Beholding Disability in Renaissance England

Allison P. Hobgood

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Allison P. Hobgood

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The image on this book's cover is a black and white etching called "Sleeping Monsters." The so-called monsters that dominate the frame are half human and half sea creatures of a sort. They rest lovingly at the edge of a body of water in an embrace. One gazes contentedly toward the sky while breastfeeding another small sea animal. The other creature is smiling and nuzzling their companion's neck and other breast. Rushes and sea oats grow out from both the water's edge and their scaly bodies. Nibbled sea animal bones are strewn in the foreground of the image. The cover is two shades of purple. The title of the book, *Beholding Disability in Renaissance England*, is at the top of the page. The image is in the middle and the author's name (Allison P. Hobgood) is across the bottom.

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To RGT, DS muse
To EBB, scholarly midwife
To BPH, best mom

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A Note on the Text

In citing early modern works (other than play editions) throughout the book, I have retained original spellings but, for clarity, most often modernized typography such that long *s* is revised to *s*, consonantal *u* and *i* to *v* and *j*, and vocalic *v* to *u*.

Introduction

Acts of Beholding

Disabled people have both intrinsic and extrinsic worth. Moreover, people's mental and physical differences are not necessarily deficits. They instead can function as invaluable resources that create knowledge,[1] form community, and make the world a more just place. *Beholding Disability in Renaissance England* invites readers to entertain, even embrace, this ethos and engage in some new considerations about the inherent value and profound promise that come from human biodiversity.

Typically, people are acculturated to reject disability, to tokenize it, or to sometimes fetishize it. Ableism functions like the air we breathe without knowing we are taking it in; it is an insidious status quo systematically fomenting prejudice against disabled people. As a mechanism of power, it structures and maintains the strict disciplining of atypical bodyminds.[2] Furthermore, ableism incites disability stigma and prescribes a very limited range of reactions to bodymind difference—most often fear, contempt, and pity.

As I acknowledge throughout this book, being disabled certainly can be profoundly disempowering, debilitating, and painful. But what if, even in recognizing how challenging disability is sometimes, one simultaneously understands it as beneficial? What if we recognize that disability brings with it myriad gains? What occurs when we imagine disability much more fully, making space for what biodiversity offers in the way of radical insights, alternate personal and cultural narratives, and more ethical wisdoms? As disability scholar Robert McRuer so usefully queries, "what might it mean to shape worlds capable of welcoming the disability to come?"[3] *Beholding Disability* takes up these key questions as they surfaced in the premodern past.

Beholding Disability is a book about early modern disability, ableism, and disability gain. Human variation has always existed, though it has been conceived of and responded to variably. I thus interpret sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature to explore the fraught distinctiveness of human bodyminds and the deliberate ways they were constructed in early modernity as able, and not. Herein, readers will learn how physical and mental impairments in Renaissance England were made sense of via intense cultural mandates and preferences for certain forms of capacity. My work names those contours and iterations as a kind of premodern ableism, but without being anachronistic.[4] *Beholding Disability* purposefully employs contemporary concepts such as "ableism" and "disability gain" to make clear how historically disability has been disavowed—and avowed too. My work models how modern ideas and terms can make the weight of the past more visible as it marks the present and cultivates dialogue in which, as early modern disability studies scholar Elizabeth B. Bearden puts it, "pertinent early modern and contemporary theoretical models can be mutually informative."[5]

Beholding Disability historicizes "early modern ideologies of ability"; these ideologies are taken-for-granted, pervasive, underpinning principles in early modernity that privileged able-bodiedness and, in so doing, energized a range of approaches to medicine, education, civic engagement, theology, and social performance. In disability scholar Tobin Siebers's words: "the ideology of ability is at its simplest the preference for able-bodiedness. At its most radical, it defines the baseline by which humanness is determined, setting the measure of body and mind that gives or denies human status to individual persons."[6] In identifying these operative ideologies, *Beholding Disability* illuminates how impaired bodies and minds helped construct early modern cultural perceptions of normalcy. It also excavates an archive of literary and other cultural texts to outline the unique lexicons of early modern disability. In these pages, readers will learn about sixteenth- and seventeenth-century hegemonic ideas that imagined variant bodies and minds as "less than" and determined what constituted humanness. They will discern how the drive to establish forms of physical and mental difference was a key shaping force in the Renaissance, from science to art to philosophy.

Beholding Disability also uncovers crucial *counterdiscourses* circulating in the period—stories and logics unique to Renaissance England—that existed *in opposition to* cultural fantasies of ability and that expressed a keen sensibility toward nonnormative embodiments. In other words, we investigate impairments as varied as epilepsy, stuttering, disfigurement, deafness, chronic pain, blindness, and castration to understand not just powerful fictions of ability circulating in the Renaissance, but also the somewhat paradoxical, surprising ways these ableist ideals were creative fodder for Renaissance writers and thinkers. Readers will discover, ultimately, that drama and poetry of the English Renaissance produced radical counterdiscourses, orientations, and aesthetic modes that challenged—and thus transformed—the prevailing views of able-bodiedness in the period. Early modern literary representations seemingly beholden to ability logics often cultivated oppositional worldviews: they articulate what contemporary disability scholars understand as disability gain.[7]

To conceive of disability as gain means acknowledging that while it can be unbelievably challenging, it should be respected as powerful and productive. For some individuals, disability does not need to be cured, fixed, or changed.[8] In fact, for many people, disability is a desirable component of their personhood. Therefore, understanding disability as gain means allowing for the possibility that bodymind differences are not so-called defects but rather are important markers of identity, as well as unique resources that incite important, alternative ways of knowing and being.

Pioneering disability studies scholar Rosemarie Garland-Thomson offers this on disability as gain: human biodiversity is something to be both celebrated and actively conserved insofar as people with atypical bodyminds offer the world unique narrative, epistemological, and ethical resources.[9] In other words, being disabled and the particular life experiences that accompany nonnormative embodiment create stories that run against the ableist grain. They testify to other approaches to being in the world that counter the idea that ability and capacity are the gold standard for humanness. They uncover "ways of knowing shaped by [disabled] embodiment that are distinctive from the ways of knowing that a nondisabled body develops as it interacts with a world built to accommodate it."[10] They invite new ethical orientations that upend oppressive cultural paradigms that too narrowly define what it means to be a valuable human and what constitutes a life worth living. As I further illustrate, disability gain also appears in the cultivation of new aesthetic forms through which "various discursive details emerge, gain salience, and ultimately undergo transformation within the literary-aesthetic field."[11] Even more so, disability and the aesthetic forms it inhabits—from the page to the stage—prompt what Jackie Leach Scully calls "experiential gestalts."[12] These gestalts invite personal and cultural transformations via the life models and embodied wisdoms of disabled people.

While the following chapters offer in-depth explorations of these various interests through the analysis of early modern English texts, I will offer a brief example here to initially establish Renaissance literature as an historical archive of the idea that disability can be a benefit, not just a deficit. In his lyric poem "Dumnesse,"[13] Thomas Traherne crafts a story about how "Man was born to Meditate on Things, / . . . And therefore Speechless made at first" (1, 5). More precisely, in the poem's first thirteen lines he contends:

> Sure Man was born to Meditate on things,
> And to contemplate the eternal springs
> Of God and Nature, glory, bliss, and pleasure;
> That life and love might be his Heavenly treasure;
> And therefore Speechless made at first, that He
> Might in himself profoundly busied be:
> And not vent out, before he hath taken in
> Those antidotes that guard his soul from sin.
> Wise Nature made him deaf, too, that He might
> Not be disturbed, while he doth take delight
> In inward things, nor be depraved with tongues,
> Nor injured by the errors and the wrongs
> That mortal words convey . . . (Traherne, "Dumnesse" 1–13)

From the poem's opening moments, one notes how, as Susannah Mintz explains, "no expression of physicality in Traherne's work is neutral."[14] Indeed, although this is not necessarily the case in Traherne's entire canon, this lyric poem manifests an intense need and desire for physical impairment. Muteness and impaired hearing are imperative resources, in this case, for the godly spirit.[15] Traherne depicts a "Wise Nature" ("Dumnesse" 9) who cultivates impairment as the basis for spiritual (and poetic) success. An inability to speak or hear in conventional ways promotes "The satisfaction of all true desire" (Traherne, "Dumnesse" 43).

While Mintz identifies in "Dumnesse" an appropriative metaphorical use of disability that relies on one-dimensional assumptions about deafness,[16] I also read a simultaneous, paradoxical invitation for readers to expand their senses of what "counts" as hearing. The Deaf infant takes in spiritual antidotes, hearing first words through first impressions. I agree with Mintz that "this is not physiological hearing at all," but counter her assessment that the poem thus portrays "a strictly internal listening to what is already inside of the speaker."[17] In these lines, the poet likewise is not merely nostalgically marking the passage of time away from idealized, youthful innocence and sinlessness. Instead, he is playing with the possibility of audition, so to speak, that arises from other kinds of sensory experiences. In fact, for Traherne, body parts and even other material entities have faculties and aptitudes not typically assigned to them: "No ear / But eyes themselves were all the hearers there, / And every stone, and every star a tongue" ("Dumnesse" 60–62). Eyes can hear. Stones can speak. Stars are tongues. In other words, Traherne's lyric opens up debate about the so-called senses and interrogates what might actually constitute sight, hearing, or speech. The poem begins to delink sense experiences and capacities from their supposed corporeal sources. Echoing famous English physician John Bulwer's conception of a "variety of hearing methods in which the eye assists the ear," for Traherne audition is ocular;[18] furthermore, language becomes a trait not necessarily singular to human beings.[19]

More than merely portraying an opportunistic form of rhetorical disability,[20] "Dumnesse" presents a poetic celebration of deafness and muteness, as well as a material and aesthetic longing for them. Among other things, impairment offers pleasure, groundedness, contentment, and enjoyment: "'Twas to be pleased with all that God hath done; / 'Twas to enjoy even all beneath the sun: / 'Twas with a steady and immediate sense / . . . And to be filled with everlasting pleasure" (Traherne, "Dumnesse" 43–45, 48). "Dumnesse" acknowledges an early modern culture that is skeptical of Deaf people's capacity to communicate, function, and thrive;[21] Traherne himself, Mintz rightly insists, understands disability as linked to "idleness, corruption, and degeneration."[22] And yet, even in the face of Traherne's investment in, for example, the "necessity of physical sightedness,"[23] the poem still produces an uncanny testament to a form of early modern disability gain.[24] The inability to communicate orally is, for Traherne, a "Blessed Case" ("Dumnesse" 17), and one that all of his readers should hope for: "*I then my Bliss did, when my Silence, break*" ("Dumnesse" 20). In this lyric, impairments are something to be held close, kept integral, and invited to thrive; "My Non-Intelligence of Human Words," the speaker admits, "Ten thousand Pleasures unto me affords" (Traherne, "Dumnesse" 21–22). Being "pent within / A fort, impregnable to any sin" (Traherne, "Dumnesse" 53–54) speaks not to what Mintz deems Traherne's "fantasy of control" by which he "wields command over the dangers of his environment;"[25] rather this impregnability allows the narrator to find godly guidance and inspiration everywhere: "All things did come / With Voices and Instructions" (Traherne, "Dumnesse" 67–68). And although speech ultimately "destroyed / The Oracle, and all I there enjoyd," muteness instilled permanently in the poet-speaker a godliness that "got such a root / Within my Heart, . . . / It may be Trampld on, but still will grow" (Traherne, "Dumnesse" 74–75, 82–84).

In "Dumnesse," deafness and impaired speech are epistemological benefits, not physical deficits; "nutriment to soil itself will owe" (Traherne 84), explains Traherne in a historical foreshadowing of the fundamental spirit of what Deaf Studies scholars call "Deaf-gain."[26] H-Dirksen L. Bauman and Joseph J. Murray describe Deaf-gain as "the notion that the unique sensory orientation of Deaf people leads to a sophisticated form of visual-spatial language that provides opportunities for exploration into the human character."[27] "Let mine enemies hoop, cry, roar, or call," proclaims Traherne's poet narrator, "Yet these will whisper if I will but hear, / And penetrate the heart, if not the ear" (Traherne, "Dumnesse" 86–88). Traherne's poem envisions deafness as the source of "new sensory modalities."[28] Deafness—here an utterly impenetrable ear—is the fundamental condition of possibility for the narrator's spiritual life. It functions as a useful, distinct *in*ability that is absolutely integral to holy health and well-being.[29] Here, disability indeed becomes gain.

Disability Literary Histories

Disability as it was understood and figured in the Renaissance remains a vexed issue, not least because many literary critics and historians continue to insist that disability was invented in relative modernity. Groundbreaking disability studies scholar Lennard Davis has argued that disabling social processes such as the rise of statistics and medicalization of the body emerged alongside industrialization in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and hence "disability" was born.[30] On the one hand, Davis is right: disability as we know it now was *not* disability in early modernity. Indeed, "daily realities such as unchecked illness, unsanitary conditions, the perils of pregnancy and childbirth, and rampant war made the presence and visibility of disabled individuals in the Middle Ages and Renaissance more likely and hence, in certain ways, less exceptional."[31] Further, the classical *ideal* that puts perfection always out of reach does not operate and enforce normalcy in early modernity in exactly the same way modern-day norms do. For Davis (and a host of other scholars from Georges Canguilhem to Michel Foucault), premodern disability often seems impossible to us because norms as we know them now did not exist then.[32] Moreover, impairment was more widespread and hence supposedly less noteworthy and stigmatizable in early modernity.[33]

On the other hand, Davis's now well-worn claim that disability emerges in the nineteenth century is misinformed. Disability *did* exist in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, just on its own terms.[34] As various premodern scholars, perhaps most notably Elizabeth B. Bearden, attest, Davis "deftly excavates the development of the statistical norm . . . but he misses the mark in claiming that in premodern societies, no norming influence can be found."[35] The arguments that follow thus work to counter the notion that the seeming *un*exceptionality of impairment in early modernity somehow translates into a *lack* of disability in the period. The less official, cultural representations, and the popular rather than political senses of "disability" that readers will encounter in this book likewise challenge an alternate (although related) vision of a utopian England filled with impaired people moving about freely without stigma or hardship and living in ideal interdependence with able-bodied and able-minded individuals. By insisting that disability did not really exist in early modernity, as many scholars do, we fall prey to a kind of historical nostalgia that sees premodern cultures as structured around more egalitarian networks of care, in which disabled people were "*more* integrated into the community . . . than they are today," and thus subject to the "arguably more humane practices of inclusion that were still standard in the seventeenth century."[36] This limited sensibility grows out of a post-Foucauldian narrative that too precisely marks the early nineteenth century as the moment in which disciplined, regulated, institutionalized subjects were born, and thus fetishizes earlier historical epochs and cultures as "inclusive" and "diverse" in ways that our own neoliberal moment so regularly fails to be.[37] It is also a product of an intellectual and affective sleight of hand that refuses to ground its orientation from and through disability because, as Garland-Thomson points out, "seeing disability reminds us of . . . the [hard] truth of our body's vulnerability to the randomness of fate."[38]

As Henri-Jacques Stiker contends in his searching account of the history of Western cultural responses to disability, perhaps normality indeed was more of "a hodgepodge, and no one was concerned with segregation, for it was natural that there should be malformations."[39] That said, disabled individuals most often were "integrated" into medieval communities of the poor and indigent and, eventually, within early modern internment facilities for the "mad" and "incurable." Thus, even less "exceptional" human variations in premodern societies came to be constructed, contained, and criminalized in very particular—and often notably disabling—ways.[40] The abundant interests and investments in physical and mental difference that are hallmarks of many early modern English texts absolutely suggest something similarly complex: bodymind atypicalities were deliberately constructed as stigmatizable differences in early modernity and sometimes functioned as fundamental barriers to social access.[41]

While access as we conceive of it now—for instance, via the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act—is, of course, not the issue in a study of early modern England, my work does consider, as Joshua Eyler puts it, "the role played by society in constructing disability by imposing definitions of normativity and ability onto the social world."[42] In other words, barriers and access in an early modern context have less to do with laws and regulations and more to do with variable social acceptability, complex insider and outsider statuses, bodies and minds carrying particular cultural capital (or not), and diverse humanistic assessments of life worth and value. The challenge, as Julie Singer aptly notes in the context of medieval disability studies, is to determine how to collectively examine assorted experiences of impairment in a distant historical context without the umbrella of "social oppression" (or even "identity") that more easily unites diverse disability communities in postmodernity.[43] *Beholding Disability* uncovers premodern "disability identities" that are, as Richard Godden and Jonathan Hsy have put it, "functionally (if not politically) analogous to the modern term 'disabled.'"[44]

To this end, *Beholding Disability* asks: What were the terms, tropes, and vocabularies for naming and understanding bodymind difference in the early modern period? And where does one look to find them? As is often the case with marginalized histories, popular culture—the stage and page, for example—offers wonderful loci for unearthing things that otherwise might seem to be absent. In part, contemporary disability "appears" in the nineteenth century because normalcy-enforcement mechanisms—such as statistical averages and compiled data on "typical" human bodies and behaviors—are hypervisible in, among other sources, recorded, official legal doctrine and policy. Disability discrimination and the criminalization of embodied difference officially goes on record as a viable strategy for managing supposed unruly bodies and minds, and these oppressive strictures also appear *in* the record as concrete, readable data that are key tools in disability history-making.[45]

Throughout this study, I invite readers to think more broadly about what "counts" as evidence of disability, ableism, disability gain, and perhaps even crip identity in the context of early modern England. While, for contemporary disability scholars, official records and personal accounts are useful sites of investigation for a sense of exclusionary politics, the disability literary historian can lean far less on (often long-gone or never existent) authoritative records, laws, legislation, or autobiography for evidence of ableism and disability experience. One might therefore envision Renaissance literature as a kind of popular record that reveals not policies or practices necessarily, but exclusionary logics that policed bodies in perhaps less immediately visible (but nonetheless violently) subjecting ways. These literary texts are also repositories for a kind of early modern disability experience that constellates not, for instance, around "rights" discourses—broad-based calls for disability justice, equity, and access—but primarily around the day-to-day negotiation of physical and mental difference and the powerful activity of disability world-making.

What follows is thus an ethical speculation[46] about a textual archive where disability has been presumed absent—and, hence, I offer significant closure of what to some readers might appear as a gap between representation and so-called reality. In a historical archive where illiterate, poor, undereducated, and disabled people were rarely given access to tell their actual stories, literary representation and reality indeed are closely aligned. Following Tobin Siebers's instructive theorization of "complex embodiment," I conceive of bodyminds and their environments as mutually transformative; furthermore, this relationship is a highly epistemological one where "active subjects . . . are defined by their ability to produce and share knowledge" in the process of that mutual transformation.[47] David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder state it this way: "if disability is a product of an interaction between individual differences and social environments . . . then the contrast between discourses of disability situates art and literature as necessary to reconstructing the dynamics of this historical interaction."[48] More to the point: text and narrative are part of any bodymind's reciprocal relation to its environs. The epistemic and ontological are always mutually imbricated. People write discourses of disability; they are also written by (and into) those stories.

Critics of certain strands of "cultural disability studies" have countered that modes of disability studies—and early modern literary disability histories like this one—that focus on rhetoric and discourse disingenuously miss the mark insofar as they do so at the expense of lived experience.[49] "Disability," Tom Shakespeare rightly notes, "always has a biological dimension that usually entails limitation or incapacity, and sometimes frailty and pain. These aspects of disability can be modified or mitigated by environmental change or social intervention, but often cannot be entirely removed. They are not just a matter of culture or language."[50] "Without evidence," Shakespeare is convinced that "attention to terminology and language is interesting, but perhaps puts the cart before the horse"; what he calls "empirical research" provides "some form of realism [that] is indispensable."[51] Shakespeare thus proposes a "critical realist perspective" that "means acceptance of an external reality" that "attends to the independent existence of bodies which sometimes hurt, regardless of what we may think or say about those bodies."[52]

While Tom Shakespeare is quite wise to insist that we not lose sight of the often painful corporeality that structures culture and discourse, there is an important difference between, for instance, minimizing disability into metaphor and acknowledging that certain metaphors offer key disability knowledges that both come from and shape material realities. As Gloria Anzaldúa claims, "nothing happens in the 'real' world unless it first happens in the images in our heads."[53] Meaning as it is made via language is always already enmeshed with the materiality of living in a bodymind. Uncovering the ways disabled people were *imagined to be*, via historical narratives and representations, fundamentally gets at how disabled people *are* understood in, and experience, the "real" world. The excavation of rhetoric, discourse, and textual representation points at lived realities in the early modern period and also anticipates some of the material consequences of being disabled in our own time.

Disability Gain in the Past

In the conclusion of her illuminating book, *Dissembling Disability on the Early Modern Stage*, Lindsey Row-Heyveld invites scholars to speculate on some possibilities for early modern disability gain.[54] "In what ways did [disability] appeal to early modern people, even as a fantasy," Row-Heyveld aptly queries.[55] Drawing on her analysis of the role of feigned disability in English Renaissance drama, she ventures that for early moderns disability might have meant freedom from certain cultural constraints, such as erotic commerce, moral codes, and political obligations. Being impaired might have meant freedom from work, useful invisibility, or relief from the pressure to be healthy;[56] or it may have relieved people of what she calls "the charitable imperative" and "burden of giving."[57] Row-Heyveld also very briefly discusses the possibility of disability as an asset that produces something in its own right. Whether that meant the experience of new physical sensations or the adoption of alternate somatic practices, she suggests that "disability could confer knowledge."[58] I wholeheartedly agree, and likewise, understand that disability knowledge is something potent we should be aiming to recognize and preserve.[59]

Row-Heyveld's invitation gets at a major point that underscores this book in its entirety: disability is valuable and productive, and moreover, there is historical precedent for imagining it as such. Identifying reasons to conserve, not eliminate, disability involves, to my mind, not just offering stories of disability in the past as gestures toward some kind of anti-oppression solidarity across time. Instead, discussion of premodern disability gain showcases disability as a useful and powerful "body of knowledge—a collection of skills, qualities, properties, and characteristics, among other things."[60] It means looking to new standard-bearers in early modern literature that we do not retroactively diagnose—"Look! Disability is here!"—but rather thoughtfully parse as historical, representational embodiments of "the knowledge of what it means to be a disabled person."[61] Following Siebers, identifying instances of disability gain means finding and keeping alive keen knowledges that "might replace power as the goal of disability interpretation."[62]

Some early modern writers clearly understood disability gain—perhaps even as they simultaneously disavowed it, or at the very least, confronted impairment's pitfalls. For example, Robert Burton, the famous English scholar, writer, and clergyman, claims that disability can enliven the soul: "deformities & imperfections of our bodies, as lameness, crookedness, deafness, blindness, be they innate or accidental, torture many men: yet this may comfort them, that those imperfections of the body do not a whit blemish the soul, or hinder the operations of it, *but rather help and much increase it*."[63] For Burton, disability can surely be "torture" as "deformities" and "imperfections" of all kinds have diverse material burdens associated with them. As Tom Shakespeare helped readers recall, being in the flesh can be painfully awful. To acknowledge the complexity of embodiment is, as Siebers notes, to "[accept] the negative among the possible values of any disability representation."[64] It also requires acknowledgment of how "the negative" looks quite different across diverse embodiments and global geographies. The challenges—and potential gains—of disability vary depending on how context, environment, and bodymind collide. One must, as Jasbir K. Puar urgently argues, attend "to the unevenness of [disability's] universal affectation in geopolitical and biopolitical terms" and to the nuanced iterations of its deliberate weaponization.[65] The same is true historically: an early modern "crippled" war vet is not a "madman" in Bedlam is not a stage player with a "monstrous" disfigurement is not an "idiot" woman with no dowry.

All this said, *Beholding Disability* embraces how both of these facts can be simultaneously true: disability is hard, and disability is good, even something one might want.[66] The work of early modern poets (now known as "metaphysical") is particularly useful in this formulation, a formulation that many contemporary disability studies scholars, understandably, have struggled to articulate.[67] Metaphysical poetry often employs a rhetorical device called "discordia concors" to structure verse. As Samuel Johnson famously intones in his *Lives of the Poets*, discordia concors offers "a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike."[68] In seventeenth-century poet John Donne's famous conceits, for example, a biting flea legislates pre- (or extra-)marital intercourse while the opposing points of an early modern compass clarify a soulful connection between lovers who are miles apart. Crucial to the poetic notion and enactment of discordia concors, then, are paradox and incongruity, but paradox and incongruity that, when set side by side, lend things more sense. Seeming incompatibilities—a flea and sexual intimacy, for instance—are never resolved in metaphysical verse but rather offer a tension that elucidates "occult resemblances," a tension that illuminates something more.

To be disabled is to live a kind of discordia concors: impairments can be painful, and they sometimes create horrible suffering, but for some people, they are also invaluable resources that point toward new ways of knowing and being. As Mel Chen explains of experiencing chronic illness, "I realized that in the most containing and altered moments of illness, as often occurs with those who are severely ill, I came to know an incredible wakefulness, one that I was now paradoxically losing and could only try to commit to memory."[69] "The radical claim of militancy and mourning," explains Christina Crosby as she writes about her own relationship to disability, "is that you are not required to set aside the messy, dark, grieving, perverse, incapacitated, angry, or shameful parts of yourself to be admitted to the public world."[70] Indeed, as José Esteban Muñoz has argued in the context of queer (and, by extension crip) studies, melancholy, mourning, and attachments to both actual loss and unattainable fantasy can forge paths to other unexpected emotions, unique communities, and radical politics.[71]

Holding space for this sometimes seemingly intractable paradox ultimately helps "reverse the hegemony of the normal" via an embrace of "alternative ways of thinking about the abnormal."[72] Put differently, disability absolutely can be unglamorous, debilitating, painful, isolating, and rote. Sometimes it is even too impossible to bear. And certainly, as Puar cautions, one must always be attuned to the violent imposition of disability as a "biopolitical state category" and keep asking questions about "who is able to participate in empowerment practices and discourses and why."[73] Nonetheless, rethinking potential desire and gain even in disability's most dire forms is a crucial step toward disability justice. Articulations of desire *for* disability in the face of inevitable suffering can acknowledge the kind of mourning Crosby avers, even as it, per historian Catherine J. Kudlick, displays how "even when it involves pain and hardship, disability is not always a tragedy, hardship, or lack but in fact often provides much of value."[74] Tracing out explicit desires for disability in the historical past, as this book does, helps mitigate the overwhelmingly negative stories, tropes, and cultural stereotypes that get attached to disability now. In other words, in our global, contemporary political climate, stories (poems, plays, prose) from the Renaissance that understand disability as a precious epistemological and ontological resource might go a long way in making a case against an ableist future in which disabled people are unwelcome, even systematically erased. Disability histories that are attentive to disability gain confirm that disabled people are indispensable, fully realized, political citizens who should not be excluded from social participation and who deserve unconditional humanity. *Beholding Disability* engages literary and cultural history to show yet another way why we *need* disability in this world.

Methodical (Re)orientations

In her vital book, *Staring: How We Look*, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson details what she calls "bad staring" at disability and contemplates how we can ameliorate such deeply problematic confrontations. She optimistically suggests that bad staring "fails to make the leap from a place of discomfort, shock, or fear."[75] However, if it were characterized by generosity and identification, it might become good staring, or "a beholding encounter."[76] Put simply, Garland-Thomson invites readers to "manage our attention"[77] to disability differently, and better. She insists that we must cultivate "a sense of beholdenness" to one another; in turn, this beholding creates "an unexpected opportunity for generating mutual new knowledge and potential social justice."[78] In addition to seeking out alternate scholarly engagements with disability theory and premodern texts, *Beholding Disability in Renaissance England* takes the need for better beholding of disability in history quite seriously.[79]

The field of disability studies has, of course, already set a methodological precedent for beholding disability. In the last thirty or so years, disability studies has established disability as a defining social category comparable to race, class, and gender, and it has mobilized academic theory into civil rights activism. As the editors of *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities* offer, the field has helped define "disability" in usefully capacious terms: disability encompasses "physical, sensory, and mental impairments; illnesses; congenital and acquired differences . . . ; psychological disabilities; . . . developmental differences; and visible anomalies such as birthmarks, scarring, and the marks of aging. In this sense, disability names the naturally occurring or acquired bodily variations that accrue as we move through time and across cultures."[80] More than simply defining disability, disability studies has illuminated disability as a set of social relations and processes that *construct* difference—

usually as undesirable and aberrant. The field reimagines disability as a social category, not just an individual characteristic, and as a discursive construction more than a bodily flaw. It sees human biodiversity as part of intricate representational systems, and it eschews the notion that impairment is simply a physiological problem to be "cured" by the medical industrial complex.

By invoking beholding as a methodological posture, *Beholding Disability* works across the fields of disability and early modern studies, demonstrating an interdisciplinary commitment to both affective and intellectual (re) orientations.[81] It models an explicit embrace of innovative perspectives that facilitate the sorts of disability avowal, beholding, and gain one finds herein. The bodyminds of epileptics, eunuchs, saints, stutterers, and even able-bodied early modern poets and actors, for example, all help to materialize early modern disability. These reclamations aim to augment the path-breaking work of disability scholars from Henri-Jacques Stiker to Susan M. Schweik to Garland-Thomson as they offer readers more ethical beholdings of history, literature, and culture.[82] In considering the complex figurations of disability in early modern texts, *Beholding Disability* reads representations afresh, and repositions what typically have been peripheral disability experiences to the center of new literary historical inquiry. In these beholdings, it embraces and enriches the analytical ethos, methodological flexibility, and radical interdisciplinarity at the heart of work by critical disability studies scholars such as Mel Y. Chen and Alison Kafer.[83] *Beholding Disability* extends and historicizes Tobin Siebers's foundational thinking on new disability-studies models for thinking about bodyminds and their impairments.[84] Like these various authors, I ponder an array of social, discursive, and representational constructions of disability to show the highly contingent nature of what any given culture deems "normal." What sets this book's approach apart is its exploration of these fabrications in a novel historical context and via Renaissance literature and drama.

A few notable texts already have undertaken invaluable work in this regard, and they crucially inspire and inform this study.[85] Lindsey Row-Heyveld's *Dissembling Disability on the Early Modern English Stage*, an important book mentioned above, explores feigned disability in early English theater to establish what she calls "the counterfeit-disability tradition."[86] In contrast to this work, Row-Heyveld primarily addresses not the representation of *actual* disability or even its textual rendering as "real," but rather its wholesale impersonation, especially on Elizabethan and Jacobean stages. Furthermore, she explores the counterfeit-disability tradition to uncover other early modern cultural ideas and normalizing strategies founded on fears of fake disability. Similar to my book's interests, Encarna Juárez-Almendros's *Disabled Bodies in Early Modern Spanish Literature: Prostitutes, Aging Women and Saints* investigates the representation of disability, but does so in the context of the early modern Hispanic world. Using a global, feminist lens specifically, Juárez-Almendros argues that "the traditional notions and segregations of female bodies, considered imperfect and inferior in comparison to the prototype of the corporeal male, constitutes a major paradigm of disability in the period."[87]

Like *Beholding Disability*, Jason Farr's innovative *Novel Bodies* examines how disability representations help configure the political, social, and emotional landscapes of a particular historical period. Farr's work, however, looks to eighteenth-century Britain to explore how novelistic representations of disability shape a literary history of sexuality and intervene in the dominant, hegemonic system that is eighteenth-century hetero-ableism.[88] Elizabeth B. Bearden's *Monstrous Kinds* is most akin to this book in ethos and attention, but Bearden's study centers on how monstrosity particularly "portends, shows, and teaches us much about our tendency to ascribe disability with meaning."[89] As Bearden theorizes impairment in the global Renaissance, her work mobilizes the ancient notion of passibility, or the bodily and spiritual capacity for suffering and change, as a unique mode for understanding early modern disability. She investigates premodern formulations of *mappaemundi* to illustrate how material space "directly influences the production of disability," and she compellingly argues that "the formulation of generic kinds . . . employs norms that mirror the classifications of early modern monstrosity."[90]

While these interventions both complement and contrast with *Beholding Disability* across geographical scope, theoretical approach, and textual emphasis, they all consistently are invested in beholding disability in the past and invoking the power of, as Alison Kafer and Michelle Jarman put it, disability studies as a field of energy.[91] Harnessing this same lively energy, the pages to come offer some very deliberate, cross-pollinating appositions by weaving together Renaissance religious lyrics and critical disability studies, the "doltish" characters of Elizabethan comedy and scholarship on stuttering, English folk ballads on castration and contemporary feminist poetry, and William Shakespeare and *Game of Thrones* actor Peter Dinklage. This tapestry of works and methods moves flexibly between period and discipline to illuminate resonances and dissonances in the construction of disability across time and space.

While I am intent on mining the synergy between contemporary disability studies and literary historical inquiry, one does risk losing important historical particularity if one too hastily or trenchantly imposes modern disability onto the Renaissance. Done thoughtfully, however, early modern disability studies—like the thriving field of medieval disability studies[92]—promises to reinvigorate and transform what we think we know about the period. In fact, work in medieval disability studies informs *Beholding Disability*: from Irina Metzler's ideas about the role of economic, social, and legal texts in articulating the challenges medieval disabled people encountered[93] to Julie Singer's critique of an inordinate focus on "models" in disability history[94] to Tory Vandeventer Pearman's illumination of the ways women's history, disability, and gender explicitly intersect in the medieval period.[95] Similarly, *Beholding Disability* reveals that imposing tight boundaries between pre- and postmodern constructions of disability limits our understanding of the cultural processes that disable individuals, both then and now. Far from being anachronistic, to look at the present—and future—of contemporary disability studies is always to reckon with the past, especially its telling fault lines and silences.

This synergistic abutting of contemporary and early modern disability also enacts a strategic resistance to the hegemonic strictures of normate time—not to mention that it pushes back on a common methodological default to overly precise synchrony that obliges those normative rules. Previously, queer and crip theorists have articulated how future-oriented linear time is a wholly artificial construction. As Jack Halberstam explains, time "is foundational in the production of normalcy, such that engaging in particular behaviors at particular moments has become reified as the natural, common-sense course of human development."[96] Atypical bodyminds and experiences of illness and impairment that arise in Renaissance literature even more acutely point out the presumed "straightness" of normate time, of sequentially driven life narratives structured around notions of "development," "independence," and forward-looking goal attainment. As Alison Kafer clarifies, illness and disability transform and queer time:[97] they cause time to slow or speed up, engender feelings of asynchrony and temporal dislocation, and disrupt a sense of the past, present, and future as discrete entities.[98] Shakespeare's Richard III, "sent before [his] time / Into this breathing world scarce half made up" (*Richard III* 1.1.20–21), explicates in the play's famous opening lines but one early modern literary instance of the asynchrony and temporal dislocation so intrinsic to the kind of "crip time" that Kafer illuminates. Richard's "scarce half made up" character usefully remarks on how ableist hegemonic responses to disability not only espouse ingrained resistance to corporeal variation, but likewise function as a kind of temporal marginalization and disavowal of bodyminds that inhabit nonnormative timescapes.

Beholding Disability embraces "crip time" not only on the personal-political level but as a scholarly posture for thinking about historicity itself. Crip time *as methodology* welcomes what Godden and Hsy describe as "the dynamic relationality between historical perspectives."[99] Put another way, crip time as methodology embraces the ways that uncanny temporal coincidences and simultaneities—finding the past in the present or vice versa, for example—open up historical narratives and possibilities. Cripping time does not foreclose historical specificity or risk a transhistorical flattening of sociocultural difference. Instead, it makes one reconsider normative, obligated investments in a certain kind of future, and hence a certain kind of past. Crip time—time out of joint—is a reminder of how contemporary moments continually rescript a lurking history that is at once both totally distinct and indistinct from the present. The jarring collapse of the present, past, and future that crip time grasps offers a provocative temporal scale violation of sorts; this violation distorts a sense of normative time proportions and flows. In so doing, it calls attention to the artificiality of that "normal" sense of timing in the first place and pushes us to reconsider methodological norms that, perhaps, insist on the so-called problem of anachronism to avoid acknowledging disability, even in its more distant historical formulations.

Book Organization

As this introduction has suggested, the story of early modern disability that emerges in *Beholding Disability* becomes increasingly complex throughout the book. The first two chapters primarily discuss early modern ideologies of ability and the cultural pressures of a "protomedical model" of disability that pathologized impairment and championed cure. Chapter 1 takes up a range of Renaissance texts, from treatises by English physicians to Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, to articulate how ideological mandates for health and ability constructed embodied difference inside simultaneous moral and medical discourses. It also outlines how this process of moralizing and medicalizing exposes ideological fears about an inability to classify disabled bodyminds, and thus shore up able embodiment as a privileged class. With a fairly exclusive focus on the vexed disability icon Richard III, chapter 2 complicates that argument by mining the stage as a cultural site that resists these stigmatizing models of disability and their ideological underpinnings, instead conveying disability's positive function as a phenomenological tool and epistemic resource.

Thereafter, *Beholding Disability* further explores disability gain, considering what disability uniquely produced in early modern England from performance to literary aesthetics. More precisely, in the book's opening chapters we move from premodern disability understood as immoral, bad, pathological, and generally unwelcome toward an affirmative sense of disability understood as producing new ontologies and epistemologies. Chapters 3–5 are especially interested in how the ideological demands for ability uncovered early in the book mobilize different kinds of subjugated knowledges. For example, chapter 3 explicitly illuminates disability as gain through a discussion of how early modern religious lyric poems proffer "prosthetic logics" that privilege intersubjectivity and interconnectedness. Bridging work in prosthetics and disability studies, this chapter examines poetry by Richard Crashaw to reveal early modern modes of knowing and being that push against an individualist ethos in which humans are singular, autonomous, and invulnerable. In Crashaw, disability epistemologies instead reveal our human vulnerability, interconnection, and dependence on others, both people and things.

Chapter 4 investigates how ideologies of ability were opposed and transformed by what I call "queer-crip discourses," in which disability opens the way to nonnormative sexualities. Among other figurations, Andrew Marvell's "eunuch" and John Wilmot, the Earl of Rochester's "disabled debauchee" help us understand how the rhetorical employment of so-called monstrous forms can express and validate nonstandard sexual desire, generate new poetic aesthetics, and incite new, more ethical ideological paradigms. Chapter 5 further explores disability desire and gain that are expressly aesthetic. Reading a little-known, noncanonical play called *Looke About You* (1600), the chapter illustrates how, in staging speech impairment, disability becomes drama's dominant aesthetic mode; in this rare early modern play, stuttering is aesthetically desirable. It is celebrated aurally in performance and conserved typographically in print.

While early modern poetry certainly spurs my arguments in these various chapters, drama surfaces frequently throughout the book. In part this is because the stage so pragmatically and materially embodies and enlivens the impairments represented in early modern texts. As Lindsey Row-Heyveld clarifies, Renaissance theater in particular can help "renovate dominant theoretical models of the non-standard body by both stressing the specific social/cultural influences that create disability for impaired people and showcasing the specific experience of negotiating the world in a disabled body."[100] Furthermore, people's cultural familiarity with Shakespearean drama makes it a useful pedagogical tool; my hope is that innovative readings and unfamiliar ideas about disability will be more accessible for readers newer to disability studies when couched in plays they think they know well.[101] That said, authors and works less typically addressed in early modern scholarship also grace these pages; for instance, Crashaw and Rochester orient their poetry from and through disability, and thereby orient readers and critics from and through disability as well. I want to give voice to these less-discussed texts and authors because their marginalization in the Renaissance canon is potentially linked to their relationship to the assumed taboo subject of disability.

Literature and drama mattered significantly in how disability signified in early modern England; disability also materialized the shape of early modern literature. Certainly, Renaissance writers used and abused disability representations, and they likewise perpetuated ableist norms and the stigmatization of impairment. In poetry, prose, and drama alike, however, authors also employed the strategic mobilization of disability to interrogate—even utterly upend—the ability logics at play in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Examining the power and potency of disability in early modern literature, as this book does, uncovers disabling early modern logics as well as disability gain. Readers will discern premodern ideologies of ability as well as calculated resistances to them. These resistances—desires for disability—celebrate the vast possibilities that disability possesses and understand biodiversity as a part of radical knowledge and justice-making. In short, they ask us to reconsider what we think we know about being human both in the premodern past, and today.

One

Early Modern Ideologies of Ability

In his seminal text, *Disability Theory*, Tobin Siebers argues for what he terms an “ideology of ability” that structures nearly everyone’s daily lives. This ableism is iterated in the incongruous ways that human bodies and minds are imagined simultaneously as “both inconsequential and perfectible”; moreover, even when the preponderance of data proves we are feeble and finite, “the vision of the future to which we often hold . . . [still] promises radical infinitude.”[1] “That we embrace these profound contradictions without interrogating them,” Siebers explains, “reveals that our thinking is steeped in ideology.”[2] As Siebers further notes, it seems nearly impossible to excavate the inner workings of this—or any—ideology, even when we find it confounding or paradoxical to lived experience: “ideology does not permit the thought of contradiction necessary to question it; it sutures together opposites, turning them into apparent complements of each other, smoothing over contradictions, and making almost unrecognizable any perspective that would offer a critique of it.”[3] Ideology appears to give us no way out. It shapes what we believe and value. It tells us who counts and who does not. Insidious and wily, ideology keeps us “in the box,” so to speak; and particularly when it comes to making sense of bodyminds that are not so-called normal, it “affects nearly all of our judgments, definitions, and values about human beings.”[4]

While the weight of ideology may seem unbearable, Siebers is right to radically refuse such foreclosure: indeed, as he puts it, “ideology creates, by virtue of its exclusionary nature, social locations outside of itself and therefore capable of making epistemological claims about it.”[5] As I argued in my introduction, disability literary histories can function in this way. They aid in making the workings of ideology “legible and familiar, despite how imbricated it may be in our thinking and practices, and despite how little we notice its patterns, authority, contradictions, and influence as a result.”[6] Disability literary histories do this in particular by testifying to "social locations" that rupture ideology's vice grip. Take the reading of Thomas Traherne's poetry in the previous chapter, for instance, in which disability productively creates "theories of embodiment more complex than [an] ideology of ability allows."[7] In response to Siebers's optimistic urging, the readings and histories that surface in this chapter begin to illuminate both the burden of ideology as well as discursive and material operations that refuse it.

While *Beholding Disability* ultimately showcases how disabilities could be imagined as desirable, enriching, and enlightening in spite of ideological insistences otherwise, chapter 1 lays groundwork for that argument by investigating the persistent fantasy of "normal" as it played out in an early modern English context. The chapter first examines fundamental Renaissance ideologies of ability that imagined disability as conquerable—something that can and must be overcome by individuals with impairments—to quell ableist fears about difference as it inevitably appears in diverse bodyminds otherwise deemed subhuman. It then outlines other ideologies of ability that were central to establishing broad moral and medical models for comprehending disability in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. More precisely, this chapter takes up representations of epilepsy in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* to expose two of the period's competing sensibilities: moralizing fears—in which impairment connotes sinfulness, monstrosity, and sometimes marvelousness—and also dangerously palpable, scientifically driven rationalizations about bodymind difference. It illuminates how ideologies of ability bolster a number of new discourses emerging in the period that articulated previously "natural" phenomena in more clinical, mechanistic terms that frame disability as something that must be either cured or killed.[8]

Chapter 1 closes with discussion of another, related early modern ideology of ability, one that in this case is apprehensive about the inability to account for and classify human variation. Through further attention to *Julius Caesar*, readers will discern how both moral and medical imaginings of epilepsy consistently desire—and mandate—disability's visibility on the material body. Caesar's ability to pass, to hide his epilepsy throughout the play, ironically clarifies a nervous adamancy in the period that embodied difference be readable and knowable so as to then be repressible. In other words, both moral and protomedical models of disability aiming to make Caesar's impairment legible instead reveal the challenge of actually doing so. *Julius Caesar* ultimately performs a kind of disability gain, unraveling the able bodymind's fragile privilege in a Renaissance cultural imagination that could only comprehend "normal" against recognizable "difference."

Overcoming, Supercrips, and "Things of Darkness"

Early modern people, though without the functional term "ideology" at their disposal, "nonetheless understood the concept [of ideology] quite well."[9] As Steven Mullaney points out, the Renaissance stage especially functioned as one robust site where affect, abstract ideas, the imaginary representation of social relations, and the acknowledgment of those imagined relations merged to move spectators and enforce ideological interpellation.[10] I thus turn below to Shakespeare for a few examples that make hypervisible early modern ideologies of ability hard at work. In these initial, specific instances, drama displays premodern iterations of what, in a more contemporary context, thinkers describe as the construction of disability as something to be "overcome" and assuaged through the idealizing trope of the "supercrip."

Overcoming narratives and stories of supercripness go hand in hand as mutually corroborating ableist fantasies bearing intense ideological weight. As pathbreaking disability studies scholar Simi Linton explains of the notion of "overcoming a disability,"

> One interpretation of the phrase might be that the individual's disability no longer limits her or him, that sheer strength or willpower has brought the person to the point where the disability is no longer a hindrance. Another implication of the phrase may be that the person has risen above society's expectation for someone with those characteristics. Because it is physically impossible to *overcome* a disability, it seems that what is *overcome* is the social stigma of having a disability.[11]

The rhetoric of overcoming implies that a person's condition or impairment is their personal "problem," one that must be triumphed over. Disabled individuals who conquer the challenges disability poses do so via their own willpower and volition, successfully assimilating into normative culture, social practices, and compulsory able-bodiedness. They single-handedly overcome both the material realities of impairment and any negative social designations that accompany it. Even more importantly, as Linton avers, this desire for overcoming inevitably "has not been generated within the [disability] community; it is a wish fulfillment generated from the outside. It is a demand that you be plucky and resolute, and not let the obstacles get in your way."[12]

External cultural impositions willing disabled people to overcome are bolstered further by the rhetorical figure of the supercrip who has not only conquered disability—and even assimilated into able-bodied culture—but who thus serves as heroic inspiration.[13] Certainly, sometimes so-called supercrips indeed are truly exceptional people. However, author and activist Eli Clare notes they often "lead entirely ordinary lives and still become supercrips" because they manage to get by in an ableist world set up to ensure disabled peoples' failure and exclusion.[14] The fantasy of the supercrip builds on the "bootstrap" mentality of overcoming and likewise relies on "the perception that disability and achievement contradict each other and that any disabled person who overcomes this contradiction is heroic."[15]

Titus Andronicus, Shakespeare's famously bloody and delightfully over-the-top play performed in the 1590s amid an increasing vogue for revenge tragedy in London theaters, espouses these copacetic ideologies of ability as they crystalized in early modernity.[16] For readers who know it, *Titus* might seem like an obvious go-to, even on the surface, because it embodies on stage one of the most physically impaired characters in Shakespeare's canon: Lavinia, tongueless and handless after a brutal off-stage rape and mutilation.[17] Lavinia's uncle Marcus, on encountering her ravished body, immediately laments her loss. "Fair Philomel," he opines, contemplating "what stern ungentle hands / Hath lopped and hewed and made thy body bare / Of her two branches" (*Titus Andronicus* 2.4.16–18).[18] Furthermore, Marcus assesses her impairment—and future fate—according to an ideology of ability in which disability *can and must* be overcome through sheer will power or radical acts of the imagination.[19]

This short scene in which Marcus commands the stage through lengthy monologue aims, in part, to imagine away Lavinia's impairment even as it calls direct attention to it. Marcus objectifies Lavinia by sensually detailing her maimed body and lingering—even leering—over, for instance, the "crimson river of warm blood, / [that] Like to a bubbling fountain stirred with wind, / Doth rise and fall between [her] roséd lips" (*Tit.* 2.4.22–24). In this litany of material parts from lips to cheeks to tongue to hands, her uncle fetishistically reimagines Lavinia as too beautiful in her tragic demise. Her bloody "issuing spouts" and "honey breath" (*Tit.* 2.4.30, 25) are titillating reminders of a hypersexualized female embodiment and fecundity that ought to make a blushing Lavinia "turn'st away thy face for shame" (*Tit.* 2.2.28). Marcus's blazon, on the one hand, remakes Lavinia into a kind of exquisite supercrip whose idealized, unmatched beauty might obfuscate the realities of her trauma. On the other hand, though, she becomes nothing more than a lyrical inventory of stunning physical failures, a mangled nonbody with no sum, just broken parts.

Even more so, however, this scene functions as a kind of ableist invitation for Lavinia *herself* to undo the damage that has been exacted on her by her rapists, Chiron and Demetrius. As he frames Lavinia's debilitation against the perverse, mythical success story of Philomel, who "but lost her tongue / And in a tedious sampler sewed her mind" (*Tit.* 2.4.38–39), Marcus foreshadows the canny plot closure that follows in 3.4 wherein Lavinia will reveal her assailants *in spite of* her disability when she scrawls their names in the dirt using a stick between her teeth. In other words, Marcus first enacts a logic in which he pities, mourns, and then imaginatively fetishizes Lavinia's impairment; she is described as a beautiful, barren tree, and her humanity is all but lost. Then, even in the face of the proclamation that she is "cut from" Philomel's "mean" because her "pretty fingers" have been amputated (*Tit.* 2.4.40, 42), Marcus calls on Lavinia to effect personal compensation for that irreparable loss. What magic motions, signs, or sounds might she employ to tell her sorrowful story in spite of dumbness, he mulls? How can she, like Philomel, express well and fully but without typical locution?

Her own father, Titus, extends Marcus's ideological posture, dubbing Lavinia his "Speechless complainer" and promising to "interpret all her martyred signs" (*Tit.* 3.2.36). "I will learn thy thought," he professes to his daughter: "Thou shall not sigh, nor hold thy stumps to heaven, / Nor wink, nor nod, nor kneel, nor make a sign, / But I of these will wrest an alphabet, / And by still practice learn to know thy meaning" (*Tit.* 3.2.39, 42–45). Here Titus imagines—further, demands—that Lavinia display the aptitude and ingenuity to overcome both muteness and amputation; "thou art deeper read and better skilled" (*Tit.* 4.1.33), Titus lauds as she opens *The Metamorphosis* to the tale of Philomel and then indeed carves her rapists' names in the sand. Lavinia's employment of an Ovidian imagination[20] and the erudite language of classical drama[21] align her with creative genius and mental agility that not only solve the crime at hand but in many ways undo the stigma of her impairment.

These extra capacities—Lavinia's supercrip status—afford her the power to outwit disability, or at the very least to make up for her supposed deficiencies. The play thus confirms disability scholar Sami Schalk's provocative suggestion that "conceptually . . . supercrip narratives have been around long before the term itself."[22] As this first example attests, early modern ideologies of ability ascribe to a kind of supercrip desire, holding "capacity" as a gold standard for humanness. It is up to Lavinia to muster certain alternate functions that might reinvest her impaired body with its basic human quality. Furthermore, this reinscription reconfigures disability as *new* capability so as to allay ableist fears about bodymind decay and death. Early modern playgoers find in Lavinia's character the suggestion that one can—and should—

overcome impairment and, Lazarus-like, rise from the near-dead, a near-dead that disability is almost always assumed to be.

While *Titus* takes up these particular ideologies of ability, Shakespeare's late romance, *The Tempest*, portrays yet another, related belief: that "disability is always individual, a property of one body, not a feature common to all human beings, while ability defines a feature essential to the human species."[23] In this play set on an island colonized under the rule of Prospero (ex-Duke of Milan),[24] the famed Caliban is deemed from the drama's outset, even in its list of players, a "savage and deformed native of the island."[25] Thus, his character encapsulates disability's supposed, and hence stigmatizing, singularity and its crucial juxtaposition against the notion that all human bodyminds are generally and inherently able. The fantasy of ability at play in this ideology marginalizes disability—here "savage" deformity—by again constructing it as an individual trait and personal deficiency as opposed to an inevitable aspect of being human. Even more, it does so in this play by simultaneously marking out Caliban's raced body: this indigenous islander is doubly disavowed for both disfigurement and nonwhiteness.[26]

Caliban's variant physical embodiment—described by Prospero early in 1.2 as "A freckled whelp, hag-born—not honoured with / A human shape" (*The Tempest* 285–86)[27]—stands throughout *The Tempest* in stark contrast to the white European men who take possession of the island and proudly distinguish themselves from its "inhuman" native inhabitants.[28] Particularly notable is the jester Trinculo's assessment of Caliban's stigmatizable distinctiveness in 2.2. In this scene, Caliban gathers wood and, on hearing a thunderclap and seeing an apparition-like Trinculo who has recently appeared on the island due to shipwreck, he ducks under a cloak as cover from the torments to which he assumes Prospero's magical spirits are about to subject him. This initial interaction begins with, and almost solely consists of, Trinculo's confusion as to Caliban's basic humanity: "What have we here, a man or a fish?" he scathingly asks, "Dead or alive?" (*Tmp.* 2.2.23–24). "A fish," Trinculo continues to deride, "he smells like a fish; a very ancient and fish-like smell; a kind of not-of-the-newest poor-john" (*Tmp.* 2.2.26–27). Reading Caliban as, at best, subhuman, or, worse, rotten food for the impoverished English masses, Trinculo deems him a fish, or something *like* a fish, "[a] strange fish!" (*Tmp.* 2.2.27). He likewise contrasts the native islander with white European throngs in England who would pay good money to gawk at Caliban's different, hence monstrous, physique: "Legged like a man, and his fins like arms" (*Tmp.* 2.2.31–32). "There would this monster make a man," Trinculo declares, "Any strange beast there makes a man" (*Tmp.* 2.2.28–29).

In this scene, Shakespeare depicts—albeit perhaps to satirize—an operative ideology of ability in which typical embodiment gets normalized as both standard and ubiquitous, while variant embodiment is so rare that every "holiday-fool there but would give a piece of silver" (*Tmp.* 2.2.28–29) to spectate at Trinculo's early modern freak show.[29] Through its representation of Caliban's anomalousness, the play speaks to the supposed primacy of both whiteness and Europeanness as they chafe against what some early moderns would have felt as the undermining force of the "savage Other." In other words, the play's palpable xenophobia is made possible explicitly by asking questions—and making assumptions—about what fundamentally constitutes humanness. In Caliban, disability stigma enables racist, colonial hegemony.

Opposing Caliban's delimiting inhumanity in the play stands Ariel, *The Tempest*'s "airy spirit"[30] who can fly, swim, dive into fire, and "ride / On the curled clouds" (*Tmp.* 1.2.191–93). As Ariel enacts his master Prospero's bidding, he takes any shape he pleases and emblematizes the possibility for self-transformation supposedly intrinsic to able bodies.[31] "Go make thyself like to a nymph o'th' sea," urges Prospero, for example, "Be subject / To every eyeball else. Go take this shape, / And hither come in't" (*Tmp.* 1.2.304–6). Taking this form and that, Ariel metamorphoses on a whim, successfully completes every challenge his master poses, and hence portrays a kind of hyperability that knows no limits or boundaries. Ariel's character represents an ableist ideological fiction ("mine would, sir, were I human" [*Tmp.* 5.1.20], the spirit reminds Prospero in the play's final act) that opposes Caliban's deformed, disabled, singular inhumanity. Ariel embodies a dreamy privileging of the able bodymind with its supposed power, flexibility, and invulnerability; you "may as well / Wound the loud winds," Ariel taunts Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio in 3.3, "or with bemocked-at-stabs / Kill the still-closing water, as diminish / One dowl that's in my plume" (*Tmp.* 62–65). The capacity for transformation and the facility to accommodate any place or circumstance stands here in stark contrast to Caliban, "this thing of darkness" (*Tmp.* 5.1.278), whose disabled body, as we saw just above, is understood as innately limited in what it can do and, hence, in what it can ever be.

Moral and Medical Models

As these readings attest, ability logics held sway in Elizabethan and Jacobean cultures. They likewise produced some very specific early modern calculuses. For example, what scholars term the "moral model" of disability[32] stands as a useful exemplar of how ideologies of ability underpinned broader cultural paradigms for understanding bodymind difference in the Renaissance. Although the moral model is, as readers will discover in a moment, transforming in noteworthy ways by the late sixteenth century, it nonetheless serves as a baseline for how ableist ideologies codified grand disability schemas—schemas that likewise invoked, as Elizabeth B. Bearden might put it, massive "norming effects."[33] Indeed, as far back as the ancient Greeks, Bearden explains, ideas about what is "natural" and "ideal" have enabled more totalizing categories of standard and deviant;[34] "thinkers have conceptualized nature [*phusis*] symptomatically, viewing its deviations as instrumental to a proper grasp of the human body and the workings of the cosmos."[35] In premodernity, bodymind atypicalities comparatively threw into relief the uniformity of conventional forms, and they universalized the nature of more ordinary embodiment.[36]

The moral model and its attendant ideologies testify to early modern investments in standardizing "normal" against supposed deviance. In brief, the moral model formulates ability by crafting disability as a penalty for sin, and also for wayward thoughts, actions, and encounters from adultery to an overindulgent female imagination.[37] It implies that, because "cure" for sin might come through righteous faith and living, people who "suffer from" impairments somehow deserve their God-issued "punishments." Variant bodyminds are, as Edward Wheatley outlines, subject to a Christian ethos that fashions disability as "a spiritually pathological site of absence of the divine where the 'works of God [could] be made manifest.'"[38] Additionally, the moral model polices both normative *and* nonnormative bodyminds, in particular women's, through the enforcement of strict gender and sexuality norms.

Subtending the moral model is an ideology of ability that presumes God makes humans in his image, which is perfect, and so therefore, humans should be perfect; or in the language of the Geneva Bible, "Thus God created the man in his image: in the image of God created he him" (Genesis 1.27). Similarly, "man was created after God in righteousnesse and true holinesse, meaning by these two wordes all perfection" (Ephesians 4.24).[39] This ability logic—that God's work is "perfect, as your Father which is in heaven, is perfect" (Matthew 5.48)[40]—drives a particular moral sensibility that reads monstrous human variation as the result of sin, divine absence, God's wrath, or resistance to his will.[41] Further, and in stubbornly circular reasoning, each one of those iterations is, most basically, an enactment of God's perfect resolve in the first place. Alan W. Bates explains that this tension about monsters—if a monster indeed was evidence of God, how could it be an error?—was resolved with the suggestion that nature was doing its best with flawed materials, and that

God had a "secondary plan" for some humans. Again, one can see how a monster was a godly "mistake" only insofar as the production of that flaw was both natural and necessary.[42] Thus, "monstrous" children oftentimes are made monstrous because God himself mandates even "unnatural" births.[43] In this hyper-closed ability logic loop, monstrous showings, portents, and aberrations are always already divine such that imperfect humans created in opposition to God's absolute perfection only reconfirm his perfect will and plan.

Another key, concomitant ideology of ability undergirds the moral model as well: questions about the value of a human life arise only in the face of mind-body atypicality.[44] In an ability logic that understands God's creations as made perfect, one is forced to ask why, even if God wills it, imperfection would be necessary. In other words, we rarely find in the early modern period—or now, for that matter—religious tracts, broadsides, or medical manuals that work to make sense of the births of normative humans. Able bodies and minds do not need to be remarked on, because their inherent value is taken for granted; they never need to be reinterpreted as, say, prophetic conduits to God or sinful, aberrational showings.

Disabled bodyminds, however, constantly require deliberation and narrative explanation that outline their existence and worth, or lack thereof. In fact, according to Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, the monster is "pure culture" and "exists only to be read."[45] Thus, as Geoffrey A. Johns clarifies, we find widespread in early modern discourses on supposed monsters an intense "labor[ing] to arrest the attention of spectators at linguistic and non-linguistic registers of comprehension, and direct the gaze through initial astonishment into a process of recognizing, meditating upon, and interpreting bodily alterity."[46] Further, these discourses aim to both rationalize and assign value to an alterity that initially seems incomprehensible given the ability logic that drives the entire thought paradigm: God is in the business of perfection-making.

The moral model and the ideologies of "monstrosity" that bolster it aim to didactically discipline individuals and, in so doing, likewise engender key cultural norms that persist in the period. This model particularly enforced behavioral norms around ideal sexual encounters as well as maternal activities during fetal gestation and infant delivery, so as to avoid so-called "monstrous births." As David M. Turner and Kevin Stagg elucidate, "'monstrosity' provided a means of categorizing congenital birth defects deemed to be caused variously by 'excess' or 'lack' of the 'seed' thought to be ejaculated by men and women during conception, corruption of 'seed' by sex during menstruation, or imprinted by the mother's imagination or cravings during pregnancy."[47] English physician Nicholas Culpeper especially schooled pregnant mothers, for example, explaining that "Your child is nourished by your own blood . . . rectified or marred by your exercise, idleness, sleep, or watching, & Nature sees and knows how you swerve from what is fitting"; Culpeper also preached the dangers of sinful behaviors, such as inappropriate sexual intercourse, that could render the womb "unfit to do its office."[48] Jane Sharp likewise reminds women of the devilish power of their imaginations during gestation and the need to closely monitor exposure to strange sights and control overactive fancies. "But the imagination is so strong in some persons with child," she proclaims, "that they produce such real effects that can proceed from nothing else."[49]

As one clearly notes, these behavioral requirements coincided especially closely with pervasive gender norms and regulation in the period. For instance, infertile women most often were held solely accountable for their "barrenness," while mothers of so-called monstrous babies were moralized as failed progenitors. Sharp, following Ambroise Paré, illustrates how a child is "a part of the mother until she be delivered, as a branch is part of a Tree while it grows there . . . whatsoever moves the faculties of the mothers soul may do the like in the child."[50] The mother's faculties, or failure to properly care for and compose them, permanently marks her child: "Imagination can do much, as a woman that lookt on a Blackmore brought forth a child like to a Blackmore: and one I knew, that seeing a boy with two thumbs on one hand, brought forth such another."[51]

Renaissance scholar Julie Crawford illuminates how early modern monstrous birth stories like these indeed are "closely associated with the maintenance of social order."[52] They are a genre in which "monsters themselves are texts: their bodies are transparent to the crimes they punish, and they render the private beliefs and behaviors of early modern men and women spectacularly legible."[53] Texts on monstrosity were, as Crawford puts it, "cases of conscience that intended to provide clear guidelines for religious and moral behavior through marvelously judgmental stories."[54] Moreover, and as Crawford consistently stresses, this judgement and disciplining explicitly targeted Renaissance women: "monstrous births . . . are made, and understood to be made, in women's bodies. It is *women* whose acts and behaviors produce monsters."[55]

Akin to the example of Caliban above, this policing of women's bodies in early modern England is impossible without disability. The moral model and its ideological buttresses propel explicitly gendered behaviors and norms, particularly, as Crawford might have it, as they "draw correspondences between monstrosity and specific women's behaviors."[56] Note again, for instance, how the birth of an able-bodied child as the result of a mother's well-governed gestation and felicitous relationship with God is rarely observed or praised in the period. Women's inherent failings (even accidental ones), however, are anxiously recorded and debated because they ultimately corrupt fetuses and breed monsters. As Culpeper and other early modern writers castigate, "the anxious . . . woman has no one to blame but herself for the difficulties in her pregnancy or the hazards in its outcome."[57] Similarly, and per Sharp, "so the parts of the infant will be hairy where no hair should grow . . . or have lips or parts divided or joined together according as the [mother's] imagination transported by violent passions may sometimes be the cause of it."[58] Here, fear of disability gets parlayed into the misogynist shaming and disciplining of early modern Englishwomen. Disability stigma as it arises in cultural moralizing about nonnormative bodies foments patriarchal dominance.

Importantly, operating alongside the complex moral model outlined above was a nascent conceptual counterpart with its own ideological freight and norming effects. This was a "protomedical model" of disability invested in, to recall Cohen and Johns, a different sort of descriptive deliberation aiming to recognize and interpret bodymind alterity. This schema, which chapter 2 further addresses, often looked to supernatural and spiritual causes *as well as* natural ones, and also prescribed physiological remedies for congenital deformities and other impairments. Thus, it simultaneously reflected moralizing fears and dangerously unambiguous, supposedly empirical rationalizations invested in diagnosis and cure. So, for instance, notions about the sinful fancies of gestating women are complemented over the course of the Renaissance by a sense of female imagination as a kind of "disease," and atypical pregnancy or birth registers not just as a sign from God, but as a physiological symptom in need of explicit medical mediation.[59]

This merging and mapping of "hard science" onto moral models symptomatically shows itself in numerous texts composed during the period. As Alan W. Bates explains, the massive increase in books about monsters between 1536 and 1636 can be distilled into two groups: "wonder books" about monsters as signs (popular literature), and "natural" or philosophical (medical) texts that were more analytical and synthetic, and dismissed individual case studies of so-called monstrosity for broader, more universal generalizations about what variant embodiment was, why it occurred, and what to do about it.[60] Sixteenth-century Spanish physician Cristóbal Méndez clarifies via emphatic declaration this new, medicalized premium on health and wellness: "Oh priceless, oh generous, oh magnificent health, worthy of being loved as life itself, for without it we can call ourselves dead even though we are alive."[61] For Méndez, an unhealthy life is a life not worth living, and thus wellness mediated by hygiene norms, pharmaceutical remedy, and practical therapy—as well as employment of the various texts that promoted them—should be attended to above all else.

This imperative is echoed, albeit with more specific focus, in John Lamport's 1685 English treatise, *A Direct Method of Ordering and Curing People of That Loathsome Disease, the Small-pox*. This work mirrors Méndez's mandate from nearly a century before as it evinces a growing conception in the Renaissance of impairment as explicit medical crisis.[62] In its distinct instruction, Lamport's treatise endeavors to "prevent the usual Deformity of Marks and Scars," normalize prevention and especially cure (as Lamport "Instruct[s] the poor ignorant tenders of the sick, and such poor Wretches as are not able to hire a Tender"), and promote "the Medicines herein mentioned" as they may be "truly prepared by the Author at Reasonable Rates."[63] Lamport's treatise medicalizes, stigmatizes, and economically capitalizes on pockmarked "Deformity" as a fate to be avoided at all costs. Further, it touts medicine as an empirically verifiable cure-all: "I have not Wrote from bare Conjecture," Lamport staunchly explains, "but from undeniable Experiments."[64]

Indeed, Michael Solomon argues that during the span of about 300 years (c. 1300–1600), Europe and England saw "the rise of medical licensing, the development of the modern hospital, the evolution of ontological notions of disease, the identification of new botanical materials from the New World, and the legitimization of medical subprofessions such as surgery and anatomy."[65] This constellation of factors led to a growing sense that vernacular books on health and hygiene, for example, "could provide [individuals with] remedies, relief, and some sense of control over the bewildering conditions of their bodies."[66] As with Lamport's treatise, doctor-authors offered readers not just diagnostic information and therapy but abundant testimony to their qualifications, efficacy, and success rate for cure.[67] Solomon goes so far as to describe this new epoch as one which presented the vernacular medical treatise as "the textual equivalent of an over-the-counter drug—an entity that has been developed by doctors but requires no secondary professional intervention to justify its use."[68]

To clarify, I am not sketching out a tight teleological trajectory of a moral to a medical model of disability over the course of the English Renaissance. My reading of *Julius Caesar* just below attests that moral and medical constructions of disability—and the ideologies that motivated them—worked together, each framing and feeding the other. The play's knotty representation of Caesar's epilepsy undermines assumptions that the construction of disability abides some distinct pattern of "modernization" whereby medieval understandings of disability as monstrous, mysterious, or divine are usurped by a protomedical model of disability that more empirically identifies impaired individuals and aims to cure them of their so-called pathology. *Julius Caesar* helps us resist a flat model of history in which, as Margaret Healy explains, "'we' moderns emerge as inheritors of significant advances in objective, scientific thinking about the body which began with decisive paradigmatic shifts in the seventeenth century."[69]

That said, more and more over the course of early modernity, physicians and their medical texts come to represent illness as bodily pathology. Philosophers and doctor-authors promise premodern folks diagnostic precision, universally effective cures, immediate access to therapy, and ultimately wellness. Solomon clarifies that while vernacular medical treatises offer information in the realms of nonnatural hygiene and daily body regulation, "there are very few . . . that do not contain at least a handful of pharmaceutical and practical therapies for various ailments."[70] Too, by the middle of the sixteenth century, the learned terms for diseases and afflictions began to displace vague, symptom-based terminology. Put differently, physicians and theologians moralized about impairment while increasingly emphasizing the vulnerability of good health. They did not just offer ill individuals a way "to redesign themselves to their worldly condition, but . . . remind[ed] them of the role medicine could play in ameliorating their condition."[71]

Caesar's *Corporeal Capacity*

I turn again now to the Renaissance stage to further investigate this unique interplay of moral and protomedical models of disability, and likewise to explore the ideologies of ability that underpin them. In Shakespeare's popular turn-of-the-seventeenth-century play, *Julius Caesar*, readers will find a useful parsing of disability—epilepsy, specifically—as both sinfully aberrant and physiologically defective.[72] Perhaps surprisingly, very little critical work on *Julius Caesar* has actually studied representations of epilepsy in this history play–cum–tragic psychodrama.[73] In other words, few critics have probed Julius Caesar's crucial embodiment, and many, like Horst Zander, have dismissed Caesar's corporeality altogether: "the play is not so much about the 'man' Caesar as about the myth or the much-quoted 'spirit' of Caesar," Zander argues; "the disembodied Caesar is mightier than the living one."[74] Somewhat contrastingly, Clifford Ronan notes important aspects of Caesar's material embodiment—he is "deaf, epileptic, . . . unable to father a child by his wife and, when suffering from fever, given to whining like a 'sick girl'"—but only to sustain an argument about the "historical inaccuracy" of Shakespeare's Caesar.[75] Barbara Parker also broaches Caesar's epilepsy, but to further discussion of Roman justice, order, and governance. She politicizes Caesar's "ill" health as symbolic of Rome's failings—his epileptic fits "replicate the civil turbulence that rocks Rome"—and thereby understands Shakespeare's play as "recall[ing] Socrates' equation of justice with health and well-being."[76]

While this scholarship skirts around the play's representations of Caesar's bodymind, Gail Paster and Coppélia Kahn offer more direct readings of his compromised corporeality. For them, in its shameful passivity and uncontrolled seeping of blood, Caesar's feminized body reproduces early modern gender conventions that constructed women as frail, leaky vessels.[77] Paster specifically notes that "the Romans themselves obsessively thematize [the topos of Caesar's body]," and she examines this fixation via the play's investment in "patriarchal bodily canons."[78] Though markedly different in their explicit focus on Caesar's so-called bodily weakness, Paster and Kahn's analyses invite further investigation into how this weakness codes Caesar as less than able. In other words, a sick, bleeding body is not just feminine but a nonstandard deviation from the healthy, masculine norm.[79]

Understanding epilepsy's complex disability signification in *Julius Caesar* supplements these stricter interpretations of Caesar's body, especially insofar as it exposes the play's underlying privileging of normativity. The able body—strong, self-contained, unmarred—and its disabled counterpart—weak, infirm, grotesque—are intrinsic to Caesar's gendering throughout the play. The play's interest in what Paster calls the "shameful secret of [his] bodiliness"[80] certainly invokes Caesar's feminization. Even more, though, it emphasizes his gendered body's deep entrenchment in the language and politics of early modern disability.[81]

In representing *Caesar*'s effeminized, epileptic protagonist and his demise at the hands of Rome's infamous conspirators, the play constructs disability against yet another dominant ideology of ability at work in the period: bodyminds must possess corporeal power and display both productivity and longevity. David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder have explained that "one cannot narrate the story of a healthy body . . . without the contrastive device of disability to bear out the symbolic potency of the message. The materiality of metaphor via disabled bodies gives all bodies a tangible essence, in that the healthy corporeal surface fails to achieve its symbolic effect without its disabled counterpart."[82] The drama appears, that is, to privilege Rome's "normal" bodies that are vital and robust over its "extraordinary" ones that are not. Insofar as he is murdered midway through the play, an epileptic Caesar helps

Shakespeare's tragedy perform, even in its most basic plot structure, an ableist politics. An "infirm" Caesar is prosthetic to the narrative: disability is made central to the plot only temporarily to enable its movement and character development (notably, other than Caesar's own), and then disappears once the drama no longer needs it.[83] This narrative technique enforces what Robert McRuer in his work on disability in contemporary culture has identified as a pervasive, compulsory able-bodiedness always obscured from view until the disabled body renders it visible.[84]

An ideology of ability intent on bodily capacity, productivity, and longevity buttresses more than just the play's narrative momentum, however. Put more simply, it is a foundational logic without which the plot's moral debate make far less sense. While the conspirators posit numerous possible reasons to assassinate Caesar, their actions are justified in large part by Caesar's inability to conform to normative cultural expectations about bodymind functioning. His epileptic "lack" prevents successful leadership, while Brutus's and Antony's able bodies ultimately are more suited to the task: "Caesar's *better parts*," explains one plebian, "Shall be crowned in Brutus" (*Julius Caesar* 3.2.47–48, my italics).[85] Brutus likewise rationalizes his participation in Caesar's death through a medicalized rhetoric of disability that is ableist in its insistence on mitigating bodily dysfunction: "This shall make / Our purpose necessary, and not envious," Brutus explains, "Which so appearing to the common eyes, / We shall be called *purgers*, not murderers" (*JC* 2.1.177–80, my italics). While scholars typically interpret these lines strictly as a metaphor legitimizing subterfuge, I argue that here Brutus imagines himself as engaged in not just political purification but a "necessary" kind of medical practice as well. He, like the knowledgeable Renaissance physician, "purges" Rome of a disabled (and politically dangerous) Caesar to restore the republic to its paramount health and ability.

In its insistence on health and capacity, the play makes very visible the nuanced juncture of medical and moral models of disability that espouse that ideological doggedness. Epilepsy in *Julius Caesar* is conceived of simultaneously through Hippocratic pathology, medieval marvelousness, Renaissance monstrosity, Galenic humoralism, and seventeenth-century rationalism. The play portrays Caesar's epilepsy variously through, among other things, premodern discourses of wonder and curiosity and emerging "modern" notions of disability as deviancy, abnormality, and lack.[86] Indeed, the play acknowledges, as Lennard Davis might suggest, that "the body is never a single thing so much as a series of attitudes toward it."[87] In epilepsy's especially muddled signification as divine, pathological, awesome, intemperate, heroic, and depraved, *Julius Caesar* illuminates the slipperiness of disability's categorization in premodernity even in the face of moral and medical models intent on pinning it down.

Divine, demonic, pathological, and geohumoral,[88] philosophers and physicians alike have struggled throughout time to determine the elusive nature and significance of epilepsy.[89] Classical traditions understood epilepsy as both sacred and sinful. The term "seizure," for example, recalls ancient Babylonian medical notions of epileptic people seized by gods or demons.[90] Often this association with the supernatural lent epilepsy an ominous connotation and encouraged interpretations of the illness as a sign of moral corruption.[91] The Middle Ages into the Renaissance saw continued association of epilepsy with depravity, but with increased conversion of the populace to Christianity, epilepsy's connections to divine prophecy (*divinatio)* and ecstatic possession became more pronounced.[92] Epilepsy was linked to Christ's goodness in St. Mark's account of Jesus healing an epileptic boy, while biblical descriptions of the three wise men at the nativity "falling down" before baby Jesus likewise associated epilepsy with God's favor.[93]

Even as the falling sickness signified both sacred wonder and monstrous depravity, it was also conceived of in much more rationalist terms. Resistance to epilepsy's supernatural symbolism began in antiquity with Hippocrates's insistence that the condition was just that, a condition: "It is thus with regard to the disease called Sacred," he proposes, "it appears to me to be nowise more divine nor more sacred than other diseases, but has a natural cause from which it originates like other affections."[94] Following this interpretation of the falling sickness as bodily pathology, Renaissance physicians infused Hippocratic logic with Galenic humoralism, emphasizing epilepsy's cause as an excess of black bile found in melancholic people, who were thus prone to "madness" and sometimes inspiration.[95] Similar to medieval Christianity's recasting of epileptic fits as divine ecstasies, this particular disability discourse again postulated epilepsy's pathological roots, but did so while reshaping the "disease," via the myth of the melancholy hero, as the burden of genius.[96]

While Galenic humoralism advocated for epilepsy's association with melancholic heroism, Paracelsan medical philosophy stressed even more adamantly the falling sickness's relationship to environmental stimulus.[97] Paracelsus explains, for example, that "the pathology of epilepsy must not proceed from human physiology, but first the cosmic phenomenon which corresponds to epilepsy has to be perceived and interpreted, and it will yield an explanation of epilepsy in man."[98] For Paracelsus, bodyminds are so vulnerable to their surroundings that forces such as wind, water, and the cosmos engender seizures. Paracelsus even describes seizures using explicitly meteorological language:

> [W]hen a thunderstorm is on its way, the weather changes, the animals notice it and become restless. So man too becomes terrified when he feels an epileptic [or similar] attack approaching. Then clouds gather in the sky, while man's eyesight becomes weakened, and he feels sleepy. . . . Now the thunder breaks forth, shaking heaven and earth; now the epileptic [or hysteric] is convulsed in all his limbs. The thunder sends forth lightening and the epileptic has sheer fire before his eyes. . . . The thunder sheds its rain; the epileptic emits froth.[99]

For Paracelsus, the body and its humors are in a constant state of flux depending on external influence. Epilepsy's physical manifestations are, therefore, linked to situational occurrences such that, just as "hail and a stroke of lightening break walls and disrupt everything—so the epileptic's limbs are bent and even broken by the force of the invisible storm and lightening in his body."[100]

The Renaissance cultural imagination of the falling sickness performed in *Julius Caesar* incorporated these diverse understandings of epilepsy from classical antiquity forward. Take 1.2, for example, wherein the wily Cassius initiates his wooing of Brutus towards a conspiratorial plot against Caesar. Here Cassius encourages Brutus to acknowledge Caesar's "feeble temper" (*JC* 1.2.131) by making much of Caesar's groaning tongue and "coward lips" (*JC* 1.2.126–7, 124). Once when Caesar was in Spain, explains Cassius,

> He had a fever . . .
> And when the fit was on him, I did mark
> How he did shake. 'Tis true, this god did shake.
> His coward lips did from their colour fly;
> And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world
> Did lose his lustre. I did hear him groan,
> Ay, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans
> Mark him and write his speeches in their books,
> "Alas," it cried, "Give me some drink, Titinius,"
> As a sick girl. (*JC* 1.2.121–31)

In this strategic recollection, Cassius testifies to Caesar's embodied difference by carefully detailing his epileptic "fit." Cassius mocks Caesar's pallor, quaking, fatigue, and thirst and exploits his "feebleness" as a corporeal metaphor for political weakness and incompetence. On the one hand, Cassius uses epilepsy to ironically undercut Caesar's power and prestige; after all, what god would shake? His language humanizes Caesar by calling attention to his medical abnormality. He is "a sick girl" wrought by fevers and tremors. Caesar's weak and fragile person is the embodiment of lack. On the other hand, Cassius's anecdote grudgingly acknowledges Caesar's divine status. In his (albeit somewhat ironic) godliness, Caesar's fit resembles divine ecstasy and is a marvelous incarnation of the sacred, not symptomatic, evidence of illness.[101] Implicitly, Cassius's language—"How he did shake. 'Tis true, this god did shake" (*JC* 1.2.123)—likewise invokes the melancholic hero whose fits and visions were not necessarily explicitly sacred but nonetheless were testament to a kind of God-given eminence and genius.

I am not suggesting that Cassius understands all discourses as equally useful. His insistence on carefully cataloging Caesar's weak disposition suggests, in fact, that a protomedical model of disability best serves the conspirators' agenda at this particular moment in the drama. Caesar's disabled body anticipates his disabled, and disabling, political ideology. That said, while Cassius privileges a narrative of disability as pathology to deploy a distinct political agenda, he troubles the easy singularity of that particular narrative by representing disability as *both* divine portent and frightening pathology.

Indeed, the discursive representation of a disabled Caesar as simultaneously divine, monstrous, and diseased surfaces consistently throughout the play. Later in 1.2, for instance, Cassius describes Caesar as a "Colossus" who "bestrid[es] the narrow world" (*JC* 136). Here, Caesar is a haughty yet enviable giant who towers above "petty men [who] / Walk under his legs, and peep about / To find [them]selves dishonourable graves" (*JC* 1.2.136–38). In this instance, disability does not make Caesar frail, ill, or incompetent; instead this difference—here implicitly resignified as gigantism—renders him prodigiously contrary to nature and thus a being whose presence and power are attributable to God.[102] Although early modern sentiments about monstrosity were not by any means exclusively positive, popular beliefs rooted in medieval tradition indeed acknowledge monstrosity, like epilepsy, as a fascinating example of God's mystery. Alan W. Bates describes early modern monsters as both "slip[s] of nature and divinely-mediated sign[s]" through which God's presence was made visible to humanity.[103] "Monsters," scholar Jenny Mann reminds us, "were signs from God, signs demanding interpretation."[104] "The figuration of monsters as readable signs is readily discernible from the term itself," Mann explains, "'monster' was derived both from *monstrare*, 'to show,' and *monere*, 'to warn.'"[105] An epileptic Caesar depicted as "Colossus" certainly serves as a political omen—what Mann identifies in another context as an "abstract [sign] of political, social, or religious corruption"[106]—but the foreboding in that omen is mediated by its likely association with God's sacred plan. Cassius politicizes disability via the colossus metaphor, in other words, to signal Caesar's inflated self-worth and its risk to the republic *as well as* the prodigious, godly quality that makes his risky leadership so seductive.

But again, even as Cassius imagines Caesar as divinely monstrous, he also describes him as suffering from the "falling *sickness*" (*JC* 1.2.250, my italics). Casca follows suit, characterizing Caesar's condition as "infirmity" (*JC* 1.2.267) and employing a counterdiscourse in which epilepsy is not a divine symbol, but rather an insufferable malady. Through Casca's language especially, the play portrays epilepsy as a regrettable illness that separates Caesar from his rational self and causes him to say and do things that seem "amiss" (*JC* 1.2.266). Here, Shakespeare appropriates rationalist perceptions of epilepsy as an abnormal physiological response; or, as early English antiquarian and lexicographer Thomas Blount puts it, epilepsy is "caused by some humor or vapour; suddenly stopping the passage of spirits in the brain, which the brain striving to expel, causeth the Patient to fall down, and commonly foam at the mouth."[107]

More specifically, this "evil," as famed Renaissance physician and anatomist Helkiah Crooke notes, was caused when "Flegm or Melancholy, or crasse and thicke winde is retained in the Ventricles, which stopping them up either wholy or for the most part, do strangle the spirits therein contained."[108] The disease betrayed itself in the comportment of the affected individual, who, according to early modern physician Philip Barrough, portrayed "an unwyse state of the body and mind, saddenesse, forgetfullnes, troublesome dreames, ache of the head, and continuall fullnes in it."[109] The patient likewise experienced "palenes of the face, [and] inordinate moving of the tongue."[110] While the disease was thought to be caused by any number of things, ranging from the ingestion of goat, quail, or parsley[111] to the movement of "cold ayre, comming from some member, and creeping up to the braine,"[112] it might be tempered with treatments as diverse as the wearing of cramp-rings made of the "whyte hooves of an Asse" to the burning of moles into fine powder to be drunk alongside "bloode warme wyne."[113]

This litany of epilepsy's causes and cures indeed signals a budding early modern understanding of "the falling sickness" via a nascent medical model of disability. *Julius Caesar* yet again verifies this cultural sensibility in, for example, Casca's anecdotal rendering of Caesar's public coronation ceremony.

Here the conspirator emphasizes disability as disease, particularly via an insistence on its connection to one's environs:

> the rabblement hooted, and clapped their chapped hands, and
> threw up their sweaty nightcaps, and uttered such a deal of
> stinking breath because Caesar refused the crown that it had
> almost choked Caesar; for he swooned and fell down at it.
> (*JC* 1.2.243–46)

In this passage, Casca pinpoints the "stinking breath" of the "hooting rabblement" as the source of Caesar's falling sickness. Their rowdy yelling and filthy utterances precipitate Caesar's "fit"; because of the crowd's gross humors, Caesar "fell down in the market-place, and foamed at mouth, / and was speechless" (*JC* 1.2.250–51). As Casca rationalizes Caesar's disability through scientific discourse, he associates the uncleanness of the masses with infectious illness and attributes Caesar's epilepsy to contagious "bad air" (*JC* 1.2.248). Notably, however, it is not just Caesar who is threatened by this contagion—Casca likewise fears for his own well-being: "And / for mine own part, I durst not laugh for fear of opening my lips / and receiving the bad air" (*JC* 1.2.247–49). In not daring to open his mouth, Casca explicitly imagines epilepsy as a transmissible medical condition. If Caesar can be moved to swoon and foam, so might he.[114] Taken all together, these moments from Caesar as Colossus to Caesar as infirm portray the early modern, disabled body as simultaneously both wondrously divine and fearfully deviant.

These coincident conceptions of disability found in Shakespeare's play are affirmed in numerous treatises on epilepsy written in the Renaissance, but one text in particular, *A General Collection of Discourses of the Virtuosi of France*, crystallizes their compelling interplay. The conference proceedings in this 1664 publication were catalyzed by physician Théophraste Renaudot's weekly public forum at the Bureau d'adresse et de Rencontre, a free medical clinic–cum–employment office established in Paris in 1630.[115] In these addresses, Parisian virtuosi characterize the falling sickness in what readers will find to be usefully ambivalent terms. For example, even as they aim to temper epilepsy's sacred history, the virtuosi nevertheless reify it, noting that

> the unexpectedness of this malady, and the Patient's quick recovery, may justifie the vulgar for thinking that there is something divine in it. Since nothing amazes us more than sudden uncomprehended altera-

> tions.[116] Therefore in Hippocrates days they us'd to make expiations and incantations for this disease, which he derides, saying that the bad Physicians promoted this false conceit, that they might get the more honour for the cure, or be more excusable for not effecting the same.[117]

Although the virtuosi deem epilepsy's divinity an uneducated notion, their mention of it here testifies that such a belief still circulated in the Renaissance; in other words, the prospect of epilepsy's divinity would not need to be discussed unless it were still considered a possibility. The virtuosi's insistent skepticism as to whether there is in fact "something divine" in "sudden uncomprehended alterations" is troubled likewise by their description of epilepsy as something secret and fantastical: "The truth is," they contest, "there is a specifical occult quality of the humours particularly disposing to this disease."[118] Put another way, while interpreting epilepsy as a sacred sign may be unfashionable to the virtuosi, the "unexpectedness of this malady, and the Patient's quick recovery"—its "specifical occult quality"—is nonetheless quite remarkable.

While the virtuosi inadvertently concretize epilepsy's "occult" nature, they of course concurrently corroborate a narrative in which it is most fundamentally a disease. Following this logic, the falling sickness results from the "abundance of gross humours, either phlegmatick or melancholy; which if it wholly fills the brains ventricles, and makes a total obstruction; . . . it causes an apoplexie, which is a total abolition of sense and motion in the whole body, with laesion of the rational faculty."[119] Here epilepsy is more plainly pathological: ill humours obstruct ventricles to the brain causing temporary loss of both "motion" and "sense"; "Animal Spirits" are unable to traverse properly throughout the body, prompting a "total abolition" of function.[120] For the virtuosi, as with Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, the falling sickness is something both wondrously inexplicable and wholly rationalizable. It inspires amazement and mystery even as it might be logically parsed with the help of empirical science.

Passing and Disability Discernment

Chapter 1 concludes with an examination of how the moral and protomedical models of disability at play in *Julius Caesar* evince broader early modern cultural insistence on properly accounting for and classify human variation.[121] The concomitant paradigms outlined just above, even in their rhetorical differences, both work to pathologize and demoralize impaired bodyminds by consistently assuming—and prescribing—disability's marked visibility on the body. To diagnose is to decipher. To moralize is to make meaningful.

Put slightly differently, *Julius Caesar* reveals yet another Renaissance ideology of ability nervously adamant that *embodied difference be readable, knowable, and hence repressible*. This ability logic—one disability scholar Ellen Samuels might term a "fantasy of identification"[122]—insists on knowing and naming disability so as to, among other things, compensate for the fact that impairment can be hard to anticipate since human bodyminds are subject to the whim of chance and contingency.[123] In other words, early modern (and postmodern) ideologies of ability strive to counter this "radical contingency," as Ato Quayson calls it, through explicit categorization and rationalization (away) of variant bodyminds. Paradoxically, however, in their attempts to know disability, these discourses express an ableist denial of the same, a refusal of corporeal diversity that, again per Quayson, "undergird[s] a perceived hierarchy of bodily traits determining the distribution of privilege, status, and power."[124]

Katharine Park and Lorraine Daston foundationally have argued that categorization and rationalization of difference are typical human impulses across time and cultures.[125] Disability, however, often "resists identification through classification because of its instability and particularity."[126] Epilepsy especially puts forward a distinct challenge to classification processes insofar as it, unlike some other illnesses and impairments, may not leave a legible trace in or on the body but instead is revealed most frequently in fleeting moments of seizure. Recall from earlier, for instance, Cassius's and Casca's repeated attempts throughout *Julius Caesar* to explicitly enunciate the falling sickness: "[Caesar] had a fever . . . / And when the fit was on him, I did mark / How he did shake. / His coward lips did from their colour fly . . ." (*JC* 1.2.121–24). Here and elsewhere in the play, we observe the conspirators demanding that Caesar's marvelous, monstrous body be defined by some obvious physical difference. Caesar is identifiable both as a "Colossus" who "bestrid[es] the narrow world" (*JC* 1.2.136) and as a sick body that registers illness in observable symptoms such as swooning, choking, and foaming.

In actuality, though, the epileptic body often lacks such easily distinguishable characteristics. It rarely functions in the predictably legible manners the conspirators willfully ascribe to it. Epileptic seizures are transitory episodes that only temporarily register disability on the body and then seem to disappear. In this way, epilepsy forces a particularly rigorous exercise in disability discernment[127] that might fail—most likely *will fail*—at any moment.

Put more explicitly in the context of disability studies, the epileptic Caesar passes as able-bodied and thus eludes any straightforward categorization as disabled.[128] Passing, while typically connoting the concealment of social markers of impairment to avoid disability stigma, also more generally applies, as Jeffrey A. Brune and Daniel J. Wilson define it, to numerous "other ways people manage their identities."[129] And for nearly all his time in the play, in fact, Caesar enacts just such an identity-management strategy. He disguises his nonnormative status in what Simi Linton has described in her work on passing as either "a deliberate effort to avoid discrimination or ostracism, or . . . an almost unconscious, Herculean effort to deny to oneself the reality of one's racial history, sexual feelings, or bodily state."[130] "The attempt," Linton further clarifies, "may be a deliberate act to protect oneself from the loathing of society or may be an unchecked impulse spurred by an internalized self-loathing."[131] Either way, Caesar, in his efforts to pass, creates for himself what Linton calls a "minifiction" in which inconsistent, unperceivable impairment makes disability strategically difficult for others to perceive.[132]

Note, for example, how Caesar passes in the play's opening acts, foregrounding an abiding able-bodiedness by unambiguously emphasizing his steadiness: "for *always* I am Caesar," he proclaims (*JC* 1.2.213, my italics). Later in 3.1, and in response to the conspirators' pleas that Publius Cimber be granted "an immediate freedom of repeal" (*JC* 53), he goes on similarly but at length: "I could be well moved if I were as you / But I am as constant as the Northern Star / Of whose true fixed and resting quality / There is no fellow in the firmament" (*JC* 3.1.59–62). Caesar continues:

> The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks;
> They are all fire, and everyone doth shine;
> But there's but one in all doth hold his place.
> So in the world: 'tis furnished well with men,
> And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
> Yet in the number I do know but one
> That unassailable holds on his rank,
> Unshaken of motion; and that I am he
> Let me a little show it even in this—
> That I was constant Cimber should be banished,
> And constant do remain to keep him so. (*JC* 3.1.63–73)

Here, Caesar employs the language of absolute "constancy" to affirm at once both his political resolve and physical endurance—the seeming absence of disability and the instability it inevitably connotes. Moreover, the monologue's entire extended metaphor functions as a direct response to the material reality of an impairment like epilepsy that induces physical responses that make it impossible to fix or steady the body.[133] Though Caesar "could be well moved," he is not. His claim to be, unlike others, "unassailable" and "unshaken of motion" seems a direct response to Cassius's indictment of his epilepsy earlier in the play. In this case, Caesar is a god who does *not* seize, or as Katharine Eisaman Maus notes, "although epileptic and physically frail, he imagines himself as embodying a god-like permanence, 'unshaked of motion.'"[134] His body is not marked by epileptic seizure but rather by a "true fixed and resting quality." By claiming utter steadfastness, Caesar performs self-control and reassuring fixity, two qualities ideologically assumed to be intrinsic to able bodyminds that are, impossibly of course, never subject to fluctuation or change.

Given this insistence on passing as able-bodied, Caesar somewhat surprisingly confesses outright to deafness early in the play. "Come on my right hand," he instructs Antony; "for this ear is deaf" (*JC* 1.2.214). I would argue that Caesar's willingness to own, albeit briefly, his deafness but not his epilepsy points to two key things. First, epilepsy signifies as a more threatening impairment than deafness in early modernity, precisely because it refuses predictable legibility and thus more easily facilitates able passing. Caesar grasps this logic and strategizes accordingly. Second and further, the ruler's claims to constancy in the face of deafness figure him and his leadership inside a powerful overcoming narrative that transcends impairment. In a passage that recalls my reading of *Titus* toward the start of this chapter, Caesar shrewdly marks his deafness—and by loose proxy his epilepsy—to minimize and efface impairment as significant. He denies the possibility of his "apprehensive" "flesh and blood" (*JC* 3.1.67), instead performing a powerful capacity to maintain an "unassailable [hold] on his rank" (*JC* 3.1.69). Caesar names disability—deafness—outright to dismiss and disavow it, proclaiming himself "as constant as the Northern Star" in an ableist world that demands that every person "hold [their] place" (*JC* 3.1.65, 70).

Caesar's strategic performance of normativity, although resisted by Cassius's and Casca's discursive constructions of their ruler's impairment, is nonetheless corroborated by other characters in the drama. Caesar's supposed abiding ability is confirmed in 2.2, for instance, by Decius's reinterpretation of Calpurnia's prophetic dream of Caesar's murder. "[Her dream] was a vision fair and fortunate," Decius explains:

> Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,
> In which so many smiling Romans bathed,
> Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck
> Reviving blood, and that great men shall press
> For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance. (*JC* 2.2.83–88)

According to Decius, the statue representing Caesar's wounded body "spouting blood in many pipes" is not a failing body but rather its total opposite: a vibrant body conferring on the populace "reviving blood" with curative powers. "Smiling Romans" bathe and suck from Caesar's potent physicality, and they affirm his vital health and constancy in their demand for curative tinctures and relics born of his memorialization. His "spouting blood" does not signify lack, deficiency, or effeminacy,[135] but rather ability so robust and perfect it might be bestowed lovingly on other suffering, less-than-able citizens. "Great Rome," in Decius's formulation, is the disabled bodymind healed by Caesar's able one.

Just as these scenes affirm Caesar's ability to pass, so too does the entire play in its refusal to stage Caesar's condition as it occurs in the moment of epileptic seizure. In other words, although various characters comment on Caesar's epilepsy, it never actually shows itself in the actions of the drama. In fact, word of Caesar's "falling sickness," the suggestion that he "fell down in the market-place, and foamed at mouth, / and was speechless" (*JC* 1.2.250–51), appears to be nothing more than rumor offered in the context of a reiterated story Casca cannot keep straight. "There was more foolery yet," Casca derisively confesses, "if I could remember it" (*JC* 1.2.281).

In noting Caesar's unconfirmed epilepsy (the lack of actual performance of fit, swoon, or seizure in the play), I am not denying this character's disability but instead further confirming its illegibility.[136] In an era that struggled desperately to define and regulate disability,[137] epilepsy's indecipherability prompts an alternate understanding of human variation that resists ideological insistence that disability "[provide] a symbolic and actual basis on which to structure a system of identification that seeks to fix individual identity."[138] Caesar's passing as able-bodied articulates the supposed risk that one might quite easily misinterpret—maybe even miss altogether—embodied difference. The so-called invisible disabled body, one that refuses identification and classification, undermines ideological demands that ability be apprehensible.[139] It upends models and medical practices that are determined that disability be seen, known, and thereby disciplined in the name of normalcy.

Sure enough, one finds in early modern England well beyond the world of Shakespeare's plays such disciplinary attempts at normalcy that betray angst over (again recalling Samuels) thwarted fantasies of identification. One manifestation was the practice of patients diagnosed with epilepsy wearing cramp rings to "cure" their falling sickness. Part of a trend that flourished from the reigns of Edward III to Mary Tudor, cramp rings, also known as St. Edward's Rings, were curative prostheses worn to ward off cramp and epilepsy, and they functioned as an especially unique, ableist mechanism for mitigating disability's supposedly dangerous illegibility.[140] The rings were made from precious metals the monarch offered up for blessing at the altar of the Chapel Royal in the annual Good Friday ceremony. During the service, prayers and psalms were said, and holy water was poured over the jewelry.[141] As the English traveler, physician, and writer Andrew Borde explains in his *Breviary of Health*, the royal healing touch infused the rings with curative power, so long as they were "given without money or petition."[142] Although the practice of blessing cramp rings was abolished under Elizabeth I, the wearing of cramp rings survived as people made their own rings out of coins or metal that was special to them in some way.[143]

Jewelry, in other words, was imagined to have a restorative power that was especially conducive to treating the falling sickness and thereby making it apprehensible. Famed English astrologer William Lilly discusses the practice of ring remedy, citing the case of a young woman who, having been determined to have epilepsy, was cured by wearing a silver ring inscribed with astrological symbols.[144] According to Lilly's report, the physician Robert Napier insisted that she wear the ring diligently and that its powers were not occult. Yet the woman's parents and community members, as the cure worked, became suspicious of the ring and its symbols as potentially demonic: "Her parents acquainted some scrupulous divines with the cure of their daughter," Lilly explains; "'The cure is done by enchantment,' they say, 'cast away the ring, it is diabolical.'"[145] When the woman's fearful parents complied, their daughter's epilepsy returned. Eventually, therefore, they reinitiated the ring treatment, and the young woman was restored to health for at least "a year or two."[146]

Like Napier, London's Royal College of Physicians recommended the use of jewelry to combat the falling sickness. They prescribed "Elks Claws or hoofs [as] a Sovereign remedy for the falling sickness."[147] "Though it be but worn in a ring," they professed, "much more being taken inwardly, but (saith Mizaldus) it must be the hoof of the right foot behind."[148] In other words, physicians similarly insisted that, in addition to ingesting the powder of an Elk's hoof, wearing a ring filled with that same powder might alleviate a patient's epilepsy.[149]

This use of cramp rings, of jewelry as cure more generally, underscores the quandary epilepsy—and other "invisible" impairments, too—posed for an early modern culture that wanted disability to be both explicit and verifiable. Following on Lindsey Row-Heyveld's nuanced argument, proscriptive ring-wearing testifies to deep cultural suspicions in the period—as well an associated theatrical tradition—that "disability is always inherently fraudulent."[150] Cramp rings attempted to remedy the anxious impasse of inscrutable impairment by offering treatment that distinctly marked otherwise unmarked, and thus unremarkable, bodyminds. As a method of countering unrecognizable disability and verifying its legitimacy, the ring's therapeutic power actually lay, more than anything else, in its purposeful signaling of difference. Cramp rings "worked," that is, by supposedly containing via cure the terrifying misrecognition all sorts of disabled bodyminds virtually guaranteed.

Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, like cramp ring treatments ironically do, openly admits the inevitable challenge of identifying impairment and safely containing human variation against constructions of normative embodiment. Indeed, the play portrays this possibility well into its final acts as Caesar's ghost, an indefinable, "monstrous apparition" (*JC* 4.3.328), appears to Brutus on the fields of Philippi. "Art thou any thing?" Brutus fearfully queries the ghost, "Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil / That mak'st my blood cold and my hair to stare? / Speak to me what thou art" (*JC* 4.3.329–32). Even in the declaration that it is "thy evil spirit, Brutus" (*JC* 4.3.333), this indeterminate being who is no "thing" affirms the play's preoccupation with difference that cannot be recognized or known. The conclusion of 4.3 drives home the fact of this anxious, ableist mandate as a worried, confused Brutus queries Lucius, Varrus, and Claudio, "Didst thou see anything" and "Saw you anything?" (*JC* 347, 353). To which they each reply in turn, "Nothing, my lord," "No, my lord, I saw nothing," and "Nor I, my lord" (*JC* 4.3.348, 354, 355).

Signified in the ghost of Caesar who is neither a god, an angel, nor a devil, as well as in the way the apparition is wholly indiscernible, Shakespeare's play dramatizes a failed fantasy of identification; disability remains indecipherable. It acknowledges and emphasizes an "overriding point" that Margrit Shildrick usefully posits: "indeterminacy and instability are not unique to the anomalous body but stand as the conditions of all corporeality in as much as the finality and integrity of the normative subject are merely features of a phantasmatic structure."[151] Put differently, the play overtly destabilizes this phantasmic structure of "normal"; for if disability cannot be marked on those who are impaired, how does one define ability? What is able-bodiedness if disable-bodiedness has no tangible form? In the Renaissance, at least, it means that difference might go unrecognized, and in this lack of recognition, be located anywhere. Maybe everywhere. Or as Cassius aptly puts it, perhaps "Caesar hath it not; but you and I / And honest Casca, we have the falling sickness" (*JC* 1.2.253–54).

Conclusion

In this chapter, readers learned about early modern ideologies of ability invested in concepts as diverse as human perfection, overcoming impairment, corporeal capacity, remarkable difference, and disability's discernibility. I also argued that these shaping ideologies subtended broader paradigms for conceptualizing atypicality in the period, specifically the moral and protomedical models of disability. Representations of epilepsy in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* especially helped illuminate these concomitant models and their potent norming effects. The drama likewise illustrated ability's privileged production against difference—and just how fragile that privilege becomes when disability refuses and refutes the signifying apprehension that enables ableism's construction.

Thus, though it might seem a bit counterintuitive, in *Caesar* we absolutely observe inklings of early modern disability gain, as I described in this book's introduction. Just above and much more so in the next chapter, critical critiques of Renaissance ideologies of ability begin to appear, critiques that comprehend disability's subversive power and potential. Certainly, one would never go so far as to say that Shakespeare's play offers robust evidence of disability desire or gain in the ways we noted of, say, Traherne's lyric poem celebrating deafness. Caesar's passing is motivated by deep, internalized ableism, and as I showed, the drama espouses numerous cultural ideologies that are equally oppressive.

But in *Julius Caesar*, Shakespearean drama nonetheless performs crucial resistance to the ableist status quo by staging epilepsy's indecipherability. Put differently, the play represents an early modern ideology of ability that mandates disability's discernibility; however, especially in Caesar's passing and in refusing the onstage portrayal of his epilepsy (unlike, for instance, in *Othello*), it ultimately rejects that diagnostic requirement. Surely, it enacts early modern cultural demands that disability be properly policed: made notable, verifiable, and hence regulatable. But as analysis of *Richard III* in chapter 2 further shows, it likewise engenders productive skepticism about the ableist prospect of ever really policing it. In the case of *Caesar*, early modern literature articulates the radical, confounding resistance that embodied difference poses for ability paradigms that require its visibility. In posing the leveling possibility that disability might not always be apprehensible, Shakespearean drama makes gains. It illuminates disability as the ghostly structure against which ability can only know itself. Ultimately, inscrutable difference productively haunts and threatens, undermining and deconstructing the able bodymind's tenuous privilege in a Renaissance cultural imagination that might only conceive of "normal" by successfully exposing "difference."

Two

Making Gains

In a book on disability, moreover one on early modern disability studies and literary histories, it might seem more than a bit cliché to write about one of literature's most infamous disabled characters: King Richard III of England (aka Richard, Duke of Gloucester),[1] the real-life murderous monarch of Shakespeare's long-celebrated history play whose "deformed" body supposedly testifies to his corrupt soul. In a disability studies context, Robert McRuer explains that, alongside Tiny Tim, Richard III is "one of the two most despised characters in literature."[2] Even more, McRuer continues, "the distaste for Richard in disability studies is not particularly difficult to comprehend, given the ways in which his 'monstrous' body logically explains his monstrous deeds. His 'deformity' is, in other words, generally causally connected to his evil machinations."[3] Pace McRuer, this deeply entrenched reading of Richard III constructs him as nothing more than a trite emblem of the moral model of disability I discussed in the previous chapter. Richard is bad. His body says so. And God is clearly punishing him for some innate wickedness. Thus, one might further contend that writing about Richard is not only cliché, but ill advised—perhaps he is not the best exemplar for the kind of book on early modern disability gain I am purporting to offer here.

While I appreciate the value of these sentiments, both recent scholarship and the discovery of the *actual* King Richard III's body under a parking lot in central England suggest there is much more to this overly simplified story.[4] Indeed, considering Richard via some new disability (re)orientations[5] clarifies key ideas from chapter 1 about powerful norming models of disability operating in early modern England. It also productively vexes that argument by illuminating how Renaissance literature—drama performed both then and now—absolutely resists those stigmatizing models to instead communicate disability's *positive function* as a phenomenological tool and epistemic resource.[6] In short, chapter 2 initially provides an extended look at representations of Richard's bodymind as, surely, various kinds of moral failing, but also as a confounding medical artifact to be empirically scrutinized and made diagnostically discernible. We then turn to both old and new performances of *Richard III* that showcase how staging impairment can invite key counterpoints to that ableism and produce radical disability agency even in the face of ideologies that aim to make disability always decipherable, disciplinable, and hence disappearable. This chapter moves in due course from premodern disability understood as immoral, stigmatizing, pathological, and generally undesirable toward disability as an essentially enabling ontology and epistemology. Ultimately, beholding Richard III in these new ways further solidifies evidence of desires *for* disability in English Renaissance texts and testifies to the ways disability can prompt experiential gestalts, produce crip phenomenologies, and create important, alternative modes of understanding the world.

Moralizing Richard

In Ato Quayson's foundational text on disability and narrative, *Aesthetic Nervousness*, he outlines a narrative typology of disability signification across literature. These types function, of course, as representational attempts to "make sense" of disability. Among other things, Quayson tells us that disability serves in stories as (a) a moral test for nondisabled characters; (b) an interface with otherness (e.g., across race, class, sexuality, and social identity); (c) a reflection of moral deficit; and (d) a source of enigmatic tragic insight.[7] While Quayson makes his case via modern and postmodern literature, Shakespeare's *Richard III* absolutely employs disability to these figurative ends.[8] Most obviously, and as noted just above, Richard's character functions as a moral deficit metaphor: he is the consummate disabled villain, an emblem of immorality. He embodies what a moral (or religious) model of disability imagines as the direct equation of impairment and sin; as Queen Margaret puts it in 1.3 of the play: "Sin, death, and hell have set their marks on him, / And all their ministers attend on him" (*R3* 291–92).[9] Even Gloucester's own mother, the Duchess of York, joins this refrain, lamenting her son's complicity in his own depravity; "He is my son, ay," she confesses, "and therein my shame; / Yet from my dugs he drew not this deceit" (*R3* 2.2.29–30). These various playtextual moments, alongside many others, narrate Richard as at once responsible for his own supposed monstrosity—his immorality makes him a monster—and also a testament to God's righteous power to know human evil and affirm it on the body.

In *Richard III*, Gloucester's character likewise comes to signify as a crucial moral test for nondisabled characters. The drama offers the (in)famous wooing scene of act 1 as a classic narration of this moral trial, albeit the scene is never interpreted this way in scholarship on the play. In 1.2, Lady Anne and Gloucester face off over the open-coffined corpse of her dead husband, Henry VI, recently killed by Gloucester's own hand. Furious and reeling with grief, Anne vociferously indicts her husband's murderer. "Thou lump of foul deformity, / . . . Thy deed, inhuman and unnatural, / Provokes this deluge supernatural" (*R3* 1.2.57–61), she curses him; "earth gape open wide and eat him quick / As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood, / which this hell-governed arm hath butchered" (*R3* 1.2.65–67). In this moment, Anne calls negative attention to Gloucester's arm explicitly and literally; like the female characters I note just above, she too metaphorizes that "hell-governed arm" as a clear sign of the devil's work and God's displeasure manifested on Richard's body.

As the scene progresses and Gloucester's wooing intensifies, however, Anne's venom slowly morphs from utter disdain to lukewarm assent. Her scorn and hatred for Richard diffuse over the course of stichomythic banter and dazzling rhetorical exchanges that, in the end, result in her accepting both Gloucester's advances and his ring. While surely Anne hates Richard because he has killed her late husband, her loathing is nevertheless, and crucially, directed at a disabled man. In this scene, the drama establishes Richard's atypical habitus, one Anne overtly scorns both literally and metaphorically, as an apt container for her hate. The play conflates her dislike of his persona with her dislike of his person. This conflation means, however, that any concessions Anne makes around humoring, forgiving, maybe even liking Richard are equally concessions around humoring, forgiving, maybe even liking his atypical embodiment. In other words, the scene stages not just the strange process of Lady Anne's transformative wooing[10] but her distinct grappling with Gloucester's disability. "With all my heart," she concedes at the close of 1.2, "and much it joys me, too, / To see you are become so penitent" (*R3* 207–8). "I do mistake my person all this while," Richard sarcastically marvels of Anne's about-face, "Upon my life she finds, although I cannot, / Myself to be a marv'lous proper man" (*R3* 1.2.240–41). While one could indeed counter that Anne's acquiescence at the scene's close is nothing more than lip service to an inevitable fate, it still represents an allowance and compromise in which she effectively signs on to Richard, to both his body and soul. Her final acknowledgment of his even seeming penitence implies that she has perhaps misread—in ableist stigma—Richard as wholly immoral. Anne's consent to marriage and her willingness to "grant [Richard] this boon" (*R3* 1.2.206) are thus a kind of moral highroad in which she (even meagerly) forgives him his sins, actions, and inherent disability depravity, and hence passes the drama's moral test of her good character.

In addition to presenting disability as moral trial, Shakespeare's *Richard III* functions as a way for audiences to interface with other sorts of "otherness." That is, spectators witness Gloucester's disability primarily as a way to conceive of his nonnormative, perhaps even queer, sexuality. Take, for example, the opening monologue of the play in which Gloucester outlines his keen difference from post–War of the Roses soldiers-turned-courtiers and their "son of York" who "instead of mounting barbed steeds / To fright the souls of fearful adversaries, / . . . capers nimbly in a lady's chamber / To the lascivious pleasing of a lute" (*R3* 1.1.2, 10–13). Here, "Richard's seduction of his audience," explains McRuer, "culminates with a wink toward Edward's heterosexual prowess."[11] Gloucester's titillating opener with its overt resistance to "sportive tricks," "amorous looking-glass[es]," and "love's majesty" (*R3* 1.1.14–16) alludes to the way "perversions of the heterosexual and familial excess . . . are afoot."[12] I concur with McRuer that Richard indeed is "a misfit in a time that apparently delights in beautiful and fashionable images"; he "hates the future portended by the son of York on the throne and villainously chooses to eschew the vacuous sunny disposition—and tiresome celebrations of heterosexuality in general—that the times demand."[13]

The beginning forty lines of *Richard III* deploy disability so that spectators, now and in the Renaissance too, can encounter deformed, unfinished, lame, and halting masculinity as well. Gloucester, "descant[ing] on [his] own deformity" (*R3* 1.1.27), directly informs spectators of his disinterest in both the compulsory heterosexuality and "young, valiant, wise, and no doubt royal" manliness of an Edward IV or Henry VI (*R3* 1.2.231). He proclaims to be nothing like these "sweeter," "lovelier" gentlemen who are "framed in the prodigality of nature" (*R3* 1.2.229, 230). Gloucester's determination to "prove a villain / And hate idle pleasures of these days" (*R3* 1.1.31–32) foregrounds so-called deformity but also its dialectical relationship to "proper" masculinity and heterofuturity. Mirroring Quayson's assessment of disability as an entry point to otherness, Richard's explicit discourse on impairment begins to expose what McRuer calls the "laughable ruse" of normative masculinity as well as its attendant, ableist fantasy of a future in which "health, beauty, and ability will last forever and . . . children will somehow guarantee this."[14]

As I have outlined, Shakespeare represents a disabled Gloucester as a moral deficit, ethical test, and encounter with otherness. The king likewise is imagined in the play as the figurative embodiment of "disability as inarticulable and enigmatic tragic insight."[15] Act 5, scene 5 serves as an illuminating example of this representational iteration, especially insofar as Richard's nightmare therein becomes a formal conduit to "the sense of tragic ethos that saturates the [world] in which [he] finds [himself]."[16] "My conscience hath a thousand several tongues," the king laments, "And every tongue brings in a several tale, / And every tale condemns me for a villain" (*R3* 5.3.147–49). Waking out of a horrible dream in which his "coward conscience" (*R3* 5.3.133) afflicts him deeply, Richard expresses tragic knowledge—as well as the burden of that tragic knowledge[17]—but in a frantic torrent of confused self-queries that foreshadow his imminent murder in the name of national justice: "What do I fear," he asks, "Myself / There's none else by. / Richard loves Richard; that is, I am I" (*R3* 5.3.136–37). Grappling with his sordid actions throughout the play, Richard ruminates on his conflicted conscience in disarticulated fragments that leave spectators baffled by this enigmatic character limping his way to certain death. Richard cannot nearly express the full extent of his realizations as he debates these misdeeds: "I rather hate myself / For hateful deeds committed by myself. / I am a villain. Yet I lie: I am not" (*R3* 5.3.143–45). In this instance and as Quayson might offer, revelation of the drama's sad ethos coincides with the disabled Richard's "inability to speak of the terrible tragic knowledge to which [he bears] witness. All that is left is a series of fragmented enactments of the self, posing an enigma for the characters around [him] as well as for the reader and spectator."[18]

Diagnosing Richard

These disembodied, extremely figurative renderings of a Shakespearean Richard III with hunched back and withered arm collide with the material world when examined in the context of an unexpected discovery in an unassuming spot in modern-day Leicester, England. More precisely, the ghostly, historical Richard of the play's original performance, probably in 1592 or 1593,[19] gets fleshed out, if you will, when we consider that a team of archeologists from the University of Leicester uncovered the grave of the *real* Richard III, king of England, in 2012. The grave site, long ago the medieval Grey Friars friary, served in modernity as a parking lot for the Leicester City Council Social Services, and to much excitement turned out to be Richard III's long-lost burial place. Within a year of the discovery of the skeleton, scientists had identified with certainty—via techniques such as radiocarbon dating, isotopic analysis, and mitochondrial DNA testing—that the buried bones indeed belonged to Richard III.[20] Since then, historians, literary scholars, fans, and detractors alike have speculated about the impact of this discovery on lore surrounding a king traditionally deemed a cruel killer "determined to prove a villain / and hate the idle pleasures of these days" (*R3* 1.1.30–31).

As suggested above, this chapter is keenly interested in how, long after his death and now in his resurrection, Richard III's body has been much more than pure disability metaphor. Renaissance writers and historians from Thomas More to Edward Hall, Raphael Holinshed to William Shakespeare obsessed over Richard III's literal, physical habitus, not unlike modern archeologists, historians, and doctors at the University of Leicester who have dedicated an entire website to the latest Richardian news.[21] As the excavation unfolded, they posted online in near real-time not just Plantagenet history and biographical tidbits, but a thorough, scientific assessment of Richard III's body. Among other things, they outlined the processes that helped confirm the king's bones and offered detailed empirical findings and painstaking evidentiary descriptions of Richard III's skeletal remains. What follows is an example of that data at length:

> The skeleton is in good condition apart from the feet, which are missing as a result of later disturbance, some of which was recorded to within 90 mm of the skeleton's lower limbs. There was no evidence of substantial post-mortem bone displacement, and the position of the vertebrae in the ground clearly reflected their position in life and was not a product of the awkward burial position. . . . The individual is male, with a gracile build, in his late 20s to late 30s, compatible with Richard's known age at death of 32. He had severe idiopathic adolescent-onset scoliosis. This may have been progressive and would have put additional strain on the heart and lungs, possibly causing shortness of breath and pain, although not all scoliosis sufferers experience pain from their condition. Unaffected by scoliosis, he would have stood around 5ft 8 in (1.73 m) tall, above average height for a medieval man, though his apparent height might have decreased as he grew older and his disability may have lifted his right shoulder higher than his left. This is consistent with the few contemporary reports of Richard III's physical appearance.[22]

Ostensibly in the name of scientific validation, the authors retroactively extrapolate and catalog the "condition" of Richard III's living body: male, aged twenty to thirty, slender, above-average height but for scoliosis evidenced by true-to-life vertebral positioning and consistency with various early modern characterizations. As this acute summary attests, barely second in importance behind confirming that the buried bones belong to Richard III is the discovery that the king was, indeed, congenitally disabled. His skeleton provokes examination and diagnosis, in other words, as if one might finally uncover the "real" Richard III by scrutinizing his "real" body.

In a kind of uncanny anticipation of the Leicester excavation, one finds in Shakespeare's *Richard III* not just variations on disability metaphor like those outlined above, but the intensely material pathologizing of Richard's physical health through early modern scientific discourse, something that does much to transmit and shape our understanding of the last Yorkist king—and moreover, our understanding of disability in Renaissance England. Like *Julius Caesar* in the last chapter, *Richard III* illuminates a quite complex construction of early modern disability, especially as it verifies how disability would have signified in definitive material terms, not just figurative—à la moral—ones. Following Katherine Schaap Williams's useful suggestion, we indeed need to "recognize that configurations of 'disability' in the period include a *variety* of attitudes towards bodily difference" (my emphasis).[23] Put a bit differently, I want to suggest that our more conventional characterizations of Richard via early modern literary and cultural histories have somewhat willfully ignored his *actual* body in the face of the figurative work that atypical body might do. This in fact happens even in live performances, where the physical enactment of Richard's disability on stage (notably, usually by able-bodied actors) is often mobilized primarily in the name of metaphorical maneuvers like those we perceived through Quayson's useful typology. In other words, myriad readings and performances of *Richard III* have intentionally forced the play's protagonist to pass through history in an able body—mostly to keep on figuratively disabling him. Furthermore, by supposing that Richard is able-bodied and only crafted in the narrative as deformed to sustain Tudor legend or properly embody the medieval Vice tradition,[24] we have authorized the notion of disability foremost as metaphor and perpetuated a discursive legacy of stigmatic correspondence between monstrous exteriority and immoral interiority.[25]

The discovery of King Richard's congenital deformity should give us pause, then, and encourage a reassessment of the ways we have come to understand his disabilities. In exploring Richard III's body as quite material and hence less heavily symbolic,[26] one of the earliest representations of Richard, offered in John Roas's *History of England* (1490), might serve not just as metaphorical slander but also as pragmatic description of an anomalous birth: Richard was "retained within his mother's womb for two years and emerg[ed] with teeth and hair to his shoulders."[27] Likewise, Edward Hall's claim that "He was little of stature, eiuill featured of limnes, croke backed, the left shoulder muche higher than the righte"[28] reads not necessarily as a marker of Richard's moral waywardness but as a precise cataloguing of Richard's health and wellness, maybe not so different from the modern-day Leicester account cited in the pages above.

Moreover, it is not as if Renaissance individuals with scoliosis or spinal curvatures were relegated strictly to the figurative realm of mystery, portent, or prodigy.[29] As Kathleen Y. Moen and Alf L. Nachemson illuminate, while individuals in the early Middle Ages indeed perceived spinal deformity as divine retribution, that understanding changed significantly in the English Renaissance as physicians such as Ambroise Paré defined congenital scoliosis for the first time and "appreciated spinal cord compression as a possible cause of paraplegia."[30] Early modern physicians speculated that poor posture could cause spinal injury and even suggested various treatments to reverse the impairment. Paré specifically "advocated the use of iron corsets fabricated by armorers, in addition to axial traction," and closely considered how growth might have related to curvature progression, "recommend[ing] new breast plates to be made every 3 months for growing individuals" (see fig. 1).[31]

These early modern diagnoses and treatment plans, not unlike our contemporary medical and rehabilitation models, treat disability as disease in need of a cure.[32] Indeed in *Richard III*, discourse around the king's nonnormative physiognomy consistently works toward establishing global norms for human development, health, and wellness, norms that might be traced back to gestation or the moment of one's birth. Shakespeare's play acutely employs an early modern medical model of disability, one of the "multiconflictual ideologies of disability"[33] I have identified as operating in the period. The play imagines early modern playgoers who were not reading Richard's body solely as monstrous and malevolent,[34] but were scientifically noting, marking, and delineating how his habitus deviated from (perhaps their own) typical, healthy embodiment.

If one rethinks Richard's representation in Shakespeare as reflecting a nascent medical model of disability, *Richard III* certainly begins to seem less like a monster movie and more like a physician's log. Far more overt and visible than *Caesar*'s epilepsy, the clinical recording of Richard's corporeal distinctiveness begins even beyond the drama proper in *an entirely other* play, *3 Henry VI*, when Gloucester describes his own birth. In terms of plot: just prior, King Henry has reviled Richard by recounting all the omens that sur-

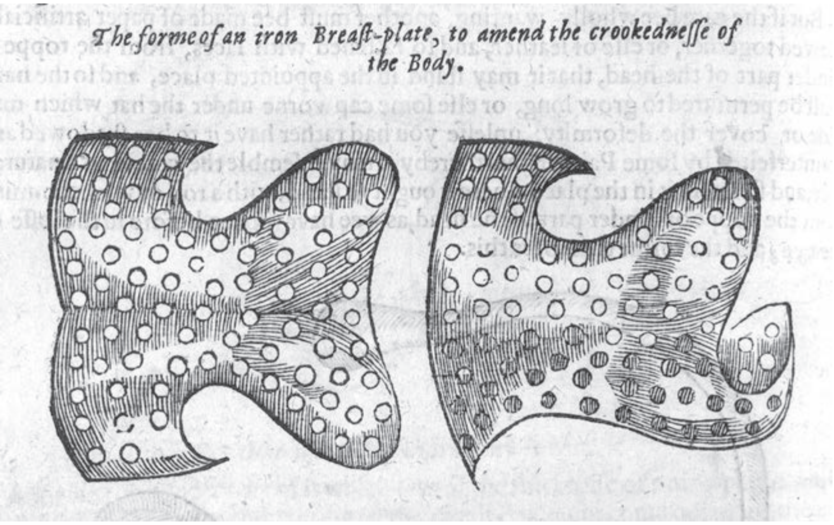
The forme of an iron Breaſt-plate, to amend the crookedneſſe of the Body.

Fig. 1. “The forme of an iron breast-plate, to amend the crookednesse of the Body.” Ambroise Paré, *Workes*, 1634. Dddd6v.
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rounded Richard’s ominous moment of parturition. “The owl shriek’d at thy birth,” Henry recalls, “an evil sign”:

> The night-crow cried, aboding luckless time;
> Dogs howl’d, and hideous tempest shook down trees;
> The raven rook’d her on the chimney’s top,
> And chattering pies in dismal discords sung.
> Thy mother felt more than a mother’s pain,
> And, yet brought forth less than a mother’s hope,
> To wit, an indigested and deformed lump,
> Not like the fruit of such a goodly tree. (*3 Henry VI* 5.6.44–52)

Here Henry outlines a series of “evil sign[s]” that occurred simultaneously, none of which actually address the material circumstances of Gloucester’s birth at all: in “the hour that ever [Richard] wast born” (*3H6* 5.6.43), owls shrieked, crows cried, dogs howled, and trees fell.[35] While Henry’s portrayal eventually attests to the baby Richard as “an indigested and deformed lump” whose head was filled with teeth when he was born (*3H6* 5.6.51, 53), his primary concern is in interpreting supposedly portentous auspices as a means of defaming the Yorks and cursing the "luckless time" (*3H6* 5.6.43) that is bound to follow on a rightful king's imminent death.

Gloucester's record stands in direct opposition to Henry's, who admits forecasting as his primary intent in these final, desperate moments in the Tower before he dies—"thus I prophesy" (*3H6* 5.6.37), Henry intones moments before Richard murders him. By contrast, Gloucester describes his shape and birth history as material markers of difference that constitute somatic uniqueness. After stabbing King Henry, Richard declares, "I have no brother, I am like no brother; / And this word 'love,' which graybeards call divine, / Be resident in men like one another / And not in me: *I am myself alone*" (*3H6* 5.6.81–84, my italics). In an extended monologue, Richard emphasizes his literal physical habitus and the anomalous presentation of his body at birth to code his impairments as crucial singularity:

> For I have often heard my mother say
> I came into the world with my legs forward:
> Had I not reason, think ye, to make haste,
> And seek their ruin that usurp'd our right?
> The midwife wonder'd and the women cried
> "O, Jesus bless us, he is born with teeth!"
> And so I was; which plainly signified
> That I should snarl and bite and play the dog.
> Then, since the heavens have shaped my body so,
> Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it. (*3H6* 5.6.70–79)[36]

Certainly, Richard's speech plays on how even as a youth his "crooked" body "plainly signified" as a penchant for evil, but his discourse is far more deliberately embodied than Henry's. The literal material status of his body—early teething and breech birth—mark disability difference as empowering, not stigmatizing, and his atypical traits matter far more than the supposed portentousness attributed to those unique physical characteristics.

Interestingly, close attention to Gloucester's teeth in particular resurfaces in *Richard III* when the young Duke of York engages in a conversation with his grandam regarding the transformation of children into adults. Even as the Duchess explains to the boy in 2.4 that "it is good to grow" (*R3* 9), the young York presses her about the correct and expected pace of that human development. "Small herbs have grace," he remembers his uncle Gloucester telling him, "gross weeds do grow apace" (*R3* 2.4.13). Defending his own typical progress into manhood, York counters with the story of Richard's extraordinary birth and stunningly rapid growth as a child: "Marry, they say my uncle grew so fast / That he could gnaw a crust at two hours old. / 'Twas full two years ere *I* could get a tooth" (*R3* 2.4.27–29, my italics). Though his comment serves to further disparage Richard, to verify that he was in fact "the wreched'st thing when he was young" (*R3* 2.4.18), it also offers rhetorical confirmation that disability in late sixteenth-century England could be defined medically according to standards of anatomical normalcy. Surely, as Mark Thornton Burnett has argued, the tale of Richard's teething cites conventional medieval wisdom that labeled children born with teeth as "divine prognosticators of such calamities as pestilence and famine,"[37] and hence the recounting of this strange tale figures Richard's disabled body in mythological proportions. The story of his "gnawing" has clearly been told more than once: "they say," begins York, reiterating a narrative about his uncle's childhood that clearly already circulates among his family. Richard's monstrousness, signified in his strangely present baby teeth, is affirmed again and again in the telling and retelling of the story of his miraculous birth.

On the other hand, though, the toothy Richard is defined by medical abnormality and against explicit norms of physical ability. Somewhat paradoxically, his capacity to "gnaw" at such a young age is understood not as an uncanny capability but as a terrifying bodily flaw. Symptomatic of both disease and genetic malformation, the fact that he "had his teeth before his eyes" (*R3* 4.4.49) pathologizes his unfit body as differing from expected biological progression: "my uncle grew so fast" (*R3* 2.4.28). In taking up the tale of baby Richard, the Duke of York compares Gloucester's deviant embodiment and unusual growth patterns to his own "normal" ones; again, and importantly, York notes, "'Twas full two years ere *I* could get a tooth" (*R3* 2.4.29, my italics). In a vein strikingly resonant with a contemporary medical model of disability, the young duke employs normalizing early modern medical discourse around teething to highlight fundamental differences between his physiology and Richard's.

As Hannah Newton notes, teething and illness often were conflated in the early modern period; illness resulting from teething included swelling of the gums and jaws, fevers, cramps, and other infirmities.[38] She further suggests that "teething caused disease by bringing pain," and the pain "unsettled the humoral balance of the body by heating and augmenting the hot humours, choler and blood."[39] The stark comparison York offers in this scene figures Richard as physically deviant, even subhuman, and likewise prone to disease and disorder.[40] With too-soon teeth and yet a body "So long a-growing, and so leisurely" (*R3* 2.4.19), Gloucester fails to conform to normative standards of development and wellness. York contrasts his own body, one that cuts teeth appropriately at age two, against Richard's; his is the model of health and ability to which Richard's atypical anatomy might never conform.[41]

The drama's opening soliloquy in which Gloucester famously "descant[s] on [his] own deformity" (*R3* 1.1.27) is further evidence of the play's investment in a protomedical model of disability that prescribes proper health and development so as to make visible any deviance from those norms. Playing to the sympathies of a captive audience, Richard bemoans his impairment as well as its defaming force. How cruel, he laments, to be "curtailed of this fair proportion, / Cheated of feature by dissembling nature / Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time / Into this breathing world scarce half made up" (*R3* 1.1.18–21). Most often, this scene is read as the play's initial, figurative conflation of deformity and sin. For instance, as Ian Frederick Moulton argues, "Richard's physical abnormality—his monstrosity—obtains inwardly as well as outwardly . . . His physical monstrosity manifests itself as social monstrosity."[42]

As I have been suggesting, though, Richard's language in this passage likewise reflects the weight and influence of scientific discourse. According to the soon-to-be king, a "dissembling nature" (*R3* 1.1.19) has abandoned its appropriate temporal trajectory, sending him into the world "before [his] time" (*R3* 1.1.20). Part and parcel with Richard's abnormal growth course in which his teeth come before his eyes, his limping body, "so [lame] and unfashionable" (*R3* 1.1.22), is unfit in great part due to its fundamental untimeliness. As Richard proclaims himself "deformed," "unfinished," and "half made up," he describes a faulty, hence failed, biological specimen that appeared in the world before it should. His lamentation invokes a pitiful, medicalizing counterdiscourse in which physical variations are not only symbols of divinity or monstrosity but impairments with very real, material consequences: even dogs bark at Richard as he "halt[s] by them" (*R3* 1.1.23). Richard's descant offers disability as superstitious portent but also gross pathology. He describes his disfigurement as visible, empirical evidence of a highly anomalous physiology that fails to meet socially sanctioned norms for health, wellness, and even happiness.

Phenomenal Invisibility

As readers have learned thus far in *Beholding Disability*, atypical bodyminds in Renaissance England were made meaningful, as they are now, but often not on their own terms. Among other modes of meaning-making, variant embodiment was both moralized and pathologized. In a protomedical model of disability especially, bodyminds were asked to measure up to and oblige norms driven by ableist logics invested in health and wellness. Moreover, and as the latter half of chapter 1 particularly illuminated, these various schemata for interpreting disability betrayed deep desires in early modern culture to mark material variation on bodies so as to register, systematize, and discipline that variation. More precisely, a protomedical model of disability pathologized and stigmatized impaired bodyminds by legibly prescribing disability on them, so as to ultimately eradicate disability via cure or extermination.

Paradoxically and perhaps somewhat stunningly, the close, observant scrutiny of disability we have encountered throughout these initial pages—the marking and interrogating of human variation as undesirable difference—actually enacts a kind of disability *erasure*. As Henri-Jacques Stiker fittingly explains it, ableist logics and paradigms such as medical and moral models of disability designate disabled people "in order to [make them] disappear, they are spoken in order to be silenced."[43] This contradictory *invisible visibility* of disabled people is an effect of what Margrit Shildrick terms "normalization strategies that cover over difference."[44] Stated more basically: disabled people—both early modern and contemporary—are surveilled and policed by myriad disciplining mechanisms, yet the same people are often utterly unrecognized. Disabled bodyminds are effaced by metaphorical oversignification or made momentarily material only in the name of remedy, purging pathological difference to reinscribe normalcy.

Via further analysis of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, we will explore this phenomenon, but with an important twist. I am particularly interested in how early modern normalization strategies that aim to efface disability difference can be productively harnessed by the very bodyminds they aim to contain, and furthermore, pace Evan Choate, even grant them "privileged access to the very normative order from which [they are] supposedly excluded."[45] As readers will find in the rest of this chapter, King Richard anticipates and strategically deploys the possibility that disability, while it invites constant inspection and interpretation, produces *useful invisibility* that enables his rise to power. "Richard's disability," as Lindsey Row-Heyveld argues, "is threatening because of its very performativity. . . . It opens up the possibility of a version of disability that resists the restrictive definitions that English social policy attempted to impose on it."[46] Choate takes this line of thinking a step further, suggesting that Richard's deformity opens up the "conception of capacity itself" and "underwrit[es] emergent notions of normativity themselves."[47] Put another way, Richard's relation to his own physical distinctiveness illuminates crucial fault lines in both early modern constructions of so-called normalcy and in a bolstering ideology of ability insistent on disability's decipherability. One encounters in Gloucester's character a story of *disability gain* in which an—ultimately illegible—disabled body, ironically erased by the insistent demand that it signifies, instead functions as an artful phenomenological and epistemological tool.

Throughout *Richard III*, as already noted, the play registers the king's disability through seemingly readily observable indicators: Richard's hunchback and atypical arm identify him as a "poisonous bunch-backed toad" (*R3* 1.3.244). Similarly, and again in *3 Henry VI*, Gloucester himself systematically records a series of "symptoms" and impairments afflicting his body. He complains of an arm "like a withered shrub," "an envious mountain on my back," and "legs of an unequal size" (*3H6* 3.2.156–59). Too, in *Richard III*, he is "rudely stamped" (*R3* 1.1.16) and "misshapen thus" (*R3* 1.3.237). He is "made up . . . so lamely and unfashionable" (*R3* 1.1.21–22), you will recall, that he "halts" (*R3* 1.3.237) as he walks. In fact, whether Gloucester is described in moral terms as "A cockatrice . . . / Whose unavoided eye is murderous" (*R3* 4.1.54–55) or in more medical terms as a "lump of foul deformity" (*R3* 1.2.57), his disability is imagined as highly legible. In contrast to Katherine Schaap Williams's assertion that "Shakespeare's play differs from other texts in refusing to specify the exact details of Richard's form,"[48] I contend that the differences that mark Gloucester as disabled seem always decipherable, at least purportedly so, insofar as they are written directly on his monstrous body just waiting to be discerned.[49]

Indeed, one notices throughout *Richard III* that characters are overwhelmingly engaged in the activity of reading Richard's body and, moreover, reading it *right*. As we similarly saw with the University of Leicester archeologists, everyone wants to precisely interpret both Gloucester's person and persona to avoid "false intelligence or wrong surmise" (*R3* 2.1.55). In a nervous debate with Lord Stanley and the Bishop of Ely in 3.4 of the play, the loyal but misguided Lord Hastings contends that this interpretive project should be fairly easy, because "there's never a man in Christendom / Can lesser hide his love or hate than [Gloucester], / For by his face straight shall you know his heart" (*R3* 48–53). In these lines, Hastings affirms the notion that Richard's outside—in this case, his visage—speaks directly to his inside.[50] Hastings, in other words, follows the hopeful, ableist logic of both medical and moral models, averring that disabled bodyminds can be distinctly recognized and aptly deciphered.

Richard seems to acutely comprehend this desire that other characters have to read him right, and he employs it to his distinct advantage, ironically according his impairments direct disability signification. Take, for example, 3.4, when Richard barges onto the stage in a fury asking what might be done to those "that do conspire my death with devilish plots / Of damnèd witchcraft, and that have prevailed / Upon my body with their hellish charms?" (*R3* 60–62). In this heated scene, Gloucester calls explicit attention to his impaired arm so that his political cronies from Ely to Hastings to Buckingham can all lay eyes on, in his words, "the witness of [his enemies'] evil" (*R3* 3.4.67). "Look how I am bewitched!," he cries out to them:

> Behold mine arm
> Is like a blasted sapling withered up;
> And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous witch,
> Consorted with that harlot, strumpet Shore,
> That by their witchcraft thus have markèd me. (*R3* 3.4.68–72)

In this key passage, Gloucester provides his potential allies with a digestible disability metaphor: a story about his disabled body as produced by perverted forces outside his influence. One way to make my difference mean, he offers them, is as the result of supernatural mischief beyond my control. Wicked women out to get me, he narrates, have sealed my physical—and spiritual—fate through wholly unnatural, grossly malevolent means.

Clearly, in this moment Gloucester is deliberately performing early modern cultural demands for both disability decipherability and signification, and to his own savvy ends. His cursed body with its telltale arm "like a blasted sapling withered up" is a product of a fate that is much bigger than his own—and one that thus lets him off the hook for any inevitable misdeeds that follow. Furthermore, other characters' unspoken affirmation in this scene that Gloucester's disability is not his own fault testifies to their willful collusion in the inescapable, failed future that is "bloody Richard" and "Miserable England" (*R3* 3.4.103). In other words, Richard delivers the sad story of his anomalous body—a story everyone so desperately wants—into the hands of his compatriots and, in so doing, entails them not just as allies but as accomplices and coconspirators. Their fate, like his, is written on his disfigured body.

In addition to proffering possible narratives about his withered arm and hunched back, Richard makes the related, usefully duplicitous argument that his body is indeed an easy read and hence both stable and authentic in this signification. Feigning insult over his implication in "dissentious rumors" that fill the ears of King Edward, Gloucester professes to be a "plain man" of "simple truth" (*R3* 1.3.51, 52). "They do me wrong, and I will not endure it!," he protests:

> Because I cannot flatter and look fair,
> Smile in men's faces, smooth, deceive, and cog,
> Duck with French nods and apish courtesy,
> I must be held a rancorous enemy.
> Cannot a plain man live and think no harm,
> But thus his simple truth must be abused
> With silken, sly, insinuating jacks? (*R3* 1.3.47–53)

In this passage, Gloucester proclaims impairment as engendering absolute genuineness; in fact, it turns out, it is *normalcy* that enables falseness. A lack of "fairness" precipitates Gloucester's inability to disingenuously smile and smooth. Unlike the able body that can deceive and cog, his unique body signifies in a legible, singular, straightforward manner, much as the gullible Hastings had wrongly assumed. In the above lines, Richard again plays on the ableist logic that impairment can and must be decipherable, suggesting that typical, "fair," beautiful bodies are far more manipulable in ways that would obscure clear signification. For a moment here in 1.3, it is not the disabled body that is so desperately fraught with possible meanings, but the able one.

Throughout *Richard III*, this ongoing attention to the readability, and *un*readability, of Gloucester's bodymind invites spectators to consider how Richard is rendered illegible even as the play primarily attunes characters and playgoers to the project of making him knowable. It appears, in other words, that the more Richard and his embodiment are made discernible throughout the drama, the less clear they actually become. As the play progresses, Gloucester's disabled habitus comes to contain so many possibilities for meaning that it actually fades from view. As Schaap Williams puts it, Richard's body almost seems to disappear as the play progresses.[51] This happens insofar as the precise body that prompts such intense attention from everyone, in the end, is erased by oversignification. "Richard's body," she further illuminates, "becomes rhetorically identified with oozy contagion, social corruption, bestiality, divine judgment and prophetic ciphers of English history."[52] Monstrosities or maladies, portents or pathologies, Richard's impairments are vehicles for meaning-making such that his bodily materiality becomes immaterial except as signifying means to some other end.

Far more importantly, though, what if—as the examples above surely attest—Richard *knows* this is the case? So, it is not just that Richard knows his body must be made meaningful, and he cunningly manipulates those discursive possibilities; it is that he knows that that process of signification actually renders him invisible. Put differently, Richard enacts in Shakespeare's play a kind of disability gain: in this case, he performs the possibility of becoming what Lady Anne calls an indecipherable "dissembler" (*R3* 1.2.172). "Richard's performance of disability," Schaap Williams confirms, "confounds the desire for interpretive certainty that other characters express when they call attention to his bodily features."[53] Crucially, this Shakespearean character lives disability from the inside, and his experience produces subjugated knowledge hyperattuned to the ableist fictions that surveil and constrain him, ironically, by aiming to make him meaningful. This means that the stories Richard tells about his own body—and hence about how meaning gets written onto impairment—are fictions meant to mask, for Machiavellian purposes, the far more complex processes of signification that disability actually, and inevitably, invokes. In short, Richard recognizes his audiences' demand for disability signification and exploits the paradoxical possibility of illegibility that it accords.[54]

In Francis Bacon's famous essay "Of Deformity" (1625), the philosopher clarifies this oxymoronic *im*perceptible perceptibility, describing the way "all *Deformed Persons*, are extreme Bold" insofar as disfigurement "layeth their Competitours and Emulatours asleepe; As never beleeving, they should be in possibility of advancement, till they see them in Possession."[55] Bacon's well-known treatise often is cited as evidence of the moral model of disability that, predictably, conflates deformity and sin. "Deformed persons are commonly even with nature; for as nature hath done ill by them," writes Bacon, "so do they by nature; being for the most part (as the Scripture saith) void of natural affection; and so they have their revenge of nature."[56] This innate immorality makes them "good Spialls, and good Whisperers; [rather] then good Magistrates and Officers," deceivers who typically "watch and observe the weakness of others."[57] That said, Bacon concedes that a vengeful attitude is not always the case; while all so-called deformed people "seek to free themselves from scorn," they may do so "either by virtue or malice; and therefore let it not be marvelled, if sometimes they prove excellent persons."[58]

More crucial here than Bacon's debate over the true "spirit" and "reason" of impaired individuals, however, is his notion that "*Deformity* is an Advantage to Rising."[59] For Bacon, Michael Torrey notes, deformity disarms others such that "physiognomical sign and psychological symptom are thus transformed into a kind of beneficial camouflage."[60] The more Richard is described both by himself and others in the play as bewitched, bestial, depraved, and divine (among other things), the more his body actually *loses* meaning—and Richard harnesses that "beneficial camouflage" to his advantage as he makes his ascent to the throne. Richard's notable disability actually promotes useful, shadowy obscurity. His scrutiny by others actually invokes artful indistinction.

Per Bacon, Shakespeare's *Richard III* specifically entails his so-called deformity as a phenomenological tool that "is an Advantage to [his] Rising." Indeed, Schaap Williams further avers, Richard "recognizes the possibilities for manipulating these competing interpretations [of his embodiment] because they presume legible impairment and a static model of deformity signified by the expected hump."[61] In other words, even as Gloucester pretends his body offers spectators interpretative certainty, he knows it ultimately delivers precisely the opposite. Geoffrey Johns concurs that "Richard's great ability then, is his aptitude for deflection and guile, an ability uniquely afforded to him by his physical difference . . . as well as the seemingly infinite mutability of both his body and his character."[62]

Richard III thus offers an instance of early modern disability gain wherein an atypical bodymind embodies, produces, and artfully engages its material and hermeneutic qualities in ways that an able bodymind expressly cannot. Invisible visibility is a distinct phenomenological stratagem that the king craftily deploys to his own profit. To wit: consider again briefly the opening monologue in 1.1 in which Richard imagines "pass[ing] away the time" spying his "shadow in the sun" (*R3* 25–26). Likewise, in the following scene, Gloucester apostrophizes "Shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass, / That I may see my shadow as I pass" (*R3* 1.2.249–50). While "shadow," of course, was a common, colloquial reference to an actor in the period, these lines likewise intimate an important, embodied knowledge about disability invisibility on Richard's part. In short, as a shadow, he fashions himself as lacking any real element. Contrasted to something (or someone) of substance, his person is chimerical semblance at best. In spite of his material mass that blocks light from the brightest of heavenly objects, he is but absence.[63] Gloucester registers himself in these various lines as *negative* space. Like the comparative darkness of a silhouette, his body is both legible and illegible; he leaves a mark, but that mark is little more than the representation of nothingness.[64] While "deformity" is the very thing that mandates my visibility, Gloucester craftily illuminates in these foreshadowing asides to the audience, it is also the very thing that handily prevents me from ever fully being seen, even as everyone else in the play is losing their heads.

Though Richard clearly uses his bodymind's gainfulness to murderous ends, I am in no way suggesting that disability gain is inherently immoral. Surely, in this one instance, Richard deploys his invisible visibility to enact evil. More crucially, however, this example of gain emphasizes the inherent power, beauty, and artistry of disabled bodyminds. Invisible visibility, albeit for Richard a malevolent tool, is nonetheless a key phenomenological asset that, when noted instead of dismissed, opens up fundamentally new ways of understanding disability and disabled people. While Richard may be one example of gain put to ill use, the rest of this chapter and the remainder of this book reveal how disability gain most often demonstrates quite the opposite possibility. Conceiving of disability as gain evidences and invites anti-ableist orientations that allow us to cultivate a more just and ethical world.

Dwarfing Richard

Actor Peter Dinklage's incarnation of Shakespeare's *Richard III* in a 2004 production at the Public Theater in New York City boldly attests to the paradox I have articulated above: ableism demands a kind of stigmatizing hyperdistinction of bodymind difference that instead sometimes produces gainful invisibility for disabled people. The production likewise illuminates how Richard's particular bodymind incites another instance of gain in which the performance of disability in the play becomes an invaluable resource for theatergoers. Many readers will know Peter Dinklage either from his starring role in the 2003 American comedy-drama film *The Station Agent*[65] or as the infamous and award-winning Tyrion Lannister in HBO's fantasy drama *Game of Thrones* (2011, season 1). While the Public Theater's 2004 production, directed by Peter DuBois, was criticized for its lack of psychological subtlety, earnest laughter, and theatrical punch,[66] it nonetheless usefully enhances the stories of early modern disability articulated in this chapter, and those previous. More to the point, Dinklage's portrayal of King Richard elucidates beautifully the invisible visibility of the disabled bodymind. The production, readers learn, translates Francis Bacon's early modern notion that "*Deformity* is an Advantage to Rising" into the twenty-first century by addressing in transhistorical terms the intense cultural desire to scrutinize disability and make it legible, only to then ignore or dismiss it. In the Public Theater show, we indeed encounter Richard using his disability as embodied advantage, artfully exploiting conflicting ideological demands that his body simultaneously be both deciphered and denied. That said, Dinklage's unique portrayal reveals not only that disability can be a gainful phenomenological asset, but that it is the key to new epistemological paradigms and more ethical modes of human relation.

In spite of what might initially seem like a somewhat ahistorical move, juxtaposing Dinklage's twenty-first-century production of *Richard III* against early modern textual renderings of the play makes good sense because this is a drama that absolutely refuses to oblige a normative timescape in the first place. As Philip Schwyzer notes of the play, *Richard III* is acutely aware of "how the present turns into the past" and "how the past negotiates a place for itself in the present."[67] Shakespeare's drama is "the product of a world still thoroughly pervaded by traces and remnants of Ricardian time," and much of the play's power lies in the way it responds to these historical traces.[68] From the outset, it "sets out to overturn the temporality of supersession, whereby one age is seen to have succeeded another."[69] *Richard III*, Schwyzer further explains, invites us to challenge the "basic tendency to read cultural artifacts in light of their moment of origin, arguing instead for an untimely, multitemporal or anachronistic understanding of the artwork or the text."[70]

Schwyzer, without saying it explicitly, is arguing here for what I outlined in the book's introduction as the utility of *crip time as historical methodology*. Further, I venture that DuBois's very particular staging of *Richard III* with Peter Dinklage as its centerpiece calls for this sort of methodological approach, not least because the staging uniquely exploits a play already rife with loci of temporal instability. These flexible loci enable the drama and its modern audiences, as Schwyzer argues of early modern playgoers as well, to "interpret and politically intervene in the present moment by aligning it with a specific moment in the past."[71] The play's distinctive crip time engenders transhistorical responsiveness to contemporary crises and issues—in this case, modern disability rights and representation. Dinklage's Richard, standing 4 feet, 5 inches, embodies a cultural desire for disability's legibility that is quite characteristic of the English Renaissance. At the same time, however, his Richard forces contemporary audiences to grapple with the visibility—or lack thereof—of disabled people in modern, Western culture, and moreover, with their own relationships to disability. In what follows, we learn how DuBois and Dinklage (perhaps even unknowingly at times) create a production that not only enacts, in its own way, an early modern cultural imagination of disability as both legible and not, but that complements that historical narrative by locating it in a very contemporary moment—and even in a postmodern social justice sensibility.

A quiet, understated disability activism[72] pervades Dinklage's work on both the stage and screen.[73] For instance, he points out in an interview with the *New York Times Magazine*, "Dwarves are still the butt of jokes. It's one of the last bastions of acceptable prejudice."[74] However, he continues, dwarf actors often collude in their own media misrepresentation: "you can say no. You can *not* be the object of ridicule," he insists.[75] Dinklage's portrayal of a diverse range of characters aims to center people of short stature, rally against what he calls "the cutesiness of little people,"[76] and give individuals with restricted growth control over the representational strategies that ascribe social meaning to their bodies. For example, about undertaking the role of Tyrion Lannister in *Games of Thrones*, Dinklage explains: "Dwarves in these [fantasy] genres always have this look. My guard was up. Not even my guard—my metal fence, my barbed wire was up. Even 'Lord of the Rings' had dwarf-tossing jokes in it. It's like, *Really*?"[77]

Dinklage's Tyrion Lannister is indeed a different kind of character as he orients audiences away from an exploitative, stigmatizing cultural mythology of little people as inhuman, fantastical creatures.[78] Instead, Dinklage's Tyrion is "somebody who turns that [mythos] on its head. No beard, no pointy shoes, a romantic, real human being."[79] The 2004 Public Theater production of *Richard III* does some of this same stigma-unravelling work in casting Dinklage as Shakespeare's perversely compelling Machiavel. In an interview with Charles McNulty of *The Village Voice*, Dinklage suggests that he was in fact just the man to play the role: "With me being a dwarf, the difference is already there. . . . There's no need to play up the deformity," Dinklage contends; "I can experience it from the inside."[80]

Dinklage's direct claim to a profound, personal connection to Richard prompts two lurking questions I will briefly address now: whether we might easily substitute one impairment for another on stage, and whether dwarfism even "qualifies" as disability. Though these are complicated issues, Dinklage's aforementioned sentiment begins to answer both of them simultaneously; once again, he proclaims, "I can experience it from the inside."[81] DuBois concurs that "unlike other actors, Peter doesn't have that middle step where he has to learn what that psychology is. . . . It's immediate. He was able to question the character from his own personal perspective."[82] These assertions intimate that Dinklage knows and feels Richard's difference as his own, and hence suggest that atypical embodiment as a Little Person[83] might, at least at times, carry with it material consequences and experiences similar to those of disfigurement. In both dwarfism and deformity, the material body diverges from an ideal form,[84] gets pathologized by the medical community as a "condition," and carries with it complicated mythological and linguistic histories.[85] Likewise, both deformed people and individuals with restricted growth have been stigmatized as so-called freaks across numerous cultures and time periods, and exploited in the name of (proto)capitalism and entertainment.[86]

The question of whether to conceive of dwarfism as disability is more complex. Renaissance scholar Sara van den Berg argues that because dwarfs "often function normally, [they] both are and are not disabled. Early modern medical texts, for example, barely mention dwarfs in the catalogue of monstrous deformities. As a result, the dwarf body is and is not subject to the social construction of deformity in the early modern era or of disability today."[87] If, however, disability is defined in part by how impairments and differences get coded negatively by social processes and become barriers to access,[88] one might again argue for a productive association between dwarfism and disfigurement. DuBois's 2004 production certainly made this case, particularly through deliberate staging of Dinklage's nonnormative stature as intensely challenged by its built environment. For example, as *New York Times* theater critic Ben Brantley writes, "ascending the throne has never been more of a struggle for the title character of *Richard III*"; he jibes, "the throne of England was obviously designed for a taller king."[89] DuBois, to highlight both the visual force and material realities of Richard's disability, compelled Dinklage to clamor onto a throne that was roughly twice his size. "That means," Brantley clarifies, "that for this Richard, physically placing himself in the seat of power requires strenuous and gymnastic exertions, made more difficult by the oversize royal cape that enfolds and thwarts him."[90] Dinklage's weighty accoutrements and difficult ascent of the throne rendered his disability even more prominent. His body not only defied certain social and cultural expectations but quite literally "mis-fit" its physical environment.[91]

King Richard's deformity, represented in Dinklage's dwarfism, thus became startlingly notable in the inaccessible, incompatible theatrical spaces that surrounded it. While Sara van den Berg usefully argues that the small size characteristic of a dwarf aesthetic "can contradict and critique accepted values, forcing on others a point of view that can diminish their stature to that of a dwarf,"[92] I assert that the aesthetic[93] DuBois creates with Dinklage as his lead does not induce a sympathetic perspective in which we might see ourselves in Richard, but rather instigates a series of ocular effects through which Richard puts to use the invisibility his disability invokes. The Public Theater production in which Dinklage so keenly misfits his physical surroundings only makes more obvious how onstage characters and spectators alike are invited to scrutinize Richard's body—to identify, label, and stare at his difference—and yet, ultimately, refuse to note him.

As argued above, as early as Shakespeare's *3 Henry VI*, Gloucester's character anticipates and employs this lack of presence—what I have termed a phenomenological tool—to his advantage. The play text describes Richard as gleefully cognizant of how unnoticed he goes. His deformity makes him camouflaged and impermanent. He is invisible and ephemeral. "I can add colours to the chameleon, / [and] Change shapes with Proteus for advantages" (*3H6* 3.2.192–93), he pronounces.[94] In *Richard III*, the misguided Hastings, for one, corroborates Richard's self-assessment as he bemoans his failure to take various prophetic forebodings to heart and recognize the duplicitous Machiavel right in front of him. "Woe, woe for England!," Hastings cries as he is carried away to his doom, "Not a whit for me, / For I, too fond, might have prevented this" (*R3* 3.4.80–81).

Dinklage's very particular embodiment takes key playtextual instances of Gloucester's literal and figurative effacement and materializes them in live performance. Via atypical stature, Dinklage's Richard becomes the vulnerable target of normative gazing and ableist disciplining, and yet this gaze is a dismissive one that never entirely acknowledges his personhood.[95] Without even having to try, Dinklage highlights the king's awareness of his visual anonymity, and he portrays the play's protagonist not as defeated but as empowered by it. In this claim, I follow Katherine Schaap Williams's important "effort to resist a translation of disability into images of negativity and characters without agency"; as she suggests, "we see that disability indexes the stakes of a person's ability to harness rhetorical and symbolic power," and in this case, Richard's disability actually enables that power.[96] Put differently, while on the one hand, Shakespeare's play is obsessed with seeing and naming Gloucester's difference, on the other hand Dinklage's performance reveals how the drama is equally interested in just the opposite. Dinklage's height functions specifically as an embodied representation of gainful disability invisibility, one that, to again echo Francis Bacon, "layeth [Richard's] Competitours and Emulatours asleepe."[97] The King's deformity, the fact that he is so "rudely stamped" and "scarce half made up" (*R3* 1.1.16, 21), marks him as distinctly notable and yet renders him, however mistakenly, wholly unremarkable.

This process of literal and figurative dismissal is, of course, what makes Shakespeare's cunning king significantly more dangerous than other able-bodied characters in the drama, and Dinklage played up this phenomenological asset on stage. "Richard's a man who knows what he is," explains the actor. "He's bitter about it, but he's prepared to use it to his advantage. People discredit him because of his appearance. They just see him as a crazy deformed warrior. They don't expect things from him or take him seriously enough, and they don't realize what's happening until everybody's dead."[98]

This invisible visibility of Dinklage's Gloucester gets materially realized in live performance through a series of "ocular effects," as broached a few pages ago. Put another way, DuBois's casting and directorial decisions—as well as Dinklage's specific acting choices—acknowledge the knotty complexities of real-life gazing encounters precipitated by Richard's disability made flesh. Dinklage's unconventionally statured Richard "throws down a visual hermeneutic challenge to its discomforted viewer."[99] Perhaps even more than a hunchbacked Richard with a "withered arm," this distinctive Richard begins to undo predictable approaches to seeing and reading the body, and thus might incite in spectators acute attention to their penchant for needing to decipher disability even as they knowingly disregard it.

In her important work on disability and staring, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson illuminates the complex rituals of looking in which we typically engage. Staring, she contends in her book about the intricate dynamics of this phenomenon, "is an ocular response to what we don't expect to see."[100] "We stare when ordinary seeing fails, when we want to know more," she explains.[101] "The eyes hang on, working to recognize what seems illegible, order what seems unruly, know what seems strange"; we invoke the "sensory sorting process of determining an interpretive foreground and background, of formulating an ocular hermeneutics."[102] A variant body like Dinklage's that is at once hypervisible and yet visually indeterminate in its difference from the norm can pose a fundamental cognitive dilemma for spectators. Though it is legible in its dwarfism, it is illegible in its deviation from cultural and bodily expectation. Thus, playgoers might stare, each—and perhaps likewise collectively—cultivating what Garland-Thomson calls "an interrogative gesture that asks what's going on and demands the story."[103]

Overtly staging Dinklage's nonnormative size as DuBois does especially provokes in viewers two key modes of staring that Garland-Thomson outlines in her typology of looking: *baroque* and *separated* staring. Baroque staring, I argue, is inherent to theater performance, and particularly the performance of disability. As Garland-Thomson explains, "proper staring is decorous, selective looking, not just random gawking"; in contrast, baroque staring is "gaping-mouthed, unapologetic staring."[104] Theater performances ask audiences to indulge in spectacle and to do so unabashedly—playgoers are paying for it, after all. Unlike baroque[105] staring in public, which is sometimes considered uncouth and rude,[106] theater sanctions a sort of uncensored wonderment. Further, disability performance, insofar as it presents audiences with bodyminds deemed nonnormative, especially invites baroque staring, an unrestrained taking in of mental and physical variation that runs against the grain.

Dinklage and DuBois put dwarfism on display at the Public Theater as a kind of willful Ricardian freak show. Their shrewd, deliberately cultivated spectacle tapped into and even further invited spectators' desire to gawp at individuals of short stature.[107] It played to the myriad representational fictions that attend the dwarf body, asking playgoers to call on narratives "caricatured from sentimental and cute to grotesque and vengeful."[108] As able-bodied spectators in particular would have taken in Dinklage's Richard—following his projected oversized shadow around the stage or noting as he struggled to clamber onto a too-huge, newly conquered throne— they probably indulged in the kind of curious staring that "overrides reason and restraint, revels in contradiction, and arouses fervor."[109] DuBois's production played on people's penchants for disability deciphering. It demanded that spectators look, and look passionately, at this unique Richard in what Garland-Thomson describes as "unrepentant abandonment to the unruly, to that which refuses to conform to the dominant order of knowledge."[110]

Baroque staring works alongside, although is ultimately mitigated by, the impulse to categorize disability and make it legible. While baroque staring at its best "eludes logical narrative" and cultivates wonder, not mastery, it often is thwarted by what Garland-Thomson describes as a "striv[ing] to vivisect the inexplicable to lay bare its secrets."[111] Readers observed this kind of dominating vivisection previously in *Beholding Disability*, from epileptic cramp ring treatments to playtextual demands that Gloucester's body make sense for playgoers and other on-stage characters. In other words, the productive possibility in a baroque stare that celebrates novelty is frequently "policed by the conflicting requirement for sameness that rationalization dictates."[112] Moral and medical models of disability, both modern and early modern, privilege ability, and as Garland-Thomson reminds us, this "influential preference for normality and prejudice against normality can render novelty in human form repugnant to us."[113] "We may want to see the unusual," she quips, "but perhaps not *be* [my italics] the unusual. Novelty, in this context, is both what we seek and avoid."[114]

DuBois's *Richard III* thus might have provoked baroque staring that became what Garland-Thomson labels *separated* staring. Insofar as "the extraordinary excites but alarms us,"[115] Dinklage's dwarf Gloucester first catches spectators off guard and amazes them. But, per ableist ideologies that, as I have shown, Shakespeare's playtext renders quite tangible, pleasurable astonishment soon becomes staring as stigma assignment and metaphorical overreading.[116] Starers attempt to dominate the so-called disabled Other by naming otherness and then pushing it away. Audiences who encounter Richard's body both on and off stage enact a rebuke of difference as well as a refusal to participate.

In short, the exasperating challenge of reading, remarking on, and distinctly deciphering Richard's embodiment is a task too hard for many spectators to bear. Momentary wonder becomes stigmatizing domination via the gaze, but that domination, it turns out, is an exercise in futility as Gloucester can indeed "add colours to the chameleon, / [and] Change shapes with Proteus for advantages" (*3H6* 3.2.192–93). Instead of (baroquely) celebrating the failure of Richard's intelligibility, spectators desire to make the unintelligible knowable, and in the face of this impossible task, engage in "visual fleeing" in a "wide-eyed, looking-over-one's- shoulder retreat of the fearful."[117] As Garland-Thomson elucidates, "separated staring is more than simply looking away out of civil inattention . . . in separated staring, discomfort overwhelms both attention and curiosity so that baroque staring collapses under its own weight."[118]

The play's final act explicitly testifies to this visual repulsion. While characters in the drama do not necessarily look away from Richard in the most physical sense of that action, their turning away from him through betrayal and avoidance speaks figuratively to a resonant dismissal. Indeed, as the Duke of Norfolk explains to Richard near the bitter end and as battle approaches, it appears they have been deceived by those they most trusted: "Jackie of Norfolk," the Duke reads from a note left on his tent that morning, "be not too bold, / For Dickon thy master is bought and sold" (*R3* 5.3.33–34). "What says Lord Stanley?," Richard queries Norfolk moments later in the face of this sinister missive; "Will he bring his power?" (*R3* 5.3.72). "My lord, he doth deny to come," (*R3* 5.3.73) confirms a messenger delivering word of Stanley's traitorous absence. Like the separated starer who flees disability encounter, Gloucester's closest compatriots severe their connections to a king they can no longer endure.[119]

Similarly, Richmond's final rallying cry–cum–rhetorical disparagement of Richard as "raised in blood" and "one that made means to come by what he hath" (*R3* 5.5.201, 202) linguistically symbolizes the denial inherent in separated staring and further confirms Richard's abandonment. According to Richmond as he prepares his troops for battle, Richard is "a base, foul stone, made precious by the foil / of England's chair, where he is falsely set" (*R3* 5.3.204–5). This baseness legitimates, to echo Garland-Thomson above, a desperate "retreat of the fearful." It also performatively enacts what she calls "hostile spectatorship," an escalation of separated staring that moves beyond visual dismissal to an attempt to "overwhelm the staree with its aggression."[120] And surely, by play's end, aggression against Richard is at its most palpable. Richard is but a "bloody dog" and "bloody wretch" (*R3* 5.3.2, 5) who has been so heartily dismissed that he cannot even find a horse to ride on in battle.[121]

Thus nearly everyone flees Richard because, per Francis Bacon nearly 400 years ago, they ultimately deem him too confounding, insignificant, or repulsive to be worthy of attention.[122] Repelled by difference too hard to comprehend, they refuse to recognize him; or as Garland-Thomson puts it, "truncated stares come from our distress at witnessing fellow humans so usual that we cannot accord them a look of acknowledgment."[123] And indeed, DuBois recalls Dinklage's candid explanation of this exact staring encounter and the way his real life experiences translated into an understanding of Richard's character: "Peter once talked about how we're taught not to stare at those who are different," remembers DuBois. "He says this is why dwarves [*sic*] and people in wheelchairs make the best shoplifters. Others are being watched by Richard, but they don't want to watch him, which in a sense makes him more dangerous,"[124] recalled DuBois. Learned aversion to difference provokes social as well as aesthetic rejection;[125] starers, Garland-Thomson suggests, "prefer the comfortable dulling of perception that looking at normalcy begets rather than the magnetism of spectacular novelty and the unsettling pleasures of baroque staring."[126] Furthermore, people look away when they "cannot bear the surprising particularities of stark human embodiment and perhaps the unwelcome reminder that their own bodies are or will be disabled, too."[127]

What was especially unique about Dinklage's performance of King Richard, however, was the way he harnessed these simultaneous desires to see and to not see and played out the drama's portrayal of Richard's rejection. Dinklage's embodiment of Richard as a dwarf refused to let playgoers indulge in an ableist "looking away" that the playtext enforces, albeit even as the drama empowers its eponymous character through the very invisibility that that refusal enables. Put more plainly, Dinklage's performance of Gloucester as a person with restricted growth forced a keen disability reorientation, asking spectators to recognize their investment in making disability signify, only to then ignore it. Dinklage's Gloucester asked spectators to acknowledge and reconsider the processes of baroque and separated staring in which they participate. Dinklage, to borrow from Garland-Thomson, used his role—and exceptional body—as "effective raw material . . . [he] can invoke to influence others."[128]

Indeed, interrogative gestures such as staring are part of a powerful relational dynamic. "An encounter between a starer and a staree," Garland-Thomson explains, "sets in motion an interpersonal relationship, however momentary, that has consequences."[129] Insofar as "staring bespeaks involvement,"[130] Dinklage's Richard particularly foregrounds spectators' resistant relation to disability. His characterization articulates a dynamic struggle in which audiences—through theatrical encounter—can reckon with their deep investment in Richard's invisibility. Their ableist looking practices facilitate and corroborate a failure to acknowledge Gloucester's personhood, but Dinklage's Richard forces them to acknowledge that failure. DuBois's casting choice strategically remarks on a spectator's resistance to beholding difference. Dinklage as King Richard *does disability gain*: his performance can serve as an epistemic resource for playgoers, evoking in them an experiential gestalt about their collusion in the cultural erasure of disability.

Dinklage's performance, again echoing Garland-Thomson, thus has serious consequences. It inspires "intense visual engagement [that] creates a circuit of communication and meaning-making."[131] The engaged self-consideration Dinklage asked of playgoers arises out of the actor's "visual activism"; he used "the human urge to look at new things to make people look at [him]."[132] In short, Dinklage's Richard refuses an audience's refusal. They might turn away, but he brings them back to their encounter with disability and invites them to re-engage in more ethical ways. For example, Ben Brantley describes spectators' emotional experiences as Dinklage stares back at them during live performance. "The hard blue ice of his eyes is enough to deflect any challenge," he writes; playgoers feel both "chilled and flattered" when he "fixes his bright, dead, complicitous gaze on the audience."[133]

This defiant demand to comprehend Richard in the face of his erasure is Dinklage's gift to playgoers. It engenders brand new disability orientations. Dinklage's specific activation of disability as a phenomenological tool might provoke in spectators new affects and experiences. Hence, I posit that while Brantley criticizes Dinklage's portrayal as being "too blunt and impatient,"[134] these qualities were precisely part of what strengthened this performance and enabled its epistemic and ethical offerings. Shakespearean drama set Dinklage up perfectly to employ what Garland-Thomson describes elsewhere as a "visual politics of deliberately structured self-disclosure . . . that primes people to act in new ways."[135] Per Brantley, the "overwhelming centeredness and conviction" that drive Dinklage's Richard[136] manage and mitigate an audience's move to separated staring, both visual and metaphorical. DuBois's production deliberately exploited tensions between spectators' baroque wonderment and separated visual fleeing. Dinklage's performance called spectators away from fearful abandonment and back into less ableist "beholding encounters" constituted by a more ethical "human obligation that inheres in the productive discomfort mutual visual presence can generate."[137]

Conclusion

Ultimately, and even inside a playtext that often insists on Gloucester's ableist dismissal, DuBois's very particular production makes us confront the prospect of a *historical* performance of *Richard III* that showcased disability gain. Put differently, Dinklage's portrayal of Richard helps us begin to conceive of early modern performances that similarly might have invited audiences into wonder and ethical beholding via the phenomenological power of the disabled bodymind. How might the stage have performed this unique iteration of desire for human variation? How would it have illuminated for early modern spectators the profound epistemic and ethical resources disability can offer?

By further outlining norming models of disability operating in early modern England, this chapter first offered readers further context for premodern disability disavowal. It examined Shakespeare's *Richard III* as emblematic of moral failing and also as a medical artifact to be scrutinized. Then, however, we turned to old and new performances of *Richard III* to uncover the ways that early modern drama also did disability *avowal*, celebrating the alternative ontologies and epistemologies that bodymind difference provokes. Actor Peter Dinklage's unique embodiment and subjugated knowledge[138]—not to mention his savvy acting in modern performance—helped us better imagine an English Renaissance rendition of *Richard III* that might have harnessed playgoers' disregard for disability and tossed it back in their faces. It enacted a metatheatrics that, as Lindsey Row-Heyveld explains in an explicitly early modern context, "held in tension the deep pleasures of passing judgment and the deep discomfort of being judged."[139] DuBois's 2004 production begged the question of how early modern playgoers too might have looked at disability, refused to look, and then instead had to take a good look at themselves.

The following chapter instigates a similar reckoning with disability gain and the new perspectives it brings. Chapter 3 moves away from drama to engage early modern poetry as a site of resistance to the notion that disability is an inherently negative ontology. Readers will again encounter the demand that they, like the spectators above, take a good look at themselves—though in this case, to interrogate ableist assumptions that to be human is to be self-sufficient and independent. Specifically, I argue that Richard Crashaw's devotional poetry deposes tacit tenets that liberty and autonomy are fundamental to our moral universes. Disability gain in the next chapter exposes the ruse of "self-sovereignty" and espouses revelatory alternative unions, mutualities, reciprocities, and interdependencies that reshape our ideas about what makes people truly human.

Three

Prosthetic Possibilities

Sometime between 1625 and 1635, Giovanni Antonio Galli (called Lo Spadarino) painted *Christ Displaying His Wounds*, a Renaissance work considered one of the most famous by this member of the Caravaggisti. The painting, captivating in its own right (see fig. 2), was especially arresting in large format as a banner hanging on the façade of the Scottish National Gallery in Edinburgh when they were advertising an exhibit entitled "Beyond Caravaggio." At roughly fifteen by fifteen feet, Galli's baroque image of a postcrucifixion Christ holding open the bloody wound in his side seized passersby, demanding that they bear witness to an iconic, larger-than-life body and its infamous trauma. In the painting, Jesus tips his head imploringly as he stares at spectators with an unavoidable, piercing gaze. I was born and died for you and your sins, the image reminds spectators; this painful wound is the marker of my sacrifice and your Christian salvation. In the painting, Christ's two hands, darker in hue and marred by stigmata, starkly contrast his pure white torso as he pries wide the wound as if inviting viewers to recognize his humanity and selflessness, but even more to climb right inside that stunning, bloody hole.

William Schupbach, a writer for the Wellcome Library blog, similarly notes of Lo Spadarino's painting that "the iconography is . . . unusual. Pictures of Christ showing his wounds are usually narratives of Christ showing his wounds to the doubting Saint Thomas. . . . [Instead], Christ is showing his wounds to us as the viewers of the painting; or to us as contemporary doubting St. Thomases."[1] Schupbach further explains that in the Renaissance, works about this subject were traditionally located in hospitals to remind the sick of Christ's identification with their suffering. The painting, he continues,

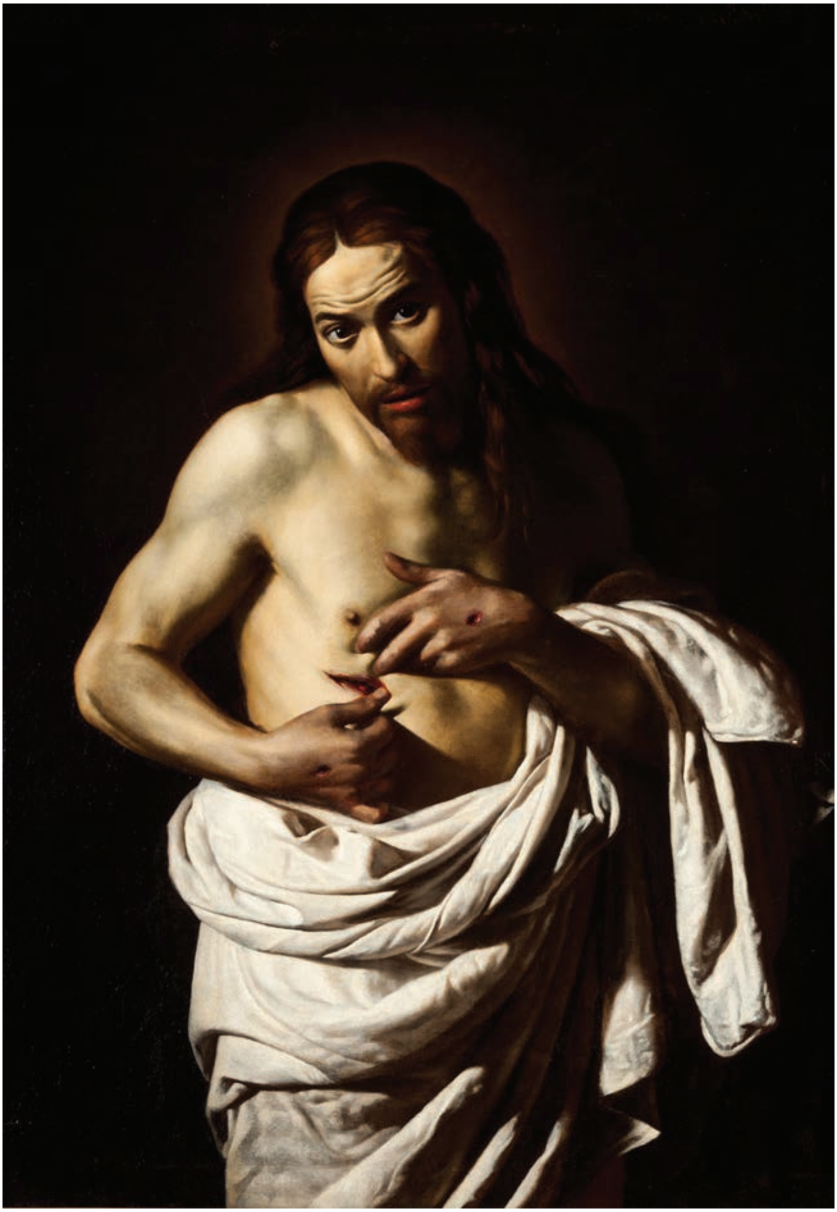


Fig. 2. *Christ Displaying His Wounds*. Giovanni Antonio Galli, gennant Lo Spadarino, ca. 1625/35. Canvas. 132.2 × 97.8 cm.
Reproduced with permission of the Perth and Kinross Council Scotland, Perth Museum and Art Gallery.

> gains in force if we imagine that we are not just doubting St. Thomases to be won over intellectually to the possibility of resurrection, we are also vulnerable, ailing hospital patients with painful ulcers, bubos, and aposthumes, to be comforted by this vision of Christ appearing, as if in living reality, before us, and demonstrating his own trauma. Christ tilts his head, raises his eyebrows and furrows his forehead in a combined questioning, pained and resigned expression in response to our presence before him: "What do you expect? I went through this—you can endure it too."[2]

While Schupbach's reading of the image is illuminating, the painting's sentiment is even more complex: it is what we have come to understand over this book's first few chapters as an important instance of early modern disability gain. Although Schupbach is right that it artistically conveys solidarity in suffering, Christ's *ostentatio vulnerum* (display of the wounds) is not solely a sacred reminder of inevitable pain, divine sacrifice, and the hope of an eternal life free from suffering. Hearkening back to the argument in chapter 2 especially, I identify in this image a deliberate disability orientation that recasts pain and injury as valuable tools and epistemological resources. Not just figurative Christian salvation, Jesus's material wound here is a locus of seventeenth century intersubjectivity-cum-disability: my bloody flesh is yours, and yours is mine, he tells viewers. Christ's embodied imperfection and symbolic gesture, "you can enter me here," avow impairment as loving corporeal vulnerability (notably, of *vulnerum*). They also emblematize the inevitability of interdependence in the face of human frailty and suffering. In other words, Lo Spadarino crafts a penetrating and penetrable Christ whose side wound is a home for everyone: this Jesus resolutely refuses self-sovereignty and an individualist ethos bent on, among other things, autonomy and independence.

As crip theorist Fiona Kumari Campbell argues, disability is imagined against able-bodied self-sovereignty as a kind of negative ontology: disability is utter malignancy, personal tragedy, inherently undesirable, and "cannot be spoken about as anything other than an anathema."[3] Ontologically intolerable, disabled bodyminds, she attests, "are positioned in the nether regions of 'unthought'" insofar as "the presence of disability . . . upsets the modernist craving for ontological security."[4] Julia Kristeva similarly suggests that "the disabled person opens a *narcissistic identity wound* in the person who is not disabled; he inflicts a threat of *physical or psychical death*, fear of collapse, and, beyond that, the anxiety of seeing the very *borders of the human species* explode."[5] Crucially, this negative ontology is bred not just from fear of the unknown or apprehension toward the subaltern, but also because the ongoing stability of ableism requires the unthinking of disability and its relation to the human self.[6] Via a perverse process of supplementation, "ableness" needs a constitutive outside; as evidenced in chapter 1, one thus can "speak in ontological terms of disability as a history of unthought" because "disability is always present, despite its absence in the ableist talk of normalcy, normalisation and humanness."[7]

Galli's impaired Christ embraces the "ontological terror"[8] that is disability and makes it the painting's aesthetic and ethical fulcrum. Here, disability is anything but inconceivable anathema. Much more than enticement or even homage to affective piety,[9] the painting demands that one think the unthinkable and bear witness to productive, universal human suffering. In the previous chapter, readers discovered how Shakespeare's *Richard III*, in modern disability performance especially, offered playgoers the opportunity to more ethically behold difference. This chapter similarly traces out disability gain and the refusal of disability as negative ontology, but it does so by exploring Richard Crashaw's devotional poetry and its deposition of liberty and autonomy as fundamental tenets of humans' moral universes. More precisely, chapter 3 excavates the powerful potentialities that inhere in vulnerability, abject interdependence, and unique crip communities constellated around pain. In Crashaw, readers discover how so-called suffering bodies are poetic vehicles for forwarding disability narratives, inviting the revaluation of pain and thereby ableist humanist insistences on people's individualism and independence.

Furthermore, representations of painful woundedness—Christ's crucified body in particular—operationalize what I call "prosthetic logics." Prosthetic logics indeed think the unthinkable as they, again borrowing language from Campbell, "refute 'autonomy' . . . and revise the meaning of 'humanness' in terms of relationality."[10] As suggested initially by way of Lo Spadarino's Jesus, early modern prosthetic logics are ideological postures rooted in disability gain. More specifically, they grow from the affirmative assumption that humans are nonautonomous, vulnerable, and interdependent, even with other nonhuman entities around them. As chapter 3 evidences, prosthetic logics disrupt conventional early modern definitions of "humanity" and evidence how radical interdependency surfaces in the period as a countercurrent to ableist notions of individual agency and subjectivity.[11] Crashaw's verse specifically employs prosthetic logics in which impairment functions as a beneficial tool that inspires close communion with others and with God, and thus espouses an anti-ableist logic thriving in the Renaissance that took for granted necessary, inevitable human intersubjectivity. Pain, in particular, structures for Crashaw this crip relational model for being human. The often anguishing, alternative unions and communions his poems voice reinforce our reckoning with what "self-sovereignty" really means in the face of mutual connections and powerful reciprocities with other people and things.

It would be remiss not to note at this chapter's outset that one might reasonably contest that Crashaw's depictions of religious suffering and perhaps more figurative wounding differ from the daily, more material pain of, for instance, a chafing prosthetic limb or the relentless brain fog associated with some chronic illnesses. Moreover, not every person with pain, injury, or wounding is necessarily disabled. This acknowledged, chapter 3 illuminates how the kind of ecstatic pain Crashaw narrates indeed is no less potent or more disembodied than, say, that of bodyminds with melancholy or posttraumatic stress, especially in that pain's explicit function as a conduit to radical vulnerability and interdependency. Furthermore, and as I argued in my introduction, representations of suffering are potent tools. A bodymind's embodied, material truths are constituted by narrative, and themselves constitute it; stories have somatic consequences, and vice versa.

As Emily Stanback explains via English Romantic authors, narratives of disability in particular "create contexts in which the corresponding qualities of disabled human bodies and minds may be (re)valued and (re)interpreted in light of the ways they allow us to interrogate and expand the possibilities of textual form, function, and functionality"; or, put more broadly, disability literature does disability gain, exploring how "the disabled body and mind could be apprehended for the ways that they expand the possibilities of the worlds in which they circulate."[12] Below, Crashaw's poetry figures painful, abject interdependencies and uncomfortable prosthetic connections; ecstatic suffering is part of keen articulations of crip epistemes and ethics that grow from and simultaneously shape disabled bodyminds' material realities. Crashaw writes from a disability orientation that knew that, as Stanback notes of the much later Wordsworth-Coleridge circle, "the world was far richer, more interesting, and more meaningful because of disability."[13] His poetry articulates disability as providing "new forms of human relationship and community, and new ways of seeing and sensing and being."[14]

Early Modern Prosthetic Logics

What makes a human human?[15] This question, and the related notion of what we now term "human rights," was hotly debated in the seventeenth century as philosophers especially begin articulating the concept of natural law to mitigate the tyranny of absolutist rule.[16] In this thinking, the authority of God or nature supersedes government, and individuals might resist state-sanctioned oppression by exerting their rights and making claims against the monarchy.[17] Indeed, argues feminist political theorist Nancy Hirschmann, "the early modern era ushered in a way of thinking about humans' relationship to God, government, and each other that turned on new conceptions of obligation, duty, justice, equality, and freedom."[18] Even more precisely, Hirschmann contends, *modern* political philosophy began with a Renaissance "thought experiment" that "centered on a first principle of natural freedom: the state of nature, from which men emerged to form civil society, postulates freedom as a first principle of human nature, a fundamental building block of the modernist definition of 'human being.'"[19]

Take, for example, seventeenth-century social contract theorists Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. Both were deeply invested in figuring out what it is—or is not—that makes humans free subjects. "Hobbes's and Locke's conceptions of freedom," Hirschmann explains, "depend on a particular body with particular physical and mental capacities and orientations, a particular set of assumptions about what constitutes a human being."[20] The status of the free individual is based, that is, on a very particular kind of able body: "able to engage in certain kinds of physical action, particularly labor, and in rational thought."[21] "*A* FREE-MAN," writes Hobbes, "*is he, that in those things, which by his strength and wit he is able to do, is not hindered to doe what he has a will to*."[22]

While Hobbes understands bodily capacity and its relation to human freedom in less overtly ableist terms than Locke, both of these foundational philosophers use impairment and incapacity to "demarcate the limits of liberty at the limits of ability."[23] Hirschmann further argues that "this conception then became the foundation for all other Enlightenment concepts: obligation was defined by way of a 'social contract' that involved people making free choices to give up their natural liberty in exchange for social order and political freedom; equality was defined as an equality of right, and an equality of freedom; justice was defined by redressing unequal impositions on entitlement and rights, and thereby unequal restrictions of liberty."[24] Moreover, in granting humans "'a State of perfect Freedom to order their Actions, and dispose of their Possessions, and Persons as they think fit,'" both [Hobbes and Locke] "defined natural freedom in a very particular way that showcased the individual as divorced from culture, society, and natural relationships."[25] The so-called individual emerging in the seventeenth century thus is "essentially the proprietor of his own person or capacities. . . . [He] is free inasmuch as he is proprietor of his person and capacities."[26] According to C. B. Macpherson, Hobbes especially imagines humans as deliberative individuals, and that deliberation is a voluntary act that proceeds from one's will.[27] In *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes describes human beings as "system[s] of self-moving, self-guided matter in motion" that are "very like an automated machine."[28] This machine is assumed to have fully functioning senses, trains of thought, language, and reason; and although it surely participates in social relations, "the independent, self-reliant actor is the grounding of these social engagements."[29]

Similarly, Locke's theories, as Christopher Gabbard puts it, "undergird the subject, the person at the center of classical liberalism, whom Locke describes as independent, self-sufficient, entrepreneurial, property owning and capable of engaging equally with other subjects."[30] For Locke, free individuals can exercise their goals and desires, be self-reliant, and advocate for their interests over the power of the state. As he writes of the limitations of neuroatypical and developmentally disabled people in *Two Treatises of Government* (1689): "[the idiot] is never capable of being a Free Man, he is never let loose to the disposure of his own Will (because he knows no bounds to it, has not Understanding, its proper Guide) but is continued under the Tuition and Government of others, all the time his own Understanding is uncapable of that Charge."[31] According to Locke, "a person has full moral human standing because he is able to think abstractly, process information swiftly, and retain and quickly recall memories. A person has continuous identity over time. Once mature, a person can act autonomously and independently of paternal authority."[32] While "God gave the World to Men in Common," he specifically "gave it to the use of the Industrious and Rational."[33] Insofar as "Lunaticks and Ideots are never set free from the Government of their Parents," Locke avers, they can never be realized as fully human, entirely free individuals.[34]

Even this very cursory overview makes clear that "individualism" begins *at least* as far back as early modernity to set the tone for what become essential, long-standing beliefs about society, justice, and political and human rights and statuses.[35] As *Beholding Disability* has already suggested, part of the job of disability studies and activism is to intervene in ableist enterprises that lean heavily on unquestioned ideologies like this one. Living with disability readily shows us that the self-reliant, autonomous, rational individual who undergirds this philosophy is a myth.[36] People cling tightly to this myth in spite of experiencing the sorts of bodymind vulnerabilities captured in the Galli painting I discussed just above.

However, human subjectivity, as Barbara Gibson describes it, is in reality always "partial and transitory." She continues, "disability connectivity thus serves as a signpost for an expanded understanding of subjectivity and suggests a radically altered ethics that is no longer premised on individual rights."[37] Disability produces an "ethic of openness" that "acknowledges the vulnerability of the subject at the moment of ethical engagement with the unmarked other."[38] It deconstructs a "pursuit of rights [that] presupposes autonomous, independent subjects contained within individual bodies."[39]

Importantly, then, various modes of thought in the Renaissance—what I identify as disability counterlogics—expressly chaffed against this burgeoning investment in individualism,[40] and to accentuate these anti-ableist avowals is to resist what Elizabeth B. Bearden so aptly identifies as a problematic "Whiggish teleology" that imagines early modernity as the inception of "a narrative of progress . . . in people's understanding of themselves as individuals."[41] Galenic humoral theory, for example, on various levels refused "agency as a prerequisite for personhood,"[42] because it gave early modern people a sense of their bodyminds as part of porous, sometimes volatile, networks of deep connection. As I have outlined elsewhere,[43] sixteenth- and seventeenth-century philosophical treatises on the emotions[44] defined "affections"—colloquially called "passions"—as perpetual movements of the soul that, along with the body's four humours, shaped human reasoning and action.[45] Put more simply, early modern people operated under the fairly standard assumption that emotion was highly transferable and blurred boundaries between inside and outside, self and other. The possibility of this ecological transaction between body and world resists a post-Cartesian sensibility, one now often taken for granted, that our emotional selves are internal, personal, and nearly hermetically sealed from the world outside.[46]

According to modern philosopher Susan James, "[early modern passions] cross two boundaries—that between soul and body, and that between the body and the physical space around it."[47] Further, early modern emotions were thought to engage in, to borrow John Sutton's useful formulation, "continual reciprocal causation" in which body, mind, and environment all contribute.[48] One meaning for the term *emotion* in this period was "a transference from one place to another," while the word *affect*, a derivative of the Latin past participle *ad-facere*, meant "to be made or fashioned toward or in respect of an other." In their emphasis on transference and fashioning, these two definitions discursively signal how early modern emotions were regarded as expressly social phenomena. While, as suggested already, one certainly notes a growing investment in individualized interiority and "somatic inwardness" by the end of the seventeenth century,[49] this sentiment was still very much confounded by a cultural imagination in which communal affectivity reigned and emotions were deemed highly shareable—both willfully and not—between one body and the next.

The classical roots informing early modern humoral theory likewise are inflected by the medieval theological notion of passibility. In short, and as Elizabeth B. Bearden so usefully helps us to comprehend, passibility is a basic condition of human mortality.[50] The passible self is capable of suffering, feeling, and being susceptible to sensation or emotion; it is also predisposed to change and decay. Christ's passibility is the most iconic formulation of this capacity for shared suffering and change. According to Christian tradition, Jesus's embeddedness in nonautonomous, communal bonds—and the mental and physical anguish that communion entailed—is what saved humanity. Bearden clarifies passibility thus:

> As distinguished from the impassibility of God, passibility emphasizes human vulnerability, mortality, and variation of the human form. . . . [P]assibility also takes social situation into account in crafting what we might think of as a mediated subject position between active and passive constructions of personhood that accords well with the lived experience of disability. The passible body is vulnerable to the influence of its surroundings. . . . Passibility locates a person within a community of influence.[51]

Theories of the early modern humors and passibility are but two brief examples of epistemological paradigms that are, as defined above, prosthetic logics. While other scholars have addressed, at least to some extent, relationality, intersubjectivity, and communities of influence as part of a Renaissance cultural imaginary,[52] I claim this sensibility specifically as another gainful disability counterdiscourse. As Bearden would concur, certain modes of thinking and feeling, like passibility and humoral theory, "account for both physical and mental variation in the form of disability in the human body while being rooted in the cosmology of its time."[53] Early modern prosthetic logics oppose conventional, ableist assumptions about corporeality, matter, and embodied experience. They explicitly recognize and avow intersubjectivity and vulnerability. Further, they always presume that "the meaning of the body resides between bodies, between those who live through them, in them, and those who bring them to mind."[54]

Thinkers in contemporary disability and prostheses studies, from Margrit

Shildrick to Tanya Titchkovsky to Sarah Jain and David Wills,[55] have theorized how the incorporation of both organic and inorganic nonself matter into an individual provokes corporeal transformations that "comprehensively undo the conventional limits of the embodied self."[56] While their interests in what constitutes humanness in the face of body-as-machine are compelling, my preoccupation is less with how the body might become a kind of cyborgian side effect of technology[57] or an animating force behind seemingly inorganic "objects." The readings of Crashaw that follow instead emphasize how prosthetic logics assume inevitable, often painfully messy yet liberating interconnectivity across bodies, persons, and things too. Prosthetic logics—as well as the actual prosthetic materials that embody and motivate them—do not emphasize the posthuman but in fact are oriented more squarely toward coincidently being in the world. Prosthetic logics champion unique modes of exchange and sites of communion among diverse bodyminds.[58] Moreover, they do not necessarily make one feel less embodied and less vulnerable—the human as cyborg conquering mortality, for example—but rather make one feel valuably *more* human, *more* vulnerable, and *more* connected to all sorts of other people and entities.

Abject Interdependence

In "On the Still Surviving Marks of our Savior's Wounds," one of Richard Crashaw's Divine Epigrams, the seventeenth-century poet-teacher-cleric describes the paradoxical story of the "cruelty" of the nail, thorn, and spear "writ in [Jesus]" ("Surviving Marks," 1–2).[59] "Sweet is the difference" ("Surviving Marks," 5), Crashaw explains, in what these wounds mean for him and his Christ: "Once I did spell / Every red letter / A wound of thine, / Now, (what is better) / Balsam for mine" ("Surviving Marks," 6–10). Bloody wounds in Jesus become sweet unguent for humanity, Crashaw's poet narrator attests, as he baroquely depicts a condition of utter dependence on the savior of his sins. Christ's passibility—his torture and somatic pain especially—is the precondition for the sustenance of Crashaw's (and humankind's) own.[60] As Richard Rambuss attests, "Christianity's God-Man effects humanity's redemption as much by what he allows to be done to his body . . . as by any operation of his spirit."[61] Jesus, the poet narrator confesses to the Lord directly and unabashedly, I am nothing without you and your suffering body.

As this brief verse begins to confirm, Crashaw articulates throughout his poetry one example of a seventeenth-century prosthetic logic in which abject dependence, a state most often imagined by able-bodied individuals as a fate worse than death,[62] is something profitable to celebrate, even formally cultivate. Even further, one finds in Crashaw, a so-called "eccentric" and "marginal" poet,[63] not just narratives of abject dependence but of abject *inter*dependence. In this kind of intersubjectivity, "heightened feelings and extreme scenes . . . [of] wrenching pathos, ecstatic contemplation of the male wounded body, the flowing and mixing of bodily fluids, voluptuous colorings, martyrdom, [and] metamorphosis"[64] all attest to inevitable connections between humans and even the divine[65]—connections that fly in the face of early modern (and also contemporary) individualism.[66]

Literary scholars consistently have described Crashaw's work as having what Richard Rambuss in particular names a "startling weirdness."[67] Crashaw, Rambuss contends, "rates among the queerest of devotional authors"[68] as readers note across his poems "their stripping down to shivered emotion; their striving to move, even overwhelm in a sheer surfeit of figuration; their decorum-flaunting juxtapositions of the otherworldly and the worldly . . . [and their] whirling mélange of keening affects and vertiginously shifting perspectives."[69] Similarly, T. S. Eliot famously writes about the poet's aesthetic freakishness and "perversity of feeling."[70] In fact, Eliot describes Crashaw's verse explicitly in terms of a *disability* aesthetic that turns conventional Western aesthetics on its head by centering as the subject of art what is "lacking, inept, incompetent, inferior, in need, immature, unskilled, frail, uncivilized, [and] defective."[71] While chapter 5 takes on disability aesthetics much more fully,[72] suffice it to say here that Eliot understands Crashaw's poetry as offering something "grotesque and . . . hideous . . . that is also in its way *beautiful*."[73]

Indeed, there is much in Crashaw that deems him a kind of crip poet—from his verse's baroque excess to its emotional extremes.[74] What matters most about Crashaw's ethos, however, is his keen articulation of ecstatic, abject interdependence. As Rambuss has maintained, Crashaw's poetry "amounts to the most sustained endeavor among English poets to render—and by rendering simulate—ecstasy."[75] The "divinest love" Crashaw expresses throughout "sanguinary epigrams" and numerous other poems becomes palpable through leaky, wounded, suffering figures—"male and female, human and heavenly—[that] wind up being devotionally versatile, both penetrable and themselves penetrative."[76]

As Rambuss reminds us, "ecstasy—*ek-statis*—means passage outside the body, past the boundaries of the self."[77] In Crashaw, readers find "transportive supra-identitarian traversals"[78] premised on the commingling, collapse, and communion of passible bodies. Take, for instance, "An Apology for the Precedent Hymn" wherein the poet narrator, as early as line 2, is "transfused [by] the flame / I took from reading thee" ("Apology," 2–3). In this transformative transfusion, "one friendly flood / Of baptism" makes souls "not Spaniards too" but rather "blends them all into one blood" ("Apology," 15–16):

> Christ's faith makes but one body of all souls;
> And love's that body's soul; no law controls
> Our free traffic for heaven; we may maintain
> Peace sure, with piety, though it dwell in Spain.
> What soul soe'er in any language can
> Speak heaven like hers, is my soul's countrymen. ("Apology," 17–22)

Both English and non-English worshippers are nonautonomous beings who are each other's "soul[s'] country[men]" ("Apology," 22): "no law controls / Our free traffic for heaven," Crashaw proclaims, as "Christ's faith makes but one body of all souls" ("Apology," 17). In "Apology," deeply vulnerable bodies disintegrate in intersubjective ecstasy as selves become others in Christ's body and love. Among other works in Crashaw's canon, this poem attests to the power of what James Kuzner so fittingly terms "unguarded existence."[79]

"Apology," I would argue, typically displays a prosthetic logic, one that combines a prostrating evacuation of agency and selfhood more typical of seventeenth-century devotional verse with Crashaw's own hyper-heightened refusal of the private and individual.[80] Abject interdependence in Crashaw's poetry eschews something Rambuss has noted in a different context: "individual experience or concentrated, inward-coiling reflection."[81] It demands the complete loss of self in other, just as "the mothers' milk" and "the children's blood" are "both blended in one flood" in a rose- and lily-filled heaven in "Upon the Infant Martyrs" (1–2):

> To see both blended in one flood,
> The mothers' milk, the children's blood,
> Makes me doubt if heaven will gather
> Roses hence, or lilies rather. ("Infant," 1–4)

Recurring tropes—rife with impairment—of blending, melting, morphing, and mingling so characteristic of Crashaw's verse all undermine a stubborn ableism in the period that refuses what Margrit Shildrick calls "the mutually engaging existential status" of all bodyminds.[82]

For Crashaw, abject interdependence, transmutation, and communion likewise are central to the experience of ecstatic, orgasmic spirituality. In "Saint Mary Magdalene; or the Weeper," for example, Magdalene's anguished tears become "milky rivers" that stream "upwards" to become nourishment for "Heaven's bosom" ("Weeper," 19–21). "A brisk cherub something sips" of these precious tears "Whose sacred influence / Adds sweetness to his sweetest lips"; even more so, "his song / Tastes of this breakfast all day long" ("Weeper," 26–30).[83] Over the course of "The Weeper," explains Rambuss, Crashaw writes a "narrative of Mary Magdalene's conversion, of who she is or how she entered into the state of extreme, world-altering feeling that here has so consumed her."[84] As her tears alternatingly become "proudest pearls" ("Weeper," 42), dewdrops "Nuzzled in the lily's neck" ("Weeper," 46), and a "wat'ry blossom . . . / [that] Ripe, will make the richer wine" ("Weeper," 65–66),[85] readers witness the Magdalene's suffering, orgasmic body "drifting toward a state on the far side of organization and sense."[86] Poetic tears multiplicitously signal all kinds of intense corporeal vulnerabilities and also testify to her *ekstasis*.

In "The Weeper," the Magdalene and her excretions extend well beyond the boundaries of the self; as Alphonso Lingis explains of the orgasmic body more generally, she "break[s] down into a mass of exposed organs, secretions, striated muscles, systems turning into pulp and susceptibility."[87] Her "expressive matter" becomes what Rambuss describes as "the matter for more matter, for more things: stars, seed, cream, pearls, dew, balsam, flowers, drinking water, wine, April showers, oceans, bath waters, money, perfume, mother and sons, and so on."[88] The Magdalene's passible body and its unrelenting secretions remind us how, as Sarah Beckwith notes, "bodily margins are where the bounded system is both created and destroyed, made powerful and vulnerable. But in displaying the very outlines of that body (through dislocation, rupture, entry, exit or traverse), and by so revealing the demarcations of the bounded system, that outline is made available for redrawing."[89]

Indeed, "the Weeper" redraws the limits of the inevitably abject bodymind as porous, malleable, and highly intersubjective:

> When some new bright guest
> Takes up among the stars a room,
> And heaven will make a feast,
> Angels with their bottles come;
> And draw from these full eyes of thine [Mary Magdalene's]
> Their master's water, their own wine. ("Weeper," 31–36)

As this stanza attests, bodies of all kinds, human and otherwise, are neither inviolable nor autonomous. Human tears are angel food; one body's saline is another's liquid balm. Lord love's "well-pointed dart" ignites "the bosom fires that fill" Mary Magdalene, and her "wounded heart" makes its "way into these weeping eyn" ("Weeper," 103, 98, 105, 106). "O floods, O fires! O suns, O show'rs!" ("Weeper," 101) all intertwine inside her complex, relational embodiment: "All places, times, and objects be / Thy tear's sweet opportunity" ("Weeper," 131–32).

This prosthetic logic of abject interdependence resurfaces again in "The Flaming Heart," a meditation "Upon the Book and Picture of the Seraphical Saint Teresa." Here, Crashaw retells St. Teresa of Avila's autobiographical report of a vision of an angel who pierced her with an arrow. By Crashaw's account, however, Teresa is the true seraph:

> You must transpose the picture quite
> And spell it wrong to read it right;
> Read Him for her, and her for him;
> And call the Saint the Seraphim. ("Teresa," 9–12)

"But had thy pale-faced purple took," the poet narrates of this quite literal transfusion of one being into another, "Fire from the burning cheeks of that bright book / Thou wouldst on her have heaped up all / That could be seraphical" ("Teresa," 26–30). "Give him the veil," the speaker instructs ("Teresa," 42). "Give her the dart" ("Teresa," 42), he likewise insists as Teresa and the seraph become interchangeable. Her shame is his; his flame is hers. Each one's ecstasy is the other's as well. Vulnerable, intercorporeal entities, we indeed "read him for her, and her for him; / And call the saint the seraphim" ("Teresa," 12) as the penetrated Teresa penetrates the seraph, wounding him just as he wounds her.

By the poem's close, it is not just Teresa and the seraph who are engulfed into each other. The poem's narrator and its readers—as well as Christ himself—all are incorporated into this rapturous orgy of wounds, bodies, and souls: "By all thy dow'r of lights and fires; / By all the eagle in thee, and all the dove; . . . / By all thy brim-filled bowls of fierce desire" ("Teresa," 94–99), the poet intones:

> By all of him we have in thee;
> Leave nothing of my self in me.
> Let me so read thy life, that I
> Unto all life of mine may die. ("Teresa," 105–8)

Selfhood is evacuated so entirely in this last stanza that nothing remains but painful ecstasy and the perversely titillating pleasure of mortality as promise of the afterlife to come.

Crashaw's verse illuminates how disability embodiment, and its attendant suffering, cultivates an epistemological logic that is intersubjective, not individualizing.[90] For this poet, devotional selves are contingent, nonautonomous, and radically transfused across bodies and persons. Take again, for instance, Crashaw's divine epigram "Blessed Be the Paps Which Thou Hast Sucked" wherein "*thy* teats" (1, my emphasis) simultaneously are Jesus's breasts:

> Suppose he had been Tabled at thy Teats,
> Thy hunger feels not what he eats:
> He'll have his Teat ere long (a bloody one).
> The Mother then must suck the Son. ("Paps," 1–4)

Indeed, Christ will "have his teat ere long (a bloody one)" ("Paps," 3) as he becomes over the course of only four short lines the nursing mother of all humanity. In "Blessed Be the Paps," "the mother then must suck the son" ("Paps," 4) as Jesus's wound-breasts transform into simultaneous nourishment for the anguished maternal virgin who bore and fed him in the first place.

Valuing Pain

Bodymind encounters in Crashaw are about what Shildrick details in disability studies as "a mutual crossing of boundaries that enacts the very means through which embodied subjects are both constituted, and undone."[91] As readers have learned, these encounters provoke shared salvation and ecstatic dissolution. However, they do not do so without quite a lot of pain and suffering. More precisely, pain—bleeding wounds and anguished weeping especially—often function for Crashaw as key loci around which abject interdependence takes shape. Indeed, as Beckwith enumerates, one of the purposes of wounds "is to melt all dividing differences . . . the boundaries of Christ's body and the body of the devotee are made so soft and so continuous with each other that where one ends and where the other begins becomes indeterminable."[92]

Scholars in disability studies and beyond have attempted to think through the problem of pain, or as Margaret Price puts it, "understanding what it means to desire disability cannot be achieved without full consideration of desire's counterpart and sometimes co-conspirator: pain."[93] While suffering certainly can be awful, finally even unbearable, disability theorizing invokes more open consideration of what Martha Stoddard Holmes calls the "validity and importance of experiences of pain."[94] Echoing a sensibility that sits at the heart of disability gain more generally, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson clarifies this challenge when she posits that pain demands critical examination of "the entanglement of suffering and joy" and interrogation of "the contradiction of simultaneously lamenting and embracing disability."[95] Pain and suffering, these and other scholars have argued, have immense epistemological value. They are an important source of crip knowledge, "a carnal property, culturally produced and producing."[96]

Crashaw's prosthetic logic assumes the difficult, inevitable proximity of suffering and ecstasy, as well as the trying productivity of this paradoxical nexus. "The Author's Motto" that introduces the 1646 edition of *Steps to the Temple* in fact embodies this sensibility perfectly: "Live Jesus, live, and let it be / My life to die, for love of thee."[97] Even in this brief statement where Jesus is re-enlivened in the poet's ecstatic, loving sacrifice, one notes Crashaw's awareness of how "immanent and vivid aliveness" is fused always with "equally vivid mortality."[98] So, too, in Crashaw's "A Hymn to the Name and Honor of the Admirable Saint Teresa" wherein the wounded martyr "oft shalt . . . complain / Of a sweet and subtle pain. / Of intolerable joys; / Of a Death, in which who dyes / Loves his death, and dies again" (79–101).

The prefatory motto, insofar as it inspires and is followed by myriad devotional poems, likewise attests to the way painful wounding and violence, as submitted just above, can distinctly inspire narrative.[99] Spiritual trial and profound agony, in Crashaw, motivate and shape poetic creativity. Susannah Mintz clarifies, "poems can act as both portrayals and instances of pain. . . . Pain circulates because poems do . . . presenting readers with a sense of shared suffering or hopefulness about salvation or cure, and perhaps more importantly, a method of *reading* pain that might redefine one's personal experience of it."[100]

Indeed, Crashaw needs pain and shared suffering for poetic production. His verse testifies to the ways that, as Garland-Thomson argues, "suffering expands our imagination about what we can endure."[101] Ato Quayson further argues that both lived and literary witnessing of pain provides sufferers with validation of the truth of their own pain; pain forces recognition and empathic repositioning.[102] "Welcome my grief, my joy; how dear's / To me my legacy of tears!" (1–2), the poet gratefully confesses in "John 16: Verily I Say Unto You, Ye Shall Weep and Lament." "I'll weep, and weep, and will therefore / Weep, 'cause I can weep no more: / Thou, thou (dear Lord) even thou alone, / Giv'st joy, even when thou givest none" (John 16, 3–5). Pain here is an expressly poetic instance. Moreover, it is one that articulates a simultaneous lamentation and embrace of anguish that, in turn, facilitates abject interdependence.

While pain regularly is theorized as an isolating and individuating experience,[103] it in fact is a socially produced and socially producing condition.[104] Contemporary historian Joanna Bourke, for one, counters notions of pain as agential, arguing instead that we must give agency to the *person* in pain by understanding "pain as a 'type of event.' A pain-event always belongs to the individual's life; it's a part of her life story."[105] Pain as event is environmental and relational; people, Bourke explains, "interpret their pains not as contained, isolated, individual bodies, but in interaction with other bodies and social environments."[106] Likewise, these social interactions and narratives can be "productive: they have the capacity to unite people in exhilarating, creative ways."[107]

In Crashaw, painful corporeal vulnerability absolutely is an event, and it is also something social that can create community—in this case, powerful abject interdependence.[108] Take for instance and again, "A Hymn to the Name and Honor of the Admirable Saint Teresa," in which the poet narrator promises Teresa that "All thy old woes shall now smile on thee . . . / All of thy suff'rings be divine" (145–48). Teresa's "wounds shall blush to such bright scars / As keep account of the Lamb's wars" ("Teresa," 153–54). "Pains sit bright upon [her]" and "sorrows here shall shine" ("Teresa," 146, 147) such that suffering brings to her a spiritual community of "thousands of crowned Soules throng[ing] to be themselves [her] crown" (166–67). Note, further, "Sancta Maria Dolorum; or the Mother of Sorrows," an expanded verse translation of the Marian hymn "Stabat Mater Dolorosa":

> In shade of death's sad tree
>   Stood doleful she.
> Ah, she! now by none other
> Name to be known, alas, but Sorrow's Mother.
>   Before her eyes
> Hers, and the whole world's joys,
> Hanging all torn she sees; and in his woes
> And pains, her pangs and throes. ("Maria," 1–7)

This "Pathetical Descant" explicitly revolves around the mutual vulnerability and passibility of Christ and his mother. Furthermore, Jesus's oozing, painful wounds are the essential site of that intersubjective connection: "Each wound of his, from every part, / All, more at home in her own heart" ("Maria," 9–10).[109] "While with a faithful, mutual, flood," Crashaw testifies, "Her eyes bleed tears, his wounds weep blood" ("Maria," 19–20).

In this poem, readers encounter what Alyson Patsavas outlines as "a queercrip understanding of pain as a fluid, relational, and . . . leaky experience that flows through, across, and between always-already connected bodies."[110] With its gaping wounds and weeping eyes, Crashaw's verse illuminates so well how "the corporeality of disability is not that of an other fixed in a binary relation to the normatively embodied self, but is already queer in its contestation of the very separation of self and other."[111] In fact, the prosthetic logic of abject interdependence that motivates "The Mother of Sorrows"—what the poet narrator calls "a costly intercourse" ("Maria," 21)—insists that Sancta Maria and her persecuted son explicitly "Discourse alternate wounds to one another" ("Maria," 24):

> His nails write swords in her, which soon her heart
>   Pays back, with more than their own smart;
> Her swords, still growing with his pain,
> Turn spear, and straight come home again. ("Maria," 27–30)

In these lines, Jesus and Mary share great suffering—not just empathically, but quite literally. Profound corporeal interconnectivity refutes demands for self-sovereignty. Put another way, Crashaw makes visible how painful flesh-and-blood encounters "do not simply *affect* us at a surface level but *effect* the very constitution of embodied becoming."[112]

In "The Mother of Sorrows," nails turn into swords turn into spears as both mother and son, across loci of intense somatic mutilation, become each other. Here, the broken body is more open and receptive to salvation; or as Susannah Mintz offers, "to be broken . . . is equivalent to a vital openness; it epitomizes acceptance of and, more profoundly, intimacy with the divine."[113] The poet narrator likewise wants to join in this painful, ecstatic merging of selves and souls: "Oh teach mine too the art / To study him so, till we mix / Wounds; and become one crucifix" ("Maria," 98–100). "Dissolve my days and hours," the poet pleads, "And if thou yet (faint soul!) defer / To bleed with him, fail not to weep with her" ("Maria," 88–90). Crashaw's narrator finds spiritual community in suffering and, as Mintz writes of another seventeenth-century devotional poet, An Collins, bodily disrepair becomes a crucial "point of commonality with Christ."[114] "To be broken down and not made whole, to be broken by and like Christ," Mintz clarifies, "is precisely the point."[115]

As one can observe, pain and injury absolutely are intrinsic to the prosthetic logic that drives "Sancta Maria Dolorum." To borrow from Nirmala Erevelles on disability in a transnational context, impairment offers "a manner of becoming-in-the-world that reorganizes lived space and time as well as the social relations between the self and other bodies."[116] Crashaw's verse is a poetics of confidence; borrowing from Sidney Gottlieb, we find herein a "poetry of affliction [that] avoid[s] giving comfort to the enemy, and perhaps defend[s] the godly from the common claim that they [disabled people] are dour and their lifestyle 'unpleasant.'"[117] In "Sancta Maria Dolorum," abjection is the basis for welcome nonautonomy and ecstatic shared experience. Somatic relation and commingling in pain and loss enable the highest form of spiritual love; or as Erevelles might put it, "a severely disabled position destabilizes the regulatory strictures of able-bodiedness and enables the proliferation of contingent, experimental, and, most importantly, productive modes of becoming."[118]

Crashaw as crip poet provokes disability reorientations, re-envisioning vulnerability and abject interdependence against stoic individualism and praising, to again recall Kuzner's formulation, "unguarded existence."[119] Crashaw's celebration of unguarded existence rejects disability as negative ontology. It shows readers that, although we imagine and are taught that the body is bounded, inviolable, and autonomous, "most of us are both consciously and subconsciously engaged in ongoing strategies that provide protection against the putative dangers of encroachment, even engulfment, that other bodies seem to pose."[120] Crashaw's verse also espouses a cripistemology that, as Patsavas puts it, "permit[s] us to think pain otherwise, to produce painful new knowledge, but also to construct analyses about pain that are less painful, and less dangerous to those of us in pain, and, in doing so, to reimagine our (shared, pained) futures."[121]

Prosthetic Contact

Given the readings offered thus far in chapter 3, one might reconsider critical resistance to Crashaw's poetry as symptomatic of ableist anxieties that reject nonnormative embodiments insofar as they "threaten to overflow the boundaries of what Kristeva calls 'the self's clean and proper body.'"[122] As Eugene R. Cunnar reminds us, Crashaw indeed has received "disparaging treatment at the hands of critics over the years."[123] Among other things, he has been imagined as inferior to nearly all other major seventeenth-century poets, overly feminine and/or grotesque in his style, and engaged in "sensationalized, blind devotionalism."[124] Perhaps, though, what is actually so discomfiting for many readers about Crashaw's work is its crip sensibilities. His work, even in its unique "weirdness," is testament to an early modern counterlogic that avows disability as it eschews individualism for sometimes painful relationality. Abject interconnection eclipses bounded autonomy in Crashaw in a way that is far more complex than what some critics have deemed his supposedly baroque, Roman Catholic aesthetic.[125] His poems instead offer modes of both knowing and feeling that unabashedly revel in impairment, weakness, and so-called grotesquery, celebrating anguish, frailty, and interdependence as powerful—and profoundly poetic—tenets of the human condition.

Even more so, and as chapter 3's conclusion details, the often painful, abject interdependencies Crashaw lauds in his verse envision fraught, complex connections not just between humans—or humans and godly deities, specifically—but to matter well *beyond* the human. Put more simply, crip intersubjectivities often involve *actual* prosthetic materials. These materials extend and reshape the psychic landscapes and embodied experiences of those who come into contact with them. These more literal, physical prostheses again evidence the prosthetic logic undergirding this chapter—that humans indeed are vulnerably open subjects whose illusory boundaries do not necessarily divide but rather ironically bind people and things together.[126] Put another way, things, bodily and not, further interrupt ableist fantasies of inviolable self-sovereignty. Motivated, ultimately, by what readers should by now understand as an attitude of disability gain, Crashaw's poetry illuminates what Stacy Alaimo elsewhere has termed an "interactionist ontology."[127] His verse offers liberating ways of comprehending early modern corporeal borders and selfhood,[128] invoking vibrant matter beyond the human bodymind proper as key to configurations of interdependence.

Take, for example, the intense fusion of worshiper and rood in "Vexilla Regis, the Hymn of the Holy Cross." Here, both reader and poet narrator are "languishing soul[s]" ("Vexilla," 1) whose sins are atoned for not just through Christ's "wounds of love" but by the holy cross itself: "Large throne of Love! royally spread / With purple of too rich a red: / . . . Glorious or grievous more? Thus to make good / Thy costly excellence with thy King's own blood" ("Vexilla," 25–30). More precisely, spiritual salvation is affected via the explicit transfusion of the sinner's pained body with the crucifix and sign of the cross:

> Hail, our alone hope! let thy fair head shoot
> Aloft; and fill the nations with thy noble fruit.
> The while our hearts and we
> Thus graft ourselves on thee;
> Grow thou and they. And be thy fair increase
> The sinner's pardon and the just man's peace. ("Vexilla," 37–42)

In late medieval devotional poetry, Sarah Beckwith notes, "the identity of the worshipper becomes labile in its desire to merge with the spear, with the nails that enter Christ's body. But the identification is also to the cross itself."[129] This certainly is the case in "Vexilla Regis" as reader-sinners prosthetically "graft [them]selves" onto the rood such that the boundaries between human and plant matter become obsolete. As an ecstatic poet narrator explains just above, self-sovereignty disintegrates in this moment of what contemporary theorists Marquard Smith and Joanne Morra might call "prosthetic contact."[130] The splicing and merging of human and nonhuman evokes a unique cross-corporeal encounter wherein the supposed gap between self and other collapses, and prosthetic matter becomes part of actual somatic habitation. "Our hearts" and minds grow both inside and along with the holy cross; one entity's "fair increase" is at the same time another's "pardon" and "peace."

In their insightful collection, *The Prosthetic Impulse*, Smith and Morra explore "point[s] of prosthetic contact" to find that "'the prosthetic' is an integral or 'interconstitutive' part of the 'human.'"[131] According to these authors, the prosthetic impulse is "composed of any encounter—material, figural, or metaphorical—that facilitates or contests our chances of making (human) contact with a modern world that is ever more mediated and determined by communication technologies, biomedicine, and information."[132] They argue that prostheses are objects that have "the potential to form an integral part of certain speculations on the corporeal surface, the psyche, and the interior and exterior limits of the body," and that any "efforts to renegotiate discourses on 'the human' might attend to the edges between these material and immaterial surfaces and limits."[133] "The human," Alaimo similarly insists, "is always the very stuff of the messy, contingent, emergent mix of the material world."[134]

Indeed, Crashaw's rood with its "noble fruit" and "fair head shoot[ing] / Aloft" becomes an integral part of devoted, godly subjects. The rood as prosthesis invites moments of intense corporeal connection, somatic recalibration, and spiritual insight: "Tall tree of life! thy truth makes good / What was till now ne'er understood / . . . . It was thy wood he meant should make the throne / For a more than Solomon" ("Vexilla," 19–24). The cross is the potent substance of intersubjectivity, and more so, organic matter beyond the human that transforms sinful humanity: "Us with our price thou weighed'st / Our price for us thou paid'st" ("Vexilla," 33–34). This vibrant matter[135] serves as a point of prosthetic contact, leaving its imprint on all the souls who become grafted to it; its transformative power, in this grafting, rivets onto better, more faithful believers new spiritual and affective impressions. This poem affirms, as Elizabeth Grosz asserts, that "we need to understand the body, not as an organism or entity in itself, but as a system, or series of open-ended systems, functioning within other huge systems it cannot control through which it can access and acquire its abilities and capabilities."[136]

The rood of Crashaw's "Vexilla Regis" certainly exposes self-sovereignty as an ableist fantasy. Further, it absolutely confirms how crip interdependencies between bodyminds and prosthetic "others" are enabling unions that can incite new capacities—often explicitly because of shared suffering. More precisely, the rood, a site of "Even balance of both worlds! our world of sin, / And that of grace heav'n weighed in him" ("Vexilla," 31–32), disrupts self-integrity insofar as it functions as the animate material of spiritual memory. The poem illustrates that things beyond ourselves are constitutive of humanness, especially, for Crashaw, when it comes to faithful remembering; prosthetic materials and the points of contact they ignite help one not to forget—and maybe even more, to recall in very particular ways.[137] "*Look up*, languishing Soul!" ("Vexilla," 1, my emphasis), the poem's narrator awfully advises:

> Lo where the fair
> Badge of thy faith call back thy care,
> And bids thee ne're forget
> Thy life is one long debt
> Of love to Him, who on this painful tree
> Paid back the flesh he took for thee. ("Vexilla," 1–6)

For Crashaw, the rood with which Christian followers and readers are abjectly interwoven is a unique, prosthetic memory device that calls one back and forbids the forgetting of humanity's debt to Christ.

In the context of contemporary disability studies, Carol Padden writes, "understanding the basis of shared intentionality and intersubjectivity" means reconceptualizing not just bodily violability but *mental* self-sovereignty as well; it "necessitates a notion of the mind that encompasses more than the individual and his or her internal space, but is extended through the body and *distributed* in social interaction."[138] Contemporary theorists of embodied cognition have called this process of extended mental distribution across open-ended, interrelated systems *externalism*: a sense of the mind as "embodied, enactive, encultured, and interwoven with a social and technical web, and as a construction not limited to the boundaries of the individual organism."[139] Psychologist John A. Teske explains it this way: our "mental states are hybrids, spread across internal and external materials, biological or not."[140] As Teske clarifies in another context, "in the case of remembering the tools and ingredients for baking a cake," for example, "the kitchen location can serve as an external aid to memory, and imagining embodied actions affords the retrieval of information."[141] Cognition is embodied, Teske posits, "when it is dependent on features of an agent's body which are beyond the brain."[142] "Quite simply," he quips, it is "the view 'the mind ain't in the head.'"[143]

Crashaw's "Vexilla Regis" illuminates this sort of anti-ableist refusal of mental self-sovereignty. Specifically, it illustrates the impossibility of salvation without the bodymind's interdependent reliance on a nonhuman entity beyond the self. Just as the forgetful baker's memory is jogged when the baker stands near a warm oven, so too can reader-sinners, not to mention the poem's narrator, only remember and enact faith through proximate prosthetic matter—that is, the cross. Especially in an early modern era invested in corporeal philosophies such as the Galenic humoralism outlined above, it makes sense that this poem's languishing souls are situated in a complex, rhizomic network that transforms both their bodies and minds and compels them toward particular information retrieval, here the embodied recollection of Jesus as their one true savior: "Lo, how the streams of life, from that full nest / Of loves, thy lord's too liberal breast / . . . washed thy stain, transferred thy smart, / And took it home to his own heart" ("Vexilla," 7–11).

In the rood, readers thus observe a powerful prosthetic object that potently rejects and reconfigures presumably bounded selfhood: it is a point of prosthetic contact that reshapes users' entire bodyminds, memories, and hence spiritual futures, and it engenders mutual connections and reciprocities, not self-sovereignty. A similar phenomenon occurs in "The Weeper," which, as described above, represents Mary Magdalene's passible body engaged in abject interdependence and communion with everything from wine-sipping cherubs to heaven itself. Notably, however, Crashaw deliberately envisions the Magdalene's eternally anguished tears as prosthetic materials crucial to those ecstatic transfusions and transmutations. Her tears are out-of-body points of prosthetic contact that affirm, as Maria Gatens further avers, that the human body "can never be viewed as a final or finished product as in the case of the Cartesian automaton, since it is a body that is in constant interchange with its environment."[144] "The human body," Gatens reminds us, "is radically open to its surroundings and can be composed, recomposed and decomposed by other bodies."[145]

These transformative interchanges entail not just other bodies but also *things* that, in the case of both "Vexilla Regis" and "The Weeper," dismantle illusions of bodymind autonomy and especially cognitive self-sovereignty. Specifically in "The Weeper," Christ has "taught the wounded heart / The way into [Mary Magdalene's] weeping eyn" (105–6), and those weeping eyes then not only reciprocally wash the Lord's feet at the close of the poem but actually "keep faithful time" (140) for the entire god-loving universe. The Magdalene's tears, not unlike the rood, are beyond-the-self temporal tools for remembering Jesus's magnanimous act of salvation as they "fall, and fall" as the "night arise[s]" and still as "night loose[s] her eyes" ("Weeper," 109–11). Tears as they embody Mary Magdalene's grief transform time altogether, realigning and reorienting all mortal believers who are beholden to it ceaseless passing. "Thus dost thou melt the year" ("Weeper," 91), the poet narrator proclaims:

> Into a weeping motion
> Each minute waiteth here,
> Takes his Tear and gets him gone.
> By thine eyes tinct ennobled thus
> Time lays him up: he's precious.
> Time as by thee he passes,
> Makes thy ever-wat'ry eyes
> His hourglasses.
> By them his steps he rectifies.
> The sands he used no longer please.
> For his own sands he'll use thy seas. ("Weeper," 92–103)

Mary's sorrowful "tinct" is the animating matter of spiritual memory that reminds readers to, like Time, lie spiritually prostrate before Christ. Even more so, her tears create a "weeping motion" that establishes an alternate temporality for Christian faith and sets the pace for readers as they move along the path to ennobling salvation. Mary's "eyes' swoll'n wombs of sorrow" are for the righteously devout a "just cadence [that] still keeps time," allowing them to consistently remember and "date [Christ's] memory" ("Weeper," 126, 104, 118). "Others by days, by months, by years" (119) recall Jesus's crucifixion, but through Mary Magdalene's metronomic weeping, reader-believers access, as with the rood, another, better memory device for ecstatically marking and measuring their redemption as well as the infinite price Jesus paid for it.

As these various poems attest, prosthetic matter and the points of contact it facilitates profoundly influence human bodyminds in myriad ways. Equally important to note: bodyminds likewise transform prosthetic matter. Prosthetic contact opens up *all* participating entities, as Grosz would have it, "for redistribution, dis-organization, transformation; each is metamorphosed in the encounter, both become something other, something incapable of being determined in advance, and perhaps even in retrospect, but which nonetheless have perceptibly shifted and realigned."[146] Put another way, as with human-human abject interdependencies, human-nonhuman communions are keenly reciprocal as well. Interdependence, as we well know, is *at least* a two-way street, even when it comes to lively things.

A quick lexical example might clarify further. In his ground-laying book *Prosthesis*, critical theorist David Wills suggests that the term *prosthesis* always infers activity and motion.[147] The word itself implies change and transformation; it is an act, an operation that "opens the structure of mutancy."[148] Outlined by English judge and diplomat Thomas Wilson in the third book of his *Arte of Rhetorique*,[149] the word *prosthesis* officially[150] entered the English language in 1553 as an elocutionary and rhetorical term clarifying the linguistic maneuver of adding a syllable to the start of a word.[151] This addition—like a prefix, for example—of course fundamentally changes the meaning of the word.[152] The syllable addition is not the only transformative mechanism, however; the point of prosthetic contact, to recall Smith and Morra, alters *both* parts, the prefix and the root. The added syllable becomes something altogether different in conjunction with the root word, and of course the root word via its linguistic prosthesis takes on new meaning.

In Crashaw's "On the Still Surviving Marks of Our Savior's Wounds," readers witness this intersubjective transformation of prosthetic matter into something else as it encounters bodyminds beyond it. As glossed toward the opening of this chapter, the "story" of Christ's painful wounds is written in "On the Still Surviving Marks" explicitly through things: a nail, a thorn, and a spear (1–2). These lively prosthetic materials are completely transfigured, however, as the poem progresses. They are "still legible" but "in another sense" ("Surviving Marks," 4, 3) as they merge with Jesus's crucified body and the bodymind of the poet narrator. Altered at the point of prosthetic contact, the tools employed to kill Christ and write the bloody tale of his death become the Lord's actual wounds—"A wound of thine" ("Surviving Marks," 8)—and also the narrator's analgesic for his own physical and spiritual injuries: "Now, (what is better) / Balsam for mine" ("Surviving Marks," 9–10).

Similarly, ecstatic commingling and abject interdependence in "Upon the Thorns Taken Down from Our Lord's Head Bloody" again are registered through the transmutation of prosthetic matter into another state. "Know'st thou this, soldier?," Crashaw writes:

> 'tis a much changed plant, which yet
> Thyself didst set,
> 'Tis changed indeed, did Autumn e'er such beauties bring
> To shame his Spring?
> O! whoso hard a husbandman could ever find
> A soil so kind?
> Is not the soil a kind one (think ye) that returns
> Roses for thorns? ("Thorns," 1–8)

In the above stanza, the poet narrator details for both the soldier watching the crucifixion and the reader-sinner recalling Christ's sacrifice how Jesus's bodymind—the "soil so kind . . . returns / Roses for Thorns" ("Thorns," 6–8). Christ's crucified body becomes the emblematic raw material of a kind of pre-Cartesian, Levinasian "radical generosity"[153] that converts dynamic prosthetic matter, here "a much changed plant" ("Thorns," 1). The intersubjective confluence of Jesus's suffering habitus and the supposed shameful crown of thorns that sits atop his bloody head alters that matter to gainfully create something new: rose "beauties" ("Thorns," 3) that further transfuse with all of humanity, proving God's eternal love for even those most sinful. As with "Vexilla Regis" and other poems, one discovers in these lines an emphatic resistance to self-sovereignty that, especially for Crashaw, gets codified in Christ's dissolution of self for/in others. One also distinctly observes that resistance as an early modern prosthetic logic and instance of disability gain: crip interdependencies and novel capacities, like Christian redemption, become manifest through the transforming prosthetic matter of the crown of thorns.

Conclusion

Chapter 3 has been an invitation to readers to dismantle ableist fantasies of the robust, invulnerable, autonomous individual so crucial to compulsory able-bodiedness and constructions of "normal" in early modernity, and in our own time as well. The often anguishing, alternative unions and communions of disabled bodyminds represented in Richard Crashaw's poetry illuminated acute limitations in conceptions of selfhood that do not fully account for what Margrit Shildrick calls "the dynamic combinations, connections and rejections that constitute life."[154] In this chapter, readers specifically learned how abject interdependence, represented in Crashaw's verse through corporeal vulnerability, pain, and prostheses, deconstructs a model of triumphant individualism operating in Renaissance England. Humanism, even in an early modern epoch, supposes that self-governing, free-willed, rational individuals desire, and indeed obtain, sovereignty over their own lives. In truth, though, as Shildrick again reminds us, "embodiment is never self-complete nor secured against otherness, but manifests through a nexus of constitutive assemblages that contest the very idea of singular human being."[155] Fantasies of self-sovereignty become even more precarious when one owns this dependency and vulnerability explicitly as disability gain, and with the acknowledgement that the unique interdependencies structuring so-called selfhood are themselves shaped by other, further force fields of intensities.[156]

The prosthetic logics and crip intersubjectivities Crashaw entertains in his verse indeed resist, even refuse, one-dimensional paradigms of both individual and dyadic sociality. His poems crystalize and refract energetic points of prosthetic contact that are numerous and varied, and as Grosz might offer, these complex networks and assemblages are "the provisional linkages of elements, fragments, flows, of disparate status and substance: ideas, things—human, animate, and inanimate—all have the same ontological status. There is no hierarchy of being . . . or plan to which they must conform. Their 'law' is rather the imperative of endless experimentation, metamorphosis, or transmutation, alignment and realignment."[157] Put slightly differently, chapter 3's depiction of disability gain does not assume a "hierarchy of being" in which humans—moreover, certain kinds of humans—supposedly function autonomously and without the "burden" of vulnerability, suffering, and dependence that is an inevitable part of being in the world. Organic totality, wholeness, oneness, and self-sovereignty as supposed staples of the human condition are fantasies operating against the harder but often more rewarding realities of unpredictability, susceptibility, interconnection, and interdependence with others, both people and things.

The abject, intersubjective alignments and painfully vulnerable enmeshments broached above are something disabled people and their allies understand so well given lived experience with, among many other things, prosthetic technologies, daily medications, and collaborative caregiving. Our bodymind's inherent instabilities, as Margrit Shildrick suggests, always disrupt "the possibility of any fixed relation between self and other," and, moreover, the situatedness of those unstable bodyminds in relation to lively, prosthetic matter makes that fixity even more impossible.[158] Indeed, readers observed in chapter 3 how early modern poetry described ecstatic connections between humans *as well as* prosthetic things. In Crashaw's devotional lyrics, shared suffering and points of prosthetic contact both cultivate and attest to the reality of these broadly constituted human-object networks. Early modern poetry made more visible, as Stacy Alaimo might put it, the "potent ethical and political possibilities [that] emerge from the literal contact zone between human corporeality and more-than-human nature."[159] It asked readers to usefully "deny the human subject the sovereign, central position" such that "instead, ethical considerations and practices . . . emerge from a more uncomfortable and perplexing place where the 'human' is always already part of an active, often unpredictable, material world."[160]

Crashaw's sacred poetry, along with the work of Andrew Marvell and John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, in the following chapter, testifies to how inevitable interdependence[161] and complex relationality undo hegemonic norms and expose, borrowing from Cynthia Marshall, "a selfhood fundamentally challenged by the call to autonomy and by the terms that necessarily structure that autonomy in social interactions."[162] The new "selves" illuminated in chapter 4, as with those herein, all point toward disability orientations that ask readers to "relinquish mastery as they find themselves inextricably part of the flux and flow of the world that others would presume to master."[163] In what follows, normative fantasies of bounded personhood and self-sovereignty disintegrate further in the face of disability gain, again, in the embrace of sometimes painfully messy human-object social networks in which mutuality, interdependence, and vulnerability are what make people most human after all. More precisely, chapter 4 argues that Marvell and Rochester both further articulate alternate modes of corporeal communing—what I term "queer-crip intercourses and intimacies." These unions and communions, readers will learn, upend compulsory heterosexuality, compulsory ableism, and normative strategies of sexual dismissal, celebrating early modern impairment, illness, and even death as the radical foundations of sexual intimacy and interdependence.

Four

Desiring Difference

> II. Foreplay
>
> To create an uninhibited environment for your partner,
> track their hands like game pieces on a board. For leg
> amputees, keep arms on upper body. For arm amputees,
> keep arms on lower body. Engage with like limbs. Keep half-
> limbs out of reach. Your goal is to achieve a false harmony
> with their body.
>
> III. Sex
>
> Mobility is key. If they see the half-limb then they become
> inhibited, nervous. They think: 'Will it hurt like this? Would
> she tell me if it did?' Mobility shows confidence. Think for
> two people. Know where your limbs are at all time; know
> where your partner's limbs are at all times.
>
> —Jillian Weise, "The Amputee's Guide to Sex," lines 7–17[1]

These excerpted stanzas from Jillian Weise's titular poem in *The Amputee's Guide to Sex* speak to how ableist, heteronormative cultural mandates shape who gets to have sex, who is imagined as wanting to have sex, and further, how that sex must be had. In an earlier section from the poem above, the narrator embarrassedly waits, contriving reasons to get her "partner to exit [the] room" (Weise, 1) so she can then remove and hide her prosthetic (Weise, 5–6). In parts II and III of the poem, readers will note that the narrator likewise offers explicit instructions for how people with impairments might "achieve a false harmony" (Weise, 11) with their lovers' bodies and successfully feign typical mobility. "Mobility shows confidence" (Weise 15), the narrator explains; "think for two people" (Weise, 15–16). Among other things, this confidence and command are meant to offset able-bodied people's incorrect assumptions and paranoia that a sex partner with disability will find intimacy unpleasant, even painful: "Will it hurt like this? Would she tell me if it did?" (Weise, 14–15).

This poem is a useful springboard for chapter 4 for two reasons. First, it foregrounds the fraught terrain that is the disabled body when it is simultaneously a sexual body. Second, and much more simply, it narrates disability and sex together, and thus invites conversation about that juncture. As readers will discover and as this initial poem choice suggests, the argument below extends from the previous one, which outlined the power of early modern prosthetic logics to counter normative fantasies of self-sovereignty. The messy, complicated interdependencies we identified in the work of Richard Crashaw celebrated often painful mutuality, vulnerability, and relationality. Complex intersubjectivity resurfaces in this chapter, but in the context of queer-crip sex encounters, encounters that, following Leo Bersani, testify to the disruptive "breakdown of the human itself."[2] Not unlike the intimate assemblages we saw in chapter 3, the early modern sex, desires, and sexualities that circulate throughout chapter 4 often inhere in nonconventional liaisons and seemingly unerotic cultural objects, customs, and acts. Too, they evidence further counterdiscourses of desire *for* disability in early modern literature that upend dominating Renaissance ideologies of ability that would ignore and erase disability and its gains.

The figure of the early modern eunuch matters much as we move forward. In what immediately follows, readers first encounter a disability microhistory of castration as physical impairment and then learn how early modern poets called on—even coveted—this and other forms of sexual difference as "productive" literary figurations.[3] We engage Renaissance anatomy and gynecology texts to explore sexual practices related to insemination, ejaculation, and impotence. This unique archive then opens an extended consideration of nonnormative sexual desires and embodiments as they are represented in the poetry of Andrew Marvell and John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. I argue that Marvell's poems engender literary historical sites of resistance to compulsory heterosexuality, compulsory ableism, and normative strategies of sexual dismissal. Rochester's works do the same, although via their representation of queer-crip communities of contagion that celebrate illness and infection as the perhaps surprising, radical underpinnings of intimacy and sexual interdependencies.

Following the critical impulse of important literary historians such as

Simone Chess and Jason Farr,[4] what gets modeled herein is a pleasurable recognition of crip sexualities, both current ones and those situated in the early modern past, as well as the embrace of "desirable disabled worlds that are not founded on the normalization of disabled people."[5] As chapter 4 shows, modern theorizations of crip sex in disability studies can help us reimagine sex and desire as they are represented in the English Renaissance. This methodology enables the recovery of sex "histories" that, as Melissa Sanchez puts it, "are provisional and fantasmatic—not purely imaginary, but a rough and incomplete narrative by which we join the threads of research, experience, and desire."[6] This chapter likewise illuminates how premodern sex histories might inform contemporary sensibilities about disability desire and gain. The distinct context of early modern literature expands our sense of disability phenomenologies, which inevitably "[generate their] own specific sets of sexual possibilities."[7] Pace eighteenth-century scholar Jason Farr's argument in his seminal work on this subject, these phenomenologies "establish queer, disabled embodiment as an ambivalent experience marked by the exquisite pleasure of transgression and the enduring social and physical pain of disability."[8] Put another way: what unique, painful yet deeply pleasurable sexual worlds and practices stem from early modern disability experience? The pages that follow take up that important question, revealing productive arrangements and innovative interdependencies specifically incited by crip sexualities. Moreover, they uncover further instances of early modern disability gain. In this case, readers discover "new ways for thinking about becoming: experimental and open-ended practices, freedoms, modes of being that do not require social legibility to thrive."[9]

Gelding the Devil

Tucked away in the annals of the British Library is a remarkable broadside ballad from the 1660s that begins to make the case for understanding castration as a disability in early modern England.[10] The anonymous ballad, titled "The Gelding of the Devil,"[11] tells the story of an unsuspecting Baker of Mansfield Town, who as he rides to market singing merrily runs into "the Devil of Hell."[12] The Devil asks him how his horse came to be so fat, and the Baker professes "Because his stones are cut away." Presumably motivated by the horse's enviable plumpness, the Devil asks the Baker to castrate him, and the Baker, apparently always ready with a knife, obliges. Not surprisingly, the Devil ends up livid about the painful procedure and declares revenge on the Baker via a similar gelding on the next market day. Worried, the Baker tells his wife what has happened, and she, so as to help him avoid this fate, pretends to be her husband and goes to market in his stead. When she encounters the waiting Devil, she explains, claiming to be the Baker: "I was gelded yesterday." The Devil wants proof, of course, so she lifts her skirts only to reveal a "terrible wound" that the Devil reads as a botched castration. A lively exchange involving a flea occurs, alongside some smelly farts issuing from the Baker's Wife's arse. These antics ultimately result in the repulsed Devil assuming the Baker's imminent deathly demise due to festering castration wounds, and the exuberant Wife heading back home to gloat about "How she had couzen'd the Devil of Hell."

While much can be made of this ephemera, most crucial is the broadside's representation of castration.[13] When the Baker returns home with news that he's gelded the Devil and shortly can expect the same in return, his Wife laments "without doubt": "I had rather both thy eyes were out . . . / For then all people far and near; As know thee will mock and jeer, / And good wives they will rail and bawl, / And stoneless Gelding will thee call." The Wife's response is notable insofar as it deliberately compares a blind person to a eunuch to emphasize the direness of the Baker's situation. In other words, the Wife hierarchizes two very different physical conditions—blindness and lack of testes—by weighing out their material consequences and associated social stigma. Working from an uncritical, ableist assumption that blindness is an inherently bad thing, the Wife determines that sightlessness is a more welcome fate than castration. She is especially sure of this fact insofar as a man without stones is certain to be ridiculed for his variant sexual organs: good wives will rail and bawl over a husband unable to produce seed, people far and near will mock and jeer, and the impaired Baker will be dubbed a "stoneless Gelding."

The fundamental stigma that drives the Wife's lament (and her wily plan) is not unique to this ballad but rather evident in numerous early modern texts that began, as explained in chapter 1, to rescript mental and physical differences previously deemed "unnatural"—as in divinely sanctioned or supernaturally manifested—as "abnormal" corporeality. Medical and anatomical texts circulating in the period certainly demonstrated collective cultural interest in enumerating and standardizing how, specifically, reproductive organs should appear and function. For example, Helkiah Crooke's *Mikrokosmographia*, an influential 1615 treatise on human anatomy and physiology, exemplifies the potency of these norms. More precisely, the powerful specter of a sexual norm based on penetrative dissemination into the vagina[14] enables Crooke's stigmatizing comparisons of eunuchs to "average" men. Privileging "Seede" as "the Epitomy of the Body, having in it the power and immediate possibility of all the parts,"[15] Crooke describes "gelt men called Eunuches" as possessing "a shrill and piping voice, evill manners, and worse dispositions, neyther shall you lightly finde one of them of a goode inclination, or not broken wited."[16] He claims that the eunuch's "bloode decayeth and their vessels or veines loose their bredth and capacity, and all vigour of lust and desire and joylity is extinguished."[17] Too, gelt men are stereotypically "quiet, diligent, and especially faithfull" only because "they are dull and blockish . . . servile and base-minded . . . [and] because they have too much distrust of themselves."[18]

John Bulwer concurs in *Anthropometamorphosis*, arguing that "testicles being taken away, and so the heart affected, the Voice and very forme [of the eunuch] becommeth womanish."[19] Stoneless men, for Bulwer, are representations of a profound "violence to Nature."[20] Eunuchs turn Nature away from her "appointed course, by a tacite Law, as it were stopping the primigeniall Fountaines of Seed, and those ways which Nature had assigned for the propagation of Posterity, that so she might make them have small voices, and to be more womanish, that conjoyned with her, she might the better conceale her usurpation and counterfeit manhood."[21] According to Bulwer, men without "primigeniall Fountaines of Seed" are harsh aberrations of nature for whom manhood is but a sham.[22] Surgeon Ambroise Paré agrees, similarly describing the castrate's body as abhorrently feminized: "The Nature of Eunuches is to be referred to that of weomen, as who may seeme to have degenerated into a weomanish nature, by deficiency of heate; their smooth body and soft and shrile voyce doe very much assimulate weomen."[23]

In these various revisitations of Galen, Hippocrates, and Aristotle propagated by Renaissance obstetricians, anatomists, and physicians, testes and their seeds are the matter that matters.[24] The testicular/reproductive model emblematized in Paré, Crooke, and Bulwer follows late medieval cultural sentiment that understood maleness and masculinity as "symbolized and authenticated in the testes (not the penis)"—and, further, eunuchs as "physically and morally deficient."[25] So although Will Fisher convincingly argues that two competing early modern regimes of masculinity (the scrotum versus the penis) arise over the course of the Renaissance,[26] it seems safe to say, as James Bromley and Will Stockton argue, that at least one fairly entrenched early modern masculinity norm "placed a high premium on the expenditure of sperm into productive (vaginal) rather than unproductive (oral and anal) orifices or no orifices at all."[27] While these authors note that it is "a philological fact that [the term] 'sex' did not describe acts in the early modern period" and "defaulting all sex to penile-vaginal intercourse . . . reveals an erotic imagination with a narrow sense of the sex acts practiced both then and now," they still posit that even in a world where individuals may have participated in erotic activities as diverse as chin chucking, anilingus, and interspecies desire, the mythical norm of consummated, penile-vaginal contact between virile, able bodies saturated the sexual landscape.[28] In fact, incapacity in heterosexual intercourse and consistent failure to adequately disseminate sperm in some instances offered legal grounds for divorce in the period.[29] As Patricia Simons clarifies more broadly, "managing the expenditure of semen was central to men's regimen of self-control and health maintenance,"[30] and dysfunctional testes especially betrayed a lack of potency, self-control, and bodily competence. Thus, even as debates ensued in the Renaissance about whether penises or testes were most important, in either case "commentators did not dispute that damaging, destroying, or removing the testicles had drastic effects on the male body,"[31] and I would add, a significant impact on early modern manhood.

While over historical time and place castrated men have been endowed with certain kinds of power and prestige,[32] vernacular medical treatises and popular verses like the aforementioned broadside ballad attest to a growing sense in the early modern period that sex organs were meant to look and act in very particular, yet highly generalizable ways. Penises and testes served as yardsticks—literal measurements—of sexual normalcy and dysfunction. "As Western culture valued manhood and the masculine ability to procreate," explains Larissa Tracy, "castration (especially self-castration) violated social norms, and castrates were most often viewed as outsiders."[33] Even more specifically, Katherine Crawford argues, "in a cultural context that linked masculinity to reproductive potency and tied social norms to the ability to procreate, castration literalized the production of non-normative bodies"; castrated individuals must be understood as early modern disabled social subjects.[34]

Crucially, then, the nonnormative body of the eunuch functions as a site of simultaneous queer *and crip* difference. Eunuchs and castrates are imagined diversely as "defective" across gender, sexuality, *and* embodiment; or as Jason Farr figures it, impaired bodies, like the bodies of eunuchs, are always imagined as "defining and exceeding the bounds of gender and sexual normativity."[35] Insofar as early modern people linked gender to certain kinds of reproductive capacity, impotent men failed to adhere to ability norms that demanded reproductive organ function as well as gender and sexual norms that mandated productive intercourse as a benchmark of masculinity and desire. Crawford puts it this way: "The denial of subjectivity to castrates was made possible because they were considered sexually defective (with various ideas about what exactly that defect did or did not entail), socially disabled (marriage was problematic and scorn about their genitals was common and extremely public), and prone to gender crossing (because of their physiology as expressed in the tales of their sexual exploits)."[36] Thus, the figure of the eunuch is the nexus where presumed bodily dysfunction and atypical embodiment rub up against supposed gender transgression as well as illicit desire. Imagined as womanish, gelded men are wanton and libidinous in their desires even as their dysfunctional testes render them supposedly sexually incapable.[37] They perturb an early modern sexual landscape in which, as Valerie Traub outlines, "the human adult marital body is recognized as the only appropriate erotic object; penetration is recognized as the only appropriate activity; the penis is recognized as the only appropriate instrument; and the vagina is recognized as the only appropriate receptacle."[38] Amid this landscape, eunuchs become what Crawford deems "an epistemological point of origin for pejorative notions of deviant sexual identity."[39] Eunuchs are consummate queer-crips.

Importantly, though, castrated individuals are not just queer and crip, but more precisely, queer *because* they are crip. The supposed deviance the early modern eunuch represents is constructed at the explicit intersection where disability meets sex; sexual transgression *cannot* be formulated without atypical embodiment and the pathologized specter of dysfunction. Eunuchs thus emblematize in a historical form contemporary critical theorizations in disability studies that insist we can never broach nonnormative sex and desire without simultaneously considering disability.[40] As Farr argues of this crucial nexus, "disability is absolutely central for the emergence of modern systems of sexuality" insofar as "impaired bodies are . . . fundamental to the cultural constructions of homo- and heterosexuality."[41] More precisely, "disability and queerness," he continues, "share political, cultural, and social orientations."[42] Anna Mollow offers something similar in her formulation of what she terms the "disability drive." Mollow postulates that sex "can no longer be conceived of as a subfield or specialized area of investigation. . . . [I]t is impossible to think about either term, 'sex' or 'disability,' without reference to the other."[43] Employing psychoanalytic discourse, she suggests that sexuality and disability "share profound structural similarities; in some instances, they could even be described as two names for the same self-rupturing force."[44] Lack, disintegration, and sometimes even suffering reside at the heart of both disability and sexual experiences: "disabled people are regarded as sexually deficient and therefore not fully human, but at the same time, disabled people register as less than human because disability is the ubiquitous figure for a dehumanizing, identity-disintegration force that resembles sex."[45]

Moreover, nonnormative bodyminds and atypical desires can evoke similar sociocultural apprehensions as they aggressively chafe against deep-rooted ableist and homophobic logics. As Abby L. Wilkerson and Robert McRuer point out, thinking about sex and disability together helps deconstruct "social ideologies of perversion, victimization, and protection," as well as norms that insist on "health, constancy, energy, wholeness, and strength at the expense of actual bodies that do not conform to these specifications."[46] Representations of early modern eunuchs serve as an ideal mechanism for exploring the disability drive. Further, they illuminate how the powerful elision of sex and disability in Renaissance poetry cultivates anti-ableist ideologies and disability gain logics that rupture quarantined spaces and discourses "configured to reproduce only the limited perspective of the able body."[47] Moreover, and as Farr might aptly put it, these "depictions of queer and disabled embodiment often manifest new critical vistas and are suggestive of unanticipated ways of being in the world."[48]

Upon a Eunuch

Bearing this in mind, let us turn to the work of seventeenth-century poet Andrew Marvell and his unique representations of queer cripness as early modern disability gain. In Marvell's epigrammatic fragment, "Upon a Eunuch: A Poet,"[49] he writes:

> Nec sterilem te crede; licet, mulieribus exul,
> Falcem virgineae nequeas immitere messi,
> Et nostro peccare modo. Tibi Fama perennè
> Praegnabit; rapiesque novem de monte sorores;
> Et pariet modulos Echo repetita nepotes.[50]

Renowned Marvell scholar Nigel Smith translates the Latin fragment[51]: "And do not believe that you are sterile, albeit, as an / exile from women, you are unable to thrust a sickle / at the virgin harvest or to sin in our manner. By you / will Fame be forever pregnant, and you will lay hold / of the nine sisters from the mountain, while Echo, / repeatedly struck, will give birth to music as your / offspring."[52]

The most fascinating aspect of "Upon a Eunuch," I would argue, is the unusual virility and unconventional intercourses that issue from the disabled body at the heart of the poem—a eunuch body that, as outlined above, runs counter to what in the Renaissance period are imagined to be sexual and ability norms. I propose that we should understand "Upon a Eunuch" explicitly as offering a narrative in which disability gainfully constitutes queer sex, and vice versa. As readers will learn, Marvell imagines the eunuch's complex embodiment—the lived knowledge that comes from disability—as cultivating an alternate form of sexual activity that is literary production, and that undermines the primacy of both sexually able bodies and heterosexual union. For Marvell in this epigram, verse becomes a prosthetic sex object of a sort employed by an impaired bodymind to enable procreative acts unique to the epigram's titular queer-crip figure.

"Upon a Eunuch" serves as a useful example of how queer-crip sex gets constructed around implied sexual norms and privileged corporeal types. This poem, not often addressed in Marvell criticism, has been read variously, although never in the manner I posit above. Some critics argue that it operates, or not, as a biographical response to political slander alleging that Marvell was a monster, amphibian, impotent, surgically castrated, effeminate, gay, and a sodomite.[53] William A. McQueen and Kiffin A. Rockwell suggest, for instance, that there is little evidence to indicate that the poem was meant to counter Samuel Parker's satirical indictment of the poet and that Marvell was more likely to have simply chosen a subject that would allow him to play on a paradox—in this case the offspring of a eunuch.[54] Contrastingly, Derek Hirst and Steven N. Zwicker posit that we might "read the epithet as a response to Marvell's relations with the Cromwellian government. Eunuchs were a sign of a tyrant, and a foreign tyrant at that."[55] Other critics deem the poem a meditation on the incapacity for spontaneity, or a tribute to violence and overweening masculine desire; still others read it as a more conventional metaphor for poetic creativity.[56] For example, Christine Rees argues that "Upon a Eunuch" calls into question the common assumption that "Marvell must be in favour of human fertility and against celibacy" and that this "witty epigram . . . turns the slur of sterility into an idiosyncratic triumph."[57] Reading the poem against "Upon Appleton House," Hirst and Zwicker argue that the eunuch is doubly emblematic "of a career that sought in lyric dramas vindication of loss and vacancy" and "of the consolation of the aesthetic for the failures of sexual reproductivity."[58]

Overwhelmingly, however, these interpretations insist fairly emphatically on the poem's figurative resonances—as if it were just an extended metaphysical conceit, for instance. In so doing, they obfuscate the poem's pronounced embodiment and the fact of the atypical sexual bodymind at the poem's core. I instead draw our attention to the soma behind the topos and reimagine this epigram with an emphasis on material parts and practices. What kind of queer-crip sex does Marvell imagine here? How does it affirm *and avow* crip cultural production as resistance to straight, ableist sites of containment where, à la McRuer, "disability and queerness are managed, contained, kept quiet, kept silent?"[59]

A cursory reading of the poem might suggest that Marvell metaphorically apes heterosexual reproduction and virile masculinity to describe textual creation. In other words, he plays to, and with, a fairly standard reproductive metaphor employed in early modern verse. A. B. Grosart, most notably, translates the fragment along these figurative lines: "Deem not that thou art barren, though, forlorn, / Thou plunge no sickle in the virgin corn" (Grosart, 1–2); he continues, "And, mateless, hast no part in our sweet curse. / Fame shall be ever pregnant by thy verse, / The vocal Sisters nine thou shalt embrace, / And *Echo* nurse thy words, a tuneful race" (Grosart, 3–6).[60] For Grosart, the narrator in this poem instructs the eunuch not to lament his "mateless[ness]" and exclusion from the "sweet curse" of heterosexual love and reproduction. Instead, akin to Smith's interpretation, Fame becomes pregnant, the Muses objects of intimacy, and Echo the nursing mother of the eunuch-poet's lyric progeny.

In this translation, "poetic activity is compared to sexual virility."[61] The narrator imagines a poet-eunuch who is not actually "sterile" (Smith, 1) or "unable to thrust a sickle / at the virgin harvest" (Smith, 2–3), but rather, who can impregnate Fame (Smith 4), arouse the Muses, and parent, with Echo, "music as [his] offspring" (Smith, 6–7). However, in line with Stephen Guy-Bray's encouragement to interrogate the trope of the fertile writer giving birth to his own immortality through verse,[62] I argue that the poem reveals something more complex when one pays closer attention to disability representation. For starters, the eunuch, "an exile from women" (Smith, 1–2), is anything but an able-bodied, hetero figure; a "forever pregnant" (Smith, 4) Fame is with child interminably and hence wholly outside linear, reproductive time; Echo and the nine sisters aren't penetrated per se but rather "repeatedly struck" (Smith, 6) and "[laid] hold of" (Smith, 4–5); the result of sexual liaison with this poet-eunuch is song, not children.

These key subtleties, in conjunction with closer attention to the figure behind the figuration, suggest an *alternate* sex narrative born of the eunuch's particular queer-crip status. The eunuch is "an exile from women" insofar as he does not engage in typical, hetero sex with other female bodies, but he is also an exile in the sense that he is not *like* women: that is, he is removed or banished from that association. In other words, while writers (and scholars as well) often regender eunuchs as effeminate or even as entirely feminine figures, this poem seems to question that too-easy similitude. And yet, the eunuch is never fully male or typically masculine either, insofar as his embodiment compromises his ability to engage in the kind of penetrative sex that makes one a man in the Renaissance. Rather, the eunuch is both and neither man nor woman, a liminal figure embodying sexual alterity and corporeal ambiguity. Here, the eunuch, as Guy-Bray notes of Marvell's far more famous "Upon Appleton House," "collapses the distinctions that turn the world into a relatively easily readable (and socially meaningful) system of differences."[63] "Upon a Eunuch" makes it fairly impossible to distinguish sexual sameness and sexual difference and, instead, forces readers to experience them simultaneously.[64]

Even more queerly provocative, perhaps, is the fact that while the poem seems to laud the production of progeny, procreation occurs altogether without the act of penile-vaginal intercourse; the eunuch-poet cultivates offspring without defaulting to a penetrative paradigm for sexual encounter. This "sickle" has no capacity to "thrust." We witness cross-species eroticism and mixing (mythological-human relations), but not necessarily penetrative seed dissemination of any kind.[65] The classical Latin word *rapiesque* (of the verb *rapio*) translates as "seize," "drag off," and "snatch," not necessarily just as "rape," and hence rattles a reading of the poem as conventionally penetrative or inherently hetero. Indeed, Hirst and Zwicker have described Marvell's poetry more broadly as exploring "the social compensation for and in non-heterosexuality."[66] In his lyrics, they argue, we find "the sorrows of fatherhood, the violence implicit in masculine sexuality, [and] filial violation in circumcision"; further, Marvell represents how the "cost of heterosexual desire is annihilation, the dream is of . . . transmigration, of refuge and shelter."[67] They identify in his work "the cohabitation, the interdependence, of transcendence and asexual reproductivity."[68]

While Hirst and Zwicker's assessment certainly helps readers conceive of the queer possibilities in Marvell's work, it does not account for its simultaneous cripness. Importantly, in "Upon a Eunuch" the castrated poet is an ostensible figure of lack whose "sterility" enables what I am calling "queercrip intercourses." In other words, Marvell celebrates the castrated poet over the pregnant bard and rejects the trope of the poet-father bringing forth the poem-child (one might think here of a lyrical Sir Philip Sidney so "great with child to speak"). Poetry does not spawn from the metaphorical mating of the author's own creative juices. Neither does the poet straightforwardly disseminate his word into Fame, Echo, or the Muses. In fact, the striking, seizing, and dragging in which the narrator imagines the eunuch-poet engaging marks a kind of BDSM[69] encounter that *is enabled by disability*; the eunuch's unique embodiment cultivates not poetic production but sexual play. Put even more precisely, poetic production—the creative potency at the heart of the epigram—serves as the eunuch's sexual prosthetic. Verse isn't the *result* of sex but the *thing that makes sex possible*. Poetic creativity prosthetically engenders erotic activity, and as such is the fundamental condition of sexual possibility for the eunuch.

Important, too, is the fact that this poetic prosthetic does not script the eunuch-poet back into normative sex acts and discourses. It rather facilitates queer-crip intercourses, alternate crip sexualities that privilege the eunuch as both a desiring subject and a subject to be desired, and that can imagine, for instance, "procreation" without sex at all. Sexual rights, as Kirsty Liddiard explains, have always been accorded to folks who promise "quality" offspring, while disabled people are "assumed to lack the capabilities to embody sexuality, sensuality, expression and desire."[70] As the above microhistory of castration evidenced so clearly, disabled people typically are represented as lacking sexual potential or potency; under discourses of "dependency," they are subject to infantilization and presumed, like small children, to have no sexuality or desires of any kind.[71] Conversely and somewhat paradoxically, people with disabilities likewise are imagined to be sexually deviant and prone to aberrancy—for example, to excessive masturbation or inappropriate sexual display.[72] In other words, disabled people's sexualities are either denied or fetishized by normative cultures and logics.

Marvell's eunuch provides a historical site of resistance to these strategies of dismissal; the castrated poet using verse as a prosthetic medium for sexual play upends both compulsory heterosexuality and compulsory ableism. In "Upon a Eunuch," queer-crip intercourses are pleasurably generative, so to speak, but no penetration, seed, or "able" virility is necessarily required. Notably, these kinds of alternate intercourses also appear in Marvell's Mower poems, poems that generally beg for sex-centric interpretations insofar as "to 'mow' in the seventeenth century meant to have sexual intercourse."[73] In "Damon the Mower," for example, the pining Damon "Depopulating all the ground" accidentally "his whistling scythe . . . into his own ankle glance[s]" (Marvell, 74, 78). In a deliberate, overt move away from the poem's hetero focus toward queer-crip autoeroticism, a hurt and moaning mower fucks himself: "By his own scythe," the poet narrator explains, "the mower mown"

(Marvell, "Damon the Mower," 80). In "The Mower Against Gardens," the "Luxurious man" (Marvell, 1) who cultivates the "garden square" (Marvell, 5) keeps in his "green *seraglio* . . . eunuchs too" (Marvell, 27). These particularly foreign eunuchs symbolically foreground the gardener's mystifying "cherry" in which "he does Nature vex / To procreate without a sex" (Marvell, "The Mower Against Gardens," 29, 30). Here in Marvell's dual innuendo, the cherry sans seed "procreates" without dissemination and confounds not just typical sex categorization but, like the mower and eunuch, normative sex acts as well.

Marvell's mowers, gardeners, and eunuchs thus are figures of obstinate refusal—obstinate refusal of both corporeal norms and conventional (hetero) sexual domestication. These figures inspire readers to imagine alternate early modern intercourses, embodiments, and desires, and they testify to what Farr calls "the long history of disabled and queer association."[74] They likewise evidence in Marvell what Margrit Shildrick describes in other disability gain contexts as "the promise of an immanent desire that embraces the strange and opens up to new linkages and provisional incorporations."[75] Indeed, these queer-crip linkages and incorporations, per Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, might "challenge dominating forms of worldly inhabitance, attempting to open spaces capacious enough for the flourishing of unpredetermined modes of life."[76]

The characters Fame and Echo in "Upon a Eunuch" further solidify the idea that Marvell's canon offers readers some "capacious" queer-crip logics that deliberately resist early modern norms around sex and able-bodiedness and that, as in chapter 3, open up new phenomenological (also epistemological) paradigms for intimacy and connection. Fame is, I venture, quite striking in her unconventional relationship to procreative time. As I noted in passing earlier, she is "forever pregnant," while ostensibly, Echo gives birth without ever being pregnant at all. More precisely, Fame never produces actual progeny but is ever with child. Her interminable pregnancy cultivates in the epigram a procreative timeline that has no linear trajectory or sense of reproductive futurity. It is not as if she is static or stagnant (she is pregnant after all), though her pregnancy never results in offspring beyond her own womb. It is as if the poem imagines Fame either conceiving over and over and over again, without producing an heir, or alternately, maintaining a single pregnancy ad infinitum.

The presence in the poem of Fame and Echo—with their, by turns, immaterial and immaculate conceptions—only emphasizes the epigram's broader investment in possible presents, futures, and pasts that resist both able and straight temporalities. As Ben Davies and Jana Funke articulate, "asynchrony and (non-)futurity can help us to think outside of a strictly linear and straight(forward) experience of time with which many subjects do not always identify."[77] "It is misleading," they insist, "to propose a normative temporality in which everything is experienced as linear, governed by purpose, attainment and goal."[78] Time in "Upon a Eunuch" is anything but normative: it's cyclical, repetitive, synchronic, a kind of ongoing *now*. As a "fragment," too, the verse begins in the middle of things: "And do not believe," the poem starts in English translation, leading with a conjunction that leaves readers and listeners feeling as if something must have come before. This inverted syntax mirrors formally the poem's nonsequential timescape. In other words, both the poem's content and grammar embrace alternate erotics and unconventional senses of how nonconforming bodyminds might relate to time and space.

Even beyond the eunuch figure at its core, the poem calls into question a normative drive to reproduce for posterity and instead posits a queer-crip sex culture unencumbered by what Tobin Siebers calls "the temporal phases of penetrative sex,"[79] and, I would add, ableist attachments to futurity. In "Upon a Eunuch," poetry functions as a prosthetic device that provides access to alternative sexual acts and activities that push against the grain. These acts and activities are queer insofar as they resist hetero sex and hetero temporalities. But they are also crip insofar as they depict atypical sexual embodiment as the pleasurable foundation of sexual recreation, gratification, and self-determination. That is to say, crip embodiment is the celebrated material, quite literally, for queer play in this poem and for unconventional intercourses whose desires and compulsions are anything but compulsory.

Cripping Vulnerability

Following the leads of Dana Luciano and Mel Chen, this chapter thus far has examined crip embodiment to "*denaturalize* the kind of 'sex' that lies at the center of deployments of sexuality."[80] In so doing, it likewise has revealed the "constitutive pleasure and potentiality of [other] forms of corporeal communing."[81] Marvell's work articulates new modes of corporeal communing—queer-crip intercourses and intimacies—that actively *desire* difference and understand disability as gain, especially when it comes to new sexual possibilities and worlds. They resist sexual domestication and expectation, and they revel in the specter of unruly crip bodyminds.

This ethos again surfaces in "The Unfortunate Lover," a Marvellian poem consistently befuddling to readers and scholars alike. For readers less familiar with this somewhat obscure lyric, the poem stages a "shipwrack"–cum–birth in death wherein the unfortunate lover's mother dies at sea "split against the stone, / In a Caesarian sectiòn," leaving "my poor lover . . . the orphan of the hurricane" stranded and alone (Marvell, "The Unfortunate Lover," 9, 11, 32). Over the course of "The Unfortunate Lover" "A num'rous fleet of corm'rants black . . . Received into their cruel care / Th'unfortunate and abject heir [e.g., the unfortunate lover]" (Marvell, 27–32). In Promethean fashion, these perversely maternal birds of prey both feed and feed off of the lover's mangled body:

> They fed him up with hopes,
> Which soon digested to despair;
> And as one corm'rant fed him, still
> Another on his heart did bill.
> Thus while they famish him, and feast,
> He both consumed, and increased:
> And languished with doubtful breath,
> Th' amphibian of Life and Death. (Marvell, "Lover," 37–39)

Meantime, "tyrant Love [the orphan lover's] breast does ply / With all his winged artillery" (Marvell, "Lover," 45–46). "Betwixt the flames and waves," this melancholic lover a "mad tempest braves" (Marvell, "Lover," 47–48):

> See how he nak'd and fierce doth stand.
> Cuffing the thunder with one hand;
> While with the other he does lock,
> And grapple, with the stubborn rock:
> From which he with each wave rebounds,
> Torn into flames, and ragg'd with wounds;
> And all he says, a lover dressed,
> In his own blood does relish best. (Marvell, "Lover," 49–56)

While Hirst and Zwicker argue that this poem is an outlier insofar as it "dwells in affective regions distant from what we think of as the familiar registers of Marvell's poetry," I contend that it very much resonates with the emotions and analytics broached above.[82] Indeed, once again, criticism around this poem has acknowledged its queer tendencies, but not its simultaneous crip ones. For instance, George Klawitter reads "The Unfortunate Lover" as a part of "a homoerotic tradition of elegy that stretches from the ancient Greek poet Bion through Shelley's *Adonis* to the scores of AIDS elegies written in the late twentieth century."[83] Hirst and Zwicker similarly suggest that the poem represents how "conventional heterosexuality cannot comprehend futurity" and that it articulates a "fear of annihilation" in straightness.[84] Meanwhile, Paul Hammond sees it as a homoerotic political allegory that contemplates how sexual maturity threatens innocence.[85]

Much more, however, should be made of "The Unfortunate Lover's" coincident investment in disability. What of the unique "taste for suffering" critics always find in the poem? What of "the narrator's desire to taste and to display his own suffering, to relish his own wounds"?[86] This ostensible trauma narrative, a "storm of physical and psychic disasters,"[87] begins in a moment of extreme corporeal vulnerability, though not merely, per Hirst and Zwicker, to outline the failure of hetero sex and "the emptiness in which human reproduction ends."[88] As readers just saw, a mere nine lines into the poem, the eponymous lover is bred out of maternal death in an oceanic accident "when the seas / Ruled, and the winds did what they please" (Marvell, "Lover," 9–10). "Till at the last the master-wave / Upon the rock his mother drave," explains the narrator, "And there she split against the stone, / In a Caesarean sectiòn" (Marvell, "Lover," 13–16). Two disabled personas—the orphan's maimed (then deceased) mother and, by overt implication, the ghost of an epileptic Caesar—haunt this verse from stanza 2 forward, framing the poem a as *disability elegy* in which queer-crip intimacy is born of fragmentation, wounding, and loss. The impairment and death these two figures foreground seem, on the one hand, to iterate the unspoken belief in both early modern and contemporary consciousnesses that "disability [is] the harbinger of mortality."[89] Likewise and quite importantly, they nod to something this book has acknowledged all along: that even in celebrating disability and conceiving of it as gain, one cannot ignore the challenge and pain that often attend it. As especially noted in this book's early chapters: disability is good; disability is hard, too.

The trauma that courses through "The Unfortunate Lover" thus foregrounds the material and psychic pain of disability. On the other hand, though, the poem absolutely frames death and impairment not as sheerly undesirable, uncomfortable, "alien condition[s]," but rather "the universal consequence[s] of living an embodied life."[90] Put another way, the lament instantiated by these representational figures might appear to look a lot like typical elegiac mourning meant to fend off death and facilitate an active process of grieving.[91] However, as outlined below, "The Unfortunate Lover" offers not solace from death and disability, but rather the embrace of these inevitabilities and the queer-crip intercourses they enable. Powerful elegiac consolation comes, not from an imagined mastery of nature and inevitable change, as is typically imagined of elegy, but from an acknowledgment of what erotic intimacies disability precisely produces—herein, the ultimate lover and "only banneret / That Love created yet" (Marvell, "Lover," 57–58).

From the poem's opening stanzas, the unfortunate lover loosely recalls the image that framed chapter 3: Galli's wounded, bloody Christ whose corporeal vulnerability emblematized the need for—and power of—interdependence in the face of inevitable human frailty. Different from Galli's Christ, however, the lover encountered above is a wholly secular "amphibian of Life and Death" whose presence in this elegy reminds readers, as disability does, of death in life and life in death (Marvell, "Lover," 40). Grief, suffering, pain, loss, and the specter of mortality all exist in the stranded orphan's simultaneously vibrant experience of living. "Torn into flames, and ragg'd with wounds," he "nak'd and fierce" survives, Marvell writes. With each wave, the lover "rebounds," embodying the multivalent senses of this term: he suffers consistent, violent blows and yet exhibits a kind of resounding resilience in the face of profound pain.

Lest one wrongly interpret this poem as conventional elegy or, worse, as a disability-overcoming narrative, I posit that the corporeal and emotional vulnerability[92] articulated in "The Unfortunate Lover" demands consideration of what happens when vulnerability is "imagined as one of the conditions of the very possibility of resistance."[93] As important work in queer and disability studies addressed throughout this book has already shown, "dominant conceptions of vulnerability and of action presuppose (and support) the idea that paternalism is the site of agency, and vulnerability, understood only as victimization and passivity, the site of inaction."[94] Put another way, the rigid insistence on rational self-authority and lawful independence found in Hobbes and Locke in the previous chapter, for example, refuses to conceive of intersubjectivity and vulnerability as key tenets of human agency and resistance. Indeed, vulnerability fundamentally "challenges the dominant ontological understanding of the embodied subject."[95]

Reclaiming vulnerability reframes the victimization and passivity seemingly inherent in a wounded, unfortunate lover dashed against a "stubborn rock." Instead, this vulnerability registers as crip agency not unlike that which we saw earlier in the figure of the eunuch. If, as Hirst and Zwicker contend, the "danger of annihilation, wounds, and incapacity together dominate Marvell's litany of sexual encounters,"[96] his unfortunate lover specifically elegizes (and sexualizes) how presumed misfortune—from ragged, torn flesh to desperate isolation to self-dissolution—might produce a keen "banneret" for love. The orphan's lone, stoic declaration that "a lover dressed / In his own blood does relish best" (Marvell, "Lover," 55–56) particularly affirms my reading of the poem as the avowal that disability—and the vulnerabilities that attend it—can cultivate highly agential, queer-crip intercourses and intimacies. This mutilated, penetrated, dying-while-living beloved is not some token of disability fetishization but a representational recognition of queer-crip desire. As Nigel Smith convincingly contends, this supposedly unfortunate lover "maintain[s] that despite his suffering, either a) a lover is best appreciated this way (as if he were a dish of food 'dressed' in the sauce of his blood), or b) the lover's senses are at their most sensitive in this state."[97] In these lines, the poem's protagonist proclaims that psychic suffering, loss, and somatic instability do not necessarily preclude but rather simultaneously precipitate certain kinds of passions and intimacies.

Smith's assessment seems especially apt, in other words, when one extends his interpretation via a disability orientation more fully attuned to the poem's representation of desire and intimacy as they explicitly abut vulnerability, maybe even intense suffering. More precisely, Marvell's orphan of the hurricane is a key flash point for uniquely queer-crip intimacies sometimes driven, perhaps counterintuitively to able-bodied individuals, by bodymind states such as defenselessness and even anguish. Pain in "The Unfortunate Lover" cultivates a profoundly intimate poetic community invited to adore a naked, dismembered lover who is wet and writhing against the storm while engulfed in Love's scorching flames and piercing arrows. The sexy vulnerability that grounds this crip image incites what Judith Butler describes elsewhere as "a relation to a field of objects, forces, and passions that impinge on or affect us in some way."[98] The poem's relational field includes, of course, a poet narrator as well as diverse readers and listeners all invited to languish over the crip figure situated at its core. This lover is a bloody dish fit for *everyone and anyone's* orgiastic consumption. Like the "corm'rants black" who feast on the orphan, so too do we, ardently drawn to a beloved "Who though, by the malignant stars, / Forced to live in storms and wars; / Yet dying leaves a perfume here, / And music within every ear" (Marvell, "Lover," 59–62). Moreover, and wonderfully queerly, this provocative, ravished, and ravishing orphan loves back no one in particular. In other words, love's best banneret embodies a kind of radical agency in the way he loves: indiscriminately, with absolute openness, and most sensuously while vulnerably ruined on the rocks. As the poem ultimately confesses, it is a disabled "unfortunate" lover who we might intimately—and communally—relish most, and who, indeed, has the capacity to "relish best" (Marvell, "Lover," 56).

Imperfect Enjoyments

If queer, disabled, presumed unfortunate lovers in many ways dominate the landscape of Andrew Marvell's canon, they do so even more in the case of late-seventeenth-century poet John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester.[99] The last half of this chapter turns to Rochester's work to further explore queer-crip intercourses, which in this case are specifically forged around illness and contagion. Without explicitly acknowledging Rochester's verse as disability poetry[100] and certainly not as evidencing disability gain, scholars and critics for years have discussed how this libertine,[101] last of the Cavalier poets,[102] who died of syphilis and drink,[103] was brashly writing about early modern nonnormativity of many stripes, especially when it came to sexuality and desire. As Edward Burns pithily declares, "of all the major English poets, Rochester is the most irrepressibly disruptive."[104]

Jonathan Sawday, for one, outlines how Rochester's verse runs counter to the hetero grain, claiming that one finds a manifestation of Rochester's queer sexual politics in his "coldly dismissive attitude towards desire and procreation."[105] Meanwhile, Ros Ballaster suggests that Rochester articulates "an anti-rationalist and materialist image of an ungendered desire that invites androgynous play of charm"; his verse, she claims, portrays "a liberative aesthetics vitally related to the body."[106] Helen Wilcox agrees, arguing that Rochester's poetry is overrun with metaphors "in which gender associations are disrupted and blurred."[107] Especially in its profound obscenity, Tom Jones further understands Rochester's work as "contrived to initiate a questioning of the categories of sexual life (the names, the configuration of partners, the appropriate share of desire among them, the innocence or otherwise of the acts) and more generally its relationship to love of the various kinds that make a social order (of a sexual partner, of parents, children, fellow citizens or subjects, of monarchs)."[108] Indeed, as Stephen Clark might add, "Rochester's erotic landscape is inhabited by a broad and varied cast, including Signor Dildo, the oceanic Duchess of Cleveland and a herd of grunting pigs."[109]

As one notices even from this brief overview, much of the scholarship on Rochester's work has focused on his representations of sex and sexuality—not to mention on the Earl's own real-life illicit and "excessive" sexual activities.[110] James Grantham Turner in fact describes Rochester as "the most notorious (and now the most canonical) English poet of sexual transgression."[111] According to Turner, Rochester is interested in "the Protean refashioning of the body in the process of arousal."[112] His work poses a kind of titillating danger to readers in its "capacity to confuse boundaries, to introduce foreign bodies, to associate polymorphous language and sexual practice, and to organize this Babel [into] . . . an erotic-didactic counter-discipline."[113]

I agree wholeheartedly. That said, minus Jason Farr's astute reading of Rochester's queer-crip embodiment and sexuality,[114] scholarly readings to date have almost completely elided the way Rochester addresses disability in ways that are similar to its figuration, refiguration, and celebration in Marvell's work. Perhaps even more boldly than in Marvell's poetics, I find in Rochester a disability ethos and avowal that understands disability as gain insofar as it produces queer-crip intercourses and intimacies, as well as a poetic aesthetic. Rochester's anti-Petrarchan re-enlivening of what Melissa Pino calls "the favorite discourse of death, pain, and despair"[115] is impossible without the invocation of impairments of all kinds. Sick, fevered, poxy bodies with "cereclothes and ulcers from the top to toe" (Rochester, "To the Postboy," 8)[116] litter Rochester's verse, and his personal letters likewise are strewn with references to his own—and others'—illnesses and contagion. As Leah Benedict attests, Rochester's verse explicitly vocalizes and stages the medical body.[117] Without ever naming him a crip poet per se, both Jeremy Treglown and Carole Fabricant similarly posit that he was "fascinated by Montaigne's ideas about the inevitability of flux—'our frail and daily-changing frame,' [as] he called his body"; Rochester's verse depicts bodily failure as "a primary characteristic and comprehensive metaphor of human existence."[118]

This so-called "failure"—something one might more generously frame as impairment or disability—takes many shapes in Rochester's verse. Note, for example, his infamous poem "The Imperfect Enjoyment," a graphic rendering of a sex encounter thwarted by premature ejaculation. This poem, as Farr suggests, is defined by "sexual dysfunction . . . and serves as a reminder of the vulnerability of not only the libertine's sexual dominance but of his political ascendency."[119] "Naked," the poet narrator's lover "lay[s], clasped in [his] longing arms":

> I filled with love, and she all over charms;
> Both equally inspired with eager fire,
> Melting through kindness, flaming in desire.
> With arms, legs, lips close clinging to embrace,
> She clips me to her breast, and sucks me to her face.

> Her nimble tongue, love's lesser lightning, played
> Within my mouth, and to my thoughts conveyed
> Swift orders that I should prepare to throw
> The all-dissolving thunderbolt below.
> (Rochester, "The Imperfect Enjoyment," 1–10)

This tryst and impending sexual penetration the poet anticipates is confounded, however, by the male lover's too-soon emission of semen. "In liquid raptures I dissolve all o'er," he confesses, "Melt into sperm, and spend at every pore" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 15–16). Subsequently, everything the female lover attempts to move forward their intercourse—"Ev'n her fair hand, which might bid heat return / To frozen age" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 31–32)—fails utterly; erection and consummation remain ever elusive.

Certainly, much of what follows on these opening lines is a candid rant against the poet narrator's one-off "dead cinder," a "Trembling, confused, despairing, limber, dry" penis as flaccid as "A wishing, weak, unmoving lump" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 35, 36). Farr observes, for instance, that in "Imperfect Enjoyment," "we observe men's dominance, yet we also encounter the very real prospect of male sexual failure. Even as they assert men's sexual ascendancy, Rochester's [poetry] present[s] premature ejaculation and impotence as commonplace among men [and] . . . suggests that even for libertines, the possibility that their virility may be compromised always looms."[120] However, in the end, insurmountable impotence allows this lover to imagine and revel in other sexual worlds. As with Marvell's eunuch poet, intimacy is here reconfigured around so-called bodily malfunction[121] as the poet narrator envisions "ten thousand abler pricks" that might "agree / To do the wronged Corinna right for thee" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 71, 72). In other words, this seeming lament over an impaired penis "Shrunk up and sapless like a withered flower" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 45) closes with a fantastic tribute to innumerable sexual encounters that await the poet's beloved but have absolutely nothing at all to do with him. Fulfillment of desire does not, for Rochester, require *his* able prick, but a vast communal network of lovers who will oblige in the job of sating Corinna. In fact, one could argue that Rochester specifically imagines this network of lovers in "A Ramble in St. James Park," when he conceives of the park as an "all-sin-sheltering grove" where "carmen, divines, great lords, and tailors / Prentices, poets, pimps, and jailers, / Footmen, fine fops do here arrive, / And here promiscuously they swive" (Rochester, 25, 29–32).

Although Farr argues "Imperfect Enjoyment" "ultimately suggests that normative male corporeality is pivotal for restoring the conventional order of heterosexual intercourse that the poet almost subverts," I counter that "the specter of corporeal failure" saturating the poem adamantly resists that norming corrective.[122] As the poet narrator curses his own cock to a fate of "ravenous chancres," "consuming weepings," and "strangury and stone" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 66–68), he counters an early modern ideology of ability insistent on successful and healthy procreative masculinity, gladly ceding that task to "abler pricks" of all kinds. Put slightly differently, and as Stephen Clark might offer, Rochester's "continual recourse to a negative testimony of the body represents a kind of obdurate refusal of a culturally endorsed mastery."[123]

In specifically enumerating productive sexual incapacity alongside sexually transmitted diseases, the poet narrator likewise gives voice to far queerer intercourses that he finds more pleasurable—or at least consistently more arousing—than his rather straight, rather conventional encounter with Corinna. Corinna's "great Love" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 60) leaves him wanting, while supposedly illicit, unclean, and excessive intercourses excite him: "I intend," he declares in another poem written around the same time (c. 1680), "Henceforth every night to sit / With my lewd, well-natured friend . . . There's a sweet, soft page of mine / Does the trick worth forty wenches" (Rochester, "Song," 9–16).[124] Even more pointedly, the poet narrator confesses in "Imperfect Enjoyment" that his penis, "Through all the town a common fucking post," has never failed in liaisons with "oyster-cinder-beggar-common whore[s]" (Rochester, 63, 50). Moreover, he finds himself most titillated—"With what officious haste dost thou obey!" he cries—"When vice, disease, and scandal lead the way" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 53, 52).

Indeed, and as this poem's title implies, it is the bodymind's seeming failure that brings alternate sexual universes into clearer relief. An "imperfect" encounter with Corinna provokes meditation on and acknowledgment of other kinds of explicitly queer-crip "enjoyments." "I hate the thing is called enjoyment" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 15), Rochester clarifies in "The Platonic Lady": "Besides it is a dull employment, / It cuts off all that's life and fire / From that which may be termed desire" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 7–10). Instead, for instance, he prefers "a youth" who "will give me leave / His body in my arms to wreathe" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 13–14); "I'd give him liberty to toy / And play with me," he declares, "and count it joy" (Rochester, "Enjoyment," 19, 20). Importantly, as these poems begin to show us, imperfect enjoyments often rely not only on queer-crip intercourses, but queer-crip communities of sickness and contagion for whom "vice, disease, and scandal" are the radical underpinnings of desire, intimacy, and pleasure.[125]

Rochester's consistent invocation of infection and illness—especially syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases—not only testifies to his queer-crip poetics but evolves directly out of his own life experience. According to Samuel Johnson, Rochester "blazed out his youth and his health in lavish voluptuousness."[126] While I am cautious, as David Vieth intones, not to over-read "a life-story so compelling that it constantly threatens to overwhelm his poetry,"[127] it seems crucial to admit how thoroughly Rochester's own illnesses and embodiment must have shaped his crip sensibilities: among other things, one notes across his work a unique "willingness to deal openly and directly with 'What oft was Thought but ne'er . . . Exprest.'"[128] The pox (syphilis), in particular, was "an occupational hazard" for libertines of the Stuart court,[129] and Rochester, especially, loved wine, boys, and cunt; he ever "raised pleasure to the top."[130] As James Grantham Turner clarifies, Rochester lived in "illustrious depravity," practicing a sublime libertinism that "valued the 'vast,' the 'unbounded,' the 'violent,' and the 'extreme'; life became an art of heightening or 'improving' sexual desire to its highest pitch, even in the face of certain death."[131] Randolph Trumbach, meanwhile, identifies in Rochester's sexual unboundedness evidence of a larger, anti-Christian philosophical system that imagined the perception of reality as utterly dependent on the senses; morality was constructed around "pleasure, which was good, and on pain, which was evil"; and it was acknowledged that "some pleasures were superior to others."[132] In spite of Rochester's claim to live by two maxims of morality—"that he should do nothing to the hurt of any other, or what might prejudice his own health," his simultaneous commitment to the absolute "gratification of our natural Appetites . . . [and] free use of Wine and Women"[133] made his willful exposure to and transmission of diseases such as the pox inevitable. "There were two Principles in his natural temper, that being heighten'd by that heat [of drink] carried him to great excesses," explains early modern cleric, preacher, and academic Gilbert Burnet: "a violent love of Pleasure, and a disposition to extravagant Mirth."[134]

In his letters,[135] Rochester is quick to own and describe in some detail the impairments that resulted from his queer intercourses and sex habits. For example, in October 1677, at thirty years of age, he writes that "my Rheumatisme begins to turn to an honest gout, my pissing of blood Doctor Wetherly say's is nothing My eyes are almost out but that hee says will nott doe mee much harme."[136] He outlines some steps he has taken to address his "venereall paines," for instance, meals consisting of "dry mutton & dyett drinke."[137] In one "damned relapse brought by a fever," he curses "the stone and some ten diseases more which have deprived me of the power of crawling, which I happily enjoyed some days ago."[138] As his conditions worsen, he mourns that he is "almost blind, utterly lame, and scarce within the reasonable hopes of ever seeing London again."[139] He calls himself a "cripple": "this is all my hand would write," he laments in a letter to a friend, "but my heart think a great deal more."[140] Days before his death, syphilis and drink brought Rochester fully into madness. Burnet, in fact, describes him as quite "disourderd"; "but his blood was so inflamed [likely from drink]," Burnet attests, "that he was not in all that time cool enough to be perfectely Master of himself. This led him to say and do many wild and unaccountable things."[141]

On the one hand, Rochester acknowledges—and materially lives out—the painful, stark challenges impairment poses, especially as his conditions worsen. On the other hand, the poet establishes and actively celebrates queer-crip intercourses cultivated precisely out of the disabilities he simultaneously laments. For Rochester, crip intimacy and kinship are inherently both pleasurable and dangerous, even deadly—perhaps pleasurable at times *precisely because of* the danger. As he puts it so keenly: "The coots black and white, Clanbrassill and Fox / . . . carry a fate which no man can oppose: / The loss of his heart and the fall of his nose" (Rochester, "On the Women about Town," 7–10).[142] This inevitable "loss" and associated illness (syphilis can result in the collapse of the bridge of the nose) are not all bad, though, as those same "coots" gift their lovers with something exquisite: they "Invade us with impudence, *beauty*, and pox" (Rochester, "Women," 9, my italics). Take as further example, the way Rochester lovingly and in solidarity chides his compatriot and close friend, George Savile, about not coming to visit him in Bath due to ill health. "You now lye bedridd of the piles," Rochester wryly and graphically predicts, "or fistula in Ano."[143] More poignantly, the poet declares that on his deathbed he will write "a small romance" in tribute to his queer-crip comrades and sexual companions who have already passed away from venereal disease: "it would be a most excellent way," he avers, "of celebrating the memories of my most pocky friends, companions, and mistresses."[144]

Honorable Scars

In what remains of chapter 4, I argue that Rochester's work evinces a libertine celebration of contagious illness as both the result of *and* the catalyst for queer pleasures and unconventional crip intimacies.[145] Certainly, readers find in Rochester's poetry and letters echoes of what Dagmawi Woubshet in important work on black mourning and the early years of the AIDS epidemic has called "a poetics of compounding loss" whereby mourners recount "the serial and repetitive nature of the losses they confront."[146] This kind of mourning, insofar as it is enacted by other "sick," marginalized, and disprized individuals, evinces a "chilling reflexivity of the subject's mourning"[147] and an "anticipatory sense of loss."[148] However, as Woubshet further argues, this kind of mourning also posits "disparaged grief as a radical basis of group ties and survival—as an immediate political act to enfranchise the dead and . . . as a fundamental ethical act to inhume the dead and consign them to posterity."[149] Similar to my aforementioned reading of Marvell's "Unfortunate Lover," Woubshet understands "sorrow as a necessary vehicle of survival."[150]

As the Earl of Rochester poetically grapples with the loss of friends and lovers, he simultaneously ruminates on his own inevitable mortality. More importantly, his verse recuperates nonnormative desires and sex acts—as well as supposedly licentious behaviors—into "creative acts of mourning . . . [that] consecrated new queer connections and counterpublics."[151] Put slightly differently, Rochester's verse imagines and upholds queer-crip intimacies and kinships that express "a visceral reaction against the inscrutable formation of 'life.'"[152] This reaction, as Melissa Sanchez has described in the context of Shakespearean drama, explicitly links queer-crip intercourses "to the unintentional production of bare life (zoē) rather than the considered perpetuation of socio-political life (bios)."[153] According to Sanchez, queer, antisocial procreation disavows any romantic idealism, and it embraces "the material, inhuman dimensions of reproduction."[154] Moreover, it resists all tenets of reproductive futurism.[155]

What happens, though, if we push more emphatically on Rochester's so-called "antisocial tendencies" and consider them in light of what scholar Chris Bell in disability and AIDS studies has termed "the politics of containment?"[156] More precisely, how do Rochester's poems envision and advocate for early modern queer-crip cultures of communion that, like much more contemporary HIV bugchasers and giftgivers, "[flout] all conventions of sexual decorum and the regime of health that paradoxically seeks to eradicate [disease]?"[157] Rochester's canon offers important representation of early modern bugchasers, of a kind, who present alternate queer-crip epistemologies that actively desire disability. The contemporary bugchaser, Octavio R. Gonzalez reminds us, moves "clandestinely from prohibition to celebration by disregarding the able-bodied interpellation of HIV-negative ideology. He reveals the phobic medical model of HIV as merely contingent, and not necessarily the most meaningful way of interacting with the virus as it mediates gay desire and sociocultural practices."[158] In Rochester's poetry, readers similarly find poxy, queer-crip figures moving from prohibition to celebration. These poet narrators and poetic representations resist sexual domestication,[159] revel in the specter of unruly crip corporeality, and rupture quarantined spaces and discourses "currently configured to reproduce only the limited perspective of the able body."[160]

To clarify, the term *bugchaser* refers to any HIV-negative man who seeks HIV infection.[161] HIV-positive men in this community who share a commitment to spreading the virus are often referred to as *giftgivers*.[162] According to Gonzalez, "the bugchaser represents the ethical residuum, a liminal figure whose motivations come closest to challenging our common sense of the 'normal' because he is closest to the transvaluation of all values—the eroticization and pursuit of a deadly virus."[163] Bugchasers are imagined, and represented, as "radically ineffable, literally impossible to comprehend or empathize with because the sexual activity of bugchasing," Gonzalez explains, "invokes an existential menace to the normal self."[164]

The simultaneously cavalier, erotic, tragic, and comic conceptions Rochester offers of the experience of contracting and living with syphilis indeed call to mind the complex, nonnormative relationships bugchasers and giftgivers have with HIV infection.[165] The cultural and literary historian Sander L. Gilman, for one, has compared the depiction of people with AIDS to representations of people with syphilis, noting how syphilis patients were socially stigmatized in ways that mirror how AIDS patients were treated in the 1980s in the US.[166] As early modern scholar Robert N. Watson concurs, transhistorical resonances of this kind are generally apt in their characterization of contagious diseases: "Like some reactionary analyses of the AIDS epidemic, the sermons and literature of 1603 predominately characterize the plague as God's scourge visited on an increasingly immoral nation."[167] Both the plague and the pox were considered intensely transmissible in the Renaissance, and they were both collapsed under a broader framework of social pathologies that "derive[d] from the inadequacy of any agent . . . to control or to satisfactorily explain [them]."[168]

Thus, not unlike the trauma[169] and fear associated with AIDS in the United States in the 1980s even among gay men who were actively seeking infection via deliberate exposure, syphilis proved to be an early modern cultural force to be reckoned with.[170] In spite of increasingly strict prohibitions and attempts at state-sanctioned sexual management, sex culture nonetheless flourished in England, and especially in London during the Restoration.[171] Among other things, the city's huge and rapid population increase, Byron Nelson posits, "certainly would have facilitated the growth of the sex industry."[172] As Gustav Ungerer further explains, "prostitutes plying their trade in the city were not geographically segregated, but were both individually and collectively an integral part of city life."[173] Thus, people of all social classes were impacted by the rampant pattern of venereal disease that accompanied widespread access to sex work.[174] Physicians and patients alike speculated about whether the use of condoms and deliberate washing before and after sexual encounters might mitigate contagion and infection.[175] "Despite the hopes of libertines," explains Trumbach of Rochester's cultural moment in particular, "it is apparent that the avoidance of vaginal intercourse, or even the avoidance of intercourse with women, was not a safe preservative from disease, since in anal, oral, and manual intercourse, either with females or males, one might still become infected."[176] Indeed, as Duane Coltharp contends, one finds in Rochester's work the deliberate registering of this acute threat; his verse especially represents "the perils of homosocial desire in a world where syphilis is a constant danger. In such a world, erotic triangles are more than a conceptual figure, and sexual economies become literal, and literally painful, orders of exchange."[177]

Yes, the sexual circles and economies within which Rochester moved might have been "literal, and literally painful, orders of exchange." Conversely, though, as I suggested a moment ago, Rochester overtly disavows orthodox, normative, culturally sanctioned sexual intercourses and practices that might moderate these "sick" exchanges. He finds constancy, for one thing, to be "the frivolous pretense / Of cold age, narrow jealousy, / Disease, and want of sense" (Rochester, "Against Constancy," 1–4).[178] Monogamy is to be avoided at all costs: "I'll change a mistress till I'm dead," one poet narrator proclaims, "and fate change me to worms" (Rochester, "Constancy," 19, 20). His "To the Post Boy" heralds genital sores as "heroic scars" to be proudly witnessed (Rochester, 7),[179] while another "Song" from 1680 parodies the desire for "clean and kind" lovers in the face of a "fair nasty nymph" and "Phyllis in foul linen" (Rochester, 5, 16).[180] These and numerous other poems in Rochester's canon eschew "cleanly sinning" (Rochester, "Song," 14) or at the very least voice deep ambivalence about whether it matters if one's "smoking prick escape[s] the fray / Without a bloody nose" (Rochester, "Song," 11–12). In Rochester, no circumstance is "unfit" for sex: men can "fuck in time of flowers, / or when the smock's beshit" (Rochester, "Song," 3, 4–5).

More than just the mere endorsement, as in the aforementioned "Song," of "dirty" sex such as intercourse during menstruation, Rochester's work offers the explicit celebration of queer-crip intercourses forged in contagion and infection. Per Gonzalez on HIV-positive communities, these poems invoke disability gain insofar as they render illness and contamination not as markers of sin, immorality, and long-suffered death[181] but as "a socially enabling and *positive* style of life."[182] Rochester's poet narrator's, like contemporary HIV bugchasers, "resolutely engage in cultural recuperations of their bodily sign and socio-sexual practices, and in so doing refuse to go quietly into the ghetto of desexualized quarantine."[183] "Bugchasers and giftgivers," Gonzalez explains, "co-opt the necessity of de-stigmatization for a specific end, ironically trading on a 'cripped-out' Poz identity as a perversely erotic disabling condition. Bugchasers' desire for the gift, and the giver's desire to 'gift' them . . . build[s] their own resistant forms of sexual counterculture."[184]

The resistant sexual countercultures and anti-ableist counterlogics that populate Rochester's verse absolutely refuse sexual sanitization and quarantine. They actively work to muddy boundaries—more specifically, they dismantle the supposedly neat, clean edges of sexual intimacy by granting the inevitable, and material, messiness of fucking; indeed, as queer theorist Tim Dean points out, "Bugchasing and giftgiving involve fantasies about making an indelible connection with someone else's insides."[185] Rochester's poems are full of disorderly, cum-covered, nonnormative bodies and objects—but, it turns out, not just onanistic pig lovers or Italian dildos. Instead, foreign bodies in the form of literal germs course throughout his verse. Polymorphous sexual practices are more than expressions of libertine revelry; they are titillating articulations of queer-crip desires and sex habits concentrated around the transmission of disease. Lastly, the "erotic-didactic counter-discipline" Turner identifies in Rochester[186] resonates with other disability gain counter-discourses broached throughout this book. In this case, though, Rochester's poetry—and his letters as well—upend early modern ableist fears and ideologies that would conceive of syphilitic infection exclusively as obscene moral transgression and sinful death sentence.[187]

Rochester's famous poem "The Disabled Debauchee" perfectly epitomizes this queer-crip ethos and epistemology. I argue by way of closing that the poem is a "small romance" of a sort; it commemorates, as the dying poet intimated he would like to do, a life of radical queer-cripness that Rochester would probably have considered well lived. For those unfamiliar, this poem on its surface pays tribute to "some brave admiral" (Rochester, "The Disabled Debauchee," 1) who has retired from battle.[188] Said veteran views from afar "The wise and daring conduct of the fight" and "Transported, thinks himself amidst the foes, / And absent, yet enjoys the bloody day" (Rochester, "Debauchee," 6, 11–12).[189]

This extended metaphor functions, however, as a distinct tribute to the poet narrator's nonnormative sex acts and intercourses. Notably, "Disabled

Debauchee" is much more than a nostalgic war poem; it specifically "celebrates drunken brothel riots and bisexual orgies, but in the voice of a syphilitic, impotent man."[190] As Turner points out regarding Rochester's canon more broadly, "the unpredictable anatomy of the genitals haunts Rochester's longer poems of debauchery."[191] Similar to "Imperfect Enjoyment," impotence in "Disabled Debauchee" once again engenders sexual fantasy, memory, and community. More precisely, though, it sets the stage for a bugchasing meditation on venereal disease as a more-than-worthwhile—even willfully desired—aspect of queer kinship and encounter. Again drawing on Dean's work on barebacking, it likewise posits that "sick," queer-crip sex is not as "nihilistic or antisocial as some might imagine."[192] "Disabled Debauchee," per Dean on HIV Poz communities, "instead affirms a community of outlaws" with their "own norms and standards of behavior" that are "used to create blood ties, ostensibly permanent forms of bodily and communal affiliation."[193]

In a brief meditation on mortality, the narrator of "Disabled Debauchee" admits up front that his "days of impotence" eventually will "approach," and then he will find himself "on the dull shore of lazy temperance" (Rochester, 13, 16). By "pox and wine's unlucky chance," this admiral will be "Forced from the pleasing billows of debauch" (Rochester, "Debauchee," 14, 15). Even as the reader feels the poet narrator's twinge of regret that he'll be out of the sexual fray, the poem's future anticipation of seeming incapacity is what actually allows "the impotent syphilitic [to look] back over glorious moments in his earlier career."[194] Thus the admiral's disappointment clearly is not shame or grief over "risky" sexual encounters that have left him, in his own words, estimably marked (Rochester, "Debauchee," 21); instead, the poet casually laments that he can no longer partake in certain intimate acts and activities. More than that, this poet narrator is afforded respite from his "pains"—affective *and* somatic—as he "behold[s] the battles [other lovers and libertines] maintain / When fleets of glasses sail about the board, / From whose broadsides volleys of wit shall rain" (Rochester, "Debauchee," 17, 18–20).

The proud poet admiral memorializes his syphilitic condition, brashly bragging about "honorable scars, / Which my too forward valor did procure" (Rochester, "Debauchee," 21–22). His poxy wounds are expressly heroic. They testify to his participation in a "viral" culture through which "men are propagating also a way of life, a sexual culture with its own institutions, codes of communication, ethical norms, representational practices, and kinship arrangements."[195] As Dean explains of contemporary barebackers: "For some people, reproducing the culture takes precedence over their own survival as individuals; these people are willing to sacrifice their lives so that something vitally important to them lives on. . . . These men are not simply enjoying sex, they are also suffering it on behalf of others. From a certain perspective, their sex is altruistic rather than merely self-indulgent."[196]

While the disabled debauchee's scars emblematize and avow his participation in and commitment to queer-crip communities of contagion, they also incite *others* to similar pleasures and intercourses. Not meant to "Frighten new-listed soldiers from the wars," the syphilitic tokens the narrator wears as badges of honor display how "Past joys have *more than paid* what I endure" (Rochester, "Debauchee," 23, 24, my italics). Cheering from the sidelines, the poet admiral plans to shun "any youth" who would "prove nice" and rally "some cold-complexioned sot [who would] forbid, / With his dull morals, our bold night-alarms" (Rochester, "Debauchee," 25, 29–30). "Paradoxically," as Dean usefully notes, barebacking subculture "depends on the death of its members. Yet this sacrificial ethic is not as alien as it might appear, because its structure is identical to that of patriotism. The communities of men formed around barebacking bond together like communities of soldiers during wartime."[197] And sure enough, "I'll fire his blood," Rochester's consummate patriot-cum–poet narrator proclaims, "by telling what I did / When I was strong and able to bear arms" (Rochester, "Debauchee," 31–32). Readers then hear tell of "whores attacked, their lords at home" (Rochester, "Debauchee," 33):

> Bawds' quarters beaten up, and fortress won;
> Windows demolished, watches overcome;
> And handsome ills by my contrivance done.
> Nor shall our love-fits, Chloris, be forgot,
> When each the well-looked linkboy strove t' enjoy,
> And the best kiss was the deciding lot
> Whether the boy fucked you, or I the boy.
> (Rochester, "Debauchee," 34–40)

In these stanzas, Rochester details his nonnormative sexual desires as well as the various communities of contagion in which he participates. Whores and bawds all are won, and Chloris is engaged in "love-fits" that morph into voyeuristic trysts and queer orgies. The "well-looked linkboy" who lights the way for passersby not only "enjoys" the poet narrator's sexual encounters from afar but ostensibly from right in the mix. Scintillatingly ambiguous about who has fucked whom, the disabled debauchee's recollection, in the end, leaves readers to imagine "the best kiss" and its subsequent amorous intimacies.

"Disabled Debauchee" is part and parcel with much of Rochester's canon, from verse offerings to personal letters. This canon is yet another example of early modern literature that advances disability desire and gain: it acclaims queer sex and feelings, and it simultaneously avows the crip embodiments that might both accompany and precisely facilitate those affects and intercourses. "Statesmanlike," Rochester's poet narrators craft "saucy" stories that urge others to "blows" (Rochester, "Debauchee," 45, 47) and, to echo Octavio R. Gonzalez from above, envision sexual cultures of contagion as socially enabling sites for robust, well-lived lives. "Safe from action," these retired poet admirals now "valiantly advise" their comrades in loving arms, delivering tales that "will such thoughts inspire / As to important mischief shall incline" (Rochester, "Debauchee," 46, 41–42). Rochester's poetry proudly reclaims impotent and ill queer-crips typically imagined as "Good for nothing else" instead as key purveyors of counsel and wisdom (Rochester, "Debauchee," 48, 28). These statesmen are powerful testament to disability gain. They are standard-bearers of queer-crip knowledges, practices, and feelings that imagine and materialize new sexual possibilities, kinships, and worlds.

Conclusion

In chapter 4, readers learned about disabled bodies as simultaneously sexual bodies. I outlined via early modern poetry various nonconventional sex encounters and liaisons that further evidence the avowal of disability and its gains. Initially, Andrew Marvell's poems offered readers access to literary historical sites of resistance to compulsory heterosexuality and ableism. His work articulated new modes of corporeal communing—new queer-crip intimacies that understand bodymind difference as the foundation of alternate sexual worlds. The Earl of Rochester's poetry did the same, albeit via testimony to queer-crip communities of contagion that acclaim illness, even death, as the radical underpinnings of intimacy and sexual kinship.

As in earlier chapters, disability and the important gains it offers interrupt early modern disavowals of difference and the unrelenting demands of ableist ideologies. Nonnormativity as it is expressed in Marvell and Rochester once again registers human biodiversity as an enabling episteme, ontology, and ethic in the premodern past. Further, the poems broached in chapter 4—as well as chapter 3, for that matter—evidence how disability functions gainfully not just in these ways but also as an aesthetic resource for early modern writers. Impaired poetic personas and keen representations of bodymind atypicality serve as generative literary tropes and aesthetic catalysts. Chapter 5 pushes hard on this latter possibility, arguing that speech impairment, specifically, motivates a unique disability aesthetic on the early modern stage. In what follows, readers again witness early modern literature welcoming and avowing disability, but even more precisely as a key artistic and aesthetic resource meant to be celebrated and actively conserved.

Five

Disability Aesthetics and Conservation

> Me a poet! My daughter with maimed limb
> became a more than tolerable sprinter.
> And Uncle Joe. Impediment spurred him,
> the worst stammerer I've known, to be a printer.
> . . .
> It seems right that Uncle Joe, "b-buckshee
> from the works," supplied those scribble pads
> on which I stammered my first poetry
> that made me seem a cissy to the lads.
>
> Their aggro towards me, my need of them 's
> what keeps my would-be mobile tongue still tied–
>
> aggression, struggle, loss, blank printer's ems
> by which all   eloquence   gets justified.
> —Tony Harrison, "Self Justification"[1]

The above excerpt comes from modern English poet and playwright Tony Harrison's poem "Self Justification" and offers an especially insightful meditation on how disability and artistic production go hand in hand. As readers will discover, Harrison's poet speaker expressly understands disability as gain. Nonnormative bodyminds are something to be appreciated and deeply desired. Disability, this poem contends, is worth conserving—even in the face of ableist mandates that suggest otherwise.

This chapter opens below with a quick, contemporary reading of Harrison's "Self Justification" to set the stage for further examination of how early modern authors also desired disability and deployed it—not merely metaphorically or exploitatively—toward new aesthetic ends. Chapter 4 explored how sexual difference and so-called dysfunction specifically served as productive literary figurations for sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers. Readers learned how Marvell and Rochester's desires for—and writerly uses of—eunuchs, "disabled debauchees," and sexy, wounded martyrs served as generative literary tropes and aesthetic foundations. Moreover, these poetic tropes and aesthetics brought into relief unique queer-crip embodiments, intimate intercourses, and erotic worlds founded on disability. They testified to—and helped us better understand—queer-crip sexual possibilities in the English Renaissance, and in our own moment, too.

Building closely on these ideas, chapter 5 continues to outline how disability interferes with ideological demands for "normalcy," and to argue for its function as a key epistemological, ontological, and ethical resource. It investigates the connections between disability desire, gain, and conservation.[2] More precisely, Harrison's poem frames a consideration of what I identify, at the end of this chapter, as "disability conservation work." "Self Justification" serves as a contemporary invitation into a historicist conversation about how, in particular, speech dysfluency was understood as disability in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. More importantly, though, the poem invites readers to begin to discern how that impairment functioned as gain, motivating a specific kind of disability aesthetic on the early modern stage.

As evidenced in the epigraph above, Harrison's "Self Justification" opens with emphatic, albeit pseudo, surprise. "Me a poet!" (Harrison, "Self Justification," 1), the narrator exclaims, posturing from the poem's start a somewhat ironic astonishment over the role disability plays in artistic inspiration. Specifically, the poet narrator's "Uncle Joe," "the worst stammerer I've known," was "spurred" by impairment "to be a printer" with real felicity (Harrison, "Self," 3–4). The poem further explains that "[Joe] handset type much faster than he spoke" (Harrison, "Self," 5); as he worked, "Those cruel consonants, *ms*, *ps*, and *bs* / on which his jaws and spirit almost broke / flicked into order with sadistic ease" (Harrison, "Self," 6–8). Enamored of Joe's "sadistic" typesetting skills and grateful for "those scribble pads / on which I stammered my first poetry / that made me seem a cissy to the lads" (Harrison, "Self," 9–11), the poet narrator is in deep debt to Joe and his printerly labor; more precisely, the poet is in debt to both Joe's stutter and "printer's ems" (Harrison, "Self," 15) as the substantive underpinnings of his own poetic art.

Throughout the poem, the speaker explicitly understands his writerly travails—the scorn of "the lads" that kept his "would-be tongue still tied" (Harrison, "Self," 14)—in light of his uncle's impairment, and he maps a vocal stutter relieved by the act of printing text onto the "aggression, struggle, and loss" (Harrison, "Self," 15) of a poetic "eloquence" that, ultimately, "gets justified" (Harrison, "Self," 16). Disability for Uncle Joe is necessary insofar as it sits at the heart of his vocation. So, too, is the narrator's tied tongue a vocational necessity: poetry as stuttering, imperfect masculinity becomes both struggle and liberation for Harrison. The poet narrator's ways of word-making depend on his experiences in the proximity of lived impairment. The machinery of Joe's printed words codifies in this poem's fully justified last two lines not only the material language of disability but its power as an epistemic resource: "maimed limb[s]," "cruel consonants," and tied tongues ultimately become "eloquence" (Harrison, "Self," 1, 6, 14, 16). Disability is the stimulus for poetic metaphor, the translation of inarticulation into articulation. More critically, though, "blank printer's ems" (Harrison, "Self," 15) are powerful precisely in their absent presence, and they mark the fundamental, material measure of Harrison's poetic fluency. The stuttery *lack* of letters reminiscent of Joe's atypical locution[3] is captured here in seemingly misprinted "them 's" (Harrison, "Self" 13) and a visually staggered final line; what cannot be said is the stammered driving force that runs through to the poem's last words.

Wonderfully, then, the poem's closing lines refuse proper justification, even as they perform it perfectly. To recall the last two stanzas of the excerpt above:

> Their aggro towards me, my need of them 's
> what keeps my would-be mobile tongue still tied–
>
> aggression, struggle, loss, blank printer's ems
> by which all   eloquence   gets justified. (Harrison, "Self" 13–16)

On the one hand, this final, broken quatrain seems to rhythmically complete the three preceding quatrains, topping off Harrison's gesture toward a stanzaic form as old and recognizable as Robert Herrick's "To the Virgins." On the other hand, the poem reads as failed verse of a sort, a conventional Elizabethan sonnet but with a prosthetic add-on in its last two lines. Even further, the articulacy the poet narrator finally finds, and that is "justified" in the printed text, sits alone—*un*justified "eloquence" in the middle of a line that is measured but disjointed. The gaps and fissures in "by which all eloquence gets justified" (Harrison, "Self," 16) at once perform continuity, linearity, and syntactical convention even as they simultaneously eschew them for rupture, disharmony, and disintegration.

The poem's final phrases are the culmination of verse testimony to disability gain. Even more than that, these last lines literally embody a disability aesthetic that undoes what we might deem in ableist terms "normal" principles that "typically" underlie and guide poetic form. In other words, "Self Justification" plays, at first glance, to the reader and listener's aesthetic expectation of visual and metrical closure. However, even as it delivers an "accurate" textualized version of the stutter that metaphorically undergirds the poem, it simultaneously disrupts the "habitual expectation that art object and world will correspond in some degree of mimetic exactitude."[4] In other words, the poem's final line is at once justified—correctly aligned, following proscribed measure—and explicitly not. Its graphic stutter is exactly as it should be. And yet it can never be, nor does it strive to be, perfect: in the end, a stammer in all its starts and stops functions as this poem's primary metrical and visual remark.

In what follows, readers discover how speech dysfluency in early modern literature was imagined not just as impairment but also as precious aesthetic catalyst and dramatic form. More specifically, an anonymous play performed circa 1600 called *Looke About You* explicitly recognizes speech impairment as gain. In this play, nonnormative speech is mobilized as an advantageous aesthetic resource fundamental to artistic production. Moreover, we note how *Looke About You* actively conserves in print the unique stage aesthetic that disability enables in performance. In short, chapter 5 posits that stuttering on the Renaissance stage illuminates the ways in which early modern bodyminds welcomed disability. Even more importantly, this crucial instance of disability gain anticipates what Rosemarie Garland-Thomson poses as "the bioethical question of why we might want to conserve rather than eliminate disability from the human condition."[5] *Looke About You*, this chapter contends, offers not only evidence of a distinct early modern disability aesthetic, but one premised on the desire for and deliberate conservation of human biodiversity and disability difference.[6]

Speaking in the Renaissance

Debate, discussion, and diagnosis of fluent and dysfluent speech have a long, complex history in the West, one I will briefly gloss here to give readers a sense of what it meant to be a disordered speaker in the English Renaissance. In his 1553 *The Arte of Rhetorique*, English diplomat, judge, and rhetorician Thomas Wilson argues for the utmost importance of fluency, proclaiming "the sounde of a good instrument stirreth the hearers, and mooveth much delite, so a cleare sounding voyce, comforteth much our deintie eares, with much sweete melodie, and causeth vs to allow the matter."[7] Wilson understands verbal eloquence as an art that must be well practiced: "there are a thousand suche faultes emong menne bothe for their speache . . . the whiche if in their young yeres they be not remedied, they will hartely be forgotte when they come to mans state."[8] Excellent speech means that "not onely wordes are aply used, but also sentences are in right order framed. . . . Elocucion getteth wordes to set furthe invencion, & with suche beautie commendeth the matter, that reason semeth to bee clad in purple, walkyng afore, bothe bare and naked."[9]

In the Renaissance, the stakes of speaking—and speaking well to best "commendeth the matter"—were high. As Carla Mazzio contends in her illuminating exploration of failed utterance in sixteenth-century drama, the status of speech, and the English language more generally, was quite fraught in the period.[10] Mazzio's important examination of the surprising dysfluency of early modern language practices and ideologies provokes fuller consideration of, specifically, the "exclusionary logic integral to established communities of linguistic exchange."[11] Inarticulation, she explains, prohibited full social participation. Disordered speech was the inability to conform to early modern sociolinguistic decorum; hence, to be able to speak, or not, mattered greatly in terms of "who did, and did not, count as arbiters of meaning."[12]

Dysfluency in the Renaissance provoked what Jeffrey Wollock describes as "a failure of correspondence between the speaker and his *orbis loquendi* or speech community."[13] Conversely, the most successful meaning-arbiters in early modern England were exceptional in their fluency. Again according to Thomas Wilson, the most articulate rhetoricians had the power to move mountains: "Suche force hath the tongue, and such is the power of eloquence and reason, that most men are forced euen to yelde in that, whiche most standeth againste their will."[14] By way of example, Wilson further explains, "the Poetes do feyne that Hercules being a man of greate wisdome, had all men linked together by the eares in a chaine, to draw them and leade them euen as he lusted."[15]

Indeed, the compelling eloquence Hercules musters exemplifies what numerous other early modern writers on speech, rhetoric, and elocution admire as "good" articulation. To be an orator, like Hercules, with "a witte . . . so greate" and a "tongue so eloquente," meant "that no one man was able to withstand his reason, but everye one was rather driven to do that whiche he woulde, and to wil that whiche he did, agreing to his advise both in word & worke, in all that ever they were able."[16] In his 1592 *A Treatise of the Good and Euell Tounge*, French writer Jean de Marconville urges speakers further in the arts of persuasion and elocution to "let your talke & communication be such as may bring grace to the hearers."[17] And similarly, about forty years later, theologian William Perkins exhorts that in "the framing of our speech Saint Ambrose requireth three things: a yoke, a ballance, and a met-wand; a yoake to keepe it in stayed gravity; a balance to give it waight of reason; a met-wand to keepe it in measure and moderation."[18]

Ultimately, this reasonable measure and moderation, as the title of Perkins's treatise—*A Direction for the Government of the Tongue*—suggests, had much to do with controlling the wiliest of organs: the tongue.[19] According to the churchman Richard Allestree in the late seventeenth century, "the Government of the Tongue has ever bin justly reputed one of the most important parts of human Regiment."[20] But alas, Allestree simultaneously confesses, "it is the worst and best part of man, the best in its original and design, and the worst in its corruption and degeneration."[21] Indeed, the tongue is an exasperatingly ambivalent organ. Mazzio reminds us, for example, that in *Lingua* (1525), Erasmus laments "the fact that malevolent and benevolent discursive agencies come from one and the same bodily organ. Erasmus, like many others, takes his cue from Proverbs (18:21) in noting the way in which the tongue is 'ambi-valent,' good and bad, always seeming to pull in two directions at once."[22]

Certainly, many of these early modern authors were thinking about proper articulation in primarily sacred and metaphorical terms. Their writings were intended to inspire godly speech instead of slanderous tongues and soul-damning blasphemy.[23] After all, to speak, according to Aquinas and Augustine, is to manifest God's Word in humankind: the Logos of the Trinity is the internal word externalized through the vocal word.[24] The religio-moral tongue "governance" exhorted in the previous passages, however, has a secular, *material* correlation in the physical disciplining of the organ itself. Surely Allestree intends in the admonition that follows to incite readers to faith and virtue: "The Tongue is so slippery, that it easily deceives a drousy or heedless guard. Nature seems to have given it some unhappy advantage towards that. 'Tis in its frame the most ready for motion of any member, needs not so much as the flexure of a joint, and by access of humors acquires a glibness too, the more to facilitate its moving."[25] The "slipperiness" Allestree notes resonates on a somatic register as well, however. Indeed, the tongue is "the most ready for motion of any member." "It often goes without giving us warning," he cautions readers further.[26] Allestree's admonition likewise reminds one of English poet and satirist George Wither's 1635 emblem "Evill Tongue," an image of a serpent-like, winged tongue, detached from the body and soaring through the sky. "No Heart can thinke," the inscription on the emblem reads, "to what strange ends, The Tongues unruely Motion tends."[27] Both in spirit *and* in practice, the tongue is a body part that is very, very hard to manage.

So, while the early modern physician John Bulwer argues that "Speech is a voluntary Action and free, and may be made or restrained according to our arbitriment,"[28] the tongue is the thing that makes that "voluntary Action" more or less possible, better or worse. The capable voice and tongue, suggests Thomas Wilson, "giveth a certaine grace to every matter, and beautifieth the cause in like maner, as a sweete sounding Lute, much setteth forth a meane devised Ballad."[29] It is the "Principall Interpreter of the Minde," explains Bulwer, "but must cooperate with pallate, jaws, nostrils, teeth, and lips for speech to occur."[30] Again, the spiritual, psychic cooperation between head, heart, and tongue that the authors above extol finds a secular, somatic parallel in the ways the same organ must work in concert with pallate, jaws, nostrils, teeth, and lips.[31]

This ableist insistence on articulate articulation meant that the disordered, stuttery, misspeaking tongue must be physically disciplined into eloquence. "They that have no good voices by nature, or cannot wel utter their woordes, must seeke for helpe elsewhere," Wilson mandates.[32] He then suggests that

> Exercise of the bodie, fastyng, moderacion in meate, and drynke, gaping wyde, or singyng plaine song, & counterfeityng those that do speake distinctly, helpe muche to have a good deliveraunce. Demosthenes beeing not able to pronounce the first letter of that Arte which he professed, but would say, for, Rhetorike, Letolike, used to put little stones under his tongue, and so pronounced, whereby he speake at length so plainly, as any man in the world could doe.[33]

Here, Wilson's prescriptive list evidences an early modern ideology of linguistic ability: both an undeniable cultural demand in the Renaissance for "good deliveraunce" and its inevitable corollary, cure of supposed dysfunction. We find in the aforementioned passage a litany of possible therapies for speech dysfluency, from exercise to diet to singing to mimicry. Moreover, the Athenian statesman and orator Demosthenes serves as Wilson's capstone example of successful treatment of speech impairment. The story goes that this famous stutterer, who especially struggled to pronounce his r's, tamed his stammer by reciting speeches ad infinitum with pebbles under his unruly tongue.

In contemporary parlance, stuttering is defined as "a disturbance in the fluency and time patterning of speech that is inappropriate for a person's age. Stuttering consists either of repetitions, prolongations, pauses within words, observable word substitutions to avoid blocking, or audible or silent blocking, all of which disrupt the rhythmic flow of speech."[34] Specific causes of stuttering trace throughout time to a diverse array of supposed origins, from childhood trauma to sibling rivalry to facial and jaw abnormalities to profound guilt.[35] For example, Aristotle described stuttering as "the inability to join one letter to another with sufficient speed," while Hippocrates imagined stammering arose from either thinking too quickly, such that one's tongue could not keep up, or from the problem of excessive black bile—aridity—that might be treated by blistering the tongue.[36] Contrastingly, Galen contended that stuttering was caused by physical, structural abnormalities—the tongue was too short, long, wet, or dry.[37] Other ancient physicians thought humidity caused lingual paralysis and so for treatment would dry their patients out, encasing their heads in plaster and putting salt, honey, and sage on their tongues.[38]

This "misconception of a diseased tongue as the root of developmental stuttering" continued into early modernity,[39] explains Nathan Lavid, and included all kinds of peculiar treatments. Forks and wedges were set below the tongue. Neck belts applied pressure to the throat to counteract spasms. Tubes were placed behind the tongue to eliminate movement and induce proper air flow.[40] Echoing what readers learned in chapter 1 about the period's coincident moral and medical models of disability, stuttering was imagined simultaneously as a reflection of God's will, a marker of certain kinds of personhood, and an ailment to be medically understood, diagnosed, and cured—most often through attention to a patient's imbalanced humoral constitution.

For instance, in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), Robert Burton dubs stuttering one of melancholy's "soonest causes" and counsels stammerers to moisten their tongues with towels soaked in lettuce juice.[41] Similarly, Francis Bacon surmises via a humoral logic in *Sylva Sylvarum* (1627) that the "refrigeration of the tongue" is the cause of a stutter.[42] "We see," he continues, "that in those that stut, if they drink wine moderately they stut less, because it heateth, and so we see that they that stut do stut more in the first offer to speak than in continuance; because the tongue is by motion somewhat heated. . . . and many stutters, we find, are very choleric men: choler inducing a dryness in the tongue."[43] Indeed, as contemporary author Benson Bobrick suggests, "the Renaissance accepted the divinity of speech as a reflection of the soul even while exploring its anatomical operation."[44] The tongue was a willful, wily organ to be tamed and tempered into submission through both spiritual resolve and physiological remedy.

Dramatic Dysfluency

While one could speculate further about Bacon's cure for choleric tongues or Burton's medicalization of the body in an effort to norm verbal fluency, this chapter instead turns to what an ideology of linguistic ability—or more precisely, *resistance to it*—does on the early modern stage. As I have established, the capacity for speech (and eloquent speech, ideally) was a mandate in the Renaissance. At heart, this insistence on linguistic fluency exposes an ability logic desperate to establish and outline clear distinctions between humans and other animals; speech and the rational soul it expresses distinguish "us" from "them." Thus, human lives are afforded paramount meaning and importance in this contrived species hierarchy, propounded by an ideology of linguistic ability. To be truly human is to be easily and obviously distinguishable from animals, and the capacity to not just vocalize (have voice) but *actually speak* is crucial to that formulation.[45]

In *Beasts of Burden*, Sunaura Taylor's moving book on the intersections of animal and disability liberation, she explains that the status of the human (versus nonhuman) has shifted and morphed over time. "At different points throughout history," she notes, "various human populations have been identified as bestial, more animal than human, or as missing links of evolution-classifications that were inextricably entangled with definitions of inferiority, savagery, sexuality, dependency, ability/disability, physical and mental difference, and so forth."[46] The prioritization of speech has been fairly consistent across history in establishing these various biodiverse humans as "bestial." As Mel Y. Chen reminds us in *Animacies*, a brilliant interdisciplinary study merging cognitive linguistics, animal studies, disability studies, and queer of color critique, "linguistic criteria [have been] and are established prominently and immutably in humans' terms."[47] Chen goes on, "who and what are considered to possess 'language' . . . are factors that influence how identification, kinship, codes of morality, and rights are articulated, and how affections and rights themselves are distributed."[48]

This indeed seems to be the operating logic in early modern England—linguistic capacity was a crucial benchmark for humanness, and moreover for the natural rights thus accorded. For example, both John Bulwer and the English writer and critic George Puttenham follow Aristotle's classical sensibility in *Politics* that "man is the only animal whom [nature] has endowed with the gift of speech,"[49] and that "*Nature who hath bestowed the power of Speech upon man, maketh nothing in vaine.*"[50] John Bulwer expands on Aristotle's sentiment in his 1648 *Philocophus: Or, The Deafe and Dumbe*

Mans Friend. Although this text ends up being a rather stunning, anti-ableist treatise on Deaf culture, advocacy, and the power of sign language,[51] Bulwer nonetheless notes,

> The condition that they are in who are borne *deafe* and *dumbe*, is indeed very sad and lamentable: for they are looked upon as misprisions of nature, and wanting *speech*, are reckoned little better then *Dumbe Animals*, that want *words* to expresse their conceptions; and men that have lost the *Magna Charta* of *speech* and privilege of communication, and society with men.[52]

Too, Puttenham argues that "Poesie was th'originall cause and occasion of their [humans] first assemblies, when before the people remained in the woods and mountains, vagrant and dispersed like the wild beasts."[53] In each of these examples, we encounter authors putting into language and practice an ideology of linguistic ability that maintains human superiority over "wild beasts" via the unique capacity for speech.[54]

These diverse authors, from Bacon to Wilson to Bulwer, were of course not the only Renaissance writers thinking about the problem of the unruly, impaired tongue and its potential for stigmatizing disarticulation. Early modern dramatists represented speech impairment on stage in multiple instances and to various ends.[55] While the remainder of this chapter focuses most on the little-known, anonymous play *Looke About You*, a madcap, romping disguise play set amid a feuding, twelfth-century English court of Henry II,[56] I turn first to a few other dramas of the period that were preoccupied with dysfluency, in particular stammering. Discussion of these texts is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to help contextualize—and mark the uniqueness—of *Looke About You* and its performance of disability gain. Specifically, I am intrigued by the way early modern drama engages disarticulation and impairment to uncover and poke at an ideology of linguistic ability. How does the paradoxical *promise* of failed speech turn up on the English stage, and what does a disability logic that embraces dysfluency do for the representational power and aesthetics of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century plays?

When considering early modern dramas concerned with how one speaks, Thomas Tomkis's *Lingua, or the Combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses for Superiority* (1607) seems a most apt place to begin. In Tomkis's allegorical play, the protagonist Lingua makes her case to expand the bodily sensorium from five senses to six so as to include herself, the personification of language, in it. Following the tale of the Judgement of Paris, Lingua orchestrates a competition among the senses by offering a golden crown and royal robe to the worthiest of them. One Communis Sensus presides over the contest, ultimately refusing Lingua's claim to be the sixth sense. Instead, she is deemed but "half a sense." In retaliation, Lingua serves the senses drugged wine at a banquet. In her sleep, however, she then accidentally confesses to her crime and is sentenced to "close prison" until she is "80 yeares of age" and so "shee shall by no meanes wagge abroad" (M4v).[57]

As Carla Mazzio has explained, *Lingua* is all about the problem of being (in)articulate. Surely and among other things, Tomkis's play is a gendered, misogynist admonishment of women's supposedly unruly tongues. For example, in addition to Lingua's imprisonment at the play's close, Phantastes insists that "whensoever she obtaineth license to walk abroad, in token the Tongue was the cause of her offence, let her wear a velvet hood, made just in the fashion of a great Tongue, in my conceit 'tis a very pritty Embleme of a Woman" (N1r). More critically, though, the play is a "microcosmic allegory about language in and around the human body."[58] In *Lingua*, "what is staged," argues Mazzio, "is a social process in which the demand for rational speech casts nonrational speech as utterly vacuous."[59] "My Lord," Lingua attempts to say in a showy but utterly inarticulate explanation of her worth via mishmashed English, Greek, French, Latin, and Italian,

> though the *Imbecill tas* [sic] of my feeble sex, might draw mee backe, from this Tribunall, with the *habenis* to wit *Timoris*, and the *Catenis Pudoris*; . . . Especially so *aspremente spurd con gli sproni di necessita mia pungente*, I will without the helpe of Orators, commit the *totom salutem* of my action to the *Volutabilitati* [*ton gynaikion logon*] which (*avec vostre bonne playseur*) I will finish with more then *Laconica brevitate*. (F2r)

Even as Lingua aims here to make the case for her verbal power and precision, she offers what Communis Sensus calls but "a Gallemaufry of speech indeed" (F2r), and he reprimands her accordingly: "Therefore *Lingua* go on, but in a more formall manner; you know an ingenious Oratiō must neither swell above the Bankes with insolent words, nor creepe too shallow in the ford, with vulgar termes, but run equally, smooth, & cheerful, through the cleane current of a pure style" (F2r).

Lingua's dysfluency is one of the play's most important matters; Tomkis imagines the stakes of speaking and, as Mazzio puts it, "just what it might take to bring this polyglot tongue, to borrow [Roger] Ascham's phrase, to 'right frame again.'"[60] However, and as readers will find with *Looke About You* as well, Communis Sensus's castigation and the play's deep concern with Lingua's inability to articulate correctly are undermined at each turn by the fact "that Lingua is the star of the play."[61] Her failure to articulate actually serves as "the element (language, speech, the tongue) without which the play could not exist."[62] Lingua—the material embodiment of dysfluent speech—performs inarticulation *as the thing of the play*. So too and even more so in *Looke About You*, even as the drama appears to be deliberately marginalizing impaired speech; disarticulation becomes a utilitarian, central focus and crucial instance of disability gain.

A number of other early modern plays beyond *Lingua* and *Looke About You* take up speech impairment. In these instances, however, dysfluency and dysfluent characters are mostly extraneous; they are employed infrequently, incidentally, and most often for comic relief.[63] For example, Mumbling Madge (Margerie Mumblecrust) makes an appearance in Nicholas Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister* (1567), while Phylantus in *Everie Woman In Her Humor* (1609) stutters just a few times, only at the ends of sentences, seemingly as a witty, ironic way to emphasize moments that profess a need to speak clearly. Stammering happens briefly in James Shirley's *The School of Compliment* (1631, 1667), and quite minimally—and offhandedly—in William Cartwright's *The Siege, or Love's Convert* (1651), *The Bastard* (1652), and Robert Neville's *The Poor Scholar* (1662).

Sir John Vanbrugh's 1700 adaptation of John Fletcher's *The Pilgrim* employs stuttering a bit more deliberately and to more obvious comic effect.[64] For example, act 2 features a stammering servant who has information important to the furious and fatherly Alphonso regarding his wayward daughter, Alinda. Alphonso queries this stuttering servant, but the more he is pressed by Alphonso, the less fluently he replies. The servant stammers his responses, doing so on his own time, and in a conversational style that infuriates the already-angry-and-in-a-hurry Alphonso. No doubt, the audience is meant to laugh at their ill-fitting communication. "This Dog will make me mad," exclaims Alphonso, "but one stammering Rogue in the family, and it must fall to his share to give me an account of her [Alinda]" (B4r). Early modern spectators would probably have howled, albeit anxiously, alongside the impatient Alphonso, for whom speech impairment is nothing but a total nuisance and waste of time.

In the anonymous *The Wits, or, Sport Upon Sport* (1662), a compilation of short pieces played in taverns and at fairs while the theaters were closed, stuttering is used allusively to represent something *beyond* impaired speech.[65] A brief play called "The Lame Common-wealth" dramatizes how "A sort of Beggars meet at their Randevouze, and contend about choosing them a King" (28). As this ragged crew verbally spars in sorting out their new "gracious Prince, 'save the good King Clause'" (32), they disclose some supposed principles of their profession. Clause, for one, enjoins the beggars to "keep a foot the humble" (31), while Higgen reminds them to "cry sometimes to move compassion" (31) and points out another table of men who "doth command all these things, and enjoynes 'em" (32). Supposedly much can be learned from these other rogues, who are consummate fakers, in moving patrons to pity: "they are perfect in their Crutches," Higgen notes, "their fain'd Plaisters, and their true passe-bords, with the wayes to stammer, and to be dumb, and deaf, and blind, and lame" (32).

In "The Lame Common-wealth," the stutter is but one of a litany of tactics beggars might employ to find financial success. Dysfluency, in this case, is not disability but rather marks a kind of master ability in feigning.[66] Speech impediment is but one aspect of a perfect disguise, which might include "crutches, wooden legs, false bellies, forc'd eyes, and teeth" (29). And indeed, various characters of the bunch derisively demonstrate the possibilities of performative disability. This "select piec[e] of drollery" ends with "a song" that puts into action especially feigned deafness, muteness, and stuttering. "Ao, ao, ao, ao" (33) vocalizes the inarticulate Ginks who are described thusly as "de—de—de—de—de—de—deaf, and du—du—du—dude-dumb sir" (33).[67]

Stuttering Scenes

Unlike the above examples, in which stuttering functions strictly as side-note comic relief and/or tactical disability disguise, John Marston's *What You Will* (London, 1607) centers and elaborates on the stutter to mobilize the play's story and its artistry. Broadly, this drama is a key play in the War of the Theatres, and as such is interested in the nature of theatrical censure. In the drama's Induction, three characters called Atticus, Doricus, and Phylomuse discuss the theater's worst auditors, describing everything from their breath to their vocal habits to their linguistic excess. These spectators, the infamous "Sir *Sineor Snuffe*, *Monsieur Mew*, and *Cavaliero Blirt*," are a "three-fold halter of contempt that choakes the breath of witte" (A2r). Phylomuse boasts that the dramatist (Marston) won't "quake and pant" (A2r) at these playgoers' verbal attacks, however:

> Shall he [Marston] be creast-falne, if some looser braine,
> In flux of witte uncively befilth
> His slight composures? shall his bosome faint
> If drunken Censure belch out sower breath,
> From *Hatreds* surfet on his labours front? . . .
> Shall his resolve be struck through with the blirt,
> Of a goose breath? . . . with *thats not so good,*
> *Mew, blirt, ha, ha, light Chaffy stuff*? (A2v–A3r)

In lines like these, the play's Induction clearly speaks to the role of stage audiences in turn-of-the-century Elizabethan satirical critique. More crucially, though, it considers as much *how* theatrical censure is expressed as *what* is actually said. In describing the material linguistic modes through which auditors offer their contempt, it sets the stage for what comes later in the play—a deliberate depiction and employment of speech impairment. Mewing, blirting, and snuffing all foreground vocalizations that are not "real" speech and hence anticipate the play's later use of dysfluency as an aesthetic device.[68]

Specifically, the play employs profound stuttering via a character called Albano, a Venetian merchant who has supposedly been lost at sea. When his beautiful wife, Celia, learns this news, she agrees to marry an intolerable French knight, Sir Laverdure. In an attempt to thwart the marriage, Albano's brothers (along with another gentleman angling to marry Celia) engage Francisco Soranza, a local perfumer, who is a dead ringer for the supposedly deceased Albano, right down to his speech impairment. The brothers aim with Soranza's help to dupe Celia into believing her husband is still alive.

As the play's Induction intimates and early modern scholar Matthew Steggle clarifies, *What You Will* is "given over to the free play of verbal exuberance"; it has lines that are "rhythmic but purely nonsensical," and its structure takes on a "deliberately improvisatory quality."[69] Indeed, Steggle further explains, "sudden inarticulacy is common in this play, in which speeches often dissolve into singing, or stammering, or even just a despairing repetition of the play's catch phrase 'what you will.'"[70] Acts 3 and 4 especially make use of dysfluency when, for example, Albano and Francisco echo one another in what Steggle wonderfully calls "a sort of stuttering duet."[71] "B, b, b, bar out *Albano*, O Adulterous impudent," Albano says, to which Francisco replies, "B, b, b, bar out *Albano*, O thou matchlesse g, g, g, gigglet" (G1v). "Ile f, f, fiddle yee," Albano exclaims further on; "Dost f, f, floute mee," responds Francisco, to which Albano quickly counters, "Dost m, m, m, mock me" (G2r). As Steggle argues and these examples attest, "the sounds produced by Albano become almost more important than the meanings that they are supposed to convey."[72] In other words, stuttering would seem to serve as an important part of the play's aesthetic, especially in performance.

I generally concur with Steggle but want to caution that, while stammering indeed enhances *What You Will*'s plot and to some extent functions as an artistic mechanism, the drama, it turns out, is but half-heartedly invested in the stutter as a sustained aesthetic. This is especially true, as we will discover in a moment, when we compare it to *Looke About You*. In Marston's play, "aesthetic qualities associated with disability" do not fully "create artistic opportunities and productively alter the relationships between author, reader, and text."[73] For one, Albano is *inconsistently* inarticulate in seemingly arbitrary ways that do not constitute a deliberate aesthetic model: he often stutters just at the ends of phrases or at the close of longer monologues. In large part, his stammer also functions as a mere prosthetic device to develop characterization and signal affect—he stutters almost exclusively in moments of heated emotion and impassioned angst. Moreover, the play closes with Albano's speech impairment completely gone. By play's end, he sports a so-called nimble tongue; his stutter has utterly and somewhat inexplicably disappeared.

While *What You Will* employs stuttering more comprehensively than other plays in the period, it turns out that Marston's use is fairly gimmicky and one-dimensional insofar as it does not leverage what Emily B. Stanback calls "aesthetically significant experiences that are enabled by non-normative states of embodiment."[74] As suggested above, the anonymous play *Looke About You* does just the opposite, however: it ultimately reveals and revels in an aesthetics of dysfluency that deliberately incorporates the body's limits and failures into composition. Speech impairment is produced and used in the play not just for laughs or as a prosthetic strategy to motivate the narrative in some way. Instead, it quite literally becomes the mode of embodiment through which the drama makes meaning.

In this alternate formulation, the play confronts an early modern ideology of linguistic ability. It both calls attention to and celebrates nonnormative bodyminds and their contingent relationship to early modern psychophysiological ideals. More precisely, *Looke About You* invites us, as Carla Mazzio suggests of dysfluent dramas more generally, to "investigate the logic of unintelligibility as it might generate bafflement and break consensual networks of exchange."[75] Even further, speech impairment in *Looke About You* deliberately short-circuits dialogic networks between not just characters but actors and spectators too. The play refuses dramatic expectations around "typical" articulation and uses linguistic unintelligibility as its primary epistemology.

Stigmatized Stuttering

Looke About You is a wholly eccentric, rather untidy drama featuring a stuttering character named Redcap, "The po po Porters Sonne of the F Fl Fleete" (C1r), who becomes enmeshed in court intrigue. The action of this "pleasant commodie" centers on a series of nobles (as well as a character named Skinke, progenitor of chaos in the play) adopting Redcap's clothes and affecting his stutter in order to negotiate fracturing sympathies among the royal family. While the play clearly falls into the genre of disguise comedy,[76] it also smacks of an English history play (think *Henry IV* and *VI*) with its focus on British nationalism, public, nonautocratic rule, and justice, big and small.[77] It riffs on Holinshed's *Chronicles*, and its Robin Hood character seems to be in direct conversation with two of Anthony Munday's plays from around 1598.[78]

Frequent recourse to stuttering (both genuine, for the sympathetic Redcap, and feigned, by his numerous imitators) is highlighted by many other representations of disability also staged in this play. There are jokes about "lameness" and "halting" (limping) to "madness" and blindness; and we encounter stigmas associated with the plague to those surrounding habitual drunkenness. One scene, for example, invokes both epilepsy *and* chronic illness simultaneously. First, a central character called Gloster poisons the Pursuivant, Winterborne, using wine and sugar so as to steal Winterborne's letter, "the warrant the olde King signed to reprieve the Porter of the fleet" (F4r). To cover the poisoning and diminish the tavern Drawer's probing angst over Winterborne's surprising sickness, Gloster duplicitously diagnoses the Pursuivant as epileptic. "What a forgetfull beast am I? peace boy," Gloster contends, "It is his fashion ever when he drinkes. / Fellow he hath the falling sickenes, / Run [Drawer] fetch two cushions to raise up his head, / And bring a little Key to ope his teeth" (F2r). Here, Gloster avoids suspicion and reproof by naming the Pursuivant's ill health as Winterborne's own personal failure—"he hath the falling sickenes"—as well as a commonplace occurrence not to be worried over—"it is his fashion ever when he drinkes." The Pursuivant is inevitably sickly, Gloster recounts, though his seizure can be easily dealt with via some usefully distracting, for the thieving Gloster, sickbed care from the Drawer.

In the very same scene, playgoers likewise witness another disability representation that reminds spectators of the absolute centrality of impairment to this drama. (The real) Skinke uses pig's blood, "a pyg new stickt" (F3), to redisguise himself as the tavern Drawer, and then pretends to have been attacked by the play's Prince John, whom everyone else on stage imagines as either a disguised Gloster or Skinke. "Betray'd, swounds betray'd, by gout, by palsie, by dropsie" (F2v) intones the wily Skinke as he devises his bloody costume. In calling deliberately on a litany of diseases, Skinke signals to both himself and the audience the level of physical suffering he will claim was exacted on him by John's fateful attack. Reminiscent of the deceitful rogues in "The Lame Common-Wealth," Skinke's successful plotting and performance of his fake abuse require not just bloody prosthetics but the formal, verbal invocation of impairment. Skinke's acute recollection of three distinct chronic ailments—gout, palsy, dropsy—puts him and the play's spectators in fuller mind not just of the supposed pain he will need to feign to ensure successful escape, but of how discomfiting embodied difference sits deep at the heart of *Looke About You*.

Among these and other more conventional disability representations in the drama, Redcap's speech impairment stands out as one of the play's most significant interests, and arguably its most unique instance of dramatic disability. On the one hand, *Looke About You* typifies early modern stigma against atypical locution and illustrates how, as Mazzio argues, "the codification of distinct and indistinct speech informed social assumptions about who did, and who did not, count in scenes of interlocution."[79] Moreover, she notes, rules around early modern sociolinguistic decorum "[led] to unjust and injurious divisions between the human and the inhuman and the subhuman."[80] Indeed various characters in *Looke About You* compare Redcap to base animals and, in both pity and derision, imply that stuttering is coincident with cognitive impairment: "Farewell and be hang'd good stammering ninny," mocks Skinke, for example; "I thinke I have set your Redcaps heeles arunning, wold your Pyanet chattering humour could as sa safely se set mee fr from the searchers walkes" (C1r).

Skinke dubbing Redcap both a magpie and a simpleton points quite obviously to the easy, albeit false, linkage of speech dysfluency and diminished intellect. As John Bulwer succinctly puts it in *Philocophus*, "Speech consists of the strength of the Tongue and Intelligence."[81] Further, he suggests, "the Tongue and Lips are the most accomodated of all the parts of our Body, to signifie what is conceived in the mind."[82] Skinke's disdainful parallel links the "ninny," "Pyanet" Redcap, to petty pilferers and idle chatterers, at best, and with nonhumans at worst. Redcaps fails, in other words, a basic test of full humanness: indeed "by the Motion of the Tongue and Lips," explains John Bulwer, "Man hath a prerogative of expressing his Mind."[83]

Looke About You plays throughout on this problematic assumption that impaired speech equals impaired cognition. For example, Redcap is described by the prison Keep as, yes, a stammerer, but nonetheless "swift and trusty" (B3r) even as "poor" Redcap repeatedly forgets and mispronounces—and thus by way of extension, misremembers—the name of another character, Lady Faukenbridge. To the absentminded Redcap, Faukenbridge is "The la the la la Lady Fau, plague on't" (B4v), an elusive name he can never recall, much less say. "[B]ut I have forgot / The La La Lady Fau Fau Fau plague on her," he berates himself; "G Gloster / Will go ne neere to st stab me, for for forgetting/ My errand" (B4v). Even when Redcap initially learns Lady Faukenbridge's name, he cannot get it straight. "Nay stay, goe to the Lady *Faukenbridge* my sister," Gloster commands. "The La La Lady Fau Fau *Faukenbreech*, I r r run sir," Redcap replies incorrectly (B3r). A simple, witty aural misstep, perhaps, but yet another dramatic opportunity for Redcap to function as the butt of the language joke: one in which his misspeaking is always indicative of broader cognitive incapacity and subhuman status.

Looke About You's humor at Redcap's expense thus also might function as a recentering of what disability scholar Joshua St. Pierre calls "dominant hearing groups" who are unaccustomed to listening and responding to speech impairment.[84] Audience members with typical fluency, expecting a certain kind of eloquence from both the drama and its actors, align themselves with dialogic conventions that refuse and marginalize the stutterer. In this stigmatizing alignment, spectators "hide the construction of their own normalcy, passing themselves off as occupying a naturally given position."[85] In other words, spectators assume the position of "normal" talkers and hearers, and, following St. Pierre, use laughter to establish arbitrary dominance over expressions of atypical speech.[86] An audience's "insider" amusement at Skinke's jokes on Redcap, among various other moments in the play, both masks and reinforces interlocking ableist logics about the best way to talk and how a "good" hearer should receive that speech. One might even deem this particular stage dynamic reminiscent of early modern (and into the nineteenth century) disability "freak shows," the dramatized, highly curated containment of disability through which spectators reaffirm their able bodyminds and reassert their physical, intellectual, and moral superiority in the face of stigmatized human biodiversity.[87] In certain ways, too, the exploitation of Redcap's stutter seems to invite the sort of bad staring broached in chapter 2 with regard to *Richard III*. What if one finds here not productive gazing in the most humane and mutual sense of the exchange, but rather a kind of ableist gawking that defers any possibility for ethical beholding?

While some representations of stuttering in *Looke About You* certainly might be interpreted as codifying an ideology of linguistic ability, others also function in notably different ways, as this chapter has intimated. For one thing, disability in the play also serves as narrative prosthesis. Narrative prosthesis, broadly defined, is David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder's powerful formulation that literature has a "perpetual discursive dependency upon disability" and that characters with disabilities serve specific representational functions.[88] Mitchell and Snyder clarify that "literary narratives lean [on disability] for their representational power, disruptive potentiality, and analytical insight."[89] Although Redcap's stutter does not get centralized dramatically in order to be explained (away), as is typical in narrative prosthesis, it *does* become paramount insofar as it enables the disguise plot of the play and provides the drama with narrative momentum. *Looke About You*'s entire plot at times revolves around Redcap's real or feigned stutter and the identity confusion that that particular disability provokes.

Simultaneously, Redcap's speech patterning operates as "the textual obstacle that causes the literary operation of open-endedness [to the nonnormative] to close down or stumble."[90] Even in its formal necessity and analytical pragmatism, stuttering is an undesirable mode of embodiment that the play must either cure or exterminate according to the logic of narrative prosthesis. Put differently, *Looke About You* occasionally folds under the pressure of literary narrative's obligation and "desire to compensate for a limitation or to reign in excess."[91] For example, on meeting Redcap, Skinke mocks, "Hey thee, to morrow morning at Graves-end Ile wash they stammering throate with a mug of ale merrily" (C1r). While certainly Skinke's promise is mainly meant to mess with Redcap for sport, his offer nonetheless alludes to a medical-like strategy for curing Redcap's problematic "clipping [of] the King's English" (C2r). Moreover, and sure enough, just before the tidy close of the comedy, Redcap is expelled from the narrative completely. In other words, the play is "cured" of disability. Redcap arrives on the scene with Blocke to confirm the King's pardon for his father, the Porter, and to take Skinke and Gloster to task for their duplicity: "A f fo fore I go goe I b b be s s seech you let Sk Skinke and gl Gloster be lo lo looked too, for they have p p playd the k k knaves to to to b b bad" (K4v), begs Redcap. In reply to Redcap's plea, however, King Henry only commands, "Take hence that stuttering fellow, shut them [Redcap and Blocke] forth" (K4v). Hence Redcap's expulsion—and the play's narrative prosthesis—appears to be complete.

Aesthetics of Stammering

While *Looke About You*'s use of Redcap's stutter evidences a repulsion toward disability, it concurrently, and somewhat paradoxically, indicates *a quite profound desire for it too*. As noted consistently throughout this book, impairment can be key to a narrative, but not simply to facilitate, say, a drama's plot device, a poem's genre obligation, or a text's collusion in ableism. Indeed, *Looke About You* offers a deliberate reproduction and conservation of disability that is more enabling and agential than stigmatizing. In fact, Redcap's last lines in the play point directly toward this disability gain and hence to the way disability operates, following Mitchell and Snyder, as "a potent force that challenges cultural ideals of the 'normal' or 'whole' body."[92] More specifically, in reply to King Henry's curt dismissal, Redcap states, "Nay Ile ru ru run, faith you shall not n n need to b b b bid him ta ta take m me away, for re re Redcap will r ru run rarely" (K4v). Redcap's resistance to being "taken away" marks a kind of push back on the inevitable exclusion of disability so characteristic of narrative prosthesis and disability stigma more generally. His instructive command is deliberate and definitive, anything but an erasure. What's more, he characterizes his leave-taking in wholly positive terms: "re re Redcap will r ru run *rarely*" (my italics). As readers learn further in a bit, his incessant running throughout the play is a physical manifestation and visual counterpoint to his aural dysfluency. Here in the instance of going, he characterizes this running—and hence his atypical fluency—as "rare," suggesting not only that he will leave of his own accord, but that that leave-taking will be excellent, maybe even exceptional.

Via this albeit rather small moment, one begins to grasp *Looke About You*'s larger desire for disability. One likewise notes its investment in disability gain: Redcap's atypical speech is a rare dramatic and aesthetic resource the play does not just highlight but rather welcomingly channels in full force. The early modern disguise plot convention itself, with its insistent repetition, duplication, and overlap, connotes a kind of visual stutter that mirrors in costuming and character the play's unique aurality. This is especially true, for example, when *both* Gloster and Skinke are disguised as the hermit: "Je Je Jesus bl blesse me, whop to to two Hermits?" an incredulous Redcap exclaims (I4v). Further and in terms of sound, characters' diction in *Looke About You* is marked by a fanatical repetition reminiscent of Redcap's speech, but particularly on the register of word and phoneme; audible breaks, pauses, and interjectional utterances abound in the play. It is as if the drama anticipates and is playing with the sixteenth-century suspicion that stuttering somehow is contagious and, hence, can be contracted.[93] As numerous characters in *Looke About You* indeed "make [Redcap's] habit to another nature," dysfluent speech comes to serve as the play's primary linguistic template. Redcap is not merely given full voice but rather his distinctive speech is imitated, contracted if you will, and thus replicated ad infinitum such that atypical locution becomes the drama's primary resource and aesthetic mode. Put another way, stuttering, especially as it is expressed in numerous characters' embrace of Redcap's vocal patterning, is a profound epistemic resource this drama cannot function without.

Following the genre of the disguise play, there are myriad examples of Redcap's "contagious" stutter passing from one character to the next as they don his persona and take up his speech behaviors. In one scene, for example, Skinke and Gloster are trapped in Fleet prison, and Gloster swaps costumes with Skinke in order to break free. In a matter of less than twenty-five lines, Skinke's feigned stutter (he is still pretending to be Redcap) is (re)appropriated by Gloster (who borrows the Redcap disguise from Skinke). Skinke's stammered query "N n nay, b b but wh wh what m meane ye?" becomes Gloster's stuttered bid for escape from confinement at Fleet: "Fa fa father, l let me out. . . . [I must] To Je Jericho I th thinke" (D1r).

Perhaps even more notably, though, lots of other characters also stutter in the play, *but not in explicit imitation of Redcap*. For one, Blocke, Lady Faukenbridge's ex-servingman, appears to just randomly stammer. To Gloster disguised as Lord Faukenbridge, Blocke states, for example: "Sir stammerer & your wa watch, y are pa past faith" (E2r). It is possible Blocke proximally imitates Redcap in this scene to further the audience's sense of his annoyance at the crew of incompetent rogues searching futilely for the fugitive Gloster. That said, there is no pragmatic, dramatic reason for Blocke to do so. Here halting speech is not connected to disguise in any way. Instead, characters like Blocke use inarticulacy as a deliberate rhetorical mode and principal method of communication, well beyond the necessity of masquerade. In other words, as I explain below, *Looke About You* seems to expose, cultivate, and depend on what Carla Mazzio calls "the internal logic of failed speech acts."[94] Even more than that, stammering takes on—or just *is*—its own powerful dramatic force in *Looke About You*.

Clearly more than just a basic function of the disguise plot, then, *Looke About You* harnesses speech impairment as a distinctive resource and broad aesthetic template. Pushed to its furthest limit, one might imagine stuttering actors' mouths in the drama as musical instruments being played on for an audience.[95] The stuttering mouth as functional tool resists John Bulwer's assessment of fluent speech as like "a mixt kinde of Musique of a Pipe and a Lute, no otherwise than if these two instruments should sound together in a mutual concent."[96] *Looke About You*'s disordered speech is instead characterized by *un*-mutual "concent" between breath, tongue, and mouth. Stammering becomes the play's new "Musique," not unlike what literary critic Marc

Shell hears in an inarticulate Hamlet's perseverated punning and palilalia throughout Shakespeare's famous tragedy.[97] While one typically imagines stuttering as impediment, obstruction, or blockage, in *Look About You* it is quite the opposite: aesthetic enhancement, aid, and advantage.

Contemporary scholar Donna Peberdy's description of the stutter as "uncontrolled, ineffective speech, broken and disjointed dialogue that overflows rather than flows" certainly sees the stutter as lack.[98] Simultaneously and maybe even accidentally, however, Peberdy points toward the stammer as useful surplus. Overflow can indeed imply negative excess, but it can also signal positive abundance. Redcap's language is full, even copious in its repetition: "Ile ca ca caperclaw to to tone of yee, for mo mo mocking me, and I d d do not ha ha hang me; wh wh which is the fa fa false knave? for I am s s sure the olde He He Hermit wo would never mo mocke an honest man" (I4v). Redcap's reiterated initial letters have their own distinctive rhythm and melodiousness. A line like "Go go god ye, go god s speed ye" (K2v) "flows," but with uncharacteristic, aggressive consonance. Redcap's cacophony of phonemes, even as they might seem "broken and disjointed," forward a cogent, bold, vigorous sound. The stutter, in fact, *is* poetic alliteration in Redcap's mouth: "Fa fa farewell f father," Redcap says to the disguised Skinke, "and I finde Skink or Glo Glo-ster, Ill g g give thee the pr prise of a penny p p pudding for thy p paines" (I2v).

Redcap's impaired speech and its duplication in *Looke About You* "attunes one," borrowing from Emily B. Stanback, "to the inarticulate, the inarticulable, the nonverbal and extra-semantic and unspeakable."[99] Additionally, the play, again echoing Stanback on modern speech dysfluency, "center[s] what exists before, beside, and beyond normative modes of linguistic communication."[100] Stutter-like repetitions abound in *Looke About You*, from Blocke's "A poore Porter sir" (K4r) to Robin's order to "send in that blockehead Blocke" (G1v). Bemoaning the mouths of his adversaries, Gloster pretending to be Old Faukenbridge stammers to a likewise disguised Skinke: "Ther's naught but Gloster Gloster in their mouthes; / I am halfe strangled with the Garlicke breath, / Of rascals that exclaims as I passe by, / Gloster is fled, once taken he must dye" (E3r). Further, John inexplicably repeats himself during a bowls game with Skinke: "Rub rub rub rub," he stuts, "Play Robin, run run run" (D2). We likewise see similar repetition of words, albeit more expressly liturgical, in Old King Henry's final lines in the play:

> Peace to us all, let's all for peace give praiyse,
> Unlookt for peace, unlookt for happy days,
> Love Henries birth day, he hath bin new borne,

> I am new crowned, new settled in my seate.
> Let's all to the Chappell, there give thankes and praise,
> Beseeching grace from Heavens eternal Throne,
> That England never know more prince than one. (L4v)

In yet another moment of palilalia that explicitly mirrors stammering, the Pursuivant falls into total disarticulation, here not repeating single phonemes or words but entire phrases instead: "A poore man sir, a poore man sir: downe I pray yee, I pray let me downe. A sir Richard, sir Richard, a good sir Richard . . . a ha, ah ah" (F3v). And then soon after, John, Faukenbridge, and Richard extensively and across dialogue echo Winterborne's palilalia. In a wild conversational mess of fakery and disguise, their exchange goes:

> RI. Sir Richard, I prethee have some patience.
> FAU. Ile to Blacke-heath, talke not of patience,
> It is intolerable, not to be borne.
> JO. It is intolerable not to be borne,
> A warrant brother, Faukenbridge a warrant?
> FAU. I saw no warrant, I defie you all,
> JO. A slave, a pursevant, one winterborne.
> FAU. I care not for thee that winterborne. (F4v)

As these and numerous other instances attest, Redcap's dysfluency motivates all sorts of deliberate reiteration, punning, homophony, and rhyming in *Looke About You*. Following Stanback's broader assessment of poetry as invested in dysfluency, I understand this drama as playing in what she calls the "borderlands of articulation."[101] It privileges poetic techniques such as repetition, a focus on phoneme and syllable, wordplay, consonance, assonance, alliteration, and even nonsensical ejaculations;[102] these techniques structure the linguistic world of *Looke About You*.

As yet another instance, take the poetic disarticulation an audience hears in Blocke's aside about Lady Faukenbridge's dubious actions. "Hem, these women, these women, and she bee not in love eyther with Prince Richard or this lad," Blocke states, "let blocks head be made a chopping blocke" (C1v). Here, as Old Richard Faukenbridge's servant puns on the high stakes of his job, he repeats "block" not only for witty emphasis but in a final echo that mirrors the doubled-up phrasing at the start of the line in "these women, these women." Blocke, like many other characters in the play, also begins his sentence with a "Hem," an indistinct, initial hesitation or clearing of the throat that functions very much like a stutter.

As with Blocke, Old Richard Faukenbridge utters lines whose singsong sound springs from repetitive diction and seemingly uncontrollable ejaculation—"O I I I tis his owne made match, / Ile make you laugh, ile make you laugh yfaith; / Come, come, he's ready, O come, come away" (K2r). Skinke disguised as the hermit likewise speaks in a language of disarticulation: "Wa ha how, wa ha how, wa ha how," he cries in feigned distress (G4v). Note again, and even more so, the unlucky Pursuivant, Winterborne, who fails to carry out his heraldic duties and subsequently laments strictly in assonant ejaculations and recurrent phrases: "O O O not too fast; O I am sicke, O very sicke. . . . But I, but I, but I, O my head, O my heart. . . . O my box, my box, with the Kings armes, O my box, . . . O my box, it cost me, O Lord every penny O, my box" (F3r–F4r).

These varied examples testify to *Looke About You*'s attention to what Stanback in other contexts has termed "inarticulate aesthetics,"[103] and taken together they cultivate an artistic ethos that runs against the grain of conventional Western aesthetic representation. "Aesthetics," Tobin Siebers has argued, "is the human activity most identifiable with the human because it defines the process by which human beings . . . imagine their feelings, forms, and futures in radically different ways."[104] In the case of *Looke About You*, both modern and early modern playgoers encounter a disability aesthetic that enables the kind of radical imagination to which Siebers refers: one that "disclose[s] new forms of beauty that leave behind a kitschy dependence on perfect bodily forms."[105] Or, as Michael Davidson puts it, disability aesthetics focus on the "spectral body of the other that disability brings to the fore, reminding us of the contingent, interdependent nature of bodies and their situated relationship to physical ideals."[106] *Looke About You*'s aesthetic mode "foregrounds the extent to which the body becomes thinkable when its totality can no longer be taken for granted, when the social meanings attached to sensory and cognitive values cannot be assumed."[107] The play's refusal of typical fluency invites audiences to intently reconsider "the way some bodies make other bodies feel,"[108] and, contrary to Siebers's contention that disability aesthetics is a contemporary phenomenon, it shows early modern precedent of art inviting us into this reconsideration specifically through representations of bodymind difference.

Stuttering as Resource

As readers have discovered thus far, stammering, dysfluent speech, and general disarticulation dominate *Looke About You*'s visual and acoustic landscapes.

Further, the play's *inarticulate* aesthetics would have forced Renaissance players and playgoers to reconsider conventional aesthetic expectations they held about early modern theater and stage-playing. This performance of speech impairment pushes back against an ideology of linguistic ability, and in so doing, becomes an invaluable resource that opens audiences to alternate aesthetic and epistemological possibilities. Stammering on stage brings spectators into an aesthetic domain in which "the sensation of otherness is felt at its most powerful, strange, and frightening."[109] Redcap's stutter immerses playgoers, especially those conditioned to typical speech and conversation, in unconventional, atypical communication. Thus, *Looke About You* offers disarticulation as disability in a useable narrative form that produces, among a number of things, new modes of being in the world with one another.

In his illuminating work on disordered speech, Joshua St. Pierre argues that "'broken speech' is constructed by *both* a speaker and a hearer," and the responsibility for the "disruption of communication rituals does not fall singularly upon the stutterer . . . but also upon the hearer whose ability to pick up on the 'web of subtle interchanges' [that is human communication] is heavily conditioned by 'normal' hearing."[110] Put another way, St. Pierre asks us to rethink stuttering not as something that happens to a stutterer ("an invasive it") but as a distinct, agential communicative action with its own rhetorical style.[111] Certainly, he concedes, disfluency can be stigmatically interpreted as a kind of moral failure in which stutterers lack will and self-discipline over vocal expression. Indeed, obligatory conversational conventions require stutterers to tightly manage their bodies, often prompting them, as St. Pierre explains, to "objectify their own body . . . and treat it as shameful."[112] Or as Carla Mazzio offers, "being inarticulate is often conditioned by social contexts that . . . can lead to injurious forms of internalization."[113]

Nonetheless, according to St. Pierre, stuttering can be a highly intersubjective interpretative situation in which stutterers *do* stuttering. Hearers and speakers, both typical and not, participate in a dialogical process. This means that so-called broken speech is constructed from both sides.[114] Put differently, dysfluent speakers invite listeners into unique communicative exchanges that require different kinds of deeply somatic, interpersonal relations than dialogue between people with typical fluency. For example, notes St. Pierre, "an unaccustomed hearer often works harder to analyze non-verbal cues, to understand the meaning of words that are twisted and stretched beyond their defining phonetic structure."[115] Mazzio describes this phenomenon as the way inarticulacy can "challenge consensus and expand the field of apperception in social interaction."[116] Similarly, James Berger argues that "dys-/disarticulation principally describes the problem of how to imagine an outside to a social-symbolic order conceived of as total and totalizing."[117] Stuttering is not simply dialogical impasse or auditory interference between a speaker and hearer, but rather an "embodied act involving the physical production of words."[118] Moreover, and echoing my previous claim, this embodied act involving the physical production of words likewise produces nonnormative, alternative epistemologies situated in and specific to the disabled bodymind of the stammerer.

The power of stuttering in *Looke About You* thus operates on two mutually reinforcing levels: the material production of dysfluent communication both on stage and between players and spectators, and the cultivation of new ways of knowing and being deriving from those atypical interchanges. As first noted in this book's introduction, Jackie Leach Scully describes these experiential gestalts as deeply somaticized moments of "thinking through the variant body."[119] Jay Dolmage offers another way into this interplay; as he notes, "the body is rhetorically invested, inscribed, shaped; second, all rhetoric is embodied."[120] Finally, Ben Jonson articulates it this way in an early modern moment: "some men are tall, bigge, so some Language is high and great. Then the words are chosen, their sound ample, the composition full, and absolution plentous, and powr'd out, all grave, sinnewye and strong. Some are little, and Dwarfes: so of speech it is humble, and low, without knitting, or number."[121] For Jonson, language *is* a literal body; speech's rhetorical stature is intimately linked to the corporeal entity that utters it.

Thus, Redcap's rhetorical power in *Looke About You*, even staged by an able-bodied actor, cannot be separated from the materiality of his performance of an atypical bodymind. Conversely, this unique bodymind produces material, rhetorical effects via impaired speech. Tobin Siebers might suggest that to stage stuttering means "returning aesthetics forcefully to its originary subject matter: the body and its affective sphere."[122] Body, voice, sound, and the communicative exchanges they invoke are all deeply embodied. This is especially the case in the space of early modern theater.

Elizabethan public theater (say, a venue such as the Globe where *Looke About You* could very probably have been performed) was imagined as a space where sound—a stutter, for instance—absolutely had its own material properties. Bruce Smith, in fact, has called for "a phenomenology of listening" in early modern studies that better attends to both physical properties and cultural variables when thinking about drama and the stage.[123] Smith explains that "the artifacts that survive from early modern England ask to be heard, not seen . . . our knowledge of early modern England is based largely on words, and all evidence suggests that those words had a connection to spoken language that was stronger and more pervasive than we assume about our own culture."[124] He argues that we might imagine the 1599 Globe, for example, as a vintage instrument and its structure as a vocal tract; "the vibrator was the stage," he explains, and "the propagator was the architecture surround."[125] He contends further that in public theater, an interlocutor's voice filled this auditory field, creating an acoustical community where speakers and listeners reverberate across one another in acutely embodied ways.[126] The space of Renaissance theater, in other words, understood and explicitly responded to the reality of language as highly material; "speech is apprehended," Smith notes of how sound works in the Globe, "via a gestalt of force."[127]

The distinctive force of speech in Renaissance public theater would have amplified the intense communicative interfaces—experiential gestalts—between the speakers and hearers outlined above. This is particularly the case with Recap's stutter and its acoustic resonances throughout *Looke About You*. As Gina Bloom informs us, in the Renaissance, "words were imagined to *be* things, rather than just to refer *to* things."[128] According to the English natural philosopher Walter Charleton, Bloom goes on, "the atoms that leave the speaker's body remain whole and durable during the transmission process" from speaker to hearer, and these particles "conserve their likeness to the original vocal sound as they travel to the ear of the listener."[129] Put differently, "a speaker's voice, contained as durable atoms, arrives in unaltered form at the listener's sensory apparatus, with the atoms 'retaining the determinate signature of their formation.'"[130] Stutterers in *Looke About You* thus would have generated agential sonic forms that made the stutter "contagious" in precisely the ways noted earlier in this chapter. The bodyminds of stammerers create sound utterances that are themselves material. Redcap "does stuttering," to recall Joshua St. Pierre, and the sticky, stuttery "atoms" he emits adhere to all kinds of listeners—both on stage and in the audience alike. In short, the disability aesthetic Redcap's speech produces and that shapes the play has a literal, material correlation in the way sound fundamentally is imagined to move in early modern theaters.

But even as Redcap's character "does stuttering" to motivate *Looke About You*'s aesthetic, his stutter likewise might have had a mind of its own. Stutterers, as Joshua St. Pierre intimates, are at once both in control and *not* in control of their dysfluency. The sticky sonic atoms Walter Charleton envisions as part of the human voice were also conceived of by other early modern thinkers as unruly and unpredictable. All voices, much like the stutter itself, could be "unmanageable, beyond the control of those who ostensibly operate and 'own' them."[131] Some authors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Bloom tells us, "imagine the voice as eerily *dis*embodied,"[132] and "distinguish the agency of speech from the agency of the speaker, demonstrating the material means by which the former makes possible the latter."[133] In "Stuttering from the Anus," Daniel Martin describes stutter events as the "excremental remains of embodiment, echoes of the inert involuntary thingness of our bodies."[134] He explains that "when artificial rhythms—stutters, hesitations, uncertainties, prats, and falls—invade the body, we recognize something in others that seems predatory in its disruption of the supposedly graceful and fluid movements of life itself."[135]

Looke About You creates an aesthetic that captures both the "doing of stuttering" and the unpredictable, disruptive effects of broken speech on typical modes of communication. Stuttering is imagined diversely and simultaneously in *Looke About You* as embodied and not, agential and not, empowering and not, and the drama's representation of stammering plays to these keen contradictions as it performs atypical locution as early modern disability gain. In so doing, *Looke About You* makes impaired speech a radical new template for interpersonal communication; dysfluency becomes a kind of new norm over the course of the play. It paradoxically often makes that case by familiarizing the defamiliarizing difference of a disabled bodymind that speaks in faltering fits and starts. Nearly all characters in the drama experience and employ speech dysfluency in some way, and an audience thus comes to recognize stuttering as the "thing" of the play. Put another way, stuttering in *Looke About You* cultivates a disability aesthetic predicated on the universality of impairment. Concurrently, though, the universal stutter still registers as an unfamiliar dialogical mode and form of communication. *Looke About You*'s disability aesthetic and the radical, nonnormative epistemology that arises from stuttering on stage draw attention to difference even as they generalize it. They ironically both familiarize stammering and keep that normalization at bay through defamiliarization and estrangement.

One keen example of this productive estrangement that generates impaired speech as an epistemic resource for playgoers comes again through the figure of Redcap—not just through his stutter, but through the associated movements of his body. Over the course of *Looke About You*, Redcap is always running. The drama notes this constant motion through dialogue, Redcap's own pronouncements, and also via stage direction: "*Still runnes*" (B3r).[136] As mentioned earlier, I read Redcap's incessant running throughout the play as, in part, a physical manifestation and visual counterpoint to his aural dysfluency. Marc Shell clarifies: there indeed is a representational relationship between speech and "going"; stutter is a cognate with stumble, and oral stammering frequently goes with pedal stumbling.[137] Toward the close of the play, *Looke About You* literally enacts this parallel when Gloster "trippes up [Redcaps's] heeles" (I4v), and the always-running Redcap stumbles and falls. Further, and all throughout the play, "Re re redcap must ru run [but] he cannot tell whe whether" (D2v). His motion, in certain ways, is as aimless as his tongue. His lack of directionality as he runs the wrong way or jogs in place as he tries to articulate is a physical metaphor for his lack of linguistic precision in speech impairment.

On the other hand, Redcap's bodily posture is diametrically *opposed* to his verbal posture. A "nimble footed fellow" (B3r), he runs to compensate for broken speech, to outpace his tripping tongue, and to make up for lost time, so to speak. His body does double-time even as his mouth moves slowly,[138] and this puts his physical mobility in stark contrast to his linguistic mobility. In the end, though, he talks constantly, but due to his stammer, says little; he runs quickly, but gets nowhere. For both early modern and contemporary audiences, this estranging clash of physical and verbal pace—as well as the frenetic, seeming unproductivity of both speech and motion in the play—is perhaps as defamiliarizing as hearing and engaging the stutter itself. The apparent incongruity between Redcap's voice and his motion is part and parcel of the play's disability aesthetic. This aesthetic calls attention to and then dismantles ideologies of ability that insist bodyminds talk and move according to ableist norms and expectations.

To establish its aesthetic and episteme, then, *Looke About You* harnesses the stutter to also instigate a significant temporal conundrum for spectators. In a drama whose intense disguise plot, in the first place, is ridiculously fast-paced and quite challenging to follow (even more so for contemporary playgoers), the audience's complex relationship to time becomes paramount. Redcap's slow-speech and fast-running engages playgoers not just in alternate ways of listening and communicating, but in a fundamentally different temporal mode. The play uses the disabled body's crip time, which according to Joshua St. Pierre "arrests time since the oblique relation between past/present/future produced by awkward pauses, gaps in signification, and stuttered syntax makes temporal movement viscous."[139] The drama's aural and visual landscapes force other players, as well as spectators, into an alternative, crip timescape.

A Blackfriar's Backstage podcast on the American Shakespeare Center's historic 2011 performance of *Looke About You* might help readers comprehend how this defamiliarizing temporality works, both now and in the Renaissance. Discussing the play, actor Chris Johnston notes how "the stammer is written in there quite a lot"; it's "all over the place."[140] Crucially, he further proclaims that "people don't have time to listen to someone stutter," and again later in the podcast, "nobody has time for a stutterer."[141] Indeed, concurs St. Pierre, typical hearers are impatient when it comes to stuttering.[142] Per ableist cultural expectations around human productivity and labor capacity, a certain pace of speech is assumed to be the norm, and "gendered, fat, elderly, and disabled bodies—bodies outside the universal position—are evaluated temporally, and read as a 'loss' or a 'waste' of time for not performing within normative parameters."[143] "The choreography taken for granted by able-bodied speakers is not simply a neutral script guiding human communication," explains St. Pierre, "but consists of normalized rules played against disabled bodies who cannot hit the right cues, or speak quickly or fluidly enough."[144] In other words, as St. Pierre elaborates, stutterers do not lack the ability to communicate, but instead "the ability to communicate in the 'right' way and within the 'appropriate' amount of time"; relatedly, impatient hearers "are actively collecting and interpreting information in an insufficient and discriminatory way and contributing to the construction of a stutterer's speech as 'broken.'"[145]

In *Looke About You*, Redcap's voice and movement, as well as his contagious stutter, refuse conventional social choreographies of human communication.[146] His running body as well as his unruly tongue resist "'clock time,' which disciplines speakers to move in standardized, efficient motions and thereby conform to strict temporal parameters."[147] Straight, able time, as explained in previous chapters, is oriented around a future-directed linearity that, as St. Pierre rightly notes, is "abstracted from the flux of bodily time."[148] However, insofar as the play centralizes and celebrates stuttering in all the ways outlined above, it creates a new temporal logic that privileges the disabled speaker and the willing, open hearer: "bad" listeners and interlocuters become the ones for whom time does not work. Redcap, while certainly disciplined in the play for not embodying time in the "right" way, succeeds in altering a temporality that, according to ableist logic, does not ever belong to him in the first place.[149]

In *Looke About You*, the "violent and persistent temporal decentering"[150] usually experienced by stutterers as they oblige normative time is scripted onto supposedly able bodies whose temporality is restructured by the rhythms and tempos of dysfluency. Following Jay Dolmage, "the stutter has a particularly powerful *kairos*."[151] It "makes the audience recognize their tacit expectations in the pause," and further establishes in disability "the very possibility (and concurrently the uncertainty) of human communication and knowledge."[152] To clarify, it is not so much that Recap's stutter takes over time, so to speak, but rather that his dysfluency fundamentally transforms communication by acknowledging how communication (1) is always co-constituted; (2) is constituted in time, space, and according to ableist logics; and (3) *does not necessarily have to be constituted in those ways*.

Stuttering in *Looke About You* forwards a defamiliarizing disability aesthetic that mandates new dialogical coperformances between speakers and hearers. The linguistic rhythms and flows of impaired speech "spurn the cardinal value of futurity and invite interlocutors to gather in a noninstrumentalized and nonproductive present."[153] At the risk of overstatement, again: this play demonstrates disability gain. It cultivates and conserves a crucial, new resource for playgoers. It offers a new episteme—what St. Pierre might call "an existential opening"[154]—out of temporal estrangement and radically different modes of human communication grounded in so-called impairment.

Disability Conservation Work

Looke About You both desires and cultivates disability as a crucial world-reframing resource through the capture of uncharacteristic aurality in performance. Interestingly, it also conserves that disability in a concomitant mode, *via the printed playtext itself*. As I outline by way of conclusion, the words on the playtext page strive to sustain performed stuttering and aestheticize it further. Redcap stumbles over *any and every* word the playwright finds dramatically or metrically useful, and the printer takes that staged stuttering and extends it beyond performative utility into a durable, expressly textual aesthetic mode. A spoken line like Redcap's "I am g g glad of th th that, my fa fa father the p p porter sha shall ge ge get a f f fee by you" (B3r) is deliberately marked and reproduced verbatim in print to highlight *each and every* locution presumably uttered by an actor on stage. As Bruce Smith explains of print drama more broadly, these "graphemes mediate between sound-in-the-body and sound-on-the-page. The common denominator in this transaction is body: paper and ink as material entities stand in for muscles and air as material entities."[155] Linguistic capture in a printed *Looke About You* conserves both a compelling disability materiality and the inevitable ephemerality of stage performance.[156]

On first reading, the typographical incompleteness of *Looke About You* is somewhat unexpected and jarring in its deliberate fragmentation, as it might have been for early modern playgoers as well. As these typographical fragments accrue, however, they become something almost *more than* complete; on the page and taken together, they prosthetically supplement staged speech impairment to formally conserve aural variation that ultimately, in performance, is fleeting. The printed phrase "La La Lady Fa Fa Faukenbridge," for example, apprehends indistinct and impermanent speech and, ironically, distinctly demonstrates it on the page. Much like the play's aural aesthetic would have asked spectators to do, the play's type compels readers to linger in the space of dysfluency, in spaces marked by forceful gaps between repeated letters. Similar to what we found in Tony Harrison's poem at the start of this chapter, this text preserves the live staging of stuttering by re-embodying speech impairment in an exceptional typography that acknowledges and then celebrates linguistic difference.

Looke About You's method of delineating stuttering with *no* dashes or commas seems exceptional insofar as it differs considerably from other early modern textual representations of stuttering. Early modern staged stuttering typically appears in print as we find it in the following two, generalizable examples:

> In Marston's *What You Will* (1607): "Ile f,f,follow though I st,st,st,stut, Ile stumble to the Duke in p,p,plaine language . . ." (G2r).[157]
>
> In Robert Neville's *The Poor Scholar* (1662): "I'le make patience as great a stranger / To my breast a a a as———" *He stammers and can go no further* (B3r).

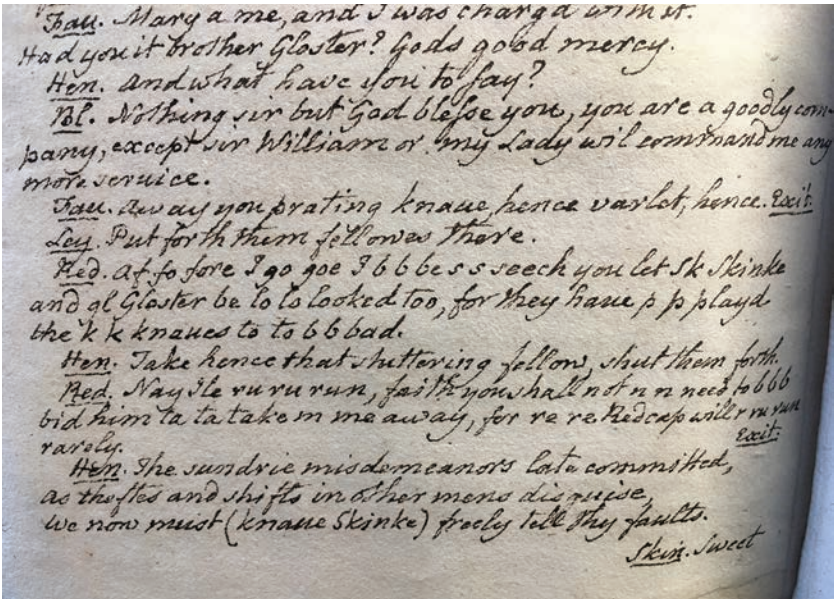
As these representative instances indicate, the early modern printed stutter most often was denoted in a kind of shorthand way via a couple of repeated letters divided by commas, sometimes dashes (long and short), or just written in as stage directions. One can imagine the challenge of stammering for an early modern typesetter constrained by having only a certain number of letters on hand; to replicate the stammer verbatim was no small thing, even just in terms of the sheer pragmatics of premodern printing.

In its impeccably and consistently thorough reproduction of both single- and multiletter phonemes doubled and even tripled up,[158] *Looke About You* foregrounds the printerly work of Edward Allde's shop as, in this case, on the front line of what we might conceive of as early modern nonnormative reading and writing practices invested in disability gain.[159] Indeed, as Gillian Silverman reminds us, the book is "a material object that elicits a range of physical gestures and bodily reactions," and reading precipitates "interactions [that] treat language and texts not as tools for the transmission of meaning but as mediums for creating pleasure and new forms of knowledge."[160] So although Bruce Smith has argued that print "stands at the farthest remove from the speaking body" and is "infinitely less sensitive than writing is to the unfolding of events in time,"[161] the printed text of *Looke About You* seems to function otherwise. The dysfluent body is significantly materialized in a printed *Looke About You*, and this typographical reproduction of the stutter's fragmentation and incompleteness shows a unique commitment to conserving disability—disability that, indeed, creates aesthetic pleasure as well as new knowledge and experiences. The play's 1600 printing conserves the embodiment and ephemerality of disability in performance, for certain. Even more importantly, though, it conserves the rare aesthetic and epistemic resources that disability uniquely produces.

Wonderfully, the same (albeit perhaps unwitting) investment in disability conservation work turns up especially in one of the seven extant copies of *Looke About You*'s single 1600 printing. The Bodleian Library at Oxford University houses two copies of the play, one of which has especially rare, eighteenth-century emendations that preserve and recreate aural dysfluency via the transformation of damaged print into manuscript handwriting. The first page of this text is a handwritten detailing of provenance that appears to have been penned by Edmund Malone.[162] Malone notes that he bought the copy from "Mr. Dutton the Watchmaker" shortly after a perfect copy of the play was purchased at a higher price by the Duke of Roxburghe. In these prefatory comments, Malone explains that Mr. (most likely, George) Steevens, "out of kindness" to Dutton, "wrote out the leaves wanting in this copy, and it was then put to sale."[163]

As the illustration here depicts (fig. 3), in this exceptional copy, numerous lines throughout are penned in where the print text was damaged.[164] Moreover, the entirety of the play from recto K forward is missing and thus meticulously copied out by hand. Using the aforementioned "perfect" copy as its model, Steevens replicates *Looke About You*'s stutter *identically* to its presentation in print, down to the very last stammered letter. While clearly Steevens must have intended his handwritten replication of the text's missing material to increase the trading price of the volume, this palimpsestic codification of *Looke About You*'s dysfluent aesthetic enacts yet another iteration of disability conservation. The material force of disability takes shape further in Steevens's handwriting; or as Bruce Smith might contend, "you can feel the force [of voice and sound] with your fingertips."[165]

In the Bodleian copy, we encounter a reader-scribe's loving articulation of disarticulation. Similar to *Looke About You*'s unprecedented 1600 printing, this



Fau. Mary a me, and I was chargd with it.
Had you it brother Gloster? Gods good mercy.
Hen. and what have you to ſay?
Bl. Nothing sir but God bleſse you, you are a goodly com-
pany, except sir William or my Lady wil command me any
more service.
Fau. Away you prating knave, hence varlet, hence. Exit.
Ley. Put forth them fellowes there.
Red. af fo fore I go goe I b b be s s seech you let Sk Skinke
and gl Gloster be lo lo looked too, for they have p p playd
the k k knaves to to b b bad.
Hen. Take hence that stuttering fellow, shut them forth.
Red. Nay Ile ru ru run, faith you shall not n n need to b b b
bid him ta ta take m me away, for re re Redcap will r ru run
rarely. Exit.
Hen. The sundrie misdemeanors late committed,
as theftes and shifts in other mens disguise,
we now must (knave Skinke) freely tell thy faults.
Skin. Sweet

Fig. 3. A rare manuscript copy of *A Pleasant Commodie, called Looke About You*.
Anon., London, 1600. Shelfmark Mal. 229 (5), L.
Photograph reproduced with permission of the Bodleian Library, Oxford University.

especially unique copy actively honors the printed text's embodiment of lived (and live-on-stage) disability. This damaged yet desirable, "imperfect" text knowingly reproduces and deliberately celebrates stuttering. It codifies atypical speech in meticulous, handwritten detail to engage in ongoing disability conservation work that is highly efficacious.[166] On both stage and page, *Looke About You* materializes and maintains stuttering's radical power as a resource for early modern disability identity, art, and experience.

Conclusion

As chapter 5 has shown, atypical speech in *Looke About You* serves as something more than an idiosyncratic (play)textual feature or disability metaphor. It is also far more than a simple plot motivator. Instead, disability in this play, instantiated via both performance and type, embraces a kind of aesthetic nervousness that, like an actual stutter, short-circuits and upends normative modes of reading, seeing, hearing, performing, and interacting.[167] In *Looke About You*, dysfluency becomes an explicit and productive aesthetic mode. It operates as an anti-ableist counterideology marking, as Ato Quayson says of disability in art more generally, "a threshold that opens up to other questions of [an] . . . ethical kind."[168]

Indeed, arguments throughout this entire book have displayed how early modern literature functions as just such a crucial threshold. Readers have discovered how literature of the English Renaissance offers, then and now, extraordinary aesthetic, epistemic, and ethical paradigms. Early modern literature has testified to some radical feelings, perspectives, and discourses that critically queried and also utterly refused premodern ableism and the sociocultural weight of its norming effects. The early modern texts and performances encountered herein extend to all of us new disability orientations and ways of beholding. They invite and teach us about how to desire difference deeply, and to know and value disability's profound promise.

Coda

Beholding, Again

“Nay, come, let’s go together” (*Hamlet*, 1.5.191), remarked Hamlet to his dead father in an outstanding production of Shakespeare’s famous play at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 2010.[1] This exchange offered a key twist on a line conventionally played as an *Exeunt* impetus addressed to Marcellus and Horatio at the close of the last scene in act 1. In this distinctive tweak, the Ashland players—Dan Donohue as Hamlet and Howie Seago as the Old King—chose to highlight what one reviewer described as “Hamlet’s exceptionally intimate relationship with his father.”[2] The intensity of this relationship as exemplified in this single line was made possible through Seago and Donohue’s unprecedented use of American Sign Language as their primary linguistic medium. Throughout the performance, Seago, a Deaf actor, communicated with his grieving son through signing. In 1.5 especially, that signing grew ever more intense as he explained the fate that befell him at the hands of his murderous brother. Both “father and son infused their gestures with urgency, tenderness, and sorrow,” explains Elizabeth Zeman Kolkovich; “I found their interactions particularly moving. . . . When the Ghost was offstage, Hamlet suggested, by signing, that his father remained in his thoughts.”[3] Conversely, Hamlet’s embittered distance from his disloyal mother came to life in Gertrude’s refusal to speak ASL in the presence of the Ghost. Her eschewal of signing emphasized her fear and guilt over betraying her husband and son. Gertrude’s disengagement with the language so crucial to her nuclear family made her estrangement all the more notable.

The level of father-son intimacy in this staging, directed by Bill Rauch and set in the Angus Bowman Theatre, was unprecedented indeed. Michael

Shurgot testified, in fact, that it presented the *most* intimacy between Hamlet and his dad that he had ever seen in performance.[4] Much of that closeness came from the ways that, via ASL, Hamlet seemed to spiritually channel his father's ghost. In other words, Hamlet did not translate or simply verbally parrot the Old King's signs to make them accessible to conventionally hearing spectators, but rather wholly embodied his father's anger and disgust at Claudius, Gertrude, and a corrupt Denmark rotting at its core. As Shurgot says, "Hamlet articulated, i.e. gave voice to, his father's agony and heard himself describe it."[5] "Using ASL to sign the Ghost's words to him," Shurgot explains, "Hamlet had to give physical 'shape' to his father's suffering."[6] The production's use of ASL added a dimension to the play that could not be articulated through spoken English alone. In this case, audience members might access the play's language on at least two different registers: they could experience it through the Old King's gestural poetics,[7] and/or hear it through his son's deliberate verbal distillation of the story of his father's murder, or both. As another reviewer puts it, "as Seago signs, Donohue repeats the lines aloud, as though interpreting for himself, as though the ghost's message must enter the world of the living through Hamlet."[8] The harrowing realizations Hamlet faces in this scene become all the more palpable as they are evinced in the signs and body movements of the Ghost.

This unprecedented linguistic dynamism is contingent on the production's use of ASL. There is an acute tangibility to Hamlet's psychic trauma that gets expressed specifically in Seago's use of signs. In an interview with Shurgot, Seago discusses the particular skill set Deaf actors bring to the stage: as Seago understands it, artistic translation[9] is a unique part of Deaf experience and something he has honed for Shakespearean purposes.[10] While incorporating ASL into a production[11] certainly might make a drama *less* accessible to some playgoers, it nonetheless enables theater to operate more heteroglossically as it deprioritizes the Shakespearean spoken word consistently imagined as the "thing" of the play. Instead of foreclosing, say, the lushness or complexity of Elizabethan verse, ASL opens another linguistic dimension that in this case changes characterization, plot movement, and affective resonances. Indeed, as Jill Bradbury notes, "there are many layers of Shakespeare's meaning that ASL can illuminate in ways that spoken languages cannot. . . . ASL has its own literary techniques and its own poetic devices that can be used to parallel or express the rich metaphorical and figurative language of Shakespeare."[12]

Resonating with the early modern lyric by Thomas Traherne that opened this book, the interface of Deaf and hearing actors on stage in Ashland illustrates the crucial value of deafness. Deaf acting and the production's use of ASL enlivened language's vibrant visuality and its deep connection—sometimes strangely obfuscated even in live productions—to bodies, movements, and orientations. Rauch's bilingual *Hamlet* harnessed metaphoric iconicity[13] to interpret complex linguistic tropes and affective exchanges through new visual-spatial metaphors.[14] In so doing, the production put into practice, among other things, the way that Deaf people's orientations and embodied knowledges offer playgoers a new resource for interpreting theater, and moreover, for experiencing the world.

Arguments throughout *Beholding Disability* have displayed historical precedents for the contemporary ethos enacted in OSF's production of *Hamlet*. They have shown how early modern literature, even in its trenchant ableism, understood human biodiversity as a positive, enabling resource to be both desired and conserved. They uncovered early modern cultural codes, pressures, and assumptions related to normativity. They likewise found them to be a series of agreed-on social fictions—ideologies of ability—operating cooperatively and hegemonically in the English Renaissance. More critically, readers gleaned how representations of disability in the literature of the period countered that ableism, instead illuminating aesthetic, epistemic, and ethical paradigms that celebrate nonnormative bodyminds and their embodied wisdoms.

Ethical beholding of disability in the premodern past necessitated some fundamental reorientations. As I hope is now apparent, revisiting texts, characters, and histories we think we know is not enough when engaging in literary history as activism. To "revisit" means to reexamine and take a fresh look at something already explored. On temporal and spatial registers, it implies a return or coming back to a moment or place one has been previously. What *Beholding Disability* has called for throughout is the more vigorous, deliberate adoption of *brand new* positions, and the fundamental redirection of long-standing orientations premised on ignoring and renouncing disability. This book offers a template for what happens when we face toward disability, not away from it.[15] As I have argued elsewhere,[16] these orientations insist on locating disability (or, at very least, its inevitability) universally in all bodies, including our own, while respecting just how profoundly different this variation makes us from one another. Indeed, as Lennard Davis notes, "what is universal in life, if there are universals, is the experience of the limitations of the body."[17] To orient toward disability means to live always and fully in our unstable corporeal habitations and to work hard not to disavow them.

The diverse bodyminds and knowledges traced out in these pages via early modern literature likewise prompt readers, to invoke disability scholar

Sami Schalk, to imagine things otherwise.[18] "Representation," Schalk further avows, "matters in material, concrete, and life-affirming—life-changing—ways."[19] As disability writer and activist George Estreich similarly suggests in his inspiring book, *Fables and Futures*, we need to carefully examine the representations we create and the stories we tell insofar as they are the mechanisms by which we decide who can claim to belong in our human community.[20] Estreich argues, and I agree emphatically, that "learning to imagine the people who are actually here, in the present, may help us to bring about better futures; and . . . those we fail to imagine today will be either absent from the future or alive only on its margins."[21]

I have attempted herein to harness the urgency Estreich voices: we must *now* consider wisely and imagine capaciously all kinds of better futures. As a literary historian, however, I also want to insist that this imagining is impossible without rumination on the past, especially as that history comes to us through artistic narrative and performance. When one gazes backward, ethically beholding epileptic kings, eunuch lovers, deaf narrators, poxy rogues, and melancholic martyrs, one discovers old stories that mean much for the creation of new, more just, possible futures. These stories indeed are an invitation to imagine worlds otherwise, to dream up and then bring into being worlds that are more loving, ethical, and equitable.

If authors and texts of the early modern period could celebrate disability as gain, so too can we. If they could comprehend and generously embrace the paradox that disability is hard, but is also good, so too can we. If they could understand the precious need for human biodiversity and advocate to conserve it, so too can we. If they could envision robust, ethical futures and worlds that acknowledge, value, and encourage disabled people to flourish, so too can we.

Notes

Introduction

1. On disability as knowledge, see Tobin Siebers, "Shakespeare Differently Disabled," in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment: Gender, Sexuality, and Race*, (ed.) Valerie Traub (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 435–54.

2. Originally coined by disability scholar Margaret Price, this term "insists on the inextricability of mind and body and highlights how processes within our being impact one another in such a way that the notion of a physical versus mental process is difficult, if not impossible to discern in most cases"; see also Sami Schalk, *Bodyminds Reimagined: (Dis)ability, Race, and Gender in Black Women's Speculative Fiction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), especially 5–6.

3. *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 207.

4. On early modern disability and ableism as not anachronistic, see Elizabeth B. Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds: Body, Space, and Narrative in Renaissance Representations of Disability* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2019); Allison P. Hobgood and David Houston Wood, *Recovering Disability in Early Modern England* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2013); Allison P. Hobgood and David Houston Wood, "Introduction, 'Disabled Shakespeares,'" *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 29.4 (2009).

5. *Monstrous Kinds*, 16.

6. *Disability Theory* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 8.

7. On gain and loss, see Peter Catapano and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (eds.), *About Us: Essays from the Disability Series of the New York Times* (New York: Liveright, 2019); Michael Davidson, "Cleavings: Critical Losses in the Politics of Gain," *Disability Studies Quarterly* 36.2 (2016), np; Eli Clare, *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation* (Cambridge, MD: South End Press, 1999); Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, "The Case for Conserving Disability," *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* 9.3 (2012), 339–55; Chris Gabbard, *A Life Beyond Reason: A Father's Memoir* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2019); Peggy Klaus, "A Chance to See Disabilities

as Assets," *New York Times*, 4 Feb 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/05/jobs/disabilities-can-be-workplace-assets.html. Accessed 16 Sept 2019.

8. On the medical model, see Eli Clare, *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017).

9. On disability as a resource, see Garland-Thomson, "The Case for Conserving Disability," 339–55. In an early modern context, see Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*.

10. Garland-Thomson, "The Case for Conserving Disability," 346.

11. Ato Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness: Disability and the Crisis of Representation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 34. See also Tobin Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010) and Michael Davidson, *Concerto for the Left Hand: Disability and the Defamiliar Body* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008).

12. Jackie Leach Scully, *Disability Bioethics: Moral Bodies, Moral Difference* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), 91.

13. Gladys Wade, *The Poetical Works of Thomas Traherne* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1965), 23–25. For the most recent and nearly complete compilation of Traherne's writings, see Jan Ross, *The Works of Thomas Traherne* (Cambridge, UK: D. S. Brewer, 2005), vol. 5. Traherne's works were lost for over two centuries, discovered in manuscript in 1896–97, and initially attributed to Henry Vaughan.

14. "Strange Bodies: Thomas Traherne's Disabled Subject," in *Re-reading Thomas Traherne: A Collection of New Critical Essays*, (eds.) Jacob Blevins, and Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2007), 1.

15. On deafness, aurality, and identity in early modernity, see Jennifer Nelson and Bradley Berens, "Spoken Daggers, Deaf Ears, and Silent Mouths: Fantasies of Deafness in Early Modern England," in *The Disability Studies Reader*, (ed.) Lennard J. Davis (New York: Routledge, 1997), 52–74.

16. Blevins (ed.), "Strange Bodies," 13.

17. Blevins (ed.), "Strange Bodies," 13.

18. The term "ocular audition" is in Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, 87; see chapters 2 and 4 especially.

19. On human exceptionalism and negative human exceptionalism, see Kenneth Gouwen, "What Posthumanism Isn't: On Humanism and Human Exceptionalism in the Renaissance," in *Renaissance Posthumanism*, (eds.) Joseph Campana and Scott Maisano (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016), 37–63; and Laurie Shannon, "Poor, Bare, Forked: Animal Sovereignty, Human Negative Exceptionalism, and the Natural History of *King Lear*," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 60.2 (Summer 2009), 168–96, respectively.

20. On Traherne coopting deafness, see Mintz in Scott W. Howard, *An Collins and the Historical Imagination* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 64; and Susannah Mintz, *Threshold Poetics: Milton and Intersubjectivity* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003), 193; and Nelson and Berens, "Spoken Daggers," 61.

21. See Lennard Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body* (London; New York: Verso, 1995), 175 n. 26; and Nelson and Berens, "Spoken Daggers," 66.

22. Blevins, "Strange Bodies," 19.

23. Blevins, "Strange Bodies," 4.

24. On the period's increasingly nuanced discourse around deafness as well as notable deaf artists, see Marc Marschark and Patricia Elizabeth Spencer, *The Oxford Handbook of Deaf Studies, Language, and Education*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 8–9.

25. Mintz, *An Collins*, 64–65.

26. On early modern Deaf-gain, see Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, chapter 2.

27. "Deaf Studies in the 21st Century: 'Deaf-Gain' and the Future of Human Diversity," in *The Disability Studies Reader*, 4th ed., (ed.) Lennard J. Davis (New York: Routledge, 2013), 247.

28. See Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, 89, for this notion as it connects to early modern passibility.

29. For some of the latest scholarship on Traherne, again see Blevins, "Strange Bodies."

30. See Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy*. Ian Hacking similarly argues that the erosion of determinism in the nineteenth century and the advent of probability cultivated new laws that enforced normalcy; Lennard Davis, *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), chapters 1, 2, 5. On the definition, enumeration, and classification of deviancy and normalcy, see chapters 1 and 19.

31. Hobgood and Wood, *Recovering Disability*, 8.

32. See Georges Canguilhem, *On the Normal and the Pathological* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Pub. Co, 1978); Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965); and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

33. On a rhetorical history of norms, see Jay Timothy Dolmage, *Disability Rhetoric* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2014), chapter 1.

34. For a resonant argument in medieval disability studies, see Irina Metzler, *A Social History of Disability in the Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2013), especially 3.

35. *Monstrous Kinds*, 7. See also Bearden, "Before Normal, There Was Natural: John Bulwer, Disability, and Natural Signing in Early Modern England and Beyond," *PMLA*, 132.1 (January 2017), 33–50. On the spatial logic of norms in early modernity, see Valerie Traub, "The Nature of Norms in Early Modern England: Anatomy, Cartography, 'King Lear,'" *South Central Review*, 26.1/2 (2009), 42–81.

36. Leah Marcus, "Recent Studies in the English Renaissance," *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500–1900*, 54.1 (Winter 2014), 228. On this matter, see also Henri-Jacques Stiker, *A History of Disability* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); and Edward Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks Before the Blind: Medieval Constructions of a Disability* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), chapter 1.

37. On disability and neoliberalism, see Robert McRuer, "Cripping Queer Pol-

itics, or the Dangers of Neoliberalism," *S & F Online*, 10 1/2 (2012). Retrieved at http://sfonline.barnard.edu/a-new-queer-agenda/cripping-queer-politics-or-the-dangers-of-neoliberalism. Accessed 9 September 2019.

38. *Staring: How We Look* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 19.

39. Stiker, *A History of Disability*, 65. On disability in medieval Europe especially, see Stiker, *A History of Disability*, and Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks*, chapter 1, especially 7–8.

40. Hobgood and Wood, *Recovering Disability*, 8.

41. On "infirmity" and social access, see Bianca Frohen, "Performing Dis/ability? Constructions of 'Infirmity' in Late Medieval and Early Modern Life Writing," in *Infirmity in Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Social and Cultural Approaches to Health, Weakness and Care*, (eds.) C. Krötzl, K. Mustakallio, and J. Kuuliala (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 52.

42. *Disability in the Middle Ages: Rehabilitations, Reconsiderations, Reverberations* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 4.

43. Julie Singer, "Disability and the Social Body," *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies*, 3.2 (Summer 2012), 141.

44. "Analytical Survey: Encountering Disability in the Middle Ages," in *New Medieval Literatures*, vol. 15 (for 2013), (eds.) Laura Ashe, David Lawton, and Wendy Scase (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2015), 330.

45. On the rise of U.S. municipal laws that criminalized disability and supported disability discrimination, see Susan M. Schweik, *The Ugly Laws: Disability in Public* (New York: New York University, 2009).

46. On responsible speculation, see Rebecca Olson, "The Continuing Adventures of Blanchardine and Eglantine: Responsible Speculation about Early Modern Fan Fiction," *PMLA*, 134.2 (March 2019), 298–314.

47. "Returning the Social to the Social Model," from "Non-normative Positivisms: Toward a Methodology of Critical Embodiment," Society for Disability Studies Meeting, Minneapolis (2014), 4, https://nonnormativepositivisms.wordpress.com/. Accessed 18 Jan 2019. See also Siebers, "Shakespeare Differently Disabled," 435–44.

48. *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 27.

49. For more on this seemingly intractable debate, see Sujata Iyengar (ed.), *Disability Health and Happiness* (London: Routledge, 2015), introduction, especially 1–5.

50. *Disability Rights and Wrongs Revisited*, 2nd ed. (Abingdon: Routledge Press, 2014), 49; see also Jenny Morris, *Pride Against Prejudice: A Personal Politics of Disability* (London: Women's Press, 1991), 10; John Swain et al., *Disabling Barriers, Enabling Environments*. 2nd ed. (London; Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2004); Carol Thomas, "How Is Disability Understood? An Examination of Sociological Approaches," *Disability and Society*, 19.6 (2004), 569–83.

51. T. Shakespeare, *Disability Rights*, 54.

52. T. Shakespeare, *Disability Rights*, 73. T. Shakespeare further argues that "the

idea of a barrier-free world is an attempt to show that impairments can be irrelevant," 42.

53. *Borderlands/La frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987), 87.

54. Again, see Bearden's *Monstrous Kinds* on this topic as well.

55. *Dissembling Disability in Early Modern England* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 214.

56. Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability*, 215–16.

57. Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability*, 216.

58. Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability*, 216.

59. On disability as resource, see Garland-Thomson, "The Case for Conserving Disability," 339–55.

60. Siebers, "Shakespeare Differently Disabled," 443.

61. Siebers, "Shakespeare Differently Disabled," 441. For a reading of Shakespeare's Falstaff that takes this tack, again see Siebers, "Shakespeare Differently Disabled," 435–44.

62. Siebers "Shakespeare Differently Disabled," 442.

63. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, (eds.) Floyd Dell and Paul Jordan-Smith (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1927), 497–98, my emphasis.

64. "Shakespeare Differently Disabled," 442.

65. *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 70. On the biopolitics of disability, see also Robert McRuer, *Crip Times: Disability, Globalization, and Resistance* (New York: New York University Press, 2018) and David T. Mitchell with Sharon L. Snyder, *The Biopolitics of Disability: Neoliberalism, Ablenationalism, and Peripheral Embodiment* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015). On slow death, see Lauren Berlant, "Slow Death (Sovereignty, Obesity, Lateral Agency)," *Critical Inquiry*, 33.4 (2007), 754–80.

66. For a nuanced exploration of this dynamic, see Davidson, "Cleavings."

67. Thanks to George Estreich for pointing out this connection.

68. *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (London, 1781), 22.

69. *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 1.

70. "My Lost Body," *Guernica*, 13 Feb 2017, https://www.guernicamag.com/my-lost-body/. Accessed 18 Jan 2019.

71. See *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), and José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009).

72. Lennard Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy*, 49.

73. Puar, *The Right to Maim*, 67.

74. "Disability History: Why We Need Another 'Other,'" *American Historical Review*, 108.3 (June 2003), 769.

75. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 186. On the stigmatization and domination that inhere in certain modes of gazing, also see Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 186.

76. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 186.

77. *Staring*, 22.

78. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 194.

79. I am specifically responding to Elizabeth B. Bearden's inspiring call to action in *Monstrous Kinds*, 234.

80. Sharon Snyder, Brenda Brueggemann, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (eds.), *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities* (New York: Modern Language Association, 2002), 1–2.

81. On habits and orientations, see Sara Ahmed, "Orientations Matter," in *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*, (eds.) Diana H. Coole and Samantha Frost (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 234–57.

82. Stiker, *A History of Disability*; Schweik, *The Ugly Laws*; Garland-Thomson, *Staring* and *Extraordinary Bodies.*

83. *Animacies*; Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013).

84. See *Disability Theory*, as well as T. Shakespeare, *Disability Rights.*

85. See also Hobgood and Wood, *Recovering Disability*; Iyengar, *Disability, Health, and Happiness*; Genevieve Love, *Early Modern Theatre and the Figure of Disability* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

86. Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability*, chapter 2 especially.

87. *Disabled Bodies in Early Modern Spanish Literature: Prostitutes, Aging Women and Saints* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017), 1.

88. Jason S. Farr, *Novel Bodies: Disability and Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century British Literature* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2019).

89. *Monstrous Kinds*, 13.

90. Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, 28 and 12, respectively.

91. "Growing Disability Studies: Politics of Access, Politics of Collaboration," *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 34.2 (2014), np.

92. See, for example, Eyler, *Disability in the Middle Ages*; Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks*; Metzler, *A Social History of Disability*; Tory Vandeventer Pearman, *Women and Disability in Medieval Literature* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

93. *A Social History of Disability.*

94. "Disability and the Social Body," 135–41.

95. Pearman, *Women and Disability.*

96. Quoted in Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip*, 35. See also Donald E. Hall, "A Brief, Slanted History of 'Homosexual' Activity," in *Queer Theory*, (eds.) Iain Morland and Annabelle Willox (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), especially 96–97.

97. David Halperin defines "queer" as "whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant;" see Donald E. Hall, *Queer Theories* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 67.

98. Hall, *Queer Theories*, 34. On crip time, see also Richard H. Godden, "Getting Medieval in Real Time," *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies*, 2.3 (Fall 2011), 267–77.

99. “Analytical Survey: Encountering Disability in the Middle Ages,” 319, and 330–34. See also Julie Orlemanski, “How to Kiss a Leper,” *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies* 3.2 (2012), 146.

100. Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability*, 210.

101. On Shakespeare and pedagogy, see Ayanna Thompson, “An Afterword about Self/Communal Care,” in *Teaching Social Justice Through Shakespeare: Why Renaissance Literature Matters Now* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 235–38.

Chapter 1

1. Siebers, *Disability Theory*, 7, 8.

2. *Disability Theory*, 8.

3. *Disability Theory*, 8.

4. Siebers, *Disability Theory*, 8. Ato Quayson uses the term “unmarked normativity” to get at a similar notion; see *Aesthetic Nervousness*, 18.

5. *Disability Theory*, 8.

6. Siebers, *Disability Theory*, 9.

7. Siebers, *Disability Theory*, 9.

8. On a cure-or-kill paradigm, see Dolmage, *Disability Rhetoric*, especially 39; and David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder, *Cultural Locations of Disability* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

9. Steven Mullaney, *The Reformation of Emotions in the Age of Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 29–30.

10. *The Reformation of Emotions*.

11. *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 17.

12. Linton, *Claiming Disability*, 18.

13. For a nuanced critique of this term and its critical usage, see Sami Schalk, “Reevaluating the Supercrip,” *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*, 10.1 (2016), 71–86.

14. *Exile and Pride*, 2.

15. Clare, *Exile and Pride*, 8.

16. Probably written for Henslowe’s Rose Theatre in the early 1590s and first performed in 1594. Jonathan Bate suggests that *Titus* is Shakespeare’s earliest tragedy, earliest Roman play, and “one of the dramatist’s most inventive plays, a complex and self-conscious improvisation on classical sources, most notably Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*”; *Titus Andronicus* (London: Routledge, 1995), 3. For more on the play’s print and performance histories, including the famous Peacham drawing, see also Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, *Titus Andronicus and Timon of Athens* (New York: Modern Library, 2011).

17. On Lavinia’s key role in the drama, see Mullaney, *The Reformation of Emotions*; Liberty Stanavage and Paxton Hehmeyer, *Titus Out of Joint: Reading the Fragmented Titus Andronicus* (Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars,

2012); and Bethany Packard, "Lavinia as Coauthor of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*," *SEL Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, 50.2 (Spring 2010), 281–300.

18. This play citation and all those hereafter come from *The Norton Shakespeare*, (eds.) Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean Howard, and Katherine Eisaman Maus (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997); *Titus Andronicus* specifically can be found on pages 371–434.

19. Siebers, *Disability Theory*, 10.

20. Lavinia recalls not just Philomel but also Io.

21. She writes for Titus a line from *Hippolytus*: "Magni dominator poli, / Tam lentus audis scelera, tam lentus vides?" (4.1.80–81).

22. Schalk, "Reevaluating the Supercrip," 74.

23. Siebers, *Disability Theory*, 10.

24. One of Shakespeare's last plays, a King's Men performance at Whitehall for King James on Hallowmas night, was officially recorded in 1611. On the play's genesis as well as its performance history, see Alden T. and Virginia Mason Vaughan, *The Tempest: A Critical Reader* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011).

25. *Norton Shakespeare*, 3055. For scholarship on Caliban and race, see, for example, John Kunat, "'Play Me False': Rape, Race, and Conquest in *The Tempest*," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 65.3 (Fall 2014), 307–27; Lauren Eriks Cline, "Becoming Caliban: Monster Methods and Performance Theories," in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment: Gender, Sexuality, and Race*, (ed.) Valerie Traub (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 709–23; Alan T. Vaughan and Virginia Mason Vaughan, *Shakespeare's Caliban: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); and Jyotsna G. Singh, "Caliban versus Miranda: Race and Gender Conflicts in Postcolonial Rewritings of The Tempest," in *New Casebooks: Shakespeare's Romances*, (ed.) Alison Thorne (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 205–25.

26. On enfreakment, see Mark Thornton Burnett, *Constructing "Monsters" in Shakespearean Drama and Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); and Garland-Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies*.

27. *The Tempest* in the *Norton Shakespeare* can be found on pages 3047–3107.

28. On early modern race generally, see Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Catherine Alexander and Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare and Race* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Sujata Iyengar, *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Color in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Virginia Mason Vaughan, *Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Mary Floyd-Wilson, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Ania Loomba, *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

29. On mid-seventeenth century freak shows, see Helen Deutsch and Felicity Nussbaum, *Defects: Engendering the Modern Body* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 100, 104.

30. The play's cast list represents Ariel as "an airy spirit attendant upon Prospero," *Norton Shakespeare*, 3055.

31. Siebers, *Disability Theory*, 10.

32. Medievalists also call this the "religious model"; see Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks*.

33. "Before Normal, There Was Natural," 35. See also Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, chapter 1.

34. "Before Normal, There Was Natural," 33–50. On normalcy in antiquity, again see Dolmage, *Disability Rhetoric*, chapter 1.

35. "Before Normal, There Was Natural," 34.

36. Again, see Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, chapter 1, and Traub, "Nature of Norms."

37. For examples, see Ambroise Paré, *The Workes of That Famous Chirurgion Ambroise Parey* (London, 1634); John Sadler, *The Sicke Womans Private Looking-glasse* (London, 1636); Marie-Hélène Huet, *Monstrous Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

38. *Stumbling Blocks*, 11.

39. Lloyd Berry and William Whittingham, *The Geneva Bible* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

40. Berry and Whittingham, *The Geneva Bible*.

41. Indeed, explains Edward Wheatley, "medieval Christianity held out the possibility of cure through freedom from sin and increased personal faith, whether that of the person with the disability or a miracle worker nearby"; *Stumbling Blocks*, 11.

42. Alan W. Bates, *Emblematic Monsters: Unnatural Conceptions and Deformed Births in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Rodopi, 2005), 114.

43. On "marvels" and "miracles" as reminders of a transcendent order, see Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 28.

44. Siebers, *Disability Theory*, 10.

45. *Monster Theory: Reading Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 4.

46. "A 'Grievous Burthen': Richard III and the Legacy of Monstrous Birth," in *Disability, Health, and Happiness*, (ed.) Sujata Iyengar, 53. See also Surekha Davies, "The Unlucky, the Bad, and the Ugly: Categories of Monstrosity from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous*, (eds.) Asa Simon Mittman and Peter Dendle (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2012), 52.

47. *Social Histories of Disability and Deformity: Bodies, Images and Experiences* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 4.

48. *A Directory for Midwives* (London: Printed by Peter Cole, 1651), 156, 97.

49. Jane Sharp, *The Midwives Book, or, The Whole Art of Midwifry Discovered* (London, 1671), 118.

50. *The Midwives Book*, 119.

51. Sharp, *The Midwives Book*, 118.

52. *Marvelous Protestantism: Monstrous Births in Post-Reformation England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 4.

53. Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism*, 3.

54. *Marvelous Protestantism*, 21.

55. *Marvelous Protestantism*, 14; on the production of monstrosity as explicitly gendered, see especially chapter 2.

56. *Marvelous Protestantism*, 64.

57. Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 181.

58. Sharp, *The Midwives Book*, 119.

59. Paster, *The Body Embarrassed*, 184. On the proximity of the religious model to the medical model, also see Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks*, chapter 1.

60. *Emblematic Monsters*, 65. Jenny Mann likewise argues that over the course of the seventeenth century, monsters came to be depicted as medical pathology; "How to Look at a Hermaphrodite in Early Modern England," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, 46.1 (2006), especially 70.

61. Méndez quoted in Michael Solomon, *Fictions of Well-being: Sickly Readers and Vernacular Medical Writing in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 31.

62. *A Direct Method of Ordering and Curing People of That Loathsome Disease, the Small-Pox* (London, 1685).

63. Méndez, *Small-Pox*, 13, 16.

64. Méndez, *Small-Pox*, "The Epistle to the Reader."

65. *Fictions of Well-being*, xii. See also Nancy Siraisi, "Some Current Trends in the Study of Renaissance Medicine," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 37.4 (1984), 585–600.

66. Solomon, *Fictions of Well-being*, 1.

67. Solomon, *Fictions of Well-being*, 7.

68. *Fictions of Well-being*, 10.

69. *Fictions of Disease in Early Modern England: Bodies, Plagues and Politics* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 10. Aimi Hamraie, following Georges Canguilhem, further clarifies "that the conditions of possibility for epistemic shifts do not occur suddenly, but rather appear and re-appear, recursively double back, and shift out of intelligibility"; "Historical Epistemology as Disability Studies Methodology: From the Models Framework to Foucault's Archaeology of Cure," *Foucault Studies*, 19 (June 2015), 126.

70. *Fictions of Well-being*, 23 and 95, respectively.

71. Solomon, *Fictions of Well-being*, 32.

72. Though Caesar's deafness is also at issue, I show that epilepsy is the drama's disability focus. For instances of deafness in the play, see 1.2.214, 1.3.43, and 2.1.317–18; for scholarly attention to Caesar's deafness, see Marvin Vawter, "'After Their Fashion': Cicero and Brutus in *Julius Caesar*," *Shakespeare Studies*, 9 (1976), 205–19; and John Velz, "Caesar's Deafness," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 22.4 (1971), 400–401.

73. One recent exception is Roxana Cazan, "'What Shall We Hear of This': Understanding Judgment, Epilepsy in William Shakespeare's Tragedies," *Neophilologus*, 98 (2014), 503–16. Scholarship on the play has focused instead primarily on the play's Roman quality, its political ideology, and its significance in the Shakespearean canon; on *Caesar's* critical history, see Horst Zander, *Julius Caesar: New Critical Essays* (New York: Routledge, 2005), introduction.

74. *Julius Caesar*, 6.

75. "Caesar On and Off the Renaissance English Stage," in *Julius Caesar*, 84.

76. Barbara Parker, "From Monarchy to Tyranny: *Julius Caesar* Among Shakespeare's Roman Works," in *Julius Caesar*, 118–19.

77. Gail Kern Paster, "'In the Spirit of Men There Is No Blood': Blood as Trope of Gender in *Julius Caesar*," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 40.3 (1989), 284–98; and Coppélia Kahn, *Roman Shakespeare: Warriors, Wounds, and Women* (London: Routledge, 1997), respectively.

78. "In the Spirit of Men," 284, 294.

79. On the useful interdisciplinarity of feminist and disability studies, see Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory," *National Women's Studies Association Journal*, 14.2 (Fall 2002), 1–32; and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, "Feminist Disability Studies: A Review Essay," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 30.2 (Winter 2005), 1557–87.

80. "In the Spirit of Men," 285.

81. For more on disability and femininity, see Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability*, especially chapter 4.

82. Mitchell and Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis*, 28.

83. On this narrative device, again see Mitchell and Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis*.

84. "Compulsory Able-Bodiedness and Queer/Disabled Existence," in *Disability Studies*, 92.

85. *Julius Caesar* can be found in the *Norton Shakespeare*, 1525–90.

86. On medieval and early modern wonder and curiosity, see especially Mary Baine Campbell, *Wonder and Science: Imagining Worlds in Early Modern Europe* (Cornell University Press, 1999); and Peter Platt (ed.), *Wonders, Marvels, and Monsters in Early Modern Culture* (University of Delaware Press, 1999). For a discussion of the impact of scientific rationalism on this sensibility, see Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998).

87. *Bending over Backwards: Disability, Dismodernism, and Other Difficult Positions* (New York: New York University Press), 22.

88. For more on Renaissance geohumoralism, see the introduction to Mary Floyd-Wilson and Garrett A. Sullivan (eds.), *Environment and Embodiment in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

89. For another brief medical history of epilepsy as it is specifically portrayed in *Othello*, see Cazan, "'What Shall We Hear of This.'" For more on epilepsy generally in *Othello*, see Thomas M. Vozar, "Body-Mind Aporia in the Seizure of Othello," *Philosophy and Literature*, 36.1 (2012), 183–86; and Stephanie Moss, "Transformation and Degeneration: The Paracelsan/Galenic Body in *Othello*," in *Disease,*

Diagnosis, and Cure on the Early Modern Stage, (eds.) Stephanie Moss and Kaara Peterson (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2004), 151–70.

90. Owsei Temkin, *The Falling Sickness: A History of Epilepsy from the Greeks to the Beginnings of Modern Neurology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), 20.

91. Temkin, *The Falling Sickness*, 8–9.

92. Temkin, *The Falling Sickness*, 150, 86.

93. Temkin, *The Falling Sickness*, 91, 111.

94. Hippocrates, *Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 10, *Hippocrates, Galen*, (eds.) Encyclopedia Britannica, University of Chicago, and Robert Maynard Hutchins (Chicago: W. Benton, 1952), ref. 15, 154.

95. Galenic medicine conceived of bodies as comprised of four elements: air, earth, water and fire. These physical elements correlated with four humors—yellow bile, black bile, phlegm, and blood—produced by the internal organs and passed through the bloodstream delivering cold, heat, moistness, and dryness to the rest of the body. Character traits and personality were associated with an excess of any of these humors.

96. On melancholic heroism, see Carol Thomas Neely, *Distracted Subjects: Madness and Gender in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), especially 13; and Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art* (London: Nelson, 1964).

97. For more on differences between Galenic and Paracelsan medical philosophies, see Moss, *Disease, Diagnosis, and Cure*.

98. Paracelsus, quoted in David F. Hoeniger, *Medicine and Shakespeare in the English Renaissance* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, Associated University Presses, 1992), 336.

99. Hoeniger, *Medicine and Shakespeare*, 337.

100. Hoeniger, *Medicine and Shakespeare*, 337.

101. Obviously, Cassius's use of the term "god" in line 123 does not recall a disability discourse solely but is also an explicit reference to Caesar's political clout.

102. Katherine Park and Lorraine J. Daston, "Unnatural Conceptions: the Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England," *Past & Present*, 92.1 (Oxford University Press, 1981), 25.

103. *Emblematic Monsters*, 114.

104. "How to Look at a Hermaphrodite," 70.

105. "How to Look at a Hermaphrodite," 70.

106. "How to Look at a Hermaphrodite," 70.

107. *Glossographia* (London, 1661), EP, columns 5–6.

108. *Mikrokosmographia, a Description of the Body of Man* (London, 1615), 500.

109. *The Methode of Phisicke Conteyning the Causes, Signes, and Cures of Invvard Diseases in Mans Body from the Head to the Foote* (London, 1583), 31. This text is considered the first medical textbook to be published in English.

110. Barrough, *The Methode of Phisicke*, 31.

111. Charles Estienne, *Maison Rustique, or the Countrey Farme* (London, 1616), 85; and Pierre Boaistuau, *Certaine Secrete Wonders of Nature Containing a Description of Sundry Strange Things* (London, 1569), 72–73.

112. Barrough, *Methode of Phisicke*, 31.

113. Saint Magnus Albertus, *The Boke of Secretes of Albertus Magnus of the Vertues of Herbes, Stones, and Certayne Beasts* [S.l.: J. King], 1560, np; and Hieronymus Brunschwig, *A Most Excellent and Perfecte Homish Apothecarye or Homely Physik Booke* (London, 1561), 9, respectively.

114. On epilepsy's perceived contagion, especially in antiquity, see Temkin, *The Falling Sickness*, 8.

115. Renaudot, who organized forums on diverse subjects of interest, catalogued about 240 conference proceedings, which were translated into English and eventually published in London.

116. For more on the notion of "alterations," see Timothy Hampton, "Strange Alteration: Physiology and Psychology from Galen to Rabelais," in *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion*, (eds.) Gail Kern Paster, Katherine Rowe, and Mary Floyd-Wilson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004)

117. Bureau d'adresse et de Rencontre, *A General Collection of Discourses of the Virtuosi of France* (London, 1664), 471.

118. Bureau d'adresse et de Rencontre, *Discourses of the Virtuosi*.

119. Bureau d'adresse et de Rencontre, *Discourses of the Virtuosi*.

120. Bureau d'adresse et de Rencontre, *Discourses of the Virtuosi*.

121. In the context of the counterfeit-disability tradition in early modern English drama, Row-Heyveld similarly identifies a cultural sensibility that "disability was difficult to detect, always potentially false, and undeserving of charity," *Dissembling Disability*, 23.

122. *Fantasies of Identification: Disability, Gender, Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), especially introduction.

123. On anxious contingency, see Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*, 17.

124. Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*, 17.

125. Park and Daston, "Unnatural Conception," 20.

126. Samuels, *Fantasies of Identification*, 13.

127. I gratefully borrow this phrase from a talk Lindsey Row-Heyveld gave at the 2007 Midwest Modern Language Association.

128. For early modern passing in a courtly context, see Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, chapter 1, especially 58–59.

129. Jeffrey A. Brune and Daniel J. Wilson, *Disability and Passing: Blurring the Lines of Identity* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013), 1. On strategically feigning and exaggerating impairments and performing disability drag as acts of disability dissent, see Tobin Siebers, "Disability as Masquerade," *Literature and Medicine*, 23.1 (2004), 1–22.

130. *Claiming Disability*, 19. Note also how Linton's use of "Herculean" recalls, even in our contemporary moment, the type of the melancholy hero so crucial to

epilepsy's signification in the classical and Renaissance traditions. On passing both toward and away from normativity, see Brune and Wilson, *Disability and Passing*; Ellen Samuels, "My Body, My Closet: Invisible Disability and the Limits of Coming-Out Discourse," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 9.1–2 (2003), 233–55; and Tobin Siebers, "Disability as Masquerade."

131. *Claiming Disability*, 19–20.

132. *Claiming Disability*, 20–21.

133. See *Norton Shakespeare*, 1528.

134. *Norton Shakespeare*, 1528

135. On blood as a marker of femininity, see Paster, *The Body Embarrassed*, chapters 1, 2.

136. On disability illegibility, see Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability*, especially the introduction and chapter 2.

137. On early modern physiognomy, see Michael Torrey, "'The Plain Devil and Dissembling Looks': Ambivalent Physiognomy and Shakespeare's Richard III," *English Literary Renaissance*, 30.2 (2000), 139.

138. Samuels, *Fantasies of Identification*, 14.

139. Samuels, "My Body, My Closet," 248.

140. For more on cramp rings as treatment for epilepsy, see Raymond Crawfurd, "The Blessing of Cramp-rings," in *Studies in the History and Method of Science*, vol. 1, (ed.) Charles Singer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1917), 165–87.

141. For an account of the ceremony, see Francis G. Waldron, *The Literary Museum: Or, a Selection of Scarce Old* Tracts (London, 1792), chapter 7. On cramp rings, see also Jacqueline Simpson and Stephen Roud, *A Dictionary of English Folklore* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

142. *The Breuiary of Healthe* (London, 1557), fol. 166.

143. For details on this cultural practice, again see Simpson and Roud, *A Dictionary of English Folklore*.

144. For a lengthier discussion of Lilly's report, see Michael MacDonald, *Mystical Bedlam: Madness, Anxiety, and Healing in Seventeenth-Century England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 30–31.

145. Quoted in MacDonald, *Mystical Bedlam*, 30–31.

146. MacDonald, *Mystical Bedlam*, 30–31.

147. Royal College of Physicians of London, *A Physicall Directory, or, a Translation of the London Dispensatory Made by the Colledge of Physicians in London* (London, 1649), 71.

148. Royal College of Physicians of London, *A Physicall Directory*, 71

149. On "the nail of the great beast" (elk) as remedy more generally, see Irina Podgorny, *Journal of Global History*, 13.1 (March 2018), np, online access: https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-global-history. Accessed 12 April 2018.

150. *Dissembling Disability*, 2. Thanks to Lindsey Row-Heyveld for generally drawing my attention to cramp ring treatments.

151. "Critical Disability Studies: Rethinking the Conventions for the Age of

Postmodernity," in *The Routledge Handbook of Disability Studies*, (eds.) Nick Watson, Alan Roulstone, and Carol Thomas (New York: Routledge, 2012), 39.

Chapter 2

1. I refer to Richard via both of his character's titles: Richard of Gloucester before coronation, King Richard III after.

2. "Fuck the Disabled: The Prequel," in *Shakesqueer: A Queer Companion to the Complete Works of Shakespeare*, (ed.) Madhavi Menon (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 295. For discussion of conventional characterizations of Richard's physiology, see Marie A. Plasse, "Corporeality and the Opening of Richard III," in *Entering the Maze: Shakespeare's Art of Beginning*, (ed.) Robert F. Willson (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), 11–26; M. G. Aune, "The Uses of Richard III: From Robert Cecil to Richard Nixon," *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 24.3 (2006), 23–47; and Michael Torrey, "'The Plain Devil and Dissembling Looks,'" 123–53. By contrast, on Richard as a "dismodern subject," see Katherine Schaap Williams, "Enabling Richard: The Rhetoric of Disability in *Richard III*," *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 29.4 (2009), np.

3. McRuer, "Fuck the Disabled," 295.

4. Note, for example, Williams, "Enabling Richard," np, and Katherine Schaap Williams, "Performing Disability and Theorizing Deformity," *English Studies*, 94.7 (2013), 757–72; Siebers, "Shakespeare Differently Disabled," 435–54; William West, "What's the Matter with Shakespeare? Physics, Identity, Playing," *South Central Review* 26.1 and 2 (2009), 103–26; Geoffrey A. Johns, "A 'Grievous Burthen:' *Richard III* and The Legacy of Monstrous Birth," *Disability, Health, and Happiness*, 41–57; Allison P. Hobgood, "Teeth Before Eyes: Illness and Invisibility in Shakespeare's *Richard III*," *Disability, Health, and Happiness* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 23–40.

5. See my introductory chapter for more on this term and these postures.

6. On disability as resource, again see Garland-Thomson, "The Case for Conserving Disability."

7. *Aesthetic Nervousness*, chapter 2.

8. On Richard's disability as inherently metaphorical, see Marjorie Garber, "Descanting on Deformity: *Richard III* and the Shape of History," in *Shakespeare's History Plays*, (ed.) R. J. C. Watt (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2002), 64. On Richard as unimpaired, see Peter Saccio, *Shakespeare's English Kings: History, Chronicle, and Drama* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); Paul Murray Kendall, Thomas More, and Horace Walpole, *Richard III: The Great Debate* (London: Folio Society, 1965); and Alison Weir, *The Princes in the Tower* (New York: Ballantine, 1994). For more on the wide range of representations of Richard's body, see Jim Casey, "Richard's Himself Again: The Body of Richard III on Stage and Screen," in *Shakespeare and the Middle Ages*, (eds.) Martha W. Driver and Sid Ray (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2009), 27–48.

9. *King Richard the Third* can be found in *Norton Shakespeare*, 516–600.

10. On the logic of arousal that undergirds Anne's wooing, see Evan Choate, "Misreading Impotence in *Richard III*," *Modern Philology: Critical and Historical Studies in Literature, Medieval Through Contemporary*, 117.1 (2019), 24–47.

11. "Fuck the Disabled," 295.

12. McRuer, "Fuck the Disabled," 295.

13. "Fuck the Disabled," 296.

14. "Fuck the Disabled," 297.

15. Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*, 49.

16. Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*, 47.

17. Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*.

18. Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*, 49.

19. For more on the play's complex textual and performance history, see *Norton Shakespeare*, 539–45; *King Richard III*, (ed.) Janis Lull (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 209–19; and *Richard III*, (ed.) Folger Shakespeare Library (New York: Washington Square Press, 1996), xlvii–lix.

20. John F. Burns, "Discovery of Skeleton Puts Richard III in Battle Once Again," *New York Times*, 23 Sept 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/24/world/europe/discovery-of-skeleton-puts-richard-iii-in-battle-again. Accessed 22 Mar 2018.

21. "The Discovery of Richard III," University of Leicester, http://www.le.ac.uk/richardiii/index.html. Accessed 22 Mar 2018.

22. Richard Buckley, Mathew Morris, Jo Appleby, Turi King, Deidre O'Sullivan, and Lin Foxhall, "'The King in the Car Park': New Light on the Death and Burial of Richard III in the Grey Friars Church, Leicester, in 1485," *Antiquity*, 87.336 (2013), 519–38.

23. "Enabling Richard."

24. For a history of the medieval Vice tradition and figures, see Abigail Elizabeth Comber, "A Medieval King 'Disabled' by an Early Modern Construct: A Contextual Examination of Richard III," in *Disability in the Middle Ages: Reconsiderations and Reverberations* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), 183–96.

25. On teratology and early modern monsters, see Helen Deutsch and Felicity Nussbaum, *Defects*; David M. Turner and Kevin Stagg, *Social Histories*; Jenny Mann, "How to Look at a Hermaphrodite"; Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park, "Unnatural Conception"; Laura Lunger Knoppers and Joan B. Landes, *Monstrous Bodies/Political Monstrosities in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004); and Marie-Hélène Huet, *Monstrous Imagination*. On a religious model that linked sin and illness with disability, see Wheatley's introduction to *Stumbling Blocks* and Lindsey Row-Heyveld, "The Lying'st Knave in Christendom: The Development of Disability in the False Miracle of St. Alban's," *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 29:4 (2009), np.

26. On Richard's body's contradictory significations, see David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis*, 105.

27. Roas quoted in Comber, "A Medieval King," 188.

28. Roas quoted in Comber, "A Medieval King," 188.

29. For a comprehensive history of the spine and scoliosis, see Fay Bound Alberti, *This Mortal Coil: The Human Body in History and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), chapter 1, 20–38.

30. "Treatment of Scoliosis: An Historical Perspective," *Spine*, 24.24 (1999), 2570.

31. "Treatment of Scoliosis"

32. On cure, see Davis, *Bending over Backwards*, 40–41; and again, Clare, *Brilliant Imperfection*.

33. Mitchell and Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis*, 105.

34. On the classical typology of prodigious, natural, and distant monsters, see Surekha Davies, *Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters*, 49–75.

35. *Richard Duke of York (3 Henry VI)* can be found in *Norton Shakespeare*, 326–97.

36. Notably, the Leicester skeleton recovery found that Richard's third molars were "unusually small"; "What the bones can and can't tell us," University of Leicester. http://www.le.ac.uk/richardiii/science/whattheonesdontsay.html. Accessed 21 Mar 2018.

37. *Constructing "Monsters,"* 67. For another account of a child born with teeth in his mouth, see Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism*, conclusion, especially 175.

38. *The Sick Child in Early Modern England, 1580–1720* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 52. See also Jessica Winston, "Richard III's Teeth," *Rendezvous: Journal of Arts and Letters*, 36.2 (Spring 2002), 43–46.

39. Newton, *The Sick Child*, 52.

40. On Richard as sub/inhuman, see Greta Olson, "Richard III's Animalistic Criminal Body," *Philological Quarterly*, 82.3 (2003), 301–24.

41. On monstrosity, see also Burnett, *Constructing "Monsters,"* 66.

42. "'A Monster Great Deformed': The Unruly Masculinity of Richard III," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 47.3 (1996), 261.

43. *A History of Disability*, 134.

44. *Routledge Handbook of Disability Studies*, 38.

45. "Misreading Impotence," 25.

46. *Dissembling Disability*, 25.

47. "Misreading Impotence," 38 and 46, respectively.

48. "Performing Disability," 760.

49. For a powerful reading of Richard's body as it intersects other embodiment categories and modes of cultural disempowerment, see Vin Nardizzi, "Disability Figures in Shakespeare," in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment: Gender, Sexuality, and Race*, (ed.) Valerie Traub (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 455–67.

50. Notably, the Duchess of York is much more skeptical: "Ah, that deceit should steal such gentle shape / And with a virtuous visor hide deep vice," she bitterly prophesizes in 2.2, lines 27–28.

51. "Enabling Richard," np.

52. Schaap Williams, "Performing Disability," 760.

53. "Performing Disability," 760.

54. On fears of counterfeit impairment and illegible disability, again see Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability*, especially chapter 5.

55. *The Essayes or Counsels, Ciuill and Morall, of Francis Lo. Verulam, Viscount St. Alban* (London: Printed by Iohn Haviland for Hanna Barret, 1625), 255.

56. "Of Deformity," 254.

57. Bacon, "Of Deformity," 256, 255.

58. "Of Deformity," 256.

59. "Of Deformity," 255.

60. "The Plain Devil," 138.

61. "Performing Disability," 760.

62. "A 'Grievous Burthen,'" 43.

63. On Richard's shadow, perspective, and proportion, see Linda Charnes, *Notorious Identity: Materializing the Subject in Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), chapter 1.

64. Thanks much to an audience member at a lecture I gave at Davidson College in 2011, who reminded me of the unique use of shadows in the Public Theater's version of *Richard III*. On the production's lighting effects, see David Rooney, "Review: *Richard III*," *Variety*, http://variety.com/2004/legit/reviews/richard-iii-11-1200530339/, np. Accessed 19 April 2018.

65. For a disability reading of aspects of this film, see Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 173.

66. See, for example, John Lahr's review of the production in the October 25, 2004, issue of the *New Yorker*, 80.32, 82–84; and John Heilpern, "A Sluggish Richard III: Where Is Our Royal Psycho?," the *New York Observer*, 25 October 2004. http://observer.com/2004/10/a-sluggish-richard-iii-where-is-our-royal-psycho/, np. Accessed 20 October 2018.

67. *Shakespeare and the Remains of Richard III* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5.

68. Schwyzer, *Remains of Richard III*, 217.

69. Schwyzer, *Remains of Richard III*, 215.

70. *Remains of Richard III*, 6.

71. *Remains of Richard III*, 90.

72. When asked if he sees himself as a spokesman for the rights of short-statured people, Dinklage replied, "I don't know what I would say. It would be arrogant to assume that I. . . . Everyone's different. Every person my size has a different life, a different history. Different ways of dealing with it. Just because I'm seemingly O.K. with it, I can't preach how to be O.K. with it. I don't think I still *am* O.K. with it. There's days when I'm not"; Dan Kois, "Peter Dinklage Was Smart to Say No," *New York Times Magazine*, 29 March 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/01/magazine/peter-dinklage-was-smart-to-say-no.html, np. Accessed 20 October 20, 2018, np.

73. On Dinklage's activism, see Katie Ellis, *Disability Media Work: Opportunities and Obstacles* (New York: Palgrave Pivot, 2016), especially chapter 5, "A Collective Phew: Disability Acting," 71–90.

74. Kois, "Peter Dinklage Was Smart," np.

75. Kois, "Peter Dinklage Was Smart," np.

76. Kois, "Peter Dinklage Was Smart," np

77. Kois, "Peter Dinklage Was Smart," np.

78. Rebecca Cokley, Executive Director of the National Council on Disability, attests that *Game of Thrones* has "given average-sized viewers a new set of references for people who look like her," and that "this fantasy universe is far more realistic than lots of other television shows . . . when it comes to representing people with disabilities on screen"; see Neda Ulaby, "'Game of Thrones' Finds Fans Among Disability Rights Activists, Too," National Public Radio, "All Things Considered," 10 July 2017. https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/, np. Transcript accessed 20 October 2018.

79. Kois, "Peter Dinklage Was Smart," np.

80. Charles McNulty, "The Little King: Size Doesn't Matter in a New Production of *Richard III* at the Public Theater," *Village Voice Online*, 31 August 2005. http://www.villagevoice.com/2004-08-31/theater/the-little-king/1/, np. Accessed 19 April 2018.

81. McNulty, "The Little King," np.

82. McNulty, "The Little King," np.

83. For more on the categorization of dwarfs, see Leslie Fiedler, *Freaks: Myths and Images of the Secret Self* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978).

84. On scale and proportion violations, see Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 162.

85. On these myths and histories, again see Fiedler, *Freaks*, especially chapters 1 and 2; and Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 172.

86. On freak shows, see Clare, *Exile and Pride*, especially "Part II: Bodies, Freaks and Queers"; and Clare, *Brilliant Imperfection*.

87. "Dwarf Aesthetics," in *Recovering Disability in Early Modern England*, (eds.) Allison Hobgood and David H. Wood (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2013), 24.

88. On the social model of disability, see Davis, *Bending Over Backwards*, 12.

89. "A Big Throne to Fill, and the Man to Fill It," *New York Times*, 12 October 2004, B1. http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/12/theater/reviews/12rich.html?_r=0, np. Accessed 20 October 2018. This essay was reprinted in *A Groat's Worth of Wit: Journal of the Open University Shakespeare Society*, 16.3 (2005), 14–15.

90. "A Big Throne to Fill," B1.

91. Here "mis-fit" recalls Rosemarie Garland-Thomson in "Misfits: A Feminist Materialist Disability Concept," *Hypatia*, 26.3 (2011), 591–609.

92. "Dwarf Aesthetics," 25.

93. On disability aesthetics, see Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics*; Davidson, *Concerto for the Left Hand*; and Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*.

94. Thanks to Professor Rebecca Olson for reminding me of these apt lines.

95. In the context of early modern dwarfs and visibility, van den Berg describes short-statured people as "at once prominent and invisible, public and private"; see "Dwarf Aesthetics," 25.

96. "Enabling Richard," np.

97. *The Essayes or Counsels*, 255.

98. McNulty, "The Little King," np. On audience disregard for Richard, see Joel E. Slotkin, "Honeyed Toads: Sinister Aesthetics in Shakespeare's *Richard III*," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 7.1 (2007), 6.

99. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 178.

100. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 3.

101. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 3.

102. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 3, 176–77.

103. *Staring*, 3.

104. *Staring*, 50.

105. The term *baroque* derives from "the Spanish medieval term for an obstacle in schematic logic"; Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 50.

106. On untoward staring, see Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 57. See also *Staring*, chapter 6.

107. On the disabling stare as it relates to early modern variations of scale, see Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, chapter 1.

108. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 172.

109. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 50.

110. *Staring*, 50.

111. *Staring*, 51.

112. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 32.

113. *Staring*, 32.

114. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 32.

115. *Staring*, 19.

116. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 44–46.

117. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 115.

118. *Staring*, 115.

119. On the interpersonal connection that separated staring shuts down, see Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 115.

120. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 116.

121. "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse," Richard famously laments at the close of Shakespeare's play (5.7.13).

122. On ugliness, see Naomi Baker, "'To Make Love to a Deformity': Praising Ugliness in Early Modern England," *Renaissance Studies* 22.1 (2008), 103.

123. *Staring*, 79.

124. McNulty, "The Little King," np.

125. See Frances Cooke Macgregor, *Transformation and Identity: The Face and Plastic Surgery* (New York: Quadrangle, 1974), xxiii.

126. *Staring*, 116.

127. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 116.

128. *Staring*, 193.

129. *Staring*, 3.

130. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 3.

131. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 3.

132. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 193.

133. Brantley, "A Big Throne to Fill," np.

134. "A Big Throne to Fill," np.

135. *Staring*, 193.

136. "A Big Throne to Fill," np.

137. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 194.

138. Among other feminist thinkers on subjugated knowledges, see Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990), especially 221–38.

139. *Dissembling Disability*, 16.

Chapter 3

1. "Behold the Man: A Painting in Perth," 19 Feb. 2010. http://blog.wellcomelibrary.org/2010/02/behold-the-man-a-painting-in-perth/. Accessed 24 May 2018.

2. William Schupbach, "Behold the Man."

3. "Inciting Legal Fictions: 'Disability's' Date with Ontology and the Ableist Body of Law," *Griffith Law Review*, 10.2 (2001), 43.

4. Campbell, "Inciting Legal Fictions," 43.

5. Julia Kristeva and Jeanine Herman, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, and . . . Vulnerability," *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 38.1–2 (2010), 251, emphasis original.

6. Fiona Kumari Campbell, "Legislating Disability: Negative Ontologies and the Government of Legal Identities," in *Foucault and the Government of Disability*, (ed.) Shelley Tremain (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 109.

7. Campbell, "Inciting Legal Fictions," 44. On negative ontology, see also Margrit Shildrick, *Dangerous Discourses of Disability, Subjectivity and Sexuality* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 21.

8. Campbell, "Inciting Legal Fictions," 44.

9. On affective piety, see Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); and Sarah Beckwith, *Christ's Body: Identity, Culture, and Society in Late Medieval Writings* (London; New York: Routledge, 1993).

10. "Legislating Disability," 112.

11. See Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

12. *The Wordsworth-Coleridge Circle and the Aesthetics of Disability* (London: Palgrave, 2016), 45 and 309, respectively.

13. *The Wordsworth-Coleridge Circle*, 309.

14. Stanback, *The Wordsworth-Coleridge Circle*, 309.

15. For more contemporary responses to this query, see Joanna Bourke, *What It Means to Be Human: Historical Reflections from the 1800s to the Present* (Berkeley: Counterpoint, distributed by Publishers Group West, 2011).

16. On early modern republican theory, see chapter 1 in James Kuzner, *Open*

Subjects: English Renaissance Republicans, Modern Selfhoods, and the Virtue of Vulnerability (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), especially 10–11.

17. Maya Sabatello, “Rights,” in *Keywords for Disability Studies*, (eds.) Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reiss, and David Serlin (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 158.

18. “Shakespearean Disability Pedagogy,” in *Recovering Disability*, 167.

19. *Recovering Disability*, 167.

20. *Recovering Disability*, 168.

21. Hirschmann, *Recovering Disability*, 168.

22. *Leviathan*, (ed.) C. B. Macpherson (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1985), chapter 14, 186.

23. *Recovering Disability*, 175.

24. *Recovering Disability*, 167–68.

25. Hirschmann, *Recovering Disability*, 167. On Locke and self-determinism, see Jerrold Seigel, *The Idea of the Self: Thought and Experence in Western Europe Since the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 89.

26. C. B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 3.

27. *Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*, 33.

28. Macpherson, *Political Theory of Possessive*, 18, 31.

29. Macpherson, *Political Theory of Possessive*, 31–32, 35.

30. “Human,” in *Keywords for Disability Studies*, 100.

31. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government in the Former* (London, 1609), 2.60.

32. Gabbard, *Keywords for Disability Studies*, 99.

33. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 2.34

34. *Two Treatises*, 2.34.

35. Macpherson, *Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*, 1.

36. On inwardness, freedom, individuality, and the history of the modern self as it arises out of premodernity, see Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 1.

37. Barbara Gibson, “Disability, Connectivity and Transgressing the Autonomous Body,” *Journal of Medical Humanities*, 27 (2006), 187.

38. Gibson, “Disability, Connectivity and Transgressing,” 195.

39. Gibson, “Disability, Connectivity and Transgressing,” 195 and 187, respectively.

40. On early modern philosophers who champion vulnerable communitarianism in a republican context, see the introductory chapter in Kuzner, *Open Subjects*, 14.

41. *The Emblematics of the Self: Ekphrasis and Identity in Renaissance Imitations of Greek Romance* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 3.

42. Bearden, *Emblematics of the Self*, 4.

43. Allison P. Hobgood, *Passionate Playgoing in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

44. See, for example, Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde in Generall. A Reprint Based on the 1604 Edition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971).

45. See Susan James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

46. On emotions as communal bonds, see Gail Paster, Katherine Rowe, and Mary Floyd-Wilson, *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 13.

47. *Passion and Action*, 86.

48. *Philosophy and Memory Traces: Descartes to Connectionism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 40.

49. David Hillman, "Shakespeare's Entrails: Belief, Scepticism and the Interior of the Body," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 59.1 (2008), 3.

50. On passibility, see Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, 17, as well as her earlier *Emblematics of the Self*; and Timothy J. Reiss, *Mirages of the Selfe: Patterns of Personhood in Ancient and Early Modern Europe* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2003).

51. *Monstrous Kinds*, 18.

52. See, for example, Gail Paster, *The Body Embarrassed*; Cynthia Marshall, *The Shattering of the Self: Violence, Subjectivity, and Early Modern Texts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); and, again, Bearden's *Monstrous Kinds* and *Emblematics of the Self*.

53. *Monstrous Kinds*, 17.

54. Tanya Titchkovsky, "Disability in the News: A Reconsideration of Reading," *Disability & Society*, 2.6 (2005), 664.

55. Margrit Shildrick, "Re-imagining Embodiment: Prostheses, Supplements and Boundaries," *Somatechnics*, 3.2 (September 2013), 270–86; David Wills, *Prosthesis* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1995); Sarah Jain, "The Prosthetic Imagination: Enabling and Disabling the Prosthesis Trope," *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 24.1 (Winter 1999), 31–54. See also *Artificial Parts, Practical Lives: Modern Histories of Prosthetics*, (eds.) Katherine Ott, David Serlin, and Stephen Mihm (New York: New York University Press, 2002).

56. "Re-imagining Embodiment," 270.

57. On cyborgs, see Mark Wigley, "Prosthetic Theory: The Disciplining of Architecture," *Assemblage*, 15 (1991), 7–29.

58. For work on lively objects in medieval studies, see Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral: Ethics and Objects* (Washington, DC: Oliphaunt Books, 2012); and Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Stone: An Ecology of the Inhuman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

59. Unless otherwise noted, this citation and all those hereafter in this chapter come from Richard Crashaw and Richard Rambuss, *The English Poems of Richard Crashaw* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013). Rambuss's edition is the most recent edition of Crashaw's canon. It reproduces *Steps to the Temple: Sacred Poems, with Other Delights of the Muses* (1646), *Carmen Deo Nostro* (1652), and the English poems added to a 1648 edition of *Steps to the Temple* but not reprinted in

Carmen Deo Nostro. Rambus reproduces Crashaw's English poems found only in manuscript form as well as a significantly revised version of the opening dedicatory poem of *Carmen Deo Nostro*, which was published in London in 1653.

60. On this phenomenon, see Beckwith, *Christ's Body*.

61. "Crashaw and the Metaphysical Shudder; Or, How to Do Things with Tears," in *Structures of Feeling in Seventeenth-Century Cultural Expression*, (ed.) Susan McClary (Los Angeles: UCLA Center Clark Library Series, 2013), 267.

62. Martha Stoddard Holmes, "Pain," in *Keywords for Disability Studies*, 134.

63. On this reading of Crashaw, see Janel Mueller, "Women among the Metaphysicals: A Case, Mostly, of Being Donne For," *Modern Philology* 87 (1989), 144. On readings that overly Romanize Crashaw and also for his connections to Milton and Herbert, see the introduction to Crashaw and Rambuss, *English Poems*.

64. Crashaw and Rambuss, *English Poems*, xxxvi.

65. On devotional desire in Crashaw, see Ryan Netzley, *Reading, Desire, and the Eucharist in Early Modern Religious Poetry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 6.

66. For a related but quite contrasting study of early modern interdependencies, see Ryan Langley, *Shakespeare's Contagious Sympathies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 14 and 16, respectively; and Rebecca Lemon, *Addiction and Devotion in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), especially chapters 3 and 4.

67. Crashaw and Rambuss, *English Poems*, xxi.

68. *English Poems*, xxii. On early modern devotional poetry, see Anthony Low, *Love's Architecture: Devotional Modes in Seventeenth-century English Poetry* (New York: New York University Press, 1978); Richard Rambuss, *Closet Devotions* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998); R. V. Young, *Doctrine and Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Poetry: Studies in Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, and Vaughan* (Cambridge, UK: D. S. Brewer, 2000); and Patrick Cheney, Andrew Hadfield, and Garrett A. Sullivan, *Early Modern English Poetry: A Critical Companion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

69. Crashaw and Rambuss, *English Poems*, xxi.

70. Crashaw and Rambuss, *English Poems*, lx.

71. Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics*, 23.

72. Again, see Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics*; also, Davidson, *Concerto for the Left Hand*; and Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*.

73. Crashaw and Rambuss, *English Poems*, lx.

74. Notably, Crashaw dies in Loreto, Italy, on August 21, 1649, while battling a fever that Rambuss calls "a fatal final ecstasy"; *English Poems*, liv.

75. *English Poems*, xxii, xxxvi, and lxvii, respectively.

76. *English Poems*, xii. On the sacred eroticism of devotional poetry, see Rambuss, *Closet Devotions*.

77. *English Poems*, lxx.

78. *English Poems*, xxxi.

79. *Open Subjects*, 4. On vulnerability as productive, see Kuzner, *Open Subjects*.

80. See Rambuss, "Crashaw and the Metaphysical Shudder," 259.

81. "Crashaw and the Metaphysical Shudder," 262.

82. *Dangerous Discourses*, 23.

83. On transmutation in these lines, see Crawshaw and Rambuss, *English Poems*, xxxix–xl.

84. "Crashaw and the Metaphysical Shudder," 257.

85. These lines appear only in the 1652 *Carmen De Nostro* collection of Crashaw's work published posthumously in Paris by Pierre Targa.

86. Alphonso Lingis, *Libido: The French Existential Theories* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 84.

87. *Libido*, 84

88. "Crashaw and the Metaphysical Shudder," 267.

89. *Christ's Body*, 56. On this notion, see also Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger, 1966).

90. See Nirmala Erevelles, *Disability and Difference in Global Contexts: Enabling a Transformative Body Politic* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2011), 8. Jay Dolmage likewise argues for a phenomenology "defined not by boundaries, but by openings"; *Disability Rhetoric*, 111.

91. *Dangerous Discourses*, 23.

92. *Christ's Body*, 59.

93. "The Bodymind Problem and the Possibilities of Pain," *Hypatia*, 30.1 (2015), 274.

94. "Pain," in *Keywords for Disability Studies*, 133.

95. "The Case for Conserving Disability," 351.

96. Kevin Paterson and Bill Hughes, "Disability Studies and Phenomenology: The Carnal Politics of Everyday Life," *Disability & Society*, 14.5 (1991), 602.

97. Crashaw and Rambuss, *English Poems*, 8.

98. Garland-Thomson, "The Case for Conserving Disability," 353.

99. On pain and narrative inspiration, see Sarah Covington, *Wounds, Flesh, and Metaphor in Seventeenth-Century England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 85.

100. *Hurt and Pain: Literature and the Suffering Body* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 25.

101. "The Case for Conserving Disability," 350.

102. *Aesthetic Nervousness*, 80.

103. On this phenomenon, see Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). On the scholarly legacy of Scarry's argument, Alyson Patsavas, "Recovering a Cripistemology of Pain: Leaky Bodies, Connective Tissue, and Feeling Discourse," *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*, 8.2 (2014), 216.

104. Holmes, *Keywords for Disability Studies*, 133.

105. *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 5.

106. *Story of Pain*, 8, 16.

107. Bourke, *Story of Pain*, 28.

108. On pain's sociality, again see Bourke, *Story of Pain*, 46.

109. On key differences between wounds and scars, see Covington, *Wounds, Flesh, and Metaphor*, 86.

110. "Recovering a Cripistemology," 213.

111. Shildrick, *Dangerous Discourses*, 142.

112. Shildrick, *Dangerous Discourses*, 25.

113. *An Collins*, 59.

114. *An Collins*, 60.

115. *An Collins*, 60.

116. *Disability and Difference*, 36.

117. Mintz, *An Collins*, 125.

118. *Disability and Difference*, 50.

119. On this phenomenon in Milton's work, see Mintz, *Threshold Poetics*, 13.

120. Shildrick, *Dangerous Discourses*, 83.

121. "Recovering a Cripistemology," 216.

122. Julia Kristeva quoted in Patsavas, "Recovering a Cripistemology," 216.

123. "Crashaw's Sancta Maria Dolorum: Controversy and Coherence," in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, (ed.) John Richard Roberts (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990), 99.

124. Cunnar, "Crashaw's Sancta Maria Dolorum." See also Crashaw and Rambuss, the introduction to *English Poems*.

125. On imagining Crashaw's aesthetics from wider transconfessional and internationalizing vantage points, see Rambuss, *English Poems*, xx, xixi, xix.

126. Recall here Kuzner, *Open Subjects*, 7.

127. *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 14.

128. On prostheses, borders, and selfhood, see Rick Godden, "Prosthetic Ecologies: Vulnerable Bodies and the Dismodern Subject," in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Textual Practice*, 30.6 (2016), 1273–90.

129. *Christ's Body*, 58.

130. *The Prosthetic Impulse: From a Posthuman Present to a Biocultural Future* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 7.

131. *The Prosthetic Impulse*, 4.

132. *The Prosthetic Impulse*, 4.

133. Smith and Morra, *The Prosthetic Impulse*, 6–7.

134. *Bodily Natures*, 11.

135. On vibrant matter, see Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

136. *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 3.

137. On how prostheses dramatize structures and processes beyond the brain, see John A. Teske, "From Embodied to Extended Cognition," *Zygon: Journal of Science and Religion,* 48 (2013), 759–87.

138. "Communication" in *Keywords for Disability Studies*, 44.

139. Robert A. Wilson quoted in Teske, "From Embodied to Extended Cognition," 775.

140. "From Embodied to Extended Cognition," 776.

141. "From Embodied to Extended Cognition," 770. On memory networks, see also John Sutton and Kellie Williamson, "Embodied Remembering," in *The Routledge Handbook of Embodied Cognition*, (ed.) Lawrence Shapiro (London: Routledge, 2014), 315–25.

142. "From Embodied to Extended Cognition," 767.

143. Teske, "From Embodied to Extended Cognition," 776.

144. *Imaginary Bodies: Ethics, Power, and Corporeality* (London: Routledge, 1996), 110.

145. *Imaginary Bodies*, 110.

146. *Space, Time, and Perversion: Essays on the Politics of Bodies* (London: Routledge, 1995), 200.

147. *Prosthesis*, 214–49.

148. Wills, *Prosthesis*, 246.

149. *The Arte of Rhetorique* (London: Richardus Graftonus, 1553), Fol. 119, Gg 1.

150. *The Oxford English Dictionary* notes that, in 1550, R. Sherry discusses "*Appositio*, apposicion, the putting to, eyther of letter or sillable at the begynnyng of a worde" but cites in his textual margin the word "Prosthesis"; http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/153069. Accessed 15 October 2017.

151. The term prosthesis did not acquire the medical definition, "replacement of a missing part of the body with an artificial one," until 1704; Wills, *Prosthesis*, 215. See also Wills's "1553: Putting a First Foot Forward (Ramus, Wilson, Paré)" in *Human, All Too Human*, (ed.) Diana Fuss (New York: Routledge, 1996), 149–66, especially 151–55; and *Prosthesis in Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, (eds.) Chloe Porter, Katie L. Walter, and Margaret Healy (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2018).

152. On this term, see Vin Nardizzi, "The Wooden Matter of Human Bodies: Prosthesis and Stump in *A Larum for London*," in *The Indistinct Human in Renaissance Literature*, (eds.) Jean Feerick and Vincent Joseph Nardizzi (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 122.

153. Sean Lawrence, *Forgiving the Gift: The Philosophy of Generosity in Shakespeare and Marlowe* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2012), 188.

154. "Re-imagining Embodiment," 283.

155. "Re-imagining Embodiment," 272; on constitutive assemblages see also Margrit Shildrick and Roxanne Mykitiuk, *Ethics of the Body: Postconventional Challenges* (Cambridge, MD: MIT Press, 2005).

156. On this notion, also see Elizabeth A. Grosz, "Animal Sex: Libido as Desire and Death," in *Sexy Bodies: The Strange Carnalities of Feminism*, (eds.) Elizabeth A. Grosz and Elspeth Probyn (London: Routledge, 1995).

157. *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 167–68.

158. *Dangerous Discourses*, 20.

159. *Bodily Natures*, 2.

160. Alaimo, *Bodily Natures*, 16–17.

161. On interdependence in other contexts, see Kathryn Abrams, "Performing Interdependence: Judith Butler and Sunaura Taylor in the Examined Life," 21 Colum. J. *Gender & Law*, 72 (2011), np; Karen Hammer, "A Scar Is More than a Wound: Rethinking Community and Intimacy through Queer and Disability Theory," *Rocky Mountain Review*, 68.2 (Fall 2014), 159–76; and Margrit Shildrick and Janet Price, "Deleuzian Connections and Queer Corporealities: Shrinking Global Disability" *Rhizomes*, 11–12 (Fall 2005, Spring 2006), np; http://www.rhizomes.net/issue11/index.html. Accessed 20 January 2016.

162. *Shattering of the Self*, 54.

163. Alaimo, *Bodily Natures*, 17.

Chapter 4

1. *The Amputee's Guide to Sex* (New York: Soft Skull Press, 2007), 1.

2. "Is the Rectum a Grave?," *October* 43 (1987), 221.

3. On disability and gelding across the global Renaissance, see Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, chapter 4. On this phenomenon and related discussions of castration, see *On Castration, Impotence, and Emasculation in the Long Eighteenth Century*, (ed.) Anne Leah Greenfield (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020).

4. See, for example, Simone Chess's unpublished conference papers: "Queer, Crip, Early Modern: Premodern Intersections of Queer and Disability Studies," "Contented Cuckolds: Infertility and Queer Reproductive Practice in Middleton's *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* and Machiavelli's *Mandragola*," "Queer Disability in the Renaissance: Crip Bodies and Queer Adaptation," and "Intersecting the Sexual: Assistive Technologies and Erotic Adaptation," as well as Chess's *Male-to-Female Crossdressing in Early Modern English Literature: Gender, Performance, and Queer Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2016), and "Asexuality, Adolescence, and 'Age Drag' in Early Modern Literature," in *Queering Childhood in Early Modern English Drama*, (eds.) Jennifer Higginbotham and Mark Albert Johnston (New York: Palgrave, 2018), 31–55; also Farr, *Novel Bodies*; Jason Farr, "Libertine Sexuality and Queer-Crip Embodiment in Eighteenth-Century Britain," in "New Queer Readings," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 16.4 (2016), 96–118, and Farr, "Crip Gothic: Affiliations of Disability and Queerness in Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764)," in *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Disability*, (ed.) Alice Hall (2020).

5. Abby Wilkerson and Robert McRuer, "Introduction," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 9.1–2 (2003), 23.

6. "This Field That Is Not One," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 16.2 (2016), 132.

7. Shildrick, *Dangerous Discourses*, 128.

8. *Novel Bodies*, 1.

9. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "Queer Crip Sex and Critical Mattering," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 21.1 (2015), 156.

10. I use gelding and castration interchangeably to describe the removal of the testes. Notably, castration including full amputation of the penis and testes was occasionally employed in early modernity for medical reasons or judicial punishment and often resulted in death. See Gary Taylor, *Castration: An Abbreviated History of Western Manhood* (New York: Routledge, 2000), especially 56–57; also Katherine Crawford, *Eunuchs and Castrati: Disability and Normativity in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2019).

11. *The Gelding of the Devil* (London: Printed and sold in Aldermary Church-Yard, Bow Lane, 1750).

12. At least five London-based printings of the ballad exist: 1668, 1670, 1709, 1710, and 1750. The earliest extant copy can be found in Guildhall Library and was printed by E. C. for F. Coles, T. Vere, and J. Wright. The broadside likewise is part of a ballad collection, originally compiled by Robert Hartley, 1st Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, called *A Book of Roxburghe Ballads* (titled such for its later owner and officially published in 1847).

13. On early modern castration procedures, again see Crawford, *Eunuchs and Castrati*, 7–8.

14. On impotency in the period, see William Gouge's marital conduct book *Of Domesticall Duties* (London, 1622). For contemporary work on early modern impotency, see Roger Kuin and Ann Lake Prescott, "The Wrath of Priapus: Remy Belleau's 'Jean qui ne peult' and Its Traditions," *Comparative Literature Studies*, 17.1 (2000), 1–17; Hannah Lavery's "Exchange and Reciprocation in Nashe's 'Choice of Valentines,'" *Appositions: Studies in Renaissance/Early Modern Literature and Culture*, 1 (2008), http://appositions.blogspot.com/; and Sara Scalenghe, *Disability in the Ottoman Arab World, 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), especially 137–38.

15. Helkiah Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia* (London, 1615), 197.

16. *Mikrokosmographia*, 242.

17. Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia*, 242.

18. Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia*, 242.

19. *Anthropometamorphosis* (London, 1653), 355–36.

20. *Anthropometamorphosis*, 353.

21. Bulwer, *Anthropometamorphosis*, 354–5.

22. Removal of the penis and/or testes was used as medical treatment for conditions as diverse as venereal diseases, hernias, leprosy, and epilepsy; see Larissa Tracy, "A History of Calamities: The Culture of Castration," in *Castration and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2013), 4–5.

23. *Workes of that Famous Chirurgion*, 27.

24. On eunuchs and castration in antiquity, see Aline Rousselle, *Porneia: On Desire and the Body in Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993). On other historical formulations of castration, see Shaun Marmon, *Eunuchs and Sacred Boundaries in Islamic Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Kathryn

M. Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Taylor, *Castration*; and Shaun Tougher (ed.), *Eunuchs in Antiquity and Beyond* (London: Classical Press of Wales, 2002).

25. Martin Irvine, "Abelard and (Re)writing the Male Body: Castration, Identity, and Remasculization," in *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*, (eds.) Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Bonnie Wheeler (New York: Garland Pub., 1997), 90. On competing early modern regimes of masculinity, also see Bonnie Wheeler, "Origenary Fantasies: Abelard's Castration and Confession," in *Becoming Male*, 107–28.

26. *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). See also Jennifer Panek, "'This Base Stallion Trade': He-Whores and Male Sexuality on the Early Modern Stage," *English Literary Renaissance*, 40.3 (2010 Autumn), 357–92.

27. James M. Bromley and Will Stockton, *Sex Before Sex: Figuring the Act in Early Modern England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 5.

28. Bromley and Stockton, *Sex Before Sex*, 11 and 10, respectively.

29. On impotence as grounds for divorce, see Thomas Foster, "Deficient Husbands: Manhood, Sexual Incapacity, and Male Marital Sexuality in Seventeenth-Century New England," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 56.4 (1999), 723–44.

30. *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 164.

31. Crawford, *Eunuchs and Castrati*, 24.

32. Again, see Taylor, *Castration*. On eunuchs as powerful sexual transgressors, see Farr, *Novel Bodies*, introduction.

33. "A History of Calamities," 9. On the increasingly important role of coitus from the eleventh and twelfth centuries onward, see Susanna Niiranen, "Sexual Incapacity in Medieval *Materia Medica*," in *Infirmity in Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Social and Cultural Approaches to Health, Weakness and Care*, (eds.) Christian Krötzl, Katariina Mustakallio, and Jenni Kuuliala (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2015), 223–40.

34. *Eunuchs and Castrati*, 18. See also Katherine Crawford, "Desiring Castrates, or How to Create Disabled Social Subjects," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 15.2 (2016), 59–90; and Karin Sellberg and Lena Wanggren, "The Dismemberment of Will: Early Modern Fear of Castration," in *Castration and Culture*, 295–313.

35. *Novel Bodies*, 1.

36. "Desiring Castrates," 78.

37. Crawford, *Eunuchs and Castrati*, 6.

38. "Sex Without Issue: Sodomy, Reproduction, and Signification in Shakespeare's Sonnets," in *Shakespeare's Sonnets: Critical Essays*, (ed.) James Schiffer (New York: Garland Pub., 1999), 432.

39. *Eunuchs and Castrati*, 4.

40. On the categories of disability and sexuality as mutually constitutive, see Farr, "New Queer Readings."

41. *Novel Bodies*, 9 and 2, respectively.

42. Farr, *Novel Bodies*, 11.

43. "Is Sex Disability? Queer Theory and the Disability Drive," in *Sex and Disability*, (eds.) Robert McRuer and Anna Mollow (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 287.

44. Mollow, "Is Sex Disability?," 287.

45. Mollow, "Is Sex Disability?," 308.

46. "Introduction," 8.

47. Robert McRuer, "Critical Investments: AIDS, Christopher Reeve, and Queer/Disability Studies," *Journal of Medical Humanities*, 23.3–4 (2002), 236.

48. *Novel Bodies*, 13.

49. Marvell composes the poem as early as 1650 or as late as the 1670s, and it is then published in his famous *Miscellaneous Poems* in 1681. *Miscellaneous Poems* was printed three years after Marvell's death as part of a Whig propaganda campaign at the end of the Exclusion Crisis, and while editorially complicated and contested in various ways, the volume is considered to be closely representative of Marvell's authorship and, in some cases, the only witness to a number of his original pastoral and lyric poems.

50. The poem's Latin original heavily echoes Martial's classical epigrams. Notably, too, "[o]ne of Donne's epigrams described an expurgated edition of Martial as a castration of the poet"; see Nigel Smith, *Marvell: The Poems of Andrew Marvell* (London: Pearson/Longman, 2007), 187. All citations from Marvell hereafter come from Smith's edition.

51. On Marvell's Latin poems, see Rosalie Littell Colie, *"My Ecchoing Song": Andrew Marvell's Poetry of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

52. Smith, *Marvell*, 188. Thanks much to Professor Rebecca Olson and her class for helping me research the textual history and critical reception of this poem. On the textual history of Marvell's work, see Elizabeth S. Donno, *Andrew Marvell: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1978).

53. Paul Hammond, *Figuring Sex Between Men from Shakespeare to Rochester* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 2002), 200.

54. *The Latin Poetry of Andrew Marvell*, (eds.) William A. McQueen and Kiffin A. Rockwell (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 42.

55. Derek Hirst and Stephen N. Zwicker, *The Cambridge Companion to Andrew Marvell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 83. See also Patsy Griffin, *The Modest Ambition of Andrew Marvell: A Study of Marvell and His Relation to Lovelace, Fairfax, Cromwell, and Milton* (Newark: University of Delaware, 1995).

56. See Smith, *Poems of Andrew Marvell*; Diane Purkiss, "Thinking of Gender," in *The Cambridge Companion to Andrew Marvell*; Michael John Disanto, "Andrew Marvell's Ambivalence Towards Adult Sexuality," *SEL*, 48.1 (Winter 2008), 165–82; and Paul Hammond, "Marvell's Sexuality," *The Seventeenth Century*, 11.1 (1996), 87–123.

57. *The Judgment of Marvell* (London: Pinter, 1989), 185.

58. *Andrew Marvell, Orphan of the Hurricane* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 57 and 112, respectively.

59. Danielle Peers, Melisa Brittain, and Robert McRuer, "Crip Excess, Art, and Politics: A Conversation with Robert McRuer," *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 34 (2012), 148–49.

60. Andrew Marvell and Alexander Balloch Grosart, *The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Andrew Marvell*. 4 vols. (London: Robson and Sons, 1872).

61. Smith, *Poems of Andrew Marvell*, 187.

62. *Against Reproduction: Where Renaissance Texts Come From* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

63. "No Present," in Ben Davies and Jana Funke, *Sex, Gender and Time in Fiction and Culture* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 49.

64. Guy-Bray, *Sex, Gender and Time*, 48.

65. For foundational work on nonprocreative sexuality in the Renaissance, see especially Alan Bray, Bruce Smith, Greg Bredbeck, Jonathan Goldberg, and Alan Stewart.

66. *Orphan of the Hurricane*, 39.

67. Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, 42, 48.

68. Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, 47.

69. BDSM: bondage and discipline, dominance and submission, sadism and masochism

70. *The Intimate Lives of Disabled People* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 5, 1.

71. See *The Sexual Politics of Disability: Untold Desires*, (eds.) Tom Shakespeare, Kath Gillespie-Sells, and Dominic Davies (London: Cassell, 1996), chapter 1.

72. See Pamela Block, Russell Shuttleworth, Hope Block, Jacob Pratt, and Linda Rammler, "Disability, Sexuality and Intimacy," in *Politics of Occupation-Centred Practice: Reflections on Occupational Engagement Across Cultures*, (eds.) Nick Pollard and Dikaios Sakellariou (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 162–79.

73. Smith, *Poems of Andrew Marvell*, 130.

74. *Novel Bodies*, 12.

75. *Dangerous Discourses*, 126; see also 133.

76. "Queer Crip Sex," 154.

77. *Sex, Gender and Time*, 10.

78. Davies and Funke, *Sex, Gender and Time*, 10–11.

79. "A Sexual Culture for Disabled People," in *Sex and Disability*, 48.

80. "Has the Queer Ever Been Human?," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 21.2–3 (2015), 185.

81. Luciano and Chen, "Has the Queer Ever Been Human?," 185.

82. Luciano and Chen, "Has the Queer Ever Been Human?," 76.

83. *Andrew Marvell, Sexual Orientation, and Seventeenth-Century Poetry* (Lanham: Fairleigh Dickinson Press, 2017), 106.

84. *Orphan of the Hurricane*, 96 and 97, respectively.

85. *Figuring Sex Between Men*, 215. For an overview of other modern criticism around the poem, see Smith, *Poems of Andrew Marvell*, 88, and Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, 75.

86. Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, 97 and 98, respectively.

87. Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, 87.

88. *Orphan of the Hurricane*, 96.

89. Snyder, Brueggemann, and Garland-Thomson (eds.), *Disability Studies*, 2.

90. Snyder, Brueggemann, and Garland-Thomson (eds.), *Disability Studies*, 2.

91. On elegy, see Peter Sacks, *The English Elegy: Studies in the Genre from Spenser to Yeats* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), especially 2–25.

92. On vulnerability in this poem, see Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*, 94.

93. *Vulnerability in Resistance*, (eds.) Judith Butler, Zeynep Gambetti, and Leticia Sabsay (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 1.

94. Butler, Gambetti, and Sabsay (eds.), *Vulnerability in Resistance*, 1.

95. Butler, Gambetti, and Sabsay (eds.), *Vulnerability in Resistance*, 21.

96. Smith, *Poems of Andrew Marvell*, 97. See this same source and page for discussion of other readings of these particular lines.

97. *Poems of Andrew Marvell*, 91.

98. *Vulnerability in Resistance*, 25.

99. On Rochester's text, print, and reception history, see David Farley-Hills, *Rochester: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972); Jim McGhee, "Obscene Libel and the Language of 'The Imperfect Enjoyment," in *Reading Rochester*, (ed.) Edward Burns (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), especially 42–54; Nicholas Fisher's introductory chapter in *That Second Bottle: Essays on John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), especially 1–6.

100. On death and absence in Rochester, see Burns, *Reading Rochester*, 2.

101. On Rochester as both libertine and not, see Anthony J. Funari, *Francis Bacon and the Seventeenth-Century Intellectual Discourse* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Joshua Scodel, *Excess and the Mean in Early Modern English Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Barbara Everett, "The Sense of Nothing," in *Spirit of Wit: Reconsiderations of Rochester*, (ed.) Jeremy Treglown (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982), 2; Melissa E. Sanchez, "Libertinism and Romance in Rochester's Poetry," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 38.3 (2005), 442; Jeremy W. Webster, *Performing Libertinism in Charles II's Court: Politics, Drama, Sexuality* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); James Grantham Turner, *Libertines and Radicals in Early Modern London: Sexuality, Politics, and Literary Culture, 1630–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); James Grantham Turner, *Schooling Sex: Libertine Literature and Erotic Education in Italy, France, and England, 1534–1685* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

102. On Rochester as a metaphysical poet as well, see John Wilmot Rochester and Jeremy Treglown, *The Letters of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1980), 3.

103. On addiction via a disability gain framework, see Lemon, *Addiction and Devotion*, especially 50–55 and conclusion.

104. *Reading Rochester*, 1.

105. "John Wilmot and the Writing of Rochester," in *Lord Rochester in the Res-*

toration World, (eds.) Matthew C. Augustine and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 30. See also Paul Hammond, "Rochester's Homoeroticism," in *That Second Bottle*, 46–62.

106. "Rochester, Behn, and Enlightenment Liberty," *Rochester in the Restoration World*, 209, 215.

107. "Gender and Artfulness in Rochester's 'Song of a Young Lady to Her Ancient Lover,'" *Reading Rochester*, 7.

108. "Unfit to Print: Rochester and the Poetics of Obscenity," *Rochester in the Restoration World*, 232.

109. "'Something Genrous in Meer Lust': Rochester and Misogyny," *Reading Rochester*, 25.

110. See, for example, Randolph Trumbach, "Rochester's Bisexual Sodomy," and Jonathan Kramnick on "his rebarbative and ambidextrous erotics"; *Sex and the Gender Revolution: Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 75; Jonathan Kramnick, "Rochester and the History of Sexuality," *ELH*, 69 (2002), 289, respectively. See also Harold Weber, "Drudging in Fair Aurelia's Womb," *The Eighteenth Century*, 33.2 (1992), 99–117; and Rochester and Treglown, *Letters of John Wilmot*.

111. *Schooling Sex*, 261.

112. *Schooling Sex*, 262.

113. *Schooling Sex*, 6.

114. "New Queer Readings."

115. "Devilish Appetites, Doubtful Beauty, and Dull Satisfaction: Rochester's Scorn of Ugly Ladies (which are very near all)," *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660–1700*, 27.1 (2003), 4.

116. John Wilmot Rochester and David M. Vieth, *The Complete Poems of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 131. All Rochester poems cited henceforth are from Vieth's edition. Other key editions follow here: *Poems on Several Occasions By the Right Honourable, the E. of R*— (London, 1680); *Poems on Several Occasions Written by a Late Person of Honour* (London, 1685); *Poems, &c. on Several Occasions: with Valentinian, A Tragedy* (London, 1691); *Collected Works of John Wilmot Earl of Rochester*, (ed.) John Hayward (London, 1926); *Rochester's Poems on Several Occasions*, (ed.) James Thorpe (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950); *Lyrics & Satires of John Wilmot Earl of Rochester*, (ed.) David Brooks (Sydney: Hydra Book Company, 1980); *John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester: Selected Poems*, (ed.) Paul Hammond (Bristol: Bristol Classic Press, 1982); *Rochester: Complete Poems and Plays*, (ed.) Paddy Lyons (London: Orion Publishing Company, 1993); *John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester: The Complete Works*, (ed.) Frank H. Ellis (Harmondsworth: Penguin Classics, 1994); *The Works of John Wilmot Earl of Rochester*, (ed.) Harold Love (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

117. "Generic Failures and Imperfect Enjoyments: Rochester and the Anatomy of Impotence," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 28.1 (2015), 73.

118. "Rochester's World of Imperfect Enjoyment," *Journal of English and German Philology*, 73 (1974), 348–50.

119. *Novel Bodies*, 23.

120. "New Queer Readings," 102.

121. On Rochester articulating a malfunctioning body, see Clark, *Reading Rochester*, 3.

122. "New Queer Readings," 103.

123. *Reading Rochester*, 39.

124. On Rochester, alternatingly, as misogynist and not, see Burns, *Reading Rochester*, 4–5; Tracy Wendt Lemaster, "Lowering the Libertine: Feminism in Rochester's 'The Imperfect Enjoyment,'" in *And Never Know the Joy: Sex and the Erotic in English Poetry*, (ed.) C. C. Barfoot (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), 123–34; Kirk Combe, *A Martyr for Sin: Rochester's Critique of Polity, Sexuality, and Society* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1998); Sanchez, "Libertinism and Romance."

125. On formulations of early modern syphilis contagion, see *The Great Pox: The French Disease in Renaissance Europe*, (eds.) Jon Arrizabalaga, John Henderson, and R. K. French (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), chapter 9.

126. *Most Eminent English Poets*, 221.

127. See *Complete Poems of John Wilmot*, xxxiii.

128. Fisher, *That Second Bottle*, 31.

129. Colin Fleming, "How Brightly It Glistens: The Earl of Rochester and the Ballers, the Poet Pornographers," *Northwest Review*, 46.1 (2008), 18.

130. James Grantham Turner, "Second Earl of Rochester (John Wilmot)," in *The Age of Milton: An Encyclopedia of Major 17th-Century British and American Authors*, (ed.) Alan Hager (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004), 276.

131. "'Illustrious Depravity' and the Erotic Sublime," *The Age of Johnson* 2 (1989), 3.

132. *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, 74.

133. Quoted from Farley-Hills, *Rochester: the Critical Heritage*, 57.

134. Farley-Hills, *Rochester: The Critical Heritage*, 51.

135. Important textual sources for Rochester's letters are *Familiar Letters: Written by the Right Honorable John late Earl of Rochester And Several Other Persons of Honor and Quality* (London, 1697); and Gilbert Burnet, *Some Passage of the Life and Death of the Right Honorable John, Earl of Rochester* (London, 1680).

136. Rochester and Treglown, *Letters of John Wilmot*, 156.

137. Rochester and Treglown, *Letters of John Wilmot*, 182.

138. Rochester and Treglown, *Letters of John Wilmot*, 202.

139. Rochester and Treglown, *Letters of John Wilmot*, 15.

140. Rochester and Treglown, *Letters of John Wilmot*, 156.

141. Burnet quoted in *Rochester: The Critical Heritage*, 51.

142. Rochester and Vieth, *Complete Poems of John Wilmot*, 47.

143. Rochester and Treglown, *Letters of John Wilmot*, 155.

144. Rochester and Treglown, *Letters of John Wilmot*, 202.

145. Thanks much to Professor Ramzi Fawaz for key conversation, insights, and source suggestions as I developed this argument.

146. *The Calendar of Loss: Race, Sexuality, and Mourning in the Early Era of AIDS*

(Baltimore: John's Hopkins University Press, 2015), 3. For more on AIDS, activism, political feeling, and social movements, see Deborah B. Gould, *Moving Politics: Emotion and Act Up's Fight Against AIDS* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

147. Woubshet, *Calendar of Loss*, 4.

148. Woubshet, *Calendar of Loss*, 19.

149. *Calendar of Loss*, 12

150. *Calendar of Loss*, 4.

151. Woubshet, *Calendar of Loss*, 12.

152. "Antisocial Procreation in *Measure for Measure*," in *Queer Shakespeare: Desire and Sexuality*, (ed.) Goran Stanivukovic (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 266.

153. Stanivukovic (ed.), *Queer Shakespeare*, 266

154. Stanivukovic (ed.), *Queer Shakespeare*, 277.

155. Stanivukovic (ed.), *Queer Shakespeare*, 27

156. "I'm Not the Man I Used to Be: Sex, HIV, and Cultural 'Responsibility,'" in *Sex and Disability*, (eds.) Robert McRuer and Anna Mollow (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 223.

157. Octavio R. Gonzalez, "Tracking the Bugchaser: Giving the Gift of HIV/AIDS," *Cultural Critique*, 75 (2010), 88.

158. Gonzalez, "Tracking the Bugchaser," 99.

159. On the specific practice of barebacking, intentional, unprotected anal sex between men, see Gonzalez, "Tracking the Bugchaser," 84; and Tim Dean, "Breeding Culture: Barebacking, Bugchasing, Giftgiving," *Massachusetts Review*, 49.1–2 (2008), 80–94; and Tim Dean, *Unlimited Intimacy: Reflections on the Subculture of Barebacking* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

160. Robert McRuer, "Critical Investments," 236.

161. On the Americans with Disabilities Act and the relation of AIDS and disability, see Carrie Sandahl, "Performing Metaphors: AIDS, Disability, and Technology," *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 1.3–4 (2001), 49–60.

162. Jennifer Malkowski, "Beyond Prevention: Containment Rhetoric in the Case of Bug Chasing," *Journal of Medical Humanities*, 35 (2014), 213.

163. "Tracking the Bugchaser," 86.

164. "Tracking the Bugchaser," 91. On the fraught relation of AIDS, disability, and queerness, see Robert McRuer and Anna Mollow, *Sex and Disability*, 26.

165. On gay, U.S. AIDS culture and bugchasing in particular, see Douglas Crimp, "How to Have Promiscuity in an Epidemic," in *AIDS: Cultural Analysis, Cultural Activism*, (ed.) Douglas Crimp (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), 237–70; David Halperin, *What Do Gay Men Want? An Essay on Sex, Risk, and Subjectivity* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007); Paula A. Treichler, *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic: Cultural Chronicles of AIDS* (Durham: Duke University Press, 199), especially chapter 1, 11–39; Alex Carballo-Dieguez and Jose Arturo Bauermeister, "'Barebacking': Intentional Condomless Anal Sex in HIV-Risk Contexts. Reasons For and Against It," *Journal of Homosexuality*, 47. 1 (2004), 1–16; Michael Shernoff, *Without Condoms: Unprotected Sex, Gay Men, and Barebacking* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

166. *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 252. On AIDS representation, also see Emily F. Nye, "The Rhetoric of AIDS: A New Taxonomy," in *Embodied Rhetorics: Disability in Language and Culture*, (eds.) James C. Wilson and Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2001), 229–43.

167. "The State of Life and the Power of Death: *Measure for Measure*," in *Shakespearean Power and Punishment: A Volume of Essays*, (ed.) G. M. Kendall (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998), 150.

168. Catherine I. Cox, "'Lord Have Mercy Upon Us': The King, the Pestilence, and Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*," *Exemplaria*, 20. 4 (2008), 433. For more on early modern disease and contagion, see Margaret Healy, "Anxious and Fatal Contacts: Taming the Contagious Touch," in *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture*, (ed.) Elizabeth D. Harvey (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 22–38; and Jonathan Gil Harris, "'Some Love that Drew Him Oft from Home:' Syphilis and International Commerce in *The Comedy of Errors*," in *Disease, Diagnosis, and Cure*, 69–92.

169. More broadly on trauma narratives in Rochester's poetry, see Cynthia Richards, "Wit at War: The Poetry of John Wilmot and the Trauma of War," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 27.1 (Fall 2014), 25–54.

170. Venereal disease appeared in Europe in the 1490s or so; for more on this global history, see Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, chapter 7; see also Arrizabalaga, Henderson, and French, *The Great Pox*, especially chapter 2.

171. On regulation of the early modern English sex trade, see Tom Flanigan, "What to Do About Bawds and Fornicators: Sex and Law in *Measure for Measure* and Tudor/Stuart England," *Journal of the Wooden O Symposium*, 3 (Jan. 2003), 36–47.

172. "Marina, Isabella, and Shakespeare's Sex Workers," *Selected Papers of the Ohio Valley Shakespeare Conference*, 2.3 (2008), 19.

173. "Prostitution in Late Elizabethan London: The Case of Mary Newborough," *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 15, 141. See also Jean Howard, "Sex and the Early Modern City: Staging the Bawdy Houses of London," in *The Impact of Feminism in English Renaissance Studies*, (ed.) Dympna Callaghan (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 117–36; and Panek, "This Base Stallion Trade," 357–92.

174. Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, 196.

175. Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, 203.

176. *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, 203.

177. "Rivall Fopps, Rambling Rakes, Wild Women, and Homosocial Desire and Courtly Crisis in Rochester's Poetry," *The Eighteenth Century*, 38.1 (1997), 23.

178. *Complete Poems of John Wilmot*, 82.

179. Rochester and Vieth, *Complete Poems of John Wilmot*, 130.

180. Rochester and Vieth, *Complete Poems of John Wilmot*, 139.

181. See Arrizabalaga, Henderson, and French, *The Great Pox*, 32–34 and chapter 3.

182. "Tracking the Bugchaser," 88.

183. Gonzalez, "Tracking the Bugchaser," 102.

184. "Tracking the Bugchaser," 102–3.

185. "Breeding Culture," 86

186. *Schooling Sex*, 262.

187. On the pathologization of nonnormative sex practices, see Dean, "Breeding Culture," 92.

188. *Complete Poems of John Wilmot*, 116.

189. On the resonant militancy of barebacking culture, see Dean, "Breeding Culture," 85.

190. *Schooling Sex*, 276.

191. Turner, *Schooling Sex*, 276.

192. Dean, "Breeding Culture," 82.

193. "Breeding Culture," 82

194. Turner, *Schooling Sex*, 264.

195. Dean, "Breeding Culture," 86.

196. "Breeding Culture," 88.

197. Dean, "Breeding Culture," 89–90.

Chapter 5

1. Tony Harrison, *From the School of Eloquence and Other Poems* (London: Collings, 1978). Thanks to Professor Emma Smith for introducing me to this poem.

2. On the term *conservation*, see Garland-Thomson, "The Case for Conserving Disability."

3. Oliver Bloodstein suggests that "to be a stutterer is more than to be merely a person with a certain way of talking," and he notes a long representational history of the stutterer beginning as early as ancient Egyptian papyri; *Stuttering: The Search for a Cause and Cure* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1993), 5, vii.

4. Siebers, *Disability Aesthetic*, 85.

5. "The Case for Conserving Disability," 341.

6. *A Pleasant Commedie Called Looke About You* (London, 1600). The 1600 playtext was reprinted in facsimile by the Malone Society in 1913 and published by Richard S. M. Hirsch as *A Pleasant Commedie Called Looke About You: A Critical Edition* (New York: Garland, 1980).

7. *Arte of Rhetorique*.

8. *Arte of Rhetorique*.

9. Wilson, *Arte of Rhetorique*.

10. *The Inarticulate Renaissance: Language Trouble in an Age of Eloquence* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

11. Mazzio, *The Inarticulate Renaissance*, 9.

12. Mazzio, *The Inarticulate Renaissance*, 11.

13. *The Noblest Animate Motion: Speech, Physiology, and Medicine in Pre-Cartesian Linguistic Thought* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins Pub., 1997), 42.

14. *Arte of Rhetorique*, A3v–A4r.

15. *Arte of Rhetorique*, A3v–A4r.

16. Wilson, *Arte of Rhetorique*, A3v–A4r.

17. *A Treatise of the Good and Euell Tounge* (London, 1592), A3r.

18. *A Direction for The Government of the Tongue According to Gods Word* (London, 1632), 89–90.

19. The tongue, states Nathalie Vienne-Guerrin, is "a paradoxical organ where good and evil, hot and cold meet"; *The Unruly Tongue in Early Modern England: Three Treatises* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011), xviii. Also, see this text for explicit discussion of Marconville, Perkins, and Webbe on controlling the tongue. For a history of the tongue, especially as gendered, see Alberti, *This Mortal Coil*, chapter 7, 154–75.

20. *The Government of the Tongue* (Oxford: At the Theater in Oxford, 1674), Preface, a2r.

21. *The Government of the Tongue*, 222–23.

22. "Sins of the Tongue," in *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (New York: Routledge, 1997), 53.

23. Also see, for example, John Abernethy, "The Posyonous Tongue," in *A Christian and Heauenly Treatise Containing Physicke for the Soule* (London, 1622), 463–85; William Gearing, *A Bridle for the Tongue* (London, 1663); and Richard Ward, *Two Very Usefull and Compendious Theological Treatises* (London, 1673).

24. Wollock, *Noblest Animate Motion*, 1–4, 13.

25. *Government of the Tongue*, Preface, a2v–a3r.

26. Allestree, *Government of the Tongue*, a3r.

27. George Wither, "Evill Tongue," in *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne, Quickened with Metricall Illustrations* (London, 1635).

28. *Philocophus: or, the Deafe and Dumbe Mans Friend* (London, 1648).

29. *Arte of Rhetoric*, Fol. 119, Gg1.

30. *Philocophus*, 3.

31. For a historical overview of the anatomy of speech organs, the tongue especially, see Wollock, *Noblest Animate Motion*, 21–37.

32. *Arte of Rhetoric*, Fol. 119, Gg1.

33. Wilson, *Arte of Rhetoric*, Fol. 119–8, Gg1–Gg2.

34. Assi Cicurel and Shifra Shvarts, "Stuttering in Antiquity: Moses and Demosthenes," *Vesalius*, 9.2 (2003), 15–18.

35. Benson Bobrick, *Knotted Tongues: Stuttering in History and the Quest for a Cure* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 21.

36. Bobrick, *Knotted Tongues*, 50. On Aristotle's typology of stuttering, see Wollock, *Noblest Animate Motion*, 62–63.

37. Bobrick, *Knotted Tongues*, 51. On Galenic classification of speech disorder, see Wollock, *Noblest Animate Motion*, chapter 3.

38. Bobrick, *Knotted Tongues*, 51, 50.

39. For more on the history of the study of speech, see Wollock, *Noblest Animate Motion*, xxxv, xlv–xlvi.

40. Nathan Lavid, *Understanding Stuttering* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2003), 18.

41. Lavid, *Understanding Stuttering*, 52.

42. *Sylva Sylvarum* (London, 1627), IV, 386.

43. Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum*.

44. *Knotted Tongues*, 25.

45. On the historical relationships between human and beasts, especially the capacity to reason, see Bruce Boehrer, *Animal Characters: Nonhuman Beings in Early Modern Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Laurie Shannon, *The Accommodated Animal: Cosmopolity in Shakespearean Locales* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013); and Erica Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality, and Humanity in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

46. Sunaura Taylor, *Beasts of Burden: Animal and Disability Liberation* (New York: New Press, 2017), 18.

47. *Animacies*, 91.

48. *Animacies*, 91.

49. Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (Chicago: Encylcopaedia Britannica, 1952), II, 446, 1253a9.

50. Aristotle, *Aristotles Politiques, or Discovrses of Government* (London, 1598), 13. Aristotle goes on, clarifying: "But Speech is giuen vnto vs to signifie what is profitable and what vnprofitable, and consequently what is iust and what vniust. For this is a proprietie belonging vnto man aboue all other liuing creatures, that he onely hath a sense and feeling of good and euill, and of iust and vniust," 13.

51. On Bulwer's radical disability politics, see Bearden, "Before Normal, There Was Natural," 33–50, as well as Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds*, chapter 2.

52. *Philocophus*, 102.

53. George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), (eds.) Gladys Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), 6.

54. On human skin as the human-animal distinction in early modernity, see Robert Mills's "Havelock's Bare Life and the Significance of Skin" and Katie L. Walter's "The Form of the Formless: Medieval Taxonomies of Skin, Flesh, and the Human," in *The Inner Touch: Archaeology of a Sensation*, (ed.) Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone Books, 2007), 57–80 and 119–40.

55. One nondramatic use of the stutter, which I won't elaborate on, is *Wit for Money: or, Poet Stutter* (London, 1691). This text employs the stutter metaphorically, imagining "stammering" poets as unoriginal, imitative, derivative, and plagiaristic.

56. *Looke About You* was probably performed in 1599 by the Admiral's Men at the Rose Theater and then published circa 1600. See Martin Wiggins and Catherine Richardson, *British Drama, 1533–1642: A Catalogue*, vol. 4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 106. Wiggins and Richardson discuss possible identification and dating as well as plot, scene, and character information; see 106–7. My reading herein follows the 1600 quarto edition character name spellings and lack of scene divisions.

57. Thomas Tomkis, *Lingua, or, Combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses for Superiority* (London, 1607). The play was first performed circa 1602.

58. Mazzio, *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 114.

59. *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 189.

60. *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 115.

61. Mazzio, *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 189.

62. Mazzio, *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 189.

63. Thanks to Professor Claire M. L. Bourne for her invaluable expertise and generosity in sharing her compiled notes about instances of stuttering across early modern plays.

64. *The Pilgrim, A Comedy* (London, 1700). The original play was first printed in the Folio edition, *Comedies and Tragedies Written by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher* (London, 1647) and does not include the same exchanges with the drunk and stuttering servants.

65. *The Wits, or, Sport Upon Sport* (London, 1662), 28–34.

66. For more on feigned disability, see Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability*.

67. For a related example, see the brief, undeveloped instance of the stammer that occurs in Alexander Greene's *The Politician Cheated* (London, 1663), where racial, linguistic, and intellectual difference is mapped onto speech impairment.

68. *To blirt* is to burst into tears or weep violently, but it is also an eruptive emission of breath from the mouth; *mew* denotes a derisive exclamation, but is also the whiney sound of person in distress; *snuffe* is an expression of contempt or disdain, but also an inhalation or sniff.

69. "Varieties of Fantasy in What You Will," in *The Drama of John Marston: Critical Re-Visions*, (ed.) T. F. Wharton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 55.

70. *Drama of John Marston*, 52.

71. *Drama of John Marston*, 56.

72. *Drama of John Marston*, 56.

73. Stanback, *The Wordsworth-Coleridge Circle*, 1.

74. *The Wordsworth-Coleridge Circle*, 1.

75. *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 8.

76. On disguise as an early modern stage convention, see Bridget Escolme, "Costume, Disguise and Self-Display," in *Shakespeare's Theatres and the Effects of Performance*, (eds.) Farah Karim Cooper and Tiffany Stern (London: Bloomsbury Arden, 2013), 118–40. See also Peter Hyland's comprehensive monograph on the topic, *Disguise on the Early Modern English Stage* (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2011).

77. On the play as a history play, see Anne B. Lancashire, "*Look about You* as a History Play," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, 9.2 (Spring, 1969), 321–34; and Richard S. M. Hirsch, *A Pleasant Commodie Called Looke About You: A Critical Edition* (New York: Garland Pub., 1980), x–xiii.

78. *The Downfall* and *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*. See Hirsch, *A Pleasant Commodie*, xvi.

79. *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 3.

80. Mazzio, *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 3.

81. *Philocophus*, 6–7.

82. Bulwer, *Philocophus*, 29. Contrastingly, Jean de Marconville presents the tongue as the messenger or interpreter of the heart: "Nature or God has placed the tongue under the brain and not far from the heart, which suggests . . . that there should not be any discrepancy between the heart and the tongue"; George Webbe follows suit, calling the tongue a "faire secretarie of a most faire Heart." On both sources, see Vienne-Guerrin, *The Unruly Tongue*, xxxvi.

83. *Philocophus*, 17. Donna Peberdy further notes that speech impediments challenge typical gender stereotypes, especially masculinity, in their association with weakness and uncontrol; see Donna Peberdy, "Male Sounds and Speech Affectations: Voicing Masculinity," in *Film Dialogue*, (eds.) Jeff Jaeckle and Sarah Kozloff (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 206–19, especially 208–9, 215–16.

84. "Construction of the Disabled Speaker: Locating Stuttering in Disability Studies," in *Literature, Speech Disorders, and Disability: Talking Normal*, (ed.) Christopher Eagle (New York: Routledge, 2013), 13. First published in *The Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*, 1.3 (2012), 1–21.

85. St. Pierre, *Literature, Speech Disorders, and Disability*, 13.

86. *Literature, Speech Disorders, and Disability*, 13.

87. On freak shows, see Garland-Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies*; Fielder, *Freaks*; and Clare, *Exile and Pride*.

88. Mitchell and Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis*, 48.

89. *Narrative Prosthesis*, 49.

90. Mitchell and Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis*, 50.

91. Mitchell and Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis*, 53.

92. *Narrative Prosthesis*, 50.

93. For Robert Boyle and Ben Jonson, respectively, on imitative and contagious stuttering, see Marc Shell, *Stutter* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 14–15; and *Ben Jonson*, (eds.) C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925–52), vol. 3, ll, 1093–99.

94. *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 10.

95. For more on this idea generally, see Shell, *Stutter*, 175.

96. *Philocophus*, 9.

97. On palilalia, a speech disorder characterized by involuntary repetition of words, phrases, or sentences, and also *Hamlet* in relation, see Shell, *Stutter*, 5, 175–76. See also Mazzio, *Inarticulate Renaissance*, chapter 5.

98. "Male Sounds and Speech Affectations," 206.

99. *"The Borderlands of Articulation" in Pedagogy*, special issue, *Caring From, Caring Through: Pedagogical Responses to Disability*, (ed.) Allison P. Hobgood, 15.3 (October 2015), 421–22.

100. "The Borderlands of Articulation," 422.

101. "The Borderlands of Articulation," 421–40.

102. Stanback, “The Borderlands of Articulation,” 437.

103. “The Borderlands of Articulation,” 437

104. *Disability Aesthetics*, 3.

105. *Disability Aesthetics*, 10.

106. *Concerto for the Left Hand*, 4.

107. Davidson, *Concerto for the Left Hand*, 4.

108. Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics*, 25.

109. Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics*, 25.

110. “The Construction of the Disabled Speaker,” 9, 12.

111. “The Construction of the Disabled Speaker,” 11.

112. “The Construction of the Disabled Speaker,” 11.

113. *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 3.

114. St. Pierre, “The Construction of the Disabled Speaker,” 14.

115. “The Construction of the Disabled Speaker,” 12.

116. *Inarticulate Renaissance*, 9.

117. *The Disarticulate: Language, Disability, and the Narratives of Modernity* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 157. “It is always language we are concerned with,” Berger further explains, “even when we study discourses of its limits, failure, or exclusions. The dys-/disarticulate is the figure for the outside of language figured in language,” *The Disarticulate*, 2.

118. St. Pierre, “The Construction of the Disabled Speaker,” 14.

119. *Disability Bioethics*, 83–85.

120. *Disability Rhetoric*, 89.

121. See Herford and Simpson, *Ben Jonson*, vol. 8, 96.

122. *Disability Aesthetics*, 2.

123. *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-factor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 8.

124. *Acoustic World*, 13.

125. Smith, *Acoustic World*, 208.

126. Smith, *Acoustic World*, 21.

127. *Acoustic World*, 23.

128. *Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 2.

129. *Voice in Motion*, 98, 97.

130. Bloom, *Voice in Motion*, 98.

131. Bloom, *Voice in Motion*, 6.

132. *Voice in Motion*, 16.

133. *Voice in Motion*, 5.

134. “Stuttering from the Anus,” *CJDS*, 5.3 (October 2016), 121.

135. Daniel Martin, “Stuttering from the Anus,” 121

136. Thanks to Professor Lindsey Row-Heyveld for pointing out and then helping me think through the connections between Redcap’s running and his impaired speech.

137. *Stutter*, 33. Contrastingly, the term *tripping*, which can mean stumbling

or erring, and often references the mouth or tongue, can also mean the *opposite*—light-footed and nimble; *Stutter*, 171.

138. On dominant temporal choreography, see St. Pierre, "Distending Straight-Masculine Time: A Phenomenology of the Disabled Speaking Body," *Hypatia*, 30.1 (Winter 2015), 59.

139. "The Construction of the Disabled Speaker," 54–55.

140. Ralph Cohen, host, "Doctor Ralph Presents: Look About You," American Shakespeare Center, 28 March 2011, http://americanshakespearecenter.blogspot.com/2011/03/doctor-ralph-presents-look-about-you.html. Accessed 12 May 2016.

141. Johnston, "Look About You."

142. "The Construction of the Disabled Speaker," 14.

143. St. Pierre, "The Construction of the Disabled Speaker," 15; and St. Pierre, "Distending Straight-Masculine Time," 60.

144. "Distending Straight-Masculine Time," 50.

145. On "the choreography of communication" and "communicative capital", see Kevin Paterson, "It's About Time! Understanding the Experience of Speech Impairment," in *The Routledge Handbook of Disability Studies*, 165–77.

146. On these social choreographies, see also Nick Crossley, *Intersubjectivity: The Fabric of Social Becoming* (London: Sage Publications, 1996).

147. St. Pierre, "Distending Straight-Masculine Time," 50.

148. "Distending Straight-Masculine Time," 50.

149. For more on this idea across disability and gender studies, again see St. Pierre, "Distending Straight-Masculine Time," 60–61.

150. St. Pierre, "Distending Straight-Masculine Time," 49–50.

151. *Disability Rhetoric*, 235.

152. Dolmage, *Disability Rhetoric*.

153. St. Pierre, "Distending Straight-Masculine Time," 55.

154. "Distending Straight-Masculine Time," 62.

155. *Acoustic World*, 121.

156. On the bibliographic characteristics of texts, see Gillian Silverman, "Neurodiversity and the Revision of Book History," *PMLA*, 131.2 (2016), 307–8.

157. Marston's 1607 edition uses commas throughout to represent the stutter; the 1633 edition, for whatever reason, removes some of those commas.

158. Thanks to Professors Zachary Lesser and James Morey for initiating these insights about how printing functioned.

159. Even the playtext's catchwords, used to ensure that the book leaves were printed in good order, are a further reminder of the stutter. A catchword's anticipation of the next page's initial word links the complete text together in a cycle of repetition reminiscent of stammering.

160. "Neurodiversity and the Revision of Book History," 308, 309.

161. *Acoustic World*, 125, 124.

162. The catalog points to Malone for provenance, and the letter is signed "E.M."

163. Thanks much to Professor Rebecca Olson, who helped me decipher these documents.

164. See shelfmark Mal. 229 (5).

165. *Acoustic World*, 124.

166. For more on disability's efficaciousness, see Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*, chapter 1, especially 19.

167. Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*, 17.

168. *Aesthetic Nervousness*, 208.

Coda

1. *Hamlet* can be found in *Norton Shakespeare*, 1659–1767.

2. Elizabeth Zeman Kolkovich, "*Hamlet*, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Ashland," *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 29.2 (Summer 2011), 226.

3. "*Hamlet*, Oregon Shakespeare Festival," 226.

4. Michael W. Shurgot, "Breaking the Sound Barrier: Howie Seago and American Sign Language at Oregon Shakespeare Festival," *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 30.1 (Spring 2012), 32.

5. "Breaking the Sound Barrier," 32. For Seago on the decision to play the scene this way, see "Breaking the Sound Barrier," 31.

6. "Breaking the Sound Barrier," 31–32.

7. On an eighteenth-century deaf spectator's experience of Shakespearean gestural poetics, see Jill Bradbury, Neva Grant, and Michael Witmore, "Shakespeare in Sign Language: A Tour of the *First Folio: Eyes on Shakespeare* Exhibition at Gallaudet University." Audio podcast. Folger Shakespeare Library, Shakespeare Unlimited, 18 October 2016. Accessed 8 September 2017, np. More generally, on early modern playgoers' familiarity with the language of rhetorical gesture, see, for example, John Bulwer *Chirologia, or the Naturall Language of the Hand* and *Chironomia, or the Art of Manual Rhetoric* (London, 1644).

8. Marty Hughley, "'Hamlet' a Jolt of Intensity, Attitude (and a Dash of Hip-Hop) at Oregon Shakespeare Festival," *The Oregonian*, 13 October 2010. http://www.oregonlive.com/performance/index.ssf/2010/03/theater_review_hip-hop_hamlet.html, np. Accessed 8 October 2017.

9. *ASL masters* is the term for people who work on translation of English to ASL for theatrical contexts; see Bradbury, "Shakespeare in Sign Language," np.

10. Howie Seago, interview by Michael Shurgot; interpreter Molly Kingsley Holzshu, "Howie Seago: On Playing the Ghost," YouTube, uploaded by Oregon Shakespeare Festival. 25 October 2012. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDL5HD8wzHo, np. Accessed 28 September 2016.

11. Bradbury explains that actors and ASL masters "use different poetic techniques like rhythm, the movement of the sign, to express some of the sense of meter." They employ different repeated hand shapes and "look for signs within a particular passage . . . [that] suggest the connections between different signs and different parts of the speech."; "Shakespeare in Sign Language," np.

12. "Shakespeare in Sign Language," np.

13. On iconic metaphor, see Sarah F. Taub, *Language from the Body: Iconicity and Metaphor in American Sign Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

14. Bauman and Murray, "Deaf Studies in the 21st Century," 249.

15. On orientations, see Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

16. See Hobgood, "Prosthetic Encounter and Queer Intersubjectivity in *The Merchant of Venice*," *Textual Practice*, 30.7 (Nov. 2016), 1291–1308; and Hobgood, "An Afterword: Thinking Through Care," 559–67.

17. *Bending over Backwards*, 32.

18. *Bodyminds Reimagined*, 2. Notably, Schalk is discussing the genre of speculative fiction.

19. *Bodyminds Reimagined*, 2.

20. *Fables and Futures* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019).

21. *Fables and Futures*, 7; see also Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip*.

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