

“Besmeared with Blood”: Embodied Horrors of *The Spanish Tragedy* **Elizabeth Dieterich**

Thomas Kyd’s genre-defining revenge play, *The Spanish Tragedy*, is marked by several moments of graphic violence that, in a departure from his Senecan inspiration, the playwright stages in full view of his theatrical audience. It seems that audiences of the Elizabethan and Jacobean commercial theater found the tragedy very compelling despite (or perhaps because of) these graphic scenes of violence, since the play enjoyed enormous success in performance and in print for several decades after it was penned. In addition to its popularity, *The Spanish Tragedy* influenced later dramatists in clear thematic, rhetorical, and dramaturgical ways. Its dramaturgical legacy is evident in subsequent plays ranging from its near-contemporary *Titus Andronicus* to Middleton’s Jacobean-era revenge-play catch-all, *The Revenger’s Tragedy*. Plays such as these, just like Kyd’s, subject the bodies of their characters to graphically violent horrors such as murder and dismemberment, front and center, onstage. Such subjection requires, of course, the participation of the actors’ bodies in producing the necessary horrifying effects; actors’ bodies, thus, occupy the overlapping categories of their characters’ imaginary bodies and their own real (unharmful) bodies, while mingling and blending with props such as weapons, prosthetics, and stage blood. In this paper, I will examine audiences’ encounters with and player’s enactments of the horrors of two major moments of violence that bookend *The Spanish Tragedy*: Horatio’s murder by hanging and stabbing and Hieronimo’s self-inflicted mutilation—his biting out of his own tongue.

While the pattern of events can seem narratively straightforward, the precise enactments of both the above acts of violence are relatively unclear. Horatio’s hanging *seems* to proceed thusly: Lorenzo and Bower enter the bower disguised, hang Horatio, stab him, and then Hieronimo discovers his son’s body and vows revenge. But how does hanging and then stabbing a *live* actor *work* onstage in the Elizabethan commercial theater? Critical treatments of this moment illuminate it in the context of early modern justice (or lack thereof) and common spectacle, but what of the imaginative schism created by watching a living actor die in such a gruesome and bloody manner? How convincing could Horatio’s death have been? Horatio’s blood, with which the stage is “besmeared,” functions as a powerful rhetorical symbol—but what of its literal (visual, tactile, olfactory, etc.) power? Then, in the final scene of the play, Hieronimo’s self-inflicted dismemberment and subsequent suicide has received productive critical attention for its relationship to language and silence. But what are the early modern player’s options for the translation of this rapid succession of events, which are crammed into just fewer than three lines on the page, into performance? For both of these moments of staged violence, I am interested in the affective stakes of such horrific spectacles and, moreover, what insights the possibilities of their performance can offer us. What can we understand about performance of horror on the early modern stage, generally, from the possibilities of body horror coupled with what we know of the habits and technologies of playing?

My examination of these moments of horror and violence is informed by theoretical approaches to abjection, horror, and the transmission of affect, and joins the already rich scholarly conversation on early modern bodies, props, and body-props in Elizabethan and Jacobean commercial drama. By examining the affective weight and embodied mechanics of horror on the early modern stage, I hope to generate conversation about how playwrights and theatermakers

wielded stage properties and actors' bodies for their affective weight on the early modern stage. Kyd's play, in particular, is positioned at the beginning of the booming Elizabethan commercial theater era, in which the technical and affective possibilities of theater respond to and mold broader cultural reckonings of early modern England.

Macbeth and the New Weird **Ethan Guagliardo**

In recent decades, and accelerated by the 2008 crisis of international capital, horror and particular weird horror has taken on a new cultural prestige, not least thanks to the interest it has received from a philosophical project that goes by many (too many) names—new materialism, posthumanism, actor-network theory, object-oriented ontology (OOO) and so on. This project, which once seemed very exciting, is by now very familiar, and even a bit tiresome. In short the “New Weird,” as it has been called, is getting old. Maybe that was always its fate, given that the New Weird was by its own lights an atavistic (which is not to say reactionary) return to the “Old Weird” of classic horror writers like Lovecraft, Blackwood, and Bierce. What made the Old Weird “weird” was that it was itself a reaction to post-Enlightenment rationalism; just as the New Weird rejects the complacency of Anthropocene neoliberalism, so the Old rejected the happily secular naturalism of modernity, returning instead to the repressed supernaturalism of pre-modernity, or what it took to be pre-modernity, now misfigured or transfigured under what we might call the principle of insufficient reason, the gloomy consciousness that the oldest gods are gods of Chaos. The trouble is that at least in the early modern period, the “Weird gods” from which the Old Weird and the New takes their name are precisely not avatars of the unintelligibility and miasmatic dissolution that writers from Lovecraft to Kristeva and beyond take to be horror's black insight. On the contrary, whether we are talking about the omniscient God who numbers the hairs on all our heads and prescribes the fall of every sparrow, or the more morally dubious Weird Sisters of *Macbeth*, these most oldest figures of Weirdness suggest the world is in fact radically intelligible.

Now this break between the actually old “weird” of pre-modern literature and the new weird of the modern weird tale (whether “Old” or “New”) has often been observed, though usually only to clarify the stakes of modern horror. I want to ask, however, how it might clarify the stakes of early modern horror. Given the early modern presumption of intelligibility, what might “early modern horror” be? My test case, naturally enough given the above discussion of the weird, will be *Macbeth*—a play that I will argue finds horror precisely in intelligibility—in the sublime sense not of what is wholly and incomprehensibly other, but of our being wholly comprehended at every moment. I also think, however, that this Real Old Weird does not just illuminate the nature of early modern horror; it also helps clarify the limits of the New. Despite its name, this New Weird is perhaps best characterized as nostalgic, a longing for mystery under conditions where the erstwhile hallmarks of unintelligibility—the transgression of form and boundary, the exteriorization of interiority, the dissipation of identity across networks—have become entirely routine and familiar in our time of algorithmic special providence. In this sense, I argue, the Real Old Weird of *Macbeth* is in fact the newest of all, because it is most suited to our own age of horrible intelligibility.

Atrocity Don Hedrick

The following is not so much an abstract proper as the initiation of semi-scattered reflections on Shakespearean horror, around the catalyst of one passage from *Titus Andronicus*. In this shocking moment of Lavinia's Uncle Marcus, "enter MARCUS from hunting, first sees her, as we just saw her brought in by her rapists the Empress sons, "her hands cut off, and her tongue cut out and ravish't." The scene offers little space for addressing my students' usual quibbles about what is visible in the moment, or what is "realistic," or their understandable astonishment that Marcus doesn't rush to help her. In their appropriate outrage, they may approximate the emotional effect of Shakespearean "passionating" where outrage is the only possible "rational" reaction.

But little in reception theory will prepare them either for his following response of some forty lines, juxtaposed by Chiron and Demetrius first mocking her in an obscene comic banter, as though the comic improv banter staged by clowns:

CHIRON Go home, call for sweet water, wash thy hands.

DEM She has no tongue to call, nor hands to wash. (2.4. 6-7)

We will consider further Shakespeare's habit of incorporating "entertainment value" with atrocity. That Shakespeare gives Marcus, a perverse tour de force blazon of what is not there, "made thy body bare of those two branches, those two ornaments/ Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in" (2.4.18-19). But he carries out a blazon of the picture before him. I want to draw attention, however, to Marcus' drawing on classical example of the rape of Philomel, who "but lost her tongue," and so could sew in a tapestry the accusations against her rapists. Lavinia, by direct contrast with the classical precedent, had "that mean . . . cut from thee," since

A craftier Tereus, cousin, hast though met,

And he that cut thy pretty fingers off

That could have better sewed than Philomel"

The "monster" who did this, moreover, at hearing those fingers play "heavenly harmony" on the lute would have "dropp'd his knife and fell asleep" (2.4.47, 50). My point in italicizing this brief passage is that Shakespeare is highlighting competitive villainy or atrocity, as an aesthetic contest between murderers themselves. We are at the depths of villainy itself, in Shakespeare's identification of entertainment at its lowest depths, a manifestation of that new word, atrocity. He will repeat the practice of pushing violence to a greater and greater extreme, in other cases briefly considered.

American (?) Horror Story: The Case of Thomas Lodge's *A Margarite of America* Michael Lutz

Described by its most recent editor Donald Beecher as Elizabethan "horror fiction," Thomas Lodge's 1596 prose narrative *A Margarite of America* offers a bloody and bleak take on the normally pastoral genre of romance. Set during an uneasy peace between two warring kingdoms who hope to resolve their tensions with an ill-fated royal marriage, the narrative is rife with gratuitous murders, rapes, infanticides, cannibalism, and vicious lion attacks. Some of this bleakness is perhaps explained by Lodge's claim he composed the tale while he accompanied Sir

Thomas Cavendish's disastrous second voyage to the Strait of Magellan in 1591, a mission that suffered misfortune, mutiny, and massive casualties, including the death of Cavendish himself. While critics like Josephine Roberts and Joan Pong Linton have situated the text firmly in its colonial milieu, reading it as Lodge's critique of England's imperial ambitions, this discussion is haunted by where and how, precisely, "America" appears in the text.

The narrative's two principal characters are Margarita, a princess of "Mosco," and her would-be lover, the Machiavellian Arsadachus, a prince of "Cusco." The former placename is taken usually without controversy to mean Moscow, and colonial framings generally take the latter location to be Cuzco, the Incan city known in early modern England through writings from and about Spanish imperial conquests. But not every scholar agrees: aforementioned editor Donald Beecher would like us to "take a last critical leave" of this interpretation (34), highlighting that Lodge's Cusco is apparently on the same continent as Mosco, separated only by several days' journey on horseback, and there is no cultural distinction depicted between the kingdoms. This is all well taken, and yet: Lodge's foreword pointedly claims the text originates in America during the Cavendish voyage, America is mentioned explicitly in the title, and there is no apparent alternative early modern English referent for 'Cusco' *aside from* accounts of the Incan city.

Thus, this paper supposes that fantastical placelessness—so generically definitive of the prose romance to begin with—is yet another convention Lodge deploys and ironizes in an uncanny and disastrous meeting of "old" and "new" worlds, one that, as prior scholars have asserted, is part of a larger critique of colonialism, a system whose ultimate output (Lodge's text avers) is horror on a global scale.

"New Flesh and Insect Politics: Body Horror in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the Early Films of David Cronenberg"
Victoria McMahan

Our post-Cartesian selves are focused on the fears generated by our suspicions that, although we privilege our "mind" as the primary defining aspect of "self," there is a nagging suspicion that it is our body that might really be in control, a fear realized when our flesh and organs might be beset by disease or eventual decrepitude. It is also profoundly alarming to recognize that any 'invasion' or infection of our bodies is uncontrollable and inscrutable, outside of the logic or power of the psyche's supposed dominance. As a genre of film and literature, "body horror" (cf. Phillip Brophy, 1983) underscores the terror of the disintegration of the Self and, therefore, the prospect of losing agency and control over one's own body. Body horror's apotheosis is a transformation written on the flesh: flesh that is eviscerated, mutilated, excised, dissected, irradiated, severed, flayed, severed, and diseased. Flesh, then, stands as a visual and literary metaphor for the fear of the loss of identity, a surrender of bodily integrity.

In a scene from Canadian auteur and writer David Cronenberg's early body horror film *Videodrome* (1983), the climax of the protagonist's death is a call for a total rebellion against the embodied Cartesian self, the body caged by false binaries of "mind" and "body," reality and fantasy, Self and Other. Before he commits suicide with a mutated hand that has become a new

organ of fused flesh, bone, and gun, Max Renn (James Woods) joyfully anticipates his incipient new incarnation with the cry of, “Long live the New Flesh!” (Cronenberg, 1983). Cronenberg’s Cartesian debate becomes less of a preoccupation, or at least a different proposition when looked at from the perspective of the early modern body, a body yet to become ontologically bifurcated into epistemes of mind and body, psyche and soma. Cronenberg’s early body horror, then, is actually a return to earlier conceptions of corporeal embodiment and phenomenological affect, the Shakespearean body ruled by the vicissitudes of humoral flux and flow, partaking equally with vegetable, animal and rational “spirits.” Cronenberg’s “New Flesh,” as the metaphorical and visual incarnation of his particular brand of body horror, is actually *old* flesh, a return to the pre-Cartesian embodied subject. New Flesh is the apotheosis of a corporeal transformation that is so completely alien to existing organic, animate forms that the resulting “thing” that emerges on the other side of this metamorphosis defies ontological and taxonomical categorization, a “monster” (*MND* 3.2.6; 3.2.377). Just as the monster straddles the animal/human divide, so too does the material qualities of the New Flesh. Imagined as a fusion of “many strange species” (Ambroise Paré) creating what is essentially a totally new being, New Flesh is conceived of by Cronenberg and Shakespeare as a material composite of animal, human, insect, and supernatural matter.

New Flesh is the term employed in this paper to suggest the Cronenbergian subject in the throes of corporeal transformation – it refers to both subject and object, sign and signifier. New Flesh also refers to the transformation process itself, particularly how such a process is instigated and mitigated by autonomous agents who take control over the body proper. New Flesh exists as a corollary to the old flesh of the early modern subject who shares much in common with Cronenberg’s incarnation of body horror. It is possible to argue, therefore, that the transformational aspects of contemporary body horror find their subjective, material origins in the natural philosophy of the classical, mediaeval, and early modern eras. For this reason, the term New Flesh can also be applied to Nick Bottom’s transformation into an ass-headed monster at the hands of Puck in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1595-96).

Bottom’s bodily transformation is unlike anything else in Shakespeare. It cannot be strictly called Ovidian because it is only Bottom’s *head* that is transformed and not his entire corpus, a corporeal segmentation with its own set of fascinating implications. The moment of Bottom’s transformation becomes analogous, indeed emblematic, of the same anxieties explored within Cronenberg’s early body horror films where horror is generated from a recognition of the instability of the body’s integrity; the fear of the body lapsing back into the animal, thus divesting itself of rational “spirit” or Cartesian “will”; the body’s inability to recognise or defend itself against external agents of change; or, conversely, when such change comes unbidden from within. This latter characteristic collapses the boundary between Self and Other by registering the body’s inability to understand and, therefore, control such sudden corporeal reconfiguration and disintegration. Symbolised by the permeability and fragility of the integrity of forms, this New Flesh is simultaneously Self *and* Other, Self *into* Other, a significance articulated by the use of three nuanced words to describe Bottom’s change: “transform[ation]” (4.1.63), “translat[ion]” (3.1.115; 3.2.32), and “transport[ation]” (4.2.4).

The true marker of body horror and the disquiet and fear it generates is not so much revulsion of the transformed body no matter how grotesque *per se*, but the realisation that whether one is

conscious of such integral transformation or not, the result is the same: a complete powerlessness to thwart or arrest such attack from autonomous internal or external agential forces. In Cronenberg's world, such agents take the form of manipulated genes, viruses, microorganisms, zoonotic disease vectors, and even psychosomatic suggestion; in Shakespeare's world, these agents who function as equivalent disease vectors are fairies and pestilent insects.

I intend to examine how we might find common ground with the particular theme of body horror concerning corporeal change through notions of contagion and pestilence, even if the anxieties surrounding the mode of bodily transformation might have arisen culturally from different causal mechanisms. For instance, both early modern and postmodern audiences would be disturbed by the idea of a healthy body disintegrating from the invasive ravages of disease or parasites, but our respective understandings of the root causes of such contagion might be attributed to demonic possession or *malefica* on the one hand, or microbial viruses on the other. Such comparative analysis across genres and historical eras would be a useful exercise in establishing how because the human body is at the centre of early modern and the contemporary phenomenology irrespective of sociocultural belief systems, the experience of horror (but not necessarily the causes of) share a commonality – the fear of bodily change orchestrated via uncontrollable, invasive vectors.

Because of this cross-cultural connection between early modern notions of disease, the supernatural, and corporeal abjection, my intended paper will focus on body horror in David Cronenberg's early films *Shivers* (1975), *Rabid* (1977), *The Brood* (1979), and *The Fly* (1986), and Bottom's transformation in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as being analogous to the fears and horror suggested by the generation of new matter, the New Flesh of an alien subject.

“Thou art a dead thing”: Body and Spirit in *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*
James Rizzi

In an essay on “Necrophilia on the Jacobean Stage,” Richard Grinnell takes *Hamlet's* Ophelia as an example of a woman transformed into the protagonist's consummate love object only through her untimely death. The Jacobean stage, however, is littered with the corpses of already beloved women, especially those killed for exercising their agency in love. John Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* and the unattributed *Second Maiden's Tragedy*, written at about the same time, present noblewomen who die affirming their chaste devotion to a chosen paramour, and both women return in ghostly form to bless the ensuing revenge plot that ends the narrative. The abject dead body is a staple of Jacobean revenge tragedy, iconically encapsulated in the skull of *Hamlet's* Yorick or *The Revenger's Tragedy's* Glorianna. *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* feature whole corpse figures as stage properties in ways that uniquely unsettle the distinction between body as subject and body as object (of horror).

The wax figures of her husband and children that her brother uses to torture the Duchess highlight a metatheatrical performance of abjection: juxtaposed against the “dead man's hand,” the authenticity of which ambiguous, the facsimilies that the Duchess takes to be her family prefigure the Duchess's own death later in the scene. Ironically, the Duchess does not return to the stage after her death in a corporeal form but only as a voice, one that can achieve little more

than an echo but that nonetheless participates actively in her own vengeance. In performance, it is both economical and practical to at least have Antonio stand in for his own wax dummy under the dim, concealing lights of the scene, whereas the Duchess's body needs never reappear, even as her voice takes on a critical role late in the play; *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, however, culminates in a scene that requires actual doubling a body. Since stage directions indicate that the ghost of the deceased Lady enters "in the same form as the [body of the] Lady is dress'd in the chair." The corpse has been taken as authentic by both the lascivious Tyrant and the avenging lover Govianus, the two living men most invested in her physicality, but it must be made of something other than the real body that has played the Lady to this point and now doubles as her ghost. On display, literally enthroned in the center of the stage, the figure of the lady is subject to male scopophilia that seems to invite the audience's inspection as well, but the uncanniness inherent in death is highlighted by Govianus's disguise, as he enters as a painter hired to restore the body's living colors. Govianus paints so well, with poison paint, that the Tyrant is compelled to kiss the corpse and seal his own death. Returning once more during Govianus's final, valedictory lines, the Lady's ghost "stays to go out with the body, as it were attending it," highlighting the spectral as a privileged yet problematic resolution to the female protagonist's obstacles to preserving her corporeal, bodily autonomy. The play ends on a tableau that depicts literally a problem inherent to numerous tragedies in the period, the divide between a woman's corporeal form and essential subjectivity. This paper will investigate abjection in the form of a theatrical encounter with the familiar corpse as a site of such a break.

"I find thee apt:" Seeing and Believing as Horror **Khristian Smith**

What do we make of Hamlet's being "apt" to the Ghost's suggestions or Macbeth's "extend[ed]...passions" and "painting of fear"? In *Hamlet*, the Ghost recounts its experience as an indiscernible horrific agony. It notes that it is incapable of telling Hamlet the secrets of its prison-house, but that, if it could, the "lightest word" would have physiological consequences: Hamlet's soul would harrow, his blood would freeze, his eyes would start from their sockets, and his hair would stand up on its ends (1.5.13-22). Yet Hamlet's exclamation, "O God!" suggests that the speech is already doing this work. The "lightest word" is doing its effect.

Similarly, Macbeth's focus on his Ghost's gory locks betrays his murderous hand, and Lady Macbeth must minimize his imaginings as a fit. She notes that any acknowledgment of them would only "extend his passions," corroborating the idea that calling attention to the matter would make it more authentic for her husband by feeding his imagination (3.4.54). Some moments later, she chastises her husband, calling his imaginings imposters to genuine fear and reemphasizing the distinction between true horror and the horrors the imagination conveys to the senses. When the Ghost reappears, Macbeth's conversation with his wife reinforces his fears. He cannot unsee what he sees but is left doubting whether it is authentic as it remains unseen by all others. Since he cannot determine what the spirit is, the uncertainty leaves him more afraid.

Early modern theories about the imagination vary in their definition of the faculty's function, especially in the processes of vision and cognition. Although many of these writers disagree on how the division between faculty psychology works or what impact those divisions make on processes of cognition and sensation, their disparate ideas about the imaginative faculty's

function emphasize its mercuriality and breadth of intellectual, emotional, and physical power. For many of the period's theorists, the imagination is *supposed* to be the wire between the imperfect body and the perfect soul; ideally, it's *supposed* to purify. But things can complicate this process, including the will, the body, the environment, and the invisible world. Building on the studies and methodologies of scholars like Stuart Clark, Debapriya Sarkar, William G. Naphy, and Penny Roberts, I propose we can trace the historical origins of what we currently understand as "the experience of horror" to the early modern period. By engaging more critically with the early modern imagination's power to generate, corrupt, lie, and delude, we can understand horror, through the imagination, as *onto-epistemological*: both a state of being and knowing.

Boxes of Wormseed and Paper Prisons: Bodies, Horror, and Imprisonment in *The Duchess of Malfi*
Charlotte Thurston

Sheetal Lodhia argues that *The Duchess of Malfi*, as well as a number of other Jacobean revenge tragedies, challenges a neostoic/Senecan perspective that privileges the soul over the body by portraying bodies that have “unruly agency” over the soul, often bodies with uncanny, automaton qualities. In *The Duchess of Malfi* in particular, Lodhia points out how the attention paid to her body as flesh, as monument, as portrait—the consistent attention to her body overall throughout the play, including those seeking to surveil, police, and imprison it—troubles an easy or hierarchical relationship between soul and body. Yet in her final scene alive, imprisoned (and, potentially, in one scene after death, where her voice emerges as an echo) the Duchess stands firm on her identity as “Duchess of Malfi, still” (4.2.139) and scorns attempts to provoke fears about her body and mortality. I am interested in how the obsession with her body figures in the scenes where her brothers imprison her, especially in light of both prevalent neostoic conceptions of the body as a prison for the soul that often arose in early modern discussions of actual and staged prisons, and of how the horror in the play surrounding bodies (her own, her family’s) interacts with these conceptions. In other words, I’m interested in whether the fleshy horrors presented in these scenes does overwhelm notions of a soul and stable identity in control of the body, and of how her imprisonment plays into the horror of the play.

When Ferdinand presents the Duchess the dead bodies of her children and husband, Ferdinand claims, with some smug satisfaction, that the Duchess is “plagu’d in art” (4.1.110) before revealing to the audience that the corpses are wax sculptures. This, as Lodhia observes, means that spectators would first be meant to believe, like the Duchess, that the bodies are her family’s real corpses. I want to explore how effective these attempts at horror are for both the Duchess and audiences. Some discussions of more current productions of the play emphasize its horror and gore, with James Shapiro in a BBC documentary on Webster calling it a “horror show of a play” (“The Mysterious Mr. Webster” 00:48) and the actress (Gemma Arterton) who plays the Duchess in the 2014 production of the play at the Sam Wanamaker theatre comparing it to a Tarantino movie. But how would the staging have resonated or read for an early modern audience? How would the Duchess’s own reaction to the scare tactics used to frighten her in her final scene of the play—a masque of madmen, a disguised Bosola lingering on the details of her body as a “box of worm seed” (4.2.123) and on her imminent death—have impacted the audiences, who watch both the frights imparted on her and her response to them? On another

note, a perhaps under discussed character in this scene is Cariola, who demonstrates real fear and desperation while facing execution, and who is incarcerated and killed for her relationship to the Duchess--how does her imminent killing after the Duchess's display of fearlessness, and in light of her own relative lack of agency in the situation, contribute to the potential horror of the scene? That is to say, I want to explore how the play functions as horror (specifically horror centered around the Duchess's and her waiting woman Cariola embodied experience as a woman), how the Duchess's and Cariola's imprisonment plays into the horror, and how the Duchess's response to this imprisonment and challenge to her agency as a person and a woman might undermine the horror the play seeks to provoke (if the play shows perhaps where Ferdinand's attempts at horror falter).

***Sejanus* and the Art of Early Modern Horror** Henry S. Turner

A paper exploring a political theory of horror, using Jonson's great tragedy of Tiberian Rome to explore the nature of horror as an affective experience, a linguistic predicament, and a generalized political structure. It first proposes a definition of tyranny as the affective condition of involuntary submission to the absolute and arbitrary will of another (the direct tyranny of Tiberius, the delegated tyranny of Sejanus or Macro, or distributed tyranny of spies, informants, and angry mobs). The condition of tyranny includes not only fear of deliberate violence but also the power of action suspended, or the threat of any possible action; in Tiberian Rome, tyranny has rendered the distinction between potential and actual obscure. Jonson shows us how this condition finds a specifically linguistic expression, since words have acquired the power of action; in a perversion of Sidney's observations about the work of the poet, the tyrant's words make real their semantic content—the tyrant's word is a word come to life. The paper then explores a theory of "horror" as that genre of representation that finds *pleasure* in the condition of tyranny, comparing *Sejanus* to other examples of the genre, both early modern and modern, and exploring the role of metaphysical and cosmological figures (i.e. Fortune) in both generalizing and personalizing the experience of fear. The paper concludes by sketching a brief political theory: "horror" describes a generalized condition in which the terror of tyranny is experienced as total, constant, or as always possible, in an environment saturated by the affective and material effects of fear and absolute domination—horror is revealed a *public affect*. In a state of "horror," the gratification of any individual will has become a form of freedom, and this freedom is experienced as a collective act. Horror is thus not a perversion of democracy but an expression of its essence, for if democracy describes a world in which the law has been structured to maximize freedom and pleasure for all, horror describes a political world in which terror might issue from each and every person, a paranoid state in which every individual pleasure has become absolute and a law unto itself and imposed on others: the world not only of tyranny but of fascism, hate crimes, public shootings, immigration raids, and incidental, intentional violence.

Horror and Hospitality in *The Winter's Tale*
Michal Zechariah

Hospitality is a trope of horror fiction, from the Gothic novel to contemporary cinema. Guests find themselves imprisoned by their hosts, and hosts are exposed to the threats of unpredictable guests. In addition, the dangers of hospitality have been acknowledged in the ethical theories of Kant, Levinas, and Derrida. This paper examines hospitality in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* and argues that in this late play, Shakespeare turns from considering the physical threats guests and host may pose to each other to exploring the affective dimensions that make hospitality the stuff of horror. I suggest that hospitality in *The Winter's Tale* contains a feature of the uncanny when a familiar friend returns as a guest, or stranger.