and specifically Anglo-Saxon racial types were positioned as the most refined human specimens—intellectually, according to racial science, and spiritually, through such creationist syntheses.

In this context, Booth's definition of martyr-like suffering and tragic self-determination testify to a white masculinity constructed in contrast to positionalities other than white men, as we can see from Booth's conception of Ophelia and later, in the case of his Othello, the racialized position of the savage Moor. Booth notes in his *Hamlet* promptbook that Ophelia is "the personification of pale & feeble-minded amiability."[44] In this case, Booth employs a "feeble-minded" white woman as a gendered foil that accentuates Hamlet's intellect as well as, humorously, his self-control: Hamlet's coming to Ophelia's closet with doublet unbraced, rather than suggesting their possible sexual familiarity, is to Booth an intentional performance on the part of Hamlet which Ophelia foolishly mistakes for actual madness.[45] Booth's "feeble-minded" epithet presages a key organizing term in eugenics discourse arguing for the sterilization of poor women that might otherwise escape scrutiny as white or white-passing; Irish immigrants, the poor, and the relatives of criminals were branded genetically inferior along the lines of intellectual refinement. Here in the postbellum period,[46] then, decades before the fever-pitch of eugenics, Booth's feminine Hamlet captures the Romantic ideals of civilizing

feminine sentiment while distinguishing his intellect from a feminized and racialized intellectual inferiority. Booth's Hamlet casts muscular masculinity, a certain unrefined white femininity, and racialized lack of self-control as inferior. In short, Booth's Hamlet itself provided an ideal toward which nineteenth-century theatregoers could aspire, an aspirational whiteness that laid claim to the transcendent universality of Shakespeare made particular to the middle-class morality. Adored by female fans, Booth's Hamlet reflected the broadening of theatrical spaces and other cultural forms, allowing inclusion in a national identity based increasingly more on race than gender. Refinement became the main marker of white distinction,[47] becoming less gender exclusive, and unrefinement aligned one with an animality suggesting not only Blackness, but the general "savagery" of non-white Others (i.e., those not possessing the "spirit" of self-determined mind).

Reception of Booth's Hamlet reveals an aesthetics of transcendent whiteness. The whiteness of Booth's body itself—often linked with intellectual spirit—drew comparisons to other "ideals" of Western civilization from his audiences. To his most descriptive annotators, the physical features of the man himself seamlessly blur into classical statuary, white and pure. Playgoer Mary Stone anatomically describes Booth performing her "demi-god Hamlet," yet careens into his statuesque whiteness:

> His complexion is naturally pale and is unaltered for Hamlet. The face is one of impressive power and intellectual as well as sensuous beauty, with features cast in the rare classical mould… To see this shapely head on broad shoulders; these handsome classical features…—why! it is like beholding some magnificent Greek statue suddenly endowed with life and motion, sense and speech, with soul, and moreover with the intellect and education of the nineteenth century![48]

Stone links Booth's shapeliness, whiteness, and intellect as markers of nineteenth-century inheritance of a literalized Greek ideal. Booth's "soul" imbues the old vessel of classical Greek culture with new life, the "intellect and education" of common schools and Shakespeare. Booth's white body is a key feature in this metaphor, but it too signifies only, following da Silva, the European origins of the spirit of civilization's progress.[49] Booth transcends the lifeless

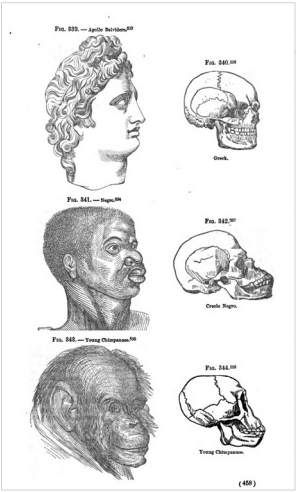

Figure 2*:* George Gliddon and Josiah Nott. *Types of Mankind: Or, Ethnological Researches, Based Upon the Ancient Monuments, Paintings, Sculptures, and Crania of Races, and Upon Their Natural, Geographical, Philological and Biblical History*. Philadelphia, PA: Lippencott & Co., 1854, 458. The "Greek" bust stands in even for a human body, positioned as a literally white perfection somewhere between the marble depicted and the forgotten human body.

stone just as he transcends the text of Shakespeare: Mary Stone elsewhere describes his Hamlet as having the "spiritual intensity of that glow from the soul outwards which made Booth seem the living, breathing Hamlet of Shakespeare himself, containing *deeps of being* more profound than any words he spoke."[50] Booth brings more to Shakespeare and the stage than impersonation; Booth brings the real thing: a white American body made authentic through theatrical ritual. Indeed, unlike the bust in the racist taxonomy contemporary to his Civil War performances above (Figure 2), Booth's intellectual and "spiritual" refinement are both ideal and human, "endowed with life," the ideal of racialized civilization made flesh.

Transcending the "animal": racial destiny on the settler (post)colonial frontier

Edwin Booth's facilitation of a racially-undergirded sacralized Shakespeare intersected with the US's lasting postcolonial anxieties in ways reflective of the culture's desire for refinement of the national (and white) identity. Booth's career maps particularly onto the settler (post)colonial frontier. Shakespeare's movement from sharing the stage with blackface minstrelsy and burlesques to being a stand-alone cultural event did not occur without star Shakespeareans like Booth to refine Shakespeare's image. Booth did by far the most to effect the simultaneous refinement of Shakespeare on the one hand and, as a public icon, the refinement

of the individual through experience with Shakespeare on the other. Edwin was seen as earning his own stardom through a kind of theatrical frontiersmanship common to the acting circuit in the nineteenth century. Booth first performed Shakespeare publicly in a minstrel song routine, done in blackface, in frontier towns his father toured. Edwin gained experience on the frontier in California and other less prestigious theatrical circuits in the 1850s.[51] He even toured the smaller international circuit at the fringes of the various settler colonial frontiers in Australia and the Sandwich Islands during this period.[52] And during a later tour of the West in 1887, Edwin Booth triumphantly described the Los Angeles audience's "utmost attention and intelligent appreciation" toward his Hamlet as "encouraging proof of intellectual elevation, [and] an assurance of the safety of the higher order of the Drama."[53] If the rugged frontier could be refined through Shakespeare, so could the nation continue to progress toward further refinement.

"Intellectual elevation" was clearly linked to the resolution of settler (post)colonial anxieties about intellectual and cultural (re: "highbrow")[54] inferiority. Booth saw his career as devoted to the refinement of both the stage and its public through his intellectual acting style and theatrical entrepreneurship. He opened Booth's Theater in 1869, arrayed with white marble statues of great English Shakespeareans like David Garrick, Edmund Kean, and Junius Brutus Booth alongside Shakespeare and Edwin himself; Booth effectively joined the pantheon of English genius here as its newest mantle-bearer, commemorated in statue-form while still living. Booth founded the Players Club five years before his death in New York City with the aim of "establish[ing] an institution in which influences of learning and taste should be brought to bear upon members of the stage—a place where they might find… intellectual communion with minds of their own order, and […] refinement of thought and manner."[55] The Players itself was likely inspired by its English predecessor, the prestigious London Garrick club named for the 18th-century star actor David Garrick, into which Booth was welcomed.[56] Taken together, Booth's major entrepreneurial projects demonstrate a vision of refinement that blended intellectual advancement with postcolonial competition with Britain.

But in the appreciation of Booth's spiritual Hamlet (and his own notes on Othello), this postcolonial tension manifested itself, as it did in the broader US culture, in racializing claims to national née imperial supremacy over non-white "savagery." Juxtapositions of Booth's intellectual refinement to other star Shakespeareans during his lifetime, particularly Edwin Forrest and Tommaso Salvini, clearly articulate a binary between an animalistic physicality and a "spiritual" intellectualism. For example, when Booth died in 1893, influential theatre critic and Booth biographer William Winter succinctly captured the shifting dynamics of nineteenth-century Shakespeare appreciation as one from the "animal" Edwin Forrest to the "spiritual and intellectual" Edwin Booth:

> The transition from Forrest to Edwin Booth marked the most important phase of [the American stage's] development. Forrest, although he had a spark of genius, was intrinsically and essentially animal. Booth was intellectual and spiritual. Forrest obtained his popularity, and the bulk of his large fortune, by impersonating the Indian chieftain Metamora. Booth gained and held his eminence by acting Hamlet and Richelieu. The epoch that accepted Booth as the amplest exponent of taste and feeling in dramatic art was one of intellect and refinement.[57]

Scholars, including Kippola, often curiously omit Winter's reference to Forrest's performances as Metamora, primarily referencing Winter's description to track the shift of Shakespeare's cultural status. But Winter's full description is crucial to understanding Shakespeare's ties to ideologies of white racial destiny in the period.

Winter frames his biography by recapitulating longstanding postcolonial anxieties: he describes the period before Forrest's career as that in which "the spirit and tone of the American theatre were English," a time when "America, theatrically, had not ceased to be a province of England."[58] Indeed, Winter's mention of "Hamlet and Richelieu," characters written by Shakespeare and a British baron, as the principal metric authorizing US transcendence from England's imperial rule over American theatre is ironic to say the least. Still, the faux-native character of this transcendence clarifies the loosely Anglo-Saxon racialization of Shakespeare's genius as a marker of global cultural capital at the time. Winter crucially extends the postcolonial logic of the fraught "animal" vs. "spiritual" dialectic by citing, as evidence of that intrinsically animal essence,

Forrest's famed performance as the noble Wampanoag chieftain Metamora, or Metacom.

Metamora; or the Last of the Wampanoags, written by John Augustus Stone in 1829 to win Edwin Forrest's competition for a play starring a Native American, falls within the settler colonial genre of "Indian drama."[59] The play follows the Wampanoag chieftain's noble resistance to English settlers' tyranny and treachery, ultimately slaying his own wife rather than allow her to be enslaved and cursing the English (rather than New-England settlers) as he dies. In that he developed the role, Forrest's own Jacksonian populism amidst Jackson's Indian removal policy blends the performance text's postcolonial significances with anti-elitist settler coloniality. Forrest's appropriation of indigeneity consonant with the political purpose of white nativist populism thus falls directly in line with Vine Deloria's history of white American settlers "playing Indian" from the Boston Tea Party to the boy scouts to rehearse a fictive native presence through the garb of Indigenous peoples.[60]

In this light, Winter's parallelism provides argumentative reasoning that connects each sentence in a logical proof. Winter's description "impersonating the Indian chieftain Metamora" marks Forrest's performance with fraudulence through the emerging connotation of the word "impersonate."[61] In contrast to Booth's more artistic "acting" of characters that, in Winter's stuffy style, speak for themselves as symbols of "intellect and refinement," Forrest's performance is presented as an attempt to mimic and thereby, as the earlier postcolonial references make clear, surrogate a racialized nativeness. Forrest's Metamora on the one hand fails to be more than an "impersonation," but implicitly *must* fail due to the "animal" nature of the Indian chieftain Forrest impersonates. Winter notes with irony that Forrest's inability to define a *white* subject position outside Indianness reified England's imperial rule of American theatre. In short, Winter's logical proof metaphorically quells the *colonial* anxiety of a threatening savage surround through reification of the *post*colonial fantasy of progress and refinement: Edwin Booth's refinement of English drama, particularly Shakespeare.[62]

"The savage blood is up": Fluid Racialization and the Ambiguous Humanity of Booth's and Salvini's *Othello*

The white theatrical population's fantasies of progress through refinement reach their clearest racial import in Booth's annotations of his Othello performances, just as performance and reception of Shakespeare's *Othello* have reflected the prevailing racial attitudes in every era since Burbage's first performance in 1604. The continuing debates surrounding Othello's Blackness express the loose racial signifiers of the ambiguous ethnic and cultural othering Shakespeare himself instantiates. But this longstanding critical debate often seems to efface the Eurocentric and, in the nineteenth century, whiteness-reifying point of contention: not whether the noble Othello is innately racially inferior, "animal," or "savage," but rather *to what degree*.[63] In the nineteenth century the stakes of this difference were high for "Caucasian" or white European critics in part due to Shakespeare's sacralization as representative Anglo-Saxon, and thus, under ever-expanding Anglophonic hegemony, human intellectual perfection. An appendix in Furness's *Variorum Othello* (1886) titled "Othello's Colour" points to one crucial premise for this debate, informed by racial theory during Booth's lifetime: that north African Moors, in contrast to the loosely distinguished African "blackamoor," were of light-brown hue due to "their descent from the Caucasian race."[64] The excerpt describes the rationale of actor Edmund Kean, the first "tawny" Othello in the nineteenth century, and argues that Kean's "alteration" through the tawny color—based specifically on this racial justification—had been "sanctioned by subsequent usage."

Both Booth and Salvini ostensibly followed this interpretation of Othello; Salvini, however, brought the "darkest Othello in a generation" to American stages in 1873 and, due to Salvini's violent portrayal and his Italian "foreign-ness," was consistently viewed through a convoluted racial heuristic that raced his Othello as a Black African. This led to frequent oppositions between his Othello and Booth's, one which extends the binary of spiritual intellect and bodily animality to contrast Anglo-American whiteness to not only American Indian "savagery," but also to the black beast trope and a similarly racialized Italianness. Ultimately, Edwin Booth's Othello illustrates the blurred racialization of non-

whiteness generally (though not without its own hierarchical logic) as less-than-human animal.

Another biographer of Booth, Professor Charles Copeland, lauds Salvini as having had the qualities that "give the force of animal passion demanded by tragedy." Copeland then adds that Salvini "was poor in other qualities 'demanded by tragedy'—namely, spirituality and imagination"—qualities which for Copeland Booth has in spades.[65] This is significant because Salvini was most well-known for his darkly-painted and lurid Othello, which was inescapably coded as "Negro" to the nineteenth-century public in the US and England. While Salvini's Othello was a turbaned Oriental Moor and not obviously African to the lay American theatergoer, his was the darkest makeup in the US since the early nineteenth century,[66] and reviews of his performance exemplify the blurring of Blackness and the more ambiguous non-whiteness of a brown body. New York newspapers described him as "Perfectly African in his appearance and his mein," called his portrayal "a blackamoor, and not a Moor."[67] And there was some suggestion that Salvini actively participated in this racial reading of the character: *The New York Times* claimed in a review that he played Othello as "an undeniable woolly-headed negro."[68] Fitting the period's reactive racism against newly-arriving Italian immigrants, Italians were easily lumped into this blurred dehumanization through racialized performance, through both animalistic imagery and the racial science that linked Southern Italians to Africa due to their shared climate. Salvini encouraged this association, perhaps to buttress his authority over the role, in describing Othello as "Meridionale."[69]

Italian-American racialization as "savage" was pronounced enough to lead, in 1891, to the lynching of eleven Italian prisoners in New Orleans.[70] In the postbellum period, however, the extensive racialization of cultural "refinement" is most illustrated by Salvini's Othello sharing "savage" behavioral qualities the press associated with Blackness. Scholar Joe Falocco writes of this critical blackening of Salvini that "[c]omplaints about the 'negro' characteristics of Salvini's Moor had less to do with the actor's physical appearance in the role than with other attributes he gave the character—his 'physical vigor' and his 'barbarism and cruelty,' which revealed a 'tiger latent in his blood.'"[71] This blurring of non-

white racializations, and the taint of Blackness that pervades them, speaks to the fluid and urgent search for a stable idea of whiteness, regularly distinguished from a non-white animality usually linked to Blackness. English actress Ellen Terry further clarified the transatlantic boundaries of Anglo-Saxon whiteness, saying Salvini's Othello succeeded due to his "foreign temperament": "Shakespeare's French and Italians, Greeks and Latins, medievals and barbarians, fancifuls and reals, all have a dash of Elizabethan English men in them, but not Othello."[72] Shakespeare's wholly Other Othello, in Terry's odd logic, is more fitting for an Italian than an Englishman.[73] Racial science clearly informed this view of Anglo-Saxon culture and identity.

Edwin Booth's direct comments on Othello's character are sparse, but the assembled whole reveals deep investment in the racial debates surrounding Othello's color and its relevance to an innate savagery. Though not the tiger-like savage Salvini made famous, Booth's Othello laid heavy emphasis on the "noble" aspect of the noble savage view. Booth himself viewed Kean's "tawny" interpretation to be correct, following his father. As recorded in a posthumous biography written by his daughter Edwina Booth, Edwin Booth reiterates his father's interpretation more explicitly along the lines of race:

> [Junius Brutus Booth] considered every character in Shakspere [sic] worthy of an artist, and of his best efforts. I think his delineation of *Othello's* jealous and suspicious nature raised it above the low level, and at one time commonly accepted idea, of the brutal blackamoor, which my father never believed to be Shakspere's motive.[74]

To Booth and to his father, Shakespeare's genius rules out the "low level" interpretation that Othello is a "brutal blackamoor," which would require no artistry. This view would at first appear to criticize the racist simplicity of the brutal blackamoor itself as a racial caricature, but Edwina Booth's biography seems to have published Booth's views on race quite selectively.

When not curated by his loving daughter as in the above, Booth's views portray a common racial essentialism that, I suggest, structured his view of culture and refinement.[75] Furness's *Variorium Othello* contains unvarnished notes on Booth's stage business which, according to the editor, "were made with no view to their

being printed."[76] Largely sourced from letters sent between the two friends,[77] Booth's notes describe his Othello as a pinnacle of white Victorian refinement and manners. For example, he relates to Furness, who in fact believed Shakespeare intended Othello to be a Black African, that the "keynote" of Othello's nature is that he is a "a modest, simple-hearted *Gentleman*."[78] Yet at times Booth slips into racialist confusion as to whether "the savage" in Othello outstrips his nobility. At the line "If thou dost slander her," Booth writes that

> seeing Iago's dagger I clutch it in frenzy and am about to stab him, when the Christian overcomes the Moor, and throwing the dagger from me, I fall again upon the seat with a flood of tears. To this weeping Iago may allude in his next speech, where he says contemptuously, Are you a man?![79]

The violent "frenzy" of "the Moor" and the "brutality" of the low-culture blackamoor interpretation Booth rejects appear differentiated only by the moderating force of the white, civilized European. Othello weeps as if, as Booth puts it in another note, "in horror" at his own lack of self-control, which then allows in Booth's conception a melancholic admission of the failure of a more Forrestian (i.e., "animal") masculinity in Iago's response. Savagery in Booth's more liberal view is any departure from bourgeois white gentility, and the civilized "Christian" leads to a tearful unmanliness that generally endeared Booth to his increasingly female and war-ravaged audience.[80]

Elsewhere in Booth's acting notes, the character of Othello's otherness further complicates an understanding of Booth's racialist viewpoint. When Othello bursts out "I'll tear her all to pieces," Booth's note describes Othello in racial scientific terms of essential unreason: "Here you may let the savage have vent—but for a moment only; when Othello next speaks, he is tame again and speaks sadly;"[81] grief and Victorian devotion here "tame" an animalistic "savage," not unlike Forrest's Metamora which Winter disdained, ironically, as derivative. In Othello and Desdemona's first relatively private scene together in Cyprus, Booth's racialist lens is more pronounced in his negation of Othello's animality in favor of an exceptional nobility: "They embrace, with delicacy. There is nothing of the animal in this 'noble savage'" (213). Similarly, when Othello disavows his love for Desdemona, Booth strikingly

opposes feelings of "humanity" itself and Othello's innate "savage blood" as vying within him:

> Although the savage blood is up, let a *wave of humanity* sweep over his heart at these words. Breathe out "Tis gone' with a sigh of agony which seems to exhale love to heaven.[82]

"Humanity" engulfs the savage essence that racially determines Othello's innately unreasoned rage. The trope of engulfment seen in Othello's Christian Victorian melodrama strikingly parallels the imperialist sentiment then gaining traction in the US.[83] Indeed, Booth's refined and whitened Othello performance—through the Orientalist gaze which, as Edward Said argued, serves to recapitulate Western desire[84]—expresses the latter-nineteenth-century US iteration of the liberal human subject, complete with its negative self-definition against racialized savagery and the settler (post)colonial anxieties about cultural inferiority based upon *proximity* to said savagery.

Booth's swerve away from "the animal" lurking in Othello's "savage blood" sits oddly with his general view of the character as at core "a *Gentleman*"—unless, that is, one considers the inherent opposition of refinement to the racially-determined savagery that inheres in Othello's "savage blood." With an emphatic, italicized and capitalized summation, Booth asserts this essence against the backdrop of animalism, meticulously defined in the racialist science of man typified by Salvini's performances. But, as we have seen, this assertion does not scan: in reality, Booth's acting notes show his Othello's refined Victorian vying to *repress* the othered "savage blood," allowing it "vent" as a strategy of control. Thus, the italic emphasis of "*Gentleman*" pushes against and represses Booth's own racial-essentialist performance, expressing *Booth's* repressive sanitization of the text's (racialized) sexuality as well as Othello's savagery and its cultural epitomization in Blackness. As Marvin Rosenberg succinctly puts it in *The Masks of Othello*: "Booth's audible, visual grief was a poetic sublimation of Salvini's violence, which Booth normally shrank from."[85]

Booth's Othello is a true "noble savage," a racial exception. And, much like the assimilationist Indian policy that would cohere at century's end in the motto "Kill the Indian; Save the Man," the distinction between nobility and savagery suggests the very same logic that grounds liberal whiteness in the period: the

transcendence of the physical body and its limitations (here being racial Otherness) toward the realm of the "spirit." Thus, a dialectic of refinement and savagery structures Othello's tragedy just as that of human and ungrievable Indian structure the march of settler colonialism's assimilationist strategy of control.

Through the various descriptions degrading everything outside of the "spiritual" self-determining mind that white bodies signified—from Winter's disdain for Forrest's racially tainted success to the racial-scientific linkage of Italian-ness and Blackness as bestial in Salvini's Othello—Shakespeare's transition to high culture clearly participated in the broader racial project of asserting Anglo-Saxon cultural and racial superiority over non-white populations as disparate as American Indians, the previously enslaved, and recent European immigrants, broadly racialized as "savages."

Notes

1. Daniel Watermeier, *American Tragedian: The Life of Edwin Booth* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2015), 126. For fear of political violence, police squads were dispatched and served to preserve order as the hundreds of ticket-holders pressed through the lobby to their seats for the sold-out performance, filling it to capacity thirty minutes after the house opened. Exact numbers for the evening are hard to come by, but per Watermeier, the venue was "filled to capacity," and thus may number in the thousands. The newer Winter Garden under Boucicault's management was renovated to have fewer seats than the "leviathan" he inherited in Tripler Hall, but exact numbers there are also elusive.

2. Watermeier, *American Tragedian*, 68.

3. Watermeier, *American Tragedian*, 127-128.

4. Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981). As Horsman notes, while of course the idea of an "Anglo-Saxon race" is an ambiguous and arbitrarily-defined fiction, it was nonetheless central to political, popular and intellectual discourse—including that of expansionism's opponents as well as its advocates—and justified by the era's intellectual community (Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, 1-2, 132). Though Horsman focuses primarily on the earlier century, racial destiny also provides a lasting if shifting racial ideology into the twentieth century, one that synthesizes a reunited white body politic with so-called spiritual progress into frontiers beyond continental limits.

5. Laurence Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 30-34. By the early 1900s at least some writers viewed Shakespeare dramas as "bores to every-day people," while Mark Twain, a member of Booth's Players Club, was lamenting the passing of the age when, in 1865, "Edwin Booth played Hamlet a hundred nights in New York…What has come over us English-speaking people?"

6. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*, 51.

7. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*, 223. English poet and cultural critic Matthew Arnold was a key figure shaping nineteenth-century American taste and, following Levine, cultural taste hierarchies. He was a somewhat moralizing figure: "Increasingly, in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, as public life became everywhere more fragmented, the concept of culture took on hierarchical connotations along the lines of Matthew Arnold's definition of culture—the best that has been thought and known in the world…the study and pursuit of perfection.' The Englishman Arnold whose critical writings preceded his trips to America in 1883 and 1886, did not discover a tabula rasa in America; he found many eager constituents here from the very beginning. Two years before Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* was published, *Harper's* maintained that certain authors were 'not only tests of taste but even of character.' If a man gave himself to Shakespeare or Chaucer, 'we have a clew to the man.' … The Arnold important to America was not Arnold the critic, Arnold the poet, Arnold the religious thinker, but Arnold the Apostle of Culture. 'I shall not go so far as to say of Mr. Arnold that he invented' the concept of culture, Henry James commented in 1884, 'but he made it more definite than it had been before—he vivified it and lighted it up.' … 'Why does nobody any more mention Arnold's name?' Ludwig Lewisohn asked in 1927 and replied that it was because Arnold's views had become completely absorbed in the mainstream of American thought."

8. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*, 223. Quoting Henry Raleigh: "Arnold's success in America was immediate, far-reaching, and lasting. In the academic world in particular he has become a fixed star. It would not be an overstatement to say, as several nineteenth century admirers of Arnold did say, that he had perhaps more readers in America than he had in England itself."

9. Andrew Carlson, "Oteller and Desdemonum: Defining Nineteenth-Century Blackness," *Theatre History Studies* 30.1 (2010): 176-186; Kris Collins, "White-Washing the Black-a-Moor: 'Othello', Negro Minstrelsy and Parodies of Blackness," *Journal of American Culture* 19.3 (1996): 87-101; Robert Hornback, "Black Shakespeareans vs. Minstrel Burlesques: 'Proper' English, Racist Blackface Dialect, and the Contest for Representing 'Blackness,' 1821-1844," *Shakespeare Studies* 38 (2010); Virginia Mason Vaughan, "Shakespeare in America's Gilded Age" in *Shakespeare in the Nineteenth Century*. Ed. Gail Marshall. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 340-345; Marvin Carlson, 1997, "Booth, Lincoln, and Theatrical Reception" (published text from *The Geske Lectures* series, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1997). While still few, illustrative analyses of scholars like Andrew Carlson, Kris Collins, and Robert Hornback have indeed considered theatrical representations of blackness through blackface minstrelsy and, especially generative, latter-century minstrel adaptations of *Othello*. Others, such as Virginia Mason Vaughan and theatre historians such as Marvin Carlson, have also considered the importance of Shakespeare and Shakespeare ownership to the frontier and the emergence of more refined, middle-class appreciation of Shakespeare as cultural, moral, even "spiritual" capital. Carlson, for example, notes that in frontier towns the touring performances of Shakespearean stars such as Edwin Booth was seen to effect a "moral and educative function" for the emerging middle-class which "bordered on the religious" (Carlson 24). Similarly, Vaughan points to the significance of owning Shakespeare memorabilia and Booth iconography to indicate social refinement throughout the nation and the frontier, a pattern influenced by the idea that female influence could refine the domestic, and thereby cultural, sphere. "But by the 1880s owning Shakespeare had become

something of a national pastime. In the great age of American collecting the names of Henry Clay Folger and Henry E. Huntington come immediately to mind, but they were not alone. Daly, Furness and Booth are characteristic of nineteenth-century American efforts to memorialize Shakespeare by owning him, whether by purchasing souvenir postcards and bric-a-brac in Stratford or keeping scrapbooks at home" (Vaughan 344-345).

10. Where relevant, I employ the terms "American Indian" "Indian" and "freedpersons" rather than Indigenous peoples or emancipated Black Americans for historical consonance and to distinguish their racial import from contemporary racializations and identities. Admittedly, parsing accuracy and virulence in historical racial terminology is a constant vexation. I do avoid labeling Black emancipated Americans as "emancipated slaves" to attempt to separate people from their enslavement.

11. Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 188.

12. da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, 119-120. Specifically, Hegel claimed this would necessitate that "the category of Universality" "which naturally accompanies our ideas" be abandoned. This degradation of Universality in Hegel also provided the basic tenets of progressive-era racism in that it gives root to the White Man's Burden trope of late 19th-century racial imperialism and its strategy of assimilation through education: For Hegel, because "the want of self-control distinguishes the character of the Negroes," Blackness is a condition "capable of no development or culture," he asserts "as we see them at this day, such have they always been," an anti-Black parallel to the vanishing/timeless Indian trope.

13. da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, 19-20. According to da Silva, without this earlier century secular-spiritual philosophy, "the ontological priority of the interior/temporal" mind that later racial science sought to taxonomize "would be meaningless."

14. The settler colonial narrative of US Manifest Destiny—the spiritual projection of ownership beyond and importantly *away from* the colonial self toward the Westward continental limits—can be understood as a postcolonial teleology. The US as a postcolony is marked primarily by an obsession with finding its distinctiveness from Britain culturally, politically, and, to a more limited degree, racially. From James Fenimore Cooper's white frontiersmen abstracting American Indian knowledge into a unique American identity to Emerson's assertions of white Americans "speaking our own minds" contra Europe to Whitman's early distaste for Shakespeare as anti-democratic, the nineteenth century was suffused by anxious American exceptionalism that contended specifically with a sense of intellectual and cultural inferiority. Many historians describe westward progress and its attendant desire for regenerative war as typifying America's dreamscape in the nineteenth century (Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000); T.J. Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009). But seen apart from war and violence, Manifest Destiny can also be read as a projection of postcolonial desire to progress—spatially and culturally—away from the British Empire and into a national identity of one's own. It is the irony and contradiction of the settler (post)colonial impulse that would abstract the frontier's possibility into ideals of Progress and racial categorization, an ironic surrogation of Britain's colonial authority achieved through simultaneous genocidal denial, racial segregation, and claims to nativeness. In other words, as white Americans became

Americans through the progress of Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier, they enacted a doubled surrogation of nativeness on the one hand and imperial might on the other. This vexed contradiction disables a conventionally "postcolonial" understanding of the US, as the shared logic of empire manifests in merely revised form, in what Taiaiake Alfred calls a "paradigm of post-colonial colonialism" (qtd. in Iyko Day, *Alien Capital: Asian Racialization and the Logic of Settler Colonial Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 36).

15. Charles H. Shattuck, *The Hamlet of Edwin Booth* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969), xxiii-xxiv.

16. Shattuck, *Hamlet of Edwin Booth*, 12.

17. Philip H. Christensen, "McGuffey's Oxford (Ohio) Shakespeare," *Journal of American Studies* 43.1 (2009): 101-115. Shakespeare declamation featured prominently in common school curricula in the service of moral education and socialization, as evidenced in McGuffey's *Readers* (1837) and *Rhetorical Guide* (1844). These texts, building on prior elocution texts, instructed morality through selections from Shakespeare and the Bible side by side, and would "mould the tastes of four generations" (Alice McGuffey Merrill Ruggles, *The Story of the McGuffeys American Book Co.*, 1950, 97). The first students of these texts would become the audiences encouraging Booth's Civil War rise to fame. These coinciding circumstances of Shakespeare on the page and Booth's refined stage encouraged Shakespeare's authority as a national body of work. As one scholar puts it, "By the close of the century, the McGuffey canon had contributed to an American belief in Shakespeare's authority as second only to the Bible's, a point of view reflected in Emerson's judgment that Shakespeare is 'inconceivably wise'" (Philip H. Christensen, "McGuffey's Oxford (Ohio) Shakespeare," *Journal of American Studies* 43.1 (2009): 101). The *Readers* and *Guide* advanced Shakespeare's (highly edited) texts as a model for public discourse which would instill praiseworthy character. In many of the editions of this "wisdom literature," usually free from dramatic plot or context, the "To be or not to be" soliloquy—termed simply "The Hamlet Soliloquy" or, in Scott's earlier elocution source text "Hamlet's soliloquy on death"—represented Shakespeare's tragedies (Christensen, "McGuffey," 112-113). Despite the moral ambiguity of Hamlet's soliloquy, it was likely included due to the play's popularity (and continued to be included in the later revised editions, albeit in more advanced *Readers*). To be a good citizen in the mid-nineteenth century, Hamlet's decision to bear the ills he has for fear of death and the unknown was required reading. Small wonder, then, that the postbellum populace could give itself so completely to the character-worship of Edwin Booth, who embodied this forbearing yet self-determined Hamlet in a time coping with great death and tragedy. A unique potential for middle-brow whiteness—as patient martyr for justice in securing abolition on the one hand and in civilizing the savage world through imperialism on the other, at personal and national cost—was already here arising.

18. Shattuck, *Hamlet of Edwin Booth*, xv.

19. Shattuck, *Hamlet of Edwin Booth*, 129 In 1870, Charles Clarke, a twenty-one-year-old self-described "mere playgoer," took it upon himself to record in great detail Booth's performance of Hamlet; this manuscript is housed at the Folger Shakespeare Library and is the main primary source that Shattuck uses to reconstruct Edwin Booth's performance of the role. Shattuck describes it as "perhaps the fullest record of any Shakespearean performance before the advent of the motion picture and the sound track" (103). See page 102-107 of Shattuck's text for more on Clarke's remarkable endeavor.

20. Shattuck, *Hamlet of Edwin Booth*, xxii.

21. Qtd. in Shattuck, *Hamlet of Edwin Booth*, xxiii.

22. Shattuck, *Hamlet of Edwin Booth*, 197.

23. *The Evening Post*, qtd. in Shattuck, *Hamlet of Edwin Booth*, 116-117. This highly-successful run of *Hamlet*, performed for 100 consecutive nights in New York City in 1865, solidified his already significant national image as the role's eminent actor.

24. Watermeier, *American Tragedian*, 119.

25. Booth had a friend draft the letter (as he was never prone to speechifying), which might explain the letter's at times glaring Hamletisms. A note attached to this letter indicates it was drafted by John B. Murray, and Booth accepted the draft but added the words "in my retirement."

26. Qtd. in Watermeier, *American Tragedian*, 120.

27. Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Trans-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 3. Joseph Roach's concept of surrogation redefines performance through the "doomed search for originals by continuously auditioning stand-ins," a term with wide applicability and with special potency to Hamlet's Oedipal relationship to his father.

28. J. Tracey Power, "Brother Against Brother: Alexander and James Campbells's Civil War," *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 95:2 (April 1994).

29. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor. (London: Bloomsbury, 2006).

> "O God, Horatio, what a wounded name,
> Things standing thus unknown, shall I leave behind me!
> If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
> Absent thee from felicity awhile
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
> To tell my story" (5.2.328-333).

30. Sir Edward Mortimer in *The Iron Chest*.

31. It is tempting to exclaim, in nineteenth-century palimpsestual prose, "Within eight months! …Frailty thy name is Booth."

32. A friend did have a hand in drafting the letter, perhaps suggesting more the public's view of him as Hamlet rather than his own self-conception or self-fashioning in this instance.

33. Qtd. in Shattuck, *Hamlet of Edwin Booth*, 102-107.

34. T.J. Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America,1877-1920* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 19-27.

35. Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 19-22.

36. Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 21.

37. Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 27.

38. Karl Kippola, *Acts of Manhood: The Performance of Masculinity on the American Stage, 1828-1865* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 117. Combined with the curious omission of Winter's reference to Forrest's stardom as an American Indian in *Metamora*, Kippola's reading serves as an erasure of the racial imperialism of the era, and in turn avoids the difficulty of engaging with racial imperialism's relationship to Booth's more feminine masculinity. These omissions call into question the validity of analyzing class without race, even when coupled with an innovative study of masculinity. One might ask what utility the lens of white masculinity has in the nineteenth century without an engagement with the whiteness that serves as its often much more "invisible" structuring surround.

39. This blurring of seemingly highly distinct conceptual frameworks can in part be traced to the influence of German Romantic idealism upon the Emersonian school of intellectualism, ironically committed to independence of American thought. Specifically, Hegel's widely-read *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (1807)—which was read across New England and the Midwest in organically formed reading clubs in the period—and the translational difficulties surrounding the German term "Geist" in, translated as either "Mind" or "Spirit," blurs Mind or rationality with its religious counterpart of the soul or Spirit.

40. Hegel, qtd. in da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, 188; Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, 2.

41. Hegel, qtd. in da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, 188. For analysis of this quote and more extended analyses of certain postcolonial anxieties, see da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, 188-189.

42. Edwin Booth's close friend Louis Agassiz was a key figure in resisting evolutionary equality. A life-long proponent of polygenism, the Swiss-American geologist and naturalist frequented Booth's Cambridge, MA performances and is repeatedly referenced in Booth's letters to his daughter as a house-guest. Perhaps not coincidentally, Booth's strong views against Shakespeare writing Othello to be "a brutal blackamoor" match Agassiz's racism, as written to his mother: "What unhappiness for the white race—to have tied their existence so closely with that of negroes in certain countries! God preserve us from such a contact!" (See Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, 77). Agassiz portrayed the presence of Black people within society as an "element of social disorder" due to "the very *character* of the negro race" being more sexually receptive, "indolent," "unsteady in their purpose" and "in everything unlike other races, they may but be compared to children, grown in the stature of adults while retaining a childlike mind" (qtd. in Collins, 89).

43. da Silva, *Global Idea of Race*, 119-120.

44. Qtd. in Shattuck, *Hamlet of Edwin Booth*, xxi.

45. Shattuck, *Hamlet of Edwin Booth*, xxi-xxiii. Shattuck summarizes: "Opposite the lines in which Ophelia describes that wild scene Booth notes that *to an actor* this is all 'play acting'; that Shakespeare, who was so well posted in actors' tricks, meant it to be so understood by the audience."

46. The promptbook was published in 1878 but referred back across Booth's conception of *Hamlet* in performances like his 1866 return to the stage in the role.

47. In the cultural register, the idea that the Civil War was a tragic challenge from which to progress supported idealistic beliefs like Booth's that the arts were constantly progressing toward perfection, and that, as the standard-bearer of the so-called "Standard Drama," he would help enshrine them there. Booth's somewhat conservative view of progress in the arts reflected that of his audience. An early champion of Booth, William Winter suggested in 1862, the very year of the Emancipation Proclamation, that the ennobling qualities of the lyrical style Booth championed were the antidote to the unfolding tragedies of the Civil War: "The sole refuge of this age is art; and that should be kept white, pure, peaceful and beautiful. What we need on stage is what will cheer, comfort, and strengthen." Though appearing during the war itself, the text suggests the tendency toward reunification through the comfort of the white middle-class ahead of the war's end. This is no surprise, in that Winter's conservative aesthetic tastes matched his conservative return to an antebellum sentiment that feared the political perils of staging *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and encouraging further abolitionist

sentiment. *The New York Herald*'s editorial ten years prior, for example, wrote, "It is a sad blunder; for when our stage shall become the deliberate agent in the cause of abolitionism, with the sanction of the public, and their approbation, the peace and harmony of this Union will soon be ended." Winter's choice of language mirrors this prior sentiment and also indicates this comfort's character: the aestheticized space of "art" is to be "kept white" and "pure." Booth's performances of that "white" and "pure" art suggest the need for keeping the stage an aesthetic realm of comforting distraction from the anguish of the conflict in contrast to, for example, continued contemporary stagings of Uncle Tom's Cabin. The need to keep the nation pure amidst the conflict between slavery and abolitionism here overlaps with the need to escape into the virgin "whiteness" of peace, allowing the white middle-class mind to be unbesmirched by the question of Emancipation and its consequences.

48. Daniel Watermeier, *Edwin Booth's Performances: The Mary Isabella Stone Commentaries* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1990), 2.

49. da Silva, *Global Idea of Race*, 119-120.

50. Watermeier, *Edwin Booth's Performances*, 6; emphasis mine.

51. Katherine Goodale, *Behind the Scenes with Edwin Booth* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1931), 179. San Francisco playgoers saw him as "San Francisco's boy" due to his performances in melodramas like the *San Francisco Fire Boy* there during the Gold Rush.

52. Watermeier, *American Tragedian*, 33. King Kamehameha IV himself, who was forced to compromise with the growing influence of the American missionary and capitalist settler class, attended Booth's *Richard III* and "spoke kindly" of the performance.

53. Qtd. in Watermeier, *American Tragedian*, 314.

54. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*, 222-226.

55. Winter, qtd. in Virginia Mason Vaughan, "Shakespeare in America's Gilded Age" in *Shakespeare in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Gail Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 340-345), 344.

56. Watermeier, *American Tragedian*, 246. Henry Irving had supported his joining on his second tour there in 1880.

57. William Winter. *Life and Art of Edwin Booth, by William Winter* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1893), 1-2. Most other scholars, including Kippola, excise the reference to Metamora.

58. Winter, *Life and Art*, 1.

59. Theresa Strouth Gaul, "'The Genuine Indian Who Was Brought Upon the Stage': Edwin Forrest's *Metamora* and White Audiences," *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American Literature, Culture, and Theory* 56. (2000): 1-27. "Beginning in the 1820s and continuing through the next decades, 'Indian dramas,' a designation that refers to plays written by whites about American Indians, were one of the hottest phenomena on the American stage. With the roles of American Indians played by white actors, Indian dramas were the first theatrical form to put a supposedly genuine version of the racial other before the American public" (1).

60. Philip Joseph Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 5.

61. "impersonate, v.". *OED Online*. September 2022. *Oxford University Press*. https://www-oed-com.libproxy1.usc.edu/view/Entry/92330?rskey=J6RfuN&result=2 (accessed October 11, 2022). Definition three reads: "To pretend to be (someone or something else), usually for the purpose of entertainment or fraud; to imitate (a person's voice, mannerisms, etc.); (in early use *esp*.) to act the role of

(a character in a play, etc.)." The example of "to act the role of" cited is from 1821 whereas the significance connoting fraudulence is from an 1889 text entitled *How to Read, Recite, & Impersonate*, which itself interestingly references Jacksonian masculinity: "Nothing is more ludicrous than to hear a lady try to impersonate the voice of Stonewall Jackson." Additionally, though Metamora was modeled after the historical Metacom (and therefore could be seen to be "impersonated" in the former sense), Cardinal Richelieu was also a historical figure, and Forrest premiered the theatrical role based on him first in 1839. Winter nonetheless aligns him with Booth's well-received "acting" of the role.

62. *Critical Survey of Drama*, ed. Carl E. Rollyson, 3rd ed. (Ipswich, MA: Salem Press, a division of EBSCO Information Services, Inc., 2018), 132-133. While both Richelieu and Hamlet represent the aspirations of the middle-class toward European "good taste" at this time, Hamlet, as a Shakespearean character, placed Booth's performances in a larger performance tradition than Bulwer-Lytton's 1839 play, itself largely imitative of Shakespeare's history plays.

63. Imtiaz Habib, *Shakespeare and Race: Postcolonial Praxis in the Early Modern Period* (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 2000), 122-123.

64. Hawkins, qtd. in *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: Othello*, ed. Horace Howard Furness, 2nd ed. (London: J.B. Lippincott Company 1886), 390.

65. G.H. Lewes, qtd. in Charles Copeland, *Edwin Booth* (Boston: Small, Maynard and Company, 1902), 141; Copeland, Booth, 142.

66. Tilden G. Edelstein, "Othello in America: The Drama of Racial Intermarriage," *Region, Race, and Reconstruction*, ed. J Morgan Kousser (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982); Carol Jones Carlisle, *Shakespeare from the Greenroom: Actor's Criticism of the Four Major Tragedies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967). To say there is even slight scholarly disagreement surrounding this point would be an overstatement. Joe Falocco's article (cited in note 60), while otherwise insightful and informative, seems to whiten Salvini somewhat for his argument's purpose. Citing only Ellen Terry's description of both Booth and Irving's Othellos as "black," he extrapolates in negation that Salvini's turbaned Othello was thus also a tawny Moor. According to newspaper reviews, William Winter's description of Booth lightening Othello to avoid the perception of miscegenation, and Carlisle's sourcing, this is false.

67. "Salvini as Othello," *New York Times*, Sept. 17, 1873.

68. "Salvini as Othello." The review goes on to acknowledge that the "peculiar features of that race are not thrust violently upon us" and then attempts to properly segregate these racial categories, writing that there are "many moors, with not a drop of negro blood in their veins, who are darker than Salvini's Othello."

69. Joe Falocco, "Tommaso Salvini's Othello and Racial Identity in Late Nineteenth-Century America," *New England Theatre Journal* 23 (2012): 15–35, 25.

70. Matthew Frye Jacobson. *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 1999), 44, 52-56.

71. Falocco, "Tommaso Salvini's Othello," 25. Even Henry James employed this particularly pervasive "tiger" trope to describe Salvini's performance. More generally, Salvini was often described as a "beast" in ways clearly linked to Blackness. For example, an actress backstage at Salvini's performances captures this blurry blackening of Italians through disgust at Salvini's miscegenational lust: "...when, at Cyprus, Othello entered and fiercely swept into his swarthy arms

the pale loveliness of Desdemona, 'twas like a tiger's spring upon a lamb. The bluff and honest soldier, the English Shakespeare's Othello, was lost in an Italian Othello. Passion choked, his gloating eyes burned with the mere lust of the 'sooty Moor' for that white creature of Venice. It was revolting, and with a shiver I exclaimed aloud, 'Ugh, you splendid brute!'…a man's rough voice had answered instantly, 'Make it a *beast*, ma'am, and I'm with you!'" (See Clara Morris, *Stage Confidences: Talks About Players and Play Acting* (New York: Lothrop Publishing, 1902), 240-241.)

72. Ellen Terry, *The Story of My Life* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1908), 204-205.

73. Terry, *My Life*, 268. Notably, however, this "foreign temperament" does nothing to improve Booth's Othello for Terry, despite him being from a foreign nation. In fact, what makes the US a "foreign experience" for the English, in Terry's biography, is the presence of its Negro servants.

74. Edwina Booth, *Edwin Booth: Recollections by His Daughter, Edwina Booth Grossmann, and Letters to Her and to His Friends* (New York: The Century Company, 1894), 21-22.

75. As an interesting sidenote, Booth's biographer and daughter Edwina Booth Grossman is often confused, rightfully so, with Edwina Booth, the actress who starred in *Trader Horn* (1931) as savage and scantily clad blonde Nina Trent, "The White Goddess."

76. Furness, *Variorum*, vii.

77. It should be noted that Horace Howard Furness believed, contrary to Booth's conception of a tawny North African Moor, that Shakespeare meant Othello to be a Black African. See Furness's editorial note in his Appendix, "Othello's Colour."

78. Furness, *Variorum*, 32; emphasis in original.

79. Furness, *Variorum*, 203.

80. Marvin Rosenberg, *The Masks of Othello: The Search for the Identity of Othello, Iago, and Desdemona by Three Centuries of Actors and Critics* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992), 85; Kippola, *Acts of Manhood*, 117-126. Booth was still at times criticized, notably by his most resistant critic, "Nym Crinkle" (whose real name was Andrew Carpenter Wheeler).

81. Furness, *Variorum*, 208.

82. Furness, *Variorum*, 509; emphasis mine.

83. Though many in Booth's orbit would actively oppose imperialism (Howells, Samuel Clemins, etc.), the cultural project of "intellectual elevation" Booth presaged the eventual "imperialism of the spirit" that defined Wilsonian doctrine during the Progressive Era with education of the Philippines, as well as the period's missionary imperialism, emerging from roots as deep and varied as common school Shakespeare and discourse on the US's Anglo-Saxonist institutions, which argued that Shakespeare was as spiritually instructive for non-Anglo-Saxons as Biblical scripture.

84. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1979).

85. Rosenberg, *The Masks of Othello*, 86.

The Traumatic Stress of Revenge and War in *Hamlet* and Stephan Wolfert's *Cry Havoc!*

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Introduction

In *Shakespeare's Returning Warriors—and Ours*, Alan Warren Friedman analyzes *Hamlet*'s paradoxical status as a play that both is and is not about a "returning warrior."[1] I argue this paradox is related to the play's dramatization of the alienation of traumatic stress in a context of suppressed collective trauma. In both *Hamlet* and contemporary America, trauma is both pervasive yet individualized; it is largely unrecognized at the cultural level, yet medicalized at the level of the subject. This dynamic is particularly relevant to America's treatment of veterans with posttraumatic stress. Stephan Wolfert's *Cry Havoc!*[2] excavates these paradoxes, bringing them to the surface to create cathartic theater that is both a one-man play and a communal experience. Wolfert shares his experience as an Army veteran and the work itself creates a community of Shakespeare's isolated veterans: Richard III shares the stage with Coriolanus and Macbeth. Wolfert goes beyond dramatizing trauma and explicitly aims to heal veterans' trauma; *Cry Havoc!* raises awareness about Wolfert's DE-CRUIT program, "which uses theatre to address traumatic stress and related problems encountered by veterans."[3]

By putting *Hamlet* into conversation with *Cry Havoc!*, I argue that both plays reveal the trauma of being recruited for war. *Hamlet*

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intervenes in the genre of revenge tragedy by dramatizing how Hamlet's recruitment for revenge is a traumatizing experience. *Cry Havoc!* depicts the trauma of being recruited for war, but not "de-cruited" after completing military service, while the DE-CRUIT program offers a model for healing this trauma. Both *Hamlet* and *Cry Havoc!* explore traumatic stress as a "psychosocial disability," which is defined by Disability Studies scholar Margaret Price as a term that "bumps *psych* (soul) against social context."[4] Both plays illustrate the failure of medicalizing traumatic stress as a problem isolated in individuals and instead indict the social contexts that perpetuate trauma. By dramatizing the trauma of revenge and war, both plays interrogate social constructions that intertwine masculinity with violence.

Rather than pathologizing individuals, both plays show the "havoc" and trauma inherent in revenge and war. Charles Edelman notes: "Shakespeare's use of 'cry havoc' seems not to be within the confines of its original meaning, a signal, once victory is achieved, that spoil may taken, but is given as a threat of war's devastation."[5] Edelman describes the non-battlefield deaths at the conclusion of *Hamlet* as epitomizing the "'havoc' of war."[6] Both *Hamlet* and *Cry Havoc!* highlight the destructive physical and psychological effects of revenge, war, and recruitment—both on the battlefield and off.

The Trauma of Recruitment for Revenge in *Hamlet*

Hamlet consistently courts and baffles the medical model of mental illness. The play dramatizes the obsession with finding the "cause" of *Hamlet*'s "madness," as well as the futility of doing so. Criticism of the play has plumbed the question of Hamlet's madness and offered centuries of diagnoses for Hamlet and Ophelia. Bennet Simon traces the history of applying the medical model to *Hamlet*, writing:

> My fundamental thesis is that psychoanalytic interpretations, particularly those of individual characters in the play, rely on a long-standing "medical model." This is most prominent in regard to the question of Hamlet's insanity—whether it is real, feigned, or both. […] Much energy has gone into diagnosing the precise nature of Hamlet's melancholy and Ophelia's madness.[7]

Simon continues:

> Apart from illustrating the crossover between the medical and literary (or theatrical) realms, this kind of diagnostic effort is important for my purpose because it tends to locate the problem within the individual. Hamlet, in other words, is thought to be a certain way because that is the way melancholics *are*. This kind of medical diagnosing shortcircuits literary and social questions, such as how much Hamlet is affected by the external rottenness in Denmark and how much is due to his innate disposition.[8]

In contrast to this, Simon offers a "psychodynamic analysis"[9] of the play's "traumatized environment."[10] He writes: "With reference to *Hamlet*, a better term for capturing the plight of the characters is 'complex traumatic stress syndrome' (Herman 1992), which signifies that the traumatic events are not entirely in the past."[11]

Similarly, in his analysis of *Hamlet* in relation to veterans' experiences, Friedman writes:

> Yet it is impossible to determine the extent to which Hamlet's volatile mood swings result from Denmark's rottenness (and his being set aside as his father's heir and his mother's favorite) and how much from his innate disposition; and the two are not mutually exclusive. His emotional and erratic range and control, his wild lashing out at those around him, track those of many veterans.[12]

Medical model diagnoses that locate a "problem" in Hamlet's bodymind will always be insufficient. Hamlet's "problem" is inextricable from his social world: the corruption of Denmark, his uncle's murder of his father, his mother's remarriage, and the Ghost's command to revenge.

Arguably, all of the play's characters are experiencing trauma, yet they all do so acutely alone. The pervasive trauma of "rotten" Denmark is suppressed, yet persistently embodied by individual characters. Hamlet and Ophelia are both profoundly alienated in their traumatic stress. When this trauma becomes personalized and narrativized as disorder, it becomes, to use Mitchell and Snyder's influential Disability Studies concept, a "narrative prosthesis": something to be cured or killed at the level of the individual character.[13]

Hamlet's traumatic stress becomes something to be eliminated through revenge. Like other revenge tragedies, there is a fantasy that

revenge may "cure" the trauma, yet ultimately, there is only killing. Unlike other revenge tragedies, however, *Hamlet* explores the complex trauma of being tasked with revenge. The alienation that Hamlet experiences at the start of the play is exacerbated by being given the alienating role of the revenger, and further heightened by being unable to fulfill this role. The play's meditation on the ethics of revenge dovetails with its exploration of the trauma of being commanded to inflict violence.[14]

The Ghost, in "warlike form" (1.1.46), attempts to recruit Hamlet for combat.[15] Friedman writes: "The Ghost is, nonetheless, the figure in the play who most unequivocally enacts the role of returning warrior."[16] Rather than recruit Hamlet for the open warfare Fortinbras engages in, the Ghost recruits him for revenge: a hidden, alienated war of one against one. The Ghost commands: "Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder!" (1.5.25), yet continues: "But, howsomever thou pursues this act / Taint not thy mind nor let thy soul contrive / Against thy mother aught" (1.5.84-6). *Hamlet* shows these commands to be paradoxical. Hamlet cannot pursue the act of revenge without his mind being tainted; perhaps no one can.[17]

Friedman writes:

> Deborah Willis maintains that "Shakespeare's insight [is] that revenge can provide an emotional container for traumatic loss and humiliation" and that it "may even protect survivors from the many symptoms of PTSD." But Hamlet's narrowing of himself in response to the Ghost's charge provokes and exacerbates his symptoms.[18]

While, according to Willis, *Titus Andronicus* explores the (limited) healing potential of revenge,[19] I argue that *Hamlet* exposes the fantasy of revenge's healing potential, alongside the traumatizing psychic effects of being tasked with revenge. *Hamlet* is unique as a revenge tragedy because it shows explicitly how the revenger, although attempting to undo trauma by avenging it, becomes further traumatized by the process.

Hamlet's ambivalence about being recruited for revenge bespeaks his ambivalence about warrior culture generally. Robin Headlam Wells writes: "Paul Cantor has argued that Hamlet's ethical dilemma is expressed in the form of a conflict between two incompatible cultures: the heroic world of classical epic and Norse

saga, and the modern world of Christian-humanist values."[20] This temporal conflict can also be mapped onto competing early modern ideals of masculinity, types which Bruce R. Smith identifies as the "Herculean Hero" and the "Humanist Man of Moderation."[21] Disputing the Romantic notion that Hamlet is "a philosopher-prince trapped in a violent world that is alien to his true nature,"[22] Wells analyzes how Hamlet is drawn to warrior culture as embodied by Old Hamlet. Wells writes: "Hamlet's father typifies the exaggeratedly masculine world of heroic values that Saxo described in his chronicle; he was, says Hamlet with eloquent simplicity, 'a man' (1.2.186)."[23] Similarly, Fortinbras presents a view of masculinity that Hamlet admires: "Fascinated, as he is, with heroic violence, it is perhaps understandable that Hamlet should be drawn to the hot-blooded, and appropriately named, young neo-Viking warrior."[24] Sidestepping the critical debate about Hamlet's morality, Wells argues: "More to the point is to see what a powerful hold on the imagination the rhetoric of heroic masculinity can exercise, and to recognize its potential for creating political instability," which Wells contends that Hamlet's endorsement of Fortinbras will bring for Denmark.[25]

Hamlet's ambivalent admiration of "heroic masculinity" aligns with his view of wrathfulness. Catherine Belsey has examined Hamlet's soliloquies in relation to ethical dilemmas of morality plays, particularly dynamics of Conscience versus Wrath. Belsey writes: "Wrath is a vice-figure who consistently urges his victims to mindless and unhesitating belligerence. In *The Castle of Perseverance* he instructs Mankind, 'Be also wroth as Pou were wode' (as if you were mad, 1.1088); 'Be redy to spylle mans blod' (1.1092)."[26] Belsey analyzes allusions to Wrath in Hamlet's soliloquies:

> One part of his nature is committed, because he loved his father and because he is outraged by his mother's incest and his uncle's villainy, to passionate, mindless vengeance. … The language of these passionate, self-castigating soliloquies is often crude and blustering, and the values they express fall little short of those of Pyrrhus, drenched with blood, … Revenge entails the "lawless resolutes" of Fortinbras, the poisoned sword of Laertes, and above all Hamlet's refusal to kill Claudius while he is praying … It is crude, extravagant, and wildly in excess of justice.[27]

As Belsey and Spivack note, Wrath could be disguised as Manhood in morality plays.[28] Hamlet's ambivalence toward revenge, war, and wrath speak to his ambivalence about social constructions that align masculinity with excessive violence.

The beserker, which Wolfert explores in *Cry Havoc!*, is the battlefield embodiment of Wrath. While *Hamlet* probes the psychic and ethical dilemma of Wrath being at the heart of his recruitment for the seemingly "noble" and "sacred duty" of revenge,[29] *Cry Havoc!* plumbs the psychic consequences of the beserker-imperative implicit in being recruited for war.[30] In his highly influential *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character*, Jonathan Shay writes: "*Beserk* comes from the Norse word for the frenzied warriors who went into battle naked, or at least without armor, in a godlike or god-possessed—but also beastlike—fury."[31] Based on his psychiatric work with Vietnam veterans, Shay contends: "The beserk state is the most important and distinctive element of combat trauma."[32]

While the beserk state is inherently traumatizing, it is also a way of mourning the dead. Shay writes: "The beserker's manic obsession with revenge is not only destruction to gratify rage. At some deep cultural and psychological level, spilling enemy blood is an effort to bring the dead back to life."[33] Shay continues: "In addition to reviving the dead, revenge denies helplessness, keeps faith with the dead, and affirms that there is still justice in the world, even if this is manifested only in the survivor's random vengeance."[34] Hamlet deeply desires to be a beserker: he longs to imaginatively revive his father through infinite bloodshed. He fantasizes about unleashing carnage, soliloquizing about how he "should ha' fatted all the region kites / With this slave's offal" (2.2.514-15) and how he "could … drink hot blood" (3.2.380). He admires Fortinbras's military sacrifice of "twenty thousand men" (4.4.59), "Even for an eggshell" (4.4.52). He even fantasizes theater as a form of vengeance, desiring to inflict violence upon audiences' ears that mirrors Claudius's poisoning of Old Hamlet's ear:

> … He would drown the stage with tears
> And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
> Make mad the guilty and appall the free,
> Confound the ignorant and amaze indeed
> The very faculties of eyes and ears. (2.2.497-501)

Hamlet views the First Player's tears for Hecuba and Fortinbras's military action admiringly because he desires not only to consummate his revenge, but also to share his family's suppressed trauma. The actor's empathetic performance of a monologue and Fortinbras's commanding of an expendable army both represent strategies for sharing the emotional weight of his burden to revenge.

According to Shay, "healing from trauma depends upon communalization of the trauma—being able safely to tell the story to someone who is listening and who can be trusted to retell it truthfully to others in the community."[35] There is no healing in *Hamlet*; the only way in which Hamlet's trauma is shared is through the rampant deaths of the final scene. Hamlet desires posthumous communalization of his trauma, commanding Horatio: "tell my story" (5.2.333). Yet, as Friedman analyzes, Horatio's retelling will be inadequate: "Horatio will recount the kind of Senecan revenge tragedy plot that Eliot critiqued the play for failing to conform to. But he will not, perhaps because he cannot or perhaps because his auditors cannot hear or comprehend, say anything of Hamlet's appalled and traumatized response to the horrific ways of a social order corrupted by brute militarism."[36]

Fortinbras describes the carnage of the play's conclusion as the aftermath of "havoc" (5.2.348).[37] Although Hamlet is not a soldier and psychically resists being recruited for combat, Fortinbras honors him as a soldier in death:

> Let four captains
> Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage,
> For he was likely, had he been put on,
> To have proved most royal. And for his passage,
> The soldiers' music and the rite of war
> Speak loudly for him.
> Take up the bodies. Such a sight as this
> Becomes the field but here shows much amiss.
> Go, bid the soldiers shoot. (5.2.379-87)

Rather than acknowledging the complexity of collective trauma, Fortinbras attempts to contain it. Friedman writes: "So Hamlet who, like many returned warriors, undergoes 'the rite of war' after his death, but no healing or spiritual ceremony, kills and is killed in the domestic realm, bestrewing a court scene with corpses that suggest a battlefield, which even the militaristic Fortinbras deems

inappropriate."[38] Moreover, Friedman notes, "In his paragraph on 'havoc' in his *Shakespeare's Military Language: A Dictionary*, Charles Edelman maintains that 'Not all soldiers would agree' with Fortinbras that 'Such a sight as this…Becomes the field.'"[39] By imposing militaristic closure on the families' intertwined traumas and revenge tragedies, Fortinbras attempts to make the carnage of havoc "becoming," while disavowing the trauma of war. It is exactly this type of trauma that Wolfert's *Cry Havoc!* excavates and attempts to heal.

De-Medicalizing Posttraumatic Stress and Promoting Healing through De-Cruitment in Wolfert's *Cry Havoc!*

While *Hamlet*'s dramatization of the consequences of prizing overly militaristic views of masculinity is left ambiguous,[40] *Cry Havoc!* provides metatheatrical commentary on the relationship between the military, masculinity, and trauma through Wolfert's direct address to audiences. Wolfert explores the forces that transformed him from "a sensitive little boy that wanted to be a dancer"[41] into a soldier and details his journey from the Army to the theater.

Paul J. C. M. Franssen writes:

> Throughout, Wolfert stresses the importance of a masculine ethos to soldiers. For US soldiers, often from a working-class background, ballet or even theatre is an unmanly activity that interferes with their rugged, stiff-upper-lip manhood. […] Throughout *Cry Havoc!*, while reliving his experiences Wolfert's persona asks himself 'What is wrong with me?', until he realises that the answer does not necessarily lie in himself, in insufficient manliness or self-control, but in the way he was trained and programmed for war and in the traumatic experiences he has undergone. Healing, in this view, comes with an acceptance of what he and his peers used to look down on as effeminate behaviour: role-playing and acting, expressing his pain through almost ballet-like body movements, and talking about it.[42]

Discussing *Cry Havoc!* alongside adaptations of *Macbeth*, Franssen continues:

> Yet, what sets apart Kurzel's film, De Man's theatre adaptation, and in a different way Wolfert's *Cry Havoc!* is that they go

> beyond a simple anti-war stance, by questioning the male ethos that they hold responsible for the world's conflicted state: what is called, in modern parlance, toxic masculinity. The epitome of the masculine ideal is the soldier: the powerful protector of women and children, the maker of his own fate. What these productions suggest, each in their own way, is that the soldier is at the mercy of his own self-doubt and the demons of PTSD; that he may be manipulated by forces beyond his control, such as indoctrination by army drills …; that rather than protecting children, he risks harming them, physically or psychologically;[43]

While Franssen analyzes how *Macbeth* is a central intertext for Wolfert's exploration of toxic masculinity, I will argue that *Hamlet* allusions give voice to Wolfert's excavation of the effects of trauma.

Richard III is perhaps the most central Shakespearean intertext in Wolfert's one-man play, with Richard serving as a physical mirror of Wolfert's physical disability in his teenage years due to injury, as well as a psychic mirror of the difficulty of transitioning from war to peace and the haunting of conscience. However, Hamlet's words underscore key moments of traumatic alienation in Wolfert's play. Although Hamlet is not a veteran, his expressions of trauma and alienation fit seamlessly into the fabric of *Cry Havoc!* The play's *Hamlet* allusions bespeak the fracturing of inner self from social world in the face of trauma.

Wolfert dramatizes the trauma of witnessing his friend Marcus's death during a training exercise. While re-enacting the scene of delivering the flag to Marcus's widow and young daughters, after reciting: "on behalf of the President of the United States of America and a grateful nation, I present you with this token of appreciation for your loved one's faithful and honorable service," Wolfert adds: "But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue."[44] Hamlet's soliloquized expression of inner anguish, not articulable in the social world he inhabits, highlights how Wolfert's inner world begins fracturing from military protocols.

Hamlet is also alluded to at the climax of Wolfert's performance, as he describes being on the brink of suicide after experiencing the profound psychic dislocation of experiencing a flashback—and restraining himself from a violent outburst—while catering a children's party. Miming pointing a sawed-off shotgun at his face, Wolfert performs the "To be or not to be" soliloquy.[45] Hamlet's

soliloquy gives voice to Wolfert's contemplation of suicide and memorializes the veterans lost to suicide. Wolfert asks, "But why, why did I want to kill myself?"[46] and continues: "I believe it's because we're wired for war, but not unwired from war, not rewired for society. You know, when I went into the military, I had a recruiter that helped prepare me for life in the military, but when I got out, where was my de-cruiter, to help me prepare for life after the military?"[47] He continues: "If I'm wrong about de-cruiting, then why are twenty-two veterans killing themselves every day?"[48] Wolfert describes the progression in his thinking from "What the hell is wrong with me?" to "what happened to me?"[49] He says: "Well, I believe what happened to me is what happened to all veterans in this country. We were recruited at a psychologically malleable age, then we were wired for war. But at the end of our military service, we were not un-wired from war. We were not re-wired for society."[50]

A key component of being "wired for war" that Wolfert describes is to "respond to a threat with violence."[51] This response can lead to wreaking havoc, especially in the context of combat trauma. Wolfert recites Antony's apostrophe to Caesar's corpse[52] and connects it to wartime experience. The desire to "Cry 'havoc!'" is intertwined with the desire to protect those one fights alongside and to avenge fallen comrades. He describes watching a comrade's death as something that will "unleash the beserker."[53] Wolfert alludes to *Henry V*'s St. Crispin's Day speech to show how the camaraderie of a "band of brothers—and sisters" motivates those who serve in combat,[54] while Henry's threat at Harfleur is described as the "order of havoc" and connected to wartime atrocities committed by service members who are driven beserk by the loss of comrades.[55]

The first time Wolfert uses the term "posttraumatic stress disorder," he pauses before and puts critical stress on the word "disorder," accompanying it with air quotes.[56] When he later repeats the term, he continues to insert a painful pause before "disorder."[57] Wolfert's intonation makes his unease with the medicalized term clear. Wolfert's performance aligns with veteran John M. Meyer's critique:

> while many people undoubtedly suffer from physical, psychological, or moral trauma due to their involvement in

> a war, our current instruments simplify the problem, and marginalize veteran behavior that, given the environmental inputs that veterans experience at home and abroad, are normal—and perhaps even healthy. Most of the time, Post Traumatic Stress should not be called a disorder.[58]

Wolfert's emphasis on de-cruitment highlights the need for social, rather than medical, contexts for understanding and treating veterans' posttraumatic stress.

Wolfert's DE-CRUIT program promotes communal healing among veterans. Sonya Freeman Loftis cites the DE-CRUIT program as a unique form of Shakespeare therapy because it is informed by the social model, rather than the medical model, of disability.[59] Loftis writes: "DE-CRUIT runs counter to the medical model of disability. The medical model is based on a clear power hierarchy: physicians and psychiatrists give treatment, and patients receive treatment."[60] Loftis continues: "In DE-CRUIT, people who have PTSD share their experiences and help other people who have PTSD."[61] DE-CRUIT focuses on "a failure to reintegrate into civilian society" rather than "a 'pathology' that resides within the individual."[62]

The DE-CRUIT program is a veteran-led research model that seeks to remedy the failures of the biomedical model to adequately address "the effects of trauma and other social and environmental factors on mental health challenges in veterans and others."[63] It offers a model for community-based approaches to trauma work.[64] Alisha Ali, Stephan Wolfert, and Bruce D. Homer write:

> The final stage of the DE-CRUIT program involves the veterans performing their own personal trauma monologue and their selected Shakespearian monologue for an invited audience of veterans, family members, friends, and community members … This culminating performance emphasizes the *communalization of trauma*—a process that Shay (1995) has described as essential in helping veterans overcome the effects of moral injury and in fostering veterans' reintegration into civilian life.[65]

Shay writes: "Our culture has been notably deficient in providing for reception of the Furies of war into community. For better or worse, the health care system has been given this role—along with the prisons, where a disproportionate number of men incarcerated

since the Vietnam War have been veterans."[66] Shay continues: "We must create our own new models of healing which emphasize communalization of the trauma. Combat veterans and American citizenry should meet together face to face in daylight, and listen, and watch, and weep, just as citizen-soldiers of ancient Athens did in the theater at the foot of the Acropolis."[67]

This description evokes the mood of the live performance of *Cry Havoc!* that I attended in 2016.[68] The following semester, streaming a recorded performance of *Cry Havoc!* for my "Shakespearean Disability Studies" class,[69] I tried to let students know about this communal container: the questions and resources shared in the post-show Q&A; the space created for veterans in the audience to connect with each other; and the opportunity for non-veterans to bear witness. Can the Shakespeare classroom be one of the places where communal healing happens? Can it happen even if the veteran appears virtually, in recorded video?

Wolfert's performance ends with the pointed and repeated question: "Now what? Now what?"[70] The question, "Now what?" is so pressing that Wolfert considered including it in the title of the play.[71] The same question he used earlier in the play to describe his crisis of identity after leaving the Army is now posed directly to the audience: what will they do? What will *we* do, as a society and as Shakespeare scholars, to better support veterans? How will we participate in communalizing and healing trauma?

Notes

1. Alan W. Friedman, *Shakespeare's Returning Warriors—and Ours* (New York: Routledge, 2022), 101-116, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003203834.

2. Unless otherwise noted, all *Cry Havoc!* citations refer to *Cry Havoc!*, written and performed by Stephan Wolfert, directed by Eric Tucker, *Vimeo*, December 6, 2017, https://vimeo.com/ondemand/cryhavoc.

3. Alisha Ali, Stephan Wolfert, and Bruce D. Homer, "In the Service of Science: Veteran-Led Research in the Investigation of a Theatre-Based Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Treatment," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* (2019): 1.

4. Margaret Price, *Mad at School: Rhetorics of Mental Disability and Academic Life* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 18.

5. Charles Edelman, *Shakespeare's Military Language* (New Brunswick, NJ: Athlone Press, 2000), 167.

6. Edelman, *Shakespeare's Military Language*, 167.

7. Bennett Simon, "*Hamlet* and the Trauma Doctors: An Essay at Interpretation," *American Imago*, 58.3 (2001), 707.

8. Simon, "*Hamlet* and the Trauma Doctors," 708.

9. Simon, "*Hamlet* and the Trauma Doctors," 708.
10. Simon, "*Hamlet* and the Trauma Doctors," 717.
11. Simon, "*Hamlet* and the Trauma Doctors," 713.
12. Friedman, *Shakespeare's Returning Warriors*, 108.
13. David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000). Mitchell and Snyder's highly influential concept, "narrative prosthesis," highlights the centrality of disability to the construction of narratives; while disability propels literary narratives, it is ultimately eliminated—usually when the disabled character is "cured" or dies (Mitchell and Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis*, 53-54).
14. Stevie Simkin, *Early Modern Tragedy and the Cinema of Violence* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 65-87 explores how Hamlet's deferred revenge relates to the moral problem of being "tainted" by vigilantism.
15. References to *Hamlet* are from William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Revised Edition, ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2016).
16. Friedman, *Shakespeare's Returning Warriors*, 105.
17. Catherine Belsey, "The Case of Hamlet's Conscience," *Studies in Philology* 79.6 (1979): 147-148, states: "The Ghost's instructions cannot be obeyed. … The play as a whole suggests that Hamlet's mind is tainted—not in the sense that he is mad, but that he is inevitably corrupted by his mission."
18. Friedman, *Shakespeare's Returning Warriors*, 109.
19. Deborah Willis, "'The gnawing vulture': Revenge, Trauma Theory, and *Titus Andronicus*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 53.1 (2002): 21-52.
20. Robin Headlam Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 73.
21. Bruce R. Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 48-49.
22. Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity*, 75.
23. Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity*, 75.
24. Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity*, 77.
25. Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity*, 85.
26. Belsey, "Hamlet's Conscience," 137.
27. Belsey, "Hamlet's Conscience," 139-140.
28. Belsey, "Hamlet's Conscience," 138; Bernard Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil: The History of a Metaphor in Relation to his Major Villains* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 155-159.
29. Belsey, "Hamlet's Conscience," 129.
30. Wolfert repeats that becoming a beserker is "what's expected of each and every one of us that signs the line" (*Cry Havoc!*, 0:35:23-0:35-28; 0:48:08-0:48:12).
31. Jonathan Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character* (New York: Scribner, 1994), 77.
32. Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam*, 75.
33. Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam*, 89.
34. Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam*, 90.
35. Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam*, 4.
36. Friedman, *Shakespeare's Returning Warriors*, 114.
37. Andrew Foley, "Heaven or Havoc? The End of *Hamlet*," *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* 24 (2012): 45-56, argues that the "havoc" and chaos of the play's conclusion undermines any sense of providence or justice.
38. Friedman, *Shakespeare's Returning Warriors*, 113.
39. Friedman, *Shakespeare's Returning Warriors*, 116 n. 19.

40. Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity*, 84-85.
41. *Cry Havoc!*, 23:26-23:29.
42. Paul J. C. M. Franssen, "Flipping *Macbeth*: PTSD, Gender, and Generation in Adaptations by Wolfert, Kurzel, and De Man," *Cahiers Élisabéthains*, 104.1 (2021): 84, https://doi.org/10.1177/0184767820980765.
43. Franssen, "Flipping *Macbeth*," 92.
44. *Cry Havoc!*, 0:14:04-0:14:25.
45. *Cry Havoc!*, 1:12:20-1:13:40.
46. *Cry Havoc!*, 1:13:50-1:13:53.
47. *Cry Havoc!*, 1:14:14-1:14:30.
48. *Cry Havoc!*, 1:15:13-1:15:18.
49. *Cry Havoc!*, 0:23:23-0:23:53.
50. *Cry Havoc!*, 0:23:53-0:24:08.
51. *Cry Havoc!*, 0:28:14-0:28:16.
52. *Cry Havoc!*, 0:38:44-0:40:03.
53. *Cry Havoc!*, 0:40:06-0:40:08.
54. *Cry Havoc!*, 0:38:00-0:38:26.
55. *Cry Havoc!*, 41:45-44:57.
56. *Cry Havoc!*, 1:02:29-1:02:33.
57. *Cry Havoc!*, 1:08:10-1:08:13.
58. Meyer qtd. in Friedman, *Shakespeare's Returning Warriors*, 2.
59. Sonya Freeman Loftis, *Shakespeare and Disability Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 80.
60. Loftis, *Shakespeare and Disability Studies*, 79-80.
61. Loftis, *Shakespeare and Disability Studies*, 80.
62. Wiggins qtd. in Loftis, *Shakespeare and Disability Studies*, 80.
63. Ali, Wolfert, and Homer, "In the Service of Science," 2.
64. Ali, Wolfert, and Homer, "In the Service of Science," 3.
65. Ali, Wolfert, and Homer, "In the Service of Science," 8-9.
66. Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam*, 194.
67. Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam*, 194.
68. *Cry Havoc!*, written and performed by Stephan Wolfert, Northwest Campus Auditorium, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, May 3, 2016.
69. Teaching *Cry Havoc!* in my "Shakespearean Disability Studies" class at UCLA was a rewarding experience, but it is crucial to provide supports when screening materials, such as this, that dramatize and explore trauma. I provided content notes that described the subjects covered in the performance and offered resources for students.
70. *Cry Havoc!*, 1:16:27-1:16:33.
71. Maddalena Pennacchia, "Theatre Strikes Back in the Digital Era: An Interview with Stephan Wolfert" *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance* 20.35 (2019): 40, http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/2083-8530.20.04.

Possible Impossibilities: Female-Female Desire in Early Modern English Drama

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In Act 2, scene 2 of John Lyly's *Galatea*, Cupid expresses his plan to complicate the lives of Diana and her nymphs: "I will make their pains my pastimes, and so / confound their loves in their own sex that they shall dote / in their desires, delight in their affection, and practice / other impossibilities" (2.2.7-10)[1]. Cupid's belief that it is an "impossibility" to love someone of the same sex is contested by the content of Lyly's play, in which two women dressed as men fall deeply in love with one another in the safety of a forest. Though the play appears to suggest that it is not possible for a pair of women to pursue a life together, it also implies that the "practice" of sex acts between women might not be "impossible" at all.

Galatea is not unique; other early modern texts also convey that sex between women was a reality, even if women making a domestic life with one another could not be. Shakespeare's similarly homoerotic pastoral comedy, *As You Like It* also insinuates that it is entirely possible for women to "practice" sexual acts with one another. In *Galatea*, the cross-dressed heroines retreat into the forest to "make much" of one another (3.3.64) and in Act 1 of *As You Like It,* Celia claims that she and Rosalind have "slept" and "play'd" together (1.3.70-1).[2] The above terms and situations all seem to be explicit examples of female-female desire, but they

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are simultaneously ambiguous, calling to mind Valerie Traub's argument that sex in the past is perpetually unknowable, and that the opacity of sex acts permits scholars to investigate "how we know as much as what we know."[3] She suggests that it is crucial that we confront what we "*don't* know as what we *can't* know about sex in the past…[because] this confrontation with the variety of ways that it is possible not to know implicates the investigator, if willing, in various considerations of pedagogy and ethics."[4]

I contend that we are incapable of "knowing" sex acts in the past and that the opacity of these acts makes them especially compelling and worthy of analysis. Unknowability, of course, is not the same thing as possibility, but the two ideas are connected; it is the unknowability of sex acts in the past that, in effect, renders them possible. Both of the texts this paper explores feature moments that initially seem to denote either sexual encounters and/or romantic attraction between two women but are ultimately opaque. As readers are not able to entirely determine with confidence what did or did not occur, these intimate but ambiguous moments multiply rather than suppress possibilities, possibilities which allow us to reimagine the past as being more diverse than we often envision it.

Galatea opens with the virgins, Galatea and Phillida, being sent to the woods dressed as men so they can avoid being sacrificed to a beast—an unfortunate fate that befalls the most beautiful virgin in the village every year. Once in the woods, the two women encounter one another and, disguised as men, fall in love. Both women, it appears, perform the role of man poorly, as each woman suspects, much to her apparent distress, that the other is female: "Phillida [aside]: What doubtful speeches these be! I fear me he is as I am, a maiden! / Galatea [aside]: What dread riseth in my mind! I fear the boy is as I am, a maiden!" (3.2.32-5) That Phillida and Galatea both experience "fear" at the thought that the other could be female suggests that they are attracted primarily to the masculine disguises rather than to the idea of becoming sexually involved with another woman. The nature of the women's desire for one another, though, is perplexing because, while each woman professes her distress over her suspicion that her beloved is also female, neither stops pursuing the object of her affection. In fact, their fixation on one another only increases after Act 3, when each has the revelation that the other could also be a woman. Therefore,

although at first it appears that what attracts each woman to the other is the masculine disguise rather than the woman veiled beneath, the text makes it clear that each maiden may be equally drawn to the feminine aspects of the other's appearance.

A few critics have argued in favor of the idea that the young women are enticed primarily by one another's feminine characteristics. Denise Walen, for example, comments that the two women are attracted "not to the stereotypically masculine attributes…that the disguise represents, but to feminine qualities in one another."[5] The basis for Walen's assertion is evident in Act 3, when Phillida comments on the femininity of Galatea's appearance. She notes that "it is a pity that Nature framed you [Galatea] not a woman / having a face so fair[…]it is a pity you are not a woman" (3.2.1-7). It is odd Phillida would make such a statement as, were Galatea truly the man she pretends to be, she and Phillida would much more easily have a future together. The meaning of Phillida's lines is unclear. Why does Phillida say that Galatea ought to have been a woman when, a mere few lines later, she indicates that she "fears" Galatea is one? And why, if both women fear loving another woman do they seem so drawn to the feminine aspects of one another's appearance? Do the women ultimately desire the masculine disguise or the feminine appearance? Or both?

The view that the women are without a doubt attracted to the feminine qualities rather than the masculine disguise is a difficult argument to make, as this cannot be proven, and Lyly appears to have intentionally left it ambiguous. Yet, it is easy to understand why any scholar might read the characters' relationship in this way when considering the words that Phillida and Galatea exchange in Act 4. The women speak as though each is ignorant of the other's biological sex, and yet Phillida asks to call Galatea "mistress":

> *Galatea:* […]I cannot love thee as a brother
> *Phillida:* Seeing we are both boys, and both lovers, that our affection may have some show, and seem as if it were love, let me call thee mistress (4.4.15-18).

At face value, this exchange is self-explanatory. Phillida claims that, because they are both boys, it would be less scandalous if one of them calls the other "mistress." That each of the girls has already speculated that the other is female and that Phillida has indicated that it is a "pity" Galatea is not a woman, however, means that

this scene is more ambiguous. Phillida does indeed seem attracted to the feminine in Galatea and, by asking if she can call her mistress, she reinforces this idea. When considering the possibility of homoerotic feelings between these two women, it is useful to examine this word *mistress* itself. Theodora Jankowski analyzes mistress-servant relationships in Shakespeare's corpus, claiming that "it would be especially possible given the fact that a woman servant often lived in the same house as her mistress for many years" for the older of the two women "to initiate the younger woman into woman-woman sex."[6] She goes on to state that, because of this, the term *mistress* likely suggested these possibilities throughout the early modern period. So those who read or viewed *Galatea* in Renaissance England would have considered the sexual implications of this term *mistress* as well, a striking detail because it explicitly signals homoeroticism between these two women in the forest.

The ambiguity in this play hardly ends with the question of what—or who—exactly draws these young women to one another, though. In the passage in which Phillida asks permission to call Galatea mistress, Phillida refers to Galatea as her "lover." This word *lover*, in itself, is difficult to define in this context. Perhaps Phillida is referring to the idea that she and Galatea are performing a kind of romantic feeling for one another. It is, though, also worth entertaining the possibility that they have actually been physically intimate prior to Phillida's declaration that she is Galatea's lover in Act 4. Their affection for one another escalates and appears to reach a kind of culmination in Act 3. In what is arguably the opaquest moment in all of *Galatea,* Phillida suggests the following course of action to her companion: "Let us into the grove, and make much of / one another, that cannot tell what to think of one / another" (3.2.64-7). These lines immediately raise a question: What does Phillida mean by "make much" of one another? Though the phrase indicates some sexual encounter between the women, there is no way to confirm what "making much" means; indeed, for the rest of the play, this strange phrase is never used again. There is no description of what occurred between the two women in the grove and, when the women appear on stage once more a full act later, they do not behave as though they have any knowledge of the other's body. In fact, they continue acting as though each believes that the other is a boy.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the critics most interested in this play have commented on this section of Lyly's comedy.[7] Despite—or perhaps due to—its undeniable opacity, it appears as though only Traub and Jankowski have addressed this moment from the play in any particular detail. Jankowski considers what it means to "make much" at the greatest length:

> What kind of transgressions of modesty or "making much" occurs in the grove? Is it verbal or physical? Will it compromise their virginity or eliminate the need for disguise?... that they do not know they are the same biological sex suggests that the characters have not seen or touched each others' genitals or breasts [and]…their lack of visual or tactile evidence of biological gender suggests that they have created a new economy of pleasure, one that disrupts the masculinist scopic economy because it does not rely on a focus on genitals or vaginal penetration. Their pleasure reinforces the fact that a woman's anatomy does not require—or desire—the same type of sexual activity as a man's.[8]

Jankowski highlights what is most compelling about the grove mystery. She begins by asking these questions—what kind of transgressions of modesty are occurring, and will it compromise their virginity—before she concludes that a number of intimate verbal or physical activities—may have occurred between the two women and that, as Traub would say, there is no way of "knowing" those activities. What is evident is that Galatea and Phillida have had such an engaging time with one another that they are absent from the play from Act 3, scene 2 until Act 4, scene 4. In that way, this scene queers the traditional idea that sexual intimacy requires a man, a woman, and vaginal intercourse. Moreover, Phillida's remark that she and her "lover" "cannot tell what to think of one another" is compelling, as it confirms that Phillida is unsure whether Galatea is male or female, but desires to "make much" of her regardless of her beloved's gender. Whatever Galatea "is" serves as no obstacle to the coupling between this besotted pair.

When considering this "making much" and its opacity, it can be helpful to contemplate the methods of pleasure in which a pair of virgins might engage. Does their lack of experience limit their knowledge about sex? Might they have engaged in a kind of sex yet failed to perceive it as such? This latter possibility might explain why each girl remains uncertain of the other's biological sex in Act

4, after the incident in the glade has occurred. Though it might initially seem as though the incident is impossible to analyze due to its inscrutability, it is its unknowability that undermines what we think we know and makes us consider other alternatives. The unknowability, then, is productive rather than restraining.

In Act 5, when their true identities are finally unveiled, Galatea cries, "Unfortunate Galatea, if this be Phillida!" Phillida, in response, exclaims, "Accursed Phillida, if this be Galatea!" (5.3.120-21). These responses seem to indicate the women's distress and yet, ultimately, both women claim that, despite their revelation, they will never be able to be happy but with one another. That both Galatea and Phillida suspect the other of being female throughout the play, are attracted to one another's feminine attributes, and are incapable of imagining life without each other makes *Galatea* a story of reciprocal love between women. One might argue that this is not the case on the basis that Venus assures the two women, at the end of the play, that she will change one of them into a man so that they can eventually marry. Notably, however, the play ends before the transformation and subsequent marriage can occur. Lyly's decision to conclude the play before these events is crucial, as innumerous early modern comedies end in marriage. In this particular case, neither the marriage nor the transformation occurs because the women's desire for one another is not dependent on one or the other being made a man. In fact, as Walen, Jankowski, and others have previously suggested, it may perhaps primarily be the women's feminine appearance that leaves them feeling attracted to one another. So, the conclusion of the play leaves many questions open: Will one of the girls be transformed? Would the other girl, who fell for her beloved as a woman, still desire her newly transformed lover? Will the marriage even occur? Though there are no answers to these questions, it is apparent that Lyly is multiplying possibilities by opting out of ending this play with a marriage. By evading the wedding, the text implies that the act of transformation is not as crucial as it might seem and that it is perhaps more rewarding to imagine all of the things that may—or may not—have happened after the play's conclusion.

Though Cupid declares that the women in the forest will "practice impossibilities" with one another, the play's conclusion potentially asserts that female-female sex and desire are entirely

possible. Helping Lyly to advocate for the naturalness—and possibility—of woman-woman homoeroticism are the interludes with the comic figures, Robin, Dick, and Rafe. In Act 2, scene 3, Peter, the alchemist's apprentice, complains about the confusion of his daily job:

> It is a very secret science, for none
> almost can understand the language of it:
> sublimination, almigation, calcination, rubification,
> incorporation, cementation, albification, and fermentation,
> with as many terms unpossible to be
> uttered as the art to be compassed (2.3.11-15).

Peter insists that "no one can understand" the alchemical sciences, that they are indecipherable. Though it might initially seem difficult to imagine why Lyly constantly moves between scenes in the idyllic woods and scenes featuring these comical would-be alchemists, the clearest explanation is that Lyly is trying to show, through the exchanges between Rafe, Peter, and Dick, that there *are* impossible things in the world. Alchemy is impossible—or "unpossible" as he says—but love between women, as the play shows us, is a definite possibility. These interludes with the alchemists, like the forest setting of this play, serve to remind the reader of the naturalness—and possibility—of female-female desire and sex.

Though *As You Like It* is perhaps less explicitly homoerotic than *Galatea*, Shakespeare's work suggests, as *Galatea* appears to, that the natural world permits and encourages homoeroticism between women.[9] Rosalind, the play's cross-dressed heroine, and Celia, her cousin, are already quite close before they enter the forest, however the dialogue between Rosalind and Celia is as erotically intriguing and complex as any of the heterosexual moments in the comedies. As early as Act I, Celia states that she and Rosalind have "slept" and "played" together and that they are "like Juno's swans, coupled and inseparable" (1.3.71-4). We cannot, of course, be certain what Celia means when she says that she and Rosalind have "slept" or "play'd" together," though we can consider possibilities. The term *slept* could refer to Celia and Rosalind literally falling asleep together or, by contrast, to their being sexually intimate with one another. Likewise, *play'd* could refer to innocent games of the sort the girls played in childhood; but it could also, by the same token, allude to a sexual relationship between the two. The OED

defines *played* as "to engage in amorous play." It cites examples from Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* in which the term is used this way, suggesting that early moderns would have considered the word *played* to have a notable sexual connotation.[10] Therefore, the ambiguity of these terms encourages readers and viewers to see sexual intimacy between this pair of women as a real possibility. When Celia describes her relationship with Rosalind, she compares their connection to that of Juno's swans, birds that mate for life. This image too helps to create the idea that their relationship is uniquely close.

Celia and Rosalind's intimacy is far more complex than the mere suggestion of physical closeness, though. In Act 1, when Charles and Oliver are discussing the relationship between the two cousins, Charles insists that Celia "would have followed her [Rosalind] into exile or have died to stay behind her" and that "never two ladies loved as they do" (1.1.104-7). Le Beau, in Act 1, scene 2, states, "their loves are dearer than the natural bond of sisters" (1.2.242-3). Furthermore, when Celia's father banishes Rosalind because he fears that she will attempt to steal Celia's inheritance, Celia insists that Rosalind has done no harm and assures her cousin that, if she is banished, she will follow her into banishment, abandoning both her inheritance and her titles in the process:

> [...]thou and I am one.
> Shall we be sundered? Shall we part, sweet girl?
> No, let my father seek another heir!
> […]Say what thou canst, I'll go along with thee (1.3.93-102).

The above quotation and the quotations that precede it are among the countless examples in the play that reveal the depth of Celia's feelings for Rosalind. Though other characters insist that Rosalind and Celia share a bond "closer than natural sisters," intriguingly, the play itself only displays Celia's affection for Rosalind. Rosalind, after learning that she is to be banished, does not seem greatly affected by Celia's description of the extent of her devotion. In fact, Rosalind's sexuality proves one of the opaquest aspects of a play that is already difficult to decipher. In response to Celia's assertion that she will "go along" with Rosalind, no matter the consequences, the latter merely asks, "Why whither shall we go?" Celia replies,

"To seek my uncle in the Forest of Arden" (1.3.103-4). Here, as in *Galatea,* the forest is a place of refuge. Exiled in the wilderness, Rosalind and Celia may be able to explore all manner of erotic possibilities, divorced as they are from the influence of society. The situation Shakespeare's comedy presents ends up rather more complicated than Celia appears to envision it, though.

When Celia proposes that she and Rosalind go into the woods, she takes the more dominant role in the planning. Carol Thomas Neely notes that, at the beginning of the comedy, "Celia's greater resources and greater affection make her Rosalind's protector" and that, after they have gone into the forest, the power dynamics are reversed such that Rosalind, whether because she is "disguised as a man" or because of "the change of venue and status," takes the lead in the relationship, abandoning her nervous disposition in favor of the confident swagger of a young man.[11] With the arrival of this confidence comes the abandonment of Rosalind's closeness with Celia. Though Rosalind and Celia's love is "more extended than any cited lovesickness discourse in Shakespeare" and "is vowed permanent," it loses steam once the two girls enter the forest.[12] Despite Rosalind and Celia's living arrangements, Rosalind is thoroughly occupied by the other opportunities that await her in Arden—particularly with Orlando, the young man with whom she ultimately falls in love. Celia, who warns Rosalind to "love no man in good earnest" (1.2.120) often responds to Rosalind's affection for Orlando with sarcasm rather than enthusiasm, an indication that she is generally skeptical of heterosexual relationships. Rosalind, by contrast, appears suddenly skeptical of homosexual relationships following her entry into Arden, a perplexing detail given that the forest, remote and inherently opaque as it is, is one place in which Rosalind could fully embrace her homoerotic relationship with Celia.

We see Rosalind's skepticism toward homosexual relationships clearly through her interactions with other characters in Arden. In Act 3, Rosalind, disguised as Ganymede, chastises Phoebe, a shepherdess, for cruelly rejecting Silvius's affections for her. Phoebe is immediately attracted to Rosalind, claiming "sweet youth, I pray you chide a year together! / I had rather hear you chide than hear this man woo" (3.5.65-6). Rosalind, concluding that Phoebe will continue to fall in love with her if she speaks to her roughly, says,

in an aside to Silvius, "[…]she'll fall in love with my anger. If it be so / as fast as she answers thee with frowning looks, I'll / sauce her with bitter words" (3.5.68-70). Rosalind is suggesting to Silvius that she will seduce the woman he loves, presumably with the goal of ultimately embarrassing her. One could argue here that Phoebe's affection for Rosalind is entirely based on her disguise as Ganymede and, therefore, that the affection she develops is not a proper example of female-female desire. However, while Phoebe is indeed attracted to the "youth" she sees before her, we have to consider that Rosalind, like *Galatea's* cross-dressed heroines, might not be performing the role of "boy" as well as she could be. After all, Orlando is able to easily imagine that Ganymede is his beloved Rosalind during the faux marriage scene in Act 4, scene 1. How could he do this if there was not something in Ganymede that reminded him of his feminine beloved? Thus, we can accept the possibility that Rosalind is still more than vaguely feminine despite her disguise. What is perhaps most remarkable about Phoebe's affection for Rosalind-as-Ganymede is Rosalind's reaction to it. Rosalind's plan to trick Phoebe into falling in love with a woman because she has been unkind to Silvius seems, on some level at least, to make a mockery of female-female desire. Phoebe's growing feelings for the ambiguously gendered Ganymede are proof that the forest still sanctions female-female desire, but Rosalind herself dismisses the opportunity to embrace any manner of homoerotic feeling and, indeed, renders such desire the punchline of a joke.

The unknowability and erraticism of Rosalind's sexuality and the manner in which she presents it is not only of interest to me, but to other scholars in the field of early modern gender studies. Traub claims that, when it comes to homoeroticism between women in Shakespeare's comedies, "it is the female rather than the male characters…who, by their silent denial of another woman's emotional claims, position homoerotic desire in the past."[13] She argues that *As You Like It* stages "a violent repudiation of female allegiance," and she cites the way "Rosalind nastily mocks Phebe's expression of erotic interest" as an example of this in the play."[14] Female-female desire, Traub concludes, "is figurable in terms not only of the always already lost, but the always about to be betrayed. And the incipient heteroeroticism of the woman who

is recipient rather than enunciator of homoerotic desire comes to stand as the natural telos of the play."[15] Traub's analysis provides another understanding of this comedy. The forest fosters all kinds of possibilities. Celia sees it as a refuge where she and Rosalind can live peacefully together; Phoebe understands it as a place in which she can fall in love with the uncharacteristically pretty boy, Ganymede; and Orlando believes he can practice marriage with an individual he takes to be another man within this woodland setting. The natural world in this play offers the same opportunities as the forest does in *Galatea*; and yet Rosalind, as the recipient of homoerotic desire rather than the enunciator, chooses to limit these possibilities, at least to some degree. There does not seem to be anything that would prevent her from "practicing" love with Celia or even with Phoebe in the woods, but she ultimately rejects these options. Rosalind's sexuality itself is one of the most unclear aspects of what is already in many ways a perplexing play. Celia claims that she and Rosalind have an emotionally and possibly physically intimate relationship and, though Celia is more invested, Charles's remarks to Oliver in Act 1 suggest that their deep affection for one another is mutual. So, why does this woman, who was involved in a deep, homosocial and possibly homoerotic relationship, use the forest as a space in which to reject homoerotic possibility, to mock Phoebe's affection, and more or less to ignore Celia? There is no obvious answer to this question. The forest remains a place of opportunities, but they are opportunities that Rosalind seems to have turned away from in favor of pursuing heteroerotic banter with Orlando.

Though Rosalind's rejection of Phoebe and Celia appears harsh and even potentially judgmental, there may be yet another explanation for her sudden shift from her affections for Celia to her love for Orlando. To explore this alternative explanation, it is useful to turn to Celia's mysterious decision to marry Oliver at the conclusion of the play. Orlando's comments on the unnatural speed of Celia and Oliver's courtship—"Is't possible that on so little acquaintance you should like her? / That but seeing, you should love her? / And loving, woo? And wooing, she should grant?" (5.2.1-3)—renders it apparent that Celia's relationship with Oliver is one of those seemingly impossible, or at least unlikely, love relationships the play portrays. But Celia's quick marriage,

strangely, actually functions as proof that *As You Like It* is not a play in which couples abandon their homoerotic bonds in favor of heterosexual marriage. Celia, notably, shows little regard for Oliver at the end of the play, though she is to marry him, seeming instead to be more concerned with the fainting of Rosalind. In Act 4, Celia is clearly worried for Rosalind's health; she says, "Come, you look paler and paler / Pray you draw homewards. Good sir, go with us" (4.3.177-8). Only the conclusion of this line ("Good sir") is aimed at Oliver, illustrating that her primary concern, at this moment at least, is still with Rosalind. Celia's behavior is befuddling. Julie Crawford offers one convincing explanation as to why Celia might so quickly enter into a heterosexual marriage with a man she does not know well:

> Traub's argument that the homoerotic desires of these female characters existed comfortably within the patriarchal order only until the onset of marriage gives too much credit to the restrictiveness, and heterosexuality, of marriage…. The speed of Celia's marriage…is less an attempt to heterosexualize her, than a condition of her continued relationship with Rosalind.[16]

By quickly marrying Oliver, Celia enables herself to remain close to Rosalind, who is marrying Oliver's brother, Orlando. Homoeroticism is then compatible with and even facilitated by the women's marriages.

Thus, Rosalind might not view her marriage as the end of her relationship with Celia. As her feelings toward Celia are consistently opaque throughout the play, it is difficult to imagine how she feels about Oliver's wedding to her cousin. It seems plausible that Rosalind sees her marriage to Orlando and Celia's to Oliver as an opportunity to keep both Orlando and Celia close to her as she enters the next stage of her life, seeking the continuation of her deep homoerotic bond rather than its dissolution. Though there are obvious limits to the intimacy that can exist between Rosalind and Celia, by marrying into the same household, the two women ensure that they can remain as connected to one another as possible. I would argue that both Crawford and Traub are too definite in their readings. Crawford seems convinced that Celia and Rosalind will continue their homoerotic connection within their marriages while Traub seemingly argues that heterosexual

marriage is the death knell for all homoeroticism. By contrast, I argue that Celia's marriage to Oliver merely creates the possibility for the continuation of these homoerotic bonds, though we cannot say for certain that any such thing occurs. The fact that the possibility is even there, though, queers our view of "natural" heterosexual marriage. If we accept that *marriage* is not synonymous with *heterosexuality*, we can prevent ourselves from running to binaries and instead acknowledge that there are always numerous possibilities where sexuality is concerned. Rosalind appears to ignore the homoerotic opportunities that the green space of Arden presents, but it is feasible that she and Celia may maintain their intimacy in the future in some capacity.

I believe it is crucial that we think about *As You Like It, Galatea,* and other pastoral comedies as works in which the characters regularly inhabit more than one position of sexual desire. These characters are not "heterosexual" or "homosexual," but rather figures that exist in a middle space of sexuality and sexual expression. Valerie Rohy builds from an argument Traub makes in her book, *Desire and Anxiety*, to protest the notion that the characters inhabit only one position of desire throughout *As You Like It*:

> Rather than being homosexual, 'characters temporarily inhabit a homosexual position of desire'-a formula that uncouples Shakespeare from today's identity politics. We might ask, however, whether heterosexuality itself isn't a temporary 'position of desire.' If sexuality is subject to the whims of fortune, would that allow an endless turning?[17]

Rohy suggests that sexuality in *As You Like It* seems to be always changing and, therefore, is perpetually opaque. I would be willing to make the same argument about *Galatea* and its characters. It can be dangerous to assume that a character inhabits one position of desire or the other instead of acknowledging that the sexualities we see in these plays are fluid, changing, and, therefore, always unknowable. Determining that the female characters in this pair of comedies must necessarily inhabit either a heterosexual space or a homosexual one closes off all possibility for further analysis in two early modern works that are characterized by possibility. I believe it is imperative that we, as readers, allow the opaque moments of female-female eroticism to remain opaque rather than trying to

define them, thereby permitting ourselves to thoroughly consider all the opportunities they are able to impart.

Notes

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ACTING SHAKESPEARE: A Roundtable Discussion with Artists from the Utah Shakespeare Festival's 2022 Production of *All's Well That Ends Well*

Isabel Smith-Bernstein
USF Dramaturg and Director of Seminar

Featuring: Yvette Monique Clark, Jeremy Thompson, Keven Kantor, Rob Tucker

Stewart Shelley: Welcome to our Actor's Panel. We are delighted to welcome members of the panel and Dr. Bernstein, who is our dramaturg and director of seminar. We have Yvette, Jeremy, Kevan and Rob ready to discuss the show, answer questions, and share insight. This is our incredible group of Wooden O participants. We also have a few people joining us via Zoom. So, without further ado, I will turn that over to you.

Smith-Bernstein: I'll give a little bit of background about this play, and then I'm here to moderate if you need the moderation, but everyone here is smart and capable. As Stewart said, my name is Dr. Isabel Smith-Bernstein. I was the dramaturg for *All's Well That Ends Well*. I've been at this festival since 2015. I also do all the seminars in the mornings.

All's Well That Ends Well is a play that was written by Shakespeare. This might be a little bit of information that you already know, since this is a room of scholars, but it was written by Shakespeare

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in about 1605. It was very hard to date for a really, really long time because it has a lot of really weird textual things about it. And one of them is that it has to have been written after about 1620 when you were allowed to say God on the stage again because our text for *All's Well* from the folio mentions God and Christianity quite a lot. And that, of course, was banned for a very, very long time. So, the dominant theory about *All's Well* now is that it was written in 1605 in between Shakespeare's writing of *Othello* and *Lear*. There are a lot of linguistic similarities between *All's Well* and *Lear*. Then it was edited by our friend Thomas Middleton in about 1620. And that's why it talks about God, and that's why some of the jokes in *All's Well* are incredibly hard to understand and also very vulgar at the same time. That's Middleton, right? And so, it does seem that our text, our only surviving *All's Well*, the folio version, is an edited version by Thomas Middleton. And so of course, as a team, for us, that meant wading through a lot of particularly difficult language because Middleton is not Shakespeare. Me and the director and the voice and text coach, Philip Thompson, actually changed a few of the words in our production of *All's Well* just for clarity, and we rewrote a couplet, too, one Diana speaks, just for clarity, so the audience can follow along.

In the seminar, I usually talk about how *All's Well's* a little bit of a problem play, and what that actually means. The term a problem play comes from a theater critic in the 1800s, who was actually writing about Henrik Ibsen. He was writing about how Ibsen's plays are all about societal or social problems that are not easily fixed in the course of a play. So, we were writing about Ibsen originally and saying that the play is about problems and not that it is a play that is a problem, but now that term has taken a life of its own.

All's Well is definitely a play about social problems. Perhaps, maybe, it also is a bit of a problem, but I think it's been labeled in an unfair way that has relegated it to a corner for most of its life. And then, of course, it's a problem play in another sense. It came to mean that play of Shakespeare's that you can't categorize, which I think is silly, because obviously Shakespeare was unconcerned with any kind of modern genre. He wrote comedies and tragedies. It's a comedy if someone gets married and not everyone's dead at the end of the play. And it's a tragedy if everyone's dead at the end

of the play. And it's my own personal thought that in Shakespeare, the real difference is that in comedy, the characters have to live with all of their choices. And in a tragedy, they all die because of their choices. And so that is *All's Well*. Everyone has to live with their choices. It's very much a play about very messy people of being messy and those who witness or try to guide, like the Countess. And ultimately, those youth just won't listen.

Our production was directed by Melinda Pfundstein, and she set it in the interwar period, as a means to bring it forward in time, so that our context for it is the same as what Shakespeare's audiences' would have been, because we have no concept of the Italian Wars, which is what Shakespeare is writing about. And so in this period, we immediately have context for that, and it actually frees us to watch the play and listen to it. So we're not all in the audience thinking, "What do I know about the Italian wars?" Probably nothing, because they're kind of insignificant today. Also, in our play, the text is shortened. It's condensed a little bit, but we're not actually missing anything, except for a six-line epilogue given by the King at the end of *All's Well*, in which the actor steps forward and says, "I am not a king. I am an actor. Please applaud." As far as epilogues by Shakespeare go, it is not a good one. There is also a strong indication that it was written by Middleton and not Shakespeare. And so we cut that in favor of an air raid siren.
So that's a little bit of primer on *All's Well*. I'd love it if everyone could introduce yourselves. Tell us your name and your pronouns if you want. My pronouns are she, her, hers.

Clark: I'm Yvette Monique Clark. I play the Countess, and my pronouns are she, her, hers.

Thompson: Jeremy Thompson, he, him, his, and I play G. Dumaine.

Kantor: My name is Kevin Kantor. My pronouns are they, them, theirs. I play Paroles.

Tucker: My name is Rob Tucker, and I played Lafeu and the Duke of Florence.

Audience member: While we're in the introduction phase, since we're a repertory theater, would you also share what other shows you're in?

Clark: I play Willetta Mayer in *Trouble in Mind*.

Thompson: I also play Eddie Fenton in *Trouble in Mind* and in *King Lear* I am the Duke of Burgundy, a knight, a servant, and the herald.

Kantor: I also play Trinculo in *The Tempest*.

Tucker: I also play the Beadle in *Sweeney Todd*. I play a knight, a doctor, a captain, an old man of 85 in *King Lear*.

Smith-Bernstein: I also worked on *Sweeney Todd* and *The Tempest*.

Audience member: I wanted to ask about the acting choices for Paroles. So, there's hypocrisy throughout the whole play, and you're being called on yours. And you can be the victim, or you can get out in front of it. Lots of choices how to play that. Reminds me of Shylock a few years ago. He had the same choice, knowing, "Okay, I'm the victim here. But wait a minute, again, they're all hypocrites." I'd love for you to talk through how you chose your response. Because you were angry. You stayed angry. And that was a choice. And I thought it worked fabulously, but I'd like to hear your thought process.

Kantor: I was really drawn to doing this contract because Melinda had reached out to me after conversations with Isabelle about how they wanted to approach the role of Paroles in the show, and particularly leaning into the queerness that is already very existent in the text. It is very much there in a show that is largely about gender and sexual agency. And so, for the lack of a better word, traditionally, we have someone that we perceive to be a man performing masculinity to the point of bravado and fluidity. And this approach was something that worked to sort of invert that. And to your point, everyone in this show, especially the principals specifically, but even beyond them, are messy and do their fair share of messy shit and lying. And so it begs the question, why is it then Paroles who is always on the receiving end of all of this criticism? And I think one of the ways that our production answers that question is that it's their perceived otherness. And I find it interesting in that context that you also bring up Shylock.

My choice, to borrow your words, to stay angry, is because I was not interested in telling a reformation story. While there is language in the play that suggests that there is a change and that Paroles's understanding of how it is that they might be able to survive this world shifts, especially after the interrogation, I was

not interested in playing a Paroles who has decided to abandon what makes them them. And we see that a little bit in the design, right? I come back in Act 5, and I've been stripped of some of my fabulousness, but I think that stripping requires a certain righteous and rightful indignation towards the wrong that has been done to them.

Audience member: Yeah, I would like to see just a little bit of your fabulousness be kind of kept—

Kantor: Well, I'm still in that corset.

Audience member: I love that last speech after the interrogation, to the audience.

Kantor: There's lots of conversation about how an image like that would be perceived, right? And we all have to understand as a cast what we're co-signing too, in that it is impossible to receive that imagery without a current cultural zeitgeist in mind. We need to know that whether or not a particular character thinks that, the actor thinks that their core motivation is grounded in prejudice against explicitly, visibly queer people and that that is what we will receive as an audience, at least to an extent. I would not suggest that that is every character's core motivation. I think for a lot of folks it could be Paroles's perceived proximity to power in their relationship to Bertram. And when we have complicated motivations like that, often our subconscious will default to the least common denominator, which is that person is different. So, I think it is unavoidable and also an important, ugly, messy truth that we are exploring with the text.

Smith-Bernstein: Jeremy, do you want to talk about that a little bit? As one of the leaders of the interrogation?

Thompson: Sure. We talked a little bit about this in that paperwork session that you did late in the process about what we were going to do. Let's really clarify. What I remember us talking about were things that we had to be aware of as actors but that maybe the characters weren't aware of themselves, like Kevin just said. That maybe G. Dumaine doesn't think of himself as being homophobic or queerphobic. And especially with the sibling relationship between the Dumaines, and having Tasha, who is playing E. Dumaine as a woman in men's clothing in the military, taking on this more traditionally masculine role. Knowing that the otherness that is still there, and that these psychological forces

are at work that maybe the characters don't even have language to describe themselves, but that they share that lowest common denominator of, "that's different and I don't like that." Especially with masculinity as the default. That in some way it's okay that E. Dumaine is presenting as masculine, but you have this masculine person who's expressing a level of femininity and that somehow all the characters on stage are like "something's wrong there." And that that subconscious thing irks us, not even in the interrogation scene, but from the very beginning. We're still playing with the brandy hand off and all the awkwardness that comes out there. We needed to be aware that it's laced in from the beginning and explodes out at the end in ways that we are definitely intending as the interrogators and then come back around to bite us at the end. And that look that you're shooting towards us at the end, at various different times, where I feel, at least as G. Dumaine living in this world, that Paroles has reclaimed some power at the end, and that we are now screwed, that Paroles has the ability, if they want to, to absolutely torch everyone. And there's a fear.

Kantor: I think it's interesting, and it's also separate from our particular approach, which I would also be remiss not to mention. It's not an entirely novel one. The queerness is in the text, and it has been explored before in other productions, even as rarely as *All's Well* is done. But for all of the language about Paroles being a braggart and a coward and false and untrue, with the exception of the King and the Countess, I would say Paroles has the most power in the play, is the one who gets the most shit done. If it were not for Paroles, I do not think—that virginity scene with Helen, I think spurs on her realization that she has agency. Because of Paroles, Bertram leaves for war. Paroles actually orchestrates everything. They have all the power. And I think it is that power, not only that power, but that power that is perceived in someone that is free from the trappings of these assigned gender roles that everyone else is shackled to, that scares everyone. And that is why they are made to be an ass by everyone, because they feel the need to strip that power away from them.

Smith-Bernstein: Could you talk a little bit more about what motivates your Paroles in doing those things that you just talked about and making those actions happen?

Kantor: Yeah, I would say the macro ones are a sense of agency and freedom, right? Especially in this approach. Again,

to hearken back to this idea that everyone calls this character a braggart and a coward, and I would say Paroles maybe selfishly, but I think textually as well, is actually the bravest person in the play, is someone who is unafraid to be uninhibited in a world that is demanding inhibition. Also, Paroles is in love with Bertram, as Helen is. Why? Who but love knows? This man—I think he's—

Thompson: Well, he's ripped.

Kantor: Right. But it's also deeply, deeply relatable that it's like, "I'm in love with this man." And also, he's sullen, he's dour, he's gloomy. He's almost everything that Paroles and Helen are not. Opposites attract, right? And so I think a lot of his actions, like the other two characters, Helen and Bertram, are born of a desire for sexual agency. Agency as a whole, but particularly *All's Well* is about sex. And I think Paroles spurs Helen on, not realizing that the man that she's going to go after is his own. And then when that happens, Paroles's actions are about getting Bertram as far away from her as possible and then again trying to intervene in the boyish ritual of courtship and at war with Diana. I think it's often read as Paroles wanting these women for himself, and it's like, what play did you read? So, I think it's largely that relationship that motivates him. There's an intimacy there; they grew up together. And I think that Bertram is also someone who has co-signed this fabulousness that Paroles exhibits, and it's one that I think that Paroles is often performing for Bertram. And I also read the play as Bertram being deeply in love with Paroles as well. That was not our production.

Audience member: I was expecting it to be honest. I wanted in the end for Bertram to be in love with you.

Kantor: Well, Paroles has private scenes with Helen and private scenes with Bertram. The two of them never have a private scene together. Paroles is the go-between. That scene when we go off to war is, well we decided it was, riddled with sexual innuendo. Where we arrived in this particular portrayal was through the question of how is this individual granted so much private intimacy with these two characters? Again selfishly, but also textually, I think it's Paroles's play. Paroles has the most private moments with the audience next to Helen. Bertram never has a private moment with the audience.

Smith-Bernstein: This play was billed as Paroles's throughout most of the 17 and 1800s.

Tucker: I think that actually brings up an interesting point, talking about the text and the sexual innuendos that are in the text, I think it's important to think about also the fact that in many ways our production is grappling with three different time periods at the same time. And the way male affection was viewed in Elizabethan England is a little different than the way we Puritan descendants view it now, and different again from where we set it in France in 1939, the World War II era. In our production, we have to navigate all three of them, so that today is completely under the curtain. That's the beauty of theater and all art. It can be turned in different ways and it's received in the perspective you come from. Which is why you're seeing queer so apparently. It's there in the text, for sure.

Clark: [Speaking of Bertram] He's an ass. That's it.

Audience member: That's your son.

Clark: He's an ass. That's why I know. He's following none of the positive upbringing and he has his privilege, and he's doing nothing good with it. He will not follow in his father's footsteps, as I wish that he would. I guess at the end of the play, you see an inkling that he might, but that's too fast of a turn on a dime for his mother. I'm sad that I don't have any language to express that at the end of the show. But yeah, he's an ass.

Tucker: I actually think Lafeu's is the traditional viewpoint, and was probably more in line with the crowd then. I mean, I think one of the things we were talking about is why people want Bertram. Why do people love him? And I think one of the reasons we get is that he's incredibly privileged and really young. But he's not been anywhere. He's not done anything. So the first time he runs away from home, which feels very teenagery to me, and he probably would have been considered a teenager.

Smith-Bernstein: He is, and the textual evidence is that he hasn't become count as soon as his father dies. He instead becomes a ward of the King of France. He's not an inheriting age.

Tucker: I mean, it's just rash. I mean, you said something in the play—

Clark: "Mad and unbridled, boy."

Tucker: Yeah. And it's just like, oh, I was forced into adulthood by this marriage, which I'm not prepared for nor want, and I need to escape in any way. It's all instinct, instinct, instinct, instinct.

And then there's all these little things, and I think there's—Yes, he is an ass. But, I think that that's what happens when you're a sheltered youth. It's so much money and so much privilege. That's what ends up happening--I mean, we see it in the world.

Smith-Bernstein: Bertram also has all his consent taken away. I mean, he doesn't want to marry Helen, and then he also doesn't want to sleep with Helen, but he gets her pregnant.

Tucker: He wants to go to war. And people keep telling him, "You're too young. You're too young." And he finally is like, "I'm just going to do something for me. Goodbye."

Clark: But he does want to sleep with somebody. It's not Helen, but okay.

Thompson: It's been noted that if you swap the traditional gender roles of Helen and Bertram, Bertram instantly becomes a Disney Princess. You could write that over the plot of *Brave*.

Smith-Bernstein: It's very effective for *All's Well*, for a theater to cast Bertram as a woman as well.

Audience member: I really love the show, and one of the things I really loved about it is—I saw a show a while ago of the same play, where it felt like the director said, "This is a problem play. Make sure no one has any fun at all." That was very tonally one note. So what I really enjoyed about your production choices and acting choices were that you seemed to accept the messiness. You went along with a mixture of charm and shifting sympathies. As much as Bertram fails, there's also this moment where we see exactly what you're saying. He's young. He wants his life to start. And suddenly, Helen cures the king, and he wants to know why do I have to marry her? And that's a good question. I really enjoyed that you kept all those things in play and let the audience sort of work out where their sympathies lie. I was interested, as a question, in how much difference you noticed between particular audiences or how people react to what you're doing.

Clark: Well, they always enjoy Paroles. Always, always.

Tucker: What's weird is that the younger the audience, the more vocal they are about their enjoyment of Paroles. There's some people who are baffled by Paroles. But at the end of the show, every single night without fail, the loudest applause is for Paroles.

Kantor: It is always interesting. This play is hard to do. I think for all the reasons that you just mentioned, and I'm glad

that this production sang to you. It's really difficult. And I think that's exemplified very early on, in the way we begin with a funeral. Everyone's dressed in black. It's dour and bleak. And then I walk down the stairs and am like "Let's talk about sex, baby." When I descend the stairs, and we immediately engage in this sort of vulgar scene about sex looking the way that I do, there is always a sharp intake of breath in the house. I think, night to night, I can clock when the exhale is, and sometimes it's at the end of that scene. Sometimes it's not until the interrogation. I think that's a reality.

It would be a reality anywhere, but it's an undeniable truth that we are creating this piece of art in a place that can have a specific sort of conservative cultural zeitgeist. I think it is actually far fewer folks than we give credit to that are ready to see something like this in the community. But I think they do follow it. I think they follow it and, the way that the play was designed, they know at the end what suffering looks like. I think Helen, Bertram, and Paroles all do their fair share of suffering in this play. So in regards to this shifting alignment of sympathies, I think that's the reality of the piece, too. It's difficult. It's so messy, this play. We are trained to believe that Shakespeare's plays, especially the more popular ones, are something we should be able to easily follow, if not textually then tonally. And this one does not hold your hand in that regard, which is why I think it's actually really fun to do.

Smith-Bernstein: It really is a play about two tricks, right? So, there's the ring trick and then the interrogation, but we only see one of them. I mean, Shakespeare's not going to put the bed trick on stage, but we see very little surrounding it either. And the tricks do kind of mirror each other. And the fact that the trick with Paroles goes too far, actually I think it also must be a comment on the trick with Helen and Bertram, one that we don't see. And then both tricks are about a circle of some kind. So, they're both kind of about sex and virginity. A drum versus a ring.

Audience member: Would you be willing to talk a little bit about the process of putting this together? How much of the interpretation was the director's choice? How much came from the actors? How did that process play out?

Clark: This is my first Shakespeare play. I fell in love with Shakespeare when I was 15 in AP English class. The first play we read was Macbeth. And Lady M spoke to me. I felt like I needed

to know, "Who is this woman?" And I needed to see—I needed to know what it was. And so I've always understood it. I've always read it. I'm not well versed in all the technical things, like, what's the verse and what is the soliloquy. But I have a connection to it. And so when I was offered the role of Countess in *All's Well*, I was like, "It's probably just a couple of lines. I'll be fine." When I got to rehearsal, I was like, "In the name of God."

I had a one-on-one with Melinda, where I was wrestling with how to create the Countess and how much of me should be in her because I am a mother as well, of a son who was an ass. He's a fabulous adult, but from 12 through 17 I thought somebody wasn't going to make it. So, I asked Melinda, "How much of me can I put into the Countess?" She said, "All of it." So, I thought, how did I deal with my son when he was going through his teenage transition? And the instinct was to slap Bertram upside the head. But I had to make do with my face and my tone of voice.

I understand who she is. I love that she is strong. I love that she owns her household. I love that she doesn't seem in a rush to get another man. She has her own money and her own situation, and she's handling it very well. So, it took me a while to figure out how strong to make her. I had to think how to plant my feet. The way I walk as Countess, the way I stand as Countess, all of that had to come into play even before I learned the words. What was her physicality going to be? How much would she tolerate from those who surround her?

As the Countess, Renalda is the closest person to me, so she's allowed more freedom. Like when E. Dumaine tries to touch me, and I'm like, "Are you serious? You don't touch me." So, I had to find who she was, and I found her. I've fallen in love with her. And I think that I'm getting better as it goes. But opening night, if you touched me you could literally feel me shaking. And I never get nervous. It was the anxiety of "I have to say all these words. And people out there don't know what I'm saying." I'm in a zone right now. Even when I mess up, I have things to cover it. Before I didn't have that. I was worrying, "What will I say if I don't say thee? What will I say if I don't say—?" It took a while for me to develop it, but I'm really proud of the work that I've done in this.

Tucker: It's also important to mention that the rehearsal process was so truncated.

Clark: Yes.

Tucker: That's why we had that feeling. Everybody had it. This is not my first Shakespeare, but everybody had that.

Clark: We only had four hours a day.

Tucker: We rehearsed 4 hours a day. How many?

Clark: Twice a week. Maybe three times.

Smith-Bernstein: It comes out to about 16 rehearsals.

Tucker: For *All's Well*, *Sweeny*, and *Lear*, we had 16 rehearsals each, and then audience, and they're like, "Oh, you'll be fine. We have time." We're like, "No, we don't."

Kantor: For Yvette, myself, and Rob, this is our first time at the Festival.

Tucker: It's one of the reasons why you had that fear. Melinda had a very strong idea. She had a very strong directorial vision for it, but there just wasn't a lot of time for us to find our way in. And especially because the play is very difficult and we had to make decisions to help read to today's audience. We presented some questions that had to be answered amongst the folks in the room, mainly you, Helena, and Bertram, I would say.

I feel it was difficult for me as Lafeu—I'm playing someone who's probably supposed to be a good 20, 25 years older. I mean, it's literally Lafeu, an old Lord. For me, it was like, okay, well, I need to find stuff to latch on to because otherwise I'd be floundering about who this person is. And I think for me, my character vision really hinged upon my relationship with Paroles and this idea of love and order and loving—very old school. I mean, even his clothes were old. He's like a combination of a dominatrix and. . . The new world is happening, and now they're at war, and I think he just wants to go back to the status quo. That helped me figure a lot out.

Clark: I'm the only one that doesn't have a relationship with Paroles. I only say his name and not in a good voice. I'm the only one that doesn't have any time on stage with them at all.

Kantor: I mean, I grew up with you, but yeah, we do not share a scene. My reputation precedes me.

Clark: He can't come to my house. I love that this production leaned into it unapologetically and allowed all of us to find our place in it. Melinda was brilliant in that and gentle and kind and very, very smart. I enjoyed the process with her so that the fear

of doing this subsided a lot during the rehearsal process for me personally. She was very good with that.

Audience member: How about your mothering of Helen? How about your mothering of the daughter?

Clark: Oh, I love her.

Audience member: That's one of my favorite—

Clark: Oh, Helen is my baby.

Audience member: Do you have a daughter?

Clark: No, I have a son in real life.

Audience member: You mother the daughter so well.

Clark: Oh, I love Helen. I think she's wonderful. And she's also the same age as Bertram. And that's why I can't understand. My son is so crazy. She's smart, and she's strong. She reminds the Countess of herself as a young woman who probably had to marry the Count about the same age she is right now. And so my thing with Bertram is that he's not rising to the station that he is given. It didn't matter how you felt at that time. You had to do what was required of you. And he's not doing that. And here this baby girl is like "I'm going to take care of it." And I was like, "Yes, you are." So, yes, I love her because she reminds me of me.

Audience member: That's so great. It's a great relationship.

Smith-Bernstein: *All's Well* is the only play in Shakespeare's canon that starts with a woman talking, to you.

Clark: And that was terrifying. "Oh, the first line is mine? Great."

Thompson: It's a real parent thing, too, because there was someone in my past who was great, and everyone knew it, and I let get away. And now I've been to her wedding. She's got two kids, but my parents still ask. They're like, "How is Julia doing? What's going on there?" I'm like "It's decades in the past." Everybody knew, and I couldn't see it.

Clark: Youth is wasted on the young.

Audience member: So, as the dramaturg, were there times that you had to correct or redirect things that people are doing to make them fit with what you saw in the text?

Smith-Bernstein: The way that I look at dramaturgy is that it's my job to hold the full context of any given play. This is kind of what Rob was talking about, too, that it's my job to understand the context of when the play's written, so 1605 and 1620, the context

of when the play is set by the playwright, the 1500s, when it's set by the director, in World War II, and when it's being presented, so 2022. I really look at my job as needing know about all of those, but on a sociopolitical level not just knowing the facts about these periods. It's about how people felt about certain things in those periods, as opposed to who was president in this year. A big part of my job is understanding all of those, and how they speak to each other across time, and how they can speak to our audience who is going to receive those. Melinda and I did *Merchant* together, too, and so we have a really great, strong working relationship. And I was involved from the very beginning of this process, so I don't really ever feel like we had to correct. I just have a lot of stuff to offer, and then it's sort of up to everyone to follow those ideas or not. And my feelings don't get hurt.

Tucker: You were invaluable. It wasn't just about the context but in this play, because of the context, the language is so difficult. There were times when we'd do a scene, and I'd realize no one's going to know who bay Curtal and his furniture are. For those of you who don't know, I've got an aside about bay Curtal. And I can hear, and I can even still feel the audience asking, "What?" And for things like that—you were just invaluable to provide context and say, "This is what Shakespeare was talking about. Let's try and find an equivalent. And if we can't, then while it probably would have been a joke in 1605, don't worry about making it a joke. No one's going to get it." That takes a lot of the pressure off. It still feels like a little—this would be funny 400 years ago.

Kantor: As a theater practitioner, I have always been keenly aware of how indispensable dramaturgs are. Isabel proved that point. One of my favorite moments in the show is because of something that she offered. We were talking about the cultural significance of the King demanding that Helen and Bertram take hands in that moment, and the weight of what that action could mean in the time period in which it was written. And once I was aware of that, I decided, it's absolutely crucial that I make him take my hand in the following scene the same way that he and Helen take hands. So, the next time we ran that scene, I offered him my hands, just as Helen did in that scene, and for Paroles, in that moment, it's a reassurance that you are, in fact, mine and everything's going to be okay. At least that's what's happening in

my mind, having just watched myself lose him in that way. I was able to mirror that exact image in the following scene, which was something that would not have existed had Isabelle not given that information.

Audience member: If it's not funny now, why not cut it?

Smith-Bernstein: We cut 90% of the jokes that weren't funny. All the ones that remained are in Rob's text. And the reason that that line is still in the play is because those jokes happen in a rhythm in the scene and if you take out his asides and if you only pick the one that still lands, that's very weird. All of a sudden, he makes an aside.

Tucker: I think it's just part of the question of the scene, why Lafeu is suddenly breaking the fourth wall and talking to the audience. When he doesn't do it throughout, it's hard.

Smith-Bernstein: And then perhaps the most difficult joke in the play, we just couldn't take out, which is the one about the tailor.

Kantor: So, for context, he asks me who my tailor is, and I say—

Tucker: Because he's trying to play it nice. My character is trying to be friendly and reach out by asking, "Who is your tailor?"

Kantor: I say, "Sir?", as in "Fuck you."

Tucker: I'm like, "Oh, I know him well. Sir."

Kantor: It's not very funny, but I get it.

Tucker: It's very difficult to cut. It's like the only time in that whole scene where I'm like, "Oh, I'll pursue the amity." And it seems it doesn't work out between the two. It's like, "Okay, we want to hate each other then. Okay, fine." But if you cut it, then it removes some of that messiness that we want to see in the characters—it means Lafeu doesn't need to be messy.

Smith-Bernstein: The actual textual joke though is that Paroles says, "Sir?" And then Lafeu thinks that is the name of the tailor. I think it's a little bit hard to make land.

Tucker: I always read it as he didn't think the name was "sir." He was playing off the response, meaning something like, "Oh you're being an ass. Sir. Yes. The name of that tailor. I know him well." That's what I assumed. But that's really hard to play with a Lafeu in 1939.

Kantor: I like Lafeu and Paroles's relationship. And it is one of far more significance than perhaps our production displayed in that, in the text at the end, Paroles becomes Lafeu's fool or pool boy, if you will. There was a lot of conversation about whether we wanted to keep that language. I thought, with the arc that we were telling, it felt a little superfluous. But it's not, insofar as it regards Shakespeare's worldview that to become a fool is actually an ascension, even though it's a demotion of status, it's an ascension to wisdom, power, accessible truth. And again, because I think everyone is gay, I think the relationship between Lafeu and Paroles is also indicative of an old guard queerness in the relationship and a new guard queerness, in that Lafeu feels maybe curiosity, or maybe instinctual disdain against someone who is free.

Tucker: It's probably significant somewhere here, but I feel like Lafeu is actually someone who's very traditional and has been forced into a traditional role, but inside is the biggest queen. He follows decorum, is married, and has a daughter who also gets kind of screwed over by the end of the play. She was supposed to marry Bertram, but we don't talk about it ever. So, for Lafeu decorum is more important than any personal feelings, much in the same vein as Countess. And I think the thing that really sets Lafeu off is that Paroles is not only loud, but they have no regard for social status. In that moment, it's that he suddenly pops off at me for asking a simple question. But I think that in the larger sense, it connects to his indignation that Paroles dares to be free. You see it a lot now, with people reacting by saying that others are "Too loud, too much, too much. Calm it down."

Kantor: This has been very rewarding, given my track this season because if you've seen *The Tempest*, I'm in two roles that are admittedly a little femo-center wearing a bright red lip, which is actually not my wheelhouse. I do a lot more sword swinging, literal sword swinging. I play a lot of men. So, it's been nice to be able to explore this side of myself through this track. I think that some people watched this and thought, "Oh, surely that's what you do all the time." And it's not. So, it's been really fun.

Smith-Bernstein: We're running out of time, but any other things for the cast?

Audience member: I've been coming to the festival for many, many years, and this is the first time I've seen this production. I

just wondered why do you think it's not a very popular play? It's not performed very often.

Tucker: I think it's hard to put on.

Smith-Bernstein: I think a lot of our sensibilities about what a good play is came from the Victorians, and the Victorians didn't love this play. It is really messy, and it doesn't have a clear structure like a play should for them. And then the Victorians started publishing these readers for school with scenes and monologues from various Shakespeare plays. And what we think of now as the good Shakespeare plays were all in those readers, and those readers came to the U.S., too. And so I think part of it is just we've inherited a lot of baggage from the Victorians. Also, it is a hard play.

Tucker: I think having the two authors conflict very strongly in it, makes it very difficult to be like, "Okay, why?" Because as an actor and as a director, you have to be like, "Okay, why does this happen here? Why does this person say this? Why am I doing this? What motivates that and where does that lead to and why is this important for them to know—the audience?" And I find that with this play, answering all of those questions can get you a little bit in the middle of the woods, and you can't see the forest for the trees. And some of it's like, "Ah! Does it matter?" Big questions.

Thompson: That "Does it matter?" is something that I've heard from people who have come and seen it. I was timing it out the other day and people were asking what's the inciting incident in this play? Where is the conflict? And it really takes off when Bertram rejects Helen at the wedding in public. It's the same at the beginning of *King Lear*, a scene that should happen in private happens in public, and so no one can back down, and so everything explodes out from there. In *King Lear*, it happens, Act 1, Scene 1. In *All's Well That Ends Well*, it happens one full hour into the runtime of the play. There's a lot of exposition and a lot of setting up these characters, and I love nothing in the world so much as good exposition. So, I'm fascinated. But a lot of people are like, "Get to the reason why I care for these people."

Tucker: Lots of long scenes. But I think that's one of the reasons why during the last scene where we're supposed to have our reconciliation, we're just like, "No. We don't need this." Even with other plays, *All's Well* is the longest play in the theater right

now, longer than *Lear*, longer than *Sweeny*. It's the longest play. I have a whole hour and ten minutes just sitting backstage. So as a result, we've got to cut some things here, cut some things there, and it's still long. I think it's long.

Thompson: I still love it.

Tucker: I love it. If the actors do the work and the director does the work in the room, it can present something. It's just that work in the room; it's a tall order to take on. This is a challenge. It's not impossible. I think also, to go back to the idea of what makes a good play; it's not a popular title, so people planning it, theaters planning it are like, "Okay now who will come to *All's Well*?"

Kantor: Because the American theatre, lest we forget, is beholden to capitalism. And it's name recognition. We don't know it. And because we don't know it, we're like, "Do I really want to go see it? I know *The Tempest*." And thank God this *Tempest* is not the *Tempest* that we all know. I love the *Tempest* that we're doing here. And yeah, I love it. It's so hard. It is hard. And I think there is so much bad Shakespeare that's not hard.

Smith-Bernstein: It was really hard to cut too, as part of that process, because there is so much exposition, and you have to set up exactly who all these characters are so that Acts 4 and 5 make sense.

Audience member: That was part of the marketing plan, of this show anyway. Come see it because you won't see it again. It is branded as the 'notch in the gun' play.

Tucker: I think it's smart marketing.

Audience member: I think shows like this will last. Thank you for doing it. Thank the Festival. Because that's the only reason we even get a chance to see it is because some festivals will keep doing it because it's awesome, no matter how much work it is to do. We don't care. We just watch stuff.

Thompson: I do think, working with Melinda on this, that she seems to have a love of those shows. I saw the *The Merchant of Venice* that she did. And this one too, is one of those plays that are hard, that have questions, that are messy. She seems to have a love of those and letting us sit with it in the room. Like we said, we didn't have a lot of time. There were times in the room where we'd ask a question, and she pointedly would not answer it,

which could be frustrating at the time. But she was living in that messiness and finding all of these people individually.

Tucker: It was fun. I mean, frustrating as hell. But most actors love nothing better than to have a challenge. Whatever this challenge is, this message that I'm trying to tell, will make me a better artist by doing it. Because I will have learned something, even if I fail spectacularly.

Undergraduate Paper

"Is there any record of any two that loved better than we do?": Male Friendship in *The Winter's Tale* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*

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In early modern England, male friendship had a significant influence on various areas of everyday life, including the social, political and economic spheres. Contemporaries such as Michel de Montaigne and Francis Bacon therefore attempted to conceptualize and articulate a definition of an ideal male friendship. According to Montaigne, in an idealized friendship, "there is general, universal warmth, tempered, moreover, and even, a constant and settled warmth, all gentleness and smoothness that has nothing harsh and stinging about it."[1] To such an ideal friendship, Montaigne explains, marriage is an impediment because, unlike friendship, marriage is "forced" since it is a "business or commerce," and it can thus "upset the course of keen affection."[2] This opinion is also shared by Francis Bacon, who states that "he that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises….Unmarried men are best friends."[3] Both Montaigne and Bacon, then, accord friendship a higher value than family since, in contrast to marriage, which is based on economic motivations, ideal male friendship is of an immaterial nature, characterized by altruism and mutual emotional support. Furthermore, because it is such a central aspect of human life, male friendship is fundamental to identity formation. As

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Montaigne states, friends "mingle and blend so completely into one another, in so complete a mixture, that they efface the seam between them."[4] Such a Humanist understanding of ideal male friendship thus suggests a spiritual conceptualization, in which friends figuratively merge into one another and, in this way, share and determine each other's identity, dissolving the boundaries of selfhood. As a result of this spiritual union, friendship not only affects individual identity, but it also shapes all other bonds, including romantic, social and political relationships.[5] Idealized male friendship is thus universally potent.

Shakespeare's romances, including *The Winter's Tale* (1611) and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (1613-14), dramatize friendship relations. In *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes's and Polixenes's idealized friendship is put into question because Leontes imagines that his wife, Hermione, and Polixenes are having a sexual relationship. Rather than destroying their friendship, however, Leontes's jealousy is in fact a necessary element which allows the play to challenge and renegotiate the early modern ideology of idealized friendship. Similarly, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Arcite's and Palamon's friendship is complicated as the two men enter into a rivalry because of Emilia. However, whereas Leontes's and Polixenes's initial friendship is an idealized one, Arcite's and Palamon's friendship at the beginning of the play is more ambiguous.

To explore the ideology of idealized friendship in William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* and Shakespeare's and John Fletcher's *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, this essay will be informed both by early modern accounts of friendship by Montaigne and Bacon and by work done by various critics, including Tom MacFaul, Allan Bloom, Jennifer Forsyth, Alan Stewart and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. The essay will focus on the friendship between Leontes and Polixenes and that between Arcite and Palamon, and it will argue that both plays challenge the early modern ideology of idealized male friendship, characterized by altruism, spiritual unity and universal potency, because the male friendships depicted are more dynamic and multifaceted than acknowledged by early modern contemporaries, which allows Shakespeare's characters to renegotiate their relationships.

The friendship Leontes and Polixenes enjoyed during their childhood conforms to the idealized male friendship as outlined by

Montaigne. When Hermione asks Polixenes about his childhood friendship with Leontes, Polixenes answers:

> We were as twinned lambs that did frisk i'th' sun
> And bleat the one at th'other: what we changed
> Was innocence for innocence; we knew not
> The doctrine of ill doing, nor dreamed
> That any did. (1.2.67-71)[6]

In this speech, Polixenes stresses their innocence, which is highlighted by both the repetition of the word itself in line 68 and by the imagery of "lambs," which is conventionally associated with innocence and purity as it is the "Christian symbol for Christ."[7] In addition, the word "twinned" highlights both their physical and emotional closeness, which echoes Montaigne's claim that true friends are "indivisible"[8] as they "mingle and blend … completely into one another."[9] This idea is reinforced by the imagery of the sun, which figuratively stands for the "universal warmth" in idealized friendships.[10] Furthermore, Polixenes's statement that he and Leontes did not know "[t]he doctrine of ill doing" conforms to the early modern notion of idealized friendship as being characterised by "gentleness and smoothness that has nothing harsh and stinging."[11]

Leontes's and Polixenes's mutual love is further reinforced by Camillo's description of their childhood "affection" for one another: "They were trained together in their childhoods, and there rooted betwixt them then such an affection which cannot choose but branch now" (1.1.21-4). MacFaul reads this description as an indication that their friendship challenges the notion of idealized friendship, arguing that the word "branch" highlights a "separation" between Leontes and Polixenes.[12] However, while this is true for the word "branch" on its own, MacFaul overlooks the first part of the metaphor, which states that their affection is "rooted betwixt them." This imagery of a botanical root suggests a common origin, indicating a unity between the two friends' selves, which are symbolized by the branches. Leontes's and Polixenes's intimate connection echoes that of Baucis and Philemon, an old married couple in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[13] Similar to Leontes and Polixenes, Baucis and Philemon are characterized by benevolence, innocence and generosity. As a reward for their hospitality shown to Zeus and Hermes, the two gods grant Baucis's and

Philemon's wish to stay united even after death by transforming them into intertwined trees. Therefore, rather than suggesting a separation between Leontes and Polixenes, Camillo's metaphor of a tree illustrates the indivisible bond underlying their (childhood) friendship.

In contrast to Leontes's and Polixenes's childhood friendship, Arcite's and Palamon's friendship at the beginning of the play complicates the early modern ideology of idealized friendship, specifically its claim to spiritual unity and permanence. While Alan Stewart[14] and MacFaul[15] claim that Arcite's and Palamon's idealized friendship is challenged only *after* they see Emilia, which implies that they enjoy an idealized friendship before that event, I argue that these critics overlook finer nuances, and that Arcite's and Palamon's friendship is in fact more ambiguous from the very beginning. In the following conversation, Arcite and Palamon talk about their friendship while they are in prison, shortly before they see Emilia:

Arcite: While Palamon is with me, let me perish
If I think this our prison!
Palamon: Certainly,
'Tis a main goodness, cousin, that our fortunes
Were twin'd together. 'Tis most true, two souls
Put in two bodies,
. . .
Arcite: We are one another's wife, ever begetting
New births of love
. . .
Palamon: Is there any record of any two that loved
Better than we do, Arcite?
Arcite: Sure there cannot
Palamon: I do not think it possible our friendship
Should ever leave us. (2.2.61-115)[16]

The exchange in lines 112-113 seems to confirm Stewart's and MacFaul's readings as it echoes the description of Montaigne's friendship with Etienne de La Boétie, which Montaigne describes as being "so complete and so perfect that surely nothing like it can be read of and no trace of it can be seen practiced among the men of today."[17] By juxtaposing Arcite's and Palamon's friendship with that of Montaigne and La Boétie, claiming that it is unique, the play seems to suggest that Arcite's and Palamon's

friendship corresponds to the early modern notion of idealized friendship. However, lines 61-65 contradict this reading. While the word "twin'd," which is also used by Polixenes as discussed above, is reminiscent of Montaigne's claim that true friendship is "indivisible,"[18] the metaphor of them being "*two* souls / Put in two bodies" contradicts the early modern ideology of true friends figuratively being "*one* soul in two bodies."[19] Arcite's and Palamon's relationship further challenges the early modern notion of ideal friendship as Arcite states that they "are one another's wife" (2.2.80). As already mentioned in the introduction, according to Montaigne[20] and Bacon,[21] love and marriage are inferior to true male friendship, and by comparing their friendship to a marriage, Arcite undermines his own argument that they are true friends. Palamon's claim that it is not "possible [their] friendship / Should ever leave [them]" thus creates an ironic effect, setting the stage for their rivalry over Emilia shortly afterwards. In other words, rather than describing an idealized friendship, both Arcite's claim that their love is unique and Palamon's assertion that their friendship is permanent seem to be hyperbolic, a promise they cannot keep.

Returning to *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes's and Polixenes's idealized friendship at the beginning of the play as discussed above is challenged when Leontes imagines himself to be cuckolded by Polixenes:

> *Leontes:* How she [Hermione] holds up the neb, the bill to him [Polixenes],
> And arms her with the boldness of a wife
> To her allowing husband. Gone already
> Inch-thick, knee-deep, o'er head and ears a forked one! (1.2.182-5)

The expression of looking "forked" alludes to the early modern imagery of horns that cuckolds supposedly wear on their foreheads, as illustrated in Fig. 1, a print from *English Customs*[22] of 1628. In addition, Leontes's description of Hermione linking arms with Polixenes mirrors the position of the pair on the left-hand side of the illustration, which further highlights Leontes's imagined identity as a cuckold. According to Allan Bloom, the jealousy Leontes feels as a cuckold "destroys" the "perfect friendship" he shares with Polixenes.[23] Rather than *destroying* their friendship, however, I argue that Leontes's jealousy in fact transforms it.

Fig. 1: *English Customs*: "My Dotard Husband Gives Not Mee" (1628)

As described by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, male homosocial bonds can take various forms, including friendship and rivalry.[24] In her seminal work *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (1983), Sedgwick envisages male homosocial desire as a triangular structure, building on René Girard's theory of the erotic triangle, which describes the rivalry between two individuals (usually men) over a third, the "beloved" (usually a woman).[25] While Girard considers the erotic triangle as symmetrical, Sedgwick argues that in fact the distribution of power in such a triangular relationship can never be even; indeed, the relationship between the two (male) rivals is stronger than that between a rival and the beloved, which is necessary in order to maintain and transmit patriarchal and heteronormative power in a "male dominated society."[26] Sedgwick illustrates this by analysing the connection between cuckoldry and sexuality in William Wycherley's play *The Country Wife* (1675), and she argues that in the play, to cuckold "is by definition a sexual act, performed on a man, by another man [through the medium of a woman]." Heterosexual love is thus "a strategy of homosocial desire."[27] This homosocial desire, then, is "not detrimental to 'masculinity' but definitive of it" as it is a way men "arrive at satisfying relationships" with one another.[28] In other words, rather than destroying the homosocial bonds between

men, cuckoldry is another form of strengthening them. Such a relationship which involves both bonding and competing can be compared to Montaigne's concept of "ordinary friendship." As Montaigne explains, in contrast to a "noble relationship," in which friends are "indivisible" because "everything between them is […] common," including their children, wives, thoughts, opinions, life and honour, in an ordinary friendship, "you must proceed with reins in hand, with prudence and precaution" since "the knot is not tied so well that you have no reason to mistrust."[29] Montaigne's emphasis on prudence, precaution and mistrust thus implies that in an ordinary friendship, friends can potentially turn into deceivers, and friendship into rivalry. In *The Winter's Tale*, rather than destroying his relationship with Polixenes, Leontes's jealousy strengthens the underlying homosocial bond of his rivalry with Polixenes, transforming their idealized friendship temporarily into an ordinary friendship.

Challenging the early modern ideology of idealized friendship has significant implications for identity formation. As noted by MacFaul, the notion of idealized friendship presupposes male friendship as "crucial to a man's sense of identity" as men form their identities in relation to their friends,[30] and Forsyth observes that without friendship, men could not live "a fulfilling life."[31] These descriptions suggest a lack of independent individuality since identity was dependent on and determined through friends. As MacFaul explains, this Humanist view of identity as being determined by social relationships resulted in an alienation of the self because it "can only be found in or through others."[32] By challenging the idealized friendship between Leontes and Polixenes, *The Winter's Tale* allows Leontes to form an identity, however wretched and despairing (3.2.207-13), outside these bonds and thus to experience a sense of individuality which would not have been possible within the constraints of idealized friendship. Furthermore, as MacFaul notes, "friends are essential to the proper playing of one's part before others" and to displaying "virtuous thought and action."[33] This metaphor of performance and artificiality is, however, a "denial of subjectivity."[34] Leontes's rivalry with Polixenes thus allows Leontes to shatter the façade of his "virtuous" identity performed in public in favour of an authentic inner self characterised by jealousy: "[Leontes's] heart

dances, / But not for joy, not joy" (1.2.110-11). Leontes is thus able to circumvent social conventions and behaviour that reduce and stifle subjectivity and authenticity.

The fact that, in contrast to Arcite and Palamon, Leontes merely imagines his identity as a cuckold and thus his rivalry with Polixenes further troubles the early modern view of idealized male friendship, which neither MacFaul nor Bloom acknowledge. In various scenes, in which Leontes stares at Hermione and Polixenes, such as the one in which they are linking arms as discussed above, Leontes projects his own fantasies onto them. According to Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, "staring establishes a social relationship between starer and staree. It is an interpersonal action through which we act out who we *imagine* ourselves and others to be."[35] Leontes's act of staring thus suggests that he creates identities through imagination, and that his rivalry with Polixenes is one-sided since Polixenes does not actively play a part in it. In their essays on friendship, neither Montaigne nor Bacon account for such an uneven male friendship which is perceived differently by two friends. While Montaigne does make a distinction between "ordinary friendship" and "noble" friendship, he presupposes that both friends look at their friendship in the same way.[36] *The Winter's Tale* can thus be read as addressing this gap and attempting to fill it, defying the early modern notion of idealized male friendship as a homogeneous construct.

In contrast to the relationship between Leontes and Polixenes, the rivalry between Arcite and Palamon is very real to both parties, creating a "division"[37] between them. After Arcite and Palamon have seen Emilia from their prison window, their rivalry is evident:

Palamon: I that first saw her, I that took possession
First with mine eye of all those beauties in her
Revealed to mankind! If thou lovest her,
Or entertain'st a hope to blast my wishes,
Thou are a traitor, Arcite, and a fellow
False as thy title to her. Friendship, blood,
And all the ties between us, I disclaim,
If thou once think upon her.
Arcite: Yes, I love her
And, if the lives of all my name lay on it,
I must do so; I love her with my soul:
If that will lose ye, farewell, Palamon.

> I say again,
> I love her and in loving her maintain
> I am worthy and as free a lover,
> And have as just a title to her beauty,
> As any Palamon, or any living
> That is a man's son. (2.2.169-85)

Arcite's and Palamon's "division" is linguistically highlighted by both Palamon's and Arcite's use of anaphora through the pronoun "I" in line 169 and at the beginning of lines 178-82, which stands in contrast to the plural pronouns "we" and "our" in their conversation praising their friendship discussed above (2.2.61-113). Their rivalry is further emphasised by their verbal dispute over Emilia's body. Both Arcite and Palamon position themselves as the owners of Emilia since Arcite claims that he has "as just a title to her beauty" as Palamon, and Palamon insists that he "took possession / First with [his] eye." Arcite's and Palamon's language, then, commodifies Emilia's body, moving their rivalry into the realm of economics, contrasting the ideal immaterial and spiritual friendship.

Palamon's act of asserting his ownership of Emilia through gazing and thus objectifying her corresponds to the concept of the "male gaze." According to Garland-Thomson, "the male gaze is a position of privilege in social relations which … positions women as objects of that look."[38] This objectification of women is also a central idea of Sedgwick's theory on homosociality and rivalry, according to which the relationship between two (male) rivals is based on a "traffic in women," since women are considered to be "an exchangeable, perhaps symbolic, property for the primary purpose of cementing the bonds of men with men."[39] Therefore, similar to the relationship between Leontes and Polixenes, rather than breaking the bond between Arcite and Palamon, their rivalry transforms it so that it becomes another form of "cementing" their bond. Their rivalry is further rendered ambiguous by Palamon's statement that: "Friendship, blood / And all the ties between us, I disclaim, / If thou once think upon her" (2.2.174-6). Rather than claiming that their friendship is over, Palamon uses the conditional "if," suggesting that he only disclaims their friendship if Arcite thinks "upon her" again, thus opening up a possible future in which their friendship continues to thrive.

Upon realizing that this verbal battle does not lead to a solution, in order to settle their rivalry over Emilia, Arcite and Palamon decide to challenge each other to a duel, which further puts their friendship, especially its insistence on altruism and selflessness, into question. The following conversation illustrates that they are willing to fight until the very end:

Palamon: no man but thy cousin's fit to kill thee.
. . .
Wilt thou exceed in all, or dost thou do it
To make me spare thee?
Arcite: If you think so, cousin,
You are deceived, for, as I am a soldier,
I will not spare you.
Palamon: That's well said. (3.6.44-9)

As Forsyth notes, according to the early modern view of idealized male friendship, "if true friends must face each other in combat, each would wish for the privilege of sacrificing himself for the other."[40] Arcite's statement that he "will not spare" Palamon thus does not conform to the image of idealized friendship as being based on unconditional altruism or even martyrdom.

Similar to the relationship between Leontes and Polixenes, the rivalry between Arcite and Palamon has a significant impact on their identity formation. As already mentioned in the introduction, in the early modern period, there was an "overall tendency … to insist on the priority of friendship over all other codes," including "family as represented through women."[41] Favouring their relationship with Emilia instead of their friendship allows Arcite and Palamon to create an alternative social order, one in which friendship does not have the highest priority and thus does not primarily determine one's identity. Moreover, as observed by Arlinghaus, when it comes to asserting one's individuality in the early modern period, in contrast to modern society, people would "opt for 'being better' rather than 'being different'" than others.[42] This competitive aspect is an integral part of the rivalry between Arcite and Palamon, who aim to surpass each other in the dual over Emilia, and it contrasts the ideology of idealized friendship, which is based on equality. By aspiring to be "better" than the other, Arcite and Palamon can create a sense of selfhood and individuality outside the constraints of an idealized friendship.

Arcite's and Palamon's relationship is, however, more complex than discussed above because even though they are willing to kill each other, their friendship arguably survives Arcite's death at the end of the play. Indeed, throughout the play, the two men repeatedly stress that death could not separate them. For example, in act two, Arcite states that their friendship goes beyond death (2.2.225-7), and later in the play, Palamon tells Arcite: "if thou killest me / The gods and I forgive thee" (3.6.97-8), and: "I am Palamon, / One that yet loves thee dying" (5.4.89-90). This emphasis on the survival of their friendship beyond death corresponds to Montaigne's description of idealized friendship as characterized by a spiritual unity because it is indivisible.[43] Arcite's and Palamon's friendship defying death thus suggests that their relationship is more complex than simple rivalry.

Circling back to *The Winter's Tale*, while Bloom argues that the play's ending "gives a definite primacy to marriage over friendship,"[44] and MacFaul claims that idealized male friendship "cannot survive,"[45] I argue that the play does indeed suggest that idealized male friendship can triumph. After Leontes learns from Apollo's oracle that Polixenes is innocent, he declares: "Apollo, pardon / My great profaneness 'gainst thine oracle. / I'll reconcile me to Polixenes" (3.2.150-2). Leontes's determination to reconcile with Polixenes is further reinforced by Paulina, who attempts to evoke his guilty conscience, declaring him responsible for Hermione's death:

> *Paulina:* If one by one you wedded all the world,
> Or from the all that are took something good
> To make a perfect woman, she you killed
> Would be unparalleled.
> *Leontes:* I think so. Killed?
> She I killed? I did so. But thou strik'st me
> Sorely, to say I did; it is as bitter
> Upon thy tongue as in my thought. Now good, now,
> Say so but seldom. (5.1.13-20)

Paulina's blunt statement that Leontes "killed" Hermione and Leontes's repeated questions "Killed? / She I killed?" as well has his subsequent realisation that "[he] did so" suggest that for the first time Leontes becomes aware that it was his jealous behaviour that resulted in Hermione's death, a thought which he cannot bear.

In addition, Paulina's adoration of Hermione, claiming that she was more than "a perfect woman" since she was "unparalleled," further reinforces Leontes's guilty feelings, which is evident as he complains that Paulina's words are "bitter" and strike him "[s]orely" and entreats her to stop her accusations ("Now good, now, / Say so but seldom"). Thus, while the play complicates Montaigne's notion of true male friendship by staging an imagined rivalry between Leontes and Polixenes, by suggesting that Leontes is able to get rid of his illusion and to develop a guilty conscience, thus preferring to reconcile with Polixenes, the play seems to privilege male homosocial love rather than rivalry. Similarly, the actual reconciliation scene seems to suggest that their friendship triumphs:

> *Steward:* Did you see the meeting of the two kings?
> *Rogero:* No.
> *Steward:* Then have you lost a sight which was to be seen, cannot be spoken of. There might you have beheld one joy crown another, so and in such manner that it seemed sorrow wept to take leave of them, for their joy waded in tears. There was casting up of eyes, holding up of hands, with countenance of such distraction that they were to be known by garment, not by favour. … [Leontes] then asks Bohemia forgiveness, … I never heard of such another encounter, which lames report to follow it, and undoes description to do it. (5.2.39-57)

By personifying Leontes's and Polixenes's emotions ("it seemed sorrow wept to take leave of them" and "their joy waded in tears"), the steward emphasizes their excessive "joy" at their reconciliation. Their joy is reinforced by their gestures of "casting up of eyes" and "holding up of hands," movements which mirror the religious piety they experienced in their idealized childhood friendship as discussed at the beginning of this essay. Moreover, the description of them as only distinguishable by their clothes ("they were to be known by garment") rather than their faces echoes Montaigne's description of his friendship with La Boétie, in which he and La Boétie figuratively share an identity, as emphasized by Montaigne's statement: "[La Boétie] is myself."[46] The mirroring of Leontes's and Polixenes's faces and body language, leaving them indistinguishable

to the observer, thus suggest that they enjoy an idealized friendship characterised by unity and indivisibility.

This seeming re-establishment of Leontes's and Polixenes's idealized friendship is, however, more ambiguous than it might seem at first. Even though drama is a form of mimesis, the reconciliation scene is rendered in a diegetic mode. Indeed, the play does not show the readers and the audience members the scene directly; instead, the scene is narrated by the steward, who, as the narrator, has the ability to colour the narrative and thus the nature of Leontes's and Polixenes's reconciliation. The steward's reliability as a narrator is, however, questionable. Not only is the steward personally and emotionally involved in the event he narrates, but in lines 55-7, he also claims that his description of the scene is "incapable of doing justice to it" as he lacks the adequate words, and that the scene can only be "seen" and not told, which thus renders Leontes's and Polixenes's reconciliation inaccessible to the readers and the audience.[47] While Jan Frans Van Dijkhuizen considers it "ironic" that the reconciliation between Leontes and Polixines is more prominently placed than the reconciliation between Leontes and Hermione,[48] I would argue that he fails to acknowledge the significance of this scene for the friendship drama of the entire play. Indeed, by denying the audience and the readers a direct rendition of the scene, the play ends on an ambivalent note, leaving the audience members and readers to ponder different possible futures for Leontes's and Polixenes's friendship.

As has been demonstrated in this essay, male friendship can be more dynamic and multifaceted than endorsed by early modern contemporaries such as Montaigne and Bacon. While friendship is "put in competition with love" in early modern drama,[49] rather than destroying friendship, rivalry is an integral part of it, enabling characters to reconsider and renegotiate their friendships. As has been shown, Leontes's jealousy and suspicion towards Polixenes transforms their idealized childhood friendship temporarily into an ordinary friendship, which lacks (spiritual) unity. However, through Leontes's and Polixenes's final reconciliation, *The Winter's Tale* seems to suggest that ultimately male homosocial love can triumph over rivalry. Unlike Leontes's and Polixenes's relationship, Arcite's and Palamon's friendship is more unstable throughout the play. While on the one hand, Arcite and Palamon are prepared to

use violence against each other as they fight for Emilia's attention, on the other hand, they repeatedly affirm the uniqueness and spirituality that underlie their relationship. Challenging the early modern ideology of idealized friendship thus allows the characters of both *The Winter's Tale* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* to carve out a space where they can experience a sense of individuality and selfhood beyond the constraints of ideal male friendship and create a self that is authentic and autonomous.

While this essay has only examined friendship between men, future work could also explore bonds between women. As observed by Will Tosh, the early modern period exhibited a "misogynistic view" towards female friendship since women were considered to be incapable of experiencing the "powerful emotions" male friends shared,[50] which echoes Montaigne's claim that women's "souls do not seem firm enough to maintain the grip of so tight and enduring a bond."[51] Both *The Winter's Tale* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, however, stage intense relationships between women. When describing her childhood friendship with Flavina, Emilia states:

> And she (I sigh and spoke of) were things innocent,
> Lov'd for we did, and like the elements
> That know not what or why, yet do effect
> Rare issues by their operance, our souls
> Did so to one another. (1.3.60-4)

This speech shows that Emilia has a spiritual notion of her friendship with Flavina, and it echoes the portrayal of Leontes's and Polixenes's childhood bonds, thus challenging the early modern notion of female friendship.

Notes

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1. Michel de Montaigne, "Friendship," in *Selected Essays: With La Boétie's Discourse on Voluntary Servitude* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2012 [1580]), 76.
2. Montaigne, "Friendship," 76-77.
3. Francis Bacon, *The Essayes or Counsels Civill & Morall of Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam*. (London: J.M. Dent & Co., 1909 [1597]), 22.
4. Montaigne, "Friendship," 79.

5. Tom MacFaul, *Male Friendship in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1.

6. William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, ed. John Pitcher (London: Bloomsbury, 2010 [1611]).

7. *Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*, s.v. "Lamb," accessed January 17, 2022, www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780192800947.001.0001/acref-9780192800947-e-4200?rskey=IZnzB6&result=4.

8. Montaigne, "Friendship," 83.

9. Montaigne, "Friendship," 79.

10. Montaigne, "Friendship," 76.

11. Montaigne, "Friendship," 76.

12. MacFaul, *Male Friendship*, 75.

13. Ovid, *The Metamorphoses of Ovid, Books VIII-XV* ([London]: George Bell & Sons, 1893; Project Gutenberg, 2008), VIII. 613-734, https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/26073/pg26073-images.html.

14. Alan Stewart, "'Near Akin:' The Trials of Friendship in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*," in *Shakespeare's Late Plays: New Readings*, ed. Jennifer Richards, and James Knowles (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 59.

15. MacFaul, *Male Friendship*, 77.

16. William Shakespeare, and John Fletcher, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, ed. Lois Potter (London: Bloomsbury, 2016 [1613-14]).

17. Montaigne, "Friendship," 74.

18. Montaigne, "Friendship," 83.

19. Montaigne, "Friendship," 81 (my emphasis).

20. Montaigne, "Friendship," 76-77.

21. Bacon, *Essayes*, 22, 82.

22. "My Dotard Husband Gives Not Mee," *English Customs*, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, 1628, https://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/detail/FOLGER~2~2~3985~257467:-English-customs--12-engravings-of-?qvq=w4s:/t%2F%255BEnglish%2Bcustoms.%2B12%2Bengravings%2Bof%2BEnglish%2Bcouples%2Bwith%2Bverses%255D%2Fwhen%2F1628%2F&mi=7&trs=26, STC 10408.6, image 008033, used by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

23. Bloom, *Shakespeare on Love and Friendship*, 109.

24. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 1.

25. For a more detailed discussion on his conceptualization of triangular relationships see Girard's chapter "'Triangular' *Desire"* in his *Deceit, Desire and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).

26. Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 21-3, 25.

27. Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 49.

28. Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 50.

29. Montaigne, "Friendship," 81-82.

30. MacFaul, *Male Friendship*, 3.

31. Jennifer Forsyth, "Cutting Words and Healing Wounds: Friendship and Violence in Early Modern Drama" in *Violent Masculinities: Male Aggression in Early Modern Texts and Culture*, ed. Jennifer Feather and Catherine Thomas (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 70.

32. MacFaul, *Male Friendship*, 2.

33. MacFaul, *Male Friendship*, 12, 6.

34. Geoff Baldwin, "Individual and Self in the Late Renaissance," *The Historical Journal* 44. 2 (2001): 347.

35. Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, *Staring: How We Look* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 14 (my emphasis).
36. Montaigne, "Friendship," 81-82.
37. Montaigne, "Friendship," 81.
38. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 41.
39. Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 25-26.
40. Forsyth, "Cutting Words and Healing Wounds," 70.
41. MacFaul, *Male Friendship*, 89.
42. Franz-Josef Arlinghaus, "Conceptualising Pre-Modern and Modern Individuality: Some Theoretical Considerations," in *Forms of Individuality and Literacy in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, ed. Franz-Josef Arlinghaus (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2015), 26.
43. Montaigne, "Friendship," 76, 83.
44. Bloom, *Shakespeare on Love and Friendship*, 110.
45. MacFaul, *Male Friendship*, 89.
46. Montaigne, "Friendship," 83.
47. John Pitcher, *The Winter's Tale*, editorial footnote.
48. Jan Frans Van Dijkhuizen, *A Literary History of Reconciliation: Power, Remorse and the Limits of Forgiveness* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 68.
49. MacFaul, *Male Friendship*, 65.
50. Tosh Will, "Shakespeare and Friendship," *British Library*, March 15, 2016, www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/shakespeare-and-friendship.
51. Montaigne, "Friendship," 77.