SEEING HARM: VISUAL VIOLENCE IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH TRAGEDY

BY

KENNEDY GRACE LONGAPHIE

A thesis submitted to the

Department of English

Mount Allison University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Bachelor of Arts degrees with Honours

April 17, 2020

Introduction

In November of 2019, five men were acquitted of gang rape in the Spanish court on the grounds that the 14-year-old victim was unconscious during the assault (Katerji). It was determined that since the young girl was unconscious, the rapists did not use violence or intimidation—a requirement for a rape conviction in Spain (Katerji). This reality highlights an issue within not only laws but definitions of rape and sexual assault that are constructed around the presence of violence, rather than the absence of consent. The notion that a perpetrator must be violent or threatening dismisses the inherent violation present in the act of rape: violence is innate in any violation.

When we begin to shift the thinking around what constitutes and defines violence, we recognize that it is rarely as explicit as displays of beheadings and blood-baths. The most prevalent acts of violence are silent, perpetuated because rarely are they identified as such. For example, there is inherent violence to any physical conflict without expressed consent: two strangers punching one another is illegal until they both sign an insurance form, strap on a pair of gloves, and step inside a boxing ring ("Documents and Resources").

This phenomenon of unidentified, pervasive violence serves as a model for how visual violence functions as well. Sight can be used to both cause and receive harm, both directly and indirectly, and, more often than not, it is the people witnessing visual violence in the absence of permission of those suffering from it, who contribute to the violence's lasting harm. One way the violence inherent to the violation of looking has been recognized is in the Anti-Pornography Civil Rights Ordinance, or the Dworkin-MacKinnon Ordinance, which proposes to treat pornography as a violation of women's civil rights and enable women

harmed by pornography to pursue lawsuits in civil courts (Lindgren 1208). This ordinance defines pornography as "the graphic sexually explicit subordination of women, whether in pictures or in words, that also includes one or more of the following…" The ordinance goes on to list such things as women presented as dehumanized sexual objects, things or commodities, as sexual objects which are tied up or cut up or mutilated or bruised or physically hurt, as whores by nature, or presented in scenarios of degradation, injury, torture, or in postures of sexual submission, servility or display (Lindgren 1208). As this ordinance reflects, the definition of violence is complex, and the parameters of violation are in direct correlation to the violence which arises from it.

This denotation of harmful visual consumption powerfully highlights how violation through sight has the potential to inflict just as much harm as any physical violence or intimidation. The definition of violence must go beyond direct physical harm to include the violence that appears in forms of perception and representation. In an age where images can go globally viral in mere seconds, this is an increasingly important definition not only to understand but also to address the violence which can be perpetrated through it. As various types of visual stimuli become increasingly prevalent and accessible in contemporary society, awareness of the ethical implications visual content stirs is of keen interest. While we cannot always control what we see, we can be aware of the implications our sight has.

Of course, visual violence is not just a modern phenomenon, and for an instructive interrogation of its effects, we can turn to Early Modern drama. Three key tragedies of the period—Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (1587), William Shakespeare's *Othello* (1603), and John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (1613)— draw attention to the understated ways in

which visual violence operates, is examined, and is exploited for the sake of the tragic genre and the audience who consumes it.

This thesis aims to analyze how these tragedies represent violence through metaphors of sight and how they engage the spectacle of suffering by implicating their audiences in their outcomes. These pivotal tragedies examine the power associated with sight and make suffering a spectacle for both the fictional characters of the tragedy and the audience that spectates them. This spectacle of suffering consists not only of bodies in evident and explicit physical pain, but also includes the less obvious, and often silent, emotional or psychological suffering derived from loss, love, shame, and circumstance. These violences are then layered with the inherent violence of the spectacle itself.

Chapter One focuses on *The Spanish Tragedy* and how its meta-theatrical structure and performative violence mark its influence on the subsequent tragedies of the period. While Early Modern English playwrights were all intensely aware of the medium of theatre as a new popular art form, *The Spanish Tragedy* excels in exploring sophisticated semiotics between the actors and audience and how they can be drawn into the patterns of visual violence in the world of the play and the reality of the playhouse. Chapter Two focuses on *Othello*, which stresses the importance of both the characters' and the audience's eyesight. The audience knows Desdemona is innocent, yet watches Othello kill her nevertheless. *Othello* also explores how we often see what we want to see, the unreliability of sight, and the violence which arises as a result. The final chapter explores how Webster's spectacles of torture in *The Duchess of Malfi* relate to the metaphors of sight present within the play and the consequences which conclude it.

Tragedies are a violent spectacle in theatre with an implicit and intrinsic lack of consent. While the actors agree to the viewing of their performances, the characters of the narrative give no such authorization. This unsanctioned insight into the characters' suffering is part of the intrigue of tragedy as well as the inherent violence of the genre. From our perspective in the Twenty-First Century, we can discern in these tragedies new ways in which this understated complicity works, and the way it highlights the dangerous prevalence of—and ideally alerts the audience to their complicity in—similar non-consensual acts of violence occurring daily around them.

Chapter One: Consuming Visual Violence in *The Spanish Tragedy*

A foundational revenge play of the Early Modern period, Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (1592) explores the spectacle of executions, the bonds of families, and the burden of love. The play begins in the aftermath of the death of a Spanish courtier, Andrea, and the imprisonment of Balthazar, the Prince of Portugal, who killed Andrea in an unfair fight. Bel-Imperia, the daughter of the Duke of Castile and the former lover of Andrea, begins a relationship with Horatio, Andrea's loyal comrade and one of the men who aided in the imprisonment of Balthazar; in doing so, Bel-Imperia draws Horatio into the quest for revenge she sets in motion. The other man who claims to have detained the Portuguese prince is Bel-Imperia's brother, Lorenzo. Unhappy with his sister's relationship to the lower-status Horatio, Lorenzo attempts to control Bel-Imperia's sexuality and ultimately kills Horatio in a brutal spectacle of violence. This act brings Hieronimo and Isabella, Horatio's parents, into the plot as Bel-Imperia and Hieronimo set out to avenge Horatio. Watching all this as a ghost is Andrea, accompanied by the spirit of Revenge. Andrea exists in the afterlife, hoping to gain vengeance for his unfortunate death, and therefore watches, along with the play's audience, the tragic revenge plot unfold. Groundbreaking in multiple ways, the truly remarkable feat of Kyd's dramaturgy is the visual consumption of visible violence layered throughout the several levels of spectatorship that structure *The Spanish Tragedy*.

The first layer of spectatorship is the playhouse audience who consume the entire dramaturgy of the play. Within the frame of this audience sits the second layer of the tragedy's spectatorship, occupied by the play's characters Andrea and Revenge, who watch the tragedy from the spirit world. The characters whom Andrea and Revenge watch are in the

third layer of spectatorship, those who experience the performative visual violence within the tragedy. This layer then divides in the play's finale, where the play-within-a-play structure creates a fourth level of spectatorship, inviting selected characters who have been engaging with violence directly as both victims and perpetrators, to step into the traditional role of spectators, mirroring the first layer of spectatorship, the playhouse audience.

This layering of visual consumption places the framing audience in an interesting position as they not only watch a violent spectacle but observe the other characters watching the same violent spectacle. This engagement with visual violence, on both the part of the audience and the characters of the tragedy, has a fundamental impact on the succeeding dramas of the Early Modern period and the way they each incorporate metaphors of sight for doing and receiving harm.

Part of the compelling visual consumption within *The Spanish Tragedy* is the variation of violent acts. Kyd incorporates self-punishment, execution, suicide, murder, and emotional suffering into the tragedy, diversifying characters' experiences of violence from mild to severe. The spectacle of suffering thus floods the tragedy, enabling the audience to witness it in every corner, while simultaneously clouding the perception of it for the characters actively engaging with it.

This phenomenon of clouding the character's perception marks the most significant divide in the tragedy's layers of spectatorship. Where the first and second layers, and later the fourth, actively assume the role of an audience, only Revenge and the playhouse audience consume all the spectacles of suffering Kyd incorporates into the play. Andrea and Revenge share in the spectatorship and visual consumption of the spectacle of suffering, existing in

their separate layer of the framed tragedy. However, despite being accompanied by Revenge, Andrea is also a character whose suffering the audience is invited to witness. The entirety of the tragedy is premised on Andrea's visual consumption of his loved ones' suffering. Andrea witnesses the suffering of his friend, Horatio, and his lover, Bel-Imperia, but it is only the audience and Revenge who can see his anguish in watching them suffer. In this way, the audience's close alignment with the supernatural spirit of Revenge further embeds the audience in the tragedy, heightening their intrigue and discomfort in the tragic ending. In addition to Andrea watching the people he loves suffer, the audience also watches him exist in uncertainty. He is not in a utopic heaven, but rather a torturous liminal space where he is continuously reminded of his untimely death and his distance from his loved ones who continue to live in the world stolen from him. This situation offers the audience another form of suffering to watch in the tiered layers of this tragedy.

As Calvo observes, *The Spanish Tragedy*'s heroine, Bel-Imperia, "set[s] the tone for the resolute, verbally alert woman of high rank who, despite all the attempts made to restrain her, fights for her will and independence, challenging the authority of her male relatives" (37). Even so, she is one of the primary victims of the play's violent visual consumption as Kyd makes the spectacle of her suffering and its various forms a prominent focus of the tragedy.

Trying and failing to control Bel-Imperia is her machiavellian brother, Lorenzo. Kyd first creates tension between Lorenzo and Horatio by having them share the prize for detaining the Viceroy of Portugal's son, Balthazar. This tension is amplified by Horatio's lower-class status and subsequent involvement with Bel-Imperia. Lorenzo takes on what he

perceives to be the responsibility of policing Bel-Imperia's relationship with Horatio since he believes, "[His] father's old wrath hath exasperate" (3.10.70). Lorenzo's primary tactic to police her is through observation. Invested in his sister's conduct, Lorenzo strives to regain access to her by using Balthazar's affection for her. He prompts the puppet-like Balthazar's affection and uses it as an excuse to investigate Bel-Imperia further, justifying to Balthazar, "Some cause there is that lets you not be loved; / First that must needs be known and then removed. / What if my sister love some other knight?" (2.1.31-3). Then, through the gaze of a spy, Lorenzo violates his sister's privacy and gains information on her relationship with Horatio. He instructs his informant: "Be watchful when and where these lovers meet, / And give me notice in some secret sort" (2.1.99-100).

The "other knight" Lorenzo alludes to is Horatio. Following Andrea's death, Bel-Imperia deliberately transfers her love from the deceased Andrea to Horatio, and in doing so, also shifts the responsibility of revenging Andrea; however, Horatio cannot withstand the power of the men who strive to control Bel-Imperia and is brutally murdered. The spectacle of suffering Kyd explores through Horatio is striking. The tension between him and Lorenzo culminates in his visually violent death: Lorenzo, along with Balthazar, Serberine, and Pedringano, hang Horatio in the arbour and proceed to stab him in front of Bel-Imperia (2.4.50-60). In addition to this physical suffering, it is genuinely heartbreaking—for the audience and for Andrea—that he is hanged for his love and devotion to both Bel-Imperia and Andrea.

Following the murder, Horatio's body is transformed into a spectacle that will be revisited during the climax of the play. The murderers flee the crime scene forcibly abducting

Bel-Imperia and leaving Horatio's body hanging on display. Molly Smith notes that "during Elizabeth's reign, 6160 victims were hanged at Tyburn…Elizabethans were certainly quite familiar with the spectacle of the hanged body and the disemboweled and quartered corpse" (217). This historical context suggests the audience's personal engagement with the public spectacle of violent punishment; however, *The Spanish Tragedy* incorporates not only a typical form of death the London audience would be accustomed to witnessing but integrates characters for the London audience to observe watching the punishment. This scene exemplifies how the spectacle of suffering the audience witnesses is not only Horatio's direct physical agony but the suffering of Bel-Imperia watching her brother kill the man she loves. In this way, Kyd "weakens the frames that separated spectators from the spectacle" (Smith 217); they are not only watching the murder of Horatio, but Bel-Imperia's pain as she witnesses it.

Despite her social transgression and sexual experience, Bel-Imperia is a dramatically sympathetic heroine: she is extraordinary. Her initial love for Andrea is never questioned, and her honest affection for Horatio is proven when she pleads for Lorenzo to spare him at her own expense: "Oh, save his life and let me die for him! / Oh save him, brother! Save him, Balthazar! I loved Horatio, but he loved not me" (2.4.55-7).

Horatio's murder is essential to Kyd's dramaturgy as the crime prompts two more spectacles of suffering in the play. First, his father, Hieronimo, becomes unhinged at the sight of his dead child and undertakes a pursuit of revenge. Immediately his suffering is on display; according to stage direction, he enters in his sleepwear, holding a sword and torch (2.5), foreshadowing his mental decline. Ingeniously, this creates dramatic irony when

Hieronimo enters and observes, “A man hanged up, and all the murderers gone” (2.5.10) as he cuts the body down. The audience knows he is seeing his son before he does.

Hieronimo then shares his grief with Isabella, calling her over to the body of their son: “Here, Isabella, help me to lament, / For sighs are stopped and all my tears are spent” (2.5.36-7). Kyd invites the audience to view this intimate, tragic moment between the parents as they mourn their dead child; the spectacle of two people sharing emotional suffering is a pathetic offering for people to consume visually.

Following her husband, Isabella also falls into an emotional spiral after the death of her child. She proclaims:

> So that you say this herb will purge the eye
>
> And this the head,
>
> Ah, but none of them will purge the heart!
>
> No, there’s no medicine left for my disease,
>
> Nor any physic to recuse the dead. (3.8.1-5)

Significantly, she explicitly desires to purge her eyes. It is the sight of her dead son that evokes her suffering just as much as his death. Though she is prevented from aiding Bel-Imperia and Hieronimo, Isabella desires revenge (3.8.24-5). She enters scene two of act four with a weapon, cutting down the arbour involved in the murder of her son (4.2.5). After destroying the tree, she cries:

> Accursed complot of my misery,
>
> Fruitless for ever may this garden be,
>
> Barren the earth, and bliss less whosoever

Imagines not to keep it unmannered. (4.2.13-6)

Here, Kyd cleverly uses the arbour to symbolizes the future, which begins to crumble with the murder of Horatio. The family tree is destroyed with Horatio's death; Isabella provides the audience with a visual representation of this destruction. This weighted act provides another motive for Hieronimo's revenge and increases the stakes of what will ultimately become his tragedy and transform him into the extremely sympathetic figure of the grieving father.

Although Hieronimo does move into the tragedy's central position, Bel-Imperia's commiserating nature is heightened by her relationship with him. Imprisoned by her brother, Bel-Imperia writes a letter in her blood to Horatio's father, revealing how Horatio died (4.1.36-7) and identifying his murderers. She then vows to join him in his pursuit of revenge (4.1.48). Not only does their revenge succeed, she directly participates in the plot, bravely avenging not only Horatio but Andrea as well in the violent play-within-a-play. Furthermore, Kyd has her kill Balthazar rather than her brother, reducing the weight of her crime and thus maintaining her dramatic sympathy, and heightening the pathos of her spectacle of anguish.

Bel-Imperia's overall suffering culminates in her suicide. Like many other heroines before and after Kyd's play, Bel-Imperia internalizes guilt for her initial transgression— her affair with Andrea—which leads to the domino effect of the tragedy. This internalization eliminates the possibility of a life for her beyond the tragedy, and thus, she commits suicide to complete her revenge. Hieronimo's ploy to kill Horatio's murderers through a staged performance offers Bel-imperia a way in which she can affect her revenge by killing herself as well as Balthazar. While on stage in character, she narrates her own suicide:

But were she able, thus she would revenge

Thy treacheries on thee, ignoble Prince, (Stabs him)

And on herself she would be thus revenged. (Stabs herself). (4.4.64-6)

Though she is performing a fictional character, she is speaking the truth. This meta-theatrical structure conflates the relationship between reality and drama in this final layer of spectatorship created by the play.

Bel-Imperia is the only heroine considered in this thesis who directly commits a murder. Interestingly, unlike the heroines examined in the upcoming chapters, Bel-Imperia is not killed by a family member to preserve her honour; instead, she preserves her own through her suicide. Kyd thus echoes the Roman heroine Lucrece as "both Bel-Imperia and Lucrece feel constrained by patriarchal structures and both stab themselves to death" (Calvo 39). The phallic symbolism of swords informs their decisions to stab themselves. They do not poison or hang themselves; instead, they use an object coded as male and frequently used as a euphemism for male genitalia, symbolically illustrating the patriarchy's oppressive rule that leads them to this resolution.

There is an element of both martyrdom and heroism in Bel-Imperia's death, and, as martyrdom requires, a public form of suffering. She does not die in a bed or a domestic location; instead, she chooses to die publicly. In her suicide, she finally obtains control over her spectacle of suffering, which the spectators of the tragedy consume. Amongst his final lines, Hieronimo notes Bel-Imperia's agency in her death:

Poor Bel-Imperia missed her part in this,

For though the story saith she should have died

Yet I, of kindness and of care to her,

Did otherwise determine of her end.

But love of him whom they did hate too much

Did urge her resolution to be such" (4.4.138-44).

It is not clear which 'him' Hieronimo is referencing, thus implying that her love for both Andrea and Horatio forced her to this conclusion.

Violence floods the finale of *The Spanish Tragedy*. Before Hieronimo's suicide, he reveals the body of his dead son and invites all the spectators of his tragedy to look on what has transformed into a spectacle through the collective gaze of both the characters of the play and the audience of the playhouse:

See here my show, look on this spectacle.

Here lay my hope, and here my hope hath end;

Here lay my heart, and here my heart was slain;

Here lay my treasure, here my treasure lost; Here lay my bliss,

But hope, heart, treasure, hoy and bliss,

All fled, failed, died, yea, all decayed with this.

From forth these wounds came breath that gave me life. (4.4.88-95)

Hieronimo transforms his son's body into a spectacle which parallels the visual component that is required to make a hanging death shameful—public spectators. Initially, it is the spectacle of Horatio's body on display that launches Hieronimo on his quest for revenge; now, it is revisited to reinforce the effect witnessing violence has on a person.

The Spanish Tragedy functions because of past and present audiences' willingness to engage with art that invites them to watch others suffer. It is interesting to question one's inclination to consume violence and the ingenious ways in which Early Modern tragedies fulfill this desire through the language of sight and the engagement of the audience by requiring them to not only watch violence, but also to observe others as they too witness these violent spectacles.

Chapter Two: Constructing Violent Images in *Othello*

The significance of visual perception and its instability is vital to Shakespeare's acclaimed play *Othello*. A complicated tragedy of sex, race, and violence, *Othello* addresses the consequences of jealousy and the implications of social defiance. The title character, Othello, a general in the Venetian army, marries Desdemona, a senator's daughter. Their relationship is met with opposition from others due to their racial differences but nevertheless begins as an affectionate and healthy marriage. For reasons widely debated by readers and audiences over the centuries, Othello's comrade, Iago, latches onto their relationship and exploits it for his own purpose. Before the play begins, Othello woos Desdemona through his stories of war, and Iago manipulates Othello throughout the play through his carefully crafted web of illusions. Iago creates, controls, and perpetuates violent images in order to trigger real violence within the tragedy. Indeed, Iago's skill is akin to the work of the early Modern playwright in exploiting audience expectations, which opens up a parallel between Iago and Shakespeare himself. In essence, both exploit their audiences' expectations and cognitive biases to determine what they are going to see, not unlike Hieroniomo's direction and control of *The Spanish Tragedy*'s play-within-a-play. Of course, Shakespeare's motives in exercising this construction as a dramatist varies from Iago's aims; nonetheless, through the construction of these violent images, Shakespeare's *Othello* examines the unreliability of sight and who has the power to construct what is seen.

The play's first visceral image is established immediately in the opening scene. Iago constructs the depiction of Desdemona's sex life for her father, declaring that "an old black ram / Is tupping your white ewe" (1.1.86-7) and further elaborating that "your daughter and

the Moor are making the beast with two backs" (1.1.124-5). This image launches the play's "voyeuristic preoccupation with Othello and Desdemona's sex life [which] structures the entire drama" (Smith 212). The violence of these images is not in their sexuality per se, but their description. Through his use of the words "tupping" and "beast" Iago contrives threatening and wild details to depict consensual sex between a husband and wife. Moreover, Iago's initial vicious image manifests in the play's tragic ending. This is comparable to Bel-Imperia's suicide in *The Spanish Tragedy,* where she employs meta-theatre to an uncomfortable level as she narrates her character's suicide while committing her own on stage. Of course, our eyes play tricks on us. Bel-Imperia's persona within the play-within-a-play may be dead, and she might also be dead as a character in *The Spanish Tragedy*, but after the performance, the actor lives on, having partaken in a mere visual illusion of death.

Iago's frames Desdemona as passive through his "old black ram" analogy. In doing so, he undertones Othello's actions as violating; however, Desdemona makes her agency in the relationship known as well as her genuine affection for him. The Duke asks, "What would you, Desdemona?" (1.3.264) to which she responds:

> That I love the Moor to live with him,
> My downright violence and storm of fortunes
> May trumpet to the world. My heart's subdued
> Even to the very quality of my lord
> I saw Othello's visage in his mind (1.3.265-9)

Thus any potential social violations—sex out of wedlock, or, for contemporary audiences, marital rape—are dismissed, and the violation in question rises instead from the couple's

racial differences that Iago is so keen to highlight. Shakespeare then allows Othello, upon being questioned about his relationship, to woo the senators and the playhouse audience with his life story in the same way he wooed Desdemona (1.3.143). While summarizing the narrative Desdemona has already heard, Othello paints the picture of his violent past for the audience. From being sold to slavery to encountering cannibalism (1.3.155 and 157), Othello gives the audience a taste of the self-image he has constructed for Desdemona, while also establishing this image for the spectators of both the on-stage senators and the off-stage playhouse audience.

Intriguingly, upon hearing Othello's story, Desdemona also wishes to construct her own self-image. According to Othello, in response to his story, "She wished she had not heard it, yet she wished / That heaven had made her such a man" (1.3.176-7). With this, Desdemona echoes the daring and praise-worthy comic heroines distinguished for their cross-dressing roles. Due to the phrasing of her thought, multiple interpretations of this line exist. Desdemona may be flirting with Othello, saying that she wishes heaven made such a man for her to marry, or, equally likely, she wishes heaven had made her such a man. Interestingly, her powerful statement acts as a significant double entendre. Both interpretations showcase Desdemona's agency over her identity and her desire to fashion her image how she sees fit. However, it is also possible to read the line as showing her alertness to her complete lack of agency: heaven did not make her such a man. This interpretation changes how her self-image is constructed; however, in being cognizant of the social oppression she experiences from the patriarchy, she retains a minor form of agency: it is far easier to retain control over people who are oblivious to their oppression.

In the beginning, it is clear that Othello and Desdemona are in love. "She loved me for the dangers I had passed / And I loved her that she did pity them" (1.3.181-2), Othello declares. This mutual love is essential to the tragedy as it raises the stakes upon which Iago preys. The tragedy would not be nearly as haunting if Iago contrived to have Othello murder a woman to whom he is indifferent. The fact that Iago can manipulate Othello's perception of the woman he loves is far more compelling, and the results far more catastrophic.

In 3.3, Iago begins to steer Othello through a step-by-step trajectory to doubt Desdemona. He suggests to Othello, "She did deceive her father, marrying you: / And when she seemed to shake and fear your looks / She loved them most" (3.3.229-31). Where the witches prey on Macbeth's ambition, Iago preys on Othello's insecurities. Visually distinct from the characters he interacts with, Othello is positioned as an outsider in more ways than one. By marrying a woman society believes he should not be with, Othello amplifies the stakes placed on Desdemona's conduct; his reputation is tied to his wife, breeding toxic insecurity from anxious masculinity. Iago recognizes Othello's worry that Desdemona will cheat on him because he is not good enough; this lingering insecurity in Othello's psyche is ripe for Iago to exploit by shaping the opportune images that will amplify Othello's cognitive bias into madness.

Harold Bloom notes that "Iago, who can dupe everyone else, does not deceive himself. He knows that he is creating murderous fictions" (27). He creates these "murderous fictions" by constructing and manipulating the visual images provided within the play. Whether it is altering an image already composed within Othello's mind or misshaping the context around an event, Iago "discovers his own genius by composing his own play with the

lives of others" (Bloom 23). His motivation for this manipulation is blurred; only Iago knows his motive, making him the character in the play with not only the most knowledge but also the most power.

While Shakespeare, like Iago, constructs murderous fictions, his motivations for writing a tragedy are more accessible. *Othello* functions as a cautionary exploration of the implications of sight and the missteps it can cause; however, fascinatingly, Shakespeare exploits the medium of theatre in the same manner Iago manipulates the plot. Iago tricks everyone on stage, but Shakespeare tricks everyone in the audience. After all, Desdemona only appears to be dead, but the audience, due to the conventions of theatre and their expectations of tragedy, accepts the spectacle of her death as truth.

Shakespeare distinguishes his aims in theatrical deception from Iago by inviting the audience to see Iago as villainous and dishonest. Iago also establishes the image of himself as a villain for both himself and the audience, while maintaining an image of honesty amidst the other characters of the play. "I am not what I am" (1.1.67), he initially warns. It is Othello's ultimate trust in Iago that permits Iago to control the images Othello begins to form of his wife, Desdemona. Then, through their relationship, "Iago's seemingly casual references to Desdemona's 'appetite,' 'will,' and "his view on Venetian women as sexual beasts, soon cause Othello to be convinced that his wife's hand is hot and moist, traditional signs of sexual license" (Bate viii). This recalls the Anti-Pornography Civil Rights Ordinance we saw at the outset, in which portraying and assuming women to be whores by nature, in pictures or in words, is a form of violence as part of the working definition of pornography (Lindgren 1208). Unquestionably, Iago can be accused of this.

One question sparked by Othello and Iago's relationship is how it characterizes Othello. The audience is let in on Iago's plot, is it then fair to criticize Othello, who is not let in, for not picking up on Iago's manipulation? The relationship of trust between Iago and Othello is complex; Othello takes his trust for granted. Just as Desdemona believes the best of Othello (3.4.27), Othello believes in the image of honest Iago. In speaking with Iago, Othello says, "And for I know thou'rt full of love and honesty" (3.3.134). It is uncertain if Othello's faith in Iago is based in a code of military honour which overlooks imperfections in those with whom one has shared the danger of death, similarly to King Duncan's trust in Macbeth, or if it is Othello's own insecurities and cognitive biases that spark the fabrication of his false perception of Desdemona. Perhaps Iago is simply a masterful villain skilled at constructing images that can fool everyone, including the playhouse audience, if the latter were not already privy to parts of his thoughts.

Initially, similarly to how we will see Lorenzo policing Bel-Imperia through the observations of a spy, Othello tells Iago, "If more thou dost perceive, let me know more: / Set on thy wife to observe" (3.3.269-70). In instructing Iago to relay what he perceives, Othello trusts Iago's subjective perception. He does not assert that he wants concrete proof but instead desires to be notified if anything discerned as suspicious arises. This state does not last long, and Othello quickly begins constructing his perceptions based on fabrications Iago presents to him. "Villain," Othello declares, "Be sure thou prove my love a whore; / Be sure of it: give me the ocular proof" (3.3.396-7). Othello has gone from being open to hearing merely suspicious perceptions of Desdemona's conduct to demanding Iago prove her

dishonourable. Ingeniously, Iago has manipulated Othello to give him license to present violent images of his wife, which will trigger the spiral of his downfall.

In demanding "ocular proof," Othello conflates visual images with absolute truth. In *The Spanish Tragedy*, Andrea and Revenge watch the violent acts the other characters experience alongside the playhouse audience. Andrea then takes the visual spectacles as proof of his revenge. The act of watching is significant for Andrea's revenge as it validates the revenge plot in a theatrically satisfactory fashion. Contrarily, by the end of Othello's encounter with Iago, where he demands ocular proof (3.3.396-7), Othello is not, in fact, a cuckold. Instead, he comes to be so anxious about becoming a cuckold that he seeks to make himself one. Benson articulates this paradox well: as Othello begins to search for "the evidence, the absolute certainty, that Desdemona has cuckolded him and thus, renders himself the protagonist of his own domestic tragedy" (113). Since Desdemona is innocent of the crime Othello fears, he never gains the ocular proof he requires. However, in a way, with Iago's help, Othello constructs his own "ocular proof" and sees what he wants to see, whether or not it is actually visible.

Desdemona, initially an autonomous woman in control of her own identity, is transformed by the images Iago, Othello, and the other men create; the images the men of the play endorse become her reality. Iago's initial description, "an old black ram / Is tupping your white ewe" (1.1.86-7), manifests in Othello's strangulation of Desdemona at the end of the play. Emma Smith notes:

> This literal violence [Othello's smothering of Desdemona] is the culmination of considerable cruelty imposed on Desdemona's character throughout the drama, which

> turns her from a spirited and eloquent woman into a passive object in her husband's own tragedy. She goes from being a person to being a prop. And she goes from a Venetian world in which she has her own story into one in which a male narrative… is dominant. (220)

Though he initially demands ocular proof, by the end of the play, Othello is willing to murder Desdemona based on a narrative he, with the help of Iago, has convinced himself to believe. She is condemned by the violent images they have fabricated. Thus, the truly memorable tragedy of *Othello* is really that of Desdemona, the tragedy that ensues from the way women's realities are constructed by anxious men under the regime of the patriarchy.

Despite the violent spectacle of Desdemona's smothering, her honour killing is not the play's last. As Desdemona's friend and Iago's wife, Emilia seems to be the only character who even comes close to seeing through Iago's control. She calls him "My wayward husband" (3.3.325) before conceding Desdemona's handkerchief to him. In deploring the double standard which plagues females, Emilia makes a case for equality between the sexes by calling on the bodily senses. She asserts passionately:

> …Let husbands know
>
> Their wives have sense like them: they see and smell
>
> And have palates both for sweet and sour,
>
> As husbands have… (Emilia 4.3. 99-101)

The first sense that Emilia asserts that wives share with their husbands is sight. Where Iago has worked for the majority of the play to dismiss the female gaze as something dangerous and untrustworthy, saying such things as: "Her eye must be fed: and what delight shall she

have to look on the devil?" (2.1.237-8), Emilia actively compares the wives' sight and other senses to their husbands. "The ills we do, their ills instruct us so" (4.3.108) she cautions. Therefore, any negative appetite the female eye expresses is learned from its long-running position as the subject of the gaze.

However, despite her frequent clarity of vision, Emilia, like all other characters in the play, is deceived by Iago. She cannot escape her entrapment in the social norms of obedience, which compels her to steal the handkerchief from Desdemona and impart it to Iago. This act of obedience, however, sharpens her defiance in the play's finale. Unlike Desdemona, Emilia is disloyal to her husband in the end. After Othello reveals Iago's role in Desdemona's death to her, Emilia asserts, "'Tis proper I obey him, but not now" (5.2.223). She knows what conduct is expected of her and actively chooses to disobey it. Emilia fiercely condemns Iago, spitting "If he say so, may his pernicious soul / Rot half a grain a day! He lies to heart: / She was too fond of her most filthy bargain" (5.2.180-2). Rather than remaining devoted to her husband as Desdemona does to Othello, Emilia defies obedience to remain loyal to Desdemona and dies as a result. In this way, Desdemona's tragedy is extended to Emilia, as part of the fate suffered by the community of women under the patriarchal abuse of power.

Counter to Iago's images of women he develops for Othello, Emilia offers the audience an image of the female experience as well as constructs images of men's nature that provide insight into the play's gendering of sight. Like her husband's aggressive image of Othello and Desdemona that later manifests in Desdemona's death scene, Emilia, too, constructs an image that is later realized in the play. At the end of Act Four, she says, "But I do think it is their husband's faults / If wives do fall" (4.3.91-2). Initially, when it is

constructed, to “fall” appears to describe only a sexual lapse; however, upon her death, we see in retrospect a dark pun. Gratiano remarks, “The woman falls: sure, he hath killed his wife” (5.2.270). Iago is the reason Emilia “falls,” just as she foretold the audience. Iago proves true the image of men Emilia has shaped, thus showing her sight to be more reliable than the male gaze, which dominates the tragedy.

Like Iago, “Shakespeare’s construction of his plays tend to imply rather than state; he often shows, rather than tells; most characters and encounters are susceptible to multiple interpretations. It’s because we have to fill in the gaps that Shakespeare is so vital” (Smith 3). This understanding is integral not only to how Shakespeare’s dramaturgy functions, but also the function of metaphors of sight within Early Modern tragedy. In implying rather than stating, metaphors of sight incorporate the audience’s interpretation more deeply into the tragedy and implicates their visual consumption in the crimes the tragedy presents.

Chapter Three: Inflicting Violent Spectacle in *The Duchess of Malfi*

A decade after *Othello*, John Webster constructs a new tragedy centred on the politics of virtue. *The Duchess of Malfi* exercises Webster's comprehension of body politics through spectacles of varying degrees and kinds, and representatives of female suffering. The play's dynamic title heroine, referred to only as "the Duchess," is recently widowed. Her brothers, Ferdinand and the Cardinal, attempt to prevent her remarrying in an apparent effort to maintain control. Despite their efforts, the Duchess proposes to Antonio, her household steward, and marries him in secret (1.2). They have three children together and maintain a happy existence until, in a trope already encountered in *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Othello*, her brother, Ferdinand, sends in the Duchess' master of horse, Bosola, to spy on her. As her disobedience is revealed, the play implodes into spectacles of violence, challenging both the psychological and bodily capacities to endure violent spectacles

Leah S. Marcus notes that *The Duchess of Malfi* is the most frequently performed of all non-Shakespearean plays of the early modern period (1). While its reasonably accessible language, comparatively condensed cast, and comprehensive plot are likely contributors to its popularity, I believe the wide-ranging displays of violence and the visual spectacle they propagate, combined with the perverse motivations that spark them, are significant contributors to the continued popularity of the play. In *The Duchess of Malfi* alone, "we are treated to a severed hand, a waxworks display of corpses, a parade of madmen and a courtesan murdered by kissing a poisoned Bible, in addition to the standard Jacobean complement of deaths by sword or dagger" (Marcus 2). Webster's tragedy is thus a high-

point of the Renaissance stage's ability to transmit violence through varying degrees of visual spectacles.

The springboard for these crimes is the body of the Duchess. The female body is "constructed differently right through a woman's life by patriarchy and capitalism" (Sabala 43). Webster thus grounds the tragedy in what we might call the Duchess' body politics. All of the characters, including the Duchess, are connected through an interest in her body and desire to control it. Since the Duchess' body "is threatening to male rule" (Lifson 50), it offers a way for Webster to ally her brothers with Bosola while also actively implicating the Duchess. While Webster could have created for her a more passive role, he constructs the Duchess as an independent thinker; both her mind and body are therefore threatening to the surrounding male characters. As a result, the plot of the play is dependent on her quest for sexual, and ultimately bodily, autonomy.

Rebecca Solnit notes how we "often treat violence and the abuse of power as though they fit into airtight categories: harassment, intimidation, threat, battery, rape, murder…" (134). While the Duchess, along with Bel-Imperia and Desdemona, experience various combinations of these abuses of power, this violence needs to be addressed as a continuum "rather than compartmentalizing the varieties of misogyny and dealing with each separately. [Since] doing so has meant fragmenting the picture, seeing the parts, not the whole" (Solnit 134). For these heroines, then, their experiences of violence become framed as fractured and isolated rather than an intertwined reality of the patriarchal binds under which they are held within the structure of Renaissance tragedy.

The Duchess' pursuit of sexual autonomy is realized first in her defiance of her brothers' desire for her to remain unmarried (1.2.209-13). She assures them, "Will you hear me? / I'll never marry" (1.2.216-7), after which, following their departure, she immediately reveals to the audience that she has "winked and chose a husband" (1.2. 264). The Duchess' sexual agency is further exerted in her pursuit of, and ultimately her proposal to, Antonio (1.2.325). She inverts Petrarchan convention, by dismissing the traditional role of the love object and directly expressing her own bodily passions:

> We are forced to woo because none dare woo us.
>
> And as a tyrant doubles with his words
>
> And fearfully equivocates, so we
>
> Are forced to express our violent passions
>
> In riddles and in dreams, and leave the path
>
> Of simple virtue, which was never made
>
> To seem the thing it is not (1.2.352-8).

By denoting the flaws in the virtuous stillness associated with love objects of the Petrarchan convention, she frames her actions in a virtuous light, implying that the path of virtue which requires this of its participants cannot be as virtuous as it appears.

Remarkably, the Duchess goes on to further assert her sexual autonomy. She directly draws Antonio's awareness, along with the audience's, to her own body: she asserts, "This is flesh and blood, sir: / 'Tis not the figure cut in alabaster / Kneels at my husband's tomb" (1.2.354-5). The emphasis she places on her own body consolidates it as the dramatic focal point from which all of the play's most violent images will stem.

Placed as a spy by the Duchess' brother Ferdinand, Bosola becomes integral to exploiting the Duchess' suffering of both her body and mind for the duration of the play. Responsible for giving her the apricots (spelt: apricocks), which induce her labour (2.1.136), Bosola becomes linked to the Duchess' body. In performing the tasks Ferdinand requests of him, Bosola acquires a level of control over the Duchess' body, that Ferdinand envies. Furthermore, like Iago, Bosola then becomes capable of constructing images of the Duchesses that prompt Ferdinand's violent actions. He confides, "I do suspect some sorcery / Used on the Duchess… To make her dote on some desert less fellow / She shames to acknowledge" (3.1.62-66).

The first spectacle of suffering of the Duchess we witness is her parting from Antonio and their son. She complains to Antonio, "Must I, like a slave-born Russian / Account it praise to suffer tyranny?" (3.5.74-5). With Antonio and their eldest son departed, the Duchess is left isolated and faces the punishment her brothers sentence her to alone.

With Antonio removed, Bosola and Ferdinand move into the primary positions revolving around the Duchess. While Webster uses her body as a way to connect the characters, it is ultimately her experience of suffering which precipitates the violent acts which conclude the play. With the Duchess imprisoned, Ferdinand inquires of Bosola, "How doth our sister Duchess bear herself / In her imprisonment?" (4.1.1-2). Bosola responds:

> Nobly. I'll describe her.
>
> She's sad, as one long used to't, and she seems
>
> Rather to welcome the end of misery
>
> Than shun it— a behaviour so noble

As gives a majesty to adversity.

You may discern the shape of loveliness

More perfect in her tears than in her smiles. (4.1.2-8)

Bosola constructs for Ferdinand and the audience an image of the Duchess' virtue. She is idealized by being entirely in control of her body and mind, according to Bosola's report. This transformation in his depiction of the Duchess is the first inkling of Bosola's shift towards virtue.

This depiction of the Duchess prompts Ferdinand's action. He goes to visit the Duchess where she is imprisoned and begins to torture her psychologically. Ferdinand uses sight as a way to inflict harm on the Duchess' mind and, in doing so, provides the playhouse audience with a violent spectacle free from physical violence and gore.

He first controls her sight by dimming the lights. Then, once she thinks she knows what is going on, Ferdinand offers her a hand, which she affectionately kisses (4.1.44) before he illuminates the space revealing the hand is dismembered (4.1.53). He goes on to further psychologically torture her by revealing artificial figures of her husband and children as if they were dead (4.1.56). In doing so, Ferdinand preys on the Duchess' sight, but also on the playhouse audience's expectations of theatrical convention. Theatre often demands the audience to suspend their disbelief and take props, such as the figures of the Duchess' family who are presented to her, and accept them as "real" within the world of the play. This requires the audience to then distrust or disregard what they believe to see before them, similarly to, as discussed before, how Desdemona only appears to be dead, but the audience nonetheless accepts the spectacle of her death as truth. In tricking the Duchess' eyes, along

with the audience's, Ferdinand introduces a means of visual violence far different than those experienced in *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Othello*. He creates an environment in which the Duchess' sight is at the mercy of his control. He constructs deliberately false images of violent spectacles, which in turn create the overarching spectacle of the Duchess' suffering for himself and the playhouse audience to consume further.

Ferdinand continues his torture by getting Bosola to place artificial figures of Antonio and the children, appearing as if they are dead, and forcing the Duchess to look at them. Despite this horrible act, the Duchess remains in control of her mind and body; however, the Duchess is aware of her increasingly hostile environment. She acknowledges, "I account this world a tedious theatre / For I do play a part in't 'gainst my will" (4.1.81-2). While she asserts her frustration in the control Ferdinand is exerting over her, the grace with which she accepts her reality shocks Bosola. Then, upon her resolution to commit suicide, he becomes overwhelmed by her composure and virtue and resolves to save her life (4.1.83).

Bosola asks Ferdinand, "Why do you do this?" (4.1.112), to which Ferdinand replies, "To bring her to despair" (4.1.113). As Marcus points out, unlike his brother, "Ferdinand appears to have no sexual outlet beyond an incestuous yearning for his sister" (26). While the Duchess gives outlet to her "violent passions" (1.2.355) in her marriage to Antonio, Ferdinand's lack of outlet enables the "violent passions" he feels towards his sister to morph into violent acts against her. He cries:

> Damn her! That body of hers,
>
> While that my blood ran pure in't, was more worth
>
> Than which thou wouldst comfort, called a soul.

> I will send her masques of common courtesans,
>
> Have her meat served up by bawds and ruffians,
>
> And, 'cause she'll need be mad, I am resolved
>
> To remove forth the common hospital
>
> All the mad folk, and place them near her lodging. (4.1.117-25)

Witnessing the Duchess' psychological suffering cues Ferdinand's descent into madness. On some level, it would seem he is aware of his loss of control as he becomes obsessed with dragging his sister into psychological turmoil alongside him. This dynamic allows Webster to continue assembling violent spectacles upon violent spectacles, towards the climax of the tragedy.

For the audience witnessing the spectacle of the Duchess' suffering, one of the most pitiful moments is in the Duchess' own recognition of her suffering. She confides to Cariola:

> I am not mad yet, to my cause of sorrow…
>
> I am acquainted with sad misery',
>
> As the tanned galley slave is with his oar:
>
> Necessity makes me suffer constantly,
>
> And custom makes it easy. Who do I look like now? (4.1.23-9)

Cariola responds that she looks like her picture in the gallery (4.2.30). Here the Duchess' suffering comes from her acknowledgement of her loss of autonomy. She has been transformed into the alabaster figure kneeling on her husband's tomb (1.2.354-5), which she had earlier asserted she was not. She concludes that "Fortune seems only to have her eyesight / To behold my tragedy" (4.2.34-5). In acknowledging eyesight's role in the production of a

tragedy, the Duchess almost meta-theatrically addresses the audience, who, like the Duchess, only have their eyesight to behold her tragedy.

In her final moments, the Duchess' body is again centralized. Through her concern for her children (4.2.196-8), the Duchess reminds the audience of her identity as a mother and recalls Bosola's apricots, which began the loss of her sexual and bodily autonomy. Ultimately, despite the virtue in her identity as a mother, her children are symbols of her sexual agency, which is the crime for which she is being punished. However, in inserting this image and classifying her sexual autonomy as virtuous, Webster preys upon "Jacobean nostalgia for Elizabeth by associating female autonomy with virtue, and domination by courtly males with corruption and oppression" (Marcus 13).

The Duchess is executed by strangulation. It appears that this is another attempt by Ferdinand to unhinge his sister's mind. Bosola tells her, "the manner of your death should much afflict you. / This cord should terrify you" (4.2.206-7). Instead of resisting, the Duchess welcomes her death with chilling composure. Her equanimity transforms the violent spectacle for the audience, as the suffering they witness is removed of conflict by the Duchess' calmness and acceptance.

For the majority of the play, the Duchess holds the central position; however, following her death in Act Four, Bosola steps into the principal tragic role. Despite the off-kilter sensation this change in protagonists brings, it is essential to Webster's establishment of the Duchess' body politics. In her saint-like death, for which he is responsible, Bosola becomes inspired to pursue virtue. "Fix your eye here" he requests of Ferdinand (4.2.249), questioning him, "Do you not weep? / Other sins only speak; murder shrikes

out" (4.2.250-1). Ferdinand demands "Cover [the Duchess'] face. Mine eyes dazzle; she died young" (4.2.254). Interestingly, Bosola disagrees: "I think not so. Her infelicity seemed to have years too many" (4.2. 255-6).

Webster consequently does not conclude the play's violence with the execution of the Duchess. Instead, her final suffering launches Ferdinand's madness into a violent spectacle far greater than the one he attempted to construct for his sister and propels the tragedy towards a more traditional Jacobean display of violent stage spectacles. The morally transformed Bosola mistakenly kills Antonio, and his body is revealed, similarly to that of Kyd's Horatio, as a visual prop in the final moments of the play (5.5.30). Ferdinand is killed by Bosola, lamenting in his final moments, "My sister, oh, my sister— there's the cause on't" (5.5.69). Then finally, both the Cardinal and Bosola die, concluding the play's violence.

Webster thus prioritizes the Duchess' suffering to launch the climax and conclusion of his tragedy. Her body is highlighted throughout the entire drama as a point of intrigue. Again, this recalls the Anti-pornography Civil Rights Ordinance, where pornography is defined as the graphic sexually explicit subordination of women, whether in pictures or in words, that can include women being presented in scenarios of degradation, injury, torture (Lindgren 1208). Before her execution, the Duchess is examined, desired, tortured and held captive in an effort for Webster to exploit her spectacle of suffering as a dramatic cue for the surrounding male characters who interact with it. This action challenges who sets the parameters of violence and what contributes to our ethical responsibility to be aware of them.

Conclusion

"Discourse to me some dismal tragedy" the Duchess requests of Cariola, to which Cariola cautions "Oh, twill increase your melancholy"; nevertheless, the Duchess declares "Thou art deceived / To hear of a greater grief would lessen mine" (4.2.8-10). This sentiment is the nature of tragedy and what drives our inclination towards the genre. We are eager to watch the misfortune of others, fascinated by other people's suffering, and fearful of our own. This combination permits tragedies to prey upon our fears by causing us to empathize with those who suffer, while also implicating us in the inflicted violence as we willingly watch, and thereby participate, in the violence that is wreaked.

In many ways, the playhouse audiences of *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Othello*, and *The Duchess of Malfi* act as eyewitnesses to the spectacles of violence enacted throughout the tragedies. Though "we will not venture an estimate of the number of people in prison who are innocent victims of mistaken eyewitness identification" (Wells 49), the role of an eyewitness is continuously valued in the legal assessment of crimes. Eyewitnesses not only have a foothold in the situation they witness, but they also have power over the reconstruction of the event as they believe to have seen it. The public suffering increases the violence of the spectacle, and the audience is a part of the public, which renders this possible. Adichie asserts, "if we do something over and over again, it becomes normal. If we see the same thing over and over again, it becomes normal" (13): the most prevalent acts of violence are silent, perpetuated because rarely are they identified as such.

Ultimately, tragedies are spectacles of suffering in their own right. They are visual depictions of violent spectacles and profound agony. *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Othello*, and *The*

Duchess of Malfi call into question and draw attention to their audiences' roles as observers of violent spectacles, the emphasis on the spectacle of suffering, and their awareness of the nature of the tragic genre and the audience biases and expectations which define it. Tragedies, and the metaphors of sight they employ, thus become places of hypothesis, which in turn offer linguistic tools to redefine the parameters of violence, how they are set, and by whom they are set. By increasing awareness of the implications our visual perception has on ourselves and for those who engage with it, whether or not they are aware of them, we begin to recognize the power sight has to both cause and receive harm, both directly and indirectly, and caution how our witnessing of visual violence, in the absence of permission of those suffering from it, contributes to the violence's lasting harm.

Bibliography

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *We Should All be Feminists*. Anchor Books, 2015.

Bate, Jonathan. Introduction. *Othello*. Modern Library, 2009.

Benson, Sean. *Shakespeare Othello, and Domestic Tragedy*. Bloomsbury, 2012.

Bloom, Harold. *Iago: The Strategies of Evil.* Scribner, 2018.

Bradley. A.C. *Shakespearean Tragedy*. Penguin Books, 1991.

Calvo, Clara, and Jesus Tronch. Introduction. *The Spanish Tragedy*, by Thomas Kyd, 2017, Modern Library, pp. 1-112.

Champion, Larry S. "Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and the Jacobean Tragic Perspective." *PMLA*, vol. 90, no. 1, 1975, pp. 78–87. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/461350.

Cole, Samantha and Emanuel Mailberg. "Pornhub Doesn't Care." *Motherboard Tech by Vice,* 6 Feb 2020, www.vice.com/en_us/article/9393zp/how-pornhub-moderation-works-girls-do-porn. Accessed 10 Mar 2020.

De Dios, Javier Berzal. *Visual Experiences in Cinquecento Theatrical Spaces*. Toronto UP, 2019.

"Documents and Resources." *Boxing Canada*, https://boxingcanada.org/documents/. Accessed 11 Mar 2020.

Findlay, Alison. *Women In Shakespeare: A Dictionary*. Bloomsbury, 2014.

Hannibal Hamlin, editor. *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Religion*. Cambridge UP, 2019.

Hogan, A. P. "'Tis Pity She's a Whore: The Overall Design." *Studies in English Literature*, 1500-1900, vol. 17, no. 2, 1977, pp. 303–316. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/450139. Accessed 18 Dec. 2019.

Ingram, Martin. *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640*. Cambridge UP, 1987.

"Italy Struggles to cope with coronavirus lockdown." *Global News Podcast* from BBC, 10 Mar 2020, www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p08658p5.

Jacobus, Mary et. al, editors. *Body Politics: Women and the Discourses of Science*. Routledge, 1990.

Katerji, Oz. "Five Men are acquitted of gang rape in Spain after court rules no force was used because the 14-year -old victim was unconscious" *Daily Mail UK*, 1 Nov 2019, www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7638517/A-Spanish-court-acquitted-five-men-gang-raping-14-year-old-girl-unconscious.html.

Lindgren, James. "Defining Pornography." University of Pennsylvania Law Review, vol. 141, no. 4, 1993, pp. 1153–1275. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/3312343. Accessed 29 Dec. 2019.

Loraux, Nicole. *Tragic Ways of Killing a Woman*. Harvard UP, 1991.

Maus, Katharine Eisaman. *Inwardness and theatre in the English Renaissance*. Chicago UP, 1995.

Neill, Michael. "Unproper Beds: Race, Adultery, and the Hideous in Othello." Shakespeare Quarterly, vol. 40, no. 4, 1989, pp. 383–412. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/2870608. Accessed 3 Oct. 2019.

Powell, Raymond. “The Adaptation of a Shakespearean Genre: Othello and Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore.” *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 48, no. 3, 1995, pp. 582–592. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/2862874. Accessed 7 Aug. 2019.

Reynolds, Paige Martin. Performing Shakespeare’s Women Playing Dead. *Arden Shakespeare* 2019.

Sabala and Meena Gopal. “Body, Gender and Sexuality: Politics of Being and Belonging.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 45, no. 17, 2010, pp. 43–51. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/25664384. Accessed 24 Feb. 2020.

Schwartz, Regina Mara. *Loving Justice, Living Shakespeare*. Oxford UP, 2016.

Smith, Emma. *This is Shakespeare*. Penguin Random House UK, 2019.

Smith, Molly. “The Theater and the Scaffold: Death as Spectacle in *The Spanish Tragedy*.” *Studies in English Literature*, 1500-1900, vol. 32, no. 2, 1992, pp. 217–232. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/450733. Accessed 16 July 2019.

Solnit, Rebecca. *Men Explain Things to Me*. Haymarket Books, 2014.

Walter, Harriet. *Brutus and Other Heroines: Playing Shakespeare’s Roles for Women*. Nick Hern Books, 2016.

Wells, Gary L., et al. “Eyewitness Evidence: Improving Its Probative Value.” *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2006, pp. 45–75., *JSTOR,* www.jstor.org/stable/40062354. Accessed 24 Feb. 2020.