



OF DOMESTIC MONSTERS AND COMPLEX MARVELS: SERIALIZATION,  
*RICHARD III*, AND THE MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE

by

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## INTRODUCTION

“At any moment, the reader is ready to turn into a writer. As expert, which he had to become willy-nilly in an extremely specialized work process, even if only in some minor respect, the reader gains access to authorship.”

— Walter Benjamin

Within this short quotation—taken from page thirty-two of his book, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*—I believe that Walter Benjamin both adequately and succinctly describes what I identify as the process of composing a Master’s thesis. For, as I wrote this thesis over the course of the past four and a half months, I, too, have become an expert—of sorts—on the topics of transmedia storytelling and Shakespeare’s play, *Richard III*, as I worked “willy-nilly in an extremely specialized work process,” and, as a reader, gained access to authorship (Benjamin 32). Now, you may be wondering as to how on earth transmedia storytelling and *Richard III*—two seemingly unrelated topics—are able to come together and be studied within a single body of research, especially when you consider that transmedia storytelling and *Richard III* are separated by nearly four hundred years. The answer to your question is this: through the study of serialization. In what follows, I will identify the key concepts of the serial form in order to introduce my own work concerning the serial’s future within New Media and its overlooked past within the early modern period.

Within her book, *Consuming Pleasures*, Jennifer Hayward reiterates Roger Hagedorn's idea that "since the nineteenth century the serial has been [the] dominant mode of narrative presentation in Western culture" (qtd. in Hayward 2). As a genre born out of capitalism, the serial's historical roots can be traced back to that of the Victorian market economy as it operates under the economic principle of obtaining the "the maximum number of effects from the minimum force" (de Certeau 82). According to Hayward's articulation of the serial's appeal, she argues that the advantages of the form is that it practically "advertises itself, providing ever-increasing profits:"

Since the inception of mass-market culture in the nineteenth century, producers have relied on the serial form to consolidate and hold a mass audience, thus enabling the profits that make new technologies (cheap mass-produced books, color printing in news papers, film, radio, television) viable in a market economy. (1-2)

This is due, in part, to the very nature of serial texts as they are unique in their ability to present audiences with a single, "ongoing narrative" that is "released in successive parts" (Hayward 3).

Within his own work, Michael Hammond asserts that today, as was the case "with the serialization of novels in the nineteenth century, the form of the serial [has become] central in gaining and retaining audiences and readers that the advertising industry now terms 'loyals'" (Hammond and Mazdon 80). And, he is correct for as a result of the serial's inherent nature, they produce the "desire for *more* about characters and plots" (Hayward 152). Thus, over the course of the serial's appropriation over time, its narrative form has come to be understood as

a “beneficial addictive good” as audiences utilize a “discourse of addiction” in describing their relationship with serialized texts: they are “hooked,” they have to get their “fix,” and go through withdrawals when they are unable to engage with their favorite texts (Clarke 4; Hayward 155).

It comes as no surprise, then, that the serial form has continued to grow and develop over time as Hayward traces its narrative evolution across three different media: written narrative (periodicals/novels), a combination of visual and written narrative (comics), and visual narrative (soap operas/television). According to Frank Rose, while “stories themselves are universal, the way we tell them changes with the technology at hand” (2). And, in regards to the television, Hayward asserts that it “offers unique benefits in its appropriation of the serial genre:”

Parts are issued regularly. . . . Audiences are vast and diverse, and because of their longevity, quotidian recurrence and themes, and—not least—audience familiarity with actors as well as characters as a result of media’s obsession with itself, [television serials] intensify the intermingling of fictional characters with audience lives that is so characteristic of the serial form.

(Hayward 144)

Meanwhile, within his own work, Glen Creeber adds to Hayward’s conceptualization of the relationship that exists between the television serial and its audience in his discussion of the the serial and series’ shared characteristic of episodic form:

[T]he episodic nature of the serial form means that it also shares important characteristics with the series. This means that the serial can frequently break



free of the narrative limitations of the single drama and exploit some of the most seductive elements of serialization. In particular, the viewer is often able to get to know the characters and the story in a serial almost as well as they might do in a series or soap opera. . . . [which] allows far greater ‘audience involvement, a sense of becoming a part of the lives and actions of the characters they see. (Creeber 9)

Due to this shared characteristic, it comes as no surprise that in 1991, with the invention of the Internet, “the first medium that can act like all media,”—“it can be text, or audio, or video, or all of the above”—the serial underwent another evolutionary transformation in which it and series formats converged (Rose 3).

The Internet’s appropriation of both the serial and series’ form gave rise to a new mode of serialization that Jason Mittell calls “narrative complexity.” According to Mittell, “the hallmark of narrative complexity [is] an interplay between the demands of episodic and serial storytelling [that] often oscillat[es] between long-term arcs and stand-alone episodes” (*Complex TV* 19). As a result of its unique form, Sara Gwenllian-Jones notes that the complex television series often consists of “scores of episodes that together constitute a hundred or more screen hours and that are played out across several years of production and distribution” (87). Additionally, complex narratives allow for the exploration of fictional worlds “of infinite suggestion and inexhaustible possibility,” which rewards “close textual scrutiny, extrapolation, and speculation and exert their fascination not through the linear pull of story events but rather through their lateral resonance and connectivity” (Gwenllian-Jones 90-91).

According to Henry Jenkins, “[m]ore and more, [serial] storytelling has become the art of world building, as artists create compelling environments that cannot be fully explored or exhausted within a single work or even a single medium (*Convergence Culture* 116). As a result, many complex narratives are forced to “overflow” into other media—resulting in a heightened form of serialization that is known as transmedia storytelling (Gray and Lotz 76). Within his book, *Convergence Culture*, Jenkins defines the nature of transmedia storytelling:

A transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole. In the ideal form of transmedia storytelling, each medium does what it does best. . . . Each franchise entry needs to be self-contained so you don’t need to have seen the film to enjoy the game and vice versa. Any given product is a point of entry into the franchise as a whole. Reading across the media sustains a depth of experience that motivates more consumption. (*Convergence Culture* 98)

Transmedia texts operate within an engagement based model which views audiences as a “collective of active agents whose labor may generate alternative forms of market value” (*Spreadable Media* 116). Thus, complex narratives that are distributed through transmedia channels that exploit the cultish behaviors of devoted fans—for whom “every episode, spin off (whether officially or unofficially produced), and intertextual pathway may contribute something” to their favorite fictional worlds—by seeking to audience “activity into profit” (Gwenllian-Jones 92; Freedman 168).

According to Matt Hills, “by making it easier for fans to contact other like-minded devotees, the web increases the possibility of small-scale organised fandoms emerging

around a wider variety of TV shows” (Hills 519). According to her own analysis of serialized novel reading, Hayward identifies the way in which communal engagements became a key characteristic of audience engagements with serials:

That novel reading became an important means of constructing leisure time and family life can be seen as the result of cultural as well as economic factors, especially since it anticipates later serial audiences’ marked preference for reading their texts communally. (Hayward 36)

Thus, within these internet-based communities, fans are able to share “detailed analyses” and “knowledge about these programmes, in terms of their narrative worlds, characters, and production details” will like-minded individuals (Hills 519). And, with the introduction of social media in 2010, as it became easier for fans to communicate with one another and share information, they began to crave even more detailed, complex narratives. However, this was not the only thing that social media changed in regards to engagements relating to serialized texts.

Within her discussion of Dickens, Hayward notes that he had an interactive relationship with his audience—a trend which has become a characteristic of the serial form (39). According to Hayward, due to “consistently negative response[s] to characters planned as central and the enthusiastic praise of others brought on as afterthoughts,” Dickens made the conscientious decision to “change plot projections midstream” (Hayward 61). This has become commonplace within the realm of television serials as social media allows for new opportunities for producers to “[connect] with fans and [draw] them in to programming” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 123). However, it is important to not that despite fan

influence in story development, producers today retain control of the narratives they tell (Hayward 189).

According to M. J. Clarke, “new media is not simply an experiment for network television to play with, but its inevitable future” (28). However, as complex narratives and their intermingling with transmedia storytelling practices becomes more commonplace, Television Studies scholars, notably Mittell and Jane Feuer, insist upon the uniqueness of narrative complexity within the medium of television. Within the chapter, “Heading to the ‘Mothership:’ Narrative Complexity, Transmedia Storytelling, and the Future of Serial Storytelling,” I will explore the ways in which the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) demonstrates narrative complexity through its narrative expansions. And, in proving that the MCU is capable of performing narrative complexity, I will argue in favor of a more nuanced interpretation of the narrational mode, one that no longer limits its application to texts solely within the medium of television, that bears greater implications for future narratological research conducted within the field of Media Studies. However, as we look towards the future, we must not overlook the serial’s even older past.

Within *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*, Stephen Greenblatt identifies Shakespeare’s plays as arguably the most powerful and influential texts in the English language. And, within this work, he seeks to identify those aspects of Shakespeare’s plays that grant them such cultural power. Greenblatt identifies the act of play writing as communal based on his assertion that “language, which is at the heart of literary power, is the supreme instance of a collective creation” (4).

Additionally, he states that “the theater is manifestly the product of collective intentions,” as is made explicit within Shakespeare’s own body of work:

There may be a moment in which a solitary individual puts words on a page, but it is by no means clear that this moment is the heart of the matters and everything else is to be stripped away and discarded. Moreover, the moment of inscription, on closer analysis, is itself a social moment. This is particularly clear with Shakespeare, who does not conceal his indebtedness to literary sources. (4-5)

In regards to Shakespeare’s creative process, Greenblatt could not be more correct as, in the case of *Richard III*, many scholars, including Alison Hobgood, believe that Shakespeare not only drew inspiration from *Holinshed’s Chronicles*, but also from those of Edward Hall and Sir Thomas More (Hobgood 24).

Meanwhile, in her own work, Dominique Goy-Blanquet traces and compares Shakespeare’s early history plays—*The Henriad* and the War of the Roses tetralogy, which is comprised of the three Henry VI plays and *Richard III*—to their historic, chronicle roots. She, like Hobgood, identifies the likelihood that Shakespeare incorporated many other chroniclers’ histories as he composed these eight plays. And, according to Goy-Blanquet, it is Shakespeare’s ability to collage historical accounts together that makes these works particularly interesting and worthy of investigation.

By interpreting Shakespeare’s two tetralogies as the continuation of a particular historical moment, Goy-Banquet argues that through writing these plays, Shakespeare developed as a play-wright—from novice to master—by the completion of the final play

within the series, *Richard III*. Although Shakespeare was selective of which historical facts to include regarding Richard III's chronicled rule, Goy-Banquet believes that Shakespeare's research into the War of the Roses, and—specifically—the life of Richard III, inspired many of his future works and characters, in particular that of Macbeth. Thus, Goy-Blanquet concludes that *Richard III* is intimately connected in both “structure and theme,” “not only to the other British or Roman histories, but to the whole tragic universe of Shakespeare”—thereby rendering the study of his serialized drama imperative to furthering our understanding of both Shakespearean and serialized texts (268).

Greenblatt adds to Goy-Blanquet's understanding of Shakespeare's tetralogies as serialized dramas by identifying a feedback loop of sorts that is generated by both the playwright's ability to incorporate cultural energies of the time into their works, and the audience's ability to interpret and recreate the messages of the plays—a reciprocal relationship that bears a remarkable relationship to that of Dickens,' and later television and film producers', interactive relationship with their audience. According to him, the Shakespearean theater both depended and thrived upon a sense of felt community: “there is no dimming of lights, no attempt to isolate and awaken the sensibilities of each individual member of the audience, no sense of disappearance of the crowd” (5). Thus, within this structure, culture contributes to the production of plays while also contributing to culture by means of their reception.

To this, Greenblatt adds the idea that the “Elizabethan playing companies contrived to absorb, refashion, and exploit some of the fundamental energies of a political authority that was itself readily committed to the histrionic display and hence was ripe for appropriation”

(40). Within this ideology, he articulates that “the ideological functions of the theater was precisely to create in its audience” a sense that what appeared on the stage was “spontaneous or accidental,” even though the dramatic plots that were performed had, in fact, been “fully plotted ahead of time by a playwright” (17). Thus, by confusing the audience’s perception of reality, Greenblatt argues that the Renaissance theater could then “confirm the structure of human experience as proclaimed by those on top”—i.e. the patriarchy—while urging the audience to “reconfirm this structure” within early modern society (17). However, if Greenblatt is correct in his assertion that “Elizabethan playing companies contrived to absorb, refashion, and exploit some of the fundamental energies of political authority,” then no one attempted to “absorb more of these energies into [their] plays” than Shakespeare (40).

Within my essay, “‘Destiny is Anatomy:’ Richard III’s Feminized Body, Ambiguous Gender, and the Elizabethan Patriarchy,” I build upon the research of both Greenblatt and Goy-Blanquet by historically situating Shakespeare’s play, *Richard III*, in order to better understand the ways in which it spoke to the contemporary issues presented by act of social climbing. According to social historians, the early modern period marks a time during which England was subjected to a crisis of social order, which centered upon the issue of gender relations. As Henry VII’s early shift towards capitalism, as it was presented within the First Act of Dissolution (1536), gave way to an unprecedented amount of social mobility as men of the lower classes became homeowners for the first time. Thus, in an attempt to protect the English patriarchal system from this class of newly established gentlemen, contemporary conduct literature sought to provide them with a sense of purpose by invoking an analogy from English law which cast homeowners in the role of kings presiding over their own

domestic microcosms of the state. In spite of this, “outbreaks of [social] disorder” increased over the course of the English Reformation and reached their peak during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (Moulton 252).

It was during this turbulent time in English history that the need arose to negotiate “the gap between ideologies of masculinity based on physical force and the novel social institution of the Renaissance court” (Moulton 253). And, due to the Elizabethan and Jacobean theaters’ ability to reach what Andrew Gurr refers to as the “complete social range” of playgoers, drama—specifically tragic drama—emerged as the most suitable medium for such a negotiation of competing masculine ideologies to occur (qtd. in Richardson 16). Thus, in my own discussion of *Richard III*, I argue that, through Shakespeare’s dramatic representation of Richard III as embodying both the effeminate male and the masculine female, Shakespeare simultaneously demonstrated that the actions of both male and female social transgressors were unnatural and threatened the established Elizabethan patriarchal society in an attempt to reinforce social order.



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## HEADING TO THE “MOTHERSHIP:” NARRATIVE COMPLEXITY, TRANSMEDIA, AND THE FUTURE OF SERIAL STORYTELLING

Within Jason Mittell’s articulation of “narrative complexity,” the narrational mode may only be applied to texts that originate in television—the medium in which narrative complexity, itself, was born. According to Mittell’s definition, *Marvel’s Agents of S. H. I. E. L. D. (MAoS)*—as a television series—is capable of performing narrative complexity, however, the question remains as to whether or not the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) as a whole, which originates in film and includes narrative and character expansions across television and comics, can also perform narrative complexity. Within this essay, by putting Mittell’s definition of narrative complexity into conversation with transmedia storytelling, I will explore the ways in which the MCU demonstrates narrative complexity through its narrative expansions. By proving that the MCU is capable of performing narrative complexity, I will argue in favor of a more nuanced interpretation of the narrational mode, one that no longer limits its application to texts solely within the medium of television, that bears greater implications for future narratological research conducted within the field of Media Studies.

Mittell identifies narrative complexity as a narrational mode—unique to television—that consists of an “interplay between the demands of episodic and serial storytelling, often oscillating between long-term story arcs and stand-alone episodes” (*Complex TV* 19). It emerged during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries as writers—such as Joss Whedon (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Angel*, and *Firefly*) and J. J. Abrams (*Alias*, *Lost*, and

*Fringe*)—who began their writing careers in film, moved to television. As a “producer’s medium,” television allowed these writers to “retain control of their work” while also exploiting the medium’s creative possibilities of the “long-form series,” particularly in regards to “extended character depth,” “ongoing” plots, and “episodic variations” (“Narrative Complexity” 31). Mittell refers to this time in television history as “the era of television complexity”—1990s - present—a time during which the series and serial forms converged, allowing for the “on going accumulation of narrative events” (“Narrative Complexity” 29).

With the success of series such as *Lost*, *Heroes*, and *24*, networks learned that the value of complex television is rooted in its ability to achieve “lateral resonance” and continuity through “carefully crafted stories and characters” (Gwenllian-Jones 91; *The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 103). With the possibility of an infinite number of episodes, each contributing to the advancement of a season’s story-arc, these complex narratives can consist of “scores of episodes that together constitute a hundred or more screen hours that are played out across several years of production and distribution” (*Complex TV* 19; Gwenllian-Jones 87). As these texts come to embody “less of a linear storytelling object” and more of “a sprawling library of narrative content,” they require and lend themselves to various practices of active audience engagement (*Complex TV* 7). Within his book, *Convergence Culture*, Henry Jenkins, notes the three kinds of consumers complex texts attract:

. . . the actively engaged realtime viewers who must find suspense and satisfaction in each single episode . . . the more reflective long-term audience who look for coherent patterns in the story as a whole . . . [and] the

navigational viewer who takes pleasure in following the connections between different parts of the story and in discovering multiple arrangements of the same material. (*Convergence Culture* 121)

Due to its ability to attract such diverse types of viewers and to promote active engagements with texts, networks sought to turn audience's "activity into profit" by utilizing narrative complexity in transmedia practices (Freedman 168).

As a "heightened" form of serialization, transmedia storytelling works as a vehicle by which narrative complexity is able to transfer into other media forms. As a result of the combined power of transmedia and narratively complex storytelling practices, devoted audience members are exploited as elements of a single narrative plot are dispersed across multiple media platforms (*Spreadable Media* 134). Although it does allow for greater opportunities to "develop characters, explore richer fictional worlds, provide backstory," and "expand the timeline of the narrative," transmedia operates on a "logic of promotion" ("Reign of the 'Mothership'" 254). It acknowledges the fact that loyal audiences—fans—actively seek out "every episode, spin-off (whether officially or unofficially produced), and intertextual pathways" that contribute to the greater narrative in order to better understand the plot as a whole (Gwenllian-Jones 92). By utilizing "engagement based models" of marketing which "places a premium on audiences" such as these, Jenkins asserts that transmedia practices are "designed to give viewers something to do and something to talk about in relation to media content" (*Spreadable Media* 116 & 148-149).

In M. J. Clarke's discussion of "tentpole TV"—his own terminology for shows that perform narrative complexity—Clarke describes what is so intriguing about these kinds of

narratives:

In the phenomena that we have called tentpole TV [or complex narratives], programs are densely serialized and narratively connected to any number of off-broadcast iterations, . . . from online, to traditional print, to video games. While none of these techniques are in themselves entirely new, it is the sheer number of significant, often scattered narrative parts and the manner in which they are interconnected that makes this trend worth studying. (137)

As Clarke attests within this statement, transmedia is not a new concept as its history can be traced back to Frank L. Baum (*The Wizard of Oz* travelogues), Walt Disney (*Disneyland* television series), and George Lucas (*The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*), each of whom expanded their respective narrative worlds by implementing early transmedia strategies.

However, it wasn't until the invention of the internet that transmedia techniques really caught on in modern production practices. Frank Rose attributes this shift to the internet's ability to "act like all media—it can be text, or audio, or video, or all of the above" (Rose 3).

Beginning in the 2000s, television series, such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Smallville*, began to "overflow" into web venues—a movement which marks narrative complexity's transition from being a medium specific narrative mode to one that may be applied to any number of media (Gray and Lotz 76).

Meanwhile, within her own research, Kristen Thompson "has noted that 'the notion of firm and permanent closure to any given narrative has loosened across media'" (qtd. in Hammond 76-77). According to Jenkins, "storytelling has become the art of world building, as artists create compelling environments that cannot be explored or exhausted within a

single work or even a single medium” (*Convergence Culture* 116). Indeed, the desire for narrative worlds that allow for infinite storytelling possibilities has lead production companies to seek out and rejuvenate previous cult fan-favorites, such as *Dr. Who* and *Star Trek*, over the past decade. This is not, however, only a television endeavor as film franchises, such as *Star Wars* and *Jurassic Park*, have also been recently resurrected and expanded upon using transmedia practices. The resurgence of older, proven narrative worlds coincidentally corresponds with those same early writers, most notably Whedon and Abrams, who initially came to television to experiment with narrative form, returning to film as transmedia “hit-makers” (Mann 3). As film studios hope to enter into and profit from the world of transmedia storytelling, they, too, must search for exploitable franchises.

According to Greg M. Smith, “[c]omics are ‘hot’ now” (Smith 110). This is not because there has been a recent surge in comic sales, but is rather due to the fact that comics are “increasingly being used as a research-and-development source for mainstream films and television programs” (Smith 110). Similar to the vast narrative worlds of complex television, the serial storytelling in comics also generates larger narrative worlds that lend themselves to transmedia adaptations. In his chapter, “The Reign of the ‘Mothership’: Transmedia’s Past, Present, and Possible Futures,” Jenkins contends that this is due to contemporary transmedia practices also being “prefigured in the comics industry”: “Over the past few decades, comics storytelling has become increasingly serialized, moving from self contained episodes to story arcs across multiple issues” (253). It comes as no surprise, then, that the two major publishers in comics, Marvel and DC, have sought to engineer cinematic universes of their own where characters can regularly appear across titles—allowing for “company-wide”

cross-over events (“The Reign of the ‘Mothership’” 253).

In regards to Marvel Studios’ transmedia endeavors, Mittell states that while “[m]ost prime time television programs serve as the core text of their transmedia franchises . . . *Marvel’s Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* [is] a rare exception pointed toward a more balanced approach in which comics and films are more central to the narrative” (294). Although Mittell is correct in his assertion that, within the MCU, films serve as the core narrative, he is hesitant to claim that the MCU is capable of being a complex narrative due to his and others’, including Jane Feuer’s, belief that narrative complexity is “uniquely televisual” due to its “technological and narrative links” to television being more significant than its affinity to any other media (qtd. in Hammond and Mazdon 5-6). In what follows, I will demonstrate the ways in which the MCU utilizes transmedia storytelling practices in order to achieve narrative complexity—allowing it to expand its narrative world and franchise while also keeping its audience focused on the narratives of its films.

According to Jenkins, “Hollywood has shifted towards a ‘mothership’ approach; that is, the focus is on one core property that may be extended into other platforms depending on market response” (“The Reign of the ‘Mothership’” 247). This was certainly Marvel Studios’ intention in 2008 when it released its first major motion picture, *Iron Man*. As the documentary *Marvel’s Assembling a Universe (AaU)* contends: “[*Iron Man*] set the groundwork for what what would become a much larger story. Marvel Studios had a vision, a single universe inhabited by heroes and villains across multiple feature film franchises.” The kind of expansion Marvel Studios alludes to here is an application of what Mittell calls “centrifugal complexity”—a sub-category of narrative complexity:



“[C]entrifugal complexity [occurs when] the ongoing narrative pushes outward, spreading characters across an expanding story world. On a centrifugal program, . . . the action traces what happens between characters and institutions as they spread outward. It is not just that the series expands in quantity of characters and settings but that its richness is found in the complex web of interconnectivity forged across the social system rather than in the depth of any one individual’s role in the narrative. (*Complex TV* 222)

Marvel’s expansionist approach to narrative complexity within the MCU is confirmed in the end-credits scene of *Iron Man* (2008) in a statement made by Nick Fury (Samuel L. Jackson), the Director of S.H.I.E.L.D., to Tony Stark (Robert Downey, Jr.):

NICK FURY. You think you’re the only super hero in the world? Mr. Stark, you’ve become a part of a bigger universe, you just don’t know it yet.

Kevin Feige, the President of Marvel Studios, identifies this cinematic moment as not only being directed towards Tony Stark, but also towards the audience as it alludes to the MCU’s greater plan of creating cinematic, cross-over events (*Assembling a Universe*).

Moving forward, Marvel Studios sought to create individual, stand-alone films, each focusing on an individual franchised character, such as Iron Man, Thor, Hulk, Captain America, etc. These films may be considered as “myth-arc stories” as each installment “focus[es] on [expanding] the series’ ongoing mythology and continuity” (“Cult TV” 190-191). In order to ensure narrative continuity and establish these characters as existing in the same cinematic universe, cross-over events began occurring as early as *Iron Man* with appearances by Nick Fury and his fellow S. H. I. E. L. D. Agent, Phil Coulson—a character

original to the MCU portrayed by Clark Gregg. Character cameos such as these served the initial purpose of linking individual super-hero franchises together via their association with the secret government organization, S. H. I. E. L. D.; and, they occurred across all of the films that comprise Phase I of the MCU: Tony Stark in *The Incredible Hulk* (2008) end-credits scene, Agent Phil Coulson and Natasha Romanoff/Black Widow (Scarlet Johansson) in *Iron Man 2* (2010), Agent Phil Coulson and Hawkeye/Clint Barton (Jeremy Renner) in *Thor* (2011), and Agent Coulson, again, in *Captain America: The First Avenger* (2011). According to Axel Alonso, Editor and Chief of Marvel Comics, this strategy “is very similar to what Marvel Comics did back in the day: they built individual stories that stand on their own two feet [and] then found a way to weave them into a larger narrative” (*Assembling a Universe*). The first five films would serve as precursors to the final cinematic installment of Phase I, *The Avengers* (2012), which would serve as the first, major cross-over event in the MCU—a narratological feat that had never before been accomplished in film (*Assembling a Universe*).

Characters and their social relationships are crucial to creating narratively complex television series. Within his own work concerning the soap opera genre, Robert Allen situates characters at the heart of what he calls “paradigmatic complexity.” In Clarke’s summary of Allen’s concept, he describes paradigmatic complexity as being that “in which character relationships are continuously changing and evolving . . . making them more nodes in an intricate unfolding puzzle than independent actors themselves” (Clarke 140).

According to Mittell, within television, characters and their personal story-arcs are typically determined through “collaboration[s] between the actors who portray them and the writers

and producers who devise their actions and dialogue” (*Complex TV* 119). In contrast, Mittell explains that this is not the case with films which he considers to be “fixed texts” in which actors do not contribute to their characters’ development (*Complex TV* 132).

However, this does not seem to be true in the case of films comprised within the MCU as the creative development of Tom Hiddleston’s character, Loki, from *Thor* (2011) seems to mimic the collaborative process that is commonplace within television. While viewers today can readily acknowledge Hiddleston’s character as the primary antagonist within *The Avengers* film, this narrational choice was not always apparent to the writers and creators of the MCU. According to Hiddleston, post *Thor*—while Loki, the “damaged prince,” “struggl[ed] to find a place in the universe”—the creative team at Marvel Studios were also unsure of how to incorporate his character into the larger narrative of the MCU, but knew that they wanted Loki to appear in future cross-over films (*Assembling a Universe*). The answer appears to have come in the form of the Tesseract—an alien device in the shape of a cube that contains an unlimited source of energy. The Tesseract first appears in the end-credits scene of *Thor*, during which Erik Selvig (Stellan Skarsgard) meets with Nick Fury and receives his assignment to begin researching the Tesseract’s power. Here, Loki enters—supposedly having just fallen through a black hole after an epic battle with his brother, Thor—and indicates, by speaking through Selvig, that he will feature as a returning villain within the first major cross-over film. Within *AaU*, Hiddleston recalls meeting with Feige after the completion of *The Avengers* and his collaboration with Feige to determine where to go next in terms of Loki’s character and story-arc. Since Marvel Studios has adopted story development practices that are reminiscent of those practiced within television, it is likely

that they are adapting other practices, such as narrative complexity, as well.

*The Avengers*' plot marks an integral moment within the MCU as the events espoused within its narrative drastically effect not only Loki's character but all of the primary characters that are espoused within the larger narrative universe—a key element to complex narratives. Since the films within the MCU mimic the serialization form of complex narratives, they operate on the same premise as complex television serials: they assume the “on going accumulation of narrative events—what occurs in one [film] will have happened to the characters as portrayed in future [films]” (“Narrative Complexity” 29; *Complex TV* 23). Within *The Avengers*, characters with very different backgrounds, which audiences have previously been introduced to within the characters' own separate franchises, are now forced to work together and form a team within the first major cross-over event to occur within the medium of film. Thus, *The Avengers* is important for a variety of reasons, including: introducing non-humanoid characters into the greater narrative (which opens up the possibility for universe expansion via *Guardians of the Galaxy*); introducing Thanos (a villain who figures in *Guardians of the Galaxy* and is supposed to figure later within *The Avengers: Infinity War, Parts 1 and 2*); it features the return of the Tesseract (which contains one of six infinity stones that are later referenced to within *Thor: The Dark World*, *Guardians of the Galaxy*, and *The Avengers: Age of Ultron*); it marks the end of Phase I in the MCU and the beginning of Phase II (which seeks to delve deeper into character development as each of the primary characters are returned to their own franchise movies); and—most important to the current study—the death of Agent Phil Coulson.

In my opinion, Coulson's character is crucial to the study of narrative complexity and

its application to the MCU. According to Hiddleston, “Agent Phil Coulson has been, in his [Clark Gregg’s] own words, ‘the glue’ of the [MCU]” (*Assembling a Universe*). And, indeed he is for although the character was only initially intended to be included within a few small scenes, Coulson remains as the most frequently recurring character within the MCU as he appeared in all but one of the Phase I films—*The Incredible Hulk*. However, in spite of his relatively minor role within the larger Marvel franchise, fans grew attached to Coulson’s character—so much so, that Coulson features in two of the MCU’s five short films from 2011 that are also known as “Marvel One-Shots.”

The Marvel One-Shots mark Marvel Studios’ first transmedia expansion within the MCU. These short films were designed and introduced into the greater narrative in order to highlight and expand upon characters that either did not feature as “leading roles” within the films, such as Coulson, or to add to the character development of those who did, such as Haley Atwell’s character, Agent Peggy Carter (*Assembling a Universe*). As with all transmedia installments, the Marvel One-Shots serve as “stand-alone” narratives that act as “a point of entry into the [MCU] franchise as a whole” (*Convergence Culture* 98). While the Marvel One-Shots only serve the purpose of providing audiences with brief interactions with these characters outside of the films, their success cannot be overlooked as fans’ positive responses to both Coulson’s and Carter’s shorts resulted in the development of two larger transmedia installments within the MCU: the television series *MAoS* and *Agent Carter*.

According to Mittell, fans’ “affection for and connection with characters are [arguably] the most intense bond that fans of a television serial [have] with a program” (*Complex TV* 301). The same seems to be true in the case of the MCU as Clark Gregg

suggests that it was the fans' positive response to Coulson that breathed life back into the character after his death in *The Avengers (Assembling a Universe)*. Such a drastic change in a character's identity is not uncommon within television narratives as Jennifer Hayward notes that "serials are fascinated by the instability of identity—hence the recurrence of radical character transformations, returns from the dead, evil twins, and so on" (175). Thus, it is with the inherent mystery surrounding Coulson's resurrection that *MAoS* begins.

It is important to pause here and examine the motivations behind Marvel Studios' decision to utilize transmedia and bring the MCU to television—the medium in which narrative complexity originated. According to Jeph Loeb, Head of Marvel Television, the goal of *MAoS* is to "fill the giant cracks" between the larger film installments and to serve as a "boardwalk" through the MCU (*Assembling a Universe*). Loeb's logic is congruent with transmedia practices as it is "optimistically regarded as a magnet to sustain viewers' engagement and attention across [the] periodic gaps" that exist between serial installments (*Complex TV* 295). Thus, by including complex television series—which, "in general require active participation on the part of consumers"—into the narrative web of the MCU, Marvel Studios is able to better "consolidate and hold a mass audience" (Freedman 168; Hayward 1).

Meanwhile, the domestic quality of serial television cannot be overlooked as it allows for fans' bonds with characters to be strengthened over time as characters are "invited into your home, often for regularly scheduled visits [sometimes] over the course of years" (*Complex TV* 128). In her own work, Hayward highlights the key differences between cinematic and televisual spectatorship:

First, the camera positioning, production values, scene construction, even

acting style are much ‘smaller’ and more intimate in television. Second, the viewing context is very different. Dominated by the vast screen above, surrounded by darkness and strange bodies, the cinemagoer’s viewing experience is both spectacular and specular. Glancing at a small screen, surrounded by familiar objects and people, the television watcher’s viewing experience is both intimate and distracted. She or he virtually exchanges glances with the smaller than life-sized actors, placed at eye level, watching them within the private space of the home rather than in the public theater.

(Hayward 159)

From Hayward’s description, one can identify familiarity as a medium specific strength of television; and, it is this sense of familiarity that Marvel Studios exploits within the series, *MAoS*.

The pilot episode of *MAoS* is set during the immediate aftermath of the Battle of New York which took place within *The Avengers*. The audience is introduced to Skye, one of the main characters of the series, who is a member of “The Rising Tide”—an underground organization whose sole purpose is to expose the secrets which S. H. I. E. L. D. has fought so hard to keep from the American public. Within her public broadcasts, Skye addresses S. H. I. E. L. D. directly:

The secret is out. For decades, your organization stayed in the shadows—hiding the truth. Now we know they’re among us: heroes and monsters. The world is full of wonders. We can’t explain everything we see; but, our eyes are open. Something impossible just happened. What are you going to do

about it? How will you come at us? From the air? From the ground? How will you silence us this time? How can you? The truth is in the wind; and, it's everywhere. You cannot stop The Rising Tide. You will not find us. You will never see our faces. But, rest assured, we will rise against those who shield us from the truth. (S1:E1)

Her speech alludes to the time before *The Avengers*, a time during which S. H. I. E. L. D. operated as a secret government organization that protected the general public from threats of both national and global security. However, everything has changed after the events of the Battle of New York when the answer to one of life's greatest questions—"Are we alone in the universe?"—was answered by an alien invasion of New York City. Now, "the truth is in the wind" as moquettes and action figures of the Avengers become popular items that adorn the shelves of the narrative world's convenience stores, and the knowledge of heroes and villains, alike, is now public knowledge. However, these truths are not limited to the constructed narrative world of the MCU, for after *The Avengers'* release on May 4, 2012, ancillary products, "branded objects, concepts, or characters in artifacts outside a presumed original source," flooded real stores around the globe—simultaneously promoting the same heroic ideas as they are portrayed within the MCU (Clarke 19). Furthermore, the rhetorical strategy employed within Skye's speech is significant as it connects the timeline of *MAoS* and that of the real world by means of characters' and audience members' shared exposure to the events of *The Avengers*. This connection intimately links the audience to the events and characters within both the cinematic and televisual universes of the MCU—thus, blurring the line between reality and fiction.



However, Skye's speech is not the only time in which the pilot directly links the series' audience to the events of the MCU's larger narrative. After retrieving a Chitauri neural link from a man who intended to sell the alien artifact over the black market, Agent Grant Ward reports to Agent Maria Hill—Director Fury's second in command. During their meeting, Ward explains to both Hill and the audience what S. H. I. E. L. D. stands for and the organization's role within the MCU:

AGENT HILL. What does S. H. I. E. L. D. stand for, Agent Ward?

AGENT WARD. Strategic Homeland Intervention Enforcement and Logistics  
Division.

AGENT HILL. And, what does that mean to you?

AGENT WARD. It means someone really wanted our initials to spell out  
S. H. I. E. L. D. It means we're the line between the world and the  
much weirder world. We protect people from news they aren't ready to  
hear. And, when we can't do that—we keep them safe. Something  
turns up, like this Chitauri neural link, we get to it before someone bad  
does. (S1:E1)

Avid fans are rewarded, here, for they will remember that this is not the first time that audiences of the MCU have heard what the acronym S. H. I. E. L. D. stands for as Coulson originally explains the organization and its purpose during one of the final scenes of *Iron Man*, during a discussion with Tony Stark's assistant, Pepper Potts (Gwyneth Paltrow). However, as Mittell explains within *Complex TV*, not all viewers engage with the same transmedia extensions:

[V]iewers . . . vary as to what paratextual expansions they explore, as some read reviews, participate in fan forums, and visit other participatory cultural sites that keep memories fresh in their minds, while others may not think at all about a program until the next episode [or installment is released]. Thus the long arcs of complex [narratives] must balance the memory demands of a wide range of viewers and reception contexts. (181)

Thus, for the fans who may not recall Coulson's original explanation of the organization and those members in the audience who are unfamiliar with the particular *Iron Man* film or franchise, Ward's explanation, here, serves the purpose of ensuring that everyone engaging with the television series will understand the present narrative regardless of their previous exposure to the texts within the MCU.

As the scene between Hill and Ward continues to unfold, Hill elaborates on the ways in which both the MCU and the public's understanding of the world have been altered by the Battle of New York:

AGENT HILL. Everything's changing. A little while ago most people went to bed thinking the craziest thing in the world was a billionaire in a flying metal suit. Then aliens invaded New York, and were beaten back by, among others, a giant green monster, a consumed hero from the forties, and a god.

AGENT WARD. I don't think Thor is technically a god.

AGENT HILL. Well, you haven't been near his arms. The Battle of New York was the end of the world. This, now, is the new world. People

are different. They have access to tech, to formulas, secrets they're not ready for. (S1:E1)

Within this brief dialogue, Hill concisely assesses the character traits that are currently in flux as the MCU shifts from the world of Phase I into the new world of Phase II. Up until this point, the characters that have been presented within Phase I, and revealed to the fictional public within *The Avengers*, introduce the concepts of genetic mutation, time travel, and aliens into the greater mythology of the MCU. However, it is important to note that, regardless of their origin, all of the heroes comprised within Phase I are either human or humanoid. Although Bruce Banner is capable of transforming into the monstrous Hulk and Captain America is revived after decades of being frozen in ice, audience members are able to look past these abnormal characteristics due to the characters' both familiar and appealing appearance. Additionally, Ward is correct in his assessment that Thor is not a god and is, in fact, a member of an alien race known as Asgardians. However, Thor's physique allows him to be easily camouflage himself amongst members of the human race, a design and character choice which allows the creators of the MCU to introduce cosmic elements into the MCU and begin expanding the narrative world to the farthest reaches of the galaxy. As the events of *The Avengers* introduced the first non-humanoid alien race, the MCU begins hinting towards the intentions of Phase II which will usher in films, like *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014), that contain more alien-type characters that will force audiences to consider the following question: What makes someone a monster if it is not their outward appearance?

Furthermore, *MAoS* adds to the current mythology of the MCU by pushing the boundaries of the audience's expectations through the resurrection of Coulson—a character

who previously died prior to the Battle of New York:

AGENT WARD. Why was I pulled out of Paris?

AGENT HILL. That you'll have to ask Agent Coulson.

AGENT WARD. Uh, yeah. I'm clearance level six, I know that Agent

Coulson was killed in action before the Battle of New York. Got the full report.

AGENT COULSON. Welcome to level seven. (S1:E1)

In addition to learning that characters within the MCU are capable of returning from the dead—a narrative choice which allows for an infinite number of future story-arcs via character returns—this scene relates back to the earlier discussion of the domestic nature of television. Due to the intimate nature of its viewing practices, audience members are also granted level seven clearance within this scene as they, too, learn of Coulson's rejuvenation. Thus, at the conclusion of *MAoS*'s pilot episode, each member of the audience becomes a member of Coulson's elite team of S. H. I. E. L. D. agents.

Mittell identifies audience members' "affection for and connection with characters" as arguably "the most intense bond that fans of a television serial" have with any given program (*Complex TV* 301). Thus, as season one of *MAoS* progresses, viewers' commitments to the series increase as they embark on weekly missions with Coulson's team. With each new installment, the audience's relationships with and attachments to the characters within the show deepen as the plot continues to develop. This intimate connection with the show's characters becomes critical to the MCU as the timelines of *MAoS* and Captain America converge—a narrative event which further links the complex narrative of the television series

with those of the films.

The climax of season one occurs in episode seventeen, “Turn Turn Turn,” when it is revealed that H. Y. D. R. A.—a terrorist organization with historical roots connected to the Nazi party—is revealed as having been imbedded within S. H. I. E. L. D. since the group’s supposed demise at the end of WWII. The events within this episode directly correspond to those of the film, *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*—which was released a mere four days before “Turn Turn Turn” aired on ABC. As many S. H. I. E. L. D. agents are revealed to be undercover H. Y. D. R. A. agents, Captain America, Black Widow, Coulson and his team each participate in the fight for the soul of S. H. I. E. L. D. within their respective narrative installment. The episode “Turn Turn Turn” rewards loyal fans of the greater MCU who saw the film during its opening weekend as it directly references events from the film—including the death of Nick Fury—as if both the television and film narratives were occurring simultaneously in real time.

As previously discussed, viewers became personally invested in the relationships that formed between Coulson’s team over the course of the previous sixteen episodes of *MAoS*. However, during “Turn Turn Turn,” the audience is dealt an emotional blow as Ward—a fan favorite and newly developing love interest of Skye—is revealed as one of the many undercover H. Y. D. R. A. agents. This craft choice was strategically implemented in order to force the audience to empathize with the events of *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* on a deeper level. By uprooting a relationship which the audience has formed with a major character over the course of sixteen weekly installments, viewers are forced to share characters’ feelings of betrayal as they, too, learn the hard truth about about H. Y. D. R. A.

from Agent Victoria Hand: “They hide in plain sight. They earn our trust, our sympathy. They make us like them. And, when you hesitate—they strike” (S1:E17).

Thus, at the conclusions of both *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* and the first season of *MAoS*, the organization formerly known as S. H. I. E. L. D. is broken; and, Coulson and his team are forced into hiding. As season two begins, Coulson and his team are the equivalents of fugitive vigilantes, taking it upon themselves to rebuild S. H. I. E. L. D. from the ground up. As the series continues to unfold, it further fulfills its purpose of bridging the narrative gaps between the MCU’s film installments by incorporating the presence of an alien presence here on earth through the introduction of the Inhumans storyline—which will be developed further within its own film installment that is expected to be released later in 2019.

By exploring the ways in which the transmedia expansions within the MCU interact with and contribute to the understanding of the core narratives of its films—I have demonstrated that the MCU is an example of a complex narrative. In light of this research, I propose the following nuanced definition of narrative complexity:

narrative complexity is a narrational mode that originated in television; it consists of an interplay between the demands of episodic and serial storytelling, often oscillating between long-term story arcs and stand-alone episodes which results in the on going accumulation of narrative events; and, due to its proven association with transmedia storytelling practices, it may be applied to narratives that originate within other media.

By lifting Jason Mittell’s restriction which stated that narrative complexity could only be

applied to texts that originate in the medium of television, my definition allows for more complex texts that originate in other media to be studied for the first time—which will broaden the scope of both Media and Literary Studies while also furthering our understanding of the poetics of complex narratives.

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“DESTINY IS ANATOMY:” RICHARD III’S FEMINIZED BODY,  
AMBIGUOUS GENDER, AND THE ELIZABETHAN PATRIARCHY

Within the body of criticism relating to *Richard III*, many scholars have argued that Richard performs both masculine and feminine characteristics as independent of his body. Such assertions have only been further supported by claims, such as Marcela Kostihová’s, that “Richard’s bodily materiality [serves] only as an after thought of his actions” (141). While these and other disability scholars have conducted studies that have researched the feminine qualities of Richard III’s body as a result of his actions, none have considered the ways in which Richard performs both masculine and feminine behaviors out of his rejection of his inherently feminized body. Geoffrey A. John’s work, “A ‘Grievous Burthen’: *Richard III* and the Legacy of Monstrous Birth,” comes the closest to bridging this gap in the research. However, even as he identifies that, “Richard’s bodily deformities and corresponding moral character [are] interrelated” his interpretation is limited by “metonymic and emblematic readings of deformed bodies as physical manifestations of transgressive inwardness” (Johns 55). In this essay I will argue that, through his dramatic representation of Richard III as embodying both the effeminate male and the masculine female, Shakespeare simultaneously demonstrated that the actions of both male and female social transgressors were unnatural and threatened the established social order of the established Elizabethan patriarchal society.

According to modern conceptualizations of disability studies, Tom Shakespeare asserts that “people are disabled by society *and* by their bodies” (qtd. in Iyengar 4). This is

not a novel idea, however, as during the early modern period, people interpreted the womb as “the organic source of disease” due to the common belief that “any perturbation of accepted order—wicked thoughts, moral culpability, chance encounters with people or things, untimely or improperly positioned intercourse—could imprint itself disastrously on the flesh of their children in utero. (Laqueur 110 and 121). Historically speaking, Richard III’s birth occurred within just a few years of his father, Richard of York’s, death—an event which historically marks the end of the 100 Years War and the beginning of the War of the Roses. Meanwhile, within the context of the first tetralogy—which is comprised of the three Henry VI plays and *Richard III*—Shakespeare foregoes this historical fact and introduces Richard’s character into the first tetralogy at least ten years before his actual birth. In light of this, Johns asserts that “the tetralogy implicitly attributes Richard’s birth deformities to divine retribution for his rebellious father’s sins, which are made physically manifest upon [his] birth” (43-44). And, as the events of the war in *3 Henry VI* end with the complete and utter dissolution of male patriarchal bonds, “Shakespeare epitomizes in his vision of Richard [a] reciprocally deformed body and mind [that] are both the products of and the signposts by which the turmoil and cancer of a corrupt and divided nation are expressed (Johns 47).

Although individuals in the Medieval period might have perceived Richard’s spinal deformity as a sign of divine retribution, playgoers of the early modern would not have been interpreting Richard’s body as only “monstrous and malevolent” (Hobgood 27-28).

According to the ideology that was prevalent during Shakespeare’s lifetime was the idea that the body served as “the absolute foundation for the entire system of gender,” and was based upon the premise that there existed only one “canonical body and that body was

male” (Laqueur 135 and 62). This interpretation of the body dates back to the second century A.D., when Galen developed a model of structural identity which “demonstrated at length that women were essentially men [who] lack . . . perfection” (Laqueur 4).

During a time of social crisis when structures of the patriarchy were continuously challenged due to the presence of Elizabeth I’s female body inhabiting the English throne, Galen’s “one flesh” model of the body was used by the early modern government to “valorize the extraordinary cultural assertion of the patriarchy [and] of the father” (Laqueur 19-20). However, if one is to assume that all early modern women’s bodies were automatically interpreted as disabled, “faulty male bod[ies],” then the opposite must also be true: a “marked” and “defective” male body must, then, be a feminized body (Bowles 49). Thus, it is Richard’s own bodily deformity that serves as the “lynchpin that engenders his self professed villainy” (Kostihová 139).

Therefore, in a close reading of Richard’s character, as it is presented under the guise of a female body, one must also understand the nature of his ambiguous gender role within the play. As a man whose body marks him as feminine, Richard is expected to adhere to the traditional gender role of the woman. And, as Ian Frederick Moulton stresses within his article, “‘A Monster Great Deformed’: The Unruly Masculinity of Richard III,” a woman’s main purpose within a patriarchal society is to produce male heirs: “For in a patriarchal society in which property and social status are passed from the father to son, women are crucial to male power,” and “the importance of women’s reproductive labor in the perpetuation of the patriarchal order” cannot be taken for granted (266). Thus, in regards to Richard’s feminine role within *Richard III*, one can attribute the cause of his hyper-masculine

behavior over the course of *Richard III* as resulting from his inability to sexually satisfy a woman and, thereby, contribute to patriarchal society through procreation.

According to Thomas Laqueur, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there existed a relationship between physical irregularities and barrenness, specifically in regards to one's "inability to satisfy [a] woman" (101). Although Shakespeare does not explicitly comment on the presence of a genital deformity in relation to Richard's body, he does hint towards Richard's inability to "make heaven in a lady's lap," a phrase that reads as a sexual innuendo for the act of generating an orgasm:

Well, say there is no kingdom then for Richard:

What other pleasure can the world afford?

I'll make my heaven in a lady's lap

...

And witch sweet ladies with my words and looks.

O, miserable thought, and more unlikely

Than to accomplish twenty golden crowns.

Why, love forswore me in my mother's womb,

And, for I should not deal in her soft laws. (*3 Henry VI* 3.2.147-155)

Although Richard speaks, here, of the pleasures of engaging in—specifically—recreational sex, he equates his chances of doing so with his inability to earn "twenty golden crowns."

This suggests that, due to his misshapen form, he is incapable of performing sexually. This becomes increasingly problematic if one considers Richard's gender expectations as a woman for, as Laqueur explains, during the early modern period some believed that an

orgasm—the epitome of sexual satisfaction—was considered essential in order for one to conceive a child. Therefore, as “love foreswore” him in his mother’s womb and rendered him physically misshapen, Richard is rendered incapable of contributing to the patriarchal society of the play, regardless of the nature of his possible, or impossible, sexual encounters.

This is not, however, the only time that Richard associates his bodily deformity with his inability to perform sexually as his opening soliloquy in *Richard III* attests:

And now, instead of mounting barbéd steeds  
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,  
He [Edward IV] capers nimbly in a lady’s chamber  
To the lascivious pleasings of a lute.  
But I am not shaped for such sportive tricks  
Nor made to court an amorous looking glass,  
I that am rudely stamped, and want love’s majesty  
To strut before a wanton-ambling nymph,  
I that am curtailed of this fair proportion,  
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,  
Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time  
Into this breathing world scarce half made up,  
And that so lamely and unfashionable  
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them:  
Why, I in this weak-piping time of peace  
Have no delight to pass away the time,

Unless to spy my shadow in the sun  
And descant on mine own deformity.  
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover  
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,  
I am determined to prove a villain,  
And hate the idle pleasures of these days. (1.1.10-31)

Here, Richard associates the act of “mounting barbed steeds” with Edward IV’s ability to “[caper] nimbly in an a lady’s chamber”—a commentary that contains a great deal of sexual undertones. In regards to the first, there is nothing in any of Shakespeare’s texts that suggests that Richard is incapable of mounting a horse as he has proved himself in battle in previous plays. Therefore, one is left to assume that by claiming, “I am not shaped for such sportive tricks,” Richard does not allude to his body as a whole as “curtailed of this fair proportion” but rather to a possible genital deformity that hinders his ability to “prove a lover.” Additionally, by describing himself in negative terms, such as his being “rudely stamped,” “curtailed of . . . fair proportion,” “cheated of feature by dissembling nature,” “deformed, unfinished,” and lame, Richard provides key insights as to his reasons for being “determined to prove a villain.” Specifically, Richard “want[s] love’s majesty;” he wants “to strut before a wanton-ambling nymph;” he wants to show a woman his body in a sexual manner, but is rendered incapable of doing due to his being sent into “this breathing world scarce half made up.” Therefore, due to his inability to “prove a lover,” Richard ultimately rejects both his feminized body and his obligation to fulfill his gender roles as a woman in order to prove his masculinity by making himself a villain of “weak-piping . . . peace.”



Furthermore, as Francis Bacon explains in his treatise, “Of Deformity,” the belief existed in the early modern period that “if the genitals do not function properly, erotic energy will circulate in other channels” (qtd. in Moulton 265). Within this mind-set, Bacon contends that “deformity is an advantage to rising [in social standing],” based on his assumption that “[t]hat which is unable to raise itself physically may rise socially instead” (qtd. in Moulton 265). This is certainly the case for Shakespeare’s Richard, as Sujata Iyengar notes, “[w]hile ‘early modern life systematically took power away from real persons with disabilities,’ Richard is, instead, able to manipulate his body and move upwards in society” (12).

One example of Richard’s ability to manipulate his body can be found within *Richard III*’s famous scene in which Richard—against all previously state odds—is able to successfully woo Anne Neville. In his own analysis of this scene, Moulton describes that Richard does so due to his unique ability to perform both masculine and feminine roles within the play:

By offering Anne his sword, [Richard] stages a calculated (and illusory) gender reversal, offering her an opportunity to exercise phallic power which he assumes in advance that she will be incapable of accepting. Anne succumbs because she allows her political quarrel with Richard to be expressed in a discourse of erotic seduction which, while it gives her the illusion of power over her helpless ‘effeminate’ suitor, actually constructs her as feminine and passive, and Richard as masculine and active. (267)

Moulton’s argument, in addition to Richard’s rhetorical ability to make Anne—and the audience—overlook his ambiguous bodily deformity, further supports my own claim that

Richard must also suffer from a genital deformity. For although the presence of Richard's supposed "withered arm" and his mountainous back may vary, as both the representation and presentation of these disfigurements rely heavily upon any given production's portrayal of Richard's character, Shakespeare omits the historical fact that Richard conceived a son, Edward of Middleham, Prince of Wales, through his marriage to Anne (*3 Henry VI* 3.3.157-158). Therefore, as this omission is consistent across all productions, Richard is rendered "an embodiment of untrammelled passion," and, as previously supported by Bacon, it is Richard's inability to appropriately exert his sexual energies that allows him to redirect this passion towards proving himself a villain by means of pursuing upward social mobility through acts of hyper-masculinity (Travitsky 73).

Meanwhile, according to Viviana Comensoli, "[e]arly modern England . . . was a society in which one's identity and survival were defined according to one's membership in a family. A person alienated from his or her family in place and in the social hierarchy was . . . 'socially extinct'" (99). This statement relates to Richard for, after avenging his father's death by murdering Henry VI in Act 5, Scene 6 of *3 Henry VI*, Richard declares, "I have no brother, I am like no brother. / And this word 'love', which greybeards call divine, / Be resident in men like one another / And not in me: I am myself alone" (80-83). Here, being permanently separated from his proper, masculine-role model, his father, Richard commits his first hyper-masculine transgression against the patriarchy. Here, in his formal rejection of "love" and his previous rejection of his mother's "soft laws," Richard reiterates his rejection of his feminine role within patriarchal society. And, in the same moment, he unknowingly forever bars himself from obtaining a masculine identity due to its dependence upon filial

relationships:

Having no brother in the sense of having no kinship with people who are lovable and who love, being himself alone emotionally, in his utter lack of pity, as well as physically, [Richard] pursues the crown for himself alone. He sets his brothers against each other, by mimicking a brotherly love he has never felt so as to deceive and entrap them and by killing off or otherwise disposing of their children as obstacles to his succession. (Kahn 65-66)

As a result of Richard's rhetorical ability to tactfully navigate his social situation, and strategically eliminate the issues presented by the bodies of his patriarchal superiors—namely those of Edward IV, Clarence, Henry VI, and Henry VI's son—Richard is ultimately appointed the role of Protector over Edward IV's heir, Edward of Westminster, Prince of Wales (*3 Henry VI* 3.2.130-133). As Protector, Richard's legal duties to the young boy-king are remarkably similar to that of the early modern "good wife" whose duty it was to serve as "a passive reflector of her husband's [the king's] greatness" ("Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form" 107). Furthermore, in addition to this responsibility, William Gouge states that the good wife must "rule others as she be subject to her husband, and not command any thing against his command," for "if she take any authority, she usurpeth it" (qtd. in Richardson 47).

It is within this context that young Prince Edward assumes the role of king, "the national father" (Kahn 49). However, the presence of a child king on the throne comes with its own set of concerns. Amongst the "practical dangers" that accompany having a child monarch on the throne, Moulton lists the following: "conflict among the regents, uncertainty

concerning the succession, and a general division of authority”—all of which occur, as they did historically, within Act II of Shakespeare’s play as Edward IV’s court divides after his death, and fights to maintain their control over England (256). Within his biography of Richard III, *Richard III*, David Hipshon describes the difficult situation that the prospect of Edward V’s ascension to the throne presented:

There can be no doubt that Edward’s death could not have come at a worse time. The eldest of his two sons was only 12 years old and too young to be expected to rule in his own right, but too old for a stable minority government to be established. His age made it unlikely that any interim regime would face the difficulty of managing the supreme authority in the state and then having to relinquish it before very long. . . . The boy-king might be susceptible to undue influence, or might already hold his own views which it would be dangerous to ignore. (120)

However, while Hipshon does provide historical evidence that, in a sense, supports Richard’s action of usurping the throne, he ultimately condemns Richard’s decision:

The institution of monarchy itself is weakened, not strengthened, by usurpation. By flouting rules of natural inheritance and succession the body politic is endangered and destabilized. Taking the throne should have been the very last resort of a lawfully-minded magnate. (135)

As I have previously mentioned within this essay, Shakespeare’s Richard III is driven by purely selfish motives to usurp the throne. And, although this act alone transgresses against the natural laws of patriarchal succession, it is the killing of the princes in the tower that

serves as Richard's most severe attack upon the patriarchy.

According to contemporary conduct manuals, child murder is “the highest violation” of not only patriarchy society but the established “Law of Nature” (qtd. in *Dangerous Familiars* 150). Although Richard himself does not kill the boys within Shakespeare's play—Tyrell, a hired assassin commits, physically murders the princes—Hipshon notes that as both Protector and then king, “the ultimate responsibility” for the fate of the princes rests with Richard (Hipshon 139). Just as a gentlemen in his house, Richard as king is “located in the arena where he has full responsibility for and final authority over family, servants, and guests,” and, therefore, it is through the murder of the princes that Richard wages his final and most brutal act of hyper-masculinity against both his feminized body and the patriarchal society.

What marks the death of the princes as so strikingly evil is that their murder occurs in the bed chamber, a space which Catherine Richardson identifies as “a female space of nurture and sleep” (188). Furthermore, the bed chamber is a space that “define[s] family and lineage” as it is directly involved in the acts of birth and death (Richardson 188). In this way, the bed itself “comes to symbolize the essentially paradoxical nature of the household as [a] simultaneous source of [both] stability and change” (Richardson 188). According to Richardson, “the male intrusion into this space is harmful; instead of creating it destroys” (188). As Richard, himself, “gives no thought to progeny,”—whether his own or those of others—it is through his inability to procreate and his murderous transgressions against the patriarchy that Richard ultimately comes to serve society as a malignant and disobedient force: “able to destroy and corrupt but not create” (Moulton 265).

Meanwhile, as Richard notably “[descants] on his shadow, and [calls] attention to his deformity the better to appreciate his triumph over it,” his destiny is fatefully reflected in its dark and misshapen anatomy (Kahn 66). Although Richard is able to both cast aside his feminine role and utilize rhetoric in a way that allows the audience to overlook his feminized body throughout the events of *Richard III*, he is ultimately doomed to fail as “the play ultimately reinstates the fantasy of an ideal masculine body” through “Richmond’s success in defeating and deposing Richard” (Williams n.pag.). For, in spite of Moulton's condemnation of Richmond as being a relatively flat character, Richmond re-establishes the patriarchy as the perfection that is the masculine ideal in two ways: firstly, by entering at the end of the play, Richmond is the only unsoiled member of this cast of players; and, secondly, he is the perfect embodiment of the ideal masculine body.

This becomes increasingly important when *Richard III* is placed with its historical context. For, as a result of Elizabeth I’s inability to serve the public as a patriarchal role model—due to her female body—the new members of the gentlemen class began to look towards the past in search of a proper masculine role-model. Due to their emulation of previous medieval ideals of masculinity, England witnessed a mass resurgence in displays of “masculine aggressivity, violence, and self-assertion” during Elizabeth I’s reign. London alone witnessed thirty-five public outbreaks of disorder between the years 1581 and 1602. It was during this turbulent time in English history that the need arose to negotiate “the gap between ideologies of masculinity based on physical force and the novel social institution of the Renaissance court” (Moulton 253). And, due to the Elizabethan and Jacobean theaters’ ability to reach what Andrew Gurr refers to as the “complete social range” of playgoers,

drama—specifically tragic drama—emerged as the most suitable medium for such a negotiation of competing masculine ideologies to occur (qtd. in Richardson 16).

Shakespeare's first tetralogy takes place during the medieval past at a time when the state was organized around and described in terms that made it "inseparable . . . from the body of the monarch" (Howard and Rackin 29). According to Coppélia Kahn, "Shakespeare's works reflect and voice a masculine anxiety about the uses of patriarchal power over women . . . which arises from . . . their peculiar emotional vulnerability to women" (12). In light of this, it is not surprising then that the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III* "consistently read the political struggles for the English crown in terms of gender" (Moulton 254). Indeed, over the course of his first tetralogy, "effeminate rulers and mannish women destabilize the traditional patriarchal power structure and gender hierarchy of England, leaving the realm in chaos" (Moulton 254-255).

Thus, when Richmond identifies Richard as a social climber and a threat to early modern patriarchal ideals within his speech to his troops, Richmond simultaneously establishes himself as a patriarchal role model for both his troops and the audience while also condemning the action of social climbing:

For what is he they follow? Truly, gentlemen,  
A bloody tyrant and a homicide;  
One raised in blood, and one in blood established;  
One that made means to come by what he hath,  
And slaughtered those that were the means to help him;  
A base, foul stone, made precious by the foil

Of England's chair where he is falsely set;

One that hath ever been God's enemy. (*Richard III* 5.4.224-231)

Here, Shakespeare draws attention to the feminized notion of Richard's body by aligning his birth with images of blood and death. Meanwhile, by addressing his troops as "gentlemen," I believe that Shakespeare intended this speech for his specific audience as contemporary social climbers of the Elizabethan era, like Richard, "made means to come by what [they] hath." Furthermore, in the continuation of his speech, unlike Richard, Richmond provides new men with a motivation for maintaining an ordered patriarchal society: "If you do fight in safeguard of your wives, / Your wives shall welcome home the conquerers. / If you do free your children from the sword, / Your children's children quite it in your age" (*Richard III* 5.4.238-241). Here, Richmond advocates for a "stable world held together in the present and the future by familial bonds of masculine duty and filial loyalty" (Moulton 268). Thus, with his victory over Richard at Bosworth, Richmond ultimately provides the early modern public with a masculine role model in the absence of a real male monarch on the English throne.

Through his dramatic representation of Richard III as both the effeminate male and the masculine female, Shakespeare simultaneously demonstrates that the actions of both male and female social transgressors are unnatural and threaten the established social order of the patriarchal system. Future early modern dramas from *Tamburlaine* to *Hamlet* and *King Lear* would further this trend which ultimately established the narrative of "independent masculine aggression as a tragedy, in which an unruly, singular, yet compelling protagonist is inevitably destroyed by larger social forces" (Moulton). It comes as no surprise then that by the year 1603, which marked the end of the war with Spain and the death of Queen Elizabeth I, there



was a steep decline in both the “quality and quantity” of both historic and domestic tragedies (Comensoli 204). It would seem that these dramas had accomplished their goal of enforcing social order, for under the reign of James I, “the audiences attending different kinds of playhouses had become divided along hierarchical lines” (Richardson 16).

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## APPENDIX A: TRANSMEDIA READING LIST

### Primary Texts

- Captain America: The Winter Soldier*. Dir. Joe Russo and Anthony Russo. Perf. Chris Evans, Scarlett Johansson, Samuel L. Jackson, and Anthony Mackie. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2014. DVD.
- Marvel's Agents of S. H. I. E. L. D.: The Complete First Season*. Writ. Joss Whedon, Jed Whedon, and Maurissa Tancharoen. Dir. Jesse Bocho. ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.
- Marvel's Agents of S. H. I. E. L. D.: The Complete Second Season*. Writ. Joss Whedon, Jed Whedon, and Maurissa Tancharoen. Dir. Jesse Bocho. Walt Disney Studios, 2015. DVD.
- Marvel's The Avengers*. Dir. Joss Whedon. Perf. Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans, Chris Hemsworth, Scarlett Johansson, Jeremy Renner, Mark Ruffalo, and Tom Hiddleston. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2012. DVD.
- Avengers: Age of Ultron*. Dir. Joss Whedon. Perf. Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans, Chris Hemsworth, Scarlett Johansson, Jeremy Renner, Mark Ruffalo, Samuel L. Jackson, Elizabeth Olsen, Don Cheadle, and Anthony Mackie. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2015. DVD.
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***Avengers: Age of Ultron*. Dir. Joss Whedon. Perf. Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans, Chris Hemsworth, Scarlett Johansson, Jeremy Renner, Mark Ruffalo, Samuel L. Jackson, Elizabeth Olsen, Don Cheadle, and Anthony Mackie. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2015. DVD.**

*Avengers: Age of Ultron* is the fifth of six films that together comprise phase two of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU): *Iron Man 3* (2013), *Thor: The Dark World* (2013), *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014), *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014), and *Marvel's the Avengers: Age of Ultron* (2015), and *Ant-Man* (2015).

The film begins in Sokovia, where the Avengers raid a Hydra outpost where Baron Wolfgang von Strucker has been using Loki's scepter (from *Marvel's The Avengers*) to experiment on humans. Here, the Avengers first encounter twins Pietro (Quicksilver) and Wanda Maximoff (Scarlet Witch), the only subjects that have survived Strucker's experimentation. After a close encounter with the twins, the Avengers destroy the base and obtain the scepter—which Stark and Banner soon discover holds a form of artificial intelligence within the infinity stone that it encompasses. Out of fear of failing to protect both the world and his team of Avengers (which he foresaw in a hallucination projected by Scarlet Witch), Tony Stark takes it upon himself to create Ultron—a global defense system that will head his Iron Legion team—and uploads the artificial intelligence contained within the Mind Stone. However, once



awakened, Ultron destroys Stark's own artificial intelligence, Jarvis, and leaves for the H. Y. D. R. A. base at Sokovia where he teams up with the twins. Ultron then travels to Seoul and locates Dr. Helen Cho, a friend of the Avengers who is researching and developing synthetic tissue technology. Ultron begins uploading himself into Dr. Cho's synthetic body, however, he is stopped by the Maximoffs; and, Captain America, Black Widow, and Hawk Eye retrieve the synthetic body. After discovering that Jarvis survived by hiding within the internet, Stark and Banner upload Jarvis into the synthetic body—creating Vision. With the additional help provided by Quicksilver, Scarlet Witch, and Vision, the Avengers are able to defeat Ultron. The film ends by setting up a “B-Team” comprised of War Machine, Scarlet Witch, Vision, and Falcon.

This film is important in relation to the MCU as Thor's vision visually hints towards the 4 known infinity stones being placed in the Infinity Gauntlet (the gauntlet is later seen in the end-credits scene in which Thanos puts the gauntlet on). Thor's vision also hints towards the events of Ragnarok (*Thor 3*). The film ends with Thor's return to Asgard (setting up the third Thor film) and the Hulk going into hiding.

NATASHA ROMANOFF. When you sent me to recruit him, way back  
when, did you know then what was going to happen?

NICK FURY. You never know, you hope for the best, then make due with  
what you get.

**Benjamin, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Lexington: Prism Key Press, 2010. Print.**

Within *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Walter Benjamin analyzes the reproduction of art as he traces it from its origination with the printing press through the developments of lithography, photography, and, ultimately, film. According to Benjamin, art loses its aura when it is reproduced. He describes this in relation to film through his discussion of the actor's loss of self and soul when they act for a camera instead of an audience. Through the mechanical reproduction, the two qualities/purposes of art, cult and exhibition, which were once separate entities, become one. Benjamin notes that painting reflects life, allowing its audience to contemplate its meaning, whereas film distracts its audience and controls one's understanding of it via the cameraman's views and cuts. This provides film with its ability to permeate reality that makes it art as it allows viewers to escape reality. This transforms audience participation from that which concentrates on art into one that is an active critic of art. However, Benjamin concludes on a negative note by discerning that this active audience participation is the work of the "absent-minded" observer (Benjamin 45).

"The manner in which human sense perception is organized, the medium in which it is accomplished, is determined not only by nature but by historical circumstances as well" (Benjamin 17).

“The film has not yet realized its true meaning, its real possibilities . . . these consist in its unique faculty to express by natural means and with incomparable persuasiveness all that is fairylike, marvelous, and supernatural” (qtd. in Benjamin 26).

“It is inherent in the technique of film as well as that of sports that everybody who witnesses its accomplishments is somewhat of an expert” (Benjamin 31).

“At any moment, the reader is ready to turn into a writer. As expert, which he had to become willy-nilly in an extremely specialized work process, even if only in some minor respect, the reader gains access to authorship” (Benjamin 32).

***Captain America: The Winter Soldier*. Dir. Joe Russo and Anthony Russo. Perf. Chris Evans, Scarlett Johansson, Samuel L. Jackson, and Anthony Mackie. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2014. DVD.**

*Captain America: The Winter Soldier* is the third film in phase two of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU)—*Iron Man 3* (2013), *Thor: The Dark World* (2013), *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014), *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014), *Avengers Age of Ultron* (2015), and *Ant-Man* (2015).

Picking up two years after the Battle of New York against the Chitauri, Captain America returns to his life as Steve Rogers as best he can by carrying out missions, alongside Black

Widow, for S. H. I. E. L. D.'s Director, Nick Fury. After a mission to rescue hostages off of one of S. H. I. E. L. D.'s battleships (*The Lemurian Star*) that has been overtaken by pirates, Steve confronts Fury due to his giving Natasha a secret mission to extract files off of the ship's hard-drive. Fury shows Steve "Project Insight," a division of S. H. I. E. L. D. that is being developed in order to stop crimes before they have the chance to occur (an issue that comes up later in *The Avengers: Age of Ultron*). Fury tries to access the files on the flash drive only to learn he has been denied clearance. After meeting with the Defense Secretary, Alexander Pierce, Fury is nearly assassinated while driving in his car by the Winter Soldier. He is later shot down in Roger's apartment before flat lining in the hospital. Later, after meeting with Pierce to discuss Fury's death, Steve is attacked in an elevator by the S. T. R. I. K. E. team. Steve and Natasha meet at the hospital and begin researching the Winter Soldier. They discover that Arnim Zola, an accomplice of Red Skull and member of H. Y. D. R. A., formerly uploaded his consciousness into computers and has been aiding H. Y. D. R. A. members who are hiding within S. H. I. E. L. D. Together with Sam Wilson (Falcon), Natasha and Steve take on the Winter Soldier who, in the skirmish, loses his mask and is revealed to be Steve's old friend, Bucky Barnes. The three heroes are taken captive by H. Y. D. R. A., rescued by Agent Hill, and taken to see Fury, who is recovering and alive in hiding. The team then heads back to S. H. I. E. L. D.'s headquarters to take out H. Y. D. R. A. and Pierce who plan to use "Project Insight" to eliminate portions of humanity as they see fit. Our heroes win the battle, both H. Y. D. R. A. and S. H. I. E. L. D. are (at least thought to be) dissolved; and, the Winter Soldier seeks to recover his memories from his past.

**Clarke, M. J. *Transmedia Television: New trends in network serial production*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013. Print.**

Within this book, M. J. Clarke seeks to study the relationship that exists between industry and production of transmedia texts. He argues that this is a meaningful pursuit due to his belief that the knowledge gained from this study may be used to benefit and inform both the texts that are produced and those who produce them. He divides his book into two parts: part one offers primarily case studies of transmedia through its association with what he terms tentpole TV (television that is owned) and its streamability; part two focuses on the expansion of these series into transmedia texts. This work is important as Clarke is the first to refer to television since the 1990s in a term other than “quality television,” which assumes a degree of evaluation. Clarke’s work is later echoed in Mittell’s works—although not explicitly cited. Within his conclusion, Clarke (unlike Mittell) argues that tentpole TV narratives engage with conspiracy theory by thinly veiling inconsistencies of central plot by promising resolution later—thus operating on the belief that “truth takes time” (Clarke 211).

“Throughout this book, we will examine a recent trend in network television programming, which I call tentpole TV that has, depending upon which narrative one follows, either sought to avoid this premature death or accelerate the medium’s evolution by experimenting with alternative organizational and creative forms, aggressively incorporating what Henry Jenkins (2006) has called transmedia, texts that expand entertainment properties across multiple platforms” (Clarke 1).

“More specifically, tentpole TV producers, through their use of serialized narrative and transmedia extensions, create programs serving as excellent examples of what economists have called beneficial addictive goods. . . . This phenomenon was explained by what the authors called ‘consumption capital,’ which simply means that time spent with a beneficially addictive good . . . will enhance subsequent encounters” (Clarke 4).

“What many critics have referred to as cult television programs, from *Star Trek* to the *X-Files*, that have best achieved this textual modularity, that is the ability for texts to be broken down into separate, exploitable narrative elements to be streamed in multiple media channels” (Clarke 6).

“This offhand comment captures an important element of cult TV’s appeal, specifically that outside of the markers of seriality, intertextuality, and complex mythology; it is this tinge of something else, frequently drawn from genre traditions, that activates fan enthusiasm, constituting its value as cult” (Clarke 7).

“Serialized dramas specifically are frequently attributed to writer-producers, known as showrunners . . . who often contribute original story material to their programs and oversee the work of the other staffers employed by the series’ writer’s room” (Clarke 12).

“By ancillary [media], I refer to the use of branded objects, concepts, or characters in artifacts outside a presumed original source” (Clarke 19).

“new media is not simply an experiment for network television to play with, but its inevitable future, a future demanding a new financial logic of production and compensation. . . . it is not only creative curiosity on the part of writers . . . that has prompted a more aggressive posture toward ancillary products, but it has become an economic imperative for the survival of the ‘dying’ medium” (Clarke 28).

“I [Clarke] argue that fandom serves an even greater importance in the production of these [ancillary] comics, and arguably ancillary media in general. Because textual information is meted out on a need-to-know basis, ‘fannish’ knowledge fills in the gaps and allows for the production of meaningful ancillary products, making the consumptive habits of freelance creatives excessively important” (Clarke 39).

“However, fandom is not simply a body of knowledge lurking behind texts, but is a contested zone fueled by a distinct form of fan reception characterized by repeated viewings of texts, the insertion of text into social interaction, and the drawing of texts close to lived experience” (Clarke 40).

“Facing growing threats of obsolescence, US network television has collectively followed the example of other, adjacent entertainment industries in the attempts to expand the breadth of their programming, replacing hits of scale with hits of scope. In the phenomena that we have called tentpole TV, programs are densely serialized and narratively connected to any number of off-broadcast iterations, many of which we reviewed in the previous chapters, from online,

to traditional print, to video games. While none of these techniques are in themselves entirely new, it is the sheer number of significant, often scattered narrative parts and the manner in which they are interconnected that makes this trend worth studying” (Clarke 137).

“tentpole TV has necessitated experimentation in the very techniques of storytelling, the organizational systems used to hold all these diffuse narrative components together, altering television’s traditional representations of time, space, and character” (Clarke 138).

“Mastermind narration is marked by the retrospective shifting in valence of narrative information (objective sequences become subjective and unmotivated sequences become motivated ones), resulting in the positing of a ghostly agency guiding narrative from the margins of the diegesis” (Clark 138).

“seriality involves the delay and extension of narratively pertinent details across a multitude of single episodes, regardless of whether such a narrative concludes. . . . Serials, programs whose narratives are delayed and stretched across episodes, represent certain challenges in the maintenance of story information at the same time that they encourage viewer hypothesization and speculation. Tentpole TV programs, more than being simply serialized, frequently use unanswered enigmas, both short term and long term, to bridge episodes with [one] another. Episodes must adhere to episodic format, but also to any number of minute details of continuity in order to achieve synthesis between installments” (Clarke 139).



“In his discussion of soap operas, [Robert Allen’s] calls paradigmatic complexity in which character relationships are continuously changing and evolving as, in the case of *Lost*, characters’ pasts and futures that are increasingly depicted, making them more nodes in an intricate unfolding puzzle than independent actors themselves” (Clarke 140).

“Mastermind narration works by retrospectively modifying the assignation of narration information and events as well as motivation, the broadest sense referring to both character actions and shot selections. Furthermore, mastermind narration suggests a diegetically ambiguous entity (is it inside or outside of the storyworld?) that shares with the implied author the power to shape and guide plot and only eventually becomes present in the narrative proper. Lastly, the mastermind, certifies, like the cover of a puzzle box, that even the most obscure and smallest of details will eventually be reconciled with the larger narrative whole” (Clarke 142).

“Tentpole TV series, too, make use of these narrative hints, but they are more focused on the revelation of what is often called the program’s mythology” (Clarke 169).

“Specifically, tentpole TV programs incorporate elements of conspiracy theory in their narratives, their preferred reading practices, and most importantly, their very construction. Tentpole TV narratives often function like conspiracy theories, problematizing the very possibility of individual, meaningful action” (Clarke 210).

“Tentpole TV programs similarly break up their fictional worlds into vast seas of modular texts at the same time that individual texts break apart the traditional representation of time, space, and character, resulting in a dense, contradictory textual system” (Clarke 211).

**Creeber, Glen. *Serial Television: Big Drama on the Small Screen*. London: British Film Institute, 2004. Print.**

Within the opening pages of his book, Glen Creeber sets out to differentiate between what is meant by the terms “serial,” “series,” and “the single play.” He argues that the serial’s structural form combines aspects of both the series and the single play in order to generate its own specific form of storytelling. This new form’s ability to build upon previous content allows for plot development across episodes, expanding upon the creativity of the single play, creating what is known as “arc shows.” The extended form of modern serials (that move towards a state of closure) has resulted in the development of what Vincent Canby calls “megamovies,” serials that are not open-ended series nor miniseries but a combination of elements from both.

One of the four sections in Creeber’s book, “Altered States: ‘Alternative’ Serial Drama,” charts serial developments across three television serials, *Twin Peaks*, *The Kingdom*, and *Cold Lazarus*. His critique of Lynch’s serial, *Twin Peaks*, focuses on the narrative’s complex style which derives from the rejection of the soap opera structure of seriality—the “formulaic” series. Meanwhile, Creeber argues that Trier’s *The Kingdom* utilizes elements of

the formulaic series in a way that grounds his narrative and dissuades the audience's potential towards becoming disturbed and/or confused by the newer, unconventional narrative that Trier employs. Finally, Creeber uses his case study of *Cold Lazarus* to explore the ways in which the post-modern form of narration allows for complexly layered television programs that, like the fantasy and science fiction series of the 1960s and 1970s, allow for masked political and artistic agendas to be portrayed on the small screen.

“Although both the series and the serial are episodic, the series tends to offer an infinite number of self-contained episodes while the serial produces . . . ‘arc shows,’ i.e. dramas that follow a distinct narrative trajectory over a number of limited episodes” (Creeber 9).

“[T]he episodic nature of the serial form means that it also shares important characteristics with the series. This means that the serial can frequently break free of the narrative limitations of the single drama and exploit some of the most seductive elements of serialization. In particular, the viewer is often able to get to know the characters and the story in a serial almost as well as they might do in a series or soap opera. . . . [which] allows far greater ‘audience involvement, a sense of becoming a part of the lives and actions of the characters they see’” (Creeber 9).

“Lynch’s film-making seems to reject traditional narrative structures and the usual limitations of linear storytelling, frequently allowing chance events to determine both dramatic content and visual style” (Creeber 51).

“Its modernist aspirations were certainly matched by an artistic agenda that attempted to revolutionize television drama, rejecting the apparently ‘logical’ and ‘rational’ parameters of conventional soap opera or the ‘formulaic’ series” (Creeber 55).

“In particular, the intrinsic familiarity of the hospital/medical drama provides an important narrative framework around which its bizarre story can carefully and gradually develop. In fact, the serial both appropriates and subverts many of the more traditional televisual genres, constantly pushing their conventional boundaries to the extreme while also relying on their recognizable form and content to deliver both meaning and expression. . . . As a result, its soap opera serial familiarity provides a narrative grounding for an audience who may otherwise have been disturbed and confused by the less conventional elements of its storytelling” (Creeber 58).

**de Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984. Print.**

This work is concerned with modes of operation and studies the systems of operational combination (which seeks to understand cultures and what generates “consumers”). Michel de Certeau identifies two ways that poaching is made possible in a culture: 1) consumer production, and 2) the tactics of practice. In relation to the first, he identifies two procedures—that of making a product and the “hidden procedure” of a consumer’s reception and utilization of the product (xiii). de Certeau begins by identifying the literary or fictional

character as “‘everyman’ and ‘nobody’” alluding to the character’s inherent ability to relate to everyman, but be no body since he is fictional (2). He notes Wittenberg’s agenda to “bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use,” however, de Certeau believes this blocks one from becoming an Expert (9). Instead, he uses Wittenberg as foundation for his discussion of the ordinary. What we know about language is that its use demonstrates both power and history (17-18). He discusses “*la perrique*,” which translates to me as plagiarism. The following definition is provided: “‘*La Perrique*’ is the worker’s own work disguised as the work for his employer”—in other words, the employer took credit for his employee’s work (25).

de Certeau places himself in conversation with both Foucault and Bourdieu in order to discuss the ways in which you can make “the theory of practices” (62). He begs the question of how you can apply a theory of practices, which is rooted in writing and science, to procedures associated with a discourse with no writing (65). de Certeau introduces the concept of narrative and puts in into communication with every day life by referencing Kant. He diagrams the relationship between force and effects in order to further demonstrate his discussion of how this principle impacts narrative (82). *See below*. He also discusses practical memory and the way in which memories change over time and develop into stories (87-88). In his discussion of space and its relationship with story, de Certeau identifies space as a critical part of everyday life and, therefore, that representations of space and the spaces that are depicted are important (115-116). de Certeau makes a case for all stories to be considered travel narratives due to the processes by which an imagined/fictive space is made

real by both seeing and going—characters provide audiences with verbal “tours” of the narrative space which allow them to transform a space into a place through familiarization and orientation (120). He identifies textual poaching—finding meaning in texts that the author did not intend, you see them for yourself due to your own experiences—as an acceptable quality for academics but not for students or readers.

“Marginality is today no longer limited to minority groups, but is rather massive and pervasive; this cultural activity [poaching] of the non-producers of culture, an activity that is unsigned, unreadable, and unsymbolized, remains the only one possible option for all those who nevertheless buy and pay for the showy products through which a productivist economy articulates itself” (de Certeau xvii).

“[C]ulture articulates conflicts and alternately legitimizes, displaces, or controls the superior force. It develops in an atmosphere of tensions, and often of violence, for which it provides symbolic balances, contracts of compatibility and compromises, all more or less temporary” (de Certeau xvii).

“Tales and legends . . . are deployed like games, in a space outside of and isolated from daily competition, that of the past, the marvelous, the original. . . . Moves, not truths, are recounted. . . . This space protects the weapons of the weak against the reality of the established order” (de Certeau 23).

“The principle of an ethnological operation on practices is thus formulated: their *social isolation* calls for a sort of ‘education,’ in which, through a *linguistic inversion*, introduces them into the field of scientific written language” (de Certeau 67).

“[T]hese scholars consider the stories by means of which a group situates or symbolizes its activities to be ‘legends’ that mean something other than what is said” (de Certeau 67).

“‘[S]tories’ provide the decorative container of a *narrativity* for everyday practices. . . . They represent a new variant in the continuous series of narrative documents which . . . set forth ways of operating in the form of *tales*. . . . [This] suggests a certain *theoretical* relevance of narrativity so far as everyday practices are concerned” (de Certeau 70).

“The story does not express a practice. It does not limit itself to telling about a movement. It *makes* it” (de Certeau 81).

“[It is an] economic principle: obtain the maximum number of effects from the minimum force” (de Certeau 82).

“[Narration’s] discourse is characterized more by a way of *exercising itself* than by the thing it indicates. And one must grasp a sense other than what is said. It produces effects, not objects. It is narration, not description. It is an *art* of saying. The audience makes no mistake on this account” (de Certeau 79).

“Stories about places are makeshift things. They are composed with the world’s debris. Even if the literary form and the octantal schema of “superstitions” correspond to stable models[,] . . . the materials are furnished by the leftovers from nominations, taxonomies, heroic or comic predicates, etc., that is, by fragments of scattered semantic places. These heterogeneous and even contrary elements fill the homogeneous form of the story” (de Certeau 107).

“The verbal relics of which the story is composed, being tied to lost stories and opaque acts, are juxtaposed in a collage where their relations are not thought, and for this reason they form a symbolic whole” (de Certeau 107).

“Every story is a travel story—a spacial practice. For this reason, spacial practices concern everyday tactics, they are part of them” (de Certeau 115).

“A *space* exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables. Thus, space is composed of intersections of mobile events. . . . In short, *space is a practical place*” (de Certeau 117).

“In narrations concerning apartments or streets, manipulation of space or ‘tours’ are dominant. This form of description usually determines the whole style of the narration” (de Certeau 119).



“A narrative activity, even if it is multiform and no longer unitary, thus continues to develop where frontiers and relations with space abroad are concerned. Fragmented and decimated, it is continually concerned with marking out boundaries” (de Certeau 125).

“To write is to produce the text; to read is to receive it from someone else without putting one’s own mark on it, without remaking it” (de Certeau 169).

“The reader takes neither the position of the author nor an author’s position. He invents in texts something different from what they ‘intended.’ He detaches them from their origin. He combines their fragments and creates something un-known in the space organized by their capacity for allowing an indefinite plurality of meanings. Is this ‘reading’ activity reserved for the literary critic, that is, once again, for a category of professional intellects, or can it be extended to all cultural consumers” (de Certeau 169)?

“There remains the literary domain, which is particularly rich today, once again privileged by writing but highly specialized: ‘writers’ shift the ‘joy of reading’ in a direction where it is articulated on an art of writing and on a pleasure of re-reading” (de Certeau 170).

“[T]o read is to be elsewhere, where *they* are not, in another world” (de Certeau 173).

“The media transform the great silence of things into its opposite. . . . News reports, information, statistics, and surveys are everywhere. No story has ever spoken so much or

shown so much. . . . [Those who appear on television] present themselves as messengers from a ‘reality’” (de Certeau 186).

“These narrations have the twofold and strange power of transforming seeing into believing, and of fabricating realities out of appearance” (de Certeau 186).

**Eco, Umberto and Chilton, Natalie. “The Myth of Superman.” *Diacritics* 2.1 (1972):**

**14-22. Web. 5 Aug. 2015.**

According to the assertions made herein by Umberto Eco and Natalie Chilton, serialization is linear; it assumes time, which assumes seriality and determinations. This allows for the continuation of plot while allowing for a deeper and more extensive character development which can’t be achieved by shorter narratives. In addition to this, serialization also allows for greater audience/fan identification. Based on Eco and Chilton’s main argument within this article, if you believe in time—as it is defined by Aristotle—as a succession of before and after (causality) and determinations, Superman does not follow this structure. According to the authors, when studied, Superman’s timeline breaks down which allows for him to indefinitely evade both death and character development—both of which are characteristics belonging to characters who operate within a traditional serial structure.

“The mythological character of comic strips finds himself in this singular situation: he must be an archetype, the totality of certain collective aspirations, and therefore, he must

necessarily become immobilized in an emblematic and fixed nature which renders him easily recognizable (this is what happens to Superman); but since he is marketed in the sphere of a 'romantic' production for a public that consumes 'romances,' he must be subjected to a development which is typical, as we have seen of novelistic characters" (Eco and Chilton 15).

"The Aristotelian definition of time is 'the amount of movement from before to after' and since antiquity time has implied the idea of *succession*; the Kantian analysis has established unequivocally that this idea must be associated with an idea of *causality*" (Eco and Chilton 16).

"In this massive bombardment of events [Superman's plot] which are no longer tied together by any strand of logic, whose interaction is ruled no longer by any necessity, the reader, without realizing it, of course, loses the notion of temporal progression" (Eco and Chilton 18).

"Is it not also natural that the cultured person who in moments of intellectual tension seeks a stimulus in an action painting or in a piece of serial music should in moments of relaxation and escape (healthy and indispensable) tend toward triumphant infantile laziness and turn to the consumer product for pacification in an orgy of redundancy" (Eco and Chilton 21)?

**Gray, Jonathan and Lotz, Amanda D. *Television Studies*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012. Print.**

Within this book, Jonathan Gray and Amanda Lotz provide a brief overview of what they call the approach of television studies. By claiming that television studies as an approach rather than a paradigm or field, Gray and Lotz stress that television studies is an approach by which television is studied that considers not one but three elements of television as a medium: institutions, programs, and audience. Throughout the four included chapters (“Programs,” “Audiences,” “Industry,” and “Context”), Gray and Lotz provide an all-encompassing overview of television studies that conveys both the importance and complexities that are involved in it.

In Chapter 4, “Context,” Gray and Lotz address the ways in which television scholars may choose to study the context of any given television show/series. They call attention to two “complementary metaphors” regarding television and its interaction with other media platforms (135). The first is Will Brooker’s notion of “overflow” which argues that television series overflow into other platforms because it cannot be contained within one medium—centralizing the television text; the second is Henry Jenkins’ term “convergence” which argues that multiple platforms come together to form a story (transmedia storytelling) (136).

“[G]enerations of humanities instruction in universities and secondary schools had

conditioned people to see fiction and art as possibly offering keys to enlightenment, and had thus sought to draw distinctions between accepted, elite culture and the alleged mindlessness of popular narratives that circulated in pulp fiction, comic books, radio plays, and so forth. Yet as exhibited by the oft-cited examples of Shakespeare and Dickens - both popular in their day, yet later 'rescued' as elite culture - the supposed hard and fast lines between elite and popular culture are in fact marked by considerable tension. Given television's popularity, the medium quickly became a key battleground for discussions of what constituted 'culture'" (Gray and Lotz 7).

"The significance of the late 1960s cultural revolutions - particularly for the college-aged cohort which was the first that had grown up with television - was impressive enough to outweigh the . . . factors that had led to the previous tendency to disregard television viewing as important, or to believe that it had uniformly negative effects if it was deemed significant at all" (Gray and Lotz 7).

"[Television studies] conceives of television as a repository for meanings and a site where cultural values are articulated. It assumes television is a key part of lived, everyday culture in contemporary society and one which may allow us to understand large parts of that culture. It [television] is also an industrial entity produced under specific conditions that require analysis precisely because it is one of our society's prime storytellers, a resource and tool for learning, deliberation, debate, and persuasion, and a site wherein power and ideology operate" (Gray and Lotz 22).

“In other words, the process of viewing is always a potentially *transformative event*, one that can change the nature of the program being watched. Audience research, therefore, was not simply about seeing whether one’s predictions for a program became true; it was about seeing what happened to the program, what it became, and, importantly, what new or different meanings accrued to the program in the process of viewing” (Gray and Lotz 64).

“[T]he internet has . . . allowed television shows to ‘overflow’ into web venues, some of which ask for the active contributions and participation of viewers. With this, being an ‘audience is a practice that may involve productive acts such as creating a mash-up, posting to a fan board, taking part in an alternate reality game, setting foot into a program’s fictional spaces, sharing fan art or fanvids, writing blog posts about one’s viewing, or so forth. If such acts were once province of groups of fans whose actions were marginalized and subcultural, increasingly these acts are mainstream and commonplace” (Gray and Lotz 76).

“[T]elevision studies is distinguished from studies of television primarily by a concern for context and breadth; that television studies may at times focus primarily on only one of the triumvirate of institutions, programs, and audiences, but that it will always at least be mindful of, open to, and acknowledge the context provided by the other two” (Gray and Lotz 141).

**Gwenllian-Jones, Sara and Pearson, Roberta E., eds. *Cult Television*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004. Print.**

Within this collection's introduction, Sara Gwenllian-Jones and Roberta Pearson identify the multifaceted metagenre that is cult television. By providing a brief overview of cult television's history, production, construction, and consumption, the editors stress the collection's intentions of outlining and highlighting the contours of the field in order to inspire future research.

Of the twelve selected essays, those of Mark Jancovich & Nathan Hunt and Sara Gwenllian-Jones are of the greatest importance in relation to the current research project. Jancovich and Hunt's article addresses the ways in which mainstream and cult cultures overlap in modern television. Specifically, they identify the similarities that exist between both academic and fan writing concerning television and the ways in which this has led to the development of "quality television" and niche television markets. Meanwhile, focusing primarily on the immersive qualities of cult television's narrative strategies, Gwenllian-Jones explains the ways in which fans voraciously consume both primary and secondary ancillary texts in order to construct cognitive encyclopedias that consist of detailed information relating to their targeted fictional world. The construction of such an encyclopedia allows for fans to both study and immerse themselves within cult television's fictional worlds due to their ability to more fully understand both the components of "multiform plots" and the ways in which they are manipulated in order to create an infinite number of narratives that maintain semantic and thematic consistency within their respective imaginary-entertainment environments.

"'Cult television' has become a metagenre that caters to intense, interpretative audience

practices. . . . The programs formulate complex internal logics, combine realistic and archetypal characters, and construct fantastical worlds where philosophical and ethical issues can be explored and grand gestures enacted free from the obscuring trivia and mundane concerns of everyday reality” (Gwenllian-Jones and Pearson xvi).

“[T]he similarities that many critics have noted between fan discourses and academic writing stem not only from these groups sharing similar competences and dispositions deriving from their middle-class and well educated status, but also from their development being intimately connected in intellectual terms” (Jancovich and Hunt 29).

“In the 1980s, the proliferation of video, cable, and satellite threatened the audiences for network or terrestrial television programming, and this development created two different, but related, tendencies. . . . First, video distributors and cable and satellite channels were all desperate for material, and they turned to old television shows as one of the ways of cheaply satisfying this need. . . . Second, these developments affected the strategies of terrestrial television stations and network television. . . . [N]etwork television gradually focused on ‘must see TV’ . . . . The shows were designed so that viewers would go out of their way to watch them and to organize their schedules around them . . . [T]hese shows are aimed at relatively well-educated, middle-class audiences with a spending power that makes them valuable to advertisers” (Jancovich and Hunt 37-38).

“[T]he cult television phenomenon is characterized by its trajectory toward ‘*imaginary-*



*entertainment environments*: fictional settings that change over time as if they were real places *and* that are published in a variety of mediums . . . each of them in communication with the other as they contribute toward the growth, history, and status of the setting” (Gwenllian-Jones 86).

“Seriality is an important and largely—though not exclusively—medium-specific factor; cult television series usually consist of scores of episodes that together constitute a hundred or more screen hours and that are played out across several years of production and distribution. Their fictional worlds are therefore vast and/or dense with detail and are further augmented by officially produced secondary texts (episode guides, novelizations, comics, computer games, and, in some instances, spin-off series and films) and fan-produced tertiary texts (fan fiction, fan art, cultural criticism, scratch videos, Web sites, screensavers, and so on)” (Gwenllian-Jones 87).

“The distinctive narrative strategies of cult television series—their emphasis on fantastical subjects, their fascination with metaphysical conundrums, their textual devices of intertextuality and intratextuality, self-referentiality, semantic density, play of excess and fracture, bricolage and exoticism—require and cater to powerful imaginative engagements. They afford entry into fictional worlds of infinite suggestion and inexhaustible possibility, which reward close textual scrutiny, extrapolation, and speculation and exert their fascination not through the linear pull of story events but rather through their lateral resonance and connectivity” (Gwenllian-Jones 90-91).

“For cult television fans engaging with the fictional worlds of their favorite series, every episode, spin off (whether officially or unofficially produced), and intertextual pathway may contribute something to the fictional encyclopedia. The accumulation of knowledge about the fictional world is of central importance, and the meticulous gathering and mapping of textual and metatextual data is a characteristic activity of fans” (Gwenllian-Jones 92).

**Hammond, Michael and Mazdon, Lucy, eds. *The Contemporary Television Series*.**

**Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005. Print.**

With this collection, Michael Hammond and Lucy Mazdon hoped to address the pressing issue of how to categorize and study contemporary/post-network television. The included chapters attempt to address either the latter question or they seek to address the “quality drama series/serial” in general (xi).

Of particular interest is Hammond and Mazdon’s use of the term “series/serial” in their attempt to discuss post-network TV’s narrative structure. This predates Jason Mittell’s theory of narrative complexity, a term which I find better suits the targeted definition of texts like *The X-Files* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. The editors also use the terms “series/serial” and “quality television” synonymously. While the two may accompany each other in some cases, one term speaks to narrative structure while the latter is an evaluative term. For these reasons, Mittell’s term “narrative complexity” is better equipped to deal with the topics discussed.

This book is a decade old and emphasizes “quality” television’s similarities with the cult.

The collection is valuable beyond cult relations, however, as Roberta Pearson’s chapter, “The Writer/Producer in American Television,” provides a background and work history of hyphenate, Joss Whedon.

“Whilst television as a social phenomenon merited attention, the dramas we were busy watching were considered by many to lack the impact and the longevity of their cinematic counterparts and for many years they were largely ignored” (Mazdon 5).

According to Jane Feuer, ‘quality drama became a uniquely televisual form, its technological and narrative links to the medium more significant than its affinity to cinema or theatre’ (qtd. in Mazdon 5-6). quoted from *The Television History Book*, 2003

“Feuer’s account [establishes] . . . quality television drama as a ‘uniquely televisual form’” (Mazdon 6).

“Drama provided the pioneers of early television with a means of successfully exploring possibilities of the new medium” (Mazdon 6).

“[D]rama consistently played a vital role in both pushing the boundaries of television as a medium and in establishing the identities of individual channels in an increasingly competitive audiovisual landscape” (Mazdon 7).

“Shows with character and originality continued to be rare during the classic network system,” however, “some of the hyphenates believed that the networks’ conservatism was ‘losing a valuable group of viewers’ who might watch ‘higher-level television shows.’ Said one of these producers, ‘I know the audience is smarter, more intelligent than they [the networks] think it is. One of the reasons so many shows fail is that the networks and others underestimate the IQ of the audience’” (Pearson 13).

“Whedon began his career as a staff-writer with [the] hit sit-com *Roseanne* (1988-97) and went on to work as a script doctor on feature films, receiving an Oscar nomination for co-writing the *Toy Story* (1995) script. It was a bitter experience with the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* feature film (1992) that motivated his return to television” (Pearson 18).

“The internet, part of the technological and social transformations that led to the end of the classic network system, gives today’s hyphenates a more accurate perception of their audience (or at least part of it) than possible before the 1980s” (Pearson 23).

“Kristin Thompson has noted that ‘the notion of firm and permanent closure to any given narrative has loosened across media. Series television, with its broad possibilities for spinning out narratives indefinitely, has been a major impetus in these tendencies’” (Hammond 76-77).

“The relationship between established ‘loyals’ and the serial format has considerable

historical roots. The serial format in cinema arose in the early teens, alongside the feature and was a design for ensuring loyal audiences” (Hammond 80).

“As with the serialization of novels in the nineteenth century, the form of the serial was central in gaining and retaining audiences and readers that the advertising industry now terms ‘loyals’” (Hammond 80).

“Serial television and serial texts in general require active participation on the part of consumers, and the study of seriality has tackled the role of the active consumer in the grip of a variety of culture industries trying to turn activity into profit” (Freedman 168).

“Series/serials such as *Lost* make use of the serial format in order to build into the programmes various ways to ‘enter’ the text for audiences. The stated pre-fix to series/serials ‘Previously on . . .’ was only the most obvious way of giving background to each episode which would allow viewers to both refresh their memory and to ‘catch up’ on the broader story arcs” (Hammond 188).

“Regardless of how cult TV narratives progress . . . there is a sense in which what we see on screen is only a part of a much wider narrative world, always implying further events and developments. It is this detailed hyper-diegesis at the heart of cult TV series that fans of the *X-Files* capture when they talk about ‘myth-arc’ stories (stories that focused on the series’ ongoing mythology and continuity), or which *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* fans are concerned

with when they debate details of ‘the Buffyverse’” (Hills 190-191).

“Dolan traces an institutional and televisual history in which the ‘episodic series’ (individual stories per episode, resolved at the conclusion so that a narrative status quo is restored) gives way to the ‘sequential series’ (overarching plot-lines moving across single-episode stories) as an industry norm in the 1980s, with this movement often being linked to markers of ‘quality’ and of TV-as-innovative” (Hills 194).

**Hayward, Jennifer. *Consuming Pleasures: Active Audiences and Serial Fictions from Dickens to Soap Opera*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1997. Print.**

Hayward begins her book by introducing Roger Hagedorn’s article, “Technology and Economic Exploitation: The Serial as a Form of Narrative Presentation,” in order to discuss Hagedorn’s thesis that “since the nineteenth century the serial has been a dominant mode of narrative presentation in Western culture” (qtd. in Hayward 2). The serial as a genre was born out of capitalism as its historical roots can be traced back to that of a market economy. She then moves to her discussion of the serial as it has developed over time, specifically as the serial expanded across three mediums: written narrative (periodicals/novels), a combination of visual and written narrative (comics), and visual narrative (soap operas/television). She observes four texts and their writing’s interaction with audience and reception: Charles Dickens’s *Our Mutual Friend* (novel; 1864-65), Milton Caniff’s *Terry and*

*the Pirates* (newspaper comic strip; 1934-46), and the soap operas *All My Children* (1970- ) and *One Life to Live* (1968- ; television). Serials—even up and through soap operas—were considered culturally to be a mostly feminine activity. Hayward concludes her book with her discussion of the television’s soap opera narrative in light of its public status as “the epitome . . . of the serial” (19).

“Since the inception of mass-market culture in the nineteenth century, producers have relied on the serial form to consolidate and hold a mass audience, thus enabling the profits that make new technologies (cheap mass-produced books, color printing in news papers, film, radio, television) viable in a market economy. The advantages of the form for producers is obvious: it essentially advertises itself, providing ever-increasing profits” (Hayward 1-2).

“the serial . . . ‘emerges as an ideal form of narrative presentation under capitalism’” (Hayward 2).

“A serial is, by definition, an ongoing narrative released in successive parts. In addition to these defining qualities, serial narratives share elements . . . [t]hese include a refusal of closure; intertwined subplots; large casts of characters (incorporating a diverse range of age, gender, class, and, increasingly, race representation to attract a similarly diverse audience); interaction with current political, social, or cultural issues; dependence on profit; and acknowledgement of audience response (this has become increasingly explicit, even institutionalized with this form, over time)” (Hayward 3).

“[E]qually important issues of serialization: the mechanics of writing against time and to fill a fixed amount of space, the additions and deletions made in consequence of this constraint, the creative and economic pressures on serial authors, the complex negotiations between serial authors and their publishers, and the ways texts are shaped as a result of the serial mode of production” (Hayward 4-5).

“[O]ne fan dismisses all but his own favorite TV series as ‘mediocre’ because of ‘poor writing, ridiculous conflicts offering no moral or ethical choices, predictable characterization, and a general lack of attention to creativity and chance-taking.’ The terms, the intent, and even, the strategy of this fan are the same as those used by defenders of high culture to set the chosen text over against a mass of undifferentiated, inferior texts by demonstrating its *uniqueness*, its *artistic value*, its status as *masterpiece*” (Hayward 11).

“As they became an important part of shared family pleasures, serials helped organize leisure time” (Hayward 35).

“That novel reading became an important means of constructing leisure time and family life can be seen as the result of cultural as well as economic factors, especially since it anticipates later serial audiences’ marked preference for reading their texts communally” (Hayward 36).

“Dickens occupies an anomalous position in the history of serialization. On the one hand, he was instrumental in developing mass-produced fiction, and thus became a kind of



manufacturer of narrative for a vast and faceless public. On the other hand, probably more than any writer of his time he insisted . . . that his relationship with that public was interactive, even intimate” (Hayward 39).

“He [Dickens] is widely recognized as an innovator in the process of developing the complex and constantly negotiated author/audience relationship” (Hayward 39).

“Due to their sheer length and duration, serial narratives encourage plot and character developments such as returns from the dead, radical character transformations, and long-concealed secrets” (Hayward 45-46).

“As well as changing texts to enhance popularity and therefore increase sales, the author [Dickens] also responded to readers’ complaints about stereotypical or unfair portrayals” (Hayward 59).

On *Mutual Friends*: Due to “the consistently negative response to characters planned as central and the enthusiastic praise of others brought on as afterthoughts,” Hayward suggests that Dickens made the conscientious decision to “change plot projections midstream” (Hayward 61).

According to Hayward, a “common response to serial fictions of all types [is that] they are treated paradoxically as both fictions and realities” (Hayward 66).

“Early critics disparage too-complex plots and lack of closure; later critics began to recast the novel’s ambiguities as strengths rather than weaknesses” (Hayward 83).

“Comics literalize [Lewis] Mumford’s dictum that ‘time took on the character of an enclosed space’ by using visual blocks to separate, isolated instances, comics annihilate the seamless ‘flow’ of narrative, forcing viewers or readers to subjectively justify leaps from frame to frame across temporal or spatial gaps” (Hayward 85).

“early comic-strip era, 1900-10” (Hayward 91).

“[T]he rise of the continuity comic impelled readers to become critics, analysts, even creators of comic art themselves” (Hayward 94).

“[T]he interchange of visual techniques is important chiefly for what it reveals about the explosion of visual media in the first part of [the 19th] century. The serial narrative left the printed page in search of higher profits and found them in what had become the new mass media: newspapers, film, and television. With this proliferation of new technologies, competition for audiences increased drastically, and as usual the serial was exploited by producers of a range of media” (Hayward 99).

According to Hayward, Caniff developed “serial techniques suited to the constraints of the comic form” (Hayward 105).

“Caniff had a reputation for being immensely responsive to fans” (Hayward 105).

“With the Depression and onset of World War II [1942], [David] Kunzel rightly argues that ‘the contemporary American strip has, in a sense, reverted to source; being only partially comic, its appeal has widened, and in ideological content it has resumed somewhat its original role of providing people with moral and political propaganda’” (Hayward 129).

“Another important factor in the decline of the serial strip was a sudden surge of attention to sex and violence in the comics. The real crackdown was on an offshoot of newspaper strips, comic books, which began during the 1930s as reprints of strips and soon attracted a huge market” (Hayward 131).

“In the narrative of serial development [that Hayward traces], Dickens’s part-published novels were feared for their addictive power and extended duration, both seen as increasing their pernicious influence on readers. It should therefore come as no surprise that comic strips have been condemned for both of these factors, as well as for the efficiency of consumption that implies, for many critics, superficiality” (Hayward 133).

“Serials are paradoxically perhaps the most present of any narrative form in that characters are always frozen in the *now*; it is audiences who must think of the future and recall the past in order to interpret the present” (Hayward 136).

“Of course, since the genre began, the social and economic functions of serials have been transformed in response to shifts in the material context of serial production” (Hayward 137).

“The first soap opera (defined in that era as a serial aimed at a female audience and marked by a domestic setting, emphasis on emotional and interpersonal concerns, and continuing narrative) is credited as Irna Phillips’s *Painted Dreams* (1931)” (Hayward 139).

“In 1951, existing serial narratives, such as *Search for Tomorrow*, ‘made the transition to television’ and, by 1960, ‘all remaining radio soaps ended abruptly in mid narrative’” (Hayward 139).

“In addition to transforming narrative aspects of serial fiction, the translation to a new medium produced essential changes in the economic exigencies of serial production. Unlike both serial novels and comic strips, radio and television segments are free. Once the initial investment in a set has been made, there is no direct cost per episode” (Hayward 140).

“Television offers unique benefits in its appropriation of the serial genre. Parts are issued regularly. . . . Audiences are vast and diverse, and because of their longevity, quotidian recurrence and themes, and—not least—audience familiarity with actors as well as characters as a result of media’s obsession with itself, soaps intensify the intermingling of fictional characters with audience lives that is so characteristic of the serial form” (Hayward 144).

“True soap operas, on the other hand, fully aware of the depression the depression following

narrative conclusion, diffuse and defuse that disappointment by interweaving multiple *and equally weighted* plot strands right from the beginning” (Hayward 152).

“[A]ll serials work by producing desire for *more* about characters and plots” (Hayward 152).

“Regular viewers realize the direct connection between the plots of their shows and the hiring and firing of actors, and therefore tend to follow fan magazines and other media sources to gather facts about contract disputes and ratings, using this knowledge to inform their reading of the show itself” (Hayward 153).

“Soap viewers . . . appropriated the game of information trading in ways that enhance their own pleasure” (Hayward 154).

“Of all TV narrative forms, soaps are arguably the most skilled at deploying [a] strategy of seduction. Viewers use the discourse of addiction: they are hooked, have to get a fix, go through withdrawal” (Hayward 155).

“[I]t is important to emphasize the very different feel of televisual, as opposed to cinematic, spectatorship. First, the camera positioning, production values, scene construction, even acting style are much ‘smaller’ and more intimate in television. Second, the viewing context is very different. Dominated by the vast screen above, surrounded by darkness and strange bodies, the cinemagoer’s viewing experience is both spectacular and specular. Glancing at a

small screen, surrounded by familiar objects and people, the television watcher's viewing experience is both intimate and distracted. She or he virtually exchanges glances with the smaller than life-sized actors, placed at eye level, watching them within the private space of the home rather than in the public theater. If others are present, they may or may not be watching (but in either case will probably be talking over, wandering in front of, and otherwise distracting from) the television, a small, familiar piece of household furniture. Perhaps most important, the viewer has power over the images" (Hayward 159).

"Like serialized novels and comic-strips, soaps provide communities both extradiegetically in bonds formed with other viewers and diegetically in extended familiarity with characters" (Hayward 164).

"[S]erials are fascinated by the instability of identity—hence the recurrence of radical character transformations, returns from the dead, evil twins, and so on" (Hayward 175).

"Also, despite soap producers' very real interest in viewer opinion and despite viewers' very active role in choosing how to use texts in their daily lives, it is important to emphasize that however much audiences may influence a particular text, control over the production agenda remains firmly in the hands of networks, producers, and advertisers" (Hayward 189).

"Because of their resistance to closure and their development of a textual system privileging not an individual hero or heroine but a community, soaps have been seen as deconstructing

the patriarchal emphasis on telos and the individual” (Hayward 191).

“By mocking patriarchs and socialites or ironicizing male chauvinism by means of mafia cross-dressers, camped-up Elvis fantasies, or . . . depicting a male cop saved by the black female partner he initially refused to work with, soaps deflate the power of class, gender, and race boundaries” (Hayward 192).

**Heath, Stephen. *Questions of Cinema*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.**

**Print.**

With this work, Stephen Heath sets out to answer questions relating to cinema in the early 1980s. Of particular interest to Heath is film’s containment within the frame of the screen. Although film seeks to replicate—or mirror—reality, it must do so through narrative spectacles—those objects that are included within the frame of the film. Heath discusses the construction of the narrative space in relation to Hitchcock’s *Suspicion*—particularly focusing on the importance of various portraits included within scenes of the film. He also addresses the various complications associated with referring to bodies within films—distinguishing between characters, people, and figures.

Although the information included therein is valuable, it is not relevant to the study at hand.

This book would be much better suited to film studies as the title may suggest.

**Hills, Matt. "Defining Cult TV: Texts, inter-texts and fan audiences." *The Television Studies Reader*. Ed. Robert C. Allen and Annette Hill. London: Routledge, 2004. 509-523. Print.**

Within this chapter, Hills elaborates on the three competing/dominating methods by which cult TV is defined: cult-as-text, cult-as-inter-text, and cult-as-audience. Hills introduces and explains each of the presented modes in order to both show the inherent difficulty in creating a standardized definition of cult TV. Additionally, Hills identifies the definitions' shared shortcomings, primarily their tendency to underplay the dynamics of cult TV, "whereby audience-led definitions can be taken up by producers, and where cult status can . . . be commodified and commercialised" (521). Hills ends his chapter with a call for a new research approach, one that seeks to define cult TV within the parameters of its institutional context of the US media industry. Such a study would aim to analyze cult TV within the broader patterns of the changing television industry.

"[Cult TV] is created by fans rather than by media producers. Such a view emphasises and celebrates fan audience power, claiming that cult TV can be neither made nor promoted as such by the media industry, but instead hinges vitally on audience take-up and devotion" (Hills 510).

"Science fiction/fantasy/horror varieties of cult TV often render the fantastic diegetically commonplace by virtue of defining and developing fantastic beings and worlds over a



lengthy period of time and in great amounts of detail. The fantastic thus takes on a quality of everydayness by virtue of its repetition, familiarity, and narrative iteration” (Hills 511).

“[T]o stop the narrative worlds of cult TV shows from becoming entirely familiar to their audiences—cult texts must play with their own established rules and norms. Cult TV texts therefore offer a delicate balancing act between establishing detailed narrative continuity which can be trusted and appreciated by audiences, and breaking with or altering this continuity in order to preserve audience interest” (Hills 511).

“[A]rising out of [cult TV’s] serialized focus on lead characters within fantastic narrative worlds, is a tendency towards what has been called ‘endlessly deferred narrative.’ This means that cult TV programmes often fail to resolve major, driving narrative questions, these questions remaining open, and narrative closure being indefinitely deferred” (Hills 513).

“[C]ontemporary US cult TV . . . typically runs in seasons of 24 episodes and often features end-of-season cliff-hangers. This type of seriality seems to support fan practices such as intense speculation over plot (especially across the summer break)” (Hills 518).

“Fans are able to produce . . . detailed analyses and knowledgeable fictions thanks to the fact that they re-view much-loved TV shows again and again, amassing vast amounts of knowledge about these programmes, in terms of their narrative worlds, characters, and production details” (Hills 519).

“[B]y making it easier for fans to contact other like-minded devotees, the web increases the possibility of small-scale organised fandoms emerging around a wider variety of TV shows” (Hills 519).

**Holt, Jennifer and Sanson, Kevin, eds. *Connected Viewing: Selling, Streaming, & Sharing Media in the Digital Era*. New York: Routledge, 2014. Print.**

Within this collection, editors Jennifer Holt and Kevin Sanson seek to provide educators with a text that adequately provides an overview of connected viewing. Primarily, this text addresses the recent changes that have occurred within media distribution, access, and the control of companies over their products. Although transmedia storytelling maintains aspects of connected viewing, it only represents one aspect of the larger whole comprises connected viewing. Due to this clarification, this book is of little use to the current study, however, it would be highly beneficial to anyone seeking information regarding the changing distribution and advertising markets of the new digital era.

“Yet whereas the concept of transmedia is primarily focused on immersive textual experiences, narrative development, and finding ways to tell a story across multiple media platforms, connected viewing addresses the larger industrial landscape in which that text is situated, often speaking to dynamics of delivery, access, and control” (Holt and Sanson 6).

“The functionality offered on connected viewing apps does not encourage long-term

engagement and creativity, the kind one might find in transmedia storytelling or a wiki-based collaboration, the kinds of participatory cultural opportunities that mobile technologies have the potential to facilitate” (Tussey 204).

***Iron Man*. Dir. Jon Favreau. Perf. Robert Downey Jr., Gwyneth Paltrow, Terrence Howard, Clark Gregg, and Samuel L. Jackson. Paramount Pictures, 2008. DVD.**

The release of *Iron Man* in 2008 marks the beginning of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU). This film focuses on the anti-hero, Tony Stark, a brilliant billionaire who finds himself kidnapped by a terrorist organization and held hostage in the Middle East. After he escapes by building what would become the prototype for his Iron Man suit, Tony returns to America, reclaims his company, and begins putting restrictions on Stark Industries’ arms/weapons development while simultaneously fashioning his official Iron Man suit. As the former chair of Stark Industries, Obadiah Stane, searches for a way to recreate Tony’s Arc Reactor—a mechanism made of pure energy that protects Tony’s heart from shrapnel. It is later revealed that Stane ordered Stark’s kidnapping and both he and Tony—each in their own respective iron suits—confront each other in a final battle. In the final scenes of the film, Tony announces to the world that he is Iron Man. Tony, is then recruited by Nick Fury in the end credits scene to join a new team that Fury is putting together. This is the first time that *The Avengers*—both the team and future films—are alluded to.

TONY STARK. I had my eyes open. I came to realize that I have more to offer this world than just making things that blow up.

NICK FURY. You think you're the only super hero in the world? Mr. Stark, you've become a part of a bigger universe, you just don't know it yet.

**Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press, 2008. Print.**

Within this book, Henry Jenkins explores the ways in which the new convergence paradigm challenges the older digital revolution paradigm. The case studies Jenkins provides in subsequent chapters aim to explore convergence through its impact upon American popular culture—in particular its effects upon specific media franchises and their audiences.

According to Jenkins, transmedia storytelling is at the heart of media convergence. Most importantly, he attributes the power of transmedia storytelling to its ability to build worlds—worlds that allow for multiple characters and multiple stories that can be told across multiple media platforms. The success of transmedia storytelling relies upon each medium's ability to tell an aspect of the story in a way that is unique to the chosen medium. Additionally, while each installment allows for a deeper understanding and appreciation of the greater story and world, the consumer must retain the right to pick and choose which mediums and stories they

wish to engage with. Thus, each installment must be able to both stand on its own while also contributing something new to the greater narrative world.

“A transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole. In the ideal form of transmedia storytelling, each medium does what it does best. . . . Each franchise entry needs to be self-contained so you don’t need to have seen the film to enjoy the game and vice versa. Any given product is a point of entry into the franchise as a whole. Reading across the media sustains a depth of experience that motivates more consumption” (*Convergence Culture* 98).

“Umberto Eco asks what . . . transforms a film . . . into a cult artifact. First, he argues, the work must come to us as a ‘complexly furnished world so that its fans can quote characters and episodes as if they were aspects of the private secretariat world.’ Second, the work must be encyclopedic, containing a rich array of information that can be drilled, practiced, and mastered by devoted consumers” (*Convergence Culture* 99).

“More and more, storytelling has become the art of world building, as artists create compelling environments that cannot be fully explored or exhausted within a single work or even a single medium. The world is bigger than the film, bigger even than the franchise—since fan speculations and elaborations also expand the world in variety of ways” (*Convergence Culture* 116).

“To make these worlds seem even more real . . . storytellers and readers begin to create ‘conceptualizing devices—color-coded paths, time lines, family trees, maps, clocks, calendars, and so on.’ Such devices ‘enable the viewer to grasp the dense psychological and cultural spaces [represented by modern stories] without becoming disoriented’”

(*Convergence Culture* 118). quoting from Janet Murray

“Murray notes . . . that such works are apt to attract three very different kinds of consumers: ‘the actively engaged real-time viewers who must find suspense and satisfaction in each single episode and the more reflective long-term audience who look for coherent patterns in the story as a whole . . . [and] the navigational viewer who takes pleasure in following the connections between different parts of the story and in discovering multiple arrangements of the same material’” (*Convergence Culture* 121).

**Jenkins, Henry, Sam Ford, and Joshua Green. *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture*. New York: New York University Press, 2013. Print.**

Within the introduction, Henry Jenkins differentiates between two terms: stickiness and spreadability. He describes stickiness as relating to broadcasting’s distribution practices, whereas spreadability relates to circulation practices that are carried out by the audience through any variety of media platforms. Jenkins stresses how the stickiness model approaches audiences with a one-size-fits-all mentality, imperfectly aligning material with an

audience's interests; meanwhile, the spreadability model describes the ways in which an audience takes material, reshapes, and circulates it in ways that fit their own specific needs (ie. fan-fiction). The latter is of the greatest importance to Jenkins' study of participatory culture, whereby the line between content-creators and content-consumers is blurred.

Within Chapter 3, "The Value of Media Engagement," Jenkins considers the importance of spreadability in relation to transmedia engagement as networks transition from appointment-based models to engagement-based models of television. According to Jenkins, transmedia strategies build on the concept of world building in ways that appeal to engaged audiences, specifically those composed of what Mittell identifies as "forensic fans" (135). According to Mittell, transmedia story worlds create "drillable texts," texts that contain multiple layers of meaning within any given episode (136). It is this drillable quality that encourages audiences to both deeply engage with these texts and inspires spreadability through "fans' collective intelligence-gathering and meaning-making processes" (137). Later in the same chapter, Jenkins notes the ways in which the social media has normalized tendencies that were once considered as cult in order to broaden their fan-base beyond their initial target audience.

"A term that emerged through marketing discourse and which was popularized by its use in Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point* (2000) and elsewhere, 'stickiness' broadly refers to the need to create content that attracts audience attention and engagement. . . . Gladwell uses 'stickiness' to describe the aspects [or mechanisms] of media texts which engender deep audience engagement and might motivate them to share what they learned with others"

*(Spreadable Media 4).*

“The key to stickiness is putting material in a centralized location, drawing people to it, and keeping them there indefinitely . . .” *(Spreadable Media 6).*

“[E]ngagement based models see the audience as a collective of active agents whose labor may generate alternative forms of market value. This approach places a premium on audiences willing to pursue content across multiple channels as viewers access television shows on their own schedules, thanks to videocassette recorders and later digital video recorders (DVRs), digital downloads, mobile video devices, and DVD boxed sets. Such models value the spread of media texts as these engaged audiences are more likely to recommend, discuss, research, pass along, and even generate new material in response” *(Spreadable Media 116).*

“[T]ransmedia storytelling draws on a longstanding push toward heightened serialization. . . . From the start, serialized entertainment was assumed to demand a committed and engaged reader, one who would track down each new installment and make links between chunks of information dispersed across the unfolding narrative” *(Spreadable Media 134).*

“Transmedia strategies assume that the gradual dispersal of material can sustain . . . various types of audience conversations, rewarding and building particularly strong ties with a property’s most ardent fans while inspiring others to be even more active in seeking and



sharing new information” (*Spreadable Media* 143).

“As social media has facilitated audience behaviors that were once considered niche or fringe to become commonplace and mainstream, innovative producers and marketers have established new relationships with their audiences using practices that were once only considered for the fans of cult media. Transmedia practices . . . are designed to give viewers something to do and something to talk about in relation to media content. In some cases, their responses are scaffolded so that the activity of the most actively engaged fans increases awareness among more casual viewers. These ‘grassroots intermediaries’ are thus generating value—especially as measured in terms of viewer engagement—through their attempts to spread media content beyond its initial point of distribution” (*Spreadable Media* 148-149).

**Jenkins, Henry, Suzanne Scott, and Louisa Ellen Stein. *Textual Poachers: Television***

***Fans and Participatory Culture. Updated Twentieth Anniversary ed. New York:***

**Routledge, 2013. Print.**

Written during a time of transition, Henry Jenkins insists that *Textual Poachers* should be read as a time capsule—capturing a moment between the end of the print-zine era and the beginning of the digital network era. Writing as a self-identified “aca-fan” (an academic who also happens to be a fan), Jenkins’ embraces an ethnographic methodology which, he argues, allows him to better assess five interconnected dimensions of fan culture: 1) “its relationship to a particular mode of reception,” 2) “its role in encouraging viewer activism,” 3) “its

function as an interpretive community,” 4) “its particular traditions of cultural production,” and, 5) “its status as an alternative social community” (1-2).

Drawing heavily from the work of de Certeau, Jenkins discusses the many ways in which fans may choose to engage with any given narrative. Specifically, Jenkins argues that repeated viewing allows for fans to revisit, reexamine, and restructure their relationship with a given text. Thus, it is through their viewing practices that fans are able to gain “mastery over a narrative” (73).

“Focusing on participatory culture as a concept allows us to acknowledge the complex interactions between fans and producers, especially as media industries have had to embrace more participatory strategies in order to court and maintain relations with their fans at a time when a logic of ‘engagement’ shakes many of their policies and promotions” (*Textual Poachers* xxii).

“As fans view media socially, they demand much greater complexity, they want more difficult problems to work through and more pieces of information to explore” (*Textual Poachers* xxv).

“[A]pproaching popular culture as a fan gives . . . new insights into the media by releasing [you] from the narrowly circumscribed categories and assumptions of academic criticism and [allows you] to play with textual materials” (*Textual Poachers* 5).

“The difference between watching a series and becoming a fan lies in the intensity of [one’s] emotional and intellectual involvement. Watching television as a fan involves different levels of attentiveness and evokes different viewing competencies than more casual viewing of the same material” (*Textual Poachers* 56).

“While [the] ‘indifferent’ viewer watches a popular series when it is convenient, when there are no other plans for the evening or nothing better on a competing channel, fans, as committed viewers, organize their schedules to insure that they will be able to see their favorite program” (*Textual Poachers* 57).

“The reader is drawn not into the reconstituted world of of the fiction but rather into a world she has created from the textual materials” (*Textual Poachers* 63).

“[Through syndication,] episodes become enmeshed in the viewer’s own life, gaining significance in relation to when they were first encountered and evoking memories as rich as the series itself; these experiences alter the viewer’s identifications with characters and the significance they place upon the narrative events. The pleasures offered by the rerun episodes, then, reflect not simply the enduring quality of the original programs but the ways they can be inflected through the viewer’s repeated experience of them” (*Textual Poachers* 69).

On serial television: “No episode can be easily disentangled from the series’ historical trajectory; plot developments are seen not as complete within themselves but as one series of events among many in the lives of its primary characters. For the fan, it is important to see *all* all of the episodes ‘in order’ in a way that is not for the average viewer of that same program. The character’s responses to a particular situation are seen as growing from that character’s total life experiences and may be explained through references to what has been learned about that character in previous episodes” (*Textual Poachers* 99).

**Lotz, Amanda D. *The Television Will Be Revolutionized*. 2nd ed. New York: New York University Press, 2014. Print.**

Within this book, Amanda D. Lotz traces the evolution of behind the screen developments in television from the network era through the beginnings of the post-network era. Lotz discusses the various technological factors that contribute to the changes in the ways that television is not only made, but also how these changes impact viewers and advertisers as well. While much of this book is a historical background of television—a topic that is thoroughly addressed in other works—Lotz provides the best history concerning changes in television production. She also discusses those televisual norms that have remained relatively stable over the years, mainly those concerning the season and individual episode production.

Important tables include: Table 1.1, “Characteristics of Production Components in Each

Period” (9); Table 2.1, “A Snapshot of Television Technology Diffusion” between 2005 and 2013 (60); Table 2.2, “Key Developments in the Transition to Nonlinear Television” (70) . “[T]he ‘network era’ (from approximately 1952 through the mid-1980s) governed industry operations and allowed for a certain experience with television that categorizes much of the medium’s history” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 8).

“[Lotz] identif[ies] the period of the mid-1980s through the mid-2000s as that of the ‘multi-channel transition.’ During these years, various new developments such as the growing availability of cable service and new cable channels, videocassette recorders (VCRs), and remote controls changed our experience with television, but did so gradually, in a manner that allowed the industry to continue to operate in much the same way as it did in the network era” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 8).

“Signs of a subsequent period, a ‘post-network era,’ began to emerge in the early 2000s. . . . What separates the post-network era from the multi-channel transition is that the changes in competitive norms and operation of the industry become too pronounced for many of the old practices to be observed” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 8).

“Prized content describes programming that *people seek out and specifically desire*. . . . [P]rized content is deliberately pursued [and] compels *some* audience members to follow news of its development, to read endless chatter on blogs and news sites, to seek out missed episodes, control viewing, and even pay for this most valued content. Prized content is

determined by the audience member [and differs from one individual to another]. . . . Prized content is a post-network-era phenomenon that emerges in defiance of the technological affordances of mid-twentieth-century broadcasting, which created the norm of a linear content flow that provided specific content at certain network-determined times and that has served as the dominant organization of television” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 12).

“Linear content is *what people watch when they watch ‘what is on,’* or it might be distinguished by the notion of ‘I’m going to watch television’ as opposed to ‘I’m going to watch *Sons of Anarchy.*’ . . . [L]inear content is viewed live . . . [and] [t]he motivation for viewing is not watching particular content, but a desire for companionship, distraction, or entertainment that may or may not make the content the viewer’s focus” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 14).

“Using control devices, [viewers] can separate prized content into a distinctive space—possibly both temporal and physical—in which they can watch undisturbed, perhaps on the best set available. A viewer might also distinguish prized television . . . by gathering an audience of friends or family to see a program that has been recorded or is shown live, or use the phone, Internet, or social media to chat about a show while it airs” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 90).

“[M]any [production] features [have remained] consistent, such as the norm of seven or eight

days of shooting per episode. . . . A full season include[s] twenty-one or twenty-two episodes that . . . air from late September through May, with rerun episodes interspersed” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 102).

“Series such as [*Lost, Heroes, and 24*] raised the stakes and expectations of television, though networks and studios learned that audiences also required carefully crafted stories and characters, which proved more difficult to replicate than visual effects” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 103).

“The television season is a prototypical network-era concept, fundamental to a linear viewing environment, and emerged from factors of competition, audience research, and program acquisition and financing. The twenty-one or twenty-two episode seasons the networks purchased throughout much of the network era and multi-channel transition allowed the networks an initial airing and at least one rerun airing to fill a time slot for roughly forty three weeks of the year” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 115).

“Apart from the tendency of decreased television use in the summer, another rationale for the ‘television season’ was maintaining optimal audiences during the key ‘sweeps’ months of November, February, May, and July, in which Neilson collected national audience data” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 116).

“By 2010, social media and new forms of distribution had created many opportunities for

connecting with audiences and drawing them in to programming” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 123).

“Promotion has also become more integrated into the basic processes of series creation” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 126).

“[N]ew conditions of the multichannel transition and emerging post-network era have certainly required adjustments to how programs are made, scheduled, and promoted, and here it is important to note that promotion does more than draw audiences to programming; it also prepares them to have certain expectations of the show and thus contributes to how they understand it” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 127).

“The displacement of linear viewing led to substantial consequences in the content of program and promotion. Rather than letting viewers know when a program would air and giving hints about ‘this week’s’ story, networks created ads more akin to film trailers, designed to rouse viewer interests in core aspects of the story” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 129).

“[N]ew technologies involve new rituals of use” (*The Television Will Be Revolutionized* 263).



**Lotz, Amanda D. "Textual (Im)Possibilities in the U.S. Post-Network Era: Negotiation Production and Promotion Processes on Lifetime's *Any Day Now*." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 21.1 (2004): 22-43. Web. 18 Sept. 2015.**

Within this article, Amanda D. Lotz examines the ways in which the creators of *Any Day Now* were limited by Lifetime Television Network's production and promotion processes. As one of the first original series aired in the post-network era, show-runners Miller and Randall hoped that they would be able to produce a television narrative that would bring attention to racial issues of both the present (late 1990s) and the 1960s. However, due to the Lifetime network brand, Miller and Randall struggled to balance network demands and their own desire for the show. Ultimately, *Any Day Now* did not achieve the radical goals of its creators due to incongruence with network branding, a poorly matched/targeted niche audience, and the network's unwillingness to promote the show in a manner that was pleasing to its writers. Lotz concludes that, while the post-network era's shift towards niche audiences allowed for more creativity in regards to content, there are still limitations upon the kinds of content that networks are willing to produce.

While this article is interesting, it casts the advancements of the post-network era in a rather negative light, arguing that—while it allows for some improvements in regards to content—certain topics (such as racism) are still barred from regular network programming. Based on other readings, perhaps the issue with *Any Day Now* was not its radically racial content, but rather the overtness of this content, Lifetime's inability/unwillingness to accurately target a

niche audience, and screenwriter's difficulty to identify and work within any given network's brand.

**Mann, Denise, ed. *Wired TV: Laboring Over an Interactive Future*. Brunswick: Rutgers, 2014. Print.**

Within his collection, Denis Mann seeks to enlighten readers as to the potentially negative side effects of transmedia approaches. Unlike other works cited within this annotated bibliography, Mann assumes a production-focused approach to transmedia in order to highlight the ways in which industries are still negotiating working roles in regards to the transmedia storytelling format.

Of the selected chapters, that of Henry Jenkins' "The Reign of the 'Mothership: Transmedia's Past, Present, and Possible Futures'" is the most relevant to my current research interests. Within his chapter, Jenkins provides a succinct definition of transmedia storytelling. He also traces transmedia's history through the works of L. Frank Baum (*The Wizard of Oz* travelogues), Walt Disney (*Disneyland* television series), and George Lucas (*The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*). Jenkins goes on to connect present day transmedia trends to its variations, such as the "franchise model" (250), the Japanese's "mix strategy" (252), and comic book practices (253). Most importantly, Jenkins elaborates on the ways in which transmedia is both a method of storytelling and a method of promotion.

“The networks began to experiment in earnest with the traditional television experience from 2005 to 2010 by collaborating with three important groups: members of the Hollywood creative community who wanted to expand television’s storytelling worlds and marketing capabilities by incorporating social media; members of the Silicon Valley tech company who helped the networks recast television distribution for the digital era; and super-fans who were eager and willing to use social media story expansions to proselytize on behalf of a favorite network series” (Mann 3).

“The networks’ experiments with transmedia storytelling and social media engagements between 2005 and 2010 were tolerated in large part because they were introduced by Hollywood insiders who were also proven hitmakers, including head television writers like J. J. Abrams, Carleton Cuse, Damon Lindelof, and Tim Kring” (Mann 10).

“The term ‘transmedia’ means simply ‘across media’ and implies a structured or coordinated relationship among multiple media platforms and practices” (“The Reign of the ‘Mothership’” 244).

“Transmedia storytelling represents a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Ideally, each medium takes its own unique contribution to the unfolding of the story” (qtd. in “The Reign of the ‘Mothership’” 245). *quoting his own work, “Transmedia Storytelling 101”*

“In the case of a television series, transmedia content often fills gaps in the program flow in the days, weeks, or months before the next installment airs” (“The Reign of the ‘Mothership’” 246).

“More recently, Hollywood has shifted toward a ‘mothership’ approach; that is, the focus is on one core property that may be extended into other platforms depending on market response. Above all, creators seek to drive audiences to the mothership—most often a feature film or television series. Other media should deepen the audience’s engagement without ‘cannibalizing’ the market. The mothership should not depend for its dramatic payoff on something that consumers have to track down elsewhere. The mothership must be perceived as self-contained, even if other media add new layers” (“The Reign of the ‘Mothership’” 246-247).

“As Starlight Runner’s Jeff Gomez explains, ‘Transmedia doesn’t replace marketing, it is infused into it, turning marketers into storytellers who are helping to enrich and expand the franchise’” (“The Reign of the ‘Mothership’” 248).

“Contemporary transmedia practice was also prefigured in the comics industry. . . . Over the past few decades, comics storytelling has become increasingly serialized, moving from self-contained episodes to story arcs across multiple issues, often intended to be collected and sold as graphic novels. The offerings of the two major comics publishers, Marvel and DC, have become interconnected universes, where characters mass regularly across titles, and

several times a year company-wide events coordinate actions across all affiliated titles” (“The Reign of the ‘Mothership’” 253).

“Whatever transmedia storytellers might hope, the industry still understands these practices within a logic of promotion. But within that space there are still opportunities to use transmedia extensions as a means to develop secondary characters, explore richer fictional worlds, provide backstory, or otherwise expand the time line of the narrative, so long as doing so will attract engaged consumers” (“The Reign of the ‘Mothership’” 254).

**“Marvel Studios: Assembling a Universe.” American Broadcasting Company. ABC, New Orleans. 18 Mar. 2014. Television.**

Within this documentary, Stan Lee, Kevin Feige, Joss Whedon, Jon Favreau (and others) discuss the making of what is now known as the “Marvel Cinematic Universe” (MCU). Those who are interviewed discuss the creative processes and visions that have come together to create a multi-dimensional world that is comprised across multiple media. They discuss films and extensions beginning with *Iron Man* (2008) all the way up through the anticipated release of *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014)—this includes Marvel One-Shots and the beginnings of the hit television shows, *Marvel’s Agents of S. H. I. E. L. D. (MAoS)* and *Agent Carter*. Stan Lee stresses the importance of continuity and character growth in Marvel Studio’s plan for both creating and expanding their universe—key components of narrative complexity. Creators also discuss the importance of franchises—explaining that, while

crossovers may occur, each character remains part of their own franchise while also contributing to the greater Avengers and Marvel franchises. Noteworthy commentary is also made by actors Tom Hiddleston (Loki) and Clark Gregg (Agent Phil Coulson).

According to Jeremy Latchum, executive producer, “‘I am Iron Man,’ Tony Stark’s declarative statement, set the groundwork for what would become a much larger story. Marvel Studios had a vision, a single universe, inhabited by heroes and villains, across multiple feature film franchises.”

Axel Alonso- Editor in Chief, Marvel Comics - “What Marvel Studios has done is very similar to what Marvel Comics did back in the day. They built individual stories that stand on their own two feet. Then they found a way to take those stories and weave them into a larger narrative.”

Tom Hiddleston describes Loki as a “damaged prince struggling to find a place in the universe.”

Tom Hiddleston- “Agent Phil Coulson has been, in his [Clark Gregg’s] own words, the glue of the Marvel universe.”

Chris Hardwick - Host/Comedian - “Marvel was one of the deciding factors in how nerd culture started to spill over and begin to eclipse pop culture.”

Narrator: “As Marvel Studios was unleashing epic adventures onto movie screens around the globe, smaller stories were being developed to expand the universe giving fans a shot to further connect with some of their favorite characters.”

Narrator: “Marvel characters continue to grow, evolve, and expand.”

Narrator: *MAoS* “give[s] fans a weekly visit into the Marvel world.”

Jeph Loeb – Head of Marvel Television – *MaoS* as a “boardwalk through marvel universe;” its “goal is to fill in the giant cracks between these movies and be the piece that ties them together.”

***Marvel’s Agents of S. H. I. E. L. D.: The Complete First Season.* Writ. Joss Whedon, Jed Whedon, and Maurissa Tancharoen. Dir. Jesse Bocho. ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.**

Within this series, Clark Gregg reprises his role as Agent Phil Coulson. Beginning after the events in New York (*The Avengers*), audiences soon learn that Coulson has been mysteriously resurrected and is putting together a team of agents (Melinda May, Grant Ward, Leo Fitz, and Jemma Simmons, and Skye) to investigate new threats to global security. This season focuses primarily on discovering the secrets behind “Project Centipede” and the meaning of Coulson’s visions of Tahiti, “a magical place.”

“Project Centipede” is headed by a character known as the Clairvoyant, a villain later revealed to be John Garrett—head of H. Y. D. R. A. Grant Ward is also revealed to be an undercover H. Y. D. R. A. agent along with others, including Jasper Sitwell. The reveal took place within days of *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*’s release. Furthermore, the nature of Coulson’s resurrection is brought to light when he discovers the upper torso of a Kree at a secret S. H. I. E. L. D. base known as the “Guest House.”

Noteworthy Characters: Agent Phil Coulson, Jasper Sitwell, Mike Peterson/Deathlok, Lady Sif, Agent Maria Hill, Director Nick Fury, Lorelei, and Professor Elliot Randolph

WARD. It means we are the line between the world and the much weirder world. (S1 E1)

AGENT HILL. That, you’ll have to ask Agent Coulson.

WARD. Yeah. I’m clearance Level 6. I know that Agent Coulson was killed in action before the Battle of New York—got the full report.

AGENT COULSON. Welcome to Level 7. (S1 E1)

AGENT HAND. They [H. Y. D. R. A.] hide in plain sight. They earn our trust, our sympathy. They make us like them. And, when you hesitate—they strike. (S1 E17)



***Marvel's Agents of S. H. I. E. L. D.: The Complete Second Season.* Writ. Joss Whedon, Jed Whedon, and Maurissa Tancharoen. Dir. Jesse Bocho. Walt Disney Studios, 2015. DVD.**

Season 2 of *Marvel's Agents of S. H. I. E. L. D* centers around the rebuilding of the S. H. I. E. L. D organization. Following the events of *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, Agent Phil Coulson and his team of agents are forced into hiding. However, they continue their mission of investigating new threats to global safety although they are no longer under the protection of the government. This season focuses heavily on an alien object known as the Obelisk—an item that was retrieved by Peggy Carter and the S. S. R. after the end of WWII.

Coulson learns that the symbols which he and others, like John Garrett, who were injected with a serum known as GH.325 began carving was in fact a map to an ancient city. Once this information is revealed, Coulson and his team race to beat H. Y. D. R. A. to the scene. After being exposed to the Diviner—a Kree object—Skye is revealed to be an Inhuman, specifically Quake—a new interpretation of one of Marvel's comic book characters. The Inhuman plot ties the television series to both the end credits scene of *The Avengers* as well as the upcoming film, *Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy* due to their connection to the Kree race. Additionally, a colony of Inhumans headed by Skye's mother—Jiaying, is discovered—although, Jiaying's intentions are revealed to be malevolent. The season ends on a cosmic note when Jemma Simmons is taken to another planet after being

consumed by the Obelisk. Meanwhile on earth, Inhumans begin popping up everywhere as remnants of crushed Terrigen crystals—which trigger human to Inhuman transformations—end up being mass distributed in fish oil supplements.

Noteworthy Characters: Agent Phil Coulson, Daniel Whitehall, Peggy Carter, Lady Sif, Mike Peterson/Deathlok, Maria Hill

***Marvel's The Avengers*. Dir. Joss Whedon. Perf. Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans, Chris Hemsworth, Scarlett Johansson, Jeremy Renner, Mark Ruffalo, and Tom Hiddleston. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2012. DVD.**

As the sixth and final installment of phase one of the “Marvel Cinematic Universe” (MCU)—following *Iron Man* (2008), *The Incredible Hulk* (2008), *Iron Man 2* (2010), *Thor* (2011), and *Captain America: The First Avenger* (2011)—*Marvel's The Avengers* builds upon the events of previous installments and acts as the first crossover film within the MCU.

Having been previously cast out of Asgard (*Thor*), Loki makes a deal with the Other, the leader of the Chitauri race, in exchange for an army to aid him in his plan of conquering and ruling Earth. Loki will retrieve and deliver the Other the Tesseract—an extraterrestrial power source that was previously introduced in *Captain America: The First Avenger*—that will allow the Chitauri a gateway to conquer other worlds in the galaxy. Meanwhile—on Earth—Erik Selvig works with Nick Fury and the government organization known as

S. H. I. E. L. D. in order to unlock the Tesseract's unknown and untapped energy power. In the middle of routine experimentation, the Tesseract acts out and opens a portal between worlds, allowing Loki to enter the scene. After Loki secures the Tesseract and takes Selvig, Agent Clint Barton (Hawk Eye), and another, unnamed agent under his control, S. H. I. E. L. D.'s director, Nick Fury, calls upon the Avengers, a band of uniquely, gifted individuals comprised of Tony Stark (Iron Man), Steve Rogers (Captain America), Thor, Natasha Romanoff (Black Widow), and Bruce Banner (the Hulk) to help retrieve the Tesseract and save the planet from Chitauri invasion and Loki's rule.

Three events from this film are of particular interest to the current study: the death of S. H. I. E. L. D. agent Phil Coulson, the scene in which the Avengers go their separate ways, and the film's after-credits scene. Firstly, Agent Coulson is murdered by Loki midway through this film, thereby providing the event that ultimately allows the Avengers the ability to come together and work as a team in order to defeat Loki and the Chitauri. Agent Coulson is then resurrected for/in the television series, *Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* (2013).

Secondly, the film concludes by showing the members of the Avengers team each going their separate ways. This is relevant to the MCU in that the individual Marvel characters each return to their own story worlds for further development before crossing over once again in *The Avengers: Age of Ultron* (2015). Thirdly, the end credits scene reveals the Other reporting to Thanos, explaining to him that to "challenge [the Avengers] is to court death." Thanos later appears in *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014), the fourth installment in the second phase of Marvel's Cinematic Universe.

**Mittell, Jason. *Complex TV: The Poetics of Contemporary Television Storytelling*. New York: New York University Press, 2015. Print.**

Within this book, Jason Mittell attempts to study the narrational mode of narrative complexity in contemporary television through the use of poetic analysis. Mittell first identifies narrative complexity as a mode of narration defined by a television serial's ability to move oscillate between episodic and serial storytelling. Most television series accomplish this through maintaining episodic plots while continuing character relationships and development over the greater season's story-arc. In his "Evaluation" chapter, Mittell identifies two distinct modes of narrative complexity: centrifugal complexity and centripetal complexity. His book culminates in a chapter dedicated to transmedia storytelling which addresses the ways in which complex narratives are dispersed across various media platforms.

"[T]he serial text itself is less of a linear storytelling object than a sprawling library of narrative content that might be consumed via a wide range of practices, sequences, fragments, moments, choices, and repetitions" (*Complex TV* 7).

"[T]he hallmark of narrative complexity [is] an interplay between the demands of episodic and serial storytelling, often oscillating between long-term arcs and stand-alone episodes" (*Complex TV* 19).

“Within a given season, nearly every episode advances the season’s arc while still offering episodic coherence and resolutions” (*Complex TV* 19).

“When we talk about a serialized program, we are usually referring less to the ubiquitous persistence of storyworld and characters and more to the ongoing accumulation of narrative events—what occurs in one episode will have happened to the characters as portrayed in future episodes” (*Complex TV* 23).

“The most common model of event serialization found on television is the forward-moving accumulation of narrative statements that create triggers for future events to come in subsequent episodes” (*Complex TV* 25).

“One major influence on the rise of narrative complexity on contemporary television is the changing perception of the medium’s legitimacy and its resulting appeal to creators. Many of the innovative television programs of the past 20 years have come from creators who launched their careers in film, a medium with more traditional cultural cachet: Aaron Sorkin (*Sports Night* and *West Wing*), Joss Whedon (*Buffy*, *Angel*, and *Firefly*), as screenwriters, and David Lynch (*Twin Peaks*) and J. J. Abrams (*Alias*, *Lost*, and *Fringe*) as writer-directors” (*Complex TV* 31-32).

“Television characters derive from collaboration between the actors who portray them and the writers and producers who devise their actions and dialogue” (*Complex TV* 119).

“Despite some exceptions, recasting tends to disrupt a series, violating viewers’ ongoing commitments to the paired actor-character identity. More often than recasting, producers integrate an actor’s departure or other changes into the storyworld. Most typically, writers must work around actors with scheduling conflicts that limit their availability, creating episodes that omit or restrict a character’s presence, and must similarly shape stories based on actors’ contracts” (*Complex TV* 120).

“blurring character arcs and real-world events” (*Complex TV* 121).

“many viewers are well versed in television conventions that guide their narrative expectations” (*Complex TV* 122).

“most viewers know basic precepts of serial storytelling that set expectations for characters” (*Complex TV* 122).

“There are industrial incentives to associate a program with actors who can be used to promote the series, serve as its public face, and be contractually committed to appear for years at a fixed salary” (*Complex TV* 126).

“Creatively, most programs are so defined by their core characters and their web of relationships that replacing them becomes a challenge without losing what drew fans into the series” (*Complex TV* 126).

“Serialized dramas might be based on a high concept or complex plot, but the character ensemble at its core is usually what hooks in viewers . . . . The large ensembles of daytime soap operas maintain stability through anchor characters who might live their entire lives on decades-spanning dramas, mirroring the time line of viewers at home, even as other characters in the ensemble might come and go (or be recast)” (*Complex TV* 127).

“Television’s character consistency is more than just an industrial convenience, as one of the primary ways that viewers engage with programming is to develop long-term relationships with characters” (*Complex TV* 127).

“Officially produced paratexts can also fill serial gaps, including in-character blogs, commentaries found on podcasts and interviews, and character-based merchandise. Such ongoing parasitical relationships are heightened for television, where typical domestic viewing literally invites characters into your home, often for regularly scheduled visits over the course of years” (*Complex TV* 128).

“Attachment is particularly important for serials, as spending time with characters encourages parasocial connections—the more time we spend with particular characters, the more we extend that time through hypothetical and paratextual engagement outside the moments of watching” (*Complex TV* 130).

“Viewers of serial television engage with an ongoing, dynamic system, not a fixed text like

most films” (*Complex TV* 132).

“[Mittell’s] approach to comprehension is based on the cognitive poetic model developed primarily through David Bordwell’s work on film narration. This approach assumes that viewers actively construct storyworlds in their minds, a process best understood through the tools of cognitive psychology” (*Complex TV* 164).

“cognitive approach to comprehension seeks to understand how viewers make sense of television” (*Complex TV* 165).

“Serial television prompts viewers to create cognitive maps of storyworlds, suggesting the importance of spatial orientation and visual construction in the viewing process” (*Complex TV* 166).

“[W]e learn about characters’ backstories, relationships, interior motivations, and beliefs throughout a series. We gather information about the storyworld’s geography, history, temporality, and particular norms and rules, especially in genres with somewhat unreal universes, such as science fiction and fantasy. We also gain operational knowledge, as we learn the intrinsic storytelling norms of a series and extrinsic information about the genre, creative team, network,, or codes of the television medium itself—the conventions catalogued by fans at the TV Tropes wiki speak to the huge amount of information about how stories are told that might be activated within the process of narrative comprehension”



(*Complex TV* 167).

“One strategy that complex television series can use to create greater narrative intrigue and engagement is to play with the boundaries of such preconscious schemata, pushing back against our normal viewing competences to create interesting variations on expectations by relocating automatic inferences into the realm of conscious comprehension” (*Complex TV* 167).

“One of the chief drives for narrative consumption is to increase our knowledge of a compelling story, as we learn more about characters, relationships, the world, events both past and future, and the operational storytelling itself through active hypothesizing and analysis of an ongoing serial” (*Complex TV* 170).

“cinematic narratives typically engage a viewer’s short term memory, cuing and obscuring moments from within the controlled unfolding of a two-hour feature film, while literature designs its stories to be consumed at the reader’s own pace and control, allowing for an on-demand return to previous pages as needed” (*Complex TV* 180).

“[V]iewers . . . vary as to what paratextual expansions they explore, as some read reviews, participate in fan forums, and visit other participatory cultural sites that keep memories fresh in their minds, while others may not think at all about a program until the next episode airs. Thus the long arcs of complex television must balance the memory demands of a wide range

of viewers and reception contexts” (*Complex TV* 181).

“[C]entrifugal complexity . . . in which the ongoing narrative pushes outward, spreading characters across an expanding storyworld. On a centrifugal program, there is no single narrative center, as the action traces what happens between characters and institutions as they spread outward. It is not just that the series expands in quantity of characters and settings but that its richness is found in the complex web of interconnectivity forged across the social system rather than in the depth of any one individual’s role in the narrative or psychological layers” (222). \*\*later described as an “expansionist approach” and termed “centrifugal storytelling” (304)

“Likewise, melodrama is more of a mode than a genre, an approach to emotion, storytelling, and morality that cuts across numerous genres and media forms. However, when it comes to American television, melodrama is often assumed to belong solely to the important genre of the soap opera, and thus moments of melodrama appearing outside the daytime schedule are often linked to the soap opera genre, as with the derogatory label ‘soapy’” (*Complex TV* 233).

“‘series’ and ‘serial’ carry their own shifting connotations—by the mid-1950s, ‘serial’ came to imply cumulative ongoing, open-ended plot lines, while ‘series’ suggested continuous story worlds and characters typical of comic strips and radio comedies but not necessarily cumulative plots” (*Complex TV* 234).

“melodrama as a mode . . . unites various forms of serial television via a shared commitment to linking morality, emotional response, and narrative drive” (*Complex TV* 244).

“As complex television has opened up playful variations of time and space in serialized storytelling, it has occasionally explored notions of parallel worlds or multiple dimensions, issues that have emerged more often in complex films” (*Complex TV* 274).

“Transmedia storytelling thrives in ongoing narrative paratexts through a strategy best captured by Henry Jenkins’s comprehensive and influential definition of the form:

‘Transmedia storytelling represents a process where integral elements of a fiction get *dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels* for the purpose of creating a *unified and coordinated entertainment experience*. Ideally, each medium makes its own *unique contribution* to the unfolding story’” (qtd. in *Complex TV* 294). *quoting Jenkins’ “Transmedia Storytelling 101”*

“Most prime time television programs serve as the core text of their transmedia franchises, with the unusual exception of *Marvel’s Agents of S. H. I. E. L. D.* as a rare exception pointed toward a more balanced approach in which comics and films are more central to the narrative” (*Complex TV* 294).

“[W]ithin a serial form, as the gaps between episodes and seasons provide time for viewers’ attention to wander—for many people within the industry, transmedia is optimistically

regarded as a magnet to sustain viewers' engagement and attention across these periodic gaps" (*Complex TV* 295).

"Complex television treats [narrative events, characters, and settings] as cumulative and consistent within the story world, with everything that happens and everyone we see as part of this persistent narrative universe" (*Complex TV* 296).

"For fans of serial television, charting the canonical events, characters, and settings featured in a storyworld is a central mode of engagement, with viewers striving for both narrative comprehension and deeper understanding of a fictional universe" (*Complex TV* 296).

"[T]he type of integrated transmedia that Jenkins explores . . . places more emphasis on narrative events, so that the plot is distributed across media. Few television series have attempted to create transmedia extensions that offer such *canonic integration*, with interwoven story events that must be consumed across media for full comprehension" (*Complex TV* 298).

"Arguably the most intense bond that fans of a television serial has with the program is their affection for and connection with characters" (*Complex TV* 301).

"A key strategy for accomplishing this storytelling breadth was to center the core television series around characters, their adventures and dramas, and how they encounter the mythology

and to allow the more in-depth mythological explorations and explanations to flower in transmedia properties” (*Complex TV* 306).

“‘What Is’ transmedia seeks to extend the fiction canonically, explaining the universe with coordinated precision and hopefully expanding viewers’ understanding and appreciation of the story world. This mode encourages forensic fandom with the promise of eventual revelations once all the pieces are put together” (*Complex TV* 314).

“If one goal of consuming a story is mastery of its fictional universe, then ‘What Is’ transmedia scatters narrative understanding across a variety of extensions to be collectively reassembled by a team of die-hard fans to piece together the elaborate puzzle” (*Complex TV* 314).

“The majority of official storytelling extensions seem designed to fulfill the goals of ‘What Is’ transmedia, and the measuring stick that critics and fans use to assess those paratexts typically defines success through canonical coordination and narrative integration” (*Complex TV* 314-315).

**Mittell, Jason. “Narrative Complexity in Contemporary American Television.” *Velvet Light Trap: A Critical Journal of Film & Television* 58 (2006): 29-40. Web. 8 Sept. 2015.**

In this article, Jason Mittell argues that a new mode of storytelling emerged during the 1990s, a mode that is specific to the medium of television: narrative complexity. Born from an era of experimentation, narrative complexity opposes traditional conventions of episodic and serial traditions in a way that both encourages and rewards greater audience engagement.

According to Mittell, narrative complexity emerged due to a series of historical factors, including the rise of new media technologies (multichannels, streamability, DVD players, etc.) and multiple film writers' switch from film to television careers. Television's reputation as a producer's medium allowed for these writers to maintain control of their work and develop what Mittell identifies as the "long-form series," a series that emerged from experimenting with conventional episodic and serial forms. This led to the development of narratively complex programming, a new mode of writing that oscillates between serial and episodic forms resulting in extended character depth, ongoing plots, and episodic variations.

"Through the operational aesthetic[,] these complex narratives invite viewers to engage at the level of formal analyst, dissecting the techniques used to convey spectacular displays of storytelling craft; this mode of formally aware viewing is highly encouraged by these programs, as their pleasures are embedded in a level of awareness that transcends the traditional focus on diegetic action typical of most viewers" ("Narrative Complexity" 36).

"In all of these programs[,] the lack of explicit storytelling cues and signposts creates moments of disorientation, asking viewers to engage more actively to comprehend the story

and rewarding regular viewers who have mastered each program's internal conventions of complex narration" ("Narrative Complexity" 37).

"Narratively complex programs invite temporary disorientation and confusion, allowing viewers to build up their comprehension skills through long-term viewing and active engagement" ("Narrative Complexity" 37).

"[W]hat seems to be a key goal across video games, puzzle films, and narratively complex television series is the desire to be both actively engaged in the story and successfully surprised through story manipulations. This is the operational aesthetic at work—we want to enjoy the machine's results while also marveling at how it works" ("Narrative Complexity" 38).

"While fan cultures have long demonstrated intense engagement in story worlds, policing backstory consistency, character unity, and internal logic in programs like *Star Trek* and *Dr. Who*, contemporary programs focus this detailed dissection onto complex questions of plot and events in addition to storyworld and characters" ("Narrative Complexity" 38).

"These programs convert many viewers into amateur narratologists, noting usage and violations of convention, chronicling chronologies, and highlighting both inconsistencies and continuities across episodes and even series" ("Narrative Complexity" 38).

**Ndalianis, Angela. "The Neo-Baroque and Television Seriality." *The Contemporary Television Serial*. Ed. Lucy Mazdon and Michael Hammond. Edinburgh: University of Edinburg, 2005. 83-101. Rpt. on Web. n.pag. Web. 8 Oct. 2015.**

Within this essay, Angela Ndalianis studies the ways in which neo-baroque aesthetics (madness of form in regards to narrative) are articulated through the various developing forms of the serial in television. Expanding upon the work of Omar Calabrese, Ndalianis pictorially diagrams the progression of the serial across 5 narrative prototypes since the 1950s.

Of the five prototypes diagramed and explained within this essay, Prototypes 3 and 5 are of particular interest due to their relation to television narratives today. Prototype 3 (self-contained episodes, an expanding series time, and character progression throughout the series) emerged in the 1960s and 70s and creates a serial pattern that is similar in structure to the story arc. Prototype 5 builds upon those characteristics of Prototype 3 by further blurring the borders between the episode and series even further. Ndalianis concludes that, in light of transmedia advancements, Today's emphasis on multi-media, narrative convergence requires further study as it further complicates and builds upon the serial prototypes discussed within this essay.

"A labyrinthine web of stories" (Ndalianisn.pag.)



“the serial—the ‘infinite work in progress’ (Ndalianis n.pag)

“The series (which consists of a succession of self-contained narrative episodes that progress in a sequence) and the serial (which comprises a series of episodes whose narratives resist closure and continue into the next episode(s) within the sequence) have increasingly collapsed into one another, so much so that, in more recent times it has become difficult to distinguish one form from another” (Ndalianis n.pag.).

“[T]elevision learned a valuable formal lesson from the comic book industry: like comics . . . television’s fundamental logic relies heavily on the series format. . . . However, while the series has always been integral to television, its formal properties become more extreme as it approaches the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries during which time it has succumbed to the serial format” (Ndalianis n.pag.).

“[N]arrative ‘meaning’ becomes increasingly reliant upon an audience that is capable of transversing multiple ‘texts’ in order to give coherence to an independent episode within a series” (Ndalianis n.pag.).

“In the late 60s, the series and serial structure opened up further, following a movement away from self-contained episodes, to episodes that increasingly weave their stories across the series as a whole, producing a serial pattern familiar to the story arc” (Ndalianis n.pag.). See

*Figure 3: The Third Prototype - self-contained episodes, an expanding series time, and*

*character progression throughout the series*

*On The Fifth Prototype - continuing episodes and multiple narrative formations:*

“[T]aking the third prototype’s form to [the] extreme[,]” “[i]t is characterized by dynamic narrative structures with multiple centres” (Ndalianis n.pag.).

“They are the series as serial in that throughout the entire series the viewer becomes embroiled in the changing lives and stories of multiple characters” (Ndalianis n.pag.)

“[T]he series time is potentially infinite with no overall narrative target in place” (Ndalianis n.pag.).

“The shows are riddled with multiple narrative formations that stress polycentrism within the series itself. While one story may be introduced and resolved in a single episode, or across a series of episodes, other narrative situations may open up, extending the stories of multiple characters beyond a single episode and across the entire series” (Ndalianis n.pag.).

“Episode and series borders are more readily ruptured, in the process creating a situation that requires that the viewer functions like a puzzle solver or labyrinth traverser: in order to understand the meaning of the whole, it is also necessary to piece together and understand the relevance of the multiple and divergent story fragments that constitute the whole” (Ndalianis n.pag.).

**Pearson, Roberta. "Cult Television as Digital Television's Cutting Edge." *Television as Digital Media*. Ed. James Bennett and Niki Strange. London: Duke University Press, 2011. 105-131. Print.**

Within this chapter, Roberta Pearson utilizes *Star Trek*, a cult classic, in order to explain the complexities that influenced the American television industry's transitions between TVI (mid-1960s - early 1980s), TVII (early 1980s - late 1990s), and TVIII (late 1990s - present day). Specifically, Pearson, through her *Star Trek* case study, argues that three characteristics of modern television, the producer brand, niche audiences, and multiple channels, originated during TVI.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Rod Serling (*The Twilight Zone*) and Gene Roddenberry (*Star Trek*) left live television in order to pursue film television, a medium which allowed for writers to maintain more authority over their texts. In each circumstance, Serling and Roddenberry were both able to circumvent the television norms of the times in order to write narratives about controversial topics, such as war, sex, racism, religion, etc. Although Serling and Roddenberry's careers as both writer and producer were short lived, Roddenberry's producer brand continued to gain popularity in both the TVII and TVIII eras. Likewise, in spite of the series' cancellation due to low Nielsen numbers, *Star Trek* was renewed for a third season due to an overwhelming response from its avid fans. Pearson identifies this as an example of events that led to television networks' realization that catering to niche audiences generates a loyal fanbase from which the network may profit.

This ideology comes into play again in Pearson's final section entitled, "Multichannels," in which she describes the ways in which the creation of off-network channels and their syndication of older materials, such as *Star Trek*, gave rise to two key characteristics of both TVII and TVIII's business models: 1) "cult shows targeting specific demographic categories" and 2) "marginal ratings performers achieving profitability in subsequent release windows" (120).

"Not until the early 1980s, during the transition from TVI to TVII, does it seem to have become standard practice to renew shows with relatively low ratings but high prestige—that is, the right viewers" (Pearson 119).

"Evidence of such intense viewer loyalty may well have influenced TVII producers who specifically designed shows for the cult niche (for example, *Twin Peaks* and *The X-Files*), knowing that these avid viewers would not only watch every week but also purchase ancillary products such as DVDs" (Pearson 119).

"[I]n relying upon and catering to passionate fan audiences in the twenty-first century . . . television could 'turn passion into money'" (Pearson 119-120). quoting Johnson

"If so-called 'TVII' gave rise to the industrial cultivation of fans for television content, those strategies have more recently accelerated the dissolution of boundaries between that content, its production and those audiences. Audiences are not just cultivated as fans, but also invited in, asked to participate in both the world of the television text and the processes of its

production” (Pearson 120). *quoting Johnson*

**Rose, Frank. *The Art of Immersion: How the digital generation is remaking Hollywood, Madison Avenue, and the way we tell stories.* New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012. Print.**

Within this book, Frank Rose identifies the commonly accepted fact that with new media comes new forms of narratives. Rose discusses the impact of the Internet on storytelling by focusing on the relationship between the advantages of the Internet and the ways in which storytelling has also embraced an “all media” approach. Amongst those who have succeeded in this form, Rose mentions *Lost* (““a story so convoluted that the audience had little choice but to work together to decipher it communally online”), *Doctor Who* (2010) (“13 television episodes and 4 subsequent episodes that came in the form of downloadable video games”), *Avatar* (a “phenomenally immersive movie” that is now being brought to life in Disney World), and *The Dark Knight* (“preceded by *Why So Serious?*, an ‘alternate reality game’”) (3-4).

Rose compares Internet 2.0’s narratives to games due to their immersive and participatory qualities (3). According to Jordan Weisman, for game narrative to work, “[y]ou need characters,” “you need plotlines that can be extended and moved to other media to create a more robust world” (qtd. in Rose 19). He attributes much of our new storytelling practices as being heavily influenced by Japan’s “media mix” (41). Transmedia Storytelling received

official recognition in April 2010 when the Producers Guild of America “approved a credit for ‘transmedia’” (42). Rose credits *Star Wars* as being the first franchise to successfully create a world—the “*Star Wars* Expanded Universe.” Not realizing what they had, the franchise had to implement canonistic strategies in order to open up for official universe expansion stories (71). One way universes are capable of doing this is by telling nonlinear stories—a trait Rose traces back to the invention of hypertext. He includes an interview with Eddie Kitsis and Adam Horowitz (executive producers for *Lost* now show runners for *Once Upon a Time*) in which they, too, blame the creation of universes on *Star Wars*—see page 156-157. From here, Rose moves his discussion to television, what many of the texts, represented here, discuss more at length, including: television, connections with characters, and world building.

“But if stories themselves are universal, the way we tell them changes with the technology at hand. Every new medium has given rise to a new form of narrative” (Rose 2).

“[The Internet] is the first medium that can act like all media—it can be text, or audio, or video, or all of the above. It is nonlinear, thanks to the World Wide Web and the revolutionary convention of hyperlinking. It is inherently participatory—not just interactive, in the sense that it responds to your commands, but an instigator constantly encouraging you to comment, to contribute, to join in. And it is immersive—meaning that you can use it to drill down as deeply as you like about anything you care to” (Rose 3).

“Under its [Internet’s] influence, a new type of narrative is emerging—one that’s told through many media at once in a way that’s nonlinear, that’s participatory and often gamelike, and that’s designed above all to be immersive. This is ‘deep media’: stories that are not just entertaining, but immersive, taking you deeper than an hour-long TV drama or a two-hour movie or a 30-second spot will permit. This new mode of storytelling is transforming not just entertainment (the stories that are offered to us for enjoyment) but also advertising (the stories marketers tell us about their products) and autobiography (the stories we tell about ourselves)” (Rose 3).

“The Web, introduced in 1991, was what made the Net accessible to ordinary people. A decade later . . . the Web began its transition from a simple delivery mechanism to the cornucopia of participation (blogs, wikis, social media) known as Web 2.0. . . . Web 2.0 [is] all about connecting people and putting their collective intelligence to work” (Rose 7).

“Alternate reality games . . . are a hybrid of game and story. The story is told in fragments; the game comes in piecing the fragments together. . . . The audience comes to own the story in ways that movies themselves can’t match” (Rose 14).

“Japan’s ‘media mix’ strategy [is] based on the idea that a single story can be told through several different media at once. Media mix emerged in Japan in the seventies, decades before Western publishers or producers saw the potential for any kind of synergistic storytelling” (Rose 42).

“Some people have stories that are too big for the Internet to handle” (Rose 47).

“In 1977, when FOX release *Star Wars*, it did not occur to anyone to create a science fiction universe that fans could explore in depth” (Rose 68).

“This is the house that *Star Wars* has built. The last of the movies came out in 2005, but the flood of products continues unabated, generating astonishing amount of income—some \$15 billion by mid-2008, dwarfing the films’ 4 billion worldwide box office take” (Rose 69).

“‘George [Lucas] created a very well defined universe,’ Roffman said—a universe of fractal-like complexity. ‘But the movies tell a narrow slice of the story. You can engage on a simplistic level—but if you want to drill down, it’s indignantly deep” (Rose 71).

“Lucas called it ‘immaculate reality’—entirely imaginary, and yet with such a level of detail as to feel instantly familiar” (Rose 72).

“In the late eighties, as Lucasfilm was trying to get back into the merchandizing business, this immaculate reality provided the handhold. The first step was a novel. The original fans—the ones who were 8 or 10 when the first movie came out—would soon be in their twenties, so it made sense to give them something more grown-up than a comic” (Rose 72).

“In 1996, the Expanded Universe reached a new level of complexity with *Star Wars*:



*Shadows of the Empire*. A multimedia production, it told a single story through a novel, a series of comics, a line of toys, a set of trading cards, and a video game for the new Nintendo 64 console. [*Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire*] filled in the gap between *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, focusing on an attempt by the criminal overlord Prince Xizor to supplant Darth Vader as . . . Emperor Palpatine’s chief lieutenant” (Rose 73).

“In a command-and-control world, we know who’s telling the story; it’s author. But digital media have created an authorship crisis. . . Mass media were an outgrowth of nineteenth-century technology—the development of ever more efficient presses and distribution networks, which made publishing such an expensive proposition that it made sense only on an industrial scale. Movies and television accelerated the trend. But now the Internet has reversed it” (Rose 83).

“Because of hypertext—the links embedded within text that have become an everyday feature of the Web—linear progression [is] no longer required or even expected. It [is] an innovation that has come to define our era” (Rose 106).

The “hive mind” and the “mystery box” (Rose 146).

“[Damon] Lindelof, [J. J.] Abrams, Joss Whedon—for a whole generation of Hollywood writers in their thirties and forties, [Adam] Horowitz quipped, ‘*Star Wars* was a gateway drug’ (Rose 157).

**Smith, Greg M. "It Ain't Easy Studying Comics." *Cinema Journal* 50.3 (2011):**

**110-112. Web. 7 Dec. 2015.**

Within this article, Greg M. Smith discusses the challenges that scholars often face when studying comics. He notes that, although studying film and television has been accepted within academia, comics still struggle to find their place within the academy. One thing Smith asserts that makes studying comics, and television, so difficult, is their serial nature and the sheer length, breadth, and depth of their narrative arcs. However, it is due to this that comics are able to portray/convey vast story worlds—a trait which television also has adapted.

“Comics are ‘hot’ now, which doesn’t mean that sale of the physical ones are up . . . but that comics are increasingly used as a research-and-development source for mainstream films and television programs” (Smith 110).

“Film and television have ‘arrived’ on the academic scene as objects that may be studied without justification, but comics have not yet achieved that status” (Smith 111).

“One specific reason comics are hard to study is that they are tough to paraphrase” (Smith 111).

“Comics’ long form provides its own difficulties, since serial storytelling in comics creates

much vaster universes than those created by films” (Smith 111).

“When I go to an SCMS conference, I can assume that my audience knows the film or television show that I’m discussing (so I don’t have to attempt to summarize *Lost*’s long-running narrative)” (Smith 112).

**Waid, Mark. *S. H. I. E. L. D., Vol. 1: Perfect Bullets*. New York: Marvel Worldwide, Inc., 2015. Print.**

This ancillary text comprises six comics that are inspired by the television series, *Marvel’s Agents of S. H. I. E. L. D.* While the comics within this collection utilize characters from the television series, such as Agent Phil Coulson, Agent May, Fitz, and Simmons, this text serves as a stand alone text—it is not part of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU). The comics do, however, serve as a crossover with the world of the Avengers as it includes newly introduced characters, such as Scarlett Witch and Vision, it breaks from the current storyline of the MCU in regards to other characters, such as Thor being a woman and the inclusion of new characters that have not appeared in the MCU, such as the Fantastic Four, Spiderman, and Agent Warrick—who possesses the body of a man paired with the head of an owl. While one could make the case for these comics being indicative of the direction that the MCU intends to take in regards to its greater, complex narrative, the likelihood of this is unlikely due to the inclusion of characters, like the Fantastic Four, who are currently owned by other production companies (FOX and Sony).

## RENAISSANCE DRAMA ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

***A Warning For Fair Women.* Ed. A. F. Hopkinson. 1904. Charleston: Nabu Press, 2010.**

### **Print.**

*A Warning For Fair Women* begins with the personification of the three dramatic genres, Tragedy, History, and Comedy, walking on stage—discussing the kind of play that is about to be performed. Tragedy whips History and Comedy off of the stage, signaling to the audience that *A Warning For Fair Women* is going to be a tragic drama. When Act I begins, George Sanders leaves his home, having been introduced to Captain George Brown. Brown remains in Sanders' wife's company. Anne Sanders is being visited by Mistress Anne Drury and Drury's servant, Roger. Brown is instantly taken by Anne's beauty and expresses his desires for her to Drury and Roger. Anne is described as a virtuous wife who sits and waits inside for her husband to return home from work at the Exchange. Drury agrees to speak to Anne on Brown's behalf. It is revealed that Anne is the mother. Drury is a pimp of sorts—a woman who arranges for men to bed married women in exchange for money. She intends to acquire a dowry so that her daughter may marry well. Anne is embarrassed when her husband does not deliver the funds for her to pay for her linens and purse. Drury takes this opportunity to speak to Anne about Brown. Drury foretells that Brown shall be Anne's next husband when Sanders dies—to which Anne feels guilty but believes her husband's death will be of natural causes and deemed by God. Act II begins with a “dumb show” in which Tragedy enters with a bowl of blood in her hands. Murder enters and rubs Roger's,

Drury's, and Brown's hands in blood while Anne dips her finger in the bowl—guilty due to association. Brown's first attempt at murdering Sanders fails as Sanders meets an acquaintance in the street. His second attempt is also thwarted as Sanders is accompanied by a waterman when he meets Anne on his way home from work. Act III begins with another “dumb show.” Brown finally murders Sanders but also mortally wounds John Beane as well. Old John and Joan find Beane wounded and left for dead near Sanders' lifeless body. Meanwhile, Brown goes to the Palace buttery where Master James notices that Brown's hose are bloody. Anne learns of Sanders' death and instantly feels guilty for the small part that she played in his death. Anne tells her two sons—one of which was mentioned earlier here—that they are now fatherless. Anne refuses Brown's proposal. Meanwhile, in a council chamber at the Palace, Master James learns of Sanders' murder. Brown is instantly suspected of the murder and Roger fetches money from Anne for Brown to flee with. Act IV begins with another “dumb show.” Brown is then arrested by the Mayor and Master James. Brown is forced to look at Sanders' body whose fifteen fatal wounds begin to bleed in Brown's presence—attesting to his guilt. All guilty parties, including Anne are arrested and executed for Sanders' death. The play ends with an epilogue delivered by Tragedy.

***Arden of Faversham. English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology.* Eds. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Eric Rasmussen. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2012. 421-461. Print.**

The anonymous play, *Arden of Faversham*, is based on the real murder of Thomas Arden at

the hands of his wife, Alice, her lover, and other accomplices. When this play begins, the audience learns that Arden has recently received lands that were previously held by the local abbey. His wife, Alice, has been having an affair with a member of lower class, Mosby. And, Arden is persuaded by his friend Franklin to befriend Mosby to get back into his wife's good favor. Arden leaves for the day with Franklin, and Alice takes this time to plot his death. She employs Arden's servant, Michael, to kill her husband in exchange for Susan—Mosby's sister—in marriage. Meanwhile, an artist, Clarke, offers to poison Arden with a painting if Mosby will promise Susan to him in marriage. They decide, instead, to put the poison in his food. When Arden returns home he orders Mosby to stay away from his wife in spite of Mosby's pleading that he only visits to see Susan. Arden, taking Franklin's advice, reconciles his differences with Mosby and leaves with Franklin for London. Meanwhile, Greene claims that Arden has taken lands that belonged to his family. He is easily persuaded my Alice to hire someone to kill Arden and leaves for London. There, Greene hires Black Will and Shakebag—known murderers—to commit the crime. Black Will and Shakebag fail to kill Arden four times between London and Arden's journey home. Alice and Mosby are together when Arden arrives home which results in Arden wounding Mosby. Alice accuses Arden of acting out of jealousy claiming that she and Mosby were both innocent. Later, Greene invites Franklin to a game of blackgammon—allowing for Alice, Mosby, Black Will, and Shakebag to stab Arden to death. His body is found quickly due to footprints and blood in the snow. All those involved in the conspiracy are executed. And, the play ends with an epilogue by Franklin.

Comensoli, Viviana. *'Household Business': Domestic Plays of Early Modern England*.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996. Print.

*'Household Business': Domestic Plays of Early Modern England* serves as Comensoli's generic study of England's early modern domestic tragedies. Emerging as a genre derived of English heritage (not influenced by the classics), domestic tragedies sought to show the lives of middle class English citizens in hopes of teaching a moral—political—lesson. Sub-genres of domestic tragedy came soon after the genre's introduction (i.e. Stuart Calvinist domestic tragedies and citizen comedy (see pg. 7)). Early modern England was an era during which there was a demographic increase of "scolds" (unmarried/widowed women who "brought their rejection of women's 'quiet' and obedience out of the household and into public view") in the English population (20). Reading the rise of domestic tragedy along the developing social unrest—regarding both social hierarchy (the patriarchy) and gender roles—of the times, Comensoli discusses the various roles of the household: husband, wife, children, servants, etc.

In particular relation to husbands, Comensoli notes the emerging code of civility and its many character traits. Comensoli then studies civility as it is represented within the plays *A Woman Killed With Kindness*, *Arden of Faversham*, *A Warning for Fair Women*, and *A Yorkshire Tragedy*. She also discusses the plays' wifely characters' unruly/challenging behavior in these plays—interpreting their disregard for patriarchal authority as a form of witchcraft. She introduces the term "witch/wife dyad," although she never defines the term.

This shows the moral/religious underpinnings of early modern England and hints towards the role of a good husband: (to inspire good, obedient behavior in his wife and servants—also signs of a good ruler). This relates to the idea of both the husband’s public life and his domestic authority mirror one another: a good man in the public sphere is a good husband at home. “The English domestic play originates on the popular stage towards the end of the sixteenth century. Its literary roots are predominantly native rather than classical, and its mainspring is the presentation of domestic conflict among English characters drawn chiefly from the non-aristocratic ranks of society: merchants, housewives, labourers, farmers, shopkeepers” (Comensoli 3).

“It has been widely perceived that the dissemination of homiletic treatises and household manuals was largely a response to changes in the social structure brought about by increasing urbanization and mobility, changes led in part by the tremendous expansion of London, the financial and cultural hub of the country” (Comensoli 9).

“Domestic drama includes a variety of characters ranging from the ‘middling sort,’ to the group that Harrison labels ‘the fourth . . . sort of people in England’ (day labourers, artificers, masons, and so on), to the poor and the dispossessed” (Comensoli 11).

“During the sixteenth century the demands of new audiences contributed to the proliferation of new literary forms and the multiplication of genres” (Comensoli 11-12).



“By the early sixteenth century the idea of the family as the foundation of the orderly Christian state and of matrimony as among the highest of human pursuits . . .” (Comensoli 18).

“. . . the definition of the early modern family as a sacred and hierarchical institution held together by the mutual obligations of husbands, wives, and children . . .” (Comensoli 18-19)

“An important adjunct to the ideal of the orderly family was the growing emphasis on civilized behaviour both outside and inside the home” (Comensoli 22).

“Domestic tragedy is brought about by the infidelity or other refractory behavior of one of the spouses . . . whose suffering, repentance, and punishment expiate the crime. The tragedies’ interest in the contemporary crisis of order coextends with their scrutiny of the early modern concept of civility as a collective obligation which promises to ensure social cohesion and continuity. In all of these plots, tragic suffering stems from the protagonists’ [most often times the woman’s] inability to abide by ideologies of civility and private life” (Comensoli 66).

“In early modern definitions of ‘civility’ the political and social applications of the term are conflated. As a political category, ‘civility’ refers to the divinely sanctioned polity or orderly state, together with the citizens’ conformity to the principles of social order; as a social category, it signifies the condition of being ‘civilized,’ including ‘good breeding,’

‘refinement,’ and ‘ordinary courtesy or politeness’ (Comensoli 66).

“Underwriting the political organization of the body politic, civility in the early modern period, as a concept pertaining to the behavior of individuals who share common goals, becomes inextricably associated with courtesy and manners” (Comensoli 67).

“The most private space was the chamber or inner room, which could serve as either bedroom or study and which was separated from the rest of the dwelling with ‘by a door with a lock’” (Comensoli 76).

“A ‘late example’ of a hybrid play, *A Warning for Fair Women* . . . ‘vividly dramatizes’ Anne Sanders’s ‘thwarted desires for status and independence,’ at the same time that it ‘censures ambition and social change by immediately associating social climbing with adultery and murder’” (Comensoli 92).

“[T]owards [the] mid-century, popular literature such as ballads and pamphlets ‘shift their focus from insubordinate dependents to the murderous husband, depicting his abuse of his authority as [that of a] petty tyranny’” (Comensoli 98).

“Early modern England . . . was a society in which one’s identity and survival were defined according to one’s membership in a family. A person alienated from his or her family and place in the social hierarchy was . . . ‘socially extinct’” (Comensoli 99).

“[W]itches, like the garrulous wives of the domestic plays discussed in previous chapters, negate the neb-aristotelian construction of female subordination, namely the *muller economica* or the belief that woman can be considered only in relation to the order of marriage” (Comensoli 111).

“There is, however, a marked shift from the medieval definition of witchcraft as heresy to the early modern construction of witchcraft as a form of usurpation of the divine order” (Comensoli 112).

“On the English Renaissance stage, the witch is a signifier of female insubordination, and witchcraft a powerful threat to patriarchal hierarchy and authority” (Comensoli 113).

“A woman becomes a witch when she resists or refuses to confirm to her prescribed social and religious role, negating both natural and divine law” (Comensoli 116).

**Dolan, Francis E. *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England***

***1550-1700. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994. Print.***

Within her book, Frances E. Dolan explores the contradictions that rose out of the early modern analogy of the commonwealth and the household. By historically situating domestic crime narratives, Dolan identifies the ways in which these texts demonstrate domestic murders of the early modern era were committed by petty tyrants (women commit petty

tyranny) and petty traitors (men commit petty treason). With laws assuming the subjectivity of wives and servants, domestic crimes were viewed as direct assaults against their husbands as both their master and domestic king. However, Dolan notes that in these narratives' historical origins, the masters were often corrupt in their own right due to reasons including wife beating, monetary greed, poorly managed estates, etc. Thus, in retelling these narratives, writers often contradict themselves in order to paint the men as victims and the women as villains. In conclusion, the messages conveyed by these texts are two-fold for as they seek to condemn the villainous work of subordinates they also push readers/viewers to consider new social hierarchies and new social order.

Dolan's first 3 chapters focus on murderous wives (chapters 1 and 2) and husbands (chapter 3) while the remaining two (chapters 4 and 5) focus on the topics of murder and witchcraft). Texts mentioned include *Arden of Faversham*, *A Warning for Fair Women*, *The Changeling*

“These [domestic crime] representations most often depict an insider who threatens order as a woman or a servant, although legal records suggest that women and servants were more often the victims than the perpetrators of domestic violence” (*Dangerous Familiars* 4).

“Many social historians agree that early modern England witnessed a crisis of order, focusing on gender relations, that began around 1550, peaking in 1650, and passed by 1700.

According to Susan Amussen, after 1660 concerns about disorder ceased to be displaced directly onto women” (*Dangerous Familiars* 17).

“In legal statutes after 1352, killing one’s husband, defined as petty treason, was carefully distinguished from other forms of murder and pronounced analogous to high treason—any threat to or assault on the monarch and his or her government” (*Dangerous Familiars* 21).

“Men convicted of petty tyranny were drawn to the place of execution on a hurdle and then were hanged. . . . Women convicted of petty treason, however, were sentenced to the same punishment of those convicted of high treason: They were burned at the stake” (*Dangerous Familiars* 22).

“These texts represent married women’s consciousness of their conflict with and separateness from their husbands, their articulation of themselves as speaking subjects, and their plotting and execution of murder as interrelated and equally violent. They also portray the subjectivities of their protagonists as produced through hierarchies ordering gender, class, and domestic relations (they are wives) and their resistance to those hierarchies (they are *murderous wives*)” (*Dangerous Familiars* 26).

“In representations of domestic conflict in early modern popular culture—ballads, pamphlets, and plays, shaming rituals and jokes—the wife diminishes or usurped her husband’s claims to authority as she asserts herself by committing adultery, beating or bossing her husband, or plotting to kill him” (*Dangerous Familiars* 36).

“Since *Arden* attempts to dramatize petty treason yet destabilize the hierarchical relations that

define it, the result is a play with no hero, no master plot, and no identifiable form. The play suggests that when wife, husband, lover, and servants are all subjects with powerful stories and no one figure, subject position, or narrative is privileged, then in the battle that ensues, no one wins” (*Dangerous Familiars* 79).

“In simultaneously narrating stories of irresponsible, brutal, or disaffected masters and of energetically insubordinate dependents, these . . . texts suggest that social position is not wholly determining, that there is space for individual agency, although that agency is restricted and criminalized. These texts restore social and aesthetic order—on the scaffold, in the courtroom, and on the stage—by subordinating dependents and their stories through violent punishment and death, but they also grant a place to those subordinates and their plots. In doing so, these texts open up the possibility of other stories, other social structures, other literary forms” (*Dangerous Familiars* 88).

“[Child murder is] the highest violation of the Law of Nature” (qtd. in *Dangerous Familiars* 150). From the *Strange and Lamentable News from Dullidg-Wells*

**Dolan, Francis E. “Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form in *A Warning for Fair Women*.” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 29.2 (1989): 201-218. Web. 3 Dec. 2015.**

Within this article, Francis E. Dolan discusses *A Warning For Fair Women* in relation to the

social changes that were occurring during the time that domestic tragedies were performed. According to Dolan, “ *A Warning For Fair Women* probes a contradiction inherent but not confronted in conduct literature which exalts companionship while enforcing the institutionalization of parallel rather than shared lives” (205). Meanwhile, what makes this article especially valuable to the current study is Dolan’s discussion of gender roles within contemporary Elizabethan society.

“[T]hese plays [domestic tragedies] provide particularly rich evidence of social change and its relationship to changing literary forms” (“Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form” 202).

“George Sanders’s death divides the play roughly in half. The first half, which dramatizes Browne’s seduction of Anne and two failed murder attempts, appears to be entirely the playwright’s invention. Within this basic division, the playwright employs contrasted modes of inquiry, characterization, and dramatization” (“Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form” 202).

“In the early scenes, we see Anne Sanders as the object of a business deal rather than as a partner in a courtship” (“Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form” 202).

“These negotiations substitute for courtship and introduce the seduction as a deal between Browne and Drury that will proceed without reference to Anne’s desires” (“Gender, Moral

Agency, and Dramatic Form” 202).

“The play here briefly attempts to characterize Anne as an individual; it asks how this woman might become an adulteress and consent to her husband’s murder” (“Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form” 204).

“Sanders subordinates the Home (female, private, and ‘trifling’) to the Exchange (male, public, and ‘great’). He puts the servant who is to carry out his priorities of power over the mistress of the house. This forces a dislocation of authority that makes both servant and wife uncomfortable. . . . Sanders’s betrayals of domestic decorum and equilibrium weaken the barriers shielding his marriage from strangers” (“Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form” 205).

“Through the conflict dramatized in this scene, *A Warning For Fair Women* probes a contradiction inherent but not confronted in conduct literature which exalts companionship while enforcing the institutionalization of parallel rather than shared lives” (“Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form” 205).

“*A Warning For Fair Women* exposes the conflict between ‘business of their callings’ and the ways that this conflict impairs convivial companionship. As Belsey observes, in conduct literature ‘the wife is aligned with the children, the mother with the father. These subject-positions, offered to the same woman, cannot be held simultaneously without contradiction.’



The duties listed for a wife in an attempt to define her sphere of authority only to reinforce her subordination” (“Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form” 205).

“the husband’s primary duty to love his wife, and they [conduct manuals] stress the way love should unify and fortify all the duties of marriage, while they nevertheless acknowledge love as a means of insuring loyalty and thus cheap, life-long domestic service” (“Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form” 205)

“The good wife must be both able partner and passive reflector of her husband’s greatness” (“Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form” 207).

“*A Warning For Fair Women* vividly dramatizes Anne’s thwarted desires for status and independence, but censures ambition and social change by immediately associating social climbing with adultery and murder” (209).

“The playwright, however, individuates Anne and depicts her transgression as a response to the constraints imposed by her gender and class” (“Gender, Moral Agency, and Dramatic Form” 215).

**Ford, John. *‘Tis Pity She’s a Whore. English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology.***

**Eds. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Eric**

**Rasmussen. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2012. 1905-1969. Print.**

This play begins with Giovanni confessing his incestuous feelings for his sister, Annabella, to a Friar. The Friar warns him against following his passion and convinces him to curb his feelings through repentance. Giovanni fails, however, and consulates his love with his sister with some help from Annabella's tutor, Putana. Meanwhile, Hippolita is upset with Soranzo for encouraging her to send her husband, Richardetto, away so that they could be together. Soranzo has since withdrawn his promises to Hippolita. Richardetto, however, is alive and wants revenge against Soranzo. Richardetto hires Grimaldi to kill Soranzo—suggesting it will help Grimaldi woo Annabella—and Grimaldi mistakenly kills Bergetto. Annabella, knowing she is pregnant by her brother, chooses to marry Soranzo. At their wedding, Hippolita attempts to poison Soranzo but is poisoned by his servant, Vasques, before she is able to succeed. Richardetto sends his niece to a nunnery. Soranzo discovers that Annabella is pregnant and locks her in her room. He and Vasques swear to avenge him and kill the unknown father. Vasques learns from Putana that Giovanni is the father and removes her eyes. Annabella writes a letter in her own blood warning her brother of Soranzo's revenge. The Friar delivers the letter but Giovanni decides to attend Soranzo's birthday feast anyway. Giovanni stabs his sister on the day of the feast during a kiss. He proceeds to the feast with Annabella's heart on his dagger. He kills Soranzo and Vasques kills Giovanni. At the end of the play, a Cardinal condemns Putana to be burnt at the stake and banishes Vasques from Parma. Richardetto reveals himself to the Cardinal at the end of the play—revealing that he is alive.

**Goy-Blanquet, Dominique. *Shakespeare's Early History Plays: From the Chronicle to Stage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Print.**

Within this work, Dominique Goy-Blanquet traces and compares Shakespeare's early history plays—*The Henriad* and the War of the Roses tetralogy comprised of the three Henry VI plays and *Richard III*—to their historic, chronicle roots. Goy-Blanquet identifies the likelihood that Shakespeare did not only use Holinshed, but many other chroniclers' histories as well when he composed these eight plays. According to her, it is Shakespeare's ability to collage historical accounts together that makes these works particularly interesting and worthy of investigation. By viewing the two tetralogies as a continuation of the same historical moment/story, Goy-Banquet argues that through writing these plays, Shakespeare developed as a play-wright—from novice to master at the completion of *Richard III*. While Shakespeare was selective of which historical facts to include regarding Richard III's chronicled rule, Goy-Banquet believes that Shakespeare's research into the War of the Roses and the life of Richard III inspired many of his future works and characters, specifically *Macbeth*. She draws similarities that exist between the characters of Macbeth and Richard III, of particular interest their inability to sire an heir—which she attributes to the belief of the sterility of monsters, a theme she briefly notes in regards to Shakespeare's plays.

“Shakespeare's dynamic progress of evil allows no space for pleasant interludes. The period represented lasted fourteen years, from Henry VI's death in 1471 to Bosworth in 1485, but only the last two years of the Plantagenets are actually shown on stage, more precisely the

end of the Yorks, executed in some ten decisive days. In Shakespeare's contracted scheme, the news of Clarence's death is the last blow to Edward, though historically he predeceased the King by five years. On the other hand, Margaret, who died a year before Edward gets extra time as a sort of living ghost, her survival after her son's demise being, as in Hall's phrase, 'more lyke a death then a lyfe'" (Goy-Blanquet 263).

"*Richard III* is connected by structure and theme not only to the other British or Roman histories, but to the whole tragic universe of Shakespeare. Macbeth shares many features with Richard, like him a worthy warrior fashioned by occasion into a murderer, unable to enjoy sleep after his regicide, who finds too late his reign is sterile. Both gaze into the void with devastating lucidity as they understand there is no turning back, and nothing to expect from the future" (Goy-Blanquet 268).

"The centering of action around a negative hero crowns a double evolution, the last stage of Shakespeare's apprenticeship, and the advent of an evil which has conquered the whole kingdom by stages. It is now summed up in a fiendish character, free from all human bonds, necessarily alone" (Goy-Blanquet 269).

"There is not just an ethical but a cosmic dimension to Richard's monstrosity, his mountainous back, and arms like withered shrubs: 'It is in one sense time itself that has given birth to Richard, the chaos of civil war breeding the 'unlicked bear whelp' whose only future is savage destruction" (Goy-Blanquet 278).

“Richmond here anticipates Macduff. A new character in this stage-soiled cast, innocent of all past crimes, he is the symbol as well as the agent of national reconciliation. He neither resolves the ambiguities of the monarchic function, nor the moral impasses signaled by the dramatic conflicts of obligation. The action stops on the threshold of the present” (Goy-Blanquet 280).

“This scene, one of the world’s greatest hits, fully demonstrates the scope of Richard’s talent—he can win any woman against all odds, despite his earlier excuse that he ‘cannot prove a lover’—and Shakespeare’s—a poet after Aristotle’s heart, able to convince with the most unlikely impossibility” (Goy-Blanquet 281).

“Not content with disowning all family ties, or murdering his own blood, he seeks to ravish women whose relatives he has killed, and claims to replace or re-engage their lost ones, abolishing all proper distance in an incestuous replay of his own birth-in-death. Anne’s curse on his abortive child does not so much evoke their own future son, suppressed for obvious thematic needs, as a cluster of popular beliefs in the sterility of monsters, which prevents all of Shakespeare’s tyrants from fathering heirs” (Goy-Blanquet 284-285).

**Greenblatt, Stephen. *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. Print.**

Within this text, Stephen Greenblatt attempts to identify the source of what he terms “social

energy” during the Renaissance. By identifying Shakespeare’s plays as arguably the most powerful and influential texts in the English language, Greenblatt seeks to identify those aspects of Shakespeare’s plays that grant them such cultural power. He identifies the act of play writing as communal, just as a play is communally experienced. Greenblatt identified a feedback loop of sorts that is generated by the playwright’s ability to incorporate cultural energies of the time into their works and the audience’s ability to interpret and recreate the messages of the plays. Here, culture contributes to the production of plays while also contributing to culture by means of their reception. Greenblatt studies five of Shakespeare’s plays in order to better understand the circulation of this process, which he terms “cultural energy.”

Texts discussed: *1 Henry IV*, *2 Henry IV*, *Twelfth Night*, *King Lear*, and *The Tempest*

“I propose that we begin taking seriously the power of collective production of literary pleasure and interest. We know that this production is collective since language itself, which is at the heart of literary power, is the supreme instance of a collective creation” (Greenblatt 4).

“the theater is manifestly the product of collective intentions. There may be a moment in which a solitary individual puts words on a page, but it is by no means clear that this moment is the heart of the mystery and everything else is to be stripped away and discarded.

Moreover, the moment of inscription, on closer analysis, is itself a social moment. This is

particularly clear with Shakespeare, who does not conceal his indebtedness to literary sources” (Greenblatt 4-5).

“the theater manifestly addresses its audience as a collectivity. The model is not, as with the nineteenth century novel, the individual reader who withdraws from the public world of affairs to the privacy of the hearth but the crowd that gathers together in public play space.

The Shakespearean theater depends upon a felt community: there is no dimming of lights, no attempt to isolate and awaken the sensibilities of each individual member of the audience, no sense of the disappearance of the crowd” (Greenblatt 5).

“we can ask how collective beliefs and experiences were shaped, moved from one medium to another, concentrated in manageable aesthetic form, offered for consumption” (Greenblatt 5).

“This liberalization and institutionalization of the place of art makes the Renaissance theater particularly useful for an analysis of the cultural circulation of social energy, and the stakes of the analysis are heightened by the direct integration of Shakespeare’s plays—easily the most powerful, successful, and enduring artistic expressions in the English language—with this particular mode of artistic production and consumption” (Greenblatt 13).

“We can say, perhaps, that an individual play mediates between the mode of the theater, understood in its historical specificity, and elements of the society out of which that theater has been differentiated. Through its representational means, each play carries charges of social energy onto the stage; the stage in its turn revises that energy and returns it to the

audience” (Greenblatt 14).

“We could argue further that one of the ideological functions of the theater was precisely to create in its audience the sense that what seemed spontaneous or accidental was in fact fully plotted ahead of time by a playwright carefully calculating his effects, that behind experienced uncertainty there was design, whether the design of the human patriarchs—the fathers and rulers who unceasingly watched over the errant courses of their subjects—or the overarching design of the divine patriarch. The theater then would confirm the structure of human experience as proclaimed by those on top and would urge us to reconfirm this structure in our pleasure” (Greenblatt 17).

“Elizabethan playing companies contrived to absorb, refashion, and exploit some of the fundamental energies of a political authority that was itself already committed to histrionic display and hence was ripe for appropriation. But if he was not alone, Shakespeare nonetheless contrived to absorb more of these energies into his plays than any of his fellow playwrights” (Greenblatt 40).

“Shakespeare’s theater was not isolated by its wooden walls, nor did it merely reflect social and ideological forces that lay entirely outside it: rather the Elizabethan and Jacobean theater was itself a social event, in reciprocal contact with other social events” (Greenblatt 45-46).

“Royal power is manifested to its subjects as in a theater, and the subjects are at once



absorbed by the instructive, delightful, or terrible spectacles and forbidden intervention or deep intimacy. The play of authority depends upon spectators—‘For ‘tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings’—but the performance is made to seem entirely beyond the control of those whose ‘imaginary forces’ actually confer upon it its significance and force” (Greenblatt 65).

**Hanham, Alison. *Richard III and His Early Historians, 1483-1535*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975. Print.**

Within this work, Alison Hanham conducts a comparison study that examines “the way in which Richard’s story was treated by the historians who wrote about him between 1483, the year in which he seized the throne, and the date of More’s death” (1). She bases her analysis of the various sources’ portrayal of Hasting’s execution. Hanham based her historical overview of Richard’s usurping and rule on the “most reliable” narratives, those of the *Crowland Chronicles* and that of Dominic Mancini (1483). Hanham believes that Mancini’s setting and scene “[strive] to give a just account of Richard’s initial reputation” while aiming to “describe in writing the mechanisms by which Richard III, the present king of England, attained the crown” (66). Hanham doubts that More or Vergil ever saw Mancini’s account. Her fourth section focuses on “The ‘Second Continuation’ of the *Crowland Chronicle*,” a personal and intimate account that is “believed to have been composed at Crowland by one man” who possessed close ties to Edward IV (75). Hanham attributes possible authorship to Bishop Russell, or if not Russell, then someone “very like him: a man in authority who wrote

with corresponding knowledge,” a man who was reluctant “to describe the wicked methods” of the king (96). However, the true identity of the author remains a mystery. Hanham argues that Vergil likely saw this account but that he “may have considered that the account was politically dangerous in the hands of others” and “may have consigned this one to the flames for heresy” (97). Meanwhile, “John Rous’s [d. 1492] Account of the Reign of Richard III” depicts a king that was “excessively cruel in his days, reigned for three years and a little more, in the way that [the] Antichrist is to reign” (123). However, Rous’s account does describe Richard as bearing “himself like a noble soldier and despite his little body and feeble strength, honourably defended himself to his last breath, shouting again and again that he was betrayed and crying, ‘Treason! Treason! Treason!’” (123).

Polydore Vergil was hired by Henry VII to write a history of England, published in 1534. According to Hanham, Vergil’s began as a manuscript that became a “sophisticated work” as he “subsequently added and altered material” in order to apply “modern humanist principles to native materials” (125). Ideas of literary works serving as Tudor propaganda emerge from Vergil’s villainized and falsified account of Richard III. Vergil notoriously falsified/created interactions between historical figures, especially relating to Gloucester and Buckingham. Vergil never provides references or citations to bolster his historical tale (144). Meanwhile, Sir Thomas More’s enhanced and villainous account is considered a satirical, historical drama. More’s work was influential to Holinshed, as he incorporated much of More’s account into his “successful chronicle” (189).

Hanham's historical overview of Richard III is based on evidence from the Mancini and *Crowland Chronicles*, and she concludes that Edward IV's reign was, overall, a successful one. However, despite the king's best efforts to keep the peace between two opposing factions—the queen's large family and the “older nobility” who had helped him gain support and seize the throne—there was a mutual hatred and “‘bitter quarrel’ between William, Lord Hastings, and the queen's family” (2). Tensions peaked when Richard and Hastings arrested Anthony, Lord Rivers, Lord Richard Grey, and Sir Thomas Vaughan after a coup on their way to collect Edward V. The young king's brother, the Duke of York, was summoned by near force out of sanctuary on Monday, June 16, in order for him join his brother for the royal coronation that was set for June 22 (10). After the acquisition of the Duke of York, Richard called for the council to meet on June 19 in two divisions, one at Westminster and the other at the tower. On June 20, Lord Hastings, Archbishop Rotherham of York, and John Morton Bishop of Ely reported to the tower where they were ambushed and accused of treason; Hastings was beheaded that day (11). On June 22, the king's coronation was cancelled and replaced by a sermon that delivered news of the king's bastard origins (adultery) (12). Richard was coronated as king on July 3, 1483, and Anne Neville as queen on July 6 (13).

After Richard's coronation, members of the Woodville faction sought to rescue the princes from the tower, remaining loyal to Edward V. However, the princes were rumored to be dead as early as July, 1483 (72). Against Richard, Henry Duke of Buckingham headed a conspiracy in support of a new candidate, Henry Tudor. It is unclear “at what point the rebels abandoned the cause for Edward V and switch their allegiance to Henry Tudor” (14).

Richard's only son and heir, Edward Duke of Whales, died in 1484, an event that was interpreted as "divine intervention on a usurper" (17). Henry Tudor evaded Brittany forces in that same year and the first proclamation in support of his right to rule was issued on December 7, 1884 (19).

"From the gossips of England and France in the summer of 1483 to modern writers and readers . . . people have been fascinated by the actions and character of King Richard III" (Hanham 1)

"The monster thus brought to birth was [done-so] by Sir Thomas More" (Hanham 1).

"When Edward IV lay dying in the early days of April 1483, after an eventful but on the whole notably successful reign of twenty-two years, his heir's prospects must have looked reasonably well assured. . . . Edward himself, by strenuous effort, had put royal finances into an order which few medieval English monarchs had achieved; efficient government had been re-established after the disorders of Henry VI's reign and the Earl of Warwick's interventions in national affairs; the Lancastrian opposition had been largely eliminated or absorbed after Barnet and Tewkesbury, and the remaining source of serious sedition, Edward's own brother George, Duke of Clarence, had finally been removed in 1478" (Hanham 2).

"There was . . . reason for Edward to trust his remaining brother, Richard Duke of Gloucester, whose political allegiance, unlike that of Clarence, had never wavered.

Gloucester's popularity with the country was high as a result of his striking (if ephemeral) success in the war against Scotland of the previous summer, and Edward's last parliament, in which the speaker was a supporter of Gloucester's, had made him lavish grants of lands and power in the north-west marches. There is evidence that among codicils which Edward hastily added to his will was one expressing his desire that Richard should be protector of his children and kingdom" (Hanham 3).

"Gloucester wrote diplomatically to the queen and the council assuring them of his loyalty, and after a solemn funeral service for the late king at York, himself headed the northern nobles in taking an oath of allegiance to Edward V" (Hanham 7).

"When a council had been convened, Gloucester was appointed protector. . . . Other points of council business recorded are the decision . . . to transfer the king's temporary residence from the Bishop of London's palace to the royal apartments in the Tower . . . and to set a new date for the king's coronation: Sunday 22 June" (Hanham 10).

"Before the coronation of the new monarch [Richard III], the previous king and his brother had gradually disappeared from public view. Their attendants had been changed after the Hastings affair, and the boys were confined to the innermost reaches of the Tower. The last of the king's servants to be allowed access [was] his physician Dr. Argentine" (Hanham 13).

"It appears that simultaneously Henry's mother Margaret Beaufort, now wife of Thomas

Lord Stanley, and Queen Elizabeth Woodville were scheming together to make a match between Henry and the Princess Elizabeth of York. Buckingham and Morton adopted this proposed match as a condition for supporting Henry” (Hanham 15).

“Henry landed in Wales with 5,000 men, both French and English and made a victorious progression as far as Coventry, near which town King Richard had as many as 70,000 troops encamped” (Hanham 55).

“Mancini was an Italian friend and protege of Angelo Cato, Archbishop of Vienne, who was in London from some time before the death of Edward IV to shortly after the coronation of Richard III. When he returned to France, his account of the drama that had been staged during his stay in England proved so fascinating that Cato made him write it down” (Hanham 65).

“Mancini’s short narrative is full of fascinating anecdotes and sidelights—Edward tried to subdue Elizabeth Woodville at the point of a dagger; it was felt by the English that the king should marry a virgin; Cecily Duchess of York was so enraged at Edward’s marriage that she threatened to denounce him as a bastard” (Hanham 67).

“The official [account] deduced later for Richard’s claim was rather some sort of pre-contract that invalidated Edward’s marriage to Elizabeth Woodville. ([Richard claimed that his brother’s marriage was not official due to a “proxy marriage arranged by Warwick on the

Continent” (Hanham 71).

“[Richard] was unexpectedly destroyed in the midst of his army by an invading army small by comparison but furious and impetuous, like a wretched creature. For all that, let me [Rous] say that in truth to his credit: that he bore himself like a noble soldier and despite his little body and feeble strength, honourably defended himself to his last breath, shouting again and again that he was betrayed and crying, ‘Treason! Treason! Treason!’” (Hanham 123).

“More did not hesitate to alter or embroider the historical record in furtherance of his literary purpose” (Hanham 166).

“As for Henry VII and his supporters themselves, there is very little evidence that they took positive steps to blacken Richard’s character. Even the *Titulus Regis* of Henry’s first parliament passes rapidly over Richard’s acts of tyranny” (Hanham 191).

“The Crowland chronicler . . . fails even to credit Richard with the remorse allowed him by Vergil and More” (Hanham 192).

**Heywood, Thomas. *A Woman Killed With Kindness*. London: The British Library, 2010.**

**Print.**

When *A Woman Killed With Kindness* begins, a banquet is being held in honor of John and

Anne Frankford's recent wedding. Anne is described as being very beautiful as well as dutiful and submissive to her husband. Meanwhile, Sir Francis Acton and Sir Charles Mountford take bets against each other for their hawk-hunt that is set for the following day. After Acton accuses Mountford of cheating, a fight breaks out, and—after killing two of Acton's men, Mountford is arrested. Wendoll, who witnessed the fight, goes and reports the events to Frankford—who is impressed by Wendoll's character and asks him to be a guest of his household. Wendoll then falls in love with Anne. Frankford leaves for business reasons and Anne informs Wendoll that Frankford has left him in charge of the house. Wendoll confesses his love to Anne—which is overheard by Nicholas. Upon Frankford's return, Nicholas reports that Anne and Wendoll are now lovers. Frankford arranges to find out if this is true and plots with Nicholas to deliver him a letter at dinner which informs him that he must leave at once. Despite her conscious, Anne dines with Wendoll in her quarters and the two go to bed together. Frankford uses duplicate keys to let himself into the house and discovers the two in bed together. Rather than kill her, Frankford decides to let Anne live so that she may spend the rest of her life alone—repenting for the sin she has committed against him. Frankford only visits her after hearing she is near death and decides that she will be remembered as a woman killed by kindness.

**Hipshon, David. *Richard III*. New York: Routledge, 2011. Print.**

Within this work, David Hipshon puts Richard III into conversation with those that came before him (Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V) and post-mortem literary representations of the



Plantagenet king. In regards to the many chronicled accounts of Richard III and his reign, Hipshon favors the historical account of the Second Continuator of the Crowland Chronicals (1486) over all others due to the anonymous author's involvement in the court of Edward IV (13). He begins his account by prefacing Richard's reign with the actions of his father, Richard duke of York—whom he argues repeats Henry Bolingbroke's 1399 usurpation of Richard II. Hipshon discusses the transition between The 100 Years War and the start of the War of the Roses in order to examine the events of Richard III's formative years. He also paints the Yorks (Richard duke of York, Edward IV, and Richard III) as favoring a Medieval way of life that was dying out during the world's transition into the early modern period. Both Edward IV and Richard III took up their father's dated beliefs—a decision which Hipshon believes lead to their eventual demise. Also, according to Hipshon, none who knew or fought with Richard III at Bosworth would have recognized the monstrous villain of Shakespeare.

Of interest are a few key facts: Richard's birth occurred at the very start of the War of the Roses while his death marks the end of both the war and the Medieval period in England. Also, in the case of both Richard duke of York and Richard III, both were protectorates over their own, respective, Prince Edwards. Due to Henry VI's mental collapse, the queen, Margaret of Anjou, acted in place of her husband and on behalf of their young son; consequently, this same situation would occur at the end of Edward IV's reign when tensions were high and many feared the Woodville's control over the young king.

“Cecily [Neville, Duchess of York] had 13 children, only seven of whom survived childhood. . . . Three sons died, one after the other, before George [Duke of Clarence] was born, to be followed by another son who died. Richard [Duke of Gloucester] was then born. . . . Richard, in other words, was surrounded in death but [survived the vigor and risks of medieval infancy]” (Hipshon 4-5).

“Cecily’s mother, Joan, was the fourth and youngest child of John of Gaunt by his mistress, Katherine Swynford, whom he later married. Joan was his only daughter. John of Gaunt was the third son of Edward III and, as duke of Lancaster, the progenitor of the Lancastrian dynasty. Cecily was, therefore, the great-granddaughter of Edward III. Royal blood flowed through her veins” (Hipshon 6).

“The House of Lancaster would always have had a superior claim to the English throne than the House of York, if it hadn’t been for the fact that, in 1406, Richard earl of Cambridge married Anne Mortimer. Anne was the great-granddaughter of Lionel, duke of Clarence, who just happened to be the second son of Edward III. . . . [A]ny son born to Anne Mortimer and Richard earl of Cambridge would be defended from both the second and the fourth sons of Edward III and be able to trump the claims of the Lancastrians” (Hipshon 7).

“[After the death of John, duke of Bedford] [m]any of Bedford’s men transferred their services to York and the council appointed him lieutenant governor of France. . . . He attempted to retain as much of England’s French contemporaries as possible under the

misapprehension that King Henry VI would come of age and assume personal rule. . . .

Henry IV turned out to be quite incapable of providing leadership of any kind, and certainly not of the military variety. . . . A failure by the royal administration [of Henry VI] to support his efforts in France would inevitably be seen by York as incompetence and even betrayal. . . . By inheriting Bedford's role and his expectations, and through them the legacy of Henry V, York became the last bacon of hope for those who yearned for a return to the good old days [of Henry V's reign]" (Hipshon 9).

"In the end the manifest incompetence of Henry VI's regime, dominated by Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, and the failure of the government to either bring the war in France to a successful conclusion or to back York's efforts to do so, led to the beginning of dynastic conflict" (Hipshon 10).

"In light of these dangers, York moved to Fotheringhay in early August and remained there for several months while Somerset consolidated his position and reduced York's lordships and offices wherever and whenever he could. Cecily, as ever, was with her husband at Fotheringhay. It was in these dangerous and difficult circumstances, with her thwarted, angry and anxious husband at hand, that the duchess of York gave birth to her fourth surviving son, Richard" (Hipshon 11).

"The backdrop to Richard's 32 years and 10 months of life was to be the bloody civil war known as the War of the Roses, between the Lancastrians and the Yorkists. This would shape

his upbringing and character in incalculable ways. He was directly involved in the fighting from the age of 17, or even a little earlier, and in the thick of battle twice. His father and brother were both killed in the fighting, while another brother was to be executed. Relatives and friends were lost and two ignominious flights into exile had to be endured before peace was eventually restored. His brother, Edward IV established the fortunes of the house of York and restored the authority of the crown after a catastrophic period of Lancastrian misrule under Henry VI. During this golden period, Richard was given extensive command over the north and established himself as a regional magnate greater than any before in English history. This was the background to the shocking events of 1483 when Edward IV died leaving a 12-year-old boy to inherit the throne” (Hipshon 12).

“Looking forward 30 years, suggestive parallels emerge. When the duke of York’s son, Richard, 2 years old during his father’s first protectorate, was to face a constitutional crisis in 1483, he also was to challenge a court faction lead by the queen. Then, too, there would be a young Prince Edward. . . . In York’s case, Prince Edward was so young that it was possible to believe that a long-term solution to the crisis might emerge over time. In Richard’s case it was precisely this emollient time factor that was missing. Prince Edward of 1483 was 12 years old and could already voice his own opinions. Richard’s solution in 1483 was to swiftly end the protectorate and to usurp the throne. If his father, in 1454 genuinely accepted the legitimacy of Prince Edward, his own claims were never too far from his mind and were to surface soon enough. Richard duke of Gloucester would have a precedent to follow when he claimed the throne” (Hipshon 22).

“[The first Battle of St. Albans] has rightly been viewed as a turning-point because it unleashed an unstoppable blood feud that could only be satiated by death” (Hipshon 24).

“York’s position was to restore good government to the realm” (Hipshon 25).

“York could not reform the government without royal authority and this was now in the hands of Margaret of Anjou. While this situation persisted York was left in increasing danger and would have to take steps to protect himself. The two camps that formed around the chief protagonists were recognizably Yorkist and Lancastrian” (Hipshon 26).

“Richard II, the only son of the Black Prince, had died without heirs. To revive the claims of Lionel’s line was to forage deep in the mouldy undergrowth of royal lineage. Henry IV’s son, Henry V, had overcome the shaky foundations of his royal heritage by defeating the French at Agincourt. To the world at large there could be no clearer divine endorsement of the Lancastrian dynasty than such a mighty victory. So strong was this sense of heavenly sanction that it had been impossible to dislodge his son, Henry VI” (Hipshon 35).

“Richard II had lost his throne to his cousin, Henry IV, in 1399. . . . York was doing precisely what Henry Bolingbroke had done in 1399. To remove a king because he had not reigned justly could only be done by powers above the reach of mere mortals. The laws of inheritance, upon which every lord and peasant depended, could not be altered to incorporate a criterion of ‘worthiness’” (Hipshon 36).

“By the Act of Accord on October 1460 [Edward earl of March] had been recognized as heir to the throne by Parliament. The murder of his father at Wakefield and the seizure of York’s estates in the north were such breaches of faith on the part of the king that his former subject, Edward, no longer owed him allegiance. Secondly, by joining Margaret after the second battle of St. Albans, Henry had abandoned the terms of the accord and thus forfeited the right to rule. [Richard of York’s] heir . . . was thus the rightful king of England” (Hipshon 47).

“[Henry VI was merely a] “bedraggled puppet sitting on the throne” (Hipshon 47).

“Both Edward’s usurpation and the difficulties he faced subsequently, clearly demonstrate the inherent problems caused by the removal of a king. It was not only considered abhorrent and unnatural by all ranks of medieval society, but also illegal and irreligious. Peace, security and prosperity, the very aims of communal organisation, were always threatened by an attack on the summit of power” (Hipshon 49).

“In Richard’s case, his two predecessors as duke of Gloucester had both met untimely ends at the hands of their enemies. Both Thomas of Woodstock and Humphrey . . . inspired cults dedicated to the posthumous restoration of their reputations. Unbeknown to Richard this habit was not to end with the second duke” (Hipshon 55).

“Elizabeth Woodville was only too keen to find suitable grants of land, offices, titles and marriages for all her five brothers , seven unmarried sisters and other relatives” (Hipshon 59).

“Edward’s secret marriage to Elizabeth Woodville was to become the central plank upon which the legal case for the deposition of her son, Edward V, was to rest. Richard was to claim that the marriage was unlawful and her son illegitimate. The problem of some of Edward’s Woodville adherents was also to become a major issue in the reign of Richard III” (Hipshon 61).

“[O]n 11 July 1469, Clarence, the brother of the king, was married to Isabel, the [eldest] daughter of Warwick, in a marriage expressly forbidden by Edward” (Hipshon 63).

“By the end of the day, 12 March 1470, it was very clear to Edward that the rebellion had been the work of Warwick and, even more so of Clarence. . . . The livery jackets of both conspirators were littered across the field and captured rebels, including an envoy of Clarence, confessed that it was indeed Clarence, aiming to become king himself, who had called them to arms” (Hipshon 70).

“[Clarence] had been persuaded to join Warwick, and marry Isabel Neville, with the prospect of an aggrandizement that may have had a regal dimension” (Hipshon 75).

“[The Battle of Barnet] was the 18-year-old duke’s first major battle and he had acquitted himself with distinction. No contemporary chronicler records Richard’s actions at Barnet but the *Arrivall* ascribes Edward’s victory to ‘the faithful, welbeloved and mighty assistance of his [Richard’s] fellowship’” (Hipshon 87).

“Both Warkworth and the Croyland Chronicle hint strongly at Richard’s involvement in the old king’s murder, and this became a commonplace in the Tudor story. It is, of course, irrelevant who did the deed: only Edward IV could have sanctioned and ordered the execution” (Hipshon 90).

“Richard had shown many qualities during Edward’s flight, exile and recovery campaign: he had been loyal, brave, effective and indispensable. None of these characteristics would have been of any use if Richard had not also been ruthless, decisive, and, when necessary, merciless” (Hipshon 90).

“There is certainly an element in the early years of Edward’s second reign of unfettered acquisitiveness on the part of the duke of Gloucester” (Hipshon 95).

“Although Anne and Richard had spent several years of their childhood together at Middleham, and therefore personal attraction cannot be ruled out, the marriage would not have taken place if Anne had not the right to a half a share in her father’s inheritance. The only difficulty was Clarence’s desire to keep the entire inheritance for himself. In order to wrest Anne from his brother’s ‘protection’, Richard would inevitably come into conflict with Clarence” (Hipshon 97).

“Richard’s marriage to Anne was to produce just one child, Edward of Middleham, born in 1476. He did not survive childhood and died on 9 April 1484. His mother did not outlive her



son by even a year, dying herself on 16 March 1485. Although the marriage was not fruitful, in terms of the number of children it produced, . . . there is no evidence to suggest that the union was anything less than a happy one” (Hipshon 99).

“[Edward IV] charged Clarence with conduct ‘derogatory to the laws of the realm’ [after he had been arrested for a number of treasonous acts]. Clarence was taken into custody and parliament summoned for January 1478. There, in person, the king accused his brother of ‘unnatural and loathly treason’ . . . . He was executed privately, in the Tower, on 18 February 1478. The Italian commentator, Mancini, first reported the story that Clarence had been drowned in ‘a butt of malmsey wine’. He also believed Richard was ‘overcome with grief for his brother’ and that he blamed the Woodville faction at court for the execution” (Hipshon 101).

“There is no reason to believe that Richard was not dismayed by the events that lead to the death of his brother. There is certainly none to implicate him in the deed” (Hipshon 101).

“There were times, however, when [Richard’s] own ambition to extend his affinity and to secure a wider and more complete hegemony in the north brought him into conflict with the only two magnates with sufficient power to challenge him. It was at these times that Edward had to exercise a restraining hand” (Hipshon 106).

“In what we are able to discern of the personal predilections that motivated Richard’s actions,

there is a consistent commonalty with those of his father. Their attitudes to France, to justice and to popular opinion, are strikingly similar. Their love of pageantry and display, chivalry and honour, appear to coincide, at least in their outward manifestations” (Hipshon 113).

“Consciousness of [his] dynastic legacy and of belonging to the ‘old royal blood of England’ is a significant feature of Richard’s character. His father’s proclaimed values, to restore English pride abroad and justice at home, could be interpreted in a practical sense to mean enmity with France and an acknowledgement of York’s right to a place in the royal council. Richard tended to follow the same line. . . . Edward’s own sons could not boast a comparable pedigree to that of their uncle” (Hipshon 114).

“Richard’s power had been won largely by his own efforts. He had utilized his kinship with the king to his best advantage and he had been given the rewards he merited and expected. Edward’s early and unexpected death was a calamity for Richard because it opened up the possibility that his authority would not only be challenged, but might also be destroyed” (Hipshon 118).

“Tensions within the polity over which Edward IV had presided now emerged and began to tear the royal council apart. Two distinct camps began to polarise in a deadly battle for control” (Hipshon 119).

“There can be no doubt that Edward’s death could not have come at a worse time. The eldest

of his two sons was only 12 years old and too young to be expected to rule in his own right, but too old for a stable minority government to be established. His age made it unlikely that any interim regime would face the difficulty of managing the supreme authority in the state and then having to relinquish it before very long. . . . The boy-king might be susceptible to undue influence, or might already hold his own views which it would be dangerous to ignore” (Hipshon 120).

“There is no substantial evidence that Richard had ever previously shown any distaste for the Woodvilles, or blamed them for the death of his brother Clarence, but it is clear that the Woodville party in London feared a collapse of their dominance. We know that they seized the treasure of Edward IV from the Tower of London” (Hipshon 121).

“While Richard wrote a conciliatory letter to the council, proclaiming his loyalty to Edward V and his willingness to do all in his power for his sake, he nevertheless insisted that he should be the protector of the young king, according to his brother’s wishes. According to Mancini a majority in the council rejected this proposal and determined on a speedy coronation, writing to Edward V to that effect” (Hipshon 121).

“Attempting to prevent the Duke of Gloucester from gaining control, and advocating an early coronation to secure the initiative, could be seen as natural responses to the threat they faced from a weakening of the dominance they had hitherto enjoyed for almost 20 years” (Hipshon 122).

“The Crowland chronicler tells us that while the council were united in wishing to see Prince Edward ‘succeed his father in all his glory’, the more prudent members of the council were of the opinion that guardianship of the youthful king ‘ought to be utterly forbidden to his uncles and brothers on his mother’s side’” (Hipshon 122).

“For the man who exercised the greatest lordship in the land, who was the dead king’s brother and most successful military leader, and who had been entrusted with the greatest extension of royal authority ever granted by a king to a lord, for such a man to be excluded from proceedings of such importance was tantamount for treason. It was true that a regency council was not bound to adhere to the wishes of the dead king, but the council could not claim to exercise authority without the presence of the leading magnate. It was this attempt to do so that precipitated the crisis” (Hipshon 123).

“Mancini relates [that] on hearing the queen’s name, Buckingham ‘who loathed her race’, answered ‘it was not the business of women but of men to govern kingdoms’” (Hipshon 124).

“Hastings had been at the centre of Edward IV’s household throughout his reign, and his loyalty to Edward’s son and heir was unquestionable. He had supported Richard and Buckingham to prevent the destruction he might face at the hands of the Woodvilles, but he would never support a usurpation of the throne” (Hipshon 130).

“There is no evidence free from prejudice and coloured by hindsight that shows that Richard intended to seize the throne before June 1483. Richard’s actions up until 10 June seem to show that he expected Edward V to be crowned, but only as long as his own power and authority could be guaranteed. If this seemed to be challenged, he acted decisively to remove the threat. . . . All [of Richard’s] actions after the calling for assistance from the north [on 10 June] are predicated on his accession” (Hipshon 131).

“In just eight weeks from the death of Edward IV, Richard had been crowned instead of Edward V” (Hipshon 135).

“If [Richard] made this decision in order to prevent civil strife, then he overlooked or underestimated the enormous damage caused by usurpation. The institution of monarchy itself is weakened, not strengthened, by usurpation. By flouting the rules of natural inheritance and succession the body politic is endangered and destabilized. Taking the throne should have been the very last resort of a lawfully-minded magnate” (Hipshon 135).

“It is certainly possible that the duke of Buckingham had a hand in the deaths of the two princes but the ultimate responsibility for their fate rests with Richard. As protector, and then as king, he was the ultimate guarantor of the safety of the boys. Their security was fatally compromised by the act of usurpation” (Hipshon 139).

“Edward V may have been declared illegitimate but he was innocent of any crime and

certainly not deserving of death. There would have been a public outcry if the bodies had been put on display. As it was, rumours of their demise led to a serious outbreak of rebellion. The only solution to a highly charged and difficult situation was the one that seems to have been adopted: the princes had to be killed, in secret, and the rumours concerning their fate allowed to circulate” (Hipshon 141).

“The two princes disappeared forever because their bodies, dead or alive, had to be removed from the political situation” (Hipshon 141).

“The message Richard aimed to promulgate was that the monarchy was safe and that strong government would follow from good kingship” (Hipshon 143).

“The lack of information about the fate of Edward V would always count against Richard and undermine the stability of his rule” (Hipshon 145).

“In the end, he was unable to free himself from the shackles of his throne taking” (Hipshon 176).

“When Richard III took the throne in 1483, the tension between public and private power that had exploded into violence during the reigns of Henry VI and Edward IV had not diminished” (Hipshon 190).

“No one who was present at the battle of Bosworth would have recognized the picture of unmitigated evil painted by Shakespeare. . . . Witnesses that day in the late summer of 1485 would have seen the awesome spectacle of the last charge of knights in English history lead by [Richard III] himself. . . . They would have seen the real king lead the mounted knights of the royal household into an audacious attack on the reign and bodyguard of Henry Tudor. If they had had a bird’s eye view of the bloody and ferocious fighting that erupted when the king’s troops smashed into Tudor’s men-at-arms, they would have seen the king fighting furiously within feet of his objective until he was hacked down from behind” (Hipshon 208-209).

**Hobgood, Allison P. and Wood, David Houston, eds. *Recovering Disability in Early Modern England*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2013. Print.**

Within this collection, the selected articles seek to encourage a new way of viewing disability studies in early modern literature. By constructing new narratives of early modern disability, Allison P. Hobgood, David Houson Wood, and the included authors hope to view disability within the scope of personal, political, and theoretical views in order to better understand both early modern and post-modern perceptions of disability.

Of particular interest were Emily Bowles’ chapter, “Maternal Culpability in Fetal Defects,” and Marcela Kostihová’s chapter, “Richard Recast.” In the former chapter, Bowles asserts that the early modern conceptualization of women’s bodies viewed them as “faulty male

bod[ies]” (49). If one is to make this assumption, then the opposite must be true: faulty male bodies are women’s bodies.

In Kostihová’s chapter, she notes that Richard’s deformity, while mentioned within the play, is never articulated in detail—leaving his material disability ambiguous at best. However, his ambiguous deformity serves as the “lynchpin that engenders his self professed villainy” (139). Kostihová also notes that it is Richard’s disabled, masculine sexuality that is directly affected by his deformity and that it is this shortcoming that Richard seeks to overcome through manipulation. By combining the two presented ideologies, one may question whether Shakespeare emphasized Richard’s supposed deformity in order to cast him as feminine. If so, how does this affect one’s interpretation of the play.

“[T]he female body was always already marked as defective and monstrous, as a faulty male body” (Bowles 49).

“In Shakespeare’s textual template, the link between power, masculinity, and deformity is laid out in Richard’s first soliloquy, which serves as a defacto prologue and thus establishes the organizing principles of the play. His disabled masculinity—or the inability to perform normative masculinity adequately—fuels his anxiety of disempowerment and subsequent disqualification from normative courtly activities. Posing the duel prongs of normative masculine power—military and heterosexual conquest—Richard seeks to supplement the shortcomings in the latter: instead of exerting sexual power, he sets out to manipulate his



political surroundings through cunning, and sometimes brutal, intrigue. His bodily deformity, though never explicitly articulated, acts as a necessary lynchpin that engenders his self-professed villainy” (Kostihová 139).

“Richard’s bodily materiality only as *an afterthought* of his actions” (Kostihová 141).

**Howard, Jean E., and Rackin, Phyllis. *Engendering a Nation: A Feminist Account of Shakespeare’s English Histories*. New York: Routledge, 1997. Print.**

Within this work, Jean E. Howard and Phyllis Rackin attempt to examine gender in respect to Shakespeare’s two tetralogies, *King John*, and the emerging nation state during the Tudor era. In regards to gender, the authors identify being driven by emotion as feminine and the desire to prove oneself on the battlefield as masculine. In relation to the first tetralogy, Howard and Rackin study the character of Margaret of Anjou and the ways in which she directly challenges the patriarchy. They also analyze the character of Henry VI and the ways that he, and, later, Edward IV, is ruled by his passions for a woman. This trend breaks with the tragedy of *Richard III* as Shakespeare makes Richard the sole challenger to the patriarchy. According to the authors, Richard performs both masculine and feminine characteristics independent of his body. Howard and Rackin also identify history plays as avoiding current political issues, such as gender, by looking to previous English glory, meanwhile, tragedies take on contemporary issues head on.

“*Henry V* may have been popular in 1599 in part because it depicts the rule of a male monarch, a king who is also a martial hero and who serves as a point of identification for those audience members weary of the rule of a woman” (Howard and Rackin 4).

“[*Henry V*] is premised on the consolidation of national identity through violence against foreign enemies” (Howard and Rackin 4).

“In early modern England, fathers held authority over the households in which they lived. Servants, children, wives—all were theoretically subordinate to the father, even in those situations where the bond between husband and wife was promoted as one of affection and near equality” (Howard and Rackin 5-6).

“Shakespeare’s play [*Henry V*] enables a fantasy of an England reborn to former greatness through a reconstruction of heroic masculinity” (Howard and Rackin 9).

“The first tetralogy . . . imagine[s] the past as a world where marriages are dynastic and the state is organized around, and is conceived as inseparable from, the body of the monarch” (Howard and Rackin 29).

“[M]embers of the audience were not necessarily known to one another or to the actors. In such conditions, the practice of playgoing helped to establish community in conditions of

anonymity. This imagined community was not so much based on personal acquaintance and familiarity, shared history, and prior relationships, as on the shared conditions of theatrical spectatorship in a commercializing culture and the shared temporality of theatrical enactment” (Howard and Rackin 31).

“Increasingly, women of the middling sort in particular were being inculcated with an ideology of domesticity. Marriage defined their social status; the home constituted their main arena of activity. . . . The theater was just one of the many institutions in urban London that took women out of the home, even as the home was being more insistently constructed as woman’s proper place” (Howard and Rackin 33).

“Plays for this theater could, of course, respond to the presence of women in the audience by presenting them with fictions designed to inculcate their subordinate place in patriarchal structures” (Howard and Rackin 35).

“The first tetralogy . . . imagine[s] the past as a world where marriages are dynastic and the Rackin 38).

“Living in a time of unprecedented social mobility, Shakespeare and his contemporaries provided a thriving business for the heralds who constructed the genealogies by which they attempted to secure their places in an unstable social hierarchy” (Howard and Rackin 46).

“*Henry VI, Part II* makes the young King Henry responsible for much of the disorder in the kingdom, and it insistently connects his failures as a monarch to his failures of masculinity” (Howard and Rackin 67).

“In early modern sexual discourses, an effeminate man was typically one who, like the inferior being, women, let passion control his reason” (Howard and Rackin 67).

“*Henry VI, Part III*, then, is spectacularly marked by the dissolution of every kind of male bond. Fathers disinherit sons; sons slay fathers and fathers sons; brothers turn against one another; dukes and early who have sworn fealty to one monarch switch their allegiance to another” (Howard and Rackin 93).

“Richard’s bodily deformity is presented as the outward sign of his unnatural nature as much as it is presented as its cause. He becomes defined by the fact of his monstrous body when he severs himself from all human ties, but not before. Rising from the collapse of the patriarchal world around him, claiming to outdo the murderous foreigner, Machiavelli, in evil, Richard stands alone. In the world of this play, with its emphasis on the tragedy of shattered social bonds, such a figure can be seen only as evil, alien, and unnatural” (Howard and Rackin 97).

“[I]n his early history plays Shakespeare often opposed the troubling realities of cultural change by projecting a better world in the past—the remembered world of Henry V’s

conquest of France, for example, or the idealized world of Talbot's military endeavors. Shakespeare's tragedies, by contrast, play out those cultural contradictions in the struggles of an individual heroic figure destroyed by the irreconcilable conflicts they produced. The ambivalent place of women in early modern England and the instability of the gender ideologies that attempted to contain them were part of the contradictory material which his tragic dramas attempted to master" (Howard and Rackin 105).

"Characterized throughout in terms of warlike masculinity and aggressive misogyny, Richard also commands the female power of erotic seduction" (Howard and Rackin 109).

"In Shakespeare's play, Richard's monopoly of both male and female sexual energy is vividly portrayed in his seduction of Anne" (Howard and Rackin 109).

"Physically a man and a womanizer, Falstaff is nonetheless characterized in feminine terms" (Howard and Rackin 165).

**Iyengar, Sujata, ed. *Disability, Health, and Happiness in the Shakespearean Body*. New York: Routledge, 2015. Print.**

Within this collection, Sujata Iyengar seeks to investigate how health, disability, and happiness are represented within Shakespearean texts. She divides the collection into three parts: nation, sex, and emotion. The included essays seek to understand early modern

conceptualizations of physical bodies in relation to vigor, health and fitness, ability, beauty, well-being, and happiness.

Of particular interest to me were three particular chapters: Alison Hobgood's "Teeth Before Eyes: Impairment and Invisibility in Shakespeare's *Richard III*," Geoffrey A. Johns' "A 'Grevous Burthen': *Richard III* and the Legacy of Monstrous Birth," and Catherine E. Doubler's "'Gambol Faculties' and 'Halting Bravery': Falstaff, Will Kemp, and Impaired Masculinity." In "Teeth Before Eyes: Impairment and Invisibility in Shakespeare's *Richard III*," Alison Hobgood situates *Richard III* historically in order to argue the ways that the play both establishes and engages with the early modern period's emerging medical model of disability. She focuses on the rhetoric of *Richard III* and the ways that it allows bodies to become invisible or anonymous. Meanwhile, in "A 'Grevous Burthen': *Richard III* and the Legacy of Monstrous Birth," Geoffrey A. Johns discusses the ways in which Shakespeare situated Richard in conversation with early modern manifestations of the monstrous birth and its associated implications of villainy. He concludes his discussion by asserting that, in Shakespeare, it is possible to have a monstrous villain without his having a monstrous body, and vice versa. Finally, in "'Gambol Faculties' and 'Halting Bravery': Falstaff, Will Kemp, and Impaired Masculinity," Catherine E. Doubler examines the ways in which Falstaff and Will Kemp, the actor who most likely portrayed Falstaff in the late 1590s, both argue for different versions of masculinity in relation to athleticism and musculature: Falstaff argues for an "abrasive masculinity" whereas Kemp, in his work *Kemp's Nine Daies of Wonder* (1600), "undoes the [work] of Falstaff's physical qualities . . . and rewrites his own

physicality in terms of temperance, able-bodiedness, and muscularity (155).

“The ‘social model of disability’ . . . argue[s] that a truly enlightened society would offer to persons called disabled by the able-bodied world the tools, help, and staff they needed in order to fulfill their intellectual, physical, and ethical potential, rather than defining such persons by and through their constraints” (Iyengar 2).

“Critics question . . . the social model’s dichotomy between ‘impairment’ (physical limitations as understood by a medical model) and ‘disability’ (the social conditions that turn impairment into inability by failing to provide the for the impaired person’s mobility, health, or activity). It is more helpful . . . to imagine that impairment and disability are interactive” (Iyengar 2).

“[Tom Shakespeare] calls for the able-bodied to imagine themselves as ‘the not-yet-disabled’ or the ‘Temporarily-Able-Bodied’” (Iyengar 2).

“Tom Shakespeare’s notion of universal impairment, however, seems to turn the idea of even temporary able-bodiedness into non-existent able-bodiedness by extending the notions of temporary able-bodiedness and impairment to all bodies; both the so called disabled and the Temporarily-Able-Bodied are always impaired (Iyengar 2-3).

“Tom Shakespeare does inject a dose, as it were, of positivism into the conversations,

colloquially summarizing his beliefs through an imagined advocate: ‘people are disabled by society *and* by their bodies’” (Iyengar 4).

“A critically embodied ontology also questions our post-Enlightenment or post-Cartesian assumptions about the happiness or well-being of persons with cognitive differences” (Iyengar 6).

“This expansive sense of the Shakespearean allows hearers and readers to explore very broadly questions surrounding the relationship among health and such measures of ‘well-being’ as prosperity, employment, youthfulness, strength, peace of mind, friendships, physical comfort, and so on without restricting our analysis to a single genre” (Iyengar 8).

“To be ‘disabled’ in Shakespeare is to experience physical, moral, or economic slowdown” (Iyengar 9).

“[E]arly modern life systematically took power away from real persons with disabilities and sentenced the halt and the lame to beggary, the tongue-tied to silence, the insane to restraints or institutionalization, and the cognitively different to ostracism” (Iyengar 12).

“[S]cientists retroactively extrapolate[d] and catalogue[d] the ‘condition’ of Richard’s living body: male, age 20-30, slender, above average height but for scoliosis evidenced by true-to-life vertebral positioning and consistency with various early modern characterizations”



(Hobgood 24).

“Shakespeare, like his literary predecessors [More, Hall, Holinshed], used and abused history in his tale of Richard’s reign by conflating his character’s supposed deformity with a subversive and criminal national politics” (Hobgood 24).

“[Richard’s] ‘deformity’ is . . . generally casually connected to his evil machinations”

(Hobgood 26).

“John Roas’s . . . description of [Richard’s] anomalous birth: Richard was ‘retained within his mother’s womb for two years and emerg[ed] with teeth and hair to his shoulders.’

Likewise, Edward Hall’s claim that “He was little of stature, euill featured of limnes, croke backed, the left shoulder muche higher than the righte” (Hobgood 27).

“Whereas individuals in the early Middle Ages indeed perceived spinal deformity as divine retribution, that understanding changed significantly in the English Renaissance as physicians like Ambrose Paré described scoliosis for the first time. . . . Paré specifically ‘advocated the use of iron corsets [as the preferred treatment for scoliosis]’ (Hobgood 27).

“The drama imagines early modern playgoers who were not reading Richard’s body solely as monstrous and malevolent but scientifically noting, marking, and delineating how his habitus deviated from typical, healthy embodiment” (Hobgood 28).

“[The] literary interpolation of birth deformity and prodigious monstrosity at such a critical moment of national history explicitly links the popular conception of England’s national past [the War of the Roses] with the anxious interpretive history of ‘monsters,’ both in the physical sense of deformed bodies and that of a moral condition marked by hypocrisy and inward corruption with which such figures had long been associated. As such, the tetralogy implicitly attributes Richard’s birth deformities to divine retribution for his rebellious father’s sins, which are made physically manifest upon birth (Johns 43-44).

“It is this state of disorder and corrupted morality [the War of the Roses] that Shakespeare epitomizes in his vision of Richard, whose reciprocally deformed body and mind are both the products of and the signposts by which the turmoil and cancer of a corrupt and divided nation are expressed. Richard poses, as prophecy suggests, a hidden, inward malice and self-interest that are detrimental to both the health and prosperity of the kingdom and to Richard’s willingness—and perhaps even his *ability*—to act in its interest” (Johns 47).

“Henry [VI’s] verbal attack on Richard in his final speech demonstrates the variety of ways in which Tudor attitudes about Richard’s bodily deformities and corresponding moral character were interrelated. Both are frequently described as products of an imbalance in the natural order whose cause had to be puzzled out through reading and interpreting prophetic messages encoded in his behaviour and appearance” (Johns 48).

“Significantly, however, the relationship Richard describes between his body and mind is that of cause and effect rather than the reciprocity suggested in Henry’s prophecy” (Johns 48).

“Francis Bacon evinces a similar attitude in his essay ‘Of Deformity’ (1625) when he describes ‘[d]eformed persons’ as ‘commonly euen with Nature: For as Nature hath done ill by them; So doe they by Nature: Being for the most part void of Natural Affection; And so they haue their Reuenge of Nature” (Johns 48).

“Crucial to the moral and social import of Shakespeare’s Richard as a specific visual representation of both deformity and immorality on stage are the visual and perceptual relationships between his physical birth defects and the supposed ethical or moral deficiencies associated generally with human vice and moral corruption” (Johns 50).

“[The] rhetorical aim of such accounts [of moralizing lessons] was to ‘[exhort] the reader to keep societal norms by showing him [through example] that the human and natural laws were interrelated” (Johns 51).

“Although [Shakespeare’s] most direct source—Thomas More’s *History*—was probably written at a time that predates any extant English monstrous birth ephemera, it contains a number of similar engagements with the discourse of monstrosity that these texts would take up in their metonymic and emblematic readings of deformed bodies as physical manifestations of transgressive inwardness” (Johns 55).

“Linking these two factors of identity [masculinity and ability] that were emerging in the early modern period, Falstaff discursively manipulates youth and age, health and ability—

dualities that figure prominently in determinations of masculinity” (Doubler 144).

“Both Mercuriale and Falstaff argue that too much focus on athleticism [is] proof [that] masculinity can weaken a man’s wits and tongue, and that bodily strength does not necessarily mean that a man is brave or valorous. Rather, athleticism can make cowards of men, and this fear of death or bodily harm becomes central to Falstaff’s idea of true masculine comportment” (Doubler 146-47).

“[Catherine E. Doubler] call[s] Falstaff’s ideal masculinity ‘abrasive masculinity,’ not only because this type of masculinity is performed through battles of wit, but also because it puns upon the word ‘abrasion,’ signaling a masculinity that is exhibited through wounds and impairments [rather than athleticism and musculature]” (Doubler 148).

“Falstaff’s attitude toward the male body is defined by one overarching claim: manliness is not denigrated, but is actually affirmed, by impairment and illness. . . . Falstaff determines manliness according to the impairments by which a man’s body changes” (Doubler 148).

“Hal, in his insults and jokes about Falstaff’s body, marks that body to represent an older feudal order, the excess of society, and the inertia that forecloses the possibility of forward movement in time and imperialistic progress. At the same time, Shakespeare critiques the lean aesthetic promoted by Hal because it quietly advocates the consumption of bodies of those in the lower classes so that Hal can achieve his imperialistic aims” (Doubler 149).

“Vesalius claims that women’s bodies, whether they are thin or more corpulent, are easier to dissect because they possess more fat. The implication, then, is that men’s bodies have less fat and are harder to dissect as consequence” (Doubler 149-50).

**Jonson, Ben. *The Alchemist. English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*. Eds. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Eric Rasmussen. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2012. 861-959. Print.**

When this play opens, the audience learns that Face, Subtle, and Dol live in a house and are con artists. Subtle and Face debate which is more integral to their operation. When a bell rings, Face plays “Captain Face” and Subtle assumes the role of Doctor (the alchemist) when Dapper arrives—he is a legal clerk who wants a drink to ensure that he wins at gambling. Dapper leaves and is instructed to return bathed and in a clean shirt. Once he leaves, Drugger arrives to inquire after how to set up his tobacco shop. He is instructed to return with tobacco and a damask. Next comes Sir Epicure Mammon and Sir Pertinax Surly and Face assumes the role of assistant to the doctor—Subtle has promised to make Mammon the Philosopher’s Stone. Then, Ananias and Tribulation enter—they too want the Philosopher’s stone. As more and more customers arrive, the three cons begin to lose control until finally they bring officers to arrest Subtle, Face, and Dol. All escape, although Subtle and Dol are forced to leave without money due to circumstances—leaving Face alone with all of their stolen money/goods.

**Kahn, Coppélia. *Man's Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981. Print.**

Through her psychoanalytic reading of Shakespeare's works, Coppélia Kahn seeks to assess the ways in which Shakespeare grappled with the idea of masculine identity. Noting the existing masculine anxieties of the Elizabethan era, Kahn historically situates Shakespeare in an England that is increasingly focused on patriarchal power. In doing so, she is able to study the ways in which Shakespeare's works sought to define and clarify the ways in which masculine identity was formed/viewed during this time in British history.

In her chapter focusing on Shakespeare's two tetralogies, Kahn plots the duplicity of patriarchal succession from the reign of Richard II to that of Richard III. Here, she identifies the patriarchy as a source of both order and chaos as some seek rule through succession and others through vengeance. Additionally, Kahn identifies the relationship between father, brother(s), and son(s) as key in the construction of one's masculine identity. Thus, as Richard III lacks both love and genuine familial relationships, this serves as the driving force behind his desire for and ascension of the English throne.

“Shakespeare's works reflect and voice a masculine anxiety about the uses of patriarchal power over women, specifically about men's control over women's sexuality, which arises from this disparity between men's social dominance and their peculiar emotional vulnerability to women” (Kahn 12).

“Lawrence Stone has recently argued for an increase in the power of the husband and father over his wife and children during the time Shakespeare wrote, making the father ‘a legalized petty tyrant within the home’ (Kahn 14).

“A paradox of sexual identity in *Macbeth* and *Coriolanus* forms the topic of chapter 6. The two virile heroes of these plays are really unfinished men—boys, who fight or murder because they have been convinced by women that violence will make them manly” (Kahn 19).

“The . . . heroes try to surpass or destroy their rivals and thus prove their masculinity” (Kahn 19).

“The patriarchal world of Shakespeare’s history plays is emphatically masculine. Its few women are relatively insignificant, and a man’s identity is determined by his relationship to his father, son, or brother” (Kahn 47).

“In historical terms, Shakespeare makes late medieval society a mirror of his own by stressing its obsession with paternal authority and power” (Kahn 48).

“the king as the national father” (Kahn 49).

“*Richard III* of all the history plays most strongly suggests the importance of the mother, rather than the father, in the formation of masculine identity—but negatively, by showing

how alienation from the mother helps turn a physical monster into a moral one” (Kahn 64).

“Richard, [Michael] Neill says, ‘cannot know himself because he cannot love himself, and he cannot love himself because he has never been loved’” (Kahn 64).

“Having no brother in the sense of having no kinship with people who are lovable and who love, being himself alone emotionally, in his utter lack of pity, as well as physically, he pursues the crown for himself alone. He sets his brothers against each other, by mimicking a brotherly love he has never felt so as to deceive and entrap them and by killing off or otherwise disposing of their children as obstacles to his succession” (Kahn 65-66).

“Richard III [descants] on his shadow, and [calls] attention to his deformity the better to appreciate his triumph over it” (Kahn 66).

**Kewes, Paulina, Ian Archer, Felicity Heal, and Henry Summerson. *The Holinshed Project*. University of Oxford and The Early English Books Online-Text Creation Partnership, 2008. Web. 31 Oct. 2015.**

Within his chronicle, Holinshed follows in the footsteps of Sir Thomas More in depicting Richard III in monstrous terms. I focused primarily on those sections relating to Edward V—Edward IV’s heir—as this is the time period covered in Shakespeare’s play, *Richard III*. Holinshed records Richard’s bodily disfigurement in terms of Richard being short,



hunchbacked, and having uneven limbs—all but the shortness is adopted by Shakespeare. Holinshed also attribute's Richard's villainy as predating his birth which alludes to the ideology of the time that events and/or inappropriate behaviors of the mother could imprint on a fetus in utero. Holinshed also elaborates on the means by which Richard III assumed the throne by discrediting Edward IV's heirs on account of his marriage to Elizabeth Grey being invalid. Richard also accused both Edward and George of being bastards—claiming to be the sole and rightful heir of the York line. According to Holinshed, once the princes were taken to the tower, they were never seen or heard from again—this is congruent with other chronicled accounts dating to the princes' disappearance.

“For Richard the duke of Glocester, by nature their vncle, by office their protector, to their father beholden, to themselues by oth and allegiance bounden, all the bands broken that bind man and man together, without anie respect of God or the world, vnnaturallie contriued to beréeue them, not onelie their dignitie, but also their liues.”

“Richard the third sonne, of whome we now in|treat, was in wit and courage equall with either of them, in bodie and prowesse farre vnder them both, litle of stature, ill featured of limmes, crooke backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard fa|uoured of visage, and such as is in states called war|lie, in othermen otherwise; he was malicious, wrath|full, enuious, and from afore his birth euer froward. It is for truth reported, that the duchesse his mother had so much adoo in hir trauell, that she could not be deliuered of him vncut; and that he came into the world with the féet forward, as men be borne out|ward, and (as the same

runneth also) not vntoothed, whether men of hatred report about the truth, or else that nature changed his course in his beginning, which in the course of his life manie things vnnaturallie committed. So that the full confluence of these qualities, with the defects of fauour and amiable proportion, gaue prooffe to this rule of physiognomie . . .”

“For the state of things and the dispositions of men were then such, that a man could not well tell whome he might trust, or whome he might feare.”

“Yet for the further appeasing of the peoples minds, he [Richard the Protector] sent immediatlie after dinner in all the hast one herald of armes, with a proclamation to be made through the citie in the kings name, contei|ning, that the lord Hastings, with diuerse other of his traitorous purpose, had before conspired the same day to haue slaine the lord protector, and the duke of Buckingham sitting in the councell; and after to haue taken vpon them to rule the king & the realme at their pleasure, and therby to pill and spoile whome they list vncontrolled.”

“To laie bastardie in king Edward, sounded open|lie to the rebuke of the protectors owne mother, which was mother to them both; for in that point could be no other color, but to pretend that his owne mother was an adultresse, which notwithstanding, to fur|ther this purpose he letted not. But neuerthelesse he would that point should be lesse and more fauoura|blie handled: not euen fullie plaine and directlie, but that the matter should be touched aslope craftilie, as though men spared in that point to speake all the truth, for feare of

his displeasure. But the other point concerning the bastardie that they deuised to surmize in king Edwards children, that would he should be openlie declared and inforced to the vttermost. The colour and pretext whereof cannot be well perceiued . . .”

“Now then (as I began to shew you) it was by the protector and his counsell concluded, that this doctor Shaw should in a sermon at Pauls crosse sig|nifie to the people, that neither king Edward him|selfe, nor the duke of Clarence, were lawfullie be|gotten, nor were not the verie children of the duke of Yorke, but gotten vnlawfullie by other persons, in adulterie, of the duches their mother.”

“Therevpon when he had shewed the great grace that God giueth, and secretlie infundeth in right generation after the lawes of matrimonie, then de|clared he, that commonlie those children lacked that grace, and for the punishment of their parents were (for the more part) vnhappie, which were gotten in base, and speciallie in adulterie.”

“Then began he to descend into the praise of the lord Richard late duke of Yorke, calling him father to the lord protector, and declared the title of his heires vnto the crowne, to whome it was (after the death of king Henrie the sixt) intailed by authoritie of parle|ment. Then shewed he that his verie right heire of his bodie lawfullie begotten was onelie the lord pro|tector. For he declared then, that king Edward was neuer lawfullie married vnto the queene, but was before God husband vnto dame Elizabeth Lucie, and so his children bastards. And besides that, neither king Edward himselfe, nor the duke of Clarence, among those that were secret in

the household, were reckoned verie suerlie for the children of the noble duke, as those that by their fauours more resembled other knowne men than him.”

“Wo is that realme that hath a child to their king.”

“For in all other nations, where the truth were not well knowne, it should peradventure be thought, that it were his owne ambitious mind and deuise, to depose the prince, and take himselfe the crowne.”

“With which infamie he would not haue his ho|nour stained for anie crowne, in which he had euer perceiued much more labour and paine, than pleasure to him that so would vse it, as he that would not, were not worthie to haue it. Notwithstanding, he not onlie pardoned them the motion that they made him, but also thanked them for the loue and hartie fa|uour they bare him, praieng them for his sake to giue and beare the same to the prince, vnder whom he was, and would be content to liue, and with his la|bour and counsell (as farre as should like the king to vse him) he would doo his vttermost deuoir to set the realme in good state, which was alreadie in this little while of his protectorship (the praise giuen to God) well begun, in that the malice of such as were before occasion of the contrarie, and of new intended to be, were now partlie by good policie, & partlie more by Gods speciall prouidence, than mans prouision, re|pressed.”

“But when he saw there was none other waie, but that either he must take it, or else he and his both go from it, he said vnto the lords and commons; Sith we perceiue well that all the

realme is so set, whereof we be verie sorie, that they will not suffer in any wise king Edwards line to gouerne them, whom no man earthlie can gouerne against their willes; & we well also perceiue, that no man is there, to whome the crowne can by iust title apperteine, as to our selues, as verie right heire lawfully begotten of the bodie of our most déere father Richard late duke of Yorke, to which title is now ioined your election, the nobles and commons of this realme, which we of all titles possi|ble take for the most effectuall: we be content and a|gréé fauourablie to incline to your petition and re|quest, and (according to the same) here we take vpon vs the roiall estate, preheminence and kingdome of the two noble realmes, England and France: the one from this daie forward by vs and our heires to rule, gouerne, and defend; the other by Gods grace, and your good helpe, to get againe and subdue, and e|stablish for euer in due obedience vnto this realme of England, the aduancement wherof we neuer aske of God longer to liue than we intend to procure.”

**Kyd, Thomas. *The Spanish Tragedy. English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology.***

**Eds. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Eric**

**Rasmussen. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2012. 3-73. Print.**

Having been slain in battle, Don Andrea’s ghost returns to earth with Revenge to watch Bel-Imperia kill Balthazar—the man who killed him. A Spanish General tells the King that they have defeated the Portuguese and captured Prince Balthazar. Meanwhile, the Viceroy grieue’s Balthazar’s death until Alexandro tells him that the prince is still alive. Back in Spain, Horatio —who earlier fought with Lorenzo over who captured the prince—tells Bel-

Imperia about the battle. Horatio and Bel-Imperia fall in love with one another; Prince Balthazar also falls in love with her. Revenge foreshadows tragedy. The King of Spain attempts to arrange a marriage between Bel-Imperia and Balthazar. She and Horatio are betrayed by Pedringano who reports them to Lorenzo and Balthazar. Horatio is hanged and then stabbed—his body left on display. Hieronimo, Horatio's father, swears revenge after seeing his son's body. Although imprisoned, Bel-Imperia sends a letter to Hieronimo telling him the names of the men who killed Horatio. Lorenzo makes arrangements to have Pedringano killed and Hieronimo finds a letter which proves his son's murder. Meanwhile, the Viceroy agrees to the King's marriage proposal. Hieronimo attempts a call for justice but is carried away after falling into a fit of madness. Bel-Imperia conspires with Hieronimo to exact revenge on Lorenzo and Balthazar. The two men perform a play—written by Hieronimo—in which both are killed. The play ends with all major characters dead due to either being killed or committing suicide (Bel-Imperia and Hieronimo).

**Laqueur, Thomas. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*.**

**Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990. Print.**

Within this book, Thomas Laqueur seeks to identify the emergence of “sex” from historical antiquity to the twentieth century. He distinguishes between the one-sex model—prevalent through the end of the seventeenth century—and the two-sex model that takes root in the eighteenth century. He discusses the economy of fluids and its relation to both sexes prior to his discussion of it in regards to conception. Laqueur explains that, during the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries, it was believed that an orgasm was necessary for conception. Thus, there existed a relationship between physical irregularities and barrenness, specifically in regards to one's "inability to satisfy the woman" (101)

Of particular interest to the study at hand is his discussion of the one-sex model in relation to early-modern society. Laqueur identifies the contradiction between the early modern period's conceptualization of a single sex and the basis of their society upon the existence of two genders. He also discusses Elizabeth I's rhetorical ability to navigate the spectrum of masculinity and femininity in her governance over England.

"Galen, who in the second century A.D. developed the most powerful and resilient model of the structural . . . identity of the male and female reproductive organs, demonstrated at length that woman were essentially men [who] lack . . . perfection" (Laqueur 4).

"[T]he old model, in which men and women were arrayed according to their degree of metaphysical perfection, their vital heat, along an axis whose telos was male" (Laqueur 4-5).

"Chapter 2 is about the oxymoronic one-sex body. Here the boundaries between male and female are primarily political; rhetorical rather than biological claims regarding sexual difference and sexual desire are primary. . . . This 'one flesh,' the construction of a single-sexed body with its different versions attributed to at least two genders, was framed in antiquity to valorize the extraordinary cultural assertion of the patriarchy, of the

father” (Laqueur 19-20).

“Destiny Is Anatomy” (Laqueur 25).

“the ‘reality’ of woman’s lesser perfection” (Laqueur 27).

“It was the weak womanly male . . . who was deeply flawed, medically and morally [that threatened the social order]. His very countenance proclaimed his nature . . . [c]onversely it was the . . . woman playing the role of the man . . . who was condemned and who . . . was said to be the victim of a wicked imagination. . . . The actions of [these men and women] were thus unnatural . . . because they played out—literally embodied—radical, culturally unacceptable reversals of power and prestige” (Laqueur 53).

“[I]n the sixteenth century, as there had been in classical antiquity, only one canonical body and that body was male” (Laqueur 62).

“The ancient account of bodies and pleasure was so deeply enmeshed in the skeins of Renaissance medical and physiological theory, in both its high and its more popular incarnations, and so bound up with a political and cultural order, that it escaped entirely any logically determining contract with the boundaries of experience or, indeed, any explicit testing at all” (Laqueur 69).



“the womb [as] the organic source of disease” (Laqueur 110).

“For women bearing children in particular, it must have been considerably less than joyful to experience a world in which any perturbation of accepted order—wicked thoughts, moral culpability, chance encounters with people or things, untimely or improperly positioned intercourse—could imprint itself disastrously on the flesh of their children in utero” (Laqueur 121).

“Elizabeth I brilliantly exploited the tensions between her masculine political body and her feminine private body in creating erotics of court life that both engendered factions of the great men of her realm and bound them to her and to each other. She could play the alluring but inaccessible virgin queen and the warrior prince. In her infamous speech to the troops at Tilbury in 1588 she proclaimed that she had ‘the body but of a weak and feeble woman but the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too.’ Her rhetoric later in her life became still more reliant on masculine images. She began referring to herself more often as king, as the nation’s husband rather than its virgin mother” (Laqueur 122).

“Indeed, in the absence of a purportedly stable system of two sexes, strict sumptuary laws of the body attempted to stabilize gender—woman as woman and man as man—and punishments for transgression were quite severe” (Laqueur 124-125).

“Renaissance doctors understood there to be only one sex. On the other hand, there were

manifestly at least two social sexes with radically different rights and obligations, somehow corresponding to ranges or bands, higher and lower, on the corporeal scale of being. Neither sort of sex—social or biological—could be viewed as foundational or primary, although gender divisions—the categories of social sex—were certainly construed as natural” (Laqueur 134).

“In a world where birth mattered desperately, sex was another ascriptive characteristic with social consequences; being of one sex or another entitled the bearer to certain social considerations, much as being of noble birth entitled one to wear ermine under sumptuary laws governing clothing. . . . The body thus seemed to be the absolute foundation for the entire system of . . . gender” (Laqueur 135).

**Lieblein, Leanore. “The Context of Murder in English Domestic Plays, 1590-1610.”**  
*Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 23.2 (1983): 181-196. Web. 11 Sept.  
2015.

Through her detailed analysis of the domestic tragedies *Arden of Feversham*, *A Warning For Fair Women*, and *A Woman Killed With Kindness*, Lieblein addresses the ways in which playwrights of the sixteenth century elaborated historical accounts of domestic murders in ways that change perceptions of the event. She argues that, by providing a social context for the murder, the plays go beyond the mere denunciation of sin and crime and force viewers to examine the complexities of marital relations. Common deviations from the source material

are carried out in order to “make the characters more interesting and the play more dramatically effective,” “set the tone for the activities of the murders,” and “stress the providential design of the events implicit in the chronicle[s]” (183). Unlike *Arden of Faversham* and *A Warning For Fair Women*, *A Woman Killed With Kindness* is not based upon historical events, a technicality that Lieblein argues allows Heywood the freedom to “explore the adultery in relation to its context and to suggest that complicity blurs traditionally obvious distinctions between the sinner and the sinned against, the adulteress and her judge” (194). The resulting moral ambiguity displayed by *A Woman Killed With Kindness* foreshadows future Jacobean domestic tragedies, such as *The White Devil* and *Women Beware Women*.

“In contrast, the plays [domestic tragedies], while they neither alter nor shift the morality of their sources, elaborate the social context, examine motives, and suggest the complicity of the victim in a way which changes the audience’s perception of events” (Lieblein 181).

“In order to ensure fidelity and chastity in marriage, [homiletic literature of the sixteenth century] insists on the importance of free choice of partner (within boundaries imposed by necessity for parental consent), compatibility of spouses as suggested by such parameters as age and social backgrounds, and the mutual responsibility of both parties to respect the marriage and each other. The domestic drama of the period accepts the morality implicit in these guidelines, but by focusing on marriages in disintegration, it examines the reasons for marital breakdown” (Lieblein 182).

“stress man’s potential sinfulness and a providential design which uncovers and punishes offenders” (Lieblein 182)

“The introduction of Franklin increases sympathy for Arden by giving him a disinterested friend who serves as the play’s center of moral judgement. Franklin is a choric voice who mediates between the audience and the characters, and in him the play’s point of view emerges” (Lieblein 184).

Though Arden is justified in condemning his wife’s adultery, his motives proceed not from a sense of sin but from a sense of injured vanity . . . . He resents Mosby for crossing class lines as much as for his invasion of his bed” (Lieblein 184-185).

“Greene conspires against Arden because he has seized a piece of his land. Similarly, Arden is cursed by the wife of a Richard Reede, because he has repossessed land to which they were entitled by lease and thus destroyed their livelihood” (Lieblein 185).

“Thus the dramatist clearly intensifies the cupidity of Arden to suggest even more strongly than the source that his death is a consequence of his avarice” (Lieblein 185).

“In *Arden of Faversham* the point was made through the use of choric characters’ responses to the guilty protagonist and through the suggestion that events were providentially ordained” (Lieblein 188).

“The murder, however spectacular, is motivated by a passion which is appealing in its intensity and rooted by the dramatist in a familiar domestic situation which people can recognize. To this end the household and dil life of George and Anne Sanders are richly elaborated at the beginning of the play to clarify the sense of what is disrupted and what is lost” (Lieblein 188).

“The play [*A Woman Killed With Kindness*] thus reiterates the social inter-connectedness of individuals” (Lieblein 189).

“Neither *Arden of Faversham*, *A Warning For Fair Women*, nor *A Woman Killed With Kindness* exonerates the adulteress. They see her, however, as part of a complex social network in which pressures other than a simplified notion of wifely duty are present” (Lieblein 189).

“In a play such as *Arden of Faversham*, murder and adultery go together and the victim is the ‘innocent’ spouse, for as in medieval drama and homiletics, one sin brings others in its wake (Lieblein 193).

“killing in other domestic tragedies is a manifestation of sin” (Lieblein 193)

“*A Woman Killed With Kindness* goes further than *Arden of Faversham* and *A Warning for Fair Women* in that it not only creates a sense that the marriage is rooted in a complex

economic and social context, but also suggests that the attitudes toward property that derive from it are directly responsible for adultery” (Lieblein 193).

“[T]here exists a group of murder plays from the same period in which adultery does not figure, and insofar as ‘passion’ motivates the murders, it is a passion for money or land rather than lust” (Lieblein 194).

“English domestic drama as we know it effectively ends with *A Woman Killed With Kindness*. Heywood’s play signals the disintegration of a genre which requires an ethical pattern of sin, discovery, punishment, and expectation of divine mercy even though it contains all of the steps in the rubric, because of the complex sympathy it creates for Anne Frankford” (Lieblein 195-196).

**Marlowe, Christopher. *Edward II. English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology.***

**Eds. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Eric Rasmussen. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2012. 351-420. Print.**

Marlowe’s history play, *Edward II*, dramatically covers the events of the weak king’s reign beginning with his father’s—Edward I’s—death. The play begins with Edward II’s lover, Piers Gaveston’s return from exile in France. Although he is not of noble blood, Edward II favors him and grants him the titles of Lord Chamberlain, Royal Secretary, and Earl of Cornwall—much to the other nobles’ discontent. Due to these nobles’ complaints, Edward II

is forced to re-exile Gaveston (this time to Ireland). Meanwhile, readers learn of his queen's, Isabella of France, affair with Mortimer Jr. Together with Warwick and Lancaster, they have Gaveston returned to English soil in order for him to be executed. Edward II, in turn, executes both Warwick and Lancaster. Isabella journeys with her son, Edward III, and Mortimer Jr. to France in order to raise an army against Edward II, eventually gaining aid from Sir John of Hainault (Belgium). Edward II is defeated at the Battle of Bannockburn and is imprisoned. The king's brother, Edmund, is executed for visiting the former king in prison. Edward II is eventually taken to Berkeley and murdered by Lightborn. Having discovered his mother's plot with Mortimer Jr., Edward III has Mortimer Jr. executed and his mother imprisoned as he ascends to the English throne.

What I found most interesting about this play was how it could be viewed as both a historical play or a domestic tragedy due to the dramatization of Isabella's plotting with Mortimer Jr. against her husband.

**Marlowe, Christopher. *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus. English Renaissance***

***Drama: A Norton Anthology.* Eds. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine**

**Eisaman Maus, and Eric Rasmussen. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2012.**

**245-285. Print.**

Marlowe's play, *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, tells the story of Doctor Faustus, an academic who believes that he has learned all that he can from scholarly sources and seeks

greater knowledge from the dark arts, specifically, Lucifer, himself. Faustus trades his body and soul for twenty-four years of Mephistopheles' services. After first gaining knowledge of astronomy from Mephistopheles, Faustus and Mephistopheles leave Wittenberg, Germany and travel the world. After an indeterminate amount of time spent traveling, Faustus returns to Wittenberg and, having gleaned a reputation as a master of the dark arts, visits the court of Charles V, emperor of Germany, and the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt in order to convey proof of his powers—producing the image of Alexander the Great for the former and a bowl of grapes for the latter. Finally, having reached the end of his twenty-four year contract, Faustus tells his fellow scholars of his dealings with the Devil and is dragged, body and soul, to hell—forswearing ever going to Wittenberg and ever reading a book.

Of particular interest within this play is its attention to Faustus' search for knowledge as the gateway to his dealings with the devil. This is first conveyed in the opening scene of the play when Faustus, having already achieved the status of doctor of theology, contemplates studying both medicine and law, ultimately determining that neither of these disciplines can grant him the knowledge that he desires—thus leading him to his dealing with Mephistopheles and the devil. Knowledge as a gateway to the devil is also referenced in the final scene of the play, in which Faustus proclaims, “oh, would / I had never seen Wittenberg, never read a book!” Thus, suggesting that his dealings with the devil began prior to the events of play, when he first attended school. By portraying knowledge as the gateway to hell, Marlowe's play reflects upon the early modern period's fears of modernity and fortifies the concept that all knowledge should be sought only through God.



**Middleton, Thomas, and Rowley, William. *The Changeling. English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*. Eds. David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Eric Rasmussen. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2012. 1593-1657. Print.**

At the beginning of this play, the audience learns that Alsemero loves Beatrice. He proposes to her but she is already engaged to marry Alonso de Piracquo. Alonso and his brother, Tomazo, pay a visit to Beatrice and her father, Vermandero, at their home. And, Beatrice asks to stall the wedding by three days. She later meets with Alsemero in secret with Diphanta also present. The two lovers discuss potentially killing Alonso. Although Alsemero offers to kill him himself, Beatrice decides to flirt with De Flores in order to convince him to kill Alonso—he agrees. After Beatrice leaves, Alonso enters and asks for a tour of the Castle. De Flores obliges but requests that they leave their swords behind. While Alonso looks out of the window, De Flores stabs him to death and cuts off one of Alonso's fingers in order to take a diamond ring. De Flores leaves with Alonso's body. Meanwhile, in the second plot of the story, Alibius has arranged for Lollio to lock his wife, Isabella, up as he does not trust her to remain faithful. After Alonso's murder, Lollio introduces Isabella to Antonio who has been disguised as a mad man. Alibius enters and informs them that the madmen will perform at Beatrice and Alonso's wedding. Beatrice attempts to convince her father to like Alsemero. De Flores seeks out Beatrice, informs her of Alonso's death by showing her the ring, and expects her virginity as payment. Beatrice attempts to give De Flores the ring as payment and adds money to his reward as she sees he is not satisfied. She

eventually gives into his reasoning and agrees to sleep with him. Beatrice convinces Diaphanta to take her place after the wedding so Alsemero will not know that she wasn't a virgin. Tomatzo believes Alsemero killed his brother and challenges him to a duel after the wedding. And, Jasperino tells Alsemero that he overheard Beatrice and De Flores having sex. Alsemero makes Beatrice drink the virginity test and she acts out the symptoms—proving she is still a virgin. When Beatrice overhears Alsemero and Diaphanta having sex, she plots with De Flores to murder her. De Flores sets fire to the castle and brings out Diaphanta's dead body. Later, Jasperino and Alsemero see Beatrice and De Flores talking in the garden and Alsemero accuses Beatrice of infidelity. He locks her in a closet until he questions De Flores who confesses both to murder and to sleeping with Beatrice—Alsemero locks him in the closet with Beatrice. De Flores stabs both Beatrice and himself—he begs forgiveness for killing Alonzo and Beatrice begs forgiveness from Alsemero. Both die.

**Moulton, Ian Frederick. “‘A Monster Great Deformed’: The Unruly Masculinity of Richard III.” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 47.3 (1996): 251-268. Web. 22 Oct. 2015.**

Within this article, Ian Frederick Moulton situates *Richard III* within its specific historical moment during which anxiety over both gender ideologies and the threat of a crumbling patriarchal system were rampant in England. While today we recognize the overall success of Elizabeth I's reign, her reign bore witness to countless crimes of masculine aggressivity that threatened the patriarchal society in which she lived and reigned. In his study of *Richard III*, Moulton highlights Richard's tendencies towards unruly masculine aggression in order to

examine the ways in which his ideologies—which were associated with medieval concepts of masculinity which favored a warrior approach—resulted in the destruction of patriarchal order. Moulton also notes the weakness and femininity of Richard’s preceding monarchs, Henry VI and Edward VI, in order to stress the ways in which Richard serves as the antithesis of their feminine rule over England. In short, Moulton argues that the social ideologies with which Shakespeare plays with in *Richard III* reflect those that were being hotly debated/acted upon by men who—also favoring the glory of the medieval warrior system—were struggling to come to terms with the new, early modern court system.

“One of the greatest structural problems facing any patriarchal society is the control of the masculine aggressively, violence, and self-assertion that constitute patriarchy’s base. Although patriarchy depends on male homosocial ties and masculine aggressivity for its organization and enforcement, the masculine values inculcated by patriarchal societies can themselves pose a threat to patriarchal order” (Moulton 251).

“Tensions raised by the war with Spain and by rapid population growth led to thirty-five outbreaks of disorder in the capital between 1581 and 1602. While most of these disturbances were described by contemporaries as riots of ‘apprentices,’ the disorderly crowds also included servants, masterless men, and discharged soldiers and sailors” (Moulton 252).

“[T]he transition of the male elite from a warrior culture to a court culture in the sixteenth

and seventeenth centuries was marked by an increasing sublimation of affect and the gradual disappearance of ‘pacified social spaces . . . normally free from acts of violence’ (Moulton 253).

“negotiating the gap between ideologies of masculinity based on physical force and the novel social situation of the Renaissance court” (Moulton 253)

“The monarch, who ought to incarnate patriarchy symbolically in the body politic of the kingship, was not a man but a woman, Elizabeth I, whose body natural was feminine and who was incapable of producing a male heir because of her advanced age” (Moulton 253).

“That Elizabeth proved herself an able if reluctant leader of a nation at war did not diminish anxieties about her gender or about the uncertain succession. And while in retrospect the 1588 defeat of the Spanish Armada marked the high point of the conflict, this was certainly not apparent at the time” (Moulton 253).

“Following Elizabeth’s death and the end of the war in 1603, there was a ‘rapid decline’ in both the quality and quantity of history plays” (Moulton 254).

“While these plays [the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III*] dealt with English wars of the fifteenth century, they also addressed concerns and anxieties provoked by the contemporary war with Spain: they focus on the dangers of feminine rule, the problem of an

uncertain succession to the crown, the threat of foreign invaders, and the excess of unruly or self-serving captains” (Moulton 254).

“It is not surprising, therefore, that Shakespeare’s first tetralogy consistently reads the political struggles for the English crown in terms of gender” (Moulton 254).

“Over the course of the three *Henry VI* plays, effeminate rulers and mannish women destabilize the traditional patriarchal power structure and gender hierarchy of England, leaving the realm in chaos” (Moulton 254-255).

“Beyond the practical dangers of having a child monarch—conflict among the regents, uncertainty concerning the succession, and a general division of authority—a boy-king is also dangerously gendered” (Moulton 256).

“Coming to the throne when he is ‘but nine years old,’ Henry VI becomes king before becoming masculine. Given hierarchy of gender which sees ability to rule as a fundamentally masculine attribute, this situation is dangerously unstable” (Moulton 256).

“the progressive decay of patriarchal order” (Moulton 257)

“the self-destructive tendencies within a patriarchal ethic that prizes the preservation of family honor above the lives of individual family members” (Moulton 256-257)

“In the absence of strong masculine royal authority, English manhood, unruly and untamed, turns to devour itself. It is this unregulated, destructive masculine force that is personified in the twisted and deformed body of Richard III” (Moulton 258).

“tragedy is a genre that . . . is gendered male” (Moulton 258)

“In the famous opening of *Richard III*, Richard . . . provides an anatomy of effeminization” (Moulton 259).

“His [Richard’s] physical monstrosity manifests itself as a social monstrosity” (Moulton 261).

“His [Richard’s] ambition, his prowess as a warrior, his viciousness, his cruel intelligence—the same masculine qualities that made him an asset to the Yorkists as a group—become monstrous when cut loose from the structure of bonds between male warriors which constitutes English ruling-class society” (Moulton 262).

“In early modern England the birth of a deformed child was inevitably seen as portentous, and in Richard’s case his deformed body figures his masculinity as both perverse and dangerous for the nation” (Moulton 262).

“deformity is invariably read as a warning against sin—sins often understood as erotic in

origin and national in scope” (Moulton 262)

“In the French surgeon Ambroise Paré’s 1573 treatise *On Monsters and Marvels*, monstrous births are frequently attributed to aberrant or unnatural erotic practices, such as having intercourse during menstruation. The imagination of women during sex could result in monstrosity: a white woman thinking of a ‘Moor’ could give birth to a dark-skinned child.

And if a pregnant woman sat in an “indecent posture,’ she could deform the fetus she carried” (Moulton 263).

“In broadside ballads the specific nature of a child’s deformities is often read as a sign of England’s sexual sins” (Moulton 263).

“for [Francis] Bacon physical deformity is a sign of perverse desire. In his essay ‘Of Deformity,’ Bacon claims that scriptural authority for the notion that deformed persons are ‘*void of natural affection*’” (Moulton 265).

“Bacon contends that, if the genitals do not function properly, erotic energy will circulate in other channels, and he cites eunuchs as an example of how ‘deformity is an advantage to rising [in social standing].’ That which is unable to raise itself physically may rise socially instead” (Moulton 265).

“[Richard] gives no thought to progeny. . . . he is . . . utterly barren, able to destroy and

corrupt but not to create” (Moulton 265).

“the boar, and indeed the pig in general, is a creature who occupies a special place in the topography of early modern European culture. Kept in the home and fed on scraps, an animal whose pink skin ‘disturbingly resemble[s] the flesh of European babies,’ the pig was a ‘creature of the threshold’ which ‘overlapped with, and confusingly deposed, human habitat and diet alike. Its mode of life was not different from, but alarmingly embraced with, the forms of life which betokened civility” (Moulton 265).

“Richard’s aggressive masculinity is reflected in his utter contempt for women. Hatred, scorn, and fear of the feminine are fundamental to his character” (Moulton 266).

“For in patriarchal society in which property and social status are passed from father to son, women are crucial to male power. The importance of women’s reproductive labor in the perpetuation of the patriarchal order is reflected in the fact that for many of Shakespeare’s kings, courtship is a crucial act, which as much as any other, defines the nature and legitimacy of their rule” (Moulton 266).

“But while Richmond and Elizabeth are securely positioned in the patriarchal order, Richard is alienated from it; so for him performative courtship is crucial” (Moulton 266).

“By offering Anne his sword, he stages a calculated (and illusory) gender reversal, offering



her an opportunity to exercise phallic power which he assumes in advance that she will be incapable of accepting. Anne succumbs because she allows her political quarrel with Richard to be expressed in a discourse of erotic seduction which, while it gives her the illusion of power over her helpless 'effeminate' suitor, actually constructs her as feminine and passive, Richard as masculine and active" (Moulton 267).

"[Richard's] social vision includes the feminine in subordinate roles; he rules women but does not reject or despise them. . . . Richard in his final address to his troops sees women as valuable property to be kept out of the enemy's hands, Richmond offers a vision of a stable world held together in the present and the future by familial bonds of masculine duty and feminine and filial loyalty" (Moulton 268).

"[E]arly modern English drama from *Tamburlaine* to *Hamlet* and *Coriolanus* constructs the narrative of independent masculine aggression as a tragedy, in which an unruly, singular, yet compelling protagonist is inevitably destroyed by larger social forces" (Moulton 268).

**Orlin, Lena Cowen. *Private Matters and Public Culture in Post-Reformation England*.**

**Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994. Print.**

Within this text, Orlin utilizes domestic tragedies in such a way that allows them to be viewed as archival artifacts that can be used to reconstruct the public and private views of early modern England. Orlin provides readers with a relatively detailed account of post

reformation England—details that are critical to understanding the political and domestic views of the time. She examines the ways in which the public and private expectations of the time were contradictory—one way being that the private nature of the house was challenged by a neighbor’s public duty to watch his neighbor’s house for transgressions. Of particular interest to me was her comparison of the real, chronicled Thomas Arden—a villain in his own right—and that of the anonymous play, *Arden of Faversham*. In general, she notes that, in spite of a husband’s public faults, women were often written as the vehicles for moral lessons to the public due to their proclivity towards disobedience. In her concluding chapter, Orlin identifies Old Lionell’s house from *The English Traveller* as the emblem of the private and political views of the time due to it being “restless, conflicted, shape-shifting, imperfectly defended and unsusceptible of repose” (269).

Texts discussed include *Arden of Faversham*, *Two Lamentable Tragedies*, *A Woman Killed With Kindness*, *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, and *Othello*.

“The plays of the Elizabethan and Jacobean public theater satisfy the desires . . . to see through walls, to discover the intimate secrets of conjugal relationships, to identify disorder and to imagine that in this way it is mastered, to participate in a communal restoration of the preferred order of domestic things” (Orlin 8).

“[Domestic tragedies] materialize the house in all its associations: first, as the primary social and economic unity of early modern English culture; second, as a construction of delimiting

a world-in-little and accommodating its occupants' most basic physical needs for shelter and sustenance as well as their psychological needs for beauty and perdurability; and finally, as an ideological construct receptive to the superimposition of political models and moral regulations" (Orlin 9).

“[T]he wide ranging phenomena that followed . . . the English Reformation . . . [t]hese include the break with Rome and with papal authority, the assertion of royal supremacy and the incipience of the doctrine of divine right; the mobilization of faction at court, a readjustment of the relationship between king and parliament, and a (much-argued) ‘revolution’ in the administration of government; the conduct of national propaganda campaign, the imposition on all citizens of an oath of the kings supremacy, and multiple executions for treason and rebellion; the advancement of humanism, private access to scripture, and an impetus toward print culture; the dissolution of the monasteries, the plundering of their treasuries and building materials, and the dispossession of their occupants; the redistribution of national wealth through the transfer of properties from the church to the crown and from the crown to members of there aristocracy and gentry; the use of revenues seized from the church to conduct foreign policy and to subsidize such central government operations as the royal household and administrative offices; the rise of evangelism, the placing on the national agenda of alternative strategies for poor relief and social reform, and the secularized redefinition of charity; the growth of a national identity and sense of history; the reinvention of the household as a unit of social control, the empowerment of the householder as defender of political order, and, finally, the

promulgation of an enabling ideology of domestic patriarchy” (Orlin 16-17).

“[A]s Edmund Tilney wrote, ‘disobedience is a fault in all persons, but the greatest vice in a woman.’ For this reason, female characters were apt literary vehicles, in late sixteenth-century England, for the acting out of crises of authority and obedience” (Orlin 104).

**Richardson, Catherine. *Domestic Life and Domestic Tragedy in Early Modern England: The Material Life of the Household*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006. Print.**

Within this book, Richardson focuses on the ways the material elements of the domestic are depicted within early modern domestic tragedies. She argues that by depicting contemporary, domestic scenes, domestic tragedies invited audience engagement that not only invites them to witness traumatic events on the stage, but also encourages them to make comparisons between the fictive domestic world of the play and the real domestic homes of the audience. She makes a compelling case while also engendering the home and the materials both within and outside of it. Richardson also provides a detailed account of the gender roles that existed within early modern society and often cites household/marriage manuals of the times.

Texts discussed include *Arden of Faversham*, *Two Lamentable Tragedies*, *A Woman Killed With Kindness*, and *A Yorkshire Tragedy*.

“If ‘Language remained the most sophisticated technology of representation’, and ‘the illusion often lay not in how something looked but how it was described’, then illusion moves in complex ways between the visual and the verbal” (Richardson 8).

“It is by beginning with the ‘normal’, by staging horrifically aberrant behaviour within an ‘everyday’ context, that the secure can be made insecure by being shaken out of the complacency of daily routine” (Richardson 15).

“Calling upon a sense of appropriate behaviour sharpens the spectator’s notion of its connection to social status, particularly in a period of growing social mobility” (Richardson 15).

“In *Playgoing in Shakespeare’s London*, Andrew Gurr states that the ‘complete social range’ of playgoers ‘goes all the way from earls and even a queen to penniless rogues . . . and the unemployed’ and extends to women as well as men. The chronology of audience patterns is also significant. Gurr concludes that ‘citizens were the standard kind of playgoer in the 1550s, but . . . they were a distinctly less normal feature of the later indoor playhouse audiences’ . . . . By the time domestic tragedy declined, the audiences attending different kinds of playhouse had become divided along hierarchical lines” (Richardson 16).

“As the king ruled the country, so the husband ruled his household. His authority there was absolute, and those who lived under his roof owed him loyalty and allegiance just as he owed them protection and the wisdom of his government. . . . A wife’s place . . . ‘is indeed a place

of inferiority and subjection, yet the nearest to equality that may be: a place of common equity in many respects, wherein man and wife are . . . fellowes and partners” (Richardson 27).

“Rifts within the social fabric of the house produce shocking and irreparable physical results: ‘As a kingdome cannot stand, if it be divided: so a house cannot stand, if it be divided: for strife is like fire, which leaves nothing . . . but dust and smoke behinde it” (Richardson 29).

“By ruling the household, men gain the skills to govern on a larger scale: ‘it is impossible for a man to understand to governe the common wealth, that doth not know to rule his owne house, or order his owne person, so that he that knoweth not to governe deserveth not to raigne’. As with everything masculine, this kind of identity works against the separation of domestic and public personas, suggesting a synthesis of ways of being in which differences in authority are those of scale only, and not of kind” (Richardson 33).

“But correspondence has a temporal order built into it. Masculine credit is *first* forged through the way a man handles the responsibilities of rule within the house, and then broadcast in the community at large . . . . [T]he household offered a testing ground for masculine identity and was the place where honour began, where it was shaped.” (Richardson 33).

“Gouge makes the important distinction that she must ‘so rule others as she be subject to her

husband, and not command any thing against his command'; she must act as her husband's representative only, over whom 'if she take any authority, she usurpeth it'" (Richardson 47).

"There is an insistence that locality and place affects identity; that the county itself is fertile for the breeding of people and plots" (Richardson 107).

"The fundamental significance of these different locations is the extent to which space can be controlled by the murderers. The progression of the narrative implicitly contrasts outside against inside, domestic against communal, in a way which invites the audience to consider *why* the final attempt within Arden's own parlour was successful, and what might be the implications of the fruitfulness of such a space for murder" (Richardson 108).

"His social position is such that his family in part defines the nature of the county in which they are based; in the past they have symbolized the county by expressing its ideals. . . . Linked to the house itself, the Husband's behavior is also inevitably connected to the lands which sustain such a residence" (Richardson 177).

"[The bed] chamber, a female space of nurture and sleep [is] . . . a soft and yet protective space of nurture. . . . The male intrusion into this space is harmful; instead of creating it destroys" (Richardson 188).

"Involved in birth and death, the bed comes to symbolize the essentially paradoxical nature

of the household as simultaneous source of stability and change” (Richardson 188).

“They use the idea of bounded space to intensify emotion and, as they are interested in disjuncture, to call to the audience’s mind the disparity between a bedchamber and a wife-murder [*Othello*]; the singleness of a closet and the doubleness of sibling husbands [*Hamlet*]. In general, then, early modern plays use the conventions of domestic representation to explore the particular significance of the household which is central to their generic form” (Richardson 200).

The bed chamber is a space that “defined family and lineage” (Richardson 202).

**Schwyzler, Philip. *Shakespeare and the Remains of Richard III*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Print.**

Within his book, Schwyzler examines the many ways that Richard III’s body and its remains are important to the study of both the historical Richard III and the collective memory of Richard III. Through the discussion of Richard’s lifetime and the decades that followed, Schwyzler chronologically traces accounts of Richard (be-it behavioral or physical) in order to determine the point at which history and memory converged, delivering us the tyrannical, murderous, hunchbacked villain we remember today. Schwyzler argues that Shakespeare wrote *Richard III* at a time at which living memory was ending and active/communicative memory was just beginning. According to Schwyzler, it was both the time at which



Shakespeare wrote *Richard III* and his method for combining and referencing numerous chronicled accounts of the Plantagenet king that resulted in Shakespeare's play becoming synonymous with the historical Richard III. Schwyzer identifies negative aspects of Shakespeare's method, combining so many historical accounts, which ultimately "creates warps, ruptures, and pleats in dramatic time" (222).

"Shakespeare's Richard is determined to pit his sheer will against the multifarious power of the body (of Henry's to testify against him, of his own to repulse, of Anne's to be repulsed by him). . . . Richard is at once all body and no-body, standing for the power of the body in its stubbornly irreducible corporeality to shape history, yet somehow also signifying a triumph over the body, the reduction of all that worldly physicality to 'nothing'" (Schwyzer 15-16).

"Long after his death, the body of Richard III retained its signifying power and capacity to challenge Tudor orthodoxies, taking part in emerging debates over matters of royal authority and national identity, the nature of tyranny, the claims of the dead, and the limits of humanity" (Schwyzer 16).

"Part of the function of the tomb or grave is to help us to forget the dead body, both by concealing it and by providing a visible and material substitute for it, a surrogate social self.

. . . The disappearance of [Richard III's] body from its container recalls and tropes the disappearance of the person from the world through death: a missing corpse thus literalizes the *uni sunt* motif in a way that undermines its conventional otherworldly resolutions. [In

this way, the mystery surrounding Richard's missing physical body mobilizes the] paradoxical power of the empty tomb to make the absent present" (Schwyzer 35).

"From the 1510s, a definite historical vision of Richard's reign—one characterized by ruthless violence and rank hypocrisy, presided over by a morally and physically misshapen tyrant—took shape and gathered weight in manuscript histories and printed chronicles" (Schwyzer 67).

"Composed in the early 1590s, [Shakespeare's] *Richard III* occupies a distinctive historical moment in relation to its subject—a period after the extinction of living memory, but still within the horizon of what is variously termed 'active' or 'communicative memory,' the period of 90-120 years in which memories may be transmitted over three or four generations, whilst retaining at least some of the vividness and immediacy of personal recollection" (Schwyzer 71-72).

"The play's deep engagement with memory and its transmission is key to its own immediate and enduring dominion over all subsequent efforts to remember Richard III. . . . [As later] memories were not simply stamped with the image of Shakespeare's play, but . . . refracted through it" (Schwyzer 88-89).

"[T]he Richard of Shakespeare's play differs from his predecessors not because he departs from the [historical] tradition but because he distills, absorbs, and embodies it . . . .

Shakespeare's success in making Richard the full embodiment of the broader historical tradition explains in part why his version became so instantly influential, indeed all but inescapable, for subsequent writers in the same tradition" (Schwyzer 204-205).

"*Richard III* is the product of a world still thoroughly pervaded by traces and remnants of Ricardian time, ranging from inherited memories to serviceable domestic objects, and including both established institutions and unofficial practices. . . . Shakespeare's play owes much of its power to its awareness of and interaction with these traces—an awareness we find registered in charged moments and passages which disrupt the normal temporality of historical drama" (Schwyzer 217).

**Shakespeare, William. *Henry IV Part I*. Ed. Claire McEachern. London: Penguin Books, 2000. Print.**

*Henry IV Part I* begins with Henry IV receiving news that Mortimer lost a battle in Wales, meanwhile, Hotspur defeated the Earl of Douglas. Hotspur withholds his prisoners of war—despite King Henry IV's request for them—due to Worcester's urgings to form an alliance with the fallen Earl of Douglas and raise an army against the king. Meanwhile, the audience is introduced to Prince Henry—better known as Hal—and his comrade Falstaff. Despite his father's wishes, Hal prefers spending his time with the lowly peasants to performing his princely duties and aiding his father in war. After robbing Falstaff on the road, Hal is summoned by the king who requests that he begin acting like a proper prince of England.

After hearing of the uprising and being compared to the likes of Hotspur, Hal swears to prove himself to his father and assembles an army to battle in the king's name at the Battle of Shrewsbury. He assigns Falstaff the position of foot soldier—which displeases Falstaff as his weight makes it difficult for him to walk. Hal saves his father on the battlefield—whip prompts an apology from the king. Hal defeats Hotspur on the battlefield, and Falstaff stabs Hotspur's dead body—taking the kill as his own. King Henry IV wins the battle, sentences Worcester and Vernon to death, and plans to march on York and Glendower.

**Shakespeare, William. *Henry IV Part II*. Ed. René Weis. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Print.**

*Henry IV Part II* begins shortly after the events of the Battle of Shrewsbury from *Henry IV Part I*. Northumberland learns of his son's, Hotspur's, death and the rebels begin to wonder if they can defeat Henry IV without Northumberland's help. Meanwhile, Falstaff—who Hal as the newly appointed Chief Justice has pardoned of all previous offenses, is threatened to be arrested by Hostess Quickly. Hal and Poinciville decide to disguise themselves as waiters in order to follow Falstaff to Eastcheap and see how he behaves behind Hal's back.

Northumberland is persuaded by Lady Percy and his wife to withdraw his support and he flees for Scotland—awaiting a more opportune time to challenge the king. Hal overhears Falstaff speaking ill of him and confronts him. Prince John, Hal's younger brother, arrests Mowbray, Hastings, and the Archbishop of York for high treason. Henry IV is ill and—realizing he will never embark on his crusade to the Holy Land—requests that his son think

on foreign lands (which Henry V will forever be remembered for his victory at the Battle of Agincourt) and his is taken to the Jerusalem room to die. Once king, Hal (now Henry V) denies ever knowing Falstaff and begins looking towards invading France.

**Shakespeare, William. *Henry VI Part III. Henry VI.* Ed. Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen. New York: Random House, Inc., 2012. 233-339. Print.**

*Henry VI Part III* opens right after the Battle of St. Albans. Richard Plantagenet—Richard III's father—is placed on the throne until he is captured and killed Margaret of Anjou. Edward and Richard swear revenge after hearing of their father's murder and proceed to defeat the Lancastrians in battle—claiming the crown for York. Henry VI is captured and summoned to the tower at Edward IV's command. Edward IV defies his counsel and married Lady Grey while Warwick weds his daughter, Anne, to Margaret's son, Prince Edward. Clarence joins with Warwick in the revolt against Edward IV. Henry VI is briefly returned to the throne but is soon overthrown by the Yorkists. The play ends with the decimation of the Lancastrian line at Tewkesbury where Warwick and Prince Edward are killed. Later, Richard murders Henry VI and Edward IV's son is born.

GLOUCESTER. Richard, I bear thy name, I'll venue thy death,

Or die renowned by attempting it. (*3 Henry VI* 2.1.87-88)

GLOUCESTER. Ay, Edward will use women honourably.

Would he were wasted, marrow, bones and all,

That from his loins no hopeful branch may spring,  
To cross me from the golden time I look for.  
And yet, between my soul's desire and me—  
The lustful Edward's title buried—  
Is Clarence, Henry, and his son young Edward,  
And all the unlooked for issue of their bodies,  
To take their rooms, ere I can place myself.  
A cold premeditation for my purpose.  
Why, then, I do but dream on sovereignty, (*3 Henry VI* 3.2.125-135)

GLOUCESTER. Unless my hand and strength could equal them.

Well, say there is no kingdom then for Richard:  
What other pleasure can the world afford?  
I'll make my heaven in a lady's lap,  
And deck my body in gay ornaments,  
And witch sweet ladies with my words and looks.  
O, miserably thought, and more unlikely  
Than to accomplish twenty golden crowns.  
Why, love foreswore me in my mother's womb,  
And, for I should not deal in her soft laws,  
She did corrupt frail nature with some bribe,  
To shrink mine arm up like a withered shrub,

To make an envious mountain on my back,  
Where sits deformity to mock my body;  
To shape my legs of an unequal size,  
To disproportion me in every part,  
Like to a chaos or an unlicked bear-whelp,  
That carries no impression like the dam.  
And am I then a man to be beloved?  
O, monstrous fault, to harbour such a thought.  
Then, since this earth affords no joy to me,  
But to command, to check, to o'rbear such  
As are of better person than myself,  
I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown,  
And whiles I live, t'account this world but hell,  
Until my misshaped trunk that bears this head  
Be round impaléd with a glorious crown,  
For many lives stand between me and home  
And I—like one lost in a thorny wood,  
That rents the thorns and is rent with the thorns,  
Seeking a way and straying from the way,  
Not knowing how to find the open air,  
But toiling desperately to find it out—  
Torment myself to catch the English crown:

And from that torment I will free myself,  
Or hew my way out with a bloody axe.  
Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile,  
And cry 'Content' to that which grieves my heart,  
And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,  
And frame my face to all occasions.  
I'll drown more sailors than the mermaid shall,  
I'll slay more gazers than the basilisk,  
I'll play the orator as well as Nestor,  
Deceive more slyly than Ulysses could,  
And, like a Sinon, take another Troy.  
I can add colours to the chameleon,  
Change shapes with Proteus for advantages,  
And set the murderous Machevil to school.  
Can I do this, and cannot get a crown?  
Tut, were it further off, I'll pluck it down. (*3 Henry VI* 3.3.146-196)

KING HENRY VI. If murdering innocents be executing,

Why then, thou art an executioner

GLOUCESTER. Thy son I killed for his presumption.

KING HENRY VI. Hadst thou been killed when first thou didst presume,

Though hadst not lived to kill a son of mine.



And thus I prophesy, that many a thousand,  
Which now mistrust no parcel of my fear,  
And many an old man's sigh and many a widow's,  
And many an orphan's water-standing eye—  
Men for their sons, wives for their husbands,  
Orphans for their parents' timeless death—  
Shall rue the hour that ever thou wast born.  
The owl shrieked at thy birth—an evil sign—  
The night-crow cried, aboding luckless time,  
Dogs howled, and hideous tempest shook down trees,  
The raven rook'd her on the chimney's tip,  
And chatt'ring pies in dismal discords sung.  
Thy mother felt more than a mother's pain,  
And yet brought forth less than a mother's hope,  
To wit, an indigested and deform'd lump,  
Not like the fruit of such a goodly tree.  
Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou wast born,  
To signify thou cam'st to bite the world. (*3 Henry VI* 5.6.32-54)

GLOUCESTER. I have no brother, I am like no brother.

And this word 'love;', which graybeards call divine,  
Be resident in men like one another

And not in me: I am myself alone.  
Clarence, beware, thou keep's me from the light,  
But I will sort a pitchy day for thee,  
For I will buzz abroad such prophecies  
That Edward shall be fearful of his life,  
And then, to purge his fear, I'll be thy death.  
King Henry and the prince his son are gone.  
Clarence, thy turn is next, and then the rest,  
Counting myself but bad util I be best. (*3 Henry VI* 5.6.80-91)

**Shakespeare, William. *Richard II*. Eds. Anthony B. Dawson and Paul Yachnin.**

**Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Print.**

*Richard II* can be identified as the inciting incident that would lead to the War of the Roses as it tells the story of Henry Bolingbroke's (of Lancaster) usurpation of the throne. The play begins with Richard II setting a dispute between two noblemen, Mowbray and Bolingbroke, who both accuse each other of treason. Richard II banishes both men—Mowbray for life and Bolingbroke for 10 years—although he decreases Bolingbroke's sentence to six. Having settled this matter, Richard II looks towards his war with Ireland, however he lacks the funds to wage war. Richard II decides to force noblemen to fund his venture and takes over the estate that formerly belonged to Bolingbroke. Meanwhile, Bolingbroke has assembled an army and marches on London claiming to only want the lands which were taken from him.

However, Richard is away in Wales so Bolingbroke meets with York instead. After finally meeting with Richard II and Flint castle, Bolingbroke and Richard II return to London together where Richard willingly bequeaths the crown to Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke sends Richard first to the tower and then to Pomfret—where Exton, believing he is doing what Bolingbroke wishes, murders Richard II. Bolingbroke—now Henry IV—is not pleased with Exton’s work and realizes that he will now have to defend his claim to the crown by force. The play ends with Henry IV vowing to take a pilgrimage to the Holy Land to cleanse his conscious for the part he played in Richard II’s death.

**Shakespeare, William. *Richard III*. Ed. John Jowett. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Print.**

*Richard III* begins where *Henry VI Part III* left off—with Edward IV on the throne and England in a time of peace. Richard is unhappy due to his deformity not allowing him to enjoy in the idle pleasures that peace brings and so he swears to prove a villain. He sees to his brother Clarence’s demise—an event, which Shakespeare’s play insinuates, provokes the king’s death as well. Having eliminated his brothers’ claims to the throne, Richard takes advantage of the now split court and assumes his role as Lord Protector. He woos and wed Anne after having killed both her father and her husband in the previous play. Richard escorts Prince Edward to the tower to await his coronation while also retrieving the would-be-king’s younger brother, Richard, from sanctuary. Shakespeare follows in the tradition of Sir Thomas Moore in having James Tyrrell murder the princes in their bed chamber. Richard

is ultimately overthrown by Henry Tudor, Duke of Richmond at the end of the play as he dies a coward's death—begging to trade his horse for his throne.

RICHARD DUKE OF GLOUCESTER. Now is the winter of our discontent

Made glorious summer by this sun of York,  
And all the clouds that loured upon our house  
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried,  
Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,  
Our bruised arms hung up for monuments,  
Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,  
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.  
Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front,  
And now, instead of mounting barbéd steeds  
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,  
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber  
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.  
But I that am not shaped for sportive tricks  
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass,  
I that am rudely stamped, and want love's majesty  
To strut before a wanton-ambling nymph,  
I that am curtailed of this fair proportion,  
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,

Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time  
Into this breathing world scarce half made up,  
And that so lamely and unfashionable  
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them:  
Why, I in this weak-piping time of peace  
Have no delight to pass away the time,  
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun  
And descant on mine own deformity.  
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover  
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,  
I am determinéd to prove a villain,  
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.  
Plots have I laid inductees, dangerous,  
By drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams,  
To set my brother Clarence and the King  
In deadly hate the one against the other;  
And if King Edward be as true and just  
As I am subtle, false, and treacherous,  
This day should Clarence closely be mew'd up  
About a prophecy which says that 'G'  
Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be. (*Richard III* 1.1.1-40)

RICHARD DUKE OF GLOUCESTER. He cannot live, I hope, and must not  
die

Till George be packed with post-haste up to heaven.

I'll in, to urge his hatred more to Clarence

With lies well steeled with weighty arguments;

And if I fail not in my deep intent,

Clarence hath not another day to live;

Which done, Got take King Edward to his mercy

And leave the world for me to bustle in,

For then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter—

What though I killed her husband and her father?

The readiest way to make the wench amends

Is to become her husband and her father,

The which will I—not all so much for love,

As for another secret close intent

By marrying her which I must reach unto.

But yes I run before my horse to the market:

Clarence still breathes, Edward still lives and reigns.

When they are gone, then must I count my gains.

*(Richard III 1.2.144-161)*

RICHMOND. For what is he they follow? Truly, gentlemen,

A bloody tyrant and a homicide;  
One raised in blood, and one in blood established;  
And slaughtered those that were the means to help him;  
A base, foul stone, made precious by the foil  
Of England's chair where he is falsely set;  
One that hath ever been God's enemy.  
Then if you fight against God's enemy,  
God will, in justice, ward you as his soldiers.  
If you do sweat to put a tyrant down,  
You sleep in peace, the tyrant being slain.  
If you do fight against your country's foes,  
Your country's fat shall pay your pains the hire.  
If you do fight in safeguard of your wives,  
Your wives shall welcome home the conquerors.  
If you do free your children from the sword,  
Your children's children quite it in your age.  
Then, in the name of God and all these rights,  
Advance your standards, draw your willing swords.  
For me, the ransom of my bold attempt  
Shall be his cold corpse on the earth's cold face.  
But if I thrive, the gain of my attempt  
The least of you shall share his part thereof.

Sound drums and trumpets bold and cheerfully!

God and Saint George! Richmond and victory!

(*Richard III* 5.4.224-249)

**Suzuki, Mihoko. “Gender, Class, and the Social Order in Late Elizabethan Drama.”**

***Theatre Journal* 44 (1992): 31-45. Web. 9 Oct. 2015.**

Within this article, Mihoko Suzuki examines the ways in which the plays *Arden of Faversham*, *A Warning for Fair Women*, and *Twelfth Night* dramatize and displace the social anxieties of the late 16th and early 17th centuries concerning class mobility through the equally unstable notion of Elizabethan gender relations. According to Suzuki, both *Arden* and *Warning*'s plots are generated through their leading men's desire for class mobility: Thomas Arden rose in class first by marrying Alice—a woman of superior rank—and second by accumulating grants of lands, meanwhile, George Sanders spends most of his time at the Exchange which, Suzuki argues, leads to Anne's vulnerability and own thoughts of upward-social mobility. In both cases, Suzuki believes that the women become scapegoats for the men's desires due to women's place within society—making them easier to target and control compared to that of their male counterparts. Suzuki links *Arden* and *Warning* with the later Jacobean tragedies *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Changeling* due to all four plays' treatment of “women who transgress both class and gender hierarchies” (430). Finally, through her inclusion of *Twelfth Night* within this discussion, Suzuki states that Comedy, unlike Tragedy, is able to convey the anxieties of both social mobility and gender relations without punishing



those women who dare to transgress against the patriarchy.

“Alice’s unruliness, partly stemming from her pride in her superior origins, and Arden’s own reluctance to chastise the wife who brought him advancement in status, both contribute to the tragedy of Arden, which dramatizes the consequences of his social climbing” (34).

“Arden’s scorn for Mosby’s humble social origin appears stronger than his distress at being cuckolded; his vehemence in describing Mosby’s social climbing reveals Arden’s desire to repudiate the similarity between Mosby and himself” (Suzuki 35).

“The husband’s absence, and specifically his excessive interest in monetary gain, draws his wife out of his house and makes her, and ultimately Sanders himself, vulnerable to predators like Browne” (Suzuki 35).

“An undercurrent running through both plays [*Arden* and *Warning*] implies that rapaciousness makes these men vulnerable to their murderers, and, in *Arden* especially, that the titular hero to some extent deserves to die” (Suzuki 35).

“As the point of view concerning both the victim and the murderer fluctuates in *Arden* and *Warning*, giving evidence of a strong ambivalence concerning these upwardly mobile males, each play shifts the responsibility for the murder onto the wife, thereby displacing the anxiety from the realm of class to the realm of gender relations. The tragedies place the blame on the

women, making them scapegoats the aspiring males” (Suzuki 38).

“The ‘warning’ dramatized in both plays asserts that women should be controlled within the patriarchal family, because aspiring males who trigger disorder in the public sphere cannot be so easily contained. A similar management of disorderly women marks Jacobean tragedies such as Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi* (1616) and Middleton and Rowley’s *The Changeling* (1632): by destroying the Duchess and Beatrice-Joanna, both aristocratic women who elude patriarchal control by joining themselves to servingmen, these tragedies punish women who transgress both class and gender hierarchies” (Suzuki 43).

**Travitsky, Betty S. “Child Murder in English Renaissance Life and Drama.” *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England* 6 (1993): 63-84. Web. 3 Dec. 2015.**

Within her article, “Child Murder in English Renaissance Life and Drama,” Betty S. Travitsky explores the topic of child murder during the early modern period. She discusses that it was a common crime amongst unmarried women. However, notes that men also committed this crime. Travitsky associates the prevalence of murderesses to the Renaissance’s double standard that men could live promiscuous lives outside of their marriages, but that women were expected to remain chaste until marriage and then loyal to their husbands. Most murders that were depicted on stage were reserved for those of older children as the killing of younger, more innocent, children was not considered suitable for public spectacle.

“For while the murder of newborn children was not uncommon in Renaissance England—especially among poor and unmarried women—. . . drama explores such murders only rarely” (Travitsky 63).

This ‘new mother’ was a mis and judicious woman with increased and clear-cut responsibility for the raising of her children and a clearly recognized right to self-development for her own sake, but a woman who could use her new resources only within the confines of her own family” (Travitsky 64).

“[A] woman’s authority was normally limited to her subordinates in her own household” (Travitsky 64).

“The humanists and Protestant reformers did not completely overturn the traditional perception that women were weak-minded and prone to passionate excess, and the translation of what has traditionally been termed the ‘dread of women’ into repressive, patriarchal codes remained in tact” (Travitsky 64).

“a society in which women remained rigidly subordinated to male authority, indeed, in which there seemed a need to insist in official and popular pronouncements on their continued subordination to male authority” (Travitsky 64)

“The lower classes were particularly affected by accelerated enclosures of land, the

emergence of early capitalism and the fluctuations of its markets, devastating harvests (particularly in the 1590s), and debasements of the currency. Their ranks were increased, at this unpromising time, by discharged retainers of both the nobility and religious houses and, periodically, by discharged soldiers returning from foreign wars, all of them left to fend for themselves as a result of political and religious changes. The often displaced and impoverished rural poor—including women—were perceived at the time by the authorities as alarming and significant threats to stability and authority” (Travitsky 65). She investigates *A Yorkshire Tragedy* as it constitutes one of the few instances in which a husband is portrayed killing his children. Meanwhile, the remainder of her analysis focuses on representations of the Medea figure.

“That repugnance is therefore an evidence of the ‘double standard’ in Renaissance sexual relations, or ‘the view,’ as defined by Keith Thomas, ‘that unchastity, in the sense of sexual relations before or outside of marriage, is for a man, if an offense, none the less a mild and pardonable one, but for a woman a matter of the utmost gravity’” (Travitsky 65).

“The growing efforts by the secular authorities to maintain order and to keep the cost of poor relief down led to such official efforts as the attempt to establish the paternity of illegitimate babies, who, if unattributed, would become charges on the parish” (Travitsky 65).

“portrayals of infanticidal fathers are considerably less negative than those of infanticide mothers” (Travitsky 68)

“Portrayals of child-murder tend to appear in more conventional tragedies, and concern the murder of older children rather than neonaticide, indeed of victims who were commonly articulate, mature, and even politically important” (Travitsky 69).

“One cannot maintain that the English stage (as a whole) developed as a medium for depicting historical fact. Nonetheless, the new genre of domestic tragedy certainly portrayed historical muderesses, adulteresses, prostitutes, cunning women and witches” (Travitsky 69).

“*A Yorkshire Tragedy* most pointedly . . . illustrate[s] the pervasive extent to which the double standard obtained in the judgment of men and women and to which the mythos of terrible destructiveness was reserved to women alone” (Travitsky 71).

“When we turn to the seven more conventional tragedies in which a Medea-figure is presented, we note that in each of the seven plays the crime is crucial to the portrayal of a woman who is driven by inherent, womanly passion and evil” (Travitsky 71).

“Jacobean infanticides are portrayed without such amelioration, as utterly ungovernable women, totally possessed, like their prototype Medea: ‘Wild, devoid of reason, sick of the soul’” (Travitsky 72).

“women embody a sense of petty triumph, cruelty, machination, and underhandedness, and that they are unfit to full non-domestic and dominant roles” (Travitsky 73)

“[Woman are] an embodiment of untrammelled passion which leads to havoc, an embodiment which Fluke Greville suggests is characteristic of women, not of all human kind” (Travitsky 74).

“the conception of the Medea—a woman centered on her own desires, ridding herself of an external encumbrance, usually between herself and a mate” (Travitsky 75)

“‘outlaw women’ who could find no legitimate outlet for their uncontrollable passions” (Travitsky 75).

“Brunhalt is associated with bestiality, with poison, with lying, and with magic in the course of the play” (Travitsky 75).

“The woman who had broken out of bounds had great fascination for a society with a rigidly ordered hierarchy in which women’s subordination to men and their inferiority were axiomatic. But there were limitations to this interest. The drama therefore concerned itself with women as central actors in domestic crimes when those crimes involved other adults rather than infants who have traditionally been less valued under law than older persons” (Travitsky 76).

**Webster, John. *The Duchess of Malfi*. *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*.**

**Eds. David Bevington, David Bevington, Lars Engle, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Eric Rasmussen. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2012. 1749-1832. Print.**

In Act 1 of *The Duchess of Malfi*, the Duchess's brothers, the Cardinal and Ferdinand appoint Bosola—a man who previously committed murder as a service to the Cardinal—as the Duchess's provisor of horse so that he may spy on and report on their sister's actions. Before departing, the brothers advise the Duchess not to remarry—conveying that she is a widow. After they leave, the Duchess proposes marriage to Antonio, a man of lower class who would otherwise be unable to wed/woo her. The lovers only tell Cariola and Delio of their secret marriage. Later in Act 2, suspecting that the Duchess is pregnant, Bosola decides to feed the Duchess apricots as a test since they are rumored to induce labor. The Duchess eats the apricots and falls ill and goes into labor; Antonio and Delio attempt to hide her delivery by claiming that the apricots merely made her sick. Later that evening, Bosola roams the palace halls having heard a woman scream. He encounters Antonio who tells him that he is the main suspect for the Duchess's missing jewels. As Antonio leaves, he drops a piece of paper containing the newborn's horoscope—a document Bosola then finds, confirming his suspicions. Bosola sends a letter to the Cardinal and Ferdinand informing her of her pregnancy; meanwhile, her marriage remains hidden. The brothers refuse to act until the identity of the father is known. Ferdinand visits Malfi in Act 3, the Duchess has now earned the reputation of a whore having now born three children in total. Ferdinand discovers that his sister is remarried and leaves for Rome. The Duchess and Antonio lay a plan that sends

him on the run to Ancona where she will send him money. The Duchess makes the poor decision to tell Bosola of her marriage to Antonio after Bosola defends Antonio's character. Having reported this news to her brothers, Bosola apprehends the Duchess and two of her children in Loretto just after Antonio leaves with their eldest son for Milan. She is placed under house arrest before she, her children, and Cariola are murdered. Ferdinand becomes insane and, having been denied payment, Bosola kills Ferdinand, Antonio, and the Cardinal. The play ends with Delio assuming the role as father to the orphaned son of Antonio and the Duchess.

**Wood, David Houston. "Shakespeare and Disability Studies." *Literature Compass* 8.5 (2011): 280-290. Web. 8 Sept. 2015.**

Within this article, Wood identifies disability studies' lack of attention in regards to early modern conceptualizations of disability. However, Wood argues that this is a folly. Due to the time at which Shakespeare was writing, studies seeking to recover early modern conceptualizations of disability may provide insight into a time of transition from a humoral conceptualization of disability to a more Cartesian (modern) way of thinking. In this vein, Wood analyzes Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part II*, *Julius Caesar*, and *The Taming of the Shrew* in order to demonstrate the multiple ways that Shakespeare portrays stigmatized illness, disease, and deformity—simultaneously describing disability in both humoral and modern ways.



“Early modern disability scholarship has only recently begun to pursue the ways in which such taxonomies derive from disability identity-categories with origins in the 16th and 17th centuries. Such identity categories include a range of representations, including demonstrable forms of disability (such as limping); ostensibly non-legible, or covert, forms of disability (such as epilepsy); and the performance-histories of disability in the staging of Renaissance drama” (Wood 280).

“Early modern disability representations . . . tend to function politically in situating disability at the nexus of the particularities of oppression and construction of the subject, in that they frequently derive from classical concepts of the aesthetic (the Beautiful and the Good); medical concepts of pathology (the aberrant as the monstrous); medieval concepts of the marvelous (fears of the other); theological concepts that situate the Reformation as a radical reordering of the socio-cultural signification of embodied and psychic otherness; and in the full range of other traditions that reflect the complexities of non-normative selfhood in the early modern period” (Wood 281).

“Shakespearean selfhood . . . can be construed as an exploration of corporeal variation and difference that highlights the complexities involved in categorizing disability in 16th-century England” (Wood 282).

“[T]he interactive flux of self and environment that constitutes early modern selfhood bears heavily on concepts of embodied disability, as well. . . . With [the shift from the humoral

concept of the self to the Cartesian mode of subjectivity], early modern theories of personhood changed from perceiving the self as humorally porous, and thus essentially unitary both in its integration of the mind and body and its interaction with the environment; to an estranged concept of the self that stressed both its mind-body duality and its essential isolation from environmental situatedness” (Wood 283).

**Williams, Katherine Schaap. “Enabling Richard: The Rhetoric of Disability in *Richard III*.” *Disability Studies Quarterly* 29.4 (2009): n. pag. Web. 9 Sept. 2015.**

Adding to the growing body of work regarding *Richard III* and disability studies, Williams casts Richard III in the role of the “dismodern subject.” By automatically assuming that all bodies are inherently disabled, Williams is able to examine the ways in which Richard is able to use his body as a prop through his masterful rhetoric. Through his manipulation of words, Richard is able to draw the audience’s attention either to or away from his physical form depending upon his needs at any given time. One example of this may be found within Richard’s opening soliloquy of the play when he uses the word “now” to emphasize how out of sync he is within the current political and social situations. And yet, later, within the same speech, Richard turns his timely misfortunes into vehicles for his masterfully laid plot (suggesting that he has used time to his advantage).

In conclusion, when viewed as a dismodern subject, Richard is able to metaphorically transform his body’s form from that of a disfigured monster into that of a rightfully made,

king of England. Although Williams is forced to acknowledge the play's positioning of Richmond as the perfect picture of both form and leadership, Williams successfully defends her thesis that bodily difference may, in some cases, be enabling.

“I use Lennard Davis's term [‘dismodern subject’] here to emphasize the extent to which Richard's dazzling rhetoric employs his distinctive body to signify an array of claims, and, likewise, works to destabilize all of the bodies in the play. [Lennard] Davis's notion of the dismodern subject suggests reading disability as a set of relations between the body and the world, relations in which physical difference may be aided by compensatory intervention and used for powerful effect” (Williams n. pag.).

“[T]he play ultimately reinstates the fantasy of an ideal masculine body through Richmond's success in defeating and deposing Richard” (Williams n. pag.).

“[D]isability is deformity operating in a moral register; the disabled body is one in which physical difference is overlaid with negative implications because of what it suggests about the moral character of the person who displays bodily difference” (Williams n. pag.).

“The dismodern subject challenges a binary of able/disabled bodies by assuming that every body starts from a position of disability, thus dispensing with the narrative of modernity that insists upon an idealized, able-bodied subject whose full independence suggest perfectibility” (Williams n. pag.).

“[The] anachronistic reading of Richard as a dismodern figure suggests that—though he suffers ultimate defeat—the variety of ways in which he displays his body, bolsters it with props, and employs its signifying power reveals a surprising congruity between pre-modern and post-modern conceptions of disability and perhaps even challenges our formulations of the kind of disability modernity produces” (Williams n. pag.).

“[Richard’s] rhetoric about his body inevitably leads to performing the kind of body he deems useful. In other words, although characters in the play repeatedly anatomize his form, the materiality of his form remains unclear until Richard highlights his shape—positively or negatively—with his rhetoric for specific purposes” (Williams n. pag.).

## VITA

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## ABSTRACT

### OF DOMESTIC MONSTERS AND COMPLEX MARVELS: SERIALIZATION, *RICHARD III*, AND THE MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE

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Within this text, I identify the key concepts of the serial form in order to introduce my own work concerning the serial's future within New Media and its overlooked past within the early modern period. Within my first chapter, "Heading to the 'Mothership:' Narrative Complexity, Transmedia, and the Future of Serial Storytelling," I place Jason Mittell's definition of narrative complexity into conversation with transmedia storytelling in order to argue for a more nuanced definition of narrative complexity that is not limited to the medium of television. Meanwhile, within my second chapter, "'Destiny is Anatomy:' Richard III's Feminized Body, Ambiguous Gender, and the Elizabethan Patriarchy," I argue the ways in which Shakespeare simultaneously demonstrated that the actions of both male and female social transgressors were unnatural and threatened the established social order of the established Elizabethan patriarchal society through his dramatic representation of Richard III as embodying both the effeminate male and the masculine female.