

### **Charlotte Artese**

#### What's in a Name: Gertrude, Claudius, and Traditional Narrative

Both Gertrude's name and Claudius's appear in traditional stories alluded to in episodes of the play in which the queen and king appear. In Act 4, scene 5, a distressed Ophelia insists on seeing a reluctant Gertrude. Gertrude struggles to understand and comfort the mad young woman. When Claudius enters, Ophelia utters a cryptic line that alludes to a folktale: "They say the owl was a baker's daughter." In this story, a woman ungenerously treats a beggar who asks for food, and is punished by being transformed into a bird or other animal. In a Norwegian variant, the stingy woman is named Gjertrud (anglicized as Gertrude) and is turned into a Gjertrudbird, or black woodpecker. In the play's final scene, Claudius deposits a pearl in a glass of wine, which poisons it. In Horace's *Satire* 2.3, the libertine son of a famed tragic actor dissolves a pearl in vinegar and drinks it. Pliny, in his *Natural History*, names the young man: Clodius. Pliny couples the story with the more famous one of Cleopatra winning a wager with Marc Antony by treating a priceless pearl in the same way. The feat has also been assigned to other historical figures, including Caligula and the Elizabethan Sir Thomas Gresham, who drank his pearl powdered in wine. This fact suggests that the story is not historical, but what folklorists term a migratory legend. In both instances, the royal couple are bound together for worse and not for better, in ways that signal Gertrude's doom in particular, caused by her union with Claudius. As Hamlet points out, man and wife is one flesh, and between them Claudius and Gertrude split the actions of the legendary pearl-drinker: Claudius deposits it in wine, and Gertrude drinks from the adulterated cup. Buried in Ophelia's folktale allusion there is an implicit threat against Gertrude—behave ignobly and you will devolve like your namesake in the story—yet Ophelia delivers the line to Claudius. In the allusive substratum of the play, these traditional (that is: shared, communal) stories are tied to Gertrude's and Claudius's names, actions, and shared fates.

### **Jessica Beckman**

#### Remembering Forms, or, Romance for Readers and Theaters

In his formidable book on the modernist movement, *The Pound Era* (1971), the literary critic Hugh Kenner insisted that "forms remember." He writes, "What process merely recapitulates, what habit merely retains, art will remember." This essay will take the form of a thought experiment positing the following: if literary form always remembers, why must this seminar remind us that it matters? If form remembers and we forget, then how might the terms of remembering and forgetting inflect the way we understand the "sharedness" of literary forms? Working through what Marjorie Levinson identified as the antitheoretical posture of New Formalism, this experiment (time permitting) will lightly take as its literary exemplar Francis Beaumont's comic pastiche, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1613), which numbers among the seventeenth-century plays that failed onstage but emerged in print for a carefully delineated audience of readers. It wagers that by considering as emblematic moments of remembrance, forgetting, and aesthetic failure both within the play and around it, two things become possible: We can consider how the early moderns theorized what is necessary for the successful performance and transmission of a particular form or mode, especially what audiences and

readers should know or remember about its conventions. We can then theorize for ourselves how the movements of genre and form across media might insist upon particular literary genealogies even as they dramatically reimagine reflexive conventions like identification, boundary-crossing, and digression. By tracing the movement of literary categories from print to performance to print again, we may ask in turn how poets, actors, theatergoers, readers, and literary critics variously reanimate what art always remembers.

### **Gabriel Bloomfield**

#### Toward a Trans Petrarchism

This paper will attempt to leverage the idea of “shared forms” toward a new understanding of Petrarchism’s construction of gender in early modern English poetry. Petrarchism might seem the fundamental forge of naturalized and strictly binary gender categories; the metaphorical transformations endemic to its literary mode (themselves derived from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*), however, open up possibilities for nonbinary or transitional readings of Petrarchan gender. My primary evidence will be Henry King’s lyric poem “A Double Rock,” a poem which opens on the hoary Petrarchan conceit of the stone-hearted woman only to explode it by having the speaker follow in the lady’s rocky footsteps. By the end of the poem, the two lovers share not just a material quality (the stone’s “hardness”) but also a form, as each comes to resemble the other’s “monument.” The convergence in form, then, proposes a sort of gender transition in which the Petrarchan object transforms into the material and formal image of the male speaker. Drawing on (trans)gender theory by Jack Halberstam and Colby Gordon, I will contend that this willful overextension of the Petrarchan topos—one of so many we encounter in seventeenth-century verse—may offer critics a new ground upon which to unsettle the strict gender binaries of early modern poetry.

### **Sierra Carter**

#### Reading for Epistolary Forms in Caroline and Interregnum England

In the 1650s, amid shifting demands of England’s print trade, reuse became the central theme of and organizational premise for literary anthologies, including *The Card of Courtship* (1653) and *Wits Interpreter* (1655). These volumes advertise their eclectic assemblage of social ‘complements’ and witty conceits, verses, dramatic dialogues, and model letters as material for pleasure and profit, promising their readers an education in gentry manners. Focusing on the proliferation of amatory epistles in these anthologies, this paper examines a long lineage of copied and repurposed love letters in early modern literature and provides insights into how readers were prompted to recognize and respond to shared forms in print. Both *The Card of Courtship* and *Wits Interpreter* adapt dialogues about epistolary reuse borrowed from Caroline drama and situate them as entertaining instructions for how to read and repurpose their appended collections of model letters. By placing these anthologies alongside Shackerly Marmion’s *A Fine Companion* (1633) and Robert Mead’s *The Combat of Love and Friendship* (1654), this paper considers how intersections of book history and literary criticism bring to light multivalent meanings of form across genre and media. The responses of fictional readers to love letters in earlier playtexts highlight the conventional rhetorical forms that characterized amorous correspondence in the period, but Interregnum anthologies also attend to the material circulation of such letters in a diverse and expanding literary marketplace. In *The Card of*

*Courtship* and *Wits Interpreter*, model letters are printed as commodified forms—sometimes set with blank spaces for personalization—that both sustain and challenge narratives of epistolary replication, reuse, and recreation for early readers.

### **Christine Coch**

#### Finding Our Feet and Reading with Meter

When sixteenth-century poets and educators wrote about what English poetry should be, they primarily focused on how it ought to be crafted. For Philip Sidney, not writers alone, but readers, too, engaged in a sort of poesis, by replicating a poet's creative process within themselves. A poet not only made "a Cyrus . . . as nature might have done, but [bestowed] a Cyrus upon the world to make many Cyruses, if they will learn aright why and how that maker made him." This essay explores what readers were thought to be doing between these two moments of making. Whereas theorists generally agreed that a poet's invention moves a reader to learn, the role of form in catalyzing this process was less certain. Sidney does not even concern himself with form in the *Defence*, save in a few sentences on versifying near the end. For a closer look at how theorists were conceiving of a reader's interaction with form, this essay takes up the case of accentual-syllabic verse as it was experienced on the page. From Surrey forward, the English accentual-syllabic line developed alongside the practice of silent reading. How was silent reading imagined to be engaging an aural rhythm? What did readers bring to the process? This essay aims to trace how readers were thought to share in meter's mechanism for moving them to new perceptions.

### **Nick Devlin**

#### A Tragical Roman Face: Playing with Plutarch in Antony and Cleopatra

History in Antony and Cleopatra never coheres: identities fragment, scenes proliferate, spectacles beggar description, and the world melts like a floodplain. This paper will explore how forms, figures, and genre(s) from antiquity relate to one of the play's central concerns; namely, the strain that occurs when history is discursively mediated by the conventions and narrative structures of drama. Recent work on classical reception in Shakespeare's England has argued for new, expansive approaches to understanding the availability of Greek tragedy and poetics in the period. Particular attention has been paid to the circulation of Greek tragedy through bilingual editions, Latin translations, and embedded references in writers like Plutarch. Following from this research, I will read Antony and Cleopatra in relation to Plutarch's blending of the forms of tragedy and history. In its reconfiguration of the tragic themes in Plutarch's *Life of Marcus Antonius*—especially Plutarch's Herculean imagery, mimetic violence, passion, cruelty, and dismemberment—the play questions the linguistic and narrative fragmentation involved in the form(ing) of history. By considering Antony and Cleopatra and Plutarch in relation to new work on the availability of Greek tragic models, I believe we can reframe Shakespeare's reception of classical sources and think about tragedy-as-method in addition to tragedy-as-form. In this light, the play's fragmentation and meta-theatricality constitute a tragic historiography, a mode that problematizes narrative discourse, stable identity, and linear causality while emphasizing mis-recognition and dissolved meaning, and one that suggests that the fragmentation of personal and narrative identity is a condition of the writing of history.

## **Matthew Harrison**

### Wanton

The erotic epyllion, we know, is shared between men. An account of the shared sociability of the form traces back through Lynn Enterline and Eve Sedgwick all the way back to Freud's account of dirty jokes tracing out a circuit of male-male relationships. For art historian E. H. Gombrich, the aesthetic mode itself emerges out of such sublimation: the viewer comes to identify with the artist, because the labor of understanding a painting echoes the symbolic labor of making it: Up to a point we have to work from clues and repeat in our mind the imaginative effort of the artist if we are to build up the figure for ourselves. We have to become Pygmalions to this Galatea. ("Psycho-analysis and the History of Art," 36) The "frankly erotic" content of a Titian painting, he argues, is "absorbed...in that aesthetic process of recreation" (36). Lynn Enterline has observed that John Marston's version of Pygmalion is fascinated by the Freudian circuit by which "a woman's resistance" becomes "the conduit for male erotic discourse." Following Gombrich, I want to suggest that Marston is in dialogue with an emerging sense of aesthetic response, imagined as being a skilled reader, as being in on the joke. Specifically my essay reads Marston's attacks on the reader of his poem—in his retraction and in the satires—as attempts to resist this aestheticizing impulse, this relegation of art to a relation between reader and writer rather than between both and the world. To do so, I read these moments alongside Gombrich's fascinating account of the failure of 19<sup>th</sup>-century art to sublimate in this way. Looking at a Bouguereau painting, he describes successive waves of feeling: recognizing the erotic appeal; resenting "being taken for such simpletons;" feeling "insulted" that we are not "sophisticated sharers in the artist's secrets"; being disturbed to find we need to put up "a certain amount of resistance" against seduction. Rather than shared experience, Marston is interested in the more complicated circuits of pleasure and disavowal traced by Sedgwick in "Queer and Now" :Some readers identify strongly with the possibility of a pleasure so displayed; others disidentify from it with violent repudiations; still others find themselves occupying less stable positions in the circuit of contagion, fun, voyeurism, envy, participation, and stimulation. He is resistant to the idea that sharing a form must implicate us in a shared sensibility.

## **Eve Houghton**

### Quotation as Free Indirect Style in John Lyly's Euphues (1578)

Critics have often associated free indirect style with the novel since the nineteenth century and with the voice of an impersonal narrator. But the history of free indirect style is not synonymous with the history of the novel; in sixteenth-century fiction, impersonal narration emerges from a rhetorical culture that grounds the authority of sentences precisely in their lack of an enunciator. This paper addresses the famously allusive style of John Lyly's *Euphues* (1578), with its constant appeal to the authority of a shared consensus. Euphuism is not merely a practice of quotation; it is a practice of imitation, mimicry, and assimilation, analogous to free indirect style, in which the voice of authority is incorporated into a character's own discourse. What looks like personal expression in *Euphues* thus often seems more like a vehicle for communal, shared beliefs: each voice is curiously indistinguishable from other voices. While later readers tended to see this as an aesthetic inadequacy—a testament to *Euphues*'s failure to convincingly differentiate the voices of its characters—early modern readers treated the wide diffusion of

common wisdom in the text as a guarantor of its truth and aptness. This paper argues that the impersonality of free indirect style has its roots in the commonplace book, the intellectual culture that shaped the first English fiction writers. Narrative authority in Euphues emanates from a voice whose origin is uncertain but whose truth is universally acknowledged.

### **Yunah Kae**

#### Staging Failure: Domesticity, Comedy, and *How to Choose a Good Wife From a Bad*

This paper examines the epistemological and affective implications of generic failure (perhaps ambiguity?) of the so-called subgenre of seventeenth century domestic plays. Feminist criticism of this subgenre (Arden of Faversham, A Woman Killed With Kindness, The Witch of Edmonton), in centering their main plots of domestic crime such as adultery and spousal murder, have largely defined this group of plays as a subset of tragedy. Taking a new approach, this paper attempts to demonstrate that domestic plays in fact fail as tragedy; the very represented affairs of domesticity works to stymie audience expectations of tragic catharsis in that domestic or “low” matter is generally theorized by early moderns as the stuff of comedy. In its generic failure, then, what shared knowledge and affect does the ambivalent domestic play shape within the space of the theater? To answer this question, I focus on the anonymous play, *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad* (c.1600-1602, usually attributed to Thomas Heywood). Advertised as “A pleasant conceited comedie” in the title-page but featuring adultery with a prostitute and attempted wife-poisoning, the play is generically disconcerting. This paper puts pressure on this generic ambiguity; in particular, the play’s strange representation of the travails of Mistress Arthur and the domestic tests of honor she is forced to endure. Is the audience supposed to feel sympathy (and thus concur to the moral tale of wifely obedience), or are they to laugh at her over-the-top show of virtue? I (tentatively) suggest that in staging generic failure, the play explores trivialness as a communal affective tool to navigate increasingly gendered and raced ideologies of domesticity, privacy, and kinship.

### **Jonathan P. Lamb**

#### Two Speakers with Five Feet: Shared Verse Lines in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*

This paper takes “shared form” literally: it will study the use of shared verse lines in early modern drama. Sometimes called “continuous verse” (a loaded term and a vile phrase), shared verse lines occur when one character speaks the first part of a verse line and another character (or more) completes the line. Such lines, elemental of the writing practice of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, coordinate two perpendicular vectors of “form.” On the one hand, shared lines strain to fit or fill form-as-template (that is, they somehow supposedly align with a certain metrical pattern, usually iambic pentameter). On the other hand, shared lines formalize in the sense of form-as-shape (that is, separate from abstract metrical patterning, they are knowable and distinct only in certain contexts and even certain typographical renderings). Shared lines therefore allow a retheorization of form itself. Arising from the process of editing Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, this paper explores one particular scene’s shared verse lines as a dramatic technique, an editorial conundrum, and a call not to return to formalism but to reformatize our study of early modern writing.

## **David Nee**

### Shakespeare, Plutarch, and the Anecdote

“Morphology” was the term the poet and polymath Johann Wolfgang von Goethe coined to describe his groundbreaking studies in botany and anatomy. In the early twentieth century, key thinkers adapted Goethe’s ideas about natural forms to the study of culture. The art historian Aby Warburg exemplifies a morphological research program that refuses to abstract form away from its concrete, archival manifestations. This paper attempts, via juxtaposition of Shakespeare, Shakespeare’s sources, and a range of related materials, a practical morphology of the form I’ll provisionally call “the anecdote.” My argument will be that this form both resists and demands definition. Resists it, since the form has no fixed essence but should rather be understood to comprise the full continuum of its metamorphoses across texts from different periods. Demands it, at least for heuristic purposes, because there nevertheless remain linking similarities of form and function that cannot be brought into view without provisional attempts at definition. Defined broadly, the anecdote is a short, self-enclosed, extractable narrative with a privileged association with the historical and the “real.” It is a shared transhistorical form with which Shakespeare scholars are intimately familiar, for they have used it themselves: as the opening gesture of countless new historical essays, the anecdote is the literary form through which a dominant strand of criticism sought to secure its referential relationship to “history” as such; nor was such a practice radically new, for as Margreta de Grazia has recently written, biographical anecdotes about Shakespeare functioned as an early mode of literary criticism. This essay will focus on the anecdote as it emerges from the study of Shakespeare’s sources, and in particular Plutarch, the paradigmatic anecdotal biographer. I’ll suggest that in Shakespeare’s Roman plays, Plutarchan anecdotes are caught between conflicting regimes of the exemplary and the factual.

## **Mary Helen Truglia**

### Mixed Modes, Tricky Temporalities: Genre and Time in Shakespeare’s *Lucrece*

As a longer narrative poem, sometimes termed a short epic, *Lucrece* uses the intimate space of the mode of lyric to navigate between the gendered personal and political realms. As a poem with extended complaints (by both Tarquin and Lucrece) and as a minor epic (one that centers on characters of seemingly secondary importance), *Lucrece* remains generically ambivalent – it is presented in a regressive lyric mode while simultaneously pushing toward a teleological epic conclusion. Gender and temporal boundaries are present within the consideration of the characters as well; Tarquin attempts to shame himself out of assaulting Lucrece by considering his legacy: “Yea, though I die, the scandal will survive” (l.204). I question how this early framing and reiteration of a patriarchal cultural concern shapes the reception of Lucrece’s actions and death. Time is used in its adjectival form early in the poem in reference to Tarquin: “But some untimely thought did instigate/His all too timeless speed” (l. 43-44), but comes to bear more pertinently in Shakespeare’s shifts between modal and active verbs: Tarquin begins his “graceless disputation” with “if” and “might,” but ends with his entrance into Lucrece’s bedchamber with “foul thoughts”: “Even there he starts” (l.346, 348). I will then read the poem’s ekphrastic scene, which brings the painting of Troy to life both through Lucrece’s description and the poet’s narration. As Lucrece starts to tear at the painted canvas with her nails, readers

easily lose track of whether the feelings and temporalities in the poetic language are activated within the painting or inside Lucrece. Through this close enfolding—the proximity of the painting coming to life around her—the temporal moment is expanded from the rape unfolding to an historical journey. Lucrece’s own apostrophe to a feminine Time (lines 925-1001) enumerates the many crimes and joys of Time’s presence, including a reminder that Time is but a “ceaseless lackey to Eternity” (l.967).

### **Benjamin VanWagoner**

#### “Why is Shakespeare in the Park?”

Our seminar is premised in part on form’s curious flexibility of scale within, without, and well beyond literary texts. But where does theatrical form fit in? Rather than think in textual terms, “Why is Shakespeare in the Park?” works in material ones, geographically and situationally, considering staging and performance practices that eschew innovation in favor of dependable pleasure and combat scarcity in a bid for ready availability. This paper experiments with the affordances of theatrical form at a very large, amorphous scale—that of multiple productions of multiple plays over nearly a hundred years, nevertheless united within what I think of as a form’s form: the theatrical phenomenon of “Shakespeare in the park.” Drawing on recent work in performance and cultural studies, it first theorizes this popular, seasonally repeated sort of production as a distinctly modern form, only apparently indebted to the open-air theaters of early modern period, before proposing *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* as the archetypal “Shakespeare in the park” play precisely for its emphasis on interpellative performativity and meta-dramatic humor. By analyzing *Midsummer’s* formal availability to audiences, in terms at once site-specific (“in the park”) and cultural (as a romance, or a “fairy tale”) this paper argues toward dramatic evaluation that has little to do with whether or not a performance is “good,” and more to do with cultural involvement or even civic enfranchisement.

### **Maggie Vinter**

#### Catching the Plague? Musical Contagion in *Twelfth Night*

In Act Two Scene Three of *Twelfth Night*, Sir Toby, Sir Andrew and the Fool cap off a night of drinking with the performance of a catch—a shared musical form today more commonly called a round. Their song, “Hold thy peace, thou knave” (2.3.65), generates pleasure from the tension between the collaborative nature of the form, in which all participants must follow and echo one another to sustain the music, and the antagonistic nature of the lyrics, which dramatize a quarrel. Characters are at once constrained and liberated to call one another knave, in ways that resonate beyond the boundaries of the song by giving voice to the Fool and Toby’s contempt for Andrew. The catch is an open-ended form of indeterminate length with no obvious endpoint. In *Twelfth Night*, “Hold thy peace, thou knave” breaks off when it becomes sufficiently obnoxious to stimulate an extra-musical retort. First Maria, and then Malvolio, enter to object to the “cozier’s catches” (2.3.91) that have disturbed the peace of the house. The command to “Hold thy peace, thou knave” jumps from the song into the dialogue, where it continues to reverberate across the plot of the play as a whole, since Malvolio’s objections to the singing are what provoke the singers and Maria to launch their campaign of humiliation against them.

I take this scene as an opportunity to think about how Shakespeare imagines something like what we now call virality. Though viral analogies always risk anachronism when applied to a culture that lacks a germ theory of disease, *Twelfth Night* does align the word catch and the act of singing with contagion. The catch as a musical form is defined by contagious replication which threatens repeatedly to escape from its supposed formal boundaries. This process encourages us to see a parallel—or even a germinal principle—for the romantic comedy in the catch, and by extension suggests that attention to contagion might help us recognize shared qualities in forms, modes, medias and genres that are generally understood as distinct.

### **Georgina Wilson**

#### Making Criticism: The Shared Forms of Material Texts and Literary Scholarship

This paper will attend to the shared forms of book history and literary criticism. Taking up Jonathan Kramnick's notion that literary criticism is an embodied craft which responds to existing material, I will argue that such craft is manifest in material acts of book production. Attending to the history of material production thus illuminates what we talk about when we talk about literary criticism, and shows how book history is central to the methods of literary scholarship. This line of thought is productively played out in the *Little Gidding Gospel Harmonies*, which creatively respond to – by selecting, cutting up, and rearranging – passages from scripture. The *Gospel Harmonies* reorder and reform their original texts, and so perform the critical scholar's act of selecting from, finding patterns in, and foregrounding particular material. The effect is to create a unique piece of work that, at the same time, draws out narratives which are already there. I want to suggest that the *Harmonies* might be read as pieces of literary criticism which ultimately enlarge our understanding of what literary criticism is. The aim is to draw attention to the shared structures and ways of thinking across book-production and critical writing, to theorise what can be gained from bringing these two disciplines together.