

2019 Seminar Abstracts: Print, Conservation, and Waste
Sarah Wall-Randell (Wellesley College)
Lina Perkins Wilder (Connecticut College)

Respondent: Joshua Calhoun (University of Wisconsin)

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“Printers’ Devices in Shakespearean Printing: The 1630 Q2 *Othello*”

Printers’ devices could be highly personalized by their commissioning printer, yet that same device might flit among printers for over a century. An explosion of new devices occurred during the earliest era of Shakespearean printing, but all Shakespearean printers had older acquired –sometimes newly personalized--devices in their repertoire, deployed in tandem with new ones. Furthermore, even “new” device images and mottoes borrowed heavily from continental sources and other English devices. My paper examines the culture of device creation, reuse, and conservatism within early modern English printing practices, focusing on devices in Shakespeare’s printed works.

It is my contention that devices can resonate across the variety of texts in which they appear, interacting with textual content. For example, the McKerrow device #188 first appears in Richard Watkins’ publication of Lambert Daneau’s *A Dialogue of Witches*, then later in Augustine Mathews’s printing of John Webster’s *The Devil’s Law Case* (subtitled *When Women Go to Law, the Devil is Full of Business*) before it appears in his 1630 *Othello*. At even a cursory glance, those works have a collective synergy, but they are further linked through the device’s image of a chariot drawn by dragons, driven by either the goddess Demeter or her demi-god protégé Triptolemus. Different textual contexts tease out different symbolic dimensions of recurrent images and mottoes; evoked here are ideas of the supernatural, matronly power, and the wronged woman. What do these previous associations bring to a reading of this late quarto *Othello*?

Scholars have been reluctant to connect textual content with devices for many reasons: the heavy flow of devices between contemporaneous printers often without apparent reason, or the inconsistency with which most printers deployed devices, or a lack of scholarly consensus about what their deployment indexes. It is time for a reevaluation of this ubiquitous but understudied printing phenomenon.

Sarah Case (Harvard University)

“Images of Nature in the Early Modern Gardening Manual”

This paper explores the tension between a material and textual reading of the late sixteenth-century English gardening manual. The garden, subject to time and decay, provides an especially problematic space in which the authors of these volumes sought to exercise control and impose order. These diminutive volumes, much smaller and less expensive than herbals, served a specific didactic purpose: to teach their readers how to do things in (and with) their gardens. These georgic manuals aim to represent gardens

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within their pages, providing detailed visual and verbal instructions for how to sow, grow, and harvest.

My focus in this paper will be on the visual cues provided by woodcuts and typeface ornaments. Drawing on Juliet Fleming's insights into typeface ornaments and printers' flowers especially, this paper will argue that the material texts of these manuals belie the desire for control over nature by emphasizing the ephemerality of the garden and the printed text. This paper thus explores the intersection between print, conservation, and waste in the space of the early modern gardening manual. After a brief overview of the genre of the gardening manual, I will focus on examples from two manuals printed by Adam Islip in 1594: Thomas Hill's *The Gardeners Labyrinth* and the anonymous *The Orchard and the Garden*.

Edwina Christie (School of Advanced Study, University of London)

“Marking for Re-Use in Seventeenth-Century Romances”

This paper surveys marks of use in copies of seventeenth-century English prose romances, focusing particularly on those marks which suggest readerly habits of conservation, repair, and re-use. Surviving copies of seventeenth-century romances often contain evidence of a strong readerly desire to ‘perfect’ the text by close correction and careful repair or by supplementing the early edition with paratextual material taken from later printings. Finding notes left to aid re-reading and instructive literary-critical comments left for future readers point to the marking readers’ expectation that the romance text would continue to be reread. And yet alongside these marks for reuse we also find numerous examples of the printed book being used as scrap. The margins and end-leaves of printed romances are repurposed for everything from pen trials and account-keeping to the composition of original verse. The romance text here is wasted, and the book is valued for the ways in which its marginal spaces can be put to new use. Focusing particularly on seventeenth-century English *romans à clef*, this paper argues that readers’ marks frequently demonstrate a serious and enduring engagement with romance fiction, and that this evidence runs counter to our perception of romance as a trivial – even disposable – genre.

Heidi Craig (Folger Shakespeare Library)

“Heaps of *Lear*”

“A Heap of Jewels, unstrung and unpolisht...”

-Nahum Tate, Dedicatory epistle to Sir Thomas Boteler, Tate's *King Lear* (1681) “Out, dunghill!”

-Shakespeare's *King Lear* (Q 4.6. 230; F4.5.235)

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This paper considers the opposition of waste and reuse in terms of the dramatic rewriting of *King Lear* across the seventeenth century — the Elizabethan chronicle play *King Leir* (printed 1605), the two *Lears* of Shakespeare (Q 1608 and F 1623), and Nahum Tate’s Restoration adaptation *King Lear* (1681) — as well as the plays’ thematic treatment of this opposition.

With varying degrees of explicitness, each new iteration of *King Lear* presents itself as a necessary update to its worn-out predecessor. Tate’s now-infamous description of Shakespeare’s *Lear*, quoted above, presents the text as a “disordered” heap which requires processing to restore its value. The previous iterations of *Lear* never disappear, however, but rather pile up, persisting culturally and materially as a remnant of the past. The opposition between the reuse and the persistence of the superannuated *Lears* has a thematic counterpart in the plays themselves, in which typical responses to the worn-out and useless go awry. The routine transmission of monarchical power to the next generation is disrupted when the one previous won’t go away. As Poor Tom, Edgar claims to “ea[t] cow dung for salads” (3.4.116). Gesturing to a circular economy, Edgar transforms waste into food, but skips the usual intermediate step; instead of fertilizing crops, cow-dung is eaten directly, this unsavory recycling a potent symbol of Edgar’s degradation. In some cases, the waste simply piles up, then as now, a sign of societal dysfunction, the more so in Shakespeare’s *Lear* where several humans are themselves “wasted.” The Servant who defends Gloucester is killed and unceremoniously “throw[n]...Upon the dunghill” (3.7. 96-7). Oswald’s excremental exclamation (quoted above) — his penultimate line before his dying (and ultimately unfilled) request that his killers “bury my body”(Q 4.6.234; F 4.5.239) — foretells his final, fetid resting place. This paper considers the persistence of the cultural and material waste that is, and is in, *King Lear*, arguing that it punctures fantasies both of cultural progress and of a circular economy.

Lara Dodds (Mississippi State University)

“Margaret Cavendish, Recycler”

In this paper I use the concepts of waste, conservation, and reuse as frameworks for an examination of Margaret Cavendish’s methods of dramatic composition. Cavendish is the author of two volumes of published plays. Her first volume, *Playes* (1662), was printed after the Restoration but it was largely composed in Antwerp, during the political exile of Cavendish and her family. The second volume, *Plays Never Before Printed* (1668), was composed and printed after the family returned to England and in the context of a revived theater tradition. In addition to four new plays (“never before printed”)—*The Sociable Companions*, *The Presence*, *The Bridals*, and *The Convent of Pleasure*—the volume also includes two dramatic fragments: “Scenes from The Presence” and “A Piece of a Play,” each of which is “waste” from another of Cavendish’s works. *Plays Never Before Printed* also “conserves” material from Cavendish’s earlier volume: *The Sociable Companions* recycles and adapts characters and plots from *The Public Wooing*, specifically a plot

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focused on a character called Prudence and her search for a husband. In this paper offer a comparison of these two plays within the larger context of *Plays Never Before Printed* as volume that simultaneously defines dramatic composition as a process of waste and conservation. Cavendish, as a dramatist who straddles the divide between pre- and post-Restoration theatre, offers an important but often unacknowledged perspective on British theatrical history.

Mark Farnsworth (University of Nevada) and Lara Hansen (University of Nevada)

**“Recycled Text: Tracing the divergence of the Quarto and Folio texts of
Richard the Third”**

Richard the Third was first printed in quarto in 1597 and was reprinted five more times before the First Folio; it appears in quarto twice afterwards. This project seeks to examine the extent to which the play’s printed text was reprinted one quarto to the next—which readings were conserved, and which became waste. If an early modern reader purchased a copy of *Richard III*, would he/she have a different reading experience whether holding a Q1 or Q6, or at some points in between? Of further concern is the stability of the Q1 through Q6 printings in preserving the text for a reading audience while the play’s performed text was simultaneously adapting through years of stage productions. If the Folio text was indeed printed from the playhouse text, as Gary Taylor suggests, and the printed play enjoyed market success, why was the playhouse version selected for the Folio? In addition, Q7, printed in 1629 was printed not from the Folio text, but from Q6. This project posits a divergence in the evolution of the text of *Richard III* for a reading audience and for a playgoing audience. In keeping with our seminar’s theme, this will allow us to examine what is preserved and what is lost in these varying encounters with the text.

Adam Halstrom (University of Utah)

“Reusing Epistolary Forms in the Early Modern Marketplace of Print”

In a letter “To the vnderstander,” published with his 1598 translation of *Achilles Shield*, George Chapman contributes to an established genre of paratextual letters “To the Reader.” He begins the letter, “You are not euery bodie, to you (as to one of my very few friends) I may be bold to vtter my minde” (Chapman 1598, Bv). Letters “To the Reader,” like Chapman’s “To the vnderstander,” are part of a larger generic form that I’ve termed epistolary paratexts. To date there have been no large scale studies of this pervasive early modern genre and its effects on the print marketplace. Rare gestures to it are references to the most recognizable of the subgenres: epistles dedicatory.

Generically, epistolary paratexts include epistles dedicatory, published letters from the Author, Translator, Publisher, or Printer “To the Reader,” and familiar letters between authors, book publishers, printers, friends, and others. Using Chapman’s “To the vnderstander” (1598) as an end point, I will track the concurrent evolution of epistolary

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paratexts as repurposed expressions of a developing early modern epistolary practice and theory in and around the sixteenth century London book trade. I will argue that the conscious reuse of pre-existent epistolary forms, repurposed as paratextual modes and functions (e.g. prologues, epilogues, dedications, commentaries, advertisements), facilitates the evolution of the print marketplace and the creation and training of an emergent early modern reading public.

Helen Hull (Queens University of Charlotte)

“Recycle or throw away?: Considering the Materiality of Urban Context in Christopher Marlowe’s *Dido, Queen of Carthage* and ‘The Wandering Prince of Troy’”

The story of Dido, Queen of Carthage, is nothing if not about loss—the loss of country/patria, the loss of love and faith, the loss of empire, the loss of life. The story of Dido, Queen of Carthage, by the time Christopher Marlowe got to it, was nothing if not recycled. Medieval writers such as Chaucer and Lydgate retold aspects of the tale from Virgil’s *Aeneid* and Ovid’s *Heroides*. Early modern writers engaged with the story in variations ranging from other play versions to incorporating allusions (in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, for example). Dido’s story was printed in a popular ballad: “The Wandering Prince of Troy.”

Christopher Marlowe’s *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (date uncertain, but generally estimated 1585-88; printed in 1594), is self-conscious about the relationship between what is lost and what can be re-used: it depicts Aeneas, momentarily considering staying in Carthage, bent upon re-purposing the city to be even bigger and better and possibly recycling the name of Troy... but ultimately being called away from that plan. The ballad version of the story re-directs the outcome entirely. Both focus attention on the materiality of the cities involved in the Dido episode of the legend of Aeneas, and in doing so, call into question the cultural legacies the legend evokes.

Katherine Hunt (The Queen’s College, Oxford)

“Bronze, Waste, and Recycling in Jonson’s *Sejanus His Fall* (1603)”

Early modern writers took seriously Horace’s proclamation, in the *Odes*, that writing could be ‘more lasting than bronze’. The comparison of literature with bronze in this period echoes Horace to make bronze surprisingly ephemeral, and thereby emphasise the endurance of writing. (The word ‘bronze’ didn’t enter English until the eighteenth century, so ‘brass’ could refer to several copper alloys, including both mentioned here).

But bronze was not only a foil for writing. The poetics of bronze casting — the creation of a new alloy from two metals; the re-use of ancient and medieval matter in a new object; and the narrative of loss that is always present in the process of casting a positive

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product from a negative mould — had profound connections to humanist processes of writing and of reading. From Aristotle (in the *Metaphysics*) onwards, bronze was the material that best showed how matter takes on form—and in this sense, can signify creation itself. Above all the recyclability of bronze, in which matter endures but form does not, offered renaissance writers a model of creativity which embraced both formal experimentation and fidelity to existing material.

In this paper I explore these ideas in Jonson's *Sejanus* (1603). Throughout this play, Jonson cleaves closely to his classical sources, references to which are printed as marginal notes in the 1605 quarto. But his borrowings are not exhaustive. When, following the fall of the man himself, the bronze statue of Sejanus is toppled, Jonson's selective use of his source material (here, Juvenal) emphasises the dissolution of the statue but not its subsequent reformation into other bronze objects. Jonson forges an equivalence between fragments of bronze and fragments of writing: turning molten bronze into text so that his own play becomes the new form made from the old material. Jonson's writing of the statue and its unmaking allows him to show the possibilities that bronze opens up for the temporalities of writing.

Sara Luttfriing (Penn State Behrend)

“Re-gendering Medical Knowledge in the Early Modern Marketplace of Print”

During the early modern period, changes to books' title pages and prefatory matter over the course of their publication histories reveal the changing ways in which publishers imagined and attempted to attract potential audiences. In this paper, I would like to examine the ways in which some early modern medical treatises were repurposed/recycled/reused by publishers in ways that explicitly target women readers. Historians have long noted that the early modern “medical marketplace” was a site of intense competition, not just among licensed medical professionals, but also between these practitioners and a wide range of unlicensed empirics. Due to their traditional roles as physical caretakers of the other members of their households, women were among the most common unlicensed medical practitioners. As I will demonstrate, early modern publishers turned women's association with household medicine into a marketing opportunity, repositioning later editions of some medical texts to appeal specifically to women readers. Examples of medical treatises whose publication histories demonstrate evidence of this repositioning include Thomas Vicary's *A Profitable Treatise of the Anatomie of Mans Body* and Owen Wood's *An Alphabetical Book of Physicall Secrets*.

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Kyle Pivetti (Norwich University)

**“Hamlet Uses the Dictionary:
 Recycling Words and the Materiality of Memory”**

When Polonius asks Hamlet the matter of his reading, the prince takes special glee in a well-known response: “Words, words, words” (2.2.192). In that quip, Hamlet seems to mock Polonius’ clumsy interrogation. My paper, however, begins from a simple proposition that interprets recycling metaphorically: Perhaps Hamlet tells Polonius the truth. That is, Hamlet reads a list of words – or a dictionary.

That possibility helps us to reconsider central critical issues in Shakespeare’s tragedy: the materiality of memory and the recycling of language. Hamlet includes any number of recoveries, as in the first player’s recitation of an old speech, Hamlet’s revisions of Gonzago, or (more subtly) references to a land buyer with the “recovery of his recoveries” (5.1.96). The appearance of a dictionary complicates such moments by suggesting that restorations are based in physical “words” on a printed page, and as such, they become vulnerable to the same violence and corruption that eats at bodies, like worms or maggots feeding on Polonius. This essay will pursue the possibility of Hamlet’s dictionary through a study of reference works like Edmund Coote’s *The English Schoolmaster* (1596); Richard Mulcaster’s *The First Part of the Elementary* (1582); and John Florio’s *A World of Words* (1598). Although these texts seek to collect and represent English vocabulary, the consistent anxiety in Hamlet about reformation and recitation implies that the dictionary has already failed. It prints words only to subject those same words to inevitable misappropriation and decay.

This paper, finally, connects linguistic violence to the problems of memory and extended mind theory. More specifically, I propose that the “table of [Hamlet’s] memory” refers to the tables of words included in the period’s dictionaries, and more generally to the apparatus of reference works in the period. Critics have often remarked on Hamlet’s problems with memory. His trouble, I will suggest, comes from the reference book that renders language both material and fragmented. Memory suffers the same fate. It is a printed page, a “table” alien to the remembering subject and crumbling into dust.

Emily Rendek (University of South Carolina)

**“Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:
 Repurposing Waste in *Titus Andronicus*”**

Have you ever read *Titus Andronicus* and wondered where Lavinia’s severed hands and tongue go? Her dismembered limbs remain unaccounted for amongst the high body count in the play. My purpose in this paper is two-fold: (1) to argue that Lavinia functions as a human form of waste paper when she is dismembered (though waste need not necessarily hold a negative connotation) and (2) to make the case for commonplace books as

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evidence of the consumption of texts—to rethink the “cutting” of choice sections of texts into a reader’s commonplace book instead as the manifestation of textual waste on the page.

Anna Reynolds (University of York)

**“‘Dispersedly-rejected’ and ‘gathered up’:
 Preserving Waste in Early Modern England”**

In this paper, I will suggest that early modern understandings of waste were radically different to our own. Far from ‘useless’ or ‘unwanted’, early modern waste was useful stuff: waste paper was employed in bindings, box linings, and as grocery wrappers, and was purposely gathered, preserved, and sold for these varied uses. Waste was not excremental or hazardous, but instead brimmed with potential use and modest value: from the Latin *vastus*, waste paper was conceived of as blank or empty, ready for future inscription and diverse functionality. This readjustment of our understanding of the term raises questions about the relationship between waste, reuse, and conservation in both the early modern and the present day, with a significant proportion of early modern print extant only as binding waste. Despite widespread literary references to ‘failed’ texts converted to waste paper, I will suggest that early moderns were well aware of the preservative side-effects of recycling a book: writers playfully suggested that one might glean wit from one author by looking on the binding of another, as John Donne claims is likely of Thomas Coryate’s *Crudities*. More than just a jest or trope, this process was enacted by early modern antiquarians who sought out rare and early examples of print in the bindings of old books.

Adam Smyth (Balliol College, Oxford)

“‘The vasty deep’: the scale of waste in early modern books”

In this paper, I’d like to think about one particular variety of early modern waste – pieces of older manuscripts and printed books found in the bindings, paste-boards, and end-leaves of many books – and I’d like to reflect on how we can study this kind of material. Waste of this kind – the almanac fragment glued to the boards of a prayer manual – is suggestive and challenging in all kinds of ways, but I’d like to think in particular about the scale of waste. Much recent work on waste (including my own!) is often organised as a series of case-studies of particular instances, which in part reflects the serendipitous ways in which we tend to come across this kind of material. But case studies tend to produce certain kinds of analysis, and I’d like to think about how a different scale of study – more akin to distant reading – might alter the discussion. This will draw a bit on the database of printed waste I’m producing with Megan Heffernan and Anna Reynolds. If we organise a discussion of waste not around a small number of colourful vignettes, but around thousands of instances, what is gained, and what is lost, in this shift of scale?