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Leader: Rebecca Ann Bach, University of Alabama, Birmingham 1

Larry Bonds, McMurry University

“When Night Dogs Run’: The Chase, the Natural World, and the World of the Supernatural in Early-Modern Drama”

My paper deals with an important element in deer hunting plays—the supernatural. I start by considering the funeral brass of James Gray, the gamekeeper of Hunsdon Park (d. 1591). The images on Gray's monument point to a pervasive concern with the supernatural in deer and deer hunting culture, a concern that receives expression in deer and deer hunting plays. After tracing medieval and early modern antecedents linking the supernatural and deer hunting, this chapter considers the Faustian Peter Fabell in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, the quasi-supernatural elements in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (such as Falstaff's disguise as the ghost of Herne the Hunter), and Prospero's spirit dogs that hunt Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo in *The Tempest*.

Stephanie Chamberlain, Southeast Missouri State University

Neither Man Nor Fish: Creaturely Encounters in Shakespeare's “Brave New World”

Shakespeare's *The Tempest* is crowded with creatures inhabiting this “brave new world” (5.1.186): from “toads, beetles, [and] bats” (1.2.343) the witch Sycorax uses in her charms, to the spirit Ariel Prospero frees from a tree. While the strange creatures early moderns encountered during the course of their travels proved an almost endless source of wonder, it is perhaps the melding of creature and human that proves most intriguing in *The Tempest*, arguably Shakespeare's most global of plays. Indeed, the strange creature that Trinculo and Stephano encounter upon their arrival, one who appears neither “a man [nor] a fish” (2.2.24), one who as Prospero recounts “is not honoured with / A human shape” (1.2.285-286), incites both fascination and fear as these displaced Europeans struggle with the perceived monstrosities they encounter in the global world.

My paper examines the creature Caliban both as source of wonder and as xenophobic fear, given an early modern anxiety about cultural contamination. While this creature proves a source of fascination to Trinculo and Stefano—so much so that the latter envisions him as a prime gift for “any emperor” (2.2.66)—Caliban nevertheless represents a source of anxiety to Prospero. My paper examines early modern curiosity cabinets in light of the wonder elicited through encounters with strange creatures during the course of global travel. I also examine the cross-breeding theories of Ambroise Paré to demonstrate the perceived threat such creaturely encounters represented to an ultimately xenophobic Europe. Caliban's desire to have “peopled else / The isle with Calibans” (1.2.354) registers as a grave danger of cultural contamination to Prospero's already displaced line.

Dr. Claire Dawkins, Stanford University Online High School

Puppy-Headed Monster and Strange Fish: Caliban and the Creaturely

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Through both their seminal study of Caliban, *Shakespeare's Caliban: A Cultural History*, and their Arden edition of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden Vaughan have convincingly argued that Shakespeare's play establishes Caliban as fully human character, despite the recurring animal epithets hurled at him by the play's other characters. The starting off point for my investigation of Caliban and the creaturely is to examine what these epithets *do* for the play even while acknowledging that Caliban isn't technically a creature; how does the play's linking of him with the creaturely do something for the genre of the play, even if Caliban is human? In the long critical conversation about the play's genre, postcolonial criticism has looked at Caliban as a colonized figure (such as a native of the Americas) in order to turn our discussion of the play from being Prospero's comedy (wherein the ousted duke virtuously reclaims his dukedom and secures a happy marriage for his daughter) to Caliban's tragedy (wherein the erstwhile sovereign of the island dies a symbolic death when he is stripped of all of his power through European discourse that constructs him as a "savage" in order to justify Prospero's "benevolent" use of power as a colonizer and a patriarch). Meredith Skura's seminal essay, which identified this reading as anachronistic, draws that methodology into question. If early modern English depictions of "savage" natives were not contemporary with Shakespeare's play, then it is impossible for us to think about Shakespeare as using Prospero's mistreatment of Caliban to critique the colonial project as a geopolitical tragedy. My contention is that an ecocritical approach to Caliban can pick up where the postcolonial reading leaves off. The creaturely epithets used to dehumanize Caliban can contribute to the character's symbolic "death"; moreover, this rhetorical strategy allows Shakespeare to innovate the genre of tragedy in ways that counter the "normal" (as evidenced in his other tragedies) relationship between man and the environment. Instead of writing a tragic hero who holds fast to his anthropocentric ideals, even against his own nature and the natural world *writ large*, Shakespeare fashions a new kind of tragic hero in Caliban: one whose loss of power is tied to the conquest and disposal of the island ecosystem.

John W. Ellis-Etchison, Rice University

Strange Bedfellows: The Creaturely and the Monstrous in the Bodies of Richard III

The creature and the monster are reciprocal figures that throw the relationship between human and nonhuman animal life into sharp relief in the early modern period. While the creature is the broadest category of nonhuman animal (and sometimes human) life during Shakespeare's time, the monster represents the threat of indistinguishability between those forms of life. Natural historical, theological, and political discourses of the day work together to create a complex portrait of creatureliness that enumerates animal entitlements, while simultaneously marking all nonhuman animals as excluded from human society and subjugated to human will. The very concept of creatureliness demonstrates the early modern struggle with anthropocentrism and anxiety about the fragility of human superiority and exceptionalism by encapsulating particular kinds of human physical limitations in the context of nonhuman animal life. These same discourses also theorize the monster as a kind of category confusion between the human and the nonhuman animal that collapses such hardfought distinctions, imagining instead the amalgamation of these disparate forms of life in a single broken frame. The monster, moreover, represents the very real fears about the fungibility between these forms of life, and

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what detractors speculate will invite both natural and supernatural disaster, civil chaos and divine disorder. Shakespeare's *Richard III* stages these debates through the body of the king by juxtaposing his physical disability with notions of monstrous birth and animalized hybridity, and imagines the political ramifications that such a sovereign body might have on the corporate body politic of the populace.

Molly Hand, Florida State University

“No lady loves her hound ... as I do thee”: Animal familiars in early modern culture

Studies of English witchcraft have long recognized the special place of the animal familiar within the early modern context. Echoing Keith Thomas and Clive Holmes, James Sharpe writes: “although it is clear that witchcraft in England is best understood in the light of a broader European context, witchcraft there, as in any other region in the period, had its peculiar characteristics. Perhaps the most striking of these is the presence of familiar spirits.” Though frequently noted, animal familiars have not yet been the subject of comprehensive research. Acknowledging the need for further inquiry, Sharpe indicates that such inquiry may be best approached through the critical framework of early modern animal studies: “one element in any future research into familiars must be an analysis of early modern attitudes to animals, and of the relationship between the human and animal worlds.”

This essay responds to Sharpe's call for such analysis, examining representations of animal familiars in witchcraft literature, including W.W.'s *True and Just Record* (1582), and Rowley, Dekker, and Ford's *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621) (as well as Henry Goodcole's pamphlet [1621] on which the play is based). I read animal familiars *as animals* (not, or not only, as spiritual or demonic beings), and as constitutive figures in an early modern intellectual landscape shaped as much by “thinking with animals” as by “thinking with demons.” Animal familiars transgress boundaries between human and nonhuman animals and productively complicate our understandings of animals and animality in early modern culture.

Fran Helphinstine, Morehead State University

**The Ass: Metamorphosed from God's Teacher to
Dogberry's “Let it be recorded that I am an ass”**

During the Middle Ages, an extremely religious era, animal lore had a distinctly spiritual and even mystical aspect. The natural world, the so-called “book of nature”, was God's text for instructing humanity, an idea based, at least in part, on Old Testament verses as “But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.” (Job 12:7-10) or details as how Balaam's Ass protected him (Numbers 22.28-30). Christianity combined classical animal stories and turned them into religious allegories such as the *Physiologus*, written in the second or third century CE. By the seventh century the bestiary, both a religious text and a description of the world, evolved from this form followed by its lavish illustrations repeated in public places. The printing press

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and woodcut illustration soon distracted mankind from the “book of nature” and the mystical aspects of animal lore. Martin Luther’s use of Lucas Cranach the Elder’s woodcut of the Papal Ass on his broadsheets claiming that not only the Pope, but the Catholic Church itself, was the anti-Christ replaced any thoughts of God speaking through Balaam’s Ass. Luther’s propaganda combined with the bestiary description of the ass as an animal that is slow and resists commands, led to using the term “ass” to describe a human who is stupid, foolish, or stubborn, for which the OED gives Shakespeare credit with Dogberry’s “Let it be recorded that I am an ass.” (*Ado* 4.2.70)

Erin K. Kelly, California State University, Chico

The Creaturely World of Izaak Walton’s *The Compleat Angler*

When critics have written about Izaak Walton’s *The Compleat Angler*, they have often analyzed its engagement with and relationship to the politics of the English Civil War. Following and extending the recent work of Marjorie Swann, this paper will focus on the creatures in Walton’s text, the fish and other nonhuman animals that make up the bulk of the manual. Whereas Swann devotes attention to Walton’s thick descriptions of various species of fish, I will focus on the section early in the text about the otter hunt, which is part of the debate between Piscator, Venator, and Auceps. In addition to examining the otter hunt alongside moments of fishing in other parts of the text, I plan to put Walton’s description into conversation with contemporaneous hunting and husbandry manuals, such as Gervase Markham’s *Country Contentments*, Nicholas Cox’s *The Gentleman’s Recreation*, and later editions of George Gascoigne’s *The Noble Arte of Venerie*. My paper will examine what the otter hunt reveals about the status of creatures in Walton’s text, including humanity’s relationship to those creatures as well as the hierarchical differences among creatures. Furthermore, my paper will consider the impact of the otter hunt on the larger dialogic structure of the text. Since my approach involves taking Walton’s text seriously as a sporting manual, the paper will also consider how Walton positions his work within an existing tradition of sporting and husbandry manuals and what that position can illuminate about the status of creatures in the text. At some point in the future in a longer version of this paper, I plan to circle back to consider the implications of all this analysis on the political context of the work.

Michael Lutz, Indiana University Bloomington

The Message of the Bottle: Radical Mediation in *The Tempest*

In Act 2 of *The Tempest*, the bottle Stephano brings to Caliban and Trinculo is an impromptu creation: “made of the bark of a tree with mine own hands since I was cast ashore” (2.120-121). Fashioned from a tree of the enchanted island yet filled with the “celestial liquor” (115) of European wine, Stephano’s wooden bottle embodies the play’s whirlpool of material, environmental, and cultural currents, an example of how the island’s resources can be repurposed to human ends. Usually cut in performance and overlooked in criticism, I return to these lines to argue the bottle’s containment of alcoholic “spirits” signals an affiliation with the enforcing “spirits” of Prospero’s “art,” especially since both serve as technologies of social

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control. This paper reads Shakespeare through contemporary media theory, understanding the “creaturely” in its sense of the “created.”

Taking my cue from Richard Grusin’s theory of “radical mediation,” I consider the bottle as the medium of Stephano’s spirits. In addition to its traditional place in theories of communication and knowledge production, Grusin posits mediation as a fundamentally material, embodied experience. Similarly, Stephano’s watery spirits lack the disembodied efficacy of Prospero’s airy powers, and the bottle foregrounds the material work that goes into their transmission. However, I argue, insofar as both Stephano’s bottle and Prospero’s magic originate on the island, they can provide complementary accounts for the informative mediation of various nonhuman agents – including the environment and the products derived therefrom – in the creation of a social world on Shakespeare’s stage.

Miriam Jacobson, University of Georgia

Vegetable Lovers: The Botanical Embrace in Early Modern Culture

If seventeenth-century metaphysical poetry is any indication, writers had a profound desire to sprout leaves from their fingers and tendrils from their arms, transforming themselves into plants. In Robert Herrick’s “The Vine,” the speaker dreams of one such metamorphosis, inverting the Ovidian myth of Daphne’s flight from Apollo to transform the male pursuer into a ravishing, imprisoning vine. Marvell’s garden poetry is similarly obsessed with a body-botanical synthesis, from the “vegetable love” imagined in the first stanza of “To His Coy Mistress” to “The Garden,” where the poet wishes for all human life and fashioned things to be subsumed by vegetation, “annihilating all that’s made / To a green thought in a green shade.” Some of the more outlandish seventeenth-century Dutch engravings and the paintings of Arcimbaldo document a similar fantasy, transforming human hands, fingers and heads into leafy monstrosities. What can this metamorphic fantasy of corporeal-botanical integration tell us about early modern culture? At a time when botanical experiments with bulb corruption and cross-pollination created Perdita’s “streaked gillyvors, which some call bastards” and the bawdy painted flowers in Marvell’s “The Mower Against Gardens,” the idea that nature could be controlled, or even, as Bacon urges in *The Great Instauration*, harnessed and violated, seemed to dominate early modern thinking. But these poems, images and references to human-plant hybrids point to a counter-narrative, one in which rather than seeking to force nature to submit to human whim, humans wished profoundly to submit to nature, even to lose their personhood in a botanical embrace.

Nicole Mennell, University of Sussex

Horses, Horsemanship and Governance in Shakespeare’s *Henry IV* Plays

Shakespeare wrote within a culture which regularly drew comparisons between the management of horses and that of the state. Sat astride a great horse the sovereign took on the qualities this impressive animal embodied in the early modern period: nobility, strength and fine breeding. It is therefore unsurprising that the playwright frequently employed equine imagery to reflect on what constituted an ideal ruler and systems of governance. In *Richard II*, Henry

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Bolingbroke is seemingly represented as a model leader through his ability to control the ‘hot and fiery steed’ he rides as he leads Richard through London and, moreover, through Richard’s favoured horse, ‘roan Barbary’, willingly accepting Bolingbroke as his new rider (*Richard II*, V.ii.8, V.v.78). This striking imagery is contrasted with the metaphor of Richard as Phaethon, unable to control those under his command, which arguably justifies his deposition. However, in evoking this myth, Shakespeare also draws parallels between Bolingbroke and the horses that carry Phaethon away, wreaking havoc as a result of their disobedience. In this figuration, Bolingbroke is partly responsible for the civil discord he faces when he takes the throne.

This paper argues that the equine imagery in *Richard II* is developed in the *Henry IV* plays to represent the instability of the new king’s rule as well as the questionable methods he employs to enforce his authority and control his rebellious subjects. It is suggested that Henry IV’s efforts may be wasted due to the uncertain suitability of his heir, Prince Hal, for governance, who risks becoming a second Phaethon. Hal’s transformation into an idealized monarch occurs when he accepts that the state, to use Richard II’s words, is a ‘burden’ he must bear ‘like an ass’, rather than a horse to be used for his own amusement (*Richard II*, V.v.93).

James Seth, Oklahoma State University

**“I wish you a wave o’the Sea”: Mermaids and Aquatic Bodies in
The Winter’s Tale and *Pericles***

The mermaid is one of the most popular mythologies birthed from the fascination with the female body. Adapted from the ancient Greek *Nērēid* and conjured from the imaginations of sailors, the early modern mermaid was often characterized as both virginal nymph and fertile bride, thus inhabiting a paradoxical nexus of female sexuality. Shakespeare explores this nexus in two mermaid-like characters, Perdita and Marina. Both heroines cross watery thresholds at birth, sing and dance, and navigate the cusp of sexual experience, metaphorically realized as a seashore. They also have key roles in the plays’ restorative cycles and are pressured to reach sexual maturity. Male characters in both plays often use watery metaphors to praise and condemn the female body. Women are like dancing “waves” (*WT* IV.iv.140), yet they are “slippery” (I.ii.275). As Autolycus’s ballad warns, women seek to become fish and leave their lovers. When Perdita and Marina are described as watery creatures, their power is contrasted with male sexual energy. As fish, women unnaturally seek water over flesh; as waves, women move like water for men’s pleasure; as water itself, they reflect the male gaze—but only if they are calm and still. This paper will discuss Shakespeare’s mermaids, Perdita and Marina, as powerful representations of the fertile space between virgin and bride, adolescence and adulthood, and human and magical creature. Both women challenge traditional binaries of sexual experience, and they confront masculine energies in the form of patriarchal authority and male sexual desire, which seek control of their bodies.

Jeanette Nguyen Tran, Drake University

Learning to Converse: (In)Civil Conversation in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*

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One of Prospero's defining characteristics is that he is a poor conversationalist, or to put it less delicately, a total windbag. As Wendy Lesser explains in *Nothing Remains the Same*, "Most of the beautiful, memorable speeches belong to" Prospero, "but he is also a terrible windbag (Miranda is in danger of falling asleep during his first long exposition) and an unquestionable believer in his own rightness." Indeed, Prospero wields language in way that oftentimes makes conversation unlikely, if not impossible. This essay explores the moral, social and political consequences of Prospero's failure to engage in what Stefano Guazzo describes as "civil conversation." Reading *The Tempest* and Guazzo's conduct manual side by side reveals how it is not colonization that decivilizes the colonizer, but the offending of nature herself by embracing solitude over companionship. Much like Prospero, the unreformed Guazzo proclaims at the start of the manual that "the city is to me a prison, and solitariness a paradise" (I.8). However, Guazzo's Anniball takes the opposite position, proclaiming that man is a naturally "companionable creature" that "loveth naturally the conversation of other men" (I.4). Men who remain "enclosed in these voluntary prisons" of silence "become ill favored, lean, forlorn, and filled full of putrified blood, by means whereof, their life and manners come to corruption, insomuch that some take after the nature of savage beasts" (I.4). Ultimately, I argue that Guazzo's *Civil Conversation* is as significant as Montaigne's "On Cannibals" in understanding the ways in which Shakespeare complicates the civilized-savage and human-non-human creature binaries in *The Tempest*.