

ABSTRACTS

Mark Bayer (University of Texas at San Antonio)
“Richard Grant White, the Civil War, and the Future of American Shakespeare Studies”

Discussions of Shakespeare during wartime typically center on how the plays are appropriated as propaganda and how wartime performances advance partisan claims. In other words, scholarly interest centers on how Shakespeare, most often in performance, is enlisted in various cultural and political agendas during periods of conflict. Less studied are the *reciprocal* engagements between Shakespeare scholarship and moments of conflict, how wartime politics influence how Shakespeare is studied and reproduced in certain historical moments, and how war might intervene in scholarly debates.

The American Civil War offers a unique opportunity to consider how civil conflict might have had a formative and lasting effect on the future course of Shakespeare studies. Several important American Shakespeareans of that era were deeply involved in the war. In this paper, I focus on the wartime activities of Richard Grant White. White was a prolific scholar and editor whose first edition of the plays, published from 1557-1865 coincided almost exactly with the war. White’s edition and concurrent writings on Shakespeare influenced generations of American readers well into the twentieth century, and his 1857-1865 edition was the precursor to the widely influential *Riverside Edition* of 1883 that introduced Shakespeare to millions of students well into the twentieth century. White’s scholarly work on Shakespeare was heavily intertwined with the conflict: while publishing on Shakespeare, he simultaneously spent time in the Union Army, ardently supported causes like abolition and denounced secession, and wrote two detailed and highly partisan allegories of the war

In this paper, I want to sketch some of the ways how White’s scholarship becomes deeply inflected by the war, and make some tentative conclusions about how the civil war affected the emerging institution of Shakespeare studies in the United States.

Darlana Ciraulo (University of Central Missouri)
“Shakespeare and Frank James”

On a rain-drenched prairie on August 10, 1861, eighteen-year-old Frank James, who would be later known as the Shakespeare-quoting bandit of the James-Younger Gang, fought in the battle of Wilson’s Creek near Springfield, Missouri, in the American Civil War. A diehard Confederate sympathizer, Frank enlisted with the pro-secessionist Missouri State Guard (MSG) under the leadership of Major General Sterling Price. After five bloody hours of battle, with major losses sustained on both sides, the Union forces retreated under the command of General Nathaniel Lyon, and victory fell to the tattered Rebel army. The backcountry terrain of Wilson’s Creek would have been familiar to Frank as well as fellow MSG soldier, Cole Younger, who, like Frank, grew up on the Northwestern frontier in rural Missouri. Only a month later saw Frank in the Siege of Lexington at the Missouri River where the future outlaw--and elder brother of the legendary Jesse James--fell sick and endured capture by federalist troops. Forced to take an oath

of allegiance, Frank returned to his home in Clay County and joined up with a band of partisan guerillas, of which Cole and later Jesse were members. Under the black flag of William Quantrill, these men undertook vigilante justice against the Kansas Jayhawkers and pro-Unionists “Redlegs” from 1862 to well after the assassination of President Lincoln. Whether attacked or attacking, whether in battlefield or bush, Frank was as renowned for his mettle and pugnacity in combat as he was for carrying Shakespeare in his saddle bags.

Reading Shakespeare between Civil War battles and skirmishes on the Missouri-Kansas border might seem curiously odd. Even stranger is Frank James’s legacy as a “Shakespearean scholar.”¹ Throughout his banditry, Frank’s love of Shakespeare manifested itself in multiform ways: quoting, reading, and seeing performances. One story goes that Frank, the alleged brains of the James-Younger gang, could recite by heart almost all of *Richard II*, apparently his favorite Shakespearean play. These recitations were not necessarily gratuitous displays of intellect, but carried a lifetime of devotion and study. That Lincoln also had a penchant for reading *Richard II* out loud during his presidency would perhaps surprise the border bandit. The heartfelt grief and pathos of Shakespeare’s deposed king held special significance for the anxiety-ridden Commander-in-Chief. As Michael Anderegg writes, “Lincoln adapted Shakespeare to his own needs and desires, selecting a speech here or a passage there, fitting the playwright’s works into his own worldview”² Although the highly-poetic *Richard the Second* play was not as popular in performance as *Richard III* in Ante- and Postbellum America, its overt politics--featuring an ineffectual tyrant--and internecine conflict made its appeal to a gray-coat like Frank James plain. Critical approaches to *Richard II* in the Civil War era offers greater insight into the complexity of this Shakespeare-spouting outlaw.

Jess Hamlet (University of Alabama)

“As bountiful as mines of India”: Shakespeare in/as the Indian Mutiny, 1857-58

This paper examines Victorian England’s print and periodical culture and the ways it used Shakespeare to create, for English readers, an idea of India and what it meant to be Indian; and how the idea of what it meant to be English evolved in opposition to that understanding of the Indian subcontinent, particularly during the so-called Indian Mutiny of 1857-58. During this time, British periodicals were reporting on India, Indian culture (particularly religious practices), and the Mutiny itself. Many periodicals invoked Shakespeare when reporting on the Mutiny, and the effect is variously to make sense of the Mutiny, to contextualize the Mutiny, or to comment on the characters in the Mutiny. This paper employs close readings of articles in *Bentley’s Miscellany*, the *Dublin University Magazine*, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, *The Rambler*, and *Fraser’s Magazine for Town and Country* that invoke *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *The Tempest*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Measure for Measure*. Each magazine and each article emphasizes Shakespeare and uses his plays to reach their readers. The articles in question not only recount events of the Mutiny and call for swift and decisive retribution for the atrocities committed against White, English citizens, but also speak to England’s moral imperative to Christianize India and to convey one magazine’s opinion that the British were naturally above the Indians in every way. Shakespeare’s deployment in these articles opens up issues of privilege, access, class,

¹. At the Jesse James Farm & Museum in Kearney, Missouri, Frank is memorialized as being, among other attributes, a “Shakespearean scholar.”

² Michael Anderegg, *Lincoln and Shakespeare* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2015), 49.

and race, aside from the obvious colonialist intent at work. Because Shakespeare was a tool of colonial subjugation in India, it was an easy tool for English writers to use to teach their English audiences about the country, the people, and how to understand the Mutiny.

Joseph Haughey (Northwest Missouri State University)

“Of Teaching and of Learning”: The Education and Career of William Holmes McGuffey

Based on archival research at Washington Jefferson College and the University of Virginia, my paper will explore the education and teaching career of William Holmes McGuffey, most well known for along with his younger brother pioneering the McGuffey series of school readers. These were the most popular school textbooks of the nineteenth century; countless Americans learned from them and all but a few would have been familiar with their reach. After completing a degree in Pennsylvania at Washington College over a six-year period from 1819-1825 -- Washington College was a hotbed in the early twentieth century for the abolitionist movement -- McGuffey took a handful of short-term teaching jobs before in 1845 beginning a three-plus-decade career at the University of Virginia, which lasted through the American Civil War and most of Reconstruction. There, beginning in 1851, according to University of Virginia catalogs, he began including Shakespeare among the texts to be studied as part of his moral philosophy class, becoming one of the first college professors to include Shakespeare in the formal curriculum.

As a college student, McGuffey had nurtured an interest in Shakespeare as a member of one of two literary debating societies at Washington College -- though these were extracurricular, all of the young men at Washington belonged to one or the other. Shortly after McGuffey enrolled, the two societies merged their libraries. They were profoundly proud and protective of their small, but growing, library. In December 1823, their collection numbered some two hundred volumes. In 1824, they invested in their first volumes of Shakespeare. Most of these were checked out the first evening after their purchase (11/26/1824). McGuffey opted for the second of the series, which included *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Measure for Measure*, *Love's Labours Lost*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *As You Like It*. He returned it on December 17. A month later, on January 21, 1825, his thirst for comedy quenched, he signed out the eighth volume of the set, which included four of Shakespeare's most popular tragedies: *King Lear*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. His peers were equally interested in Shakespeare; several volumes had been checked out that first night, and members would continue to sign out these volumes with regularity in the weeks and years that followed.

In their society debates, the institution of slavery was often on the table, and McGuffey and his peers always sided against it. In one debate, they concluded slavery a greater punishment to a man than immediate death (6/15/1820). They determined it more injurious to government than ignorance (9/15/1821). As time passed, though, the societies took increasingly radical views on the issue. It was deemed expedient, for example, to encourage the slaves of a neighbor to escape (6/8/1821, 6/15/1821, 3/8/1822, 3/26/1824). Free blacks should be allowed to settle in the West, and Missouri should not be admitted as a state as long as her constitution forbade their emigration (2/16/1821, 2/10/1820). Abolition societies were a necessity (1/21/1825), and it was even deemed justifiable for a slave to kill his master (Union 1/25/1822).

McGuffey's abolitionist principles, though, would haunt him later in life. After moving to Virginia, he found himself in the society of Southern slave-owning gentility and even married

the daughter of a Southern gentleman. During the Civil War, he was forced to watch students he had introduced to Shakespeare in his moral philosophy class, students he had grown to think of as sons, go to war to fight and die for the Confederacy for beliefs he did not believe in. Several of his students did die in the war and those who returned were forced to suffer the indignities of Reconstruction; McGuffey remained silent on slavery in these years, and throughout most of his life after leaving Washington College, the boisterous debates of his college days drowned in the bitter realities of life in the war-torn South.

Matthew Kendrick (William Patterson University)

“Shakespeare, Popular Culture, and Class Consciousness in Nineteenth Century New York City”

The Astor Place riot occurred on May 10, 1849, at the Astor Place Theatre in New York City. The Astor Place Theatre was one of the most elite and exclusive theaters in the city. The riot was the culmination of a longstanding feud between two of the world’s most prominent Shakespearean actors: William Macready, an aristocrat from England, and Edwin Forrest, a working-class lad from Manhattan. For several years, the two men were engaged in an acrimonious rivalry that broke down along class lines. Macready was a favorite of the upper class, both in the US and the UK; Forrest was the champion of the US working class, and performed mostly in working-class theaters like The Bowery Theater and middle-class theaters like The Broadway Theatre. In May 1849, the rivalry reached a boiling point when Macready and Forrest both decided to perform *Macbeth* on the same night in NYC, Macready at Astor Place and Forrest at Broadway. The rivalry was hyped by the press, inspiring Forrest’s working-class fans to storm the Astor during Macready’s performance. The military opened fire, killing 25 and wounding 120. In this paper, I will explore some of the reasons why a rivalry between Shakespearean actors would be so conducive to class conflict. I will argue that the class riot at Astor Place was not incidentally a Shakespearean riot – that is to say, the working-class rioters were not just using the Shakespearean rivalry between Macready and Forrest as a convenient opportunity to stage an insurrection. Instead, we need to think about the intimate relation between working-class consciousness and the struggle to define the cultural value of Shakespeare’s drama. I suggest that Shakespeare was a nexus point of working-class struggle and identity in Antebellum New York City. The fight to claim Shakespeare for the working class was the cultural manifestation of the broader and on-going fight for working-class dignity.

Amir Khan (Dalian Maritime University)

“*Hamlet* and the Loss of Political Consent”

A topical reading of *Hamlet* might reveal something about the nature of government or about the nature of political consent, whether citizens living within and amongst a plethora of Western parliamentary democracies, which bill themselves as carrying the legitimate stamp of the people’s approval (i.e. via the ballot box), are actually free and able to give and/or take away their consent from the ruling classes who do so, we are told, on their/our behalf. Prescriptive measures to be taken when living under janus-faced representative institutions do not coalesce around simply voting a different party into office. The forces and accidents of history may indeed initiate a crisis severe enough to sever consent; yet such forces and accidents are difficult

to imagine and impossible to point to from the vantage point of the present. The question is not prescriptive but normative: not, what will it take, but what *should* it take? The first question is easy enough to answer in hindsight after change or revolution has already taken place. Yet as a prescription, the lessons of history are of little use moving forward. How are we to judge the grounds for the severing of consent now?

Hamlet can offer instruction here. The political import of the play is most evident in hindsight, after all the dust has settled. In the present, we are more likely ourselves to be caught up in Hamlet's inner monologues and would have difficulty, indeed, pointing to any one of his seven soliloquies, say, as any type of evidence attesting to a present political crisis. Hamlet's woes over his procrastination seem prima facie psychological, not political. Yet Hamlet's actions or inactions are necessarily political as he is the crown Prince of Denmark looking to avenge the possible murder of his father. The question which indubitably follows is to ask if Hamlet is aware that his motivations or lack-of-motivations have some political import. Were we to ask Hamlet himself, he could not so easily deny that his course of action carries political ramifications. *Of course* Hamlet knows. But we as critics would be hard-pressed to find evidence, say textual evidence, that we could point to attesting to Hamlet's perception of any such political import at all.

This critical lapse mirrors a veritable crisis of political consent in the present. What to point to or at to know that consent is missing, that our representative structures no longer rule in our best interest. And it is not enough simply to be convinced, prima facie, that there is indeed evidence *enough* to support that consent has indeed been lost. Because, as it stands, *it hasn't yet been lost*. According to John Locke, such loss means the ruling government of the day has been dissolved and if *this* is the case, revolution is underway. In other words, by the time you realize conditions are ripe for the loss of consent, it is already too late; dissolution (hence revolution) is already well underway. Yet nowhere in the play do we have anything that we could point to as revolution. But we have other things, all of which, according to Locke, are requisite in the lead-up to revolution. When all the dust has indeed settled in *Hamlet*, we have evidence of at least three of the following: (foreign) conquest, usurpation, tyranny, and dissolution of government.

These four states denote the concluding chapters of the *Second Treatise of Government*. It is my claim that in *Hamlet* we have direct evidence of conquest, usurpation, and dissolution, strictly and precisely as Locke defines these terms. What we lack is equally direct or concrete evidence of tyranny (namely Claudius's and perhaps Hamlet Senior's), the sort that we could point to with enough conviction so as to initiate the loss of political consent in the present. Yet since we lack the ability to clearly pinpoint tyranny serious enough to "rationally" initiate revolution, both in this play and in the world, the political import of Hamlet's procrastinations carries real-world correlates. The question, again, is not prescriptive, but normative. When should we have the guts to do something so drastic as to kill a King?

Justin Kuhn (The Ohio State University)

"Republicanism for Royalists: Empowering the Roman Patriciate in Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*"

This paper will reassess the political and cultural significance of the 1655 edition of Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*. Published by John Stafford and William Gilbertson with a new sequel poem by John Quarles entitled *The Banishment of Tarquin: or, the Reward of Lust*, this volume was released amidst England's tumultuous and decade-long experiment with representative self-rule, and its subject matter, the sexual assault that led to the overthrow of a tyrannical monarchy and the founding of the Roman Republic, certainly relates to the country's political situation during the 1650s. Despite these resonances, critics have tended to view the 1655 *Lucrece* as a Royalist volume due to the political affiliations of Quarles and the stationers involved in its publication, as well as the veiled Royalism and more explicit Anglicanism contained in other publications with which these figures were associated. Many Royalists, however, attempted at various points throughout the 1650s to adapt to the circumstances of kingless self-rule, and I will argue that the 1655 *Lucrece* represents one such attempt through its depiction of aristocratic empowerment within a republican framework. During the 1650s, an elitist strain of republicanism promising social and political stability through aristocratic rule presented an alternative to populist forms of republicanism that expanded power and authority to wider segments of the populace. While the historical episode involving Lucrece concerns the circumstances behind the creation of a republic renowned among early modern commentators for its populist orientation, in its early years and in its foundational moment the Roman Republic qualified as more of an aristocracy, and Shakespeare's poem—indeed the entire volume—registers this distinction.

Questions of aristocratic honor and noble status are of paramount importance to the principal characters in *Lucrece*. When the rapist, the prince Tarquin, begins threatening to assault Lucrece, both the poetic speaker and Lucrece herself symbolically dislocate Tarquin from his aristocratic identity. The ensuing revolt by Roman noblemen ends up filling a vacuum of patrician authority left not only by Tarquin but also by the corrupt monarch who defended Tarquin's actions. Quarles's sequel *The Banishment of Tarquin* likewise condones the death of the Roman King while emphasizing the honor of the noblemen who overthrew him. Both poems confirm the assessment of republican commentators from the 1650s that monarchies gave priority to the private interest of a king—or in this case, to one of the king's sons—over matters of civic or public duty. Blaming the country's social and political upheavals on royal figures devoid of aristocratic values, the 1655 *Lucrece* volume portrays the self-destruction of a monarchy and the concomitant empowerment of a Roman patriciate in terms largely favorable to the nobles who finally emerge with institutional power. If this publication appealed to Royalist readers during the 1650s, that is probably less of an indication of any actual pro-Stuart sentiments within either of the poems than it is a reflection of the aristocratic republicanism that former Royalists tended to favor.

Robert Sawyer (East Tennessee State University)
“Paul Robeson: Activist, Author, and Actor”

Although Paul Robeson was politically active for almost his entire life, my essay focuses on three events which occurred in the late 1950s: when he achieved an award for championing coal mining strikes in Wales (1957), published his autobiography, *Here I Stand* (1958), and played Othello at Stratford-upon-Avon (1959). Even though Robeson's status as a Global Citizen was already well established by the early 50's, during these three consecutive years, his

advocacy for civil unrest combined with his Shakespearean acting seems particularly pronounced.

Robeson's affinity for and participation in protests by the coal miners in Wales had a long history, dating back to the 1928, when he was in London preparing to perform in *Othello* at the Savoy Theatre. While there, he observed a band of marching Welsh miners singing in London's West End, and he decided to join in with the group, adding his famous bass-baritone voice to the protest. But that was just a prelude encounter, for over the next few decades, he appeared in many concerts across Wales, some in support of the Talygarn Miners' Rest Home. The most famous of these charity events followed a disastrous mining catastrophe in 1934, when an explosion at the Gresfod Pit killed 266 workers. As one critic has noted, Robeson's visits to Wales are "revered" in the country as being some of "the most resonant moments in Welsh political and cultural history."

That same year, Robeson published his autobiography, *Here I Stand*, displaying his authorial skills, while also asserting his activist stance. In fact, no leading press in the United States would publish the book due to Robeson's championing of the Communist cause abroad, and his challenge to segregation at home, so it was printed, instead, by a London publisher in 1958.

The civil unrest it promotes is most prominent in Chapter 4 of the book, called "The Time is Now," where Robeson espouses two important "propositions." In the first he claims "Freedom can be ours, here and now," and that "the long sought goal of citizenship under the constitution is now within our reach"; in the second proposition, he declares that to achieve that goal people will have to "be decisive." He further reminds his readers that even after the recent debate about the Jim Crow system of the South in the U.S. senate, many congressman claimed that "the South will retain segregation," in spite of the Supreme Court decision to outlaw it (74).

The following year, Robeson was contacted about playing the role of Othello again, but this production would take place in Shakespeare's birthplace, and so by agreeing to the role, he would become the first black actor to perform the role in Stratford in the 20th century. Although the FBI had recently invalidated Robeson's passport for his "communist leanings," the passport ban was soon declared unconstitutional, and Robeson traveled swiftly to Stratford-Upon-Avon.

But there were other production problems as well, unrelated to nationality or color. Robeson had been ill, so he "missed the first two weeks of rehearsals and the understudy, Julian Glover, blocked it and then Robeson came in and had to catch up." Now in his sixties, Robeson was forced to perform Othello as an elderly man, but another younger American, Sam Wanamaker, (yes, that Sam Wanamaker) was cast as Iago, and by holding improvised sessions together, they produced a successful version of the play. Although Robeson's performance garnered mixed reviews, he felt it to be one pinnacle of his activist and acting career: to break the so-called "colour-bar" in Shakespeare's hometown.

Mary Steible (Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville)

Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* invites reflection on republican forms of government and the right to a voice in the political processes. Over the centuries, as political philosophies have evolved, so have readings and adaptations of *Coriolanus*, the text seeming to show the threat of tyrannical rule on the one hand, or the threat of the rule by the many on the other. In a democratic republic like the United States, where the rule of law is counted on to check the

power of an individual or group, political unrest is still common enough, for oppression of constituents whose access to promised life, liberty, and happiness is ignored or overlooked.

The civil unrest of the mid to late 1960s and early 1970s in the United States had its roots in a number of anti-establishment causes. Resistance to the conflict in Vietnam and a military draft that seemed inherently unfair drove many protests, sit-ins, marches, and skirmishes with police and national guardsmen, one of the most horrifying events being the killing of 4 protestors at Kent State in 1970. Privilege was a central theme of the Vietnam war protests. Unlike Martius, who loves war, the privileged in America were able to avoid military service through a number of channels. A disproportionate number of non-elite or non-privileged were sent to Nam in their stead. All people from all classes protested, but from college youth, we saw an active role in governance, civil disobedience even. One resounding theme of the time was a desire for youth to have a legitimate voice in government.

War was never declared in Vietnam by the United States congress, yet the military at the time was able to press for and receive more youth to send to Nam. The rioting that broke out at the Chicago National Democratic Convention in 1968 between war protestors and the Chicago police, the nine catholic draft resisters who burned draft records in Catonsville, MD that same year, or the Dow protests at UW-Madison in 1967 were just a few protests that revealed how strongly young Americans opposed the ongoing conflict in Nam. Protestors risked arrest, their lives, jail time, and death, not so unlike the plebeians in *Coriolanus*, who, armed with the tools of their agricultural trade, claim to want to kill Caius Martius, a symbol of their oppression and hunger. The plebeians risk losing their lives, as they do not stand a chance at defeating the force that is Caius Martius in a skirmish.

During the late 60s and early 70s, popular musical and other arts flourished in United States, the Vietnam conflict often an influence for lyrics and musical mood, as were other establishment institutions targeted by a generation tired of the *status quo*. The “I-Feel-Like-I’m-Fixin’-to-Die Rag” (1967) by Country Joe and the Fish, was a raucous satire on the military-industrial complex that was feeding Vietnam young men, the lyrics calling on mothers to “pack off their sons to Vietnam” and subsequently “be the first one on [their] block to have [their] son come home in a box.” The military valor so warmly embraced by Volumnia and Caius Martius might serve the elite of ancient Rome, but then as in 20th century America, the non-elite or plebeians are often ill-trained and expendable.

Coriolanus was performed in the United States during the Vietnam era, but apparently was not radicalized or appropriated, as was Bertold Brecht’s socialist-minded adaptation, *Coriolan* (1951), as a means to protest or question concepts such as military valor or lack of political voice by those most likely to be conscripted. Caius Martius’s centrality as tragic hero unquestioningly pursuing a single life goal—a life of valor—remains a significant topic onstage and in critical readings.

Jeanette Nguyen Tran (Drake University)

“The 64,000 Question: What Can Frances DeBerry Tell Us About Shakespeare?”

What can the case of Frances DeBerry, a 73-year-old Shakespeare expert who won 16,000 on *The 64,000 Question* in 1956, tell us about the role that Shakespeare played in the American civil rights movement? DeBerry’s personal story—she was a bible teacher from Kentucky and the daughter of slaves—combined with her extensive knowledge of Shakespeare

made her a perfect candidate for the popular quiz show. The show's producers actively sought contestants who embodied dramatic juxtapositions, such as the Marine officer who is an expert cook, or the attractive young female psychologist (Dr. Joyce Brothers) who is a boxing expert. The idea that an elderly black woman who was the child of slaves could become an expert on Shakespeare titillated audiences for how it defied stereotypes of African Americans in 1956. When asked what she would do with her winnings, DeBerry told the *New York Amsterdam News* that she was excited about buying a home and "getting to work on two of my favorite themes, ancient costuming and the women of Shakespeare's plays."³

DeBerry's cash winnings made it possible for her to publish her book on the women of Shakespeare's comedies, *All the World's a Stage for Shakespeare's Comedies*, with Exposition Press, a prominent vanity or subsidy publisher at the time. As court records show, all authors who published with Exposition were responsible for the full cost of production for their books.⁴ And as is well known, individuals tend to turn to vanity or subsidy publishers only when commercial and academic presses are unwilling to publish their work. DeBerry's preface, much like Saunders Redding's review of her book that points out her "gauche composition and doubtful grammar," must contend with the fact that she is not a real scholar or real expert.⁵ She writes, "I desire to let it be understood that no attempt has been made to emulate the experts and scholars who have made their extensive researches in the field of the Shakespearean drama, but it is designed to meet the needs of those who desire to obtain a general knowledge of Shakespeare through a study of his dramatic works in either tragedy, comedy or history."⁶ While the book may not be scholarly, its aim is strikingly more feminist and more inclusive than much sanctioned Shakespeare scholarship from that time period. My essay examines DeBerry's book as a piece of criticism and as a cultural artifact that can tell us about the power and potential of network television and the vanity press, two often derided institutions, to serve as agents of civil unrest during the Civil Rights era. Likewise, DeBerry's story sheds light on the power and potential of academic institutions, academic publishing and Shakespeare to serve as gatekeepers or agents of civil unrest.

Rachel Willie (Liverpool John Moores University)

"I thought my blood derived a Crown to us, / But now I find it derives only Treason':
remembering and forgetting the civil war"

Panegyric that greeted the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660 presented the return of the king as a joyous moment where king and subject renewed their bond. However, despite its presentation as a turning point where the conflicts of the past could be forgotten, memory of civil war continued to instruct, inform and cloud the present. Instead of the nation moving into a peaceful future, tensions between Charles II and his parliament meant his reign was one of extreme political crisis, brought on partly through fear of French authoritarianism and its promotion of Catholicism in Europe. In England, the passing of several Test Acts forced Catholics out of Office, including Charles' brother and heir, James, who had to resign his

³ "Mrs. DeBerry Takes 16,000," *New York Amsterdam News*, December 1, 1956.

⁴ *Exposition Press*, at 871-872.

⁵ Saunders Redding, "Shakespeare Comes to Life," *Afro-American*, December 13, 1958.

⁶ Frances DeBerry, *All the World's a Stage for Shakespeare's Comedies* (New York: Exposition Press, 1958), Preface.

position as Lord High Admiral. In 1678 Titus Oates and Israel Tonge caused mass hysteria by publishing a pamphlet that alleged there was a Catholic conspiracy to assassinate Charles. In 1681 Oates was finally exposed as a fantasist, but, during “the Popish Plot”, Oates had denounced hundreds of people and at least twenty-two people were executed. Fears that “41 had come again” permeated political thought as sentiments in the late 1670s echoed feelings that culminated in the outbreak of Civil War in 1642. Charles resorted to proroguing parliament to prevent the passing of a Bill to exclude James from the line of succession. In June 1679 a rebellion broke out in Scotland and rumours circulated in March 1680 that the apprentices of London planned an uprising. While, as Mark Knights notes, contemporary fears of civil war might be exaggerated, Britain experienced a level of unrest that meant civil war was a distinct possibility.⁷

Into this space of heightened political tension, John Crowne wrote *The Misery of Civil War* (1680). This play is an abridgement of Shakespeare’s *Henry VI* parts 1-3. Emma Depledge has recently argued that Crowne’s play wrests “Henry VI’s reign from the clutches of Whig writers”, to present a Tory response to the Exclusion Crisis.⁸ This argument is compelling, but what I am interested in here is the nebulous nature of Crowne’s work. Crowne extensively cuts Shakespeare’s text and fleshes out elements with bloody accounts of violence, anti-Catholic sentiment, reflections on the nature of rule by might or by divine right, and the rule of law. Cade’s call to “kill all the lawyers” in Shakespeare is replaced with a discussion on why corrupt lawyers deserve to be hanged, while treason and blood are also brought to the fore. I will briefly examine how Crowne expresses anxiety that 41 had come again by repackaging Shakespeare to reflect on political and social tensions during the Popish Plot.

⁷ Mark Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678-81* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006),

⁸ Emma Depledge, *Shakespeare’s Rise to Cultural Prominence: Politics, Print and Alteration, 1642-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 97.