

Using Sense and Sensing Use: Vocal Invention in *Lingua*

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In Thomas Tomkis’s university comedy, *Lingua: Or, the Combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses for Superiority* (1607), the sense of speech is thrown into question. Or, put another way, speech throws the use of sense – the sense of sense itself – into question. This essay seeks to build on crucial scholarship by Carla Mazzio and Jennifer Richards about the play’s relationship to the history of sensation by showing how the play’s depiction of the voice’s place within the sensorium also resembles a founding moment in political theory: the Aristotelian claim that mankind is a political animal because he removes “mere voice” from the political realm. But even as the play eventually excludes its title character, making her the tragi-comic butt of its cruel jokes, I want to insist that *Lingua*’s own advocacy for her inclusion in the sensorium, her appeal to “make the senses six,” offers us a way of reimagining the voice’s relationship to political community. *Lingua*’s appeal is inventive. Both a rhetorical use of *inventio*, the uncovering of a new argument about voice, and the putting into practice of her very appeal, *Lingua*’s use of voice invites speakers and listeners to consider the experience of speech as a component of its meaning. It feels like something to speak, she insists, and this experience could and should lend inform the body politic the play allegorizes. Drawing on Sara Ahmed’s theorization of “the uses of use,” I argue that *Lingua* positions spoken language as a capacity that can be used like sensation: as a way of perceiving one’s relation to the world. Reinvented in this way, the voice offers new ways of conceiving both the use of the senses and the sense – that is, the entanglement of logic, perception, and meaning – of use. It offers new ways, potentially, of sensing invention itself.

Inventing Professions: Fencing, Acting, and Embodied Learning in Early Modern Technical Manuals

Dori Coblentz (Georgia Institute of Technology)

In “The Actors Remonstrance” (1643), London houses complain that even though they have tried to “instruct one another in the true and genuine Art of acting” they have been “restrained from the practice of [their] Profession.” The pamphlet presents a tantalizing picture of knowledge transfer between houses – how, exactly, did these actors instruct one another? Was there a professional consensus around the real Art of acting? Or, is this simply another humorous moment in an ironic pamphlet? Rhetorical manuals such as *Chirologia* (1644) usefully supplement our understanding of the history of acting instruction and can shed light on the transfer of embodied skills via text. Manual rhetoric is only one part of the picture, however. The parallel and enmeshed discipline of fencing and its development of a professional discourse can also help us better understand theatrical pedagogy and professional practice.

This paper will explore how the authors of early modern fencing instructional manuals took opportunities afforded by print technology to invent a shared professional identity and teach embodied skills. The German master Joachim Meyer promises to show the vocabulary “invented by the masters of this art” through the careful organization of his 1570 *Art of Combat*, with formatting designed to decrease the reader’s cognitive load and enhance memorization. Angelo Viggiani and Camillo Agrippa, both writing in the early 1550s in Italy, experiment with visual metaphors for movement and directionality. They use flowing trees, rolling balls, and rough sticks to innovate effective print instructional methods kinesiologically knowledge. Through studying the rise of technical, professional discourse in these early modern fencing manuals, this paper will provide tools for understanding the learning contexts of the early commercial theater.

Words like Arrows: Rhetorical and Technological Invention in *Henry V*  
Dorothy Todd (TAMU)

My paper aims to explore the intersections of rhetorical and technological invention in *Henry V* and to demonstrate the role of invention in the play's construction of a remembered past and an imagined future for England. While modern historians of the Battle of Agincourt often point to the English longbow as the key to the English victory over the French, chroniclers present at the battle note the superiority of English weaponry, and even the anonymous *Famous Victories of Henry V* include a description of the English archers, longbows and other technologies related to archery are demonstrably absent from Shakespeare's Agincourt. Instead of the technological invention of the longbow, rhetorical invention defines the Battle of Agincourt in *Henry V*. Attempting to rally his troops through rhetoric, King Henry describes an imagined or invented future, one in which people in the future will remember the events of the past. While rhetorical invention largely overwrites technological invention within the military action of the play, rhetorical and technological invention work hand-in-hand in the play's Choric framework. In the opening lines of the Prologue, the Chorus seeks inspiration through the muses: "O, for a muse of fire that would ascend / The brightest heaven of invention!" (Prologue 1-2). The success of this rhetorical invention or imagination, however, depends in part on the specific technologies—one might even say the invention—of the Wooden O. Through the interplay of rhetorical and technological invention in both the action of the play and the play's framework, Shakespeare's *Henry V* develops a vision of England, its future, and its past that grapples with the stories it tells about its kings and that interrogates the medium through which it tells these stories.

Disidentification, or, Inventing Character  
Sam Fallon (SUNY Geneseo)

This paper attempts a description of a peculiar literary effect that I will call "disidentification." The exemplary instance is in *Astrophil and Stella* 45, where Astrophil asks Stella to imagine him as the generic image of a "ruined lover": "I am not I, pity the tale of me." Such a gesture reverses what we might expect character-making to be. It is not an identification with or an investment of feeling in another, of the sort that the rhetorical practice of *ethopoeia* encourages, but nearly its opposite: a withdrawal of self-attachment that reduces a person to a character. Why pursue such a reduction? The answer I will develop, in readings of *Astrophil and Stella* and *Othello*, implicates *invention* both in its primary early modern sense (denoting one of the arts of rhetoric) and in its emerging modern sense (identifying a novel contrivance). In the first place, disidentification exploits rhetorical invention's complex relation to abstraction—as furnishing particular arguments and, at the same time, referring individual cases to general topics—in its production of a person that is both less and more than a self. In the second, disidentification functions as a perspectival instrument, a procedure by which to imagine what others see when they look at you.

Invention and the Pleasure of (Ir)reality  
David Hershinow (The Graduate Center, CUNY)

Advising Maria on her catfishing letter to Malvolio, Sir Toby encourages her to "write it in a martial hand; be curst and brief; / it is no matter how witty, so it be eloquent and fun / of invention." This paper asks: what is invention, and what is the fun of it, in the context of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*? I'll be thinking about the layered forms of inventiveness at play in Maria and Sir Toby's comic scenario-building, on the one hand, and Malvolio's construal-rich response to it, on the other. I pursue the hypothesis that the work of invention Sir Toby has in mind produces the conditions for "fun" because it

creates the space for another person to be inventive in a pleasurable (ir)real way. The audience enjoys watching Malvolio as “imagination blows him” precisely because they understand that another has orchestrated the scenario within which he acts. In this context, I’ll also be thinking about the relationship between the scenarios cooked up by reality TV show producers and the reality stars who navigate them.

### Macbeth and the School of Time

James A. Knapp (Loyola University Chicago)

Early in his reign, King James I invited the Dutch inventor and alchemist Cornelis Drebbel to his court, installing him at Eltham Palace, and inaugurating Drebbel’s run as Europe’s celebrity scientist. Among the inventions with which Drebbel amazed the court during this period was a *perpetuum mobile* clock, described in detail by Thomas Tymme in *A Dialog Philosophical* (1612) as an “instrument...perpetually in motion, without the meanes of Springs, Steele, & Waights.” Tymme uses the perpetual motion clock to illustrate the principle that “this inferior world is governed by the superior.” It was an invention that harnessed the natural motion of atmospheric pressure thus revealing a link between motion and time, microcosm and macrocosm. The *perpetuum mobile* fascinated James, likely for its ability to bring together the occult and divine, revealing a connection between nature’s hidden mysteries and a providential temporality that exceeded the time of everyday life. While Drebbel established himself at court Shakespeare was at work on his supernatural thriller, *Macbeth*, ostensibly seeking to gain favor with the new King. The Scottish play is notoriously focused on temporality, predestination, and the occult forces at work in nature. The movement of time is particularly vexing to the title character. Macbeth’s acknowledgement of the impossibility of stopping time, that he cannot “jump the life to come,” is a lesson he has learned “here” where “even-handed” Earthly judgment ensures that “bloody instructions” “return to plague the inventor.” This paper will explore Drebbel’s machine as material metaphor for the eternal—in Tymme’s terms “A wonderful demonstration of artificial motion, imitating the motion celestiall”—as a way of reevaluating the problem of time in *Macbeth*.

### Perpetual (E)motion: Thinking John Donne’s Poetry via Cornelis Drebbel’s *Perpetuum Mobile*

Lynn Maxwell (Spelman College)

In this paper I explore how we might use Cornelis Drebbel’s perpetual motion machine as a lens to think through John Donne’s poetry. The machine that Drebbel designed, which might be characterized as a thermometer, thermoscope, or barometer, was intended to convey much more than those instruments actually do about the workings of the universe and marry Drebbel’s mechanical abilities and his natural philosophy. Drebbel’s creation finds greater register in Ben Jonson’s works. Yet I read it alongside Donne’s poetry as the two are not only contemporaries, but similarly caught between Aristotelian ideas and the new science. I argue that “The Ecstasy” and “A Valediction: of Weeping” reveal an interest in the interplay of motion and stasis that might be read in relation to perpetual motion. I also suggest that the idea of a living machine that inspires wonder and offers revelation might be a way to conceptualize Donne’s poetic project, which is to say, that a poem might also occupy a space between life and machine, creation and invention, and that Donne’s poems in particular might simultaneously be demonstration and experiment designed to reveal larger truths of the universe.

### Masculinity and Machination: Gender and the Early Modern Engineer

N. Amos Rothschild (St. Thomas Aquinas College)

In the discursive register of Tudor-Stuart England, the word “engine” denotes both a physical and an intellectual contrivance; it can describe a mechanical apparatus up to and including siege weaponry, a literary text, or a mental scheme. An engineer, then, is a creator of material devices, a concocter of plots, or (often) both. Moreover, the word “engine” derives from the Latin *gignere*—“to beget; to give birth to, to bring forth” (*OED*)—an etymology evident in Renaissance writers’ habitual tendency to trope the mind of the engineer as a space of cerebral creation at once fecund and threatening: a brain-womb. This paper will argue that the figure of the engineer and related trope of the brain-womb can reveal a good deal about the underexplored relationship between early modern machinery and gender.

The brain-womb trope renders the gender of the early modern engineer both complex and precarious. Texts as varied as *Hamlet*, Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*, Herbert’s *The Temple*, and Bacon’s *The Wisdome of the Ancients* reveal a misogynist logic whereby, if the engineer is able to master the brain-womb within, he might externalize an engine that would demonstrate his manifest manliness. However, these texts also warn of the dangerous possibility that (like the petard of Hamlet’s unfortunate engineer) an engine might recoil upon its maker. The brain-womb trope thus absorbs from the discourses of obstetrics not only the womb’s fertile and hidden internality, but also anxieties about its potential to devour or suffocate. Rather than a hidden and protected space in which to discover freedom, the engineer’s brain-womb is more often represented as a space of dangerous, internal femininity that must be rigidly controlled lest it symbolically swallow and unman the engineer when its own productions rebound upon their creator.

### “Strike all that look upon with marvel”: Paulina’s Sublime Invention

John D. Staines (John Jay College)

Long before Edmund Burke contrasted a masculine realm of the sublime against a feminine realm of the beautiful, a connection had been established between sublime rhetoric and (to borrow Donne’s phrase) “masculine persuasive force.” Such a masculinist poetics, as Lynn Enterline might suggest, is rooted in the male poet’s agonistic struggles with the feminine, a sublime born from his attempt to master or excise a force he imagines as threatening to overwhelm him, silence him, turn him to stone. As Jenny Mann has recently shown, such a poetics of the sublime finds its inspiration in versions of the myth of Orpheus. In this paper, however, I want to counter such a masculinist tradition with an alternative history of the sublime, where the figure of the sublime voice is not the male Orphic poet but the female visionary, the mystic, the sorceress, the oracle. In the ancient, medieval, and early modern periods, the mystic sublime was one of the primary modes of female poetic invention, one that challenged male authority. Although Shakespeare’s female sublime appears most terrifyingly in the dark magic of Lady Macbeth and the Weird Sisters, when Paulina steps into the role of Pygmalion and gives life to her creation, she stages a version of the female sublime and declares it lawful. Paulina’s magic, like the numinous power of the Delphic oracle, associates the feminine sublime with the healing power of romance and against the destructive powers of the play’s patriarchal laws. It challenges the patriarchs’ authority over the laws in an invention, a discovery, of the ancient sublime magic of the female voice.

### Curious Imagery in Elizabethan Epyllia

Will Roudabush (Southern Methodist University)

As the session description of our seminar attests, definitions for the word “invention” are heterogeneous, even contradictory. Most commonly, we think of “invention” and “inventing” in the verb’s chief current sense, “to create, produce, or construct by original thought or ingenuity; to devise first, originate” (*OED*,

“Invent,” 3). Accordingly, “inventions” primarily suggest novelty and originality. Yet for early modern writers, of course, “invention” more specifically referred to the arrangement of arguments, “the fyrste parte of Rhetorike,” as Thomas Elyot put it. What is often overlooked, however, is an invention’s obverse, an “inventory,” which shares the same Latin root, *inventio*. Inventions, whether technological or compositional or otherwise, derive from accumulated inventories.

My paper will explore how the early modern invention of perspective, in all its various forms, provided a rich conceptual inventory for Elizabethan poets and dramatists to employ in their own original ways. In particular, I will focus on two epyllia from the 1590s, Shakespeare’s *Venus and Adonis* (which Shakespeare fittingly calls “the first heir of my invention”) and John Marston’s *Metamorphosis of Pigmalion’s Image*. I will examine how these poems can be read as literary experiments in translating the burgeoning art of visual perspective into verbal media and in rivaling perspective art, but to different ends. For Shakespeare, his highly visual poem attempts to engage with the fashion for perspective works of art in the late sixteenth century; it displays him as a poetic counterpart of the classical painters Zeuxis and Parrhasius. For Marston, his satirical poem instead emulates the exaggerated offshoot of perspective, anamorphosis: his poem captures and confronts readers’ gazes, and critiques epyllia such as Shakespeare’s for their eroticism and rhetorical excess.

#### Making New Things Old in *Troilus and Cressida*

Michael Saenger (Southwestern University)

The word “invention” sits at an odd and precarious bridge between the past and the present, between the conceived and the actual. Composed, as it is, of the idea of coming and in, perhaps it should not be surprising that it leaves open whether what arrives was already there, and is freshly noticed, or is newly conceived. In the first sense, the person experiencing invention sees a thing, and then understands it, whereas in the second, it is the other way around. This etymological chiasmus derives from an ambiguity built into the English word’s Latin root: does the idea come from a creative or spiritual place inside ourselves, or does it come from a patient observation of what is already visible; does it come in from inside, from above, or from what we face? That ambiguity can be seen in two cognates in modern English: invention and inventory. In one, the inspired creator imagines and makes a new thing, whereas in the other, the patient archivist records what is present, which is to say, what is past.

Here, I want to attend to the implications of the paradoxical quality of invention as it is channeled through the use of neologisms and the subjunctive mood in *Troilus and Cressida*. Both instances are new and old, foreign and domestic. Neologisms generally borrow, import, and combine old or foreign elements to render them unfamiliar, new and English. The subjunctive is familiar and natural in most European languages, but in English it is understated and awkward, and it always carries a sense of newness in its creation inasmuch as it lacks a clear grammatical formula. These very technical features of the play resonate with the overall effort of *imitatio*, that is, the Renaissance habit of looking into the past to find new things.

#### “Inventions Lost and Found,” Jessica Wolfe (UNC Chapel Hill)

I am interested in exploring the mutually animating intellectual dynamics of three discrete but related categories of technological and scientific invention: first, inventions by which the Renaissance comes to define itself (compass, gunpowder, printing press), second, *deperdita*, or the “lost” inventions of classical antiquity for which Renaissance natural philosophers search, and third, *desiderata* or “wish-lists” of possible future inventions, including but not limited to inventions already known to non-European

cultures but not to European ones (for instance, porcelain). Across sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Europe, natural philosophers situate themselves both temporally and geographically through narratives of invention that complicate, and sometimes frustrate, other prevailing narratives of cultural exchange or political transfer. These narratives are hardly ideologically neutral; instead, they reflect an active and often hostile contestation between competing cultural and political values.

Focusing on five writers – Polydore Vergil, Guido Pancirolli, Francis Bacon, Thomas Browne, and Robert Boyle – this paper will unravel the cultural logic behind lists of lost inventions, as well as those wished for but not yet ‘discovered’. In the process, I will shed light on the reasons why the learned, scientific culture of the Renaissance comes to be interested in defining historical epochs in terms of certain technological inventions, and how these lists help us understand how Renaissance Europeans constituted their relationship to classical antiquity, to the world beyond Europe, and above all to the future, an idea that emerges in tandem with the techno-literary convention of scientific desiderata.