

**Douglas Clark**

**The Will and Testamentary Eroticism in Shakespearean Drama**

The power of the human will is often associated with notions of futility and states of powerlessness in early modern English literature. As the speaker of Thomas Wyatt's 'The Ballad of the Will' suggests, 'What thing I will, I shall not. / Wherefore my will is vain. / Will willing is in vain, This may I right well see. The significance of the will's potential to undermine its own operation is memorialised here through a similar lens of erotic redundancy as is found in Shakespeare's sonnets 135 and 136. Taking this trope into account, this paper seeks to illustrate the impotency associated with performances of '[w]ill willing' in respect to the creation of willed testaments in two Shakespearean dramas. Readings of *Troilus and Cressida* and *Julius Caesar* are given to illustrate how testamentary acts of remembrance are eroticised through the utilization of the will. Investigating the will's function in preserving the memory of Cressida, Pandarus, and Julius Caesar will evidence this faculty's role in emphasising the fundamental instability at the heart of notions of truth and identity which are presented in each drama. This paper demonstrates how these plays employ the concept of the will to memorialise moments of annihilation and absence, though rather than merely enhancing the potential for our will to exacerbate personal disempowerment, I argue that these moments of testamentary willing actually allow meaning to be created from instances of self-destruction. Deliberating upon the significance of this particular realisation of the will may enable us to reconsider the importance and influence that conceptions of the will take in Shakespearean drama.

**Rachel Clarke**

**Virgin Wives: The Erotics of Caroline Elizabethanism in *The Broken Heart***

John Ford's *The Broken Heart* (published in 1633) culminates in a famous extended dance. The princess Calantha, an Elizabeth figure, continues dancing while she learns of a series of deaths, including her suitor's and her father's. She then marries her beloved's corpse (using her mother's ring) and oversees his coronation before she dies of a broken heart. This remarkable scene not only provides a clear depiction of Calantha's strength--commented on by her observers--but also turns that strength into a gendered denial of futurity, in which Calantha, the rightful but female heir, abdicates responsibility for the future by dying, even while entrusting her country to her cousin Nearchus. The play hearkens back to the Elizabethan era not only by depicting a version of Elizabeth in Calantha, but also (as S.P. Sherman argued long ago) by recalling the story of Sir Philip Sidney and Penelope Rich. The play is dedicated to William, Lord Craven, one of Charles's courtiers who fought for Frederick V on the Continent. During Craven's time abroad, he became closely associated with Elizabeth of Bohemia, and when he returned to England in 1633, he continued to support her financially. This essay will explore the erotics of Elizabethanist memory in 1633, focusing particularly on the role of Calantha as virgin princess. *The Broken Heart* links the cultural memories of the Elizabethan era, which made the past a mirror for the present, with the cultural erotics of virginity and chaste marriage, which use female sexuality as a shorthand for other forms of virtue.

**Mark Dahlquist**

**Catholic Nostalgia and Funerary Erotics in *Romeo and Juliet***

Accounts of Shakespeare's interest in England's Catholic past sometimes describe his affection for the subject as an example of the "antiquarian and nostalgic writing about the religious past, which seems to have been a special feature of the 1590's," as Eamon Duffy put it.

However, as the examples of *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Lover's Complaint* make clear, Shakespeare's concern with the power of (Catholic, devotional) images often seems to emphasize the erotic or seductive, rather than the nostalgic. The "saint's hands" and "holy palmers' kisses," to which Romeo and Juliet refer in the sonnet they speak together in the moments before their first kiss, invoke for example the theological discourse of scandal, which by the last decade of the sixteenth century was increasingly employed in discussions of the seductive power of devotional images.

And yet it would also be misleading to distinguish between Shakespeare's "antiquarian and nostalgic" interest in Catholicism and his uses of imagery that invokes the language of temptation and seduction, on the other. A pilgrimage site, after-all, is seductive in part *because* of its memorial function, as a tomb or resting place for a sainted figure. Moreover, for committed iconoclasts, memory itself was an entryway to the seduction and corruption of the world. For them the apocryphal Book of Wisdom provided an alternative to the Edenic story of original sin, by explaining that the beginnings of idolatry and sin were rooted in the sculpting of funerary statues commemorating the absent dead—an act of transgression that was both sexual ("the beginning of spiritual fornication") and memorial in nature.

This paper will consider the metaphor of funerary sculpture in a play that might be subtitled "a tomb is born," in which the figure of a tomb serves as both origin (imagined in the lover's kiss) and endpoint (the statute of Juliet constructed to commemorate her death) of affective desire. It will also consider the related theology of scandal, as it appears in *Romeo and Juliet* and perhaps with reference to *A Lover's Complaint* and to Samuel Daniel's *Musophilus* and *The Complaint of Rosamond*.

**Annelise Duerden**

**"As with your shadow I with these did play": Blazoning Away the Time  
in Early Modern Poetry of Erotic Memory**

My paper argues that the organizing strategies of the blazon in early modern poetry are associated with the arts of memory. I further suggest that attending to this intellectual overlap between the organizing principles of *memoria* and blazon helps to highlight the poetic blazon's anxiety over decay.

Within the memory tradition taught well into the early modern period, an ordered whole that can be broken into parts because it has an inherent, logical form—like the rooms of a house, or parts of a body—is paired with images imprinted on the divided units of this form, and subsequently possessed within the storehouse of the memory. Accordingly, the blazon divides and contemplates the object of its meditation within the organized form of the body, pairing the pieces with associative images. Yet even in a straight-forward blazon, like Spenser's *Amoretti* 64 or Campion's "There is a Garden in Her Face," the appropriating gestures of desire are subtly pitted against loss. These poems subtly evoke the material effects of time, attending to the possibility for decay, even while they celebrate the potential future of sexual fulfillment. In Shakespeare's Sonnet 98, absence resounds with insistent presence by recalling the erotic

tradition of the blazon alongside its recollection of a beloved. It is as though the landscape itself, having been imprinted by the desire of the Petrarchan tradition, contains a memory of body parts. Thus the speaker may “play” with flowers that already evoke cheeks, lips, breasts, and eyes as he recollects “the shadow” of his absent lover. Shakespeare’s “April (dress’d in all his trim)” is trotted out to memorialize the ephemerality of desire, and the structures of desire are produced by the transience of the spring flowers, subjected to winter by the poem’s end. Using the familiar pattern of *memoria*, the early modern poet argues for his mind/heart’s ability to comprehend and maintain his desire through the structures of blazon. It is a paradoxical assertion of possession of the unpossessible: beauty caught growing without decay, sexual knowledge of the virginal, immortalization of essential mortality.

**Lea Luecking Frost**

**“Speak Thy Sovereign’s Errors”: History and Sexual Violence in Cary’s *History of Edward II* and Drayton’s *Barons’ Wars***

This paper takes as its jumping-off point the treatment of the infamous legend of the death of Edward II, by way of anal impalement with a red-hot poker, in two early modern historical texts. Elizabeth Cary’s 1628 *History of Edward II* deems the incident literally unspeakable, not only because of its cruelty, but because “it both dishonoureth our nation, and is in the example so dangerous.” Michael Drayton’s 1603 *Barons’ Wars*, on the other hand, envisions the king’s murder as an act so heinous that it inscribes itself on its surroundings – if, as Derrida famously proclaimed, writing is violence, then in Drayton’s poem violence is a form of writing. The heavily sexualized murder of a king, supposedly devised both as a mockery of his sexual preferences and a way of leaving his body unmarked, presents a dual challenge to early modern historians, encompassing simultaneously the unspeakable acts of sodomy (called by Sir Edward Coke “a crime among Christians not to be named”) and regicide. This paper will examine the ways in which these texts express the sexual violence of Edward’s death through their treatment of the act of writing – both texts transfer the mostly-undepicted violence into the medium of language, implicating history-writing itself in the process.

**Christine Gottlieb**

**Sexing the Skull**

My paper considers the use of skulls as props in *Hamlet* and *The Revenger’s Tragedy* in relation to the gendered anatomical and *memento mori* traditions. Skulls had not been stably sexed in the early modern period, but female skeletons were beginning to make appearances in anatomical treatises. However, skulls’ gender differences had long been artistically constructed in the *memento mori* tradition. Both plays bring the ubiquitous *memento mori* and anatomical specimen onto the stage and make it perform the role of a gendered character. By metatheatrically exploring the gendered iconography of death, these plays invite us to see the performative construction of gendered personhood operating at the level of the bone.

In the graveyard scene in *Hamlet*, the unearthed skulls are implicitly or explicitly gendered male. However, when Hamlet turns Yorick’s skull into an emblematic mirror for “my Lady,” death’s ability to turn the gendered body into a neuter object becomes apparent. In *The Revenger’s Tragedy*, Gloriana’s skull is a neuter prop that is emphatically fashioned into a woman: gender is literally applied to it. The satiric extravagance of the skull’s eroticization queers the *memento mori* tradition and deconstructs the categories of gender and sexuality that are applied to the bodies of the dead.

**Stephen Guy-Bray**

### **Remembering to Forget**

One of Shakespeare's main concerns in his sonnet sequence is memory, something that acts both for good and for bad in the speaker's life. In our own thinking about memory, the most important distinction is probably between short-term and long-term memory. In the sonnets, however, the most important distinction seems to be between the speaker's memory of the man he loves and his memory of everything else. In this paper, I want to look at two early sonnets—30 and 35—in which a distinction is also made between the speaker's memories and the lover's. I am also interested in a further distinction, the one between personal and cultural memory. As I shall show, Sonnet 30 in particular has an interesting relation to the question of cultural memory. In this section of the paper, I shall look at two versions of these sonnets in a recent book that features rewritten and, in some cases, completely reimagined versions of each of Shakespeare's sonnets (the new version of Sonnet 30 is by Eric Zboya; the new version of Sonnet 35 is by Cedar Sigo). In very different way, all four poems have much to say about the centrality of memory to both erotic and cultural practice.

**Joyce Green MacDonald**

### **“Paris, Oenone, and the Trojan War”**

The paper I'm planning will discuss the pastoral Paris-Oenone scenes in George Peele's *The Araygnement of Paris* (published 1584). Although this play is best known as an example of courtly pastoral designed to flatter Queen Elizabeth and demonstrating the largely unsuccessful struggles of aspiring poet/dramatists like Peele for preferment, I want to pay particular attention to way in which its first three acts interweave historical matter—they identify Paris' choice of Venus as the most beautiful as the initiating event of the Trojan War—with their own memories of literary modes and particular texts. Specifically, Peele's play calls on the complaint, modelled by Ovid's *Heroides* 5, as Oenone—the nymph Paris abandons for Helen--bewails Paris' infidelity. Oenone's romantic grief invokes textual and literary pasts that infuse the play's ostensibly historical matter with emotional affect. In the play—or at least, in its first section--the act of invoking the past is inseparable from the weight of heartbreak. If I have space, I will also set Peele's Oenone scenes against the abandoned nymph of “A Lover's Complaint,” as both works ask us to consider relations between gender, genre, and the ways in which erotic bereavement shape how we understand the past.

**Ian MacInnes**

### **“Despisèd straight”: Shakespeare's discovery of semantic memory bias**

The large number of early modern works devoted to memorization suggest how important memory was to the early moderns, but they also foreground the epistemology of memory (its adequacy or faithfulness) at the expense of more psychological concerns. In particular, because such texts were primarily concerned with verbal or visual memory, they tended to obscure the key role of emotion except as catalytic or fixative (remembering using images that conjure up strong emotions). To some extent modern scholarship has tended to replicate the early modern focus. Those working on Shakespeare's sonnets, for example, have tended to concentrate on the poems to the Young Man, in which memory is explicitly invoked, and on the adequacy or inadequacy of memory as represented by certain metaphorical models. Few focus on the process of recollection itself, and fewer still on the ways that emotions such as erotic desire shape remembrance. Drawing on early modern theories of the passions, on Aristotle, and on modern psychological studies, I argue that the *Sonnets* move from an obsession with the adequacy of memory as a

record of individuals and emotions toward a recognition that memory is a process utterly contingent upon the passions of the mind.

**Melanie Mohn**

### **The Erotic Reminders of *As You Like It***

*As You Like It* opens with a scene of memory: Orlando recalls the terms of his father's will and claims to feel his father's spirit in his own body. His complaint reflects a larger problem of lost patriarchs in the play. The absence of Duke Senior—not dead, but banished—provides an occasion for his daughter Rosalind's deflated mood in the scene that follows, in which she can neither “forget a banished father” nor “remember any extraordinary pleasure.” This pattern of recollection, in which memory enables the processes of identification and transference, compels the play's marriage plot: Rosalind's love for Orlando reinscribes her father's affection for Sir Rowland de Boys. But even as the play culminates in a set of couplings, the rearrangement of diffuse erotic entanglements, and the restoration of the rightful Duke, it contains several remembered fragments that resist assimilation. These latent memories, half recognitions, and even quick allusions to old songs, sayings, and lines of verse are traces of erotic alternatives that the play must excise or erase; the most prominent of these remainders is the melancholic Jaques. Just as Rosalind imagines that she can only remember pleasure by forgetting her father, the play's resolution—the arrival at a comedic ending through the rearrangement of its characters' desires—similarly requires a kind of forgetting.

**Dee Anna Phares**

### **“The stage is down, and Philomela's choir is hushed from pricksong”: Revising and (Re)membering in Middleton's *The Ghost of Lucrece***

Helen of Troy's famous countenance may have been “the face that launch'd a thousand ships,/ And burnt the topless towers of Ilium,” but it was Lucrece's violated body that served as the inspiration for a series of important dramatic and poetic works in Early Modern England. Shakespeare's 1594 narrative poem, *The Rape of Lucrece*, has received the lion's share of scholarly consideration because of its agonizingly detailed description of the thoughts, feelings, and actions of both the violator and victim and due to a recent turn toward studies of female memorialization in both literature and in funeral effigy. In many ways, this critical trend encourages readers to envision Lucrece as a “virtuous monument,” and to understand her final words as an epitaph that signals an erasure of the rape that stained her and an indication that “Her winged sprite” is released from the “polluted prison” of her assaulted body (ll. 1728, 1726). In essence, Lucrece constructs a tableau to stand in opposition to the “skilful painting, made for Priam's Troy”—a “piece” which features Helen, “the strumpet that began this stir” enduring in her ignominy (ll. 1367, 1471). And yet, while Lucrece slays herself to kill her sin and bury it, her virtue becomes fetishized so that her defiled/revered body commemorates the rape itself.

In Thomas Middleton's rarely-read and seldom-praised poetic complaint, *The Ghost of Lucrece* (1600), Shakespeare's heroine is disinterred and her spirit called back by an iconoclastic poet intent on obliterating Lucrece's “virtuous monument” and forcing her to remember, relive and re-articulate the rape. Like the Helen resurrected in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, Middleton's Lucrece is brought forth for male scopophilic enjoyment, but unlike the silent spirit of Helen, Lucrece's voluble misery provides the conjuring-poet—and the male audience—with a measure of audio-erotic pleasure. However, Middleton's Lucrece is not as malleable as Shakespeare's wifely paragon or Marlowe's beautiful cipher: she takes control of the narrative, figuring Tarquin, the poet, and the male readers as infants who are nourished by her infamy, thereby de-eroticizing the collective memory of her violation. Instead of playing the part of the tantalizing victim or the

stoically eulogized martyr, the ghost of Lucrece transforms into a Fury who reclaims her story and battles to have the last word on her life, death, and legacy.

**Garrett Sullivan**

**"Memory, Desire and Exemplarity in Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*"**

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the concept of exemplarity provided an influential way of accounting for the effects of history and literature on the subjectivity of a reader. As Timothy Hampton has suggested, humanist historiography understood "the past [as] ... a reservoir of models for present action. ... The words, deeds, and even the bodies of the illustrious ancients were seen as signs of excellence and patterns for behavior" to be emulated. At the same time, this period was marked by an increasing skepticism toward exemplarity. Christopher Marlowe's *Dido Queen of Carthage* is a product of that skepticism; it offers a famously jaundiced depiction of Aeneas, who appears as grief-stricken and alienated, and is notably weaker and more distracted than his Virgilian counterpart. Even more than his desire for Dido, Aeneas's memories of Troy reveal him to be divided from himself, and thus non-identical to his own exemplarity. I will focus on Marlowe's Aeneas in order to suggest that Marlowe produces an anti-exemplary or (in Judith Haber's term) "pointless" theater in which Aeneas's character emerges out of both a refusal of epic *telos* and his shifting and vexed relationship to memory and desire.

**Heather Wicks**

**"The monument woos me": Eroticizing the Dead in Thomas Middleton's *The Lady's Tragedy***

This paper will focus on Thomas Middleton's treatment of the Lady's eroticized dead body in *The Lady's Tragedy*. When the Tyrant steals the Lady's corpse from her tomb, it represents a moment of failure: the failure of his faulty memory and inability to properly commemorate her death. In many ways, the play is about the moral obligations of forgetting and remembering, about the desire to commemorate or revise the past. After the Lady's death, both the Tyrant and Govianus, her lover and the Tyrant's supposed foil, find memory insufficient, have moments of forgetting, and attempt to memorialize the spirit of the Lady with physical, worldly markers. For her lovers, the monuments erected to memorialize her life prove an inadequate replacement for the loss of her physical body, and thus they turn to find comfort, both erotic and commemorative, in her corpse. In grief, the faculty of memory proves to be inadequate, and they must have the sight and touch of her. The Tyrant forgets the natural barrier of death, and he eroticizes her dead body in an act of commemoration only to find that the erotic experience cannot satisfy neither his desires nor the memory of her. The Tyrant demonstrates that not only is memory a poor substitute for the erotic experience, but the erotic experience also ultimately fails to satisfy his memory.

**Rachel Zlatkin**

**"You cannot call it love" in *Hamlet* 3.4**

This essay utilizes the work of Melanie Klein to explore the relationship between Hamlet mourning his father and his fixation on the maternal body, particularly during his visit to Gertrude's closet in 3.4. The scene has been so very psychoanalyzed for its oedipal content, both in scholarship and in various film and stage productions, that I have become increasingly interested in what work focused on the preoedipal might have to add to the discussion surrounding this scene. More than any psychoanalytic thinker, Klein perceived how the object world (embodied by the mother) was imagined to *absorb* and return objects and sensations. Kristeva describes Klein's imaginary as one "made up of substantive and sensorial elements" and

the internal object world as "an *amalgam* of representations, sensations, and substances - in a word, it is a diverse array of heterogeneous internal objects" (64). This is the body I want to study, guided by Klein's work, but also by the medical treatises of the period, which followed the Hippocratic notion that female flesh was more absorptive than male flesh. The sensual nature of Hamlet's language, his fixation on his mother's body, and his need for her to choose the "right" husband all speak to a complicated array of attractions and identifications — attractions and identifications that, I argue, Hamlet would have his mother contain and that he would access through her.

When Hamlet holds before Gertrude two images of the King—He sees one father with “grace ... seated on [his] brow / Hyperion's curl, the front of Jove himself” (3.4.55-56), and the other in contrast to this god, as “a mildewed ear, / Blasting his wholesome brother” (3.4.64-65)—I perceive a Hamlet who asks his mother to re-member King Hamlet, to be the "ear" to his "dagger," and in so doing to memorialize the father he loved as much as the mother who married him.