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Signature:

Irene Middleton

Date

“Audience Communities: Early Modern Desire in Post-1956 British Performance”

By

Irene Middleton
Doctor of Philosophy

English

Dr. Sheila Cavanagh
Advisor

Dr. Michael Evenden
Committee Member

Dr. Harry Rusche
Committee Member

Accepted:

Lisa A. Tedesco, Ph.D. Dean of the James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies

Date

“Audience Communities: Early Modern Desire in Post-1956 British Performance”

By

Irene Middleton
M.A., Emory University, 2009

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Abstract

“Audience Communities: Early Modern Desire in Post-1956 British Performance” By Irene Middleton

Live theatre creates significant reactions in audience members through their cognitive and interpretative participation in performance. While individual reactions might diverge and fade away, the group reaction of the audience reinforces the shared interpretation visually and aurally, increasing the power of the staged event. The shared experience of participation and interpretation links audience members together into “an audience,” a collective body that sustains itself as a community through its shared experience and reactions.

Cognitive science supports the conclusion that audience members have more similarities than differences in their response to performance. On an unconscious cognitive level, audience members participate in the creation of meaning from performed actions and language. The resulting conscious interpretation is also guided by shared species- and culture-wide experiences.

The combination of naturalism in acting and abstraction in sets and costuming encourages participation in productions of early modern drama over the last fifty years in Britain. Naturalism presents a firm and comfortable basis for creating meanings while abstraction encourages an increased degree of involvement in interpretation, encouraging audience members to participate in developing similar interpretations.

Desires provide an enticing possibility for participation and have the potential to build especially cohesive audiences. Some audience members’ might limit their conscious participation in staged desires to those that fit their sexual orientation. Early modern drama, however, has a fruitful combination of the familiar and the alien, regularly producing moments that are identifiable as desires yet are evasive of modern sexual identity categories. These “queer desires” lure all audience members into interpretive participation with the titillation of desire without threatening sexual self-identity. The shared experience of queer desires of early modern plays draws audience members together into the communal audience.

Three case studies focus on early modern dramas that use queer desires to create the communal audience and then manipulate it, encouraging group reactions in support of central themes. This dissertation examines *Titus Andronicus*, which increases a longing for community, *The Jew of Malta* and *The Merchant of Venice*, which increase a yearning for ethnic and religious tolerance, and *As You Like It*, which encourages support for patriarchal structures.

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Preface

In 2006, the Globe theatre in London produced William Shakespeare's bloody revenge tragedy *Titus Andronicus*. Although presenting its lofty language and high body count on the abstract bare stage of the Globe would seem to promote disengagement in audience members accustomed to the naturalism of film, the play had a significant effect on the spectators. Audience members cried out, moaned, turned away, and fainted when they faced Titus's daughter Lavinia, raped and mutilated, dripping stage blood from her "tongueless" mouth. It was clear to the audience members that the actress that had not been harmed, that this was only costume bandages and stage blood, yet the stage created powerful reactions. In this dissertation I take up this central question about theatre: How does the stage create these significant reactions? I argue that these reactions are driven by audience members' cognitive and interpretative participation in performance. While individual reactions might diverge and fade away, the group reaction of the audience reinforces the shared interpretation visually and aurally, increasing the power of the staged event. The shared experience of participation and interpretation links audience members together into "an audience," a collective body that sustains itself as a community through its shared experience and reactions. The creation of "an audience" encourages continued participation—maintaining the communal audience—and increases the impact of onstage events by reverberating them through the audience. The plays examined here build such communal audiences, which causes similarly powerful effects as the 2006 *Titus Andronicus*.

This new theory of "an audience" counters the current critical emphasis on individual responses to performance. Much recent work on the theatrical experience—

such as literary scholar Jill Dolan's feminist response to performances—focuses on the individuality of audience members' responses, emphasizing how cultural differences between audience members led to differing interpretations of performance. Most post-1970s reviewers also emphasize individual reactions by reporting only their own reactions rather than attempting to capture a general audience response. Following the work of theatre scholars Bruce McConachie and Amy Cook, among others, I apply cognitive science to the theatrical experience to argue that audience members have more similarities than differences in their response to performance. On an unconscious cognitive level, audience members participate in the creation of meaning from performed actions and language. The resulting conscious interpretation is also guided by factors more shared than disparate. Chapter 1: "The Communal Audience" presents the cognitive theories that support audience participation in the creation of theatrical meaning, focusing on how human brains engage with action and language. Cognitive scientists working on the brain's understanding of viewed actions, recently led by Vittorio Gallese, have demonstrated that viewing intentional actions causes the brain to mimic those actions as though the observer was enacting the action viewed.¹ Cognitive linguists, including Marc Sato, Mark Johnson, and George Lakoff, have found that the understanding of language is similarly participatory, with the creation of meaning and interpretations of phrases and longer narratives being pieced together by the auditor's brain. According to Lakoff and Johnson, this process is guided by experiences shared on both species- and culture-wide levels, though details may be molded by individual experience.²

Plays and productions encourage unconscious cognitive participation and conscious interpretation in various ways, but sexual desires provide an enticing possibility for these forms of engagement and have the potential to build especially cohesive audiences. Sexual desires make participation in the stage especially alluring, causing unconscious involvement in the actions of desire and conscious interpretation of the acts and language on stage as desire. However, modern sexual orientations affect audience member's conscious reactions to staged desires. Some audience members' might limit their conscious interpretive participation in staged desires to those that fit their sexual orientation; a straight woman, for example, might only consciously indulge in presentations of heterosexual desires. Early modern drama, however, has a fruitful combination of the familiar and the alien, regularly producing moments that are identifiable as desires yet are evasive of modern sexual identity categories. These "queer desires" lure all audience members into interpretive participation with the titillation of desire without threatening sexual self-identity. Audience members need not be divided by desires; queer desires allow them the enjoyment of unconscious participation of staged desire and the conscious interpretation of these moments as desires while leaving sexual identities intact. The shared experience of queer desires of early modern plays draws audience members together into a cohesive body, into an audience.

Chapter 1 illuminates how the primary style for productions of early modern drama over the last fifty years in Britain encourages both unconscious and interpretive participation. The primacy of the text in the rehearsal practices developed by Artistic Director Peter Hall and director John Barton for the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) led to an emphasis on naturalistic acting that was carried on by the National Theatre (NT)

and the Globe. Influenced by director and theatre theorist Bertolt Brecht's Berliner Ensemble, the RSC simultaneously developed a degree of abstraction in its sets and costuming that was mimicked by the other two theatres. The naturalism presents a firm and comfortable basis for creating meanings while the abstraction encourages an increased degree of involvement in interpretation, encouraging audience members to participate in developing similar interpretations. I also further define the queer desires described above and discuss the use of "community" to describe the collective audience built from participation in this chapter. Finally, I outline there the methodology used to develop the case studies of Chapters 2-4.

These case studies focus on early modern dramas that use queer desires to create the communal audience and then manipulate it, encouraging group reactions in support of central themes. This dissertation examines *Titus Andronicus*, which increases a longing for community, *The Jew of Malta* and *The Merchant of Venice*, which increase a yearning for ethnic and religious tolerance, and *As You Like It*, which encourages support for patriarchal structures.

Chapter 2: "Desiring Horror" looks in depth at how the language and plotting of *Titus Andronicus* builds an audience. "Desiring Horror" argues that *Titus Andronicus* encourages audience members to desire Titus's daughter, Lavinia, as a part of a cohesive group identity as "Rome." However, initial, approved desire for her is on a continuum that includes her eventual rape and mutilation. By participating in and accepting the initial stages of violent desire, audience members are implicated in its twisted counterpart, when violent desire is taken to extremes. Because the attack on Lavinia occurs offstage, audience members must be more participatory than if a version of the

attack were staged. Rather than merely accepting a staged “reality,” they are asked to fully imagine what occurs offstage. After Lavinia’s rape and mutilation, the play guides audience members from desire to guilt through the display of her body and the poetic interpretation of her injuries, though the level of reaction is determined by the style of the production. To expel the guilt at having participated in the same desire that drives the rape, audience members come to approve of and long for revenge as the rational “solution” to the rape, their guilt, and the plot.

By moving from the everyday world through the act to be avenged to the revenge itself, the play yokes audience members together into a common longing to right the wrong done to the Andronici. The second half of the play is governed by a drive for revenge, which replaces, with equal intensity, desire’s drive of the first half of the play. Unlike Northrop Frye’s “green world” where rules are suspended, the play here enters into a *new* system in which Titus’s choice to revenge is as logical as his choices in the first half of the play.³ The revenge-driven “red world” of excess and blood is familiar to modern audiences through horror films. The Andronici learn to navigate the red world by developing a new family language of literary analogy, questioning, and gesture. It is only by creating a new language that the Andronici can learn who are guilty and avenge their injuries, thereby cleansing the audience of their guilt over the participation in Lavinia’s attack.

Chapter 3: “Desiring Difference” examines one of the areas of greatest change between early modern and twentieth- and twenty-first-century audiences—their expectations of and reactions to Jewish characters. Given the anti-Semitism depicted, why is *The Merchant of Venice* so popular and *The Jew of Malta* so well received?⁴ The

answer lies in a specifically post-Holocaust performance effect—that each play stimulates a longing for and then denies the possible construction of a community tolerant of religious and ethnic difference.

Although the Holocaust now shapes audience reactions to “Jewishness,” the plays’ divisions are based on an underlying early modern Christian frame of reference. The plays’ constant shoring up of the divisions between the two onstage communities is in tension with the effect of these divisions on modern audience members. The Holocaust causes audience members to wish for the display of a tolerant community rather than the warring factions staged by *The Jew of Malta* and *The Merchant of Venice*. The longing for this accommodating community begins with the divided communities but is increased by the presence of the Jewish daughters Abigail and Jessica. These daughters are described, and often staged, with a blend of Jewish and Christian characteristics that is eroticized. They embody the possibility of a tolerant community built through their possible incorporation into the Christian community despite their Jewish traits. This acceptance is founded on the desire of a Christian man; this desire is explicitly for the *blend* of traits that they embody. The formation of a tolerant community onstage would satisfy audience members’ longing. The play texts deny the creation of a tolerant community, but some productions stage it, succumbing to the modern interest in the formation of tolerant community.

Chapter 4: “Desiring Youth” also highlights how significant shared cultural ideas and narratives shape the creation of audience community by examining the popularity of *As You Like It*. The play’s eroticization of Rosalind’s gender play has come under intense scrutiny in recent years. Various arguments address what layer of Rosalind’s

identity an early modern audience would have seen or found desirable in a boy actor playing a girl playing a boy.⁵ The many possible desires onstage and off include ones that would now be categorized as homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual, or some combination thereof (as when an audience member is simultaneously aware of both the actor's sex and a contrasting layer of the character's sex). Yet, there is one attribute that transcends these various desires—youth—and the play emphasizes Rosalind's youth in all her guises as the core of her desirability. The combination of youth and desire in performance echoes the text's emphasis on Rosalind's growth from youth to adulthood as the play progresses.

Audience members engage with the narrative of maturation because it mimics their personal experience. In addition, the desirability of youth is consistent across modern sexual orientations, encouraging the majority of the audience to engage in desiring some level of Rosalind's character. Evidence from reviews and taped performances demonstrates that staging Rosalind with especially youthful characteristics appeals to many audience members. Such productions, exemplified by Adrian Noble's (1985, RSC), have the most unified and positive audience responses. Surrounded by enthusiastic laughter from the audience, an explicitly sexual Rosalind in disguise flirted with a confused but compelled Orlando. As one reviewer described the production,

Rosalind begins to discover herself, first in easing clown [*sic*] routines with Hilton McRae's Orlando, and then entering deeper waters where neither she, her lover, nor the audience can tell truth from masquerade. I have never seen their late dialogues played with equivalent erotic force; nor

seen the mock-marriage take on such sacramental qualities. (Irving Wardle
“Playground”)

The combination of the maturation narrative and Rosalind’s youth bolsters a play-long emphasis on the acceptance of and participation in hierarchical, patriarchal community. Like Rosalind and Orlando, audience members learn to long for this community as the only possible way to fulfill desire.

The conclusion outlines additional possible applications of this theory of audience. It further discusses the continuing popularity of early modern drama and theatre more generally. I suggest that a new understanding of the audience could produce methods for rehearsal and production that capitalize on audience members’ cognitive and interpretive participation and the communal audience.

Chapter 1

The Communal Audience: Cognition, Interpretation, and Desire

One of the defining pleasures of theatre is that it is a group experience. As theatre semiologist Anne Ubersfeld states, “Theatrical pleasure is not a solitary pleasure, but is reflected on and reverberates through others; it spreads like a train of gunpowder or suddenly congeals. The spectator emits barely perceptible signs of pleasure as well as loud laughter and secret tears—their contagiousness is necessary for everyone’s pleasure” (“Pleasure” 128). Ubersfeld’s comment illustrates the tension between the individual and group experiences of theatre, sliding from the response of “the spectator” to “everyone’s pleasure.” Cognitive theory provides a foundation for a new conception of the relationship between individual audience members and the collective audience. It explains that each audience member actively participates in creating meaning from theatrical performance, guided by a common biological basis for interpreting human actions. I argue that staged desires are a powerful force for drawing audience members into this participatory theatre, and desires that appeal beyond any single modern identity position can create overarching communities without eliminating individual difference. Production style influences the cognitive participation in and interpretation of performance. The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) style for early modern drama blends accessible naturalistic acting (derived from director and theatre theorist Constantin Stanislavski) with abstract elements that require interpretation (derived from director and theatre theorist Bertolt Brecht); this style has been copied by the National Theatre (NT) and the Globe. The blend of naturalism and abstraction creates performances that

encourage active participation and draw audience members together through shared experiences.

The Cognitive Process

The act of understanding is part of the active “collaborative play” of theatergoing (McConachie 51). Though all involved know that what is staged is a fictive “reality,” where the intention of an actor’s every gesture is to convey information about his or her character rather than “real” intention, performance scholar Amy Cook argues that “This series of actions is meant to simulate, in the *audience’s* brain, the effect of” the action imitated or suggested through fictional means (591). Although aiming for a “real” response in audience members, it is vital that they are aware of the fiction of theatre. As theatre theorist Bruce McConachie states, “the theatre provides a safe haven for empathetic engagement without the fear of real-world consequences” for audience members (81). These effects are bolstered by the cognitive processes of audience members during a performance. A full explanation of the multitude of ways that theatre works with the brain will be set aside in favor of a deep focus on two key areas: that audience members are actively engaged in creating meanings derived from the stage and that audience members can be expected to interpret and experience theatre in similar ways.

Most modern audience members have the same unconscious cognitive processes while watching live theatre. According to McConachie’s *Engaging Audiences*, the seminal work applying cognitive theory to the live theatre experience, the average adult theatregoer has more commonalities than differences with other audience members in his or her cognitive response to theatre.⁶ This process begins with participation; the human

neural system participates in observed intentional actions. According to recent studies of cognition by Pierre Jacob and Marc Jennerod, when a human being watches an intentional act by another, the human brain reacts as though the body were enacting the same physical movement.⁷ In 2001, Giovanni Buccino et al. supported this conclusion, finding that “when individuals observe an action, an internal replica of that action is automatically generated in their premotor cortex” (“Action” 400).⁸ Further studies by Vittorio Gallese, Christian Keysers, and Giacomo Rizzolatti echo these findings, pinpointing “neural mechanisms (mirror mechanisms)” as the foundation for the ability to “directly understand the meaning of the actions and emotions of others by internally replicating (‘simulat- simulating’ [*sic*]) them without any explicit reflective meditation” (396).⁹ In other words, the human brain unconsciously replicates observed intentional actions; humans “read” body language on stage by simulating the actions observed in their own brains. They cognitively participate in theatre by replicating what is seen. The actions of an actor fighting on stage, for example, are replicated by the mirror neurons of the audience members; the audience members’ brains engage in the action they observe as if they were doing the fighting. This description of human behavior is still being tested. Although most current research points in this direction, it is possible that future research will demote the motor system to one of several systems creating meaning from observed behavior.

This reaction is not limited to unconscious mirroring. “Mirror mechanisms” or “mirror neurons” also control a series of “predictions or ‘motor inferences,’” the initial steps of interpreting others’ actions. According to Gallese’s 2009 study, the “simulation” of others’ intentional actions also leads the brain to “map the goals and purposes of

others' actions" ("Motor Abstraction" 492). Previous experiences of similar actions guide audience members to enhance the simulation with associated physical conclusions and interpretations. By watching intentional actions, audience members are able to "intuit . . . beliefs, intentions, and emotions" (McConachie 65). McConachie argues that this occurs in response to watching the actions of characters—in reaction to the fiction—not just to the actions of the actor (65). His work suggests that audience members react to an actor miming eating or drinking as though the character were actually doing those actions.¹⁰ The ability to derive conclusions and interpretations from actions, the active "mode of engagement," is labeled "empathy" (McConachie 65). This form of "empathy" allows audience members to make meaning from the actions onstage; it is not an emotional reaction or identification but a physical function of the brain's mirror neurons.

Several recent studies have found that humans' response to language may be similarly linked to the motor system.¹¹ This "empathy" is not limited to the purely physical, either. Two recent studies in cognitive science (Keysers et al., 2003, and Evelyne Kohler et al., 2002) demonstrate that certain sounds also cause mirror neurons to react. Buccino et al. (2001) also find that listening to action-related sentences activates the mirror neurons of the motor system in ways similar to watching intentional actions ("Listening").

The effect of mirror neurons on the theatregoing experience is difficult to overstate. To watch or listen to an intentional action on stage is, for certain parts of the brain, equivalent to participating cognitively in the action, leading to empathy, understanding and interpretation from that participation. Marc Sato et al. expand on these findings, demonstrating that there may be "shared neural substrates for

understanding observed actions and action-related material” (84). The brain’s processing of action-related verbs engages the sections of the brain responsible for such actions (e.g., the part of the brain controlling legs engages on seeing “walk”).¹² Just as the brain mirrors action it sees, it “mirrors” action it reads or hears.¹³ Drama, therefore, seems to be especially engaging because of its emphasis on action, reinforced by the visual actions onstage.

In addition to being simultaneously physically engaged with the production of linguistic meaning, audience members have similar interpretations of the actions and language onstage.¹⁴ While there is still much disagreement in cognitive science and cognitive linguistics about how humans learn to create meaning from language and actions, most working in these fields agree that adult humans have developed a particular set of understandings—variously called schema, mappings, concepts, or units of meaning—that the brain accesses in order to create meaning. These schemas are the building blocks that humans use to make sense from their world, allowing an audience member to identify and given meaning to an item or action. In the foundational text for cognitive linguistics, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson combine cognitive science, linguistics, and philosophy to argue that these schemas are in part formed by cultural norms, but are primarily based in species-level and individual embodied experience and therefore more shared than individual.¹⁵ Schemas mean that the average theatregoer will interpret an actor’s expression, action, and lines in a fundamentally similar way to other audience members. Intentional language (even complex, poetic early modern language) tends to have a restricted number of possible meanings and most audience members will access only a few possible meanings for any

given unit of language. In addition to species-level embodied schemas, interpretations are even more likely to be similar when many of the audience members share cultural schemas about the theatre and the actions depicted onstage.¹⁶ As McConachie states, “Two mature adults sitting or standing next to each other and processing nearly the same visual and aural inputs from *Twelfth Night* will share most of the same mental concepts from one image to the next” (McConachie 38).

Production choices further limit the number of schemas activated in audience members’ minds. The actions on stage—including gesture, tone, speed of delivery, and interpretation of the phrase and the production as a whole—will restrict the potential meanings to those that are “logical” in the ongoing narrative. Jacob and Jeannerod are careful to point out that “two creatures may enjoy one and the same visual experience, which they may be inclined to conceptualize differently” (22) and Giles Fauconnier and Mark Turner argue that although biology and culture guide some schemas, individual experience plays a significant role as well (22). However, the presence of schema *with* performance choices and a narrative plot seems to greatly reduce the field of possibilities. These choices are further narrowed by the current dominant conceptions of theatre, which try to create coherent narratives for characters and the play as a whole, as audience members have come to expect from other entertainment media.¹⁷

In addition to the motor-neuron responses analyzed above, cognitive linguists find that “language and thinking are creative and embodied and use metaphors, models, and blends” (Cook 581).¹⁸ In other words, the listener’s brain contributes to the sounds heard in order to create meaning. An audience member must participate with the sounds coming from the stage to understand them as language and to interpret their meanings.

Cook argues that Shakespeare is especially effective in creating moments that require audience members to blend concepts in unique combinations, making the audience especially participatory as they must create new meanings after interpreting sounds into words.¹⁹ From Seana Coulson and Cyma Van Petten's cognitive science findings that "the metaphoric sentences were read no more slowly than the more literal sentences," Cook concludes that "processing metaphoric sentences required more of the brain to participate Indeed, perhaps the reason *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is performed more often than *Knight of the Burning Pestle* is because of, not despite, the fact that the richness of Shakespeare's language requires more imagination and "work" (Cook 586-87). Cook suggests that more participatory language may be more pleasurable for listeners, supplying one reason for the continued popularity of early modern drama's metaphoric and complex language.

This understanding of language schemas and their particular appearances in literature has also been described by some linguistic and reader-response scholars. The audience as an active "receiver" is best encapsulated by an extension of Wolfgang Iser's work on the reading process. Iser theorizes the way in which all language is participatory and therefore performative, focusing on the reading experience. According to Iser, the possible performativities of a given text are bounded by the text itself. Iser argues that reading should be viewed as an experience in which the creation of meaning is guided by the text but necessitates the active participation of the reader: "The implications of an utterance are the productive prerequisite for its comprehension, and so comprehension itself is a productive process" (Iser 59). The reader's participation arises from "gaps" or "blanks" in the text, constructed so as to have the greatest possible effects upon the reader

as s/he fills them; the reader “is drawn into the events and made to supply what is meant from what is not said” (Iser 168). By providing things left unsaid, playtexts allow audiences to participate in the creation of narrative, as well as the interpretation of meaning. By extension, then, audience members imaginatively participate in the narrative of a play’s performance, interpreting and reinterpreting their understanding as the plot unfolds.²⁰ Those familiar with the plot may interpret a production’s particular choices rather than the more comprehensive reinterpretations of an audience member seeing the play for the first time. Yet, as mentioned above, these interpretations are limited in their scope, as only certain schemas will fit the choices of a given performance.

I label the layers of active engagement by audience members described above “imaginative participation.” Imaginative participation in any given moment on stage is guided by physical processes of the brain—the mirror neurons—which activate common schemas; the schemas then guide the meanings attributed to that moment along with culturally determined interpretations of the theatre, production, actors, actions, and play. Imaginative participation is a shared experience in its similarity across individuals and in the mutual reinforcement of audience members’ reactions. As Cook states,

Joint action is the coordination of action across a group—such as lifting a boat into the water or rowing it—and might help to explain the pleasure for spectators of laughing, clapping, and standing together. Perhaps acting in synchrony with others based on the interplay of social conventions and spontaneous feelings unites spectator with spectator as it co-fires mirror neurons. (590).

This work argues that certain plays depend on imaginative participation to create “joint action.” Production choices, theatrical and “social conventions,” and the play’s language

all guide the creation and quality of the imagined participation and therefore the resulting joint actions. I argue that “joint action” in the theatre is another name for the experience of being “an audience”—a collective identity that forms from individual audience members when imaginative participation causes them to act and react as one. This collective identity is best described as an “audience community”; members’ imaginative participation both builds and maintains a group reaction.

Audience Community

To call the audience a “community” is to apply a long history of sociological arguments to the modern theatre. Social theorists working on embodied communities have often followed the lead of Ferdinand Tönnies’s 1887 theories of “*gemeinschaft*” and “*gesellschaft*.” The first, *gemeinschaft*, is usually translated as “community,” a pre-industrial state formed from living in small towns that necessitated communal responsibility and reliance on one’s fellow townspeople. *Gesellschaft* refers to a more loose “association,” which he connects to post-industrial movement into cities and the resulting use of others for self-benefit. Basing his arguments on Tönnies’s, Emile Durkheim suggests that “community” rises from an “organic” union of people that “although different, in crucial respects . . . were complementary” (Durkheim summarized by Graham Day 3). Contemporaries find that communing is an essential feature of humankind (Max Weber), that communities are founded on shared economic interests (Karl Marx), or that communities are necessarily based on proximity (Talcott Parsons, Suzanne Keller, and others). Regardless of the particulars of their definitions, nearly all of these theories, implicitly or explicitly, argue that modern and postmodern societies are

the cause of a decline in “community” because of a decline in close personal relationships.²¹ As Day points out, “this makes a certain kind of established rural social order seem the very epitome of community, where as other late, and supposedly more sophisticated, forms of social organization are departures from it. The general movement is *from* community *to* something different” (emphasis original, 11).

More recently, some sociologists have begun to expand the definition of “community.”²² The disembodied, asynchronous groups on the Internet, which these theorists seek to define as “communities,” would seem to have little in common with the theatrical experience. However, the work on Internet groups offers confirmations that “community” is still a ripe field for study and that experiences with “communities” in the late-twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries may be changing, rather than disappearing. In 1999, Barry Wellman and Milena Gulia were the first to examine how the long-standing debates outlined above over the persistence or destruction of “community” by new technology might be applied to the Internet. They support the view that “community” may refer to “*social networks* of kin, friends and workmates who do not necessarily live in the same neighborhood” (emphasis original, 333). They find that, despite the specificity of Internet groups, the use of the Internet for information retrieval, and the asynchronicity of interactions, the Internet “provides emotional and peer-group support” for many, creating strong bonds (337). These bonds, they argue, are a form of “community.” Significantly for the possibility of audience community, they find that “Net members are distinctive in providing information, support, companionship, and a sense of belonging to persons they hardly know offline or who are total strangers” (341). They also point out that online interactions are “easier for people to withdraw from” and

“voluntary” (341, 345). This flexibility in joining and leaving encourages people to participate in community as it reduces the “stakes” of communal participation; this will be a key point in the creation of audience community. Wellman and Gulia also conclude that “socially close, strong, intimate ties . . . are the core of community” (344).

While local experiences of community appear to be on the decline, I argue that this may increase people’s interest in participating in community experiences (embodied or virtual) elsewhere.²³ If, as some cognitive theorists suggest, humans have an innate need for companionship, the lack of local community involvement should cause audience members to long for participation in other group experiences. Theatre offers a place where community can be experienced.²⁴ As discussed above, performance offers the “socially close, strong, intimate ties” that “are the core of community,” built by the commonality of audience members’ responses to performance, by the actors’ reactions to the audience, and by the use of particular rhetorical techniques in the play and its staging.

These ties form a community despite their arbitrary beginning and transient state. Individuals attending these plays create and participate in a “imagined community,” as social theorist Benedict Anderson argues for the large community of the nation. The theatrical performance community “is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation [or audience] will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Anderson 6).²⁵ According to Anderson, community is a “cotemporaneous” construction built by willing individuals whose participation creates and maintains the community.²⁶ As theatre theorist Herbert Blau puts it,

The audience . . . is not so much a mere congregation of people as a body of thought and desire. It does not exist before the play but is *initiated* or *precipitated* by it; it is not an entity to begin with but a consciousness constructed. The audience is what *happens* when, performing the signs and passwords of a play, something postulates itself and unfolds in response. (25)

As Blau's formulation suggests, the audience fits Anderson's definition of an imagined community, being temporally limited to the performance and contemporaneous, as it is built by the audience's participation in the performance. In addition, for many UK audience members, attendance at an individual performance is also one participation in a series that creates "a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history" (Anderson 26).²⁷ Each theatre experience, each participation in the building of community, is a small event, but the cumulative effect of these experiences is the creation and maintenance of an audience community.

Sylvia Hayes's *Theatre Audiences as Communities* is a rare piece of quantitative research on the modern audience's experience as a community. In it, Hayes surveys twelve audience members of the Blackpool Grand theatre in Blackpool, UK. All are regular attendees of this theatre. Her interviewees talked generally about their experiences as theatre audience members, at the Blackpool Grand and elsewhere. Despite the small sample and its likely bias in choosing regular theatre goers, Hayes's study demonstrates that the respondents identified their most effecting theatre experiences as part of a group's shared response and that these moments were almost always tied to particularly pleasant feelings (29). Hayes also notes a correlation between

the moments of group response and a full house (30). She does not surmise whether performances with full theatres inspire more feelings of community because audience members can see and hear others' responses or whether the house was full because the performance was well received by previous audience members and critics, who may have enjoyed it because it created community. The respondents also demonstrate familiarity with how theatre is produced and with a broad range of plays, which may suggest that theirs are ideal audience member reactions rather than the norm (33-7). Overall, however, her study supports the conclusion that the audience experience is a pleasurable communal one.

Early Modern Drama in Performance

Early modern drama also offers the "intermediate novelty" that humans prefer in their imaginative participation; "[c]omplete or absolute novelty poses problems in that there are no extant categories against which the new experience can be prepared" while a lack of novelty produces disengagement (Michael Ellis 92).²⁸ This would seem to explain the appeal of the combination of naturalism and abstraction in British productions of early modern drama. "Intermediate novelty" also fits with Hans-Georg Gadamer's claim that "the basic experience of art is playing," with players submitting to the game's rules in order to participate (summarized by Sauter 5). As Sauter presents Gadamer's ideas:

In the case of art, this playing is also a playing for *someone*, an observer, a spectator. The player and the observer participate in the playing, both usually knowing the rules. In the performative arts, the creation and

experience of it are simultaneous processes, which take place in the form of an event. Unlike traditional communication theories, Gadamer does not split the process into a sender, who neatly packs the message in some suitable form, and a receiver, who decodes it; the processes of creating and experiencing theatre as united through the act of playing, through the mutual contact between performer and spectator (Sauter 5).

Gadamer's point that "those who participate [in playing] subordinate their will to the rules of the game" works on several layers in the theatre experience. The rules of the text, the theatre, the production, the acting style perceived as "natural" by the audience, and what both sides of the stage consider those rules to be all play into the construction of meaning.

The UK theatre since the 1950s has consistently worked toward making audiences more participatory in the creation of theatrical meaning, by creating particular "blanks" for audience members to fill that are especially appealing due to the "intermediate novelty" of their performance styles. The methods adopted by the RSC and, following their example, the NT and Globe are especially effective in creating performance communities. One piece of Peter Hall's genius in his (re)invention of the RSC was that, as a "new" company, they were not beholden to a theatrical inheritance from the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre. They instead blended elements to best appeal to a new audience.²⁹ As theatre scholar Dennis Kennedy states, "Whether with the flow or against it, the innovations of directors are always bound by the current theatrical apparatus"; productions must fulfill audience expectations enough to be legible to audience members (44). Kennedy also points out that "the greatest influences on directing in the second half

of the twentieth century came from writings in the first half by Craig, Copeau, Artaud and Brecht” along with Stanislavski (44). These influences on the last fifty years of British performances of early modern drama perfectly fit the criteria of “intermediate novelty.” Like much of UK theatre, the RSC quickly embraced Brecht’s theories after the Berliner Ensemble’s visit to London in 1956.³⁰ By folding Brecht’s theories into Shakespeare-production traditions, Hall and John Barton created a RSC style that is not the realism of Stanislavski and the nineteenth century nor the full alienation of Brechtian theatre. Instead, they created a theatrical experience of intermediate novelty that combines familiar elements—Shakespeare and realistic acting—with unfamiliar theatrical blanks—the Brecht-influenced look of the set and costume designs and the choice to produce unfamiliar works.³¹ The Method elements work like the familiar moments in content, those moments of chiming in or identity-position desires, the comfortable moments on which new things can be built. The Brechtian elements, with their intentional alienation, are able to create gaps that need audience participation to interpret. The production choices that increase the potential for the creation of an audience community begin with these influences on the RSC and their theatrical context.

Although not a direct influence, RSC productions work according to director and theatre theorist Vsevolod Meyerhold’s push for a recognition of the theatricality of theatre. Meyerhold claims that the realism of the nineteenth century results in a disengaged, passive audience: “How did medieval drama succeed without any stage equipment? Thanks to the lively imagination of the spectator. The naturalistic theatre denies not only the spectator’s ability to imagine for himself, but even his ability to understand clever conversation” (Meyerhold 27). Like Iser’s reader, a Meyerholdian

audience member would be given carefully constructed blanks; the following interpretative process would create theatrical meaning but also be recognized as a construction. In cognitive terms, Meyerhold wants audience members to select certain schemas but be aware of the associated processes of selection and empathy. Meyerhold claims that

In the theatre the spectator's imagination is able to supply that which is left unsaid. It is this mystery and the desire to solve it which draw so many people to the theatre . . . Thus the spectator in the theatre aspires—albeit unconsciously—to that exercise of fantasy which rises sometimes to the level of creativity . . . It would seem that the naturalistic theatre denies the spectator's capacity to fill in the details with his imagination in the way one does when listening to music. But nevertheless, the capacity is there. . . . The mystery takes hold of the audience and draws it into the world of fantasy. (Meyerhold 25-6)

Meyerhold's language predicts that of cognitive theory in its call for an active role for audience members' minds in the creation of meaning.

Brecht developed Meyerhold's ideas to argue for a theatre that demonstrates its own theatricality, a conception that had a direct influence on the RSC. Brecht states that this engages the audience by encouraging them create meaning, an engagement that is inherently political as it refuses to naturalize dominant ideology as realism does. Brecht argues that an abstract element in a performance works like an Iserian blank in a text—both require active audience participation to make meaning. A Brechtian production would, ideally, demystify; rather than “tak[ing] hold of the audience and draw[ing] it into

the world of fantasy,” a Brechtian production encourages a self-aware participation. This is a part of the “collaborative play” mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (McConachie 51). A Brechtian production emphasizes a willing participation, a self-aware blank filling, and the pre-existing community of ideology and language that the play attempts to denaturalize.

The new RSC style also incorporated naturalistic elements in its performance, balancing the abstraction of Brecht to create intermediate novelty. Understanding this acting style and its reliance on the text is vital to understanding the performative effects of early modern drama’s recent productions because, according to theatre scholar Willmar Sauter, the acting is the most important factor in audience evaluation of performance:

the acting quality is almost entirely responsible for the overall impression of a performance . . . Moreover, the appreciation of the acting is also decisive for the spectators’ interest in the fiction of the performance: if the actors’ quality is considered poor, then the spectators are not prepared to discuss the content of the play; only when they enjoy the acting will there also be an interest in what the performance was all about. (Sauter 185)

Acting is a vital ingredient to audience participation in the creation of meaning and the experience of desire. Though now perceived as realistic, the RSC acting style developed by Peter Hall and John Barton was a radical choice for the rehearsal and delivery of Shakespeare at its inception. Rather than the dominant acting styles for early modern drama—the grand and weighty style of director Herbert Beerbohm Tree or the “rhetorical and operatic” delivery of the director of the RSC-precursor in Stratford, Frank

Benson—Hall and Barton followed director Harley Granville-Barker’s lead to develop a “cooler, drier, intensely rational, [and] highly disciplined” delivery style (Sally Beauman 269).³² According to performance theorist W. B. Worthen, this style demands that an actor

produces the speech through our contemporary conventions of Shakespearean stage characterisation: a concentration on psychological motivation complicated by a degree of openness to the theatre audience, the post-Brechtian compromise between ‘realistic’ and ‘theatrical’ characterisation typical of the RSC since the mid-1960s. (Worthen “Rhetoric” 68-69)

That this style is now considered realistic shows both the influence of this choice on audience expectations of early modern drama and how well the RSC responded to the wants of its audience. This combination of realism and theatricality began at the RSC but became the expectation of British state-supported theatre, setting the standard and expectations for post-1950s early modern drama in England.

This new style combined an adaptation of Method acting derived from Stanislavski with an attention to verse-driven delivery. Unlike Meyerhold and Brecht’s attention to theatre as theatre, “Stanislavski . . . is part of a naturalistic, anti-theatrical tradition that produces dramatic subjects that erase their own theatricality, even when standing on sets that do not” (Escolme 14).³³ Most UK actors and directors are trained in the various derivatives of Method acting, which emphasize finding both coherent psychological motivations in the character and connections between the character’s emotional states and the actor’s experience. As actors attempt to close the gaps of the

text with psychoanalytic motives to create coherent “characters,” Method demonstrates the existence of and closes off some of the Iserian blanks for the audience.³⁴ This approach also naturalizes a perception that a text can fully capture and transmit a three-dimensional human being across the centuries. Method encourages the audience to assume, as the actors are, that there is a coherence to the characters—the supposed underlying psychological motivation—and therefore to the play and the experience of the play as a whole. This psychologizing process helps to make the early modern characters less alien and more novelistic, bringing them fully into intermediate novelty and encouraging the use of similar schemas as the “correct” interpretation to fit an overall pattern.

The primary role of the text in Iser’s co-creation of meaning is especially relevant to this study because of the text-reliant rehearsal process begun by the RSC and adopted by the NT and Globe. This emphasis is usually traced back to John Barton and Peter Hall’s Cambridge days studying with literary scholars George Rylands and F.R. Leavis.³⁵ That these studies took place under the auspices of English literature classes rather than theatre meant they emphasized verse speaking and close reading, textual skills that were then translated into theatre settings. The weight given to the text in RSC, NT, and Globe rehearsal and production strategies naturalizes the text-author-production relationship. As typified by John Barton’s sonnet-based classes, the primary rehearsal strategy is one of “discovering” and then realizing on stage the author’s “intention” as conveyed through the text. This approach insists on the verse itself providing all that is necessary for the actor’s delivery of it.³⁶ As Worthen points out, this kind of performance claims to be “natural” in that it comes (supposedly) from the text/author (“Rhetoric” 69-70). The RSC

creates performances out of literary/textual foundation, one that assumes that the text shows authorial intent, and an authorial intent that is recoverable or uncoverable and should be followed. This process privileges the text in theatrical experience, assuring that the audience members will be co-creators in the performance since they will participate in creating meaning from the language presented.

This is not to suggest that the text and the performance are identical or that performance in some way replicates the text. As Worthen states,

Texts in the theatre are subjected [. . .] to rewriting that embodies the performative constraints and conventions of a specific mode of theatricality. Far from guiding, controlling, authorizing the performance, writing is subject in critical ways to labor: printed or otherwise, the text of a play in production is a unique document, a site for inscription that is itself only part of a larger process of production [. . .] Dramatic performativity is perhaps a special case of the performative, or perhaps the emblematic case, the place where scripted language operates at once as a kind of raw material for performance, but also as a kind of catalyst, burned off in the act of performing, transformed into something else rich and strange: an event, theatre. (Worthen *Shakespeare* 23-4)

Worthen's conception of text in performance echoes Gadamer's language—the text being “subjected” to production in a similar way to the subordination of participants in the theatre. This subjection has frequently been discussed as a kind of limiting of the text's infinite possibilities into a single reading presented on the stage, an understanding also suggested by Worthen's conception of text as a “catalyst” that is “burned off in the act of

performing” (24). Leaving the text behind, as this understanding does, neglects the intensely text-bound experience of early modern drama in later twentieth-century UK theatre, but supports the argument that performance reduces the number of possible schemas activated in audience members’ minds. In production, the text is no longer a text, but one member of the ensemble of performance.³⁷ If meaning is built through the filling of blanks, then the text-in-performance may guide meanings, as it structures production choices, but the meanings are built in the performance itself and in the minds of the spectators. The text is latently present throughout the theatrical experience—especially thanks to the cultural capital of Shakespeare, the familiarity of many of the early modern dramas, and the rehearsal methods that privilege text—but in analyzing the meaning of a given performance, the text is only a first among equals.

Though neither Meyerhold nor Brecht had the new findings of cognitive science available in order to theorize how “the spectator’s imagination is able to supply that which is left unsaid,” Meyerhold suggests here, in telling language, that it is the “desire to solve it,” to be a participant in the creation of meaning, that is the key point. The audience can satisfy that “desire to solve it” by filling in the blanks of the text and performance, a chance for the pleasure of mutually created meaning in a theatre that only fully “works” with audience participation. As Ubersfeld puts it, “Theatrical pleasure, properly speaking, is the pleasure of the sign; it is the most semiotic of all pleasures . . . Theatre as sign of gap-being-filled. It would not be going too far to say that the act of filling the gap is the very source of theatre pleasure” (“Pleasure” 129). Meyerhold, Brecht, and Ubersfeld add pleasure to the cognitive process. The addition of abstraction increases the overall potential for community by increasing the pleasurable gap-filling.

In content and in form, audience members at these performances are given a comfortable place from which to increase their willing participation; this participation is encouraged by the text and the production, and audience members are rewarded by the pleasures of the creation of meaning and community.

The Engagement of Desire

This dissertation argues that depictions of sexual desire in early modern drama can especially encourage audience participation and create cohesive audience communities. Early modern drama offers intermediate novelty; the blend of familiar and unfamiliar in the language and situations is an especially fruitful opportunity for audience engagement. As Fauconnier and Turner state, “Human sexual practices are perhaps the epitome of meaningful behavior because they constitute a deeply felt intersection of mental, social, and biological life” (28). Given that audience members are participating in the performance, depicted desires are potent community-building opportunities, encouraging continued participation by tantalizing and then delaying or denying sexual fulfillment. Staged desires are, on some level, shared by the audience members, and the associated pleasure encourages continued participation.

However, staged desires can also divide the audience community because desires are so strongly associated with other non-inclusive communities. Humans daily participate in communities based on identity positions, including race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, etc. As Anderson argues for human relations on a national scale, however, people seldom consciously recognize that they are regularly participating in and helping to build and maintain communities, as this coherence is so

firm as to not be thought of as community. This especially occurs with groups formed from the desire-based identity positions of gender and sexual orientation. Because these identity positions are built around something innate—desire—they form especially intense communities—gender and sexual orientation categories. An audience of the last sixty years may interpret many moments in early modern drama as aligning with the desires that define current gender and sexual identities. For example, an actress costumed in a dress playing Juliet’s “Gallop apace” speech with its loaded language of sexual longing for Romeo’s arrival would be interpreted as both female and heterosexual (Shakespeare 3.2.1-31). A young male actor in the same moment, however, would likely inspire many categorizations in the audience, including perhaps male, female, hetero- and homosexual.

However, not all desires are understood as defining an identity category and early modern drama has many such desires for a modern audience. Intermediate novelty again comes into play. Certain moments in early modern drama can be recognized as desire yet exceed or evade desires associated with modern identity positions. As Iser states, a “good deal of familiar material . . . serves not as a confirmation, but as a basis out of which the new experience is to be forged” (132). To participate in desire audience members must recognize the moment as one of desire. The familiar desires that are associated with identity positions set the stage, as it were, for the experience of unfamiliar desires. To be recognized as desire, the unfamiliar desires that this dissertation focuses on often go hand-in-hand with identity position desires.

Desires that are not part of identity positions will be referred to as “queer” desires. First, this new definition of “queer desires” needs to be differentiated from the idea of a

queer identity, an identity position that is defined as individual, singular, and self-constructed against existing identity positions.³⁸ Second, these “queer desires” are unrelated to the use of “queer” as an umbrella term for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered individuals. These desires, however, do appear as moments of strangeness, moments that do not fit into identity-position desires even as they run alongside them, as “queer” does as an identity position. Yet, these desires are not the basis of any identities, as “queer” is when used as an umbrella term, nor are they against the formation of identity positions more generally, as “queer” gender identities are. Instead, “queer desires” disconnect the expected relationship between desire and identity. These are moments of exaggeration, of excess, of failure to adhere to or be contained by the expected meanings associated with identity-position desires, even the queer identity position. “Queer desires” are not foundational to gender or sexual identity positions over the last fifty years; thus, the desires that form the basis of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered identities are outside the scope of “queer desires” because they coalesce as identity positions during the time period covered by this work.

Because queer desires are not tied to a particular identity position, they are also not associated with a particular identity community. These desires are potentially open to be experienced by anyone without that experience establishing or changing one’s identity or previous community membership. This refusal to equate desire with established identity positions is often recognized as an anti-social choice of absolute individuality (as in the work of Lee Edelman and Leo Bersani).³⁹ I argue, however, that participation in these desires does not create a queer, absolute individual. Although queer desires are not associated with an identity community, this does not necessarily mean they are absolutely

individual. Indeed, in theatrical production, queer desires offer a potentially rich and overarching community experience. The theatre offers a place for a common experience of these desires with other individuals. On one level, audience members are already participating in all staged activities, including all desires, because they are mirroring the staged actions. However, on the level of meanings and interpretations, the creation of which may be conscious or unconscious, individuals may participate more readily in queer desires. When queer desires are depicted in performance, they are available for anyone to participate in, because they will not jar—consciously or unconsciously—against audience members’ identity positions. Queer desires have the potential for building overarching communities out of the audience members. The common experience of queer desire can bind together audience members across identity positions without obliterating individual identities. The communities formed by queer desires are not stable and circumscribed as those based on identity positions are. Instead, they are queer communities: inherently fluid, changing across the time of the performance and between productions, and open to all comers.⁴⁰ Because these queer communities are not invested in drawing boundaries between identity positions—between an “us” and an “other”—they can be flexible, shifting, and inclusive.

Anderson argues that participation in community comes from a reliance on and belief in co-current actions and experiences across the community. Because queer desires are not associated with any particular identity position, each individual may participate in them on the assumption that they are participating concurrently with an already-existing community. Audience members are free to assume that everyone in this limited space and time is sharing these desires. The effect of queer desires is to heighten

the pre-existing tendency to assume a “deep, horizontal comradeship,” to imagine and feel one is participating in and with community (Anderson 7).⁴¹

The ability to walk away at a finite point may encourage an audience member’s yielding to queer desires. The experience is therefore understood to be “limited,” though not in the same way that Anderson first laid out those terms (6). He uses “limited” to refer to the “finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations” (7); for the theatre, there are physical limits on the auditorium, but the true emphasis is on the temporal limits of the performance. The audience community is temporally limited by the gathering of individuals at a given performance—those who are participating in a single production of meaning, a single experience of this set of queer desires, a single production of community. Rather than this making each individual who experiences those desires queer (regardless of their own identification of sexual orientation, sex, gender, race, etc.), the experience of queer desire preserves an individual’s identity positions and his or her membership in the associated communities while not excluding the possibility of a larger community.

Methodology

The method of this study developed organically. Beginning with the concept of queer desires in early modern drama, I became increasingly interested in the modern response to these desires in performance. This seemed best studied where early modern productions were commonplace. Most challenging was narrowing down which plays were the best examples of such moments. Many plays that seemed strong potentials on paper—such as *Troilus and Cressida*—lacked any productions that seemed to capture the

audience through the engagement of queer desires. Others offered a wealth of possibilities in their evident audience engagement but no clear consistency in their methods of achieving that effect, such as *Taming of the Shrew* and *Othello*. Still others lacked enough productions or production materials to draw any conclusions about their effect on modern audiences. For the four plays examined here—Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus*, *As You Like It*, and *The Merchant of Venice* and Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*—I have examined the prompt books, photograph collections, videos where available, and reviews for each production between 1956 and 2006 at the Globe, RSC, and NT. In addition, I attended all the productions of these plays between 2004 and 2009 that I cite here.

It should be noted that the NT archive does not have the depth of material that the Globe and RSC archives do. The information about their productions, therefore, more often comes from secondary sources. The RSC and the NT only began to record their productions, usually for the use of understudies, in the 1980s. These single-camera recordings are often poor, especially in capturing the full width and height of the stage, colors, and expressions of actors. As such, I have primarily relied on textual and photo testimony for the information about production choices while using the video as a snapshot of audience response to one evening’s production. Especially before casual rehearsal photos became standard fare, this means drawing conclusions about performances based often on staged publicity photos. I have attempted to be conservative in this practice, recognizing the inherent differences between staged still photos and live theatre, and confirmed each conclusion I draw from the photos with evidence from prompt books or reviews. The Globe offers a more extensive video collection,

documenting multiple audiences and angles for each production. Details of Globe productions are therefore more often based on the video evidence and audience responses are often corroborated by several performance recordings.

As Peter Eversmann points out, because there is “no universally applicable definition of theatre . . . it seems superfluous to investigate ‘the’ theatrical experience” (139). Given the work done on the broad early modern understanding of “theatre”⁴² and the explosion in breadth of what is considered “performance” since the 1950s (the wide-ranging nature of both Butlerian identity and theatrical performances), it is important to note that this work’s definition of both terms is relatively narrow. The choice to limit this discussion to the three professional British companies whose stock includes a high percentage of early modern drama—the RSC, NT, and Globe—likely limits the applicability of the argument. These three companies, however, are the primary theatrical forces in early modern drama since the 1950s rebirth of the RSC.⁴³ While not attempting a comprehensive survey of any play’s productions by these companies, the dissertation will roam over productions by these three as the primary post-1956 theatrical forces in early modern drama. These are, all in all, relatively conservative theatres in their structure, emphasis on early modern drama, techniques, and relationship with the audience, again emphasizing narrow definitions of “theatre” and “performance.”⁴⁴ In addition, this work considers only those performances that occur within the space of the auditorium.⁴⁵ It is in this physical space that the *play’s* contribution to community is active, and it is the play’s contribution that will be the focal point of this work. Because of these choices, this work has a narrow definition of what constitutes a theatrical performance and is thereby also limited in what it considers “theatre.”

Eversmann addresses this issue by studying “theatrical *peak-experiences* (i.e. performances that are highly valued by the individual” (139).⁴⁶ This study also focuses on a different kind of “peak” performance—those productions that generally received positive evaluations from reviewers or productions about which reviewers consistently noted the audience engagement in the production, even if the reviewers disliked the production. Reviewers, then, are sometimes treated as representative of a general audience experience and sometimes as recorders of an experience they did not share. The production and audience information conveyed by reviews has been augmented by listening to and observing audience reactions in live and videoed productions. The plays here offer a startlingly consistent group of theatrical choices; audiences, it seems, know what they like and like to see it repeated. On occasion, less-involving productions are referred to as counter-examples; all productions by the RSC, Globe, and NT of each play examined here have been surveyed to arrive at these conclusions.

Although the audience community is built on the shared cognitive processes that I call imaginative participation, because this is a community built on the experience of staged desire, it by necessity is not a wholly inclusive one. Children and those audience members who do not speak English, for example, would likely be excluded from the experience of desire and therefore from the joint actions and the audience community. Others might reject the opportunity for imaginative participation. There are many possible exceptions, yet the commonalities of the adult brain allow for a great deal of certainty in examining audience response. Despite the neurological basis for imagined participation, culture and personal identity have large roles in determining audience members’ responses to staged and experienced desire. Culture has a significant rule in

determining what can be recognized and participated in as desire and how different identity positions and individuals respond to desire.⁴⁷

Finally, some audience members may refuse to participate in *interpretive* cohesion even as they are still participating in the shared cognitive processing of the aural and visual elements of the stage. Some students laughed at Lavinia's post-rape and mutilation reveal in the 2006 Globe performance. These students removed themselves from the encouraged interpretation to laugh at the fiction of the staged actions (the quantity of stage blood, for example) or at the general audience reaction of moans, groans, and fainting. Similarly, some audience members may find what they are asked to participate in so objectionable that they refuse to participate in the interpretation of the acts on stage. These moments may occur because an audience member refuses to recognize his or her response to the staged desire. Because queer desires are, as in the examples presented here, paired with what would now be categorized as "straight" desire, some audience members may refuse conscious, interpretative participation in both. I have chosen plays that appear to have fewer moments of division, where audience members have an especially cohesive experience.

Chapter 2

Desiring Horror

“Watching a horror film is, like riding a roller coaster, a collective experience.”

—Isabel Pinedo, *Recreational Terror*, 42-43.

In delving into Shakespeare’s bloody revenge tragedy *Titus Andronicus*, this chapter focuses on some of the darker aspects of sexual desire. Shakespeare’s choice to stage the act to be avenged in the center of the play brings audience members along on the Andronici’s journey from the everyday world to the “red world” of horror, excess, and revenge.⁴⁸ The first half of *Titus Andronicus* encourages audience members to desire Titus’s daughter, Lavinia, as part of a collective identity as “Rome.” However, the initial, socially appropriate desire for Lavinia is on a continuum with her eventual rape and mutilation. By participating in and accepting the initial stages of violent desire, audience members are implicated in its twisted counterpart, when violent desire is taken to extremes. To expel guilt at having participated in the same desire that drives the rape, audience members are manipulated by the text into approving of revenge as the rational “solution” to the rape, their guilt, and the plot. The path from the act to be revenged to avenging yokes viewers together into an audience community.

The excess of *Titus Andronicus*’s horror has led to interest and condemnation. T. S. Eliot famously found the play “One of the stupidest and most uninspired plays ever written.”⁴⁹ The play has had some recent success, however, based in part on its similarities to the “postmodern horror film.”⁵⁰ For both, “*body horror* is central . . . everything else, including narrative and character development, is subordinated to ‘the demands of presenting the viewer with the uncompromised or privileged detail of human

carnage’” (Peter Boss qtd. in Isabel Pinedo 18-19). With Alarbus’s sacrifice, Bassianus’s murder, Lavinia’s rape and mutilation, Titus’s amputated hand, Martius and Quintus’s execution, and the final revenge, *Titus Andronicus*’s violence rivals that of any slasher flick. The pleasure of revenge tragedy, like postmodern horror films, is body-centered horror. The play also moves beyond the movies in its use of desire in this moment of horror. As Pinedo summarizes, the “physical violence against the body” in postmodern horror films is “typically nonsexual” and is “presented in an emotionally detached manner so that what fascinates is not primarily the suffering of the victim but her or his bodily ruination” (18-19). Although this approach increases the pleasure a viewer can take in the carnage by minimizing any sympathy or identification one might feel, *Titus Andronicus* uses the opposite approach to increase the horror. The play is built around twinned violences—desire and revenge—that are intensely intimate and personal. This intimacy increases the effectiveness of the play’s horror but also draws each audience member into an emotion-built community.

Titus Andronicus’s popularity in the twentieth century may be in part due to these films, which have developed genre expectations in directors, companies, and audiences.⁵¹ The play, even in an adapted form that minimized the violence, was unpopular in the 18th and 19th centuries.⁵² An unintentionally funny performance as part of Robert Atkins’s push to produce Shakespeare’s complete works at the Old Vic in 1923 did not bode well for its future on stage.⁵³ It is only with the cultural and theatrical changes of the World Wars that *Titus Andronicus* won critical acclaim.⁵⁴ Peter Brook’s 1955 Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) production starring Laurence Olivier as Titus and Vivien Leigh as Lavinia minimized the onstage violence; this ritualistic production was well

received as resurrecting an interesting early “draft” of Shakespeare’s later tragedies. J. C. Trewin reported that “curtain-fall that August evening brought the longest, loudest cheer in Stratford memory” (qtd. Alan Dessen 15). Brook thought the “‘real appeal’ of the show ‘was obviously for everyone in the audience about the most modern of emotions—about violence, hatred, cruelty, pain—in a form that, because *unrealistic*, transcended the anecdote and became for each audience *quite abstract and thus totally real*’” (qtd. Dessen 15, emphasis original).

Despite this success, the RSC waited seventeen years before Trevor Nunn’s leather-and-orgy revival turned Brook’s production on its head. Starring Colin Blakely as Titus and Janet Suzman as Lavinia, the production had a “lingering, slow-motion realism” yet was not a critical success, perhaps because he cut many of the passages that I argue are essential to the creation of audience community (Billington qtd. Dessen 36).⁵⁵ The play’s next production reflected this uncertainty. Starring Patrick Stewart and Leonie Mellinger, John Barton’s 1981 RSC production heavily cut the play to pair it with *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* in a single evening of early Shakespeare plays. According to reviewer John Barber, the effect “on *Titus* is to lower the temperature and soften the savage impact . . . it does not prevent some of the horrors from being received by the audience with quiet but persistent merriment” (“Side”).

It lay with Deborah Warner’s spare and powerful 1987-88 RSC production to resurrect *Titus Andronicus*’s popularity. Starring Brian Cox and Sonia Ritter, this full-text production spawned a host of others: Bill Alexander’s 2003 production for the RSC starring David Bradley and Eve Myles, Lucy Bailey’s 2006 production for Shakespeare’s Globe starring Douglas Hodge and Laura Rees, and two visiting productions at the RSC

and National Theatre.⁵⁶ All these later productions embraced the violence and desire of the play. Warner's, for example, emphasized Lavinia as a victim, creating a naturalistic depiction based on extensive research into the experiences of trauma survivors. These productions balance abstraction and realism to encourage continued audience participation in interpretation while appealing through their blend of desire and horror.

The popularity of *Titus Andronicus* in production begins with its presentation of the audience as a pre-existing community, Rome. By opening with the election of a leader by the audience-as Rome, Shakespeare immediately binds the audience members together in a common interest in what happens to Rome and to Titus. He increases audience members' participation by assuming it exists and portraying it as unified. This cohesion begins with multiple characters addressing "Rome" directly; Titus does so most often and powerfully, nearly always stressing unity by speaking to the collective "Rome" rather than plural "Romans."⁵⁷ The Globe audience laughed and yelled in the videoed performance in response to Titus's first words, "Hail, Rome" (performance notes, 1.1.75). Productions often emphasize this textual unity by including Saturninus's and Bassianus's fractious factions entering from opposite sides of the stage, as the Folio text indicates.⁵⁸ "Rome," however, is united in its support for Titus, a support that dominates the quarrel. The stage directions do not indicate a third, larger faction onstage, implying the audience is to be addressed as this united Rome. Warner (1987-88, RSC) created an audience that was "clearly implicated in the action by the opening and closing scenes in which the unseen Romans are directly questioned from the stage about the succession of the crown" (H.R. Woudhuysen "Savage"), while Bailey (2006, Globe) increased audience cohesiveness and identification as Rome through her use of Marcus. Saturninus

and Bassianus entered on rolling platforms, their “followers” pushing the groundlings aside to make way for the towers’ movement. Literally thrown off kilter by the debate, the audience seemed grateful for Marcus to center and settle attention on the stage, adding subtle weight to the play’s demand for unity.⁵⁹ Having already elected Titus as their leader is an explicit echo of the audience’s cognitive and interpretative participation in theatre. This echo reinforces theatre’s invitation to participation and its communal nature.

Part of being “Rome” is agreeing to follow Titus’s lead; from the first moments of the play, Shakespeare sets up Titus as a leader for the audience. In telling language, Marcus asks Titus to “help set a head on headless Rome” (1.1.189). The metonymy accurately indicates Titus’s interaction with the audience—he will be the head, the guiding force but also part of the whole. The audience “following” Titus is different than empathizing with him or identifying with him. Although Marcus will continue to speak for the audience, especially in his reaction to Lavinia’s rape and mutilation, Titus will lead, moving the audience from their current reaction into the next emotion or action. The power of Titus as leader is shown when he offers to “restore” to Saturninus “The people’s hearts, and wean them from themselves” (1.1.214-15). This is a fundamental statement of Titus’s effectiveness; he can sway the Romans (and thereby, the audience) from their own wants. It is this ability that will later transform the audience’s guilt over the results of desire into the longing for revenge. Yet, Titus frames the weaning as Rome’s choice, again underlining the audience’s participation. Titus requests Rome’s support: “People of Rome, and people’s tribunes here, / I *ask* your voices and your suffrages. / Will ye *bestow* them friendly on Andronicus?” (emphasis mine, 1.1.221-23).

By asking, Titus displays an attractive humility, acting only after their acquiescence, which provides a stark contrast to Saturninus's pride, command, and general disregard for the crowd. The expected effect of the request on the audience is aptly signified by the Tribunes simultaneously agreeing to be led by Titus.

There is, however, another part to being "Rome"—desiring Titus's daughter, Lavinia. In the long opening scene the audience is shown—and therefore is invited to participate in—the disintegration of proper, acceptable desire into unfettered, violent desire. Both are presented here as unconcerned with the woman's permission or interest. Though performances have often added a romantic element to Lavinia and Bassianus's elopement, the text does not indicate Lavinia's interest and labels the elopement "rape" (1.1.411). Their elopement and Chiron and Demetrius's attack are two sides of the same coin. Shakespeare places licit and illicit desires on a continuum, the boundary between them permeable.⁶⁰ This adds to the terror of the attack on Lavinia. Not only have audience members been lured into participation in desire similar to rape, the continuum plays on the connections between everyday life and terrifying situations that, according to Pinedo, underlie horror. As Pinedo states, "The horror film is an exquisite exercise in coping with the terrors of everyday life . . . horror exposes the terror *implicit* in everyday life" (emphasis original, 39). Productions, however, attempt to create a difference between the licit and illicit, between the everyday and the terrifying, thereby reducing the horror. Similarly, the audience wants to shore up a divide between the two, to ensure that they are on the "right" side of desire, but also to avoid the terror of acknowledging that the licit and illicit desires are connected, that the terror *is* implicit in everyday life.

The effects of Lavinia's desirability have seldom been studied because of the assumption that the audience is to identify with Titus's viewpoint.⁶¹ Although her family does not seem to participate in finding Lavinia desirable, nearly every other character does. In Warner's (1987-88, RSC) production, even Aaron demonstrated a sexual interest in Lavinia (performance notes). In Bailey's production, Lavinia was an "object of lust for the jeering Roman mob, jostling among the groundlings" and when Bassianus first mentions her name, his followers responded with approving shouts and whistling (Sam Marlowe "Blood-Letting," performance notes). Tamora may have the more showy sexuality, but Lavinia is the locus of desire. The effects of Lavinia's desirability are out of control. She inspires rebellion in the otherwise proper Bassianus, rage in Tamora, and unconstrained desire in Chiron and Demetrius. This is not, however, a straightforward heterosexual desire. Although acted on by men toward a woman, this desire is queered by its association with violence and its excess. Literary scholars Mario DiGangi and Jonathan Goldberg argue that desire that breaks social boundaries is "sodomy," DiGangi applying the term to certain acts of male-male sex in the early modern period and Goldberg to Isabella in Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II*.⁶² Their use of "sodomy" parallels my use of "queer" to describe the desire for Lavinia; though the desire she inspires is heterosexual, it is inextricably bound to the violation of acceptable social behavior.

Surprisingly, it is Saturninus who demonstrates the most proper desire for Lavinia, offering a political marriage:

Titus, to advance

Thy name and honourable family,

Lavinia I will make my empress,
 Rome's royal mistress, mistress of my heart,
 And in the sacred Pantheon her espouse. (1.1.242-46)

Saturninus's choice requites Titus for advancing him to the throne, but it also demonstrates Lavinia's desirability. Being a proper match for an emperor suggests that Lavinia has the virtues that Chiron and Demetrius will later mock (2.2.124-26), her small role emphasizes her visual desirability rather than her virtues. An audience member might fill this blank with an unmentioned prior history, and some productions encourage this by demonstrating a silent familiarity between the emperor's family and the Andronici. Bailey's (2006, Globe) production, for example, had Bassianus warmly greeting the Andronici sons.⁶³ However, an audience member might instead fill the blank in accordance with his or her own experience of Lavinia; with nothing else to rely on, Saturninus must ask for her because he desires her.⁶⁴ Certainly this would seem to be in keeping with his rapid switch to Tamora whose virtues he does not yet have any knowledge of, instead choosing her for her "hue," a physical attribute (1.1.265).⁶⁵ Although somewhat abrupt to modern sensibilities accustomed to the ideal of romantic marriage, Saturninus has properly asked Titus for Lavinia, offering her a formal marriage in the Pantheon, the equivalent of an early modern English full, formal church ceremony.⁶⁶

The hint of emotion in Saturninus's lines above is usually played with a heavy dose of irony. The text, however, does not demand a heavy-handed coloring if read as an expression of Lavinia's desirability. The syntax allows for two interpretations: that this is a list of things Saturninus will "make" of Lavinia or that these are two parallel phrases,

that Lavinia will be made empress as “Rome’s royal mistress” is made mistress of his heart. This second reading makes Lavinia already “Rome’s royal mistress.” This is an important reading on two levels—first, it makes sense of Saturninus’s choice for wife, for he is marrying a pseudo-equal; second, it implies in language what happens in action, that Lavinia is already the darling of an entire city, the epitome of desirability. Yet, this is also a queer description in its excess, as though Lavinia has been mistress to the entire city. It is this insinuation of copious availability that Saturninus, Bassianus, Chiron, Demetrius, and the audience respond to.

Saturninus’s choice causes Bassianus to act, suddenly and rashly, on his desire for Lavinia. This act is tinged with violence and a disturbing silence on Lavinia’s part. Although she confirms her obedience to Titus and Saturninus, Lavinia offers no verbal confirmation that Bassianus is preferable to Saturninus. Titus, at least, notices this and presumes Lavinia has been “surprised” by Bassianus’s abduction, an assumption in keeping with his belief in her virtues (1.1.288). Bassianus claims he has a right to Lavinia based on a pre-existing arrangement, the legal language of early modern English betrothal.⁶⁷ Although he covers the claim with a polite “Lord Titus, by your leave,” Bassianus is already assured that “this maid is mine” (1.1.280). The use of the present tense “is” suggests a pre-existing contract between them, perhaps even more than a *per verba de futuro* agreement.⁶⁸ On “seiz[ing]” Lavinia, Bassianus explicitly claims that she is his “betrothed,” while Lucius refers to her as “another’s lawful promised love” (1.1.285, 290, 301).⁶⁹ Bassianus rests his claim to “seizeth but his own” not on love but on a kind of enforced ownership. Bassianus argues here that he has a legal “right” to Lavinia as his property; the repeated “seize” and “justice” resonate with legal

connotations (*OED*). But “seize” also strongly suggests force, adding to Lavinia’s lack of consent. Upon their return, Saturninus explicitly accuses Bassianus of the forceful abduction and/or sexual conquest of Lavinia by calling their elopement a “rape,” bringing the latent violence of the elopement to the fore (1.1.411).⁷⁰ Bassianus’s defense answers the legal claims of property “rape” without fully extinguishing the possibility of an unwilling sexual encounter. What lingers is the excess of desire Lavinia has inspired, desire mixed with violence; the “elopement” cannot be textually distinguished from rape.

Recent productions downplay the legalistic language in favor of romantic touches that appeal to a modern audience and emphasize desire. Bassianus’s impetuosity is often presented as an elopement, the antithesis of a formal, loveless, political marriage to Saturninus. This choice seduces the audience into approving of his claim to Lavinia, undermining the text with coercively appealing visuals. An earlier betrothal is confirmed by significant looks between Bassianus and Lavinia on her being handed to Saturninus, Lavinia demonstrating only a grudging acceptance of her situation, and early physical contact between Bassianus and Lavinia.⁷¹ In Warner’s (1987-88, RSC) production, Lavinia stalked off angrily on being given to Saturninus while Alexander’s (2003, RSC) Lavinia ran for Bassianus (performance notes). Bailey’s (2006, Globe) production even had an eager Lavinia leading Bassianus offstage at a run for the elopement. These gestures also downplay Lavinia’s silence, as visual cues signal her emotions. No post-1965 production by the RSC, NT, or the Globe has presented Bassianus and Lavinia’s marriage as anything other than romantic elopement. This choice may increase the effect of this queer desire even as it attempts to soften it. The productions make violent desire

more palatable as romance replicates the effects of the legal language—both work to entice the audience into approving participation in the opening stages of violent desire.

As in the later rape scene, the elopement leaves the audience to imagine what occurs offstage while being repeatedly reminded of it by the language onstage. Because there are only hints, the audience is left to imagine precisely how Lavinia and Bassianus solidify their marriage. This is a “blank,” in Wolfgang Iser’s formulation, that the audience is asked to imaginatively “fill.” There is, of course, one option that is far more enticing to imagine than the others, and consummation is not an unlikely choice. Within 100 lines, Lavinia and Bassianus could either find a priest willing to risk the new emperor’s wrath or engage in a perfunctory sexual encounter, one even shorter than the mid-play rape.⁷² While the audience may imagine either version, the temptation is toward the sexually explicit.⁷³ Because the audience is left to imagine what takes the couple from betrothal to marriage, they participate in the creation of the story by filling in the blank Shakespeare sets up with their anticipatory exit. Shakespeare presents both possibilities while Bassianus and Lavinia are offstage. Saturninus and Tamora are to be “espoused” in the Pantheon, just as Saturninus offered Titus for Lavinia, again indicating a formal wedding ceremony (1.1.333). However, Saturninus suggestively states, “There shall we consummate our spousal rites” (1.1.342). They will finish the rites, but the line carries a strong hint that they will also sexually consummate the marriage.⁷⁴ Bailey’s (2006, Globe) production punctuated Lavinia’s invitation to the wedding ceremony by having Saturninus roughly kiss her, a choice that won approving laughter from the audience (production notes).

The more certain attack on Lavinia is established in the opening scene with Chiron and Demetrius's parodies of Petrarchan love conventions. Chiron and Demetrius's love-prattle and threats highlight what was missing from Saturninus and Bassianus's "wooing." Chiron and Demetrius slip easily from "love" to rape, but they each bestow more emotional language on Lavinia than Saturninus and Bassianus together. The frequent choice to play this scene as a black comedy may work similarly to adding romantic touches to Lavinia and Bassianus's relationship. If audience members laugh at Chiron and Demetrius, then they enjoy them, making it difficult to take the threats seriously. The pairing of these moments and the elopement demonstrates their disturbing similarities and the continuum of violent desire. The play sets up a fine line between love and rape, perhaps only an unproven difference between a legal rape and an illegal one.⁷⁵

This scene, seemingly an illogical break from the main characters, focuses on two points: the desirability of Lavinia and the ease with which proper desire can become improper. Without this scene, the rape of Lavinia might be pure revenge; with it, the rape involves a desire that is intimately and explicitly linked to declarations of love. The boys' intense and sudden reactions to Lavinia demonstrate her immense desirability, suggesting it is the foundation of her identity:

She is a woman, therefore may be wooed;

She is a woman, therefore may be won;

She is Lavinia, therefore must be loved. (1.1.582-84)

Although Demetrius claims she is to be "loved," the following lines make clear he is discussing a particularly physical "love," comparing her to an already-cut loaf from

which it is easy to steal a piece. Their desire seems to be based entirely on appearance and perhaps the rumor of her virtues, as they have had even less exposure to Lavinia than Saturninus's has. However, they have been exposed to Lavinia for the same amount of time as the audience, indicating that they demonstrate the intensity of desire she inspires, a degree of which the audience should feel.

The scene demonstrates how quickly and easily Petrarchan conventions can slip into violence. Aaron quickly picks up on both the intensity of the boys' emotion and its quality, emphasizing for the audience the link between the desire Rome feels for Lavinia and its violence. As Aaron points out, Chiron and Demetrius are willing to defy several social boundaries because of Lavinia (and their own foolhardiness), including being interested in another man's seemingly chaste wife, quarrelling near the seat of government, and dishonoring their mother in both their choice of woman and their fighting (1.1.545-567). Aaron capitalizes on their rashness in offering up the solution that "some certain snatch or so / Would serve" (1.1.595-96). Lavinia here stands in for any woman, needing only to be the object of desire. Tellingly, the men do not mention that the women need be willing and the hunting comparisons that fill the conversation imply that violence is perhaps more titillating than a willing sexual encounter. As Aaron points out, relying on love would result only in a "lingering languishment" and even in praising Lavinia he hints at her violent fate: "Lucrece was not more chaste / Than this Lavinia" (1.1.608-9). This comparison links Lavinia's chastity with the attack—it is because she is virtuous that she is desired; it is because she is virtuous that desire can only be enacted as a rape. Aaron adopts the conceit of "*noli me tangere*" of Caesar's deer, arguing that the boys cannot woo Lavinia. If they cannot woo, then, according to

Aaron, they can follow the current of the comparison in using violence to “hit” the “dainty doe” (1.1597-98, 617). Aaron never attempts to reduce the lust Chiron and Demetrius feel; instead, he channels it into “logical” action, the hunt. This presents the rape as inevitable, logical action following a natural example.

The play thus far has set up Lavinia’s rape and mutilation as acts merely further down a slippery slope, acts not clearly divided from the norm. Audience members want these actions to be illicit, but they have also been in favor of related, nearly indistinguishable acts. The tension between these two positions comes to a head at Lavinia’s rape and mutilation. Unable to clearly separate “rape” from rape, approved desire from illicit desire, the audience is torn. Shakespeare leads the audience into participating in queer desires. By sliding the audience from “rape” to rape, from romantic prattle to unfettered lust, Shakespeare sets up Lavinia’s rape and mutilation as though it were merely one step further on desire’s continuum. On the far side of the rape and mutilation, audience members want a way to cleanse themselves, to put themselves firmly on the “right” side.

The attack on Lavinia and Bassianus moves the play and audience into a new, unreal world of exaggerated bloodshed and horror. It is a world governed by a drive for revenge, which replaces, with equal intensity, desire’s drive of the first half of the play. This “red world” is familiar from horror films. Unlike Northrop Frye’s “green world” where rules are suspended, here “the referent or ‘reality’ is gone, and [. . . the characters are] caught within a closed system from which there is no exit” (Pinedo 22-23). The play enters into a *new* system (not a topsy-turvy world) in which the choice to revenge is a logical one. As I will demonstrate, the attack on Lavinia and the following display of her

body negotiate the audience's entrance into the red world by introducing the new set of "rules" by which blanks are to be filled.⁷⁶ The "lesson" from Martius and Quintus and the successive "readings" of Lavinia by Chiron and Demetrius, Marcus, and Titus present the logic of the red world. I will argue that their reactions and actions transform the audience's feelings of guilt, the result of desiring Lavinia, into a longing for revenge. Titus leads the audience to replace the queer desire with a vehement reaction to the results of desire, the longing for revenge, by learning to communicate with Lavinia.

The horror of the attack on Bassianus and Lavinia begins with one of the "everyday" terrors that Pinedo identifies as the center of postmodern horror films, as Aaron and Tamora describe nature as an accomplice to the Goths' revenge. When Aaron broaches the idea of rape to Chiron and Demetrius, he argues that the hunt provides a place built for attack: "forest walks are . . . / Fitted by kind for rape and villainy" for "The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf and dull" (1.1.614-16, 628). Tamora takes this description a step further to link the red world with nature, but nature at a slant. In the red world, desire is disconnected from life and reproduction and is attached to darkness and death. Her description of the "barren detested vale" is otherworldly, underlining the lack of life, the darkness, and, paradoxically, the terrors that inhabit it. The "barren" vale where "nothing breeds" is still home to monsters ranging from the everyday "nightly owl or fatal raven" to the extraordinary:

A thousand fiends, a thousand hissing snakes,
 Ten thousand swelling toads, as many urchins,
 Would make such fearful and confused cries
 As any mortal body hearing it

Should straight fall mad, or else die suddenly. (2.2.93-104)

This is the proper setting for horror; the Goths' actions seem merely an extension of the world around them.

The hunt begins with vicious banter between Tamora, Lavinia, and Bassianus. Although Tamora hints at sexualized violence in wishing Actaeon's fate would befall Bassianus, it is, surprisingly, Lavinia who makes the sexual violence explicit and personal, biting telling Tamora, "'Tis thought you have a goodly gift in horning . . . Jove shield your husband from his hounds today: / 'Tis pity they should take him for a stag" (2.2.67, 70-1).⁷⁷ Bassianus's language about Tamora's adultery is equally loaded with sexual and hunting puns, claiming she has "Dismounted from [her . . .] snow-white goodly steed" of a husband, driven by "foul desire" for the "Spotted, detested and abominable" "barbarous Moor" (2.2.74-9). Although both Bassianus and Lavinia use this language of sexual violence, they mix it with a conservative message of faithfulness in marriage. A current of violence separates the language from the message, which seems to undermine the previous claims of their virtue. Their use of this language even when arguing for virtue demonstrates the pervasiveness of the connection between violence and desire in *Titus Andronicus*.

Tamora oddly changes the reasons for attacking Bassianus and Lavinia. Rather than recalling Alarbus's sacrifice and explaining how Bassianus and Lavinia's deaths would revenge him, Tamora creates a scenario of desire based in part on what just occurred.⁷⁸ Stripping Lavinia and Bassianus's comments of their veneer of metaphor and mythological comparisons, she claims "they called me foul adulteress, / Lacivious Goth, and all the bitterest terms / That ever ear did hear to such effect" (2.2.109-11). The boys

are asked to revenge to clear their mother's name of this slander about her illicit desire, again linking desire and violence. Tamora ties her demand to another kind of nature: "Or be ye not henceforth called my children" (2.2.115). To be Tamora's children, then, is to be Rape and Murder, the children of Revenge.⁷⁹

The attack on Bassianus and Lavinia is the apex of violent desire. Building on the metaphors Aaron constructed earlier, the scene ties together violent desire and revenge through the language and narrative structure of a hunt. Yet, by focusing the victim, the scene refuses to fulfill the audience's expectations and turns desire to guilt. Literary scholar Michael Hall suggests that audience members should be familiar with the hunt as a narrative structure and "are disposed to find it exciting, and this is whether the chase concerns a hunt, a battle, a rape, or even a contest of wits. The thrill of the chase in rape stories is the tension readers feel as the rapist threatens his victim" (59). Hall argues that

Employing this form helps keep at a distance the horror and danger of sexual violence by making narrative rape seem more like other chases than like the crime, and by focusing attention away from the victim and toward the rapist and the victim's would-be protector. Emphasizing the chase . . . pushes readers away from the threatening implications of rape, while any substantial portrayal of the forced intercourse or the victim's response to it has just the opposite effect. (Hall 51)

Almost predictably, Shakespeare presents the unexpected. There is little attention paid to Lavinia's would-be protectors—Bassianus is eliminated quickly and perfunctorily and the Andronici are conspicuously absent. The "chase" is repeatedly downplayed in favor of the "kill" of the hunt, the slow torture of a doe cornered by hounds. These choices

help to center attention on Lavinia even before the lengthy display of her injuries. By emphasizing Lavinia, the scene also emphasizes desire. If focusing on the chase increases the pleasure of the hunt story, Shakespeare's choice to concentrate on Lavinia instead increases the "horrors . . . of rape" (Hall 51). The audience's expectations are manipulated as the narrative expectations are *not* fulfilled. By centering the scene on Lavinia and stressing the sexual side of rape, Shakespeare prevents the audience from taking unreflective pleasure in the horror. Instead, audience members fill the blanks as they "should," fulfilling what audience members want—horror and desire—but in such a way that they are condemned to guilt.

The clearest way Shakespeare focuses on the victim rather than on the hunt is in having Lavinia live on after Bassianus's death. The play presents Lavinia as a fully fledged character, which turns the scene into a victim's torture rather than an enjoyable moment of carnage.⁸⁰ All three Goths are given the chance to relent and all three confirm their allegiance to violent desire as the mode for their revenge. These two choices begin the audience's change from taking pleasure in desire to guilt over its result. Warner (1987-88, RSC) staged the attack as a shocking surprise, with Lavinia and Bassianus laughing until the moment Bassianus was stabbed. In contrast, Bailey (2006, Globe) had Lavinia and Bassianus evince fear from the moment Chiron and Demetrius appear, while Alexander (2003, RSC) began the sexual assault on stage.⁸¹ The combination of virtue and horror seems to drive Chiron and Demetrius's desire. Lavinia, they claim, has "stood upon her chastity, / Upon her nuptial vow, her loyalty" (2.2.124-6). The proper revenge, therefore, is to break down those virtues forcefully. Chiron adds yet more horror to this situation by threatening to use Bassianus's "dead trunk [as] pillow to our lust," a

deliciously horrific image (2.2.130). Chiron even says they will “enjoy / That nice-preserved honesty of yours,” as though the honesty makes for the enjoyment (2.2.134-5). Lavinia’s begging and the Goths’ hearts of “unrelenting flint” begin the audience’s slide from desire to guilt (2.2.141). Rather than negotiating a deal or understanding their motivations, Lavinia asks the Goths to behave virtuously. As literary scholar Clark Hulse puts it, she delivers the “wrong argument to the wrong audience” (109). This pithy statement is a bit misleading, however. In delivering the wrong argument to the Goths, Lavinia delivers the right one to the audience. As well as winning the audience’s sympathy, Lavinia’s choice demonstrates her virtues, previously talked of but unproven. The ultimate confirmation comes when Lavinia asks to be killed to “keep me from their worse-than-killing lust” (2.2.175). This choice, so resonant in the period to similar literary examples, may now seem extreme, yet it continues to illustrate the depths of terror Lavinia feels and tries to communicate to the audience.

Lavinia asks one further thing that confirms her virtue but increases the audience’s guilt—that the Goths “tumble [. . . her] into some loathsome pit / Where never man’s eye may behold [. . . her] body” (2.2.176-77). Lavinia’s modesty and chastity extend so far as to condemn the act of looking at her body, an implication that viewing is a kind of desiring or even acting on desire. This echoes the cognitive process of the audience, where seeing is participating. Marcus will have to call Lavinia “niece” and “Cousin,” indicating his lack of desire, before she will consent for her body to be “read.” The various displays of Lavinia are calculated to make the audience translate the desire the first half of the play encourages to guilt.

The sequence of approved and illicit events that the audience participates in leads it to one overwhelming reaction: guilt. Guilt is “an unpleasant feeling with an accompanying belief (or beliefs) that one should have thought, felt, or acted differently,” in its most popular psychological definition (E. S. Kubany et al 429). Empirical and theoretical approaches find that guilt is linked to moral development; for viewers of *Titus Andronicus*, the injuries done to Lavinia are a violation of morals that would lead to guilt.⁸² Guilt’s “feelings of regret, fear, worry, anxiety” are accompanied by “a wish to make reparations for the wrongdoing” (Ayfer Dost and Bilge Yagmurlu 111). Michael Schmitt et al. find that individuals in groups feel guilt for the wrongs committed by others in the group. Rather than being innocent bystanders, audience members are inculcated in the attack on Lavinia through their previous participation in desiring her. Schmitt et al. also find that “the difficulty of making reparations for . . . harm done . . . affects the intensity of collective guilt” (267). *Titus Andronicus* causes audience members to feel guilt and want to make reparations; the correct reparation, however, is revenge.

The wording of Lavinia’s pleas also makes the audience feel guilt. Having been encouraged to desire Lavinia by paying attention to others’ reactions to her appearance, the audience is now repeatedly told to listen to her. Lavinia’s pleas are loaded with cues for the audience to pay attention to her message: “Listen,” “be to me . . . Nothing so kind, but something pitiful,” “let me teach thee,” “open thy deaf ears,” etc. (2.2.139, 155-6, 158, 160). These calls to listen and learn focus attention on Lavinia’s interiority, encouraging the audience to think consciously about what is happening to her rather than remaining at the comfortable distance that allows for pleasure at horror. Lavinia foreshadows the worst of her coming torments and begins the lesson that condemns

desire. The Goths do not hear her and when threatened with rape she calls it that “one thing more / That womanhood denies my tongue to tell” (2.2.175). Audience members are told to listen to Lavinia just before it becomes an impossibility. Visually driven desire is now condemned by its violence. Audience members are now placed in an unusual position. The attack on Lavinia will break the connection between her appearance and desire yet the play does not turn away from displaying her body in favor of listening to her. Instead, the audience must look at the painful results of their desire, unable to listen to her story. This choice drives the audience toward guilt.

Shakespeare’s construction of the attack increases the tension of this uncertain moment. In Iserian terms, the offstage rape and mutilation of Lavinia is the largest “blank” in any performance of *Titus Andronicus*. Because it occurs offstage, the audience is perhaps more participatory than if a version of the attack were staged. Rather than merely filling in the blanks of a staged reality, the audience is asked to fully imagine what occurs offstage. As theatre scholar Amy Cook argues, humans take pleasure in cognitively putting together meanings, whether linguistic or theatrical. While audience members lose the cognitive participation of mirror neurons by the act occurring offstage, their interpretive minds may be more engaged by the need to create meaning, as Cook argues for metaphoric language. The audience has already participated in a murder and a “rape”; now the audience must extrapolate Lavinia’s rape and mutilation.

The staging echoes Lavinia’s pleas—audience members are asked to listen while they are denied sight. Yet, this careful listening reinforces audience members’ imagination of what occurs simultaneously offstage. The metaphoric representation for what is occurring offstage increases the likelihood that audience members will continue

to participate through interpretation in Lavinia's situation. As many critics have argued, the discovery of Bassianus's body can be read as symbolic of Lavinia's rape. Briefly, the repeated references to a "pit," "womb," and "hole" surrounded by "drops of new-shed blood" may be read as graphic references to Lavinia's violated chastity (2.2.193, 198, 200, 210, 232, 239, etc.).⁸³ The scene's emphasis on hands and fingers (2.2.226, 233, 237, 243) links to Lavinia's fate as well (Dessen 87-88).

More important to the audience's move into the red world, however, is the scene's demonstration of a refusal to see or understand. Martius and Quintus cannot see or make meaning of what they are seeing. The scene enacts their learning a new way of seeing that can interpret horror, a lesson that the audience needs before Lavinia's reveal. Initially, Martius claims to be "hurt," not by his fall, but by the sight of horror: "the dismall'st object . . . That ever eye with sight made heart lament" (2.2.204-5). Paralleling Lavinia's refusal to name "rape," Martius's refusal to name the sight he sees brings her to mind even as the audience knows he refers to Bassianus's body. Quintus mimics the audience's position. Unable to see into the pit without conscious effort, this soldier is far more unnerved by the possibilities, by the unknown horror, than Martius is by the horror he intimately confronts. At first, Quintus describes the symptom of his horror, but is frozen in place: "I am surprised by an uncouth fear; / A chilling sweat o'erruns my trembling joints; / My heart suspects more than mine eye can see" (2.2.211-13). These are the very symptoms that the audience, if not already feeling, should feel on seeing the injured Lavinia. These symptoms are also quite close to the thrill of desire—trembling, heart racing, etc.—again demonstrating the close connections between the actions on- and offstage and the audience's pleasures in desire and horror.⁸⁴ Martius must convince

Quintus to “look down into this den” even as he increases Quintus’s fearful anticipation by not naming the horror save as “a fearful sight of blood and death” (2.2.215-16).

Quintus confirms that it is not knowing what he will see that unnerves him, more than the sight itself: “my compassionate heart / Will not permit mine eyes once to behold / The thing whereat it trembles by surmise” (2.2.217-19). This parallels the audience’s experience. Because audience members do not see the attack, they are left to imagine it and anticipate its display, a situation more terrifying than if it were staged.⁸⁵ The sight of the thing is less affecting than the imagination of it. Yet the scene also suggests that anticipation incites more horror than fulfillment. Each of these “lessons” reminds the audience of Lavinia’s ongoing rape and mutilation, but also potentially reduces the impact of seeing her post-rape and mutilation. The sight of Lavinia, it indicates, will be less horrific than what the audience has already imagined, thereby encouraging the audience to continue their cognitive and interpretive participation through in the lesser horror of her reveal.

By encouraging the audience to imaginatively create the offstage event, the Iserian blank builds anticipation for the eventual horror of seeing Lavinia. As a horror film might create a “blind space” around the monster, delaying or denying the audience’s full view of it, this vital omission from the stage “generates suspense and stimulates the desire to know more” (Pinedo 53). Although the reveal would seem to strip away much of the uncertainty and fulfill the anticipation, it retains another pleasure of horror—“the tension between not (fully) seeing, the pleasure of recoil, and seeing (more fully), the pleasure of the gaze” (Pinedo 54).⁸⁶ The audience is being shown the result and culmination of its queer desire in the first half of the play. This, the play suggests, is

what the audience wanted. Audiences do look and are both gloriously terrified and repugnantly horrified. Terrified at the outcome, audiences are also horrified at themselves for desiring Lavinia.

Shakespeare adds to the audience's condemnation and guilt through Chiron and Demetrius's mocking of Lavinia and Marcus's discovering her. Like postmodern horror films, *Titus Andronicus* focuses on "body horror" in the reveal.⁸⁷ Chiron and Demetrius increase the audience's revulsion by mocking Lavinia, yet demand that the audience see her and notice the details of her injuries. Their initial "reading" of Lavinia's injuries both points out their literal meaning—that she has been "ravished," her tongue cut out, and her hands cut off—and their (more significant) impact—that she cannot "go tell," "Write down [. . . her] mind," "play the scribe," or "scrawl" (2.3.1-5). Warner's (1987-88, RSC) production added physical mocking to the reveal. Chiron and Demetrius entered first in an awkward crawl, laughing; Lavinia then followed in a "heart-rending, broken scuttle," the movement the boys had just parodied (Taylor "Good Sense"). Their mocking was so effective in eliciting sympathy for Lavinia that one reviewer "spent the rest of that scene blinded by tears" (Taylor "Good Sense").⁸⁸ Like Martius and Quintus, audience members must learn to see Lavinia differently or risk interpreting her injuries in accord with her attack. Audience members are directed to put themselves on the "good" side, to sympathize with Lavinia's suffering, yet are torn because they cannot listen as Lavinia requested. They are pushed to discover a new way of looking, one that can accommodate horror. Chiron and Demetrius emphasize that Lavinia will not be able to communicate, that others will have to interpret her "signs and tokens," and the absolute necessity of communication (2.3.5). The audience will be wrenched between this knowledge and the

onstage fumbling attempts to read Lavinia's wounds. Locked in a shared silence, equally unable to make Titus "hear" or to "listen" to Lavinia, the audience shares in Lavinia's longing to communicate. This adds to both the horror of the situation and the audience's yearning to participate.

The faintings at the 2006 Globe Theatre performances demonstrate the possible power of Lavinia's reveal. According to the Front of House reports, most faintings occurred upon Lavinia opening her mouth in response to Marcus questioning why she does not speak (2.3.21).⁸⁹ While the audience has had some time to come to terms with her hands being cut off (this being evident from her reentry), the copious stream of blood from her mouth elicited repeated and loud groaning from the audience.⁹⁰ Many of the students I attended with also turned their faces away from the stage as Lavinia turned in their direction, as though afraid to look. They aptly demonstrated Pinedo's point about seeing and not seeing, "the pleasure of recoil [. . . and] the pleasure of the gaze" (54). Disability theorist Rosemarie Garland-Thomson argues that fear spurs looking away: "If the knowledge that staring delivers is unbearable, the expected elasticity of human connection that mutual looking offers becomes brittle. When we suddenly find ourselves face to face with some *memento mori* or our most dreaded fate—we look away" (79).⁹¹ There may be, however, another layer to that decision to turn away. The Globe cannot sustain Laura Mulvey's movie-theatre "gaze." In looking at Lavinia, there is always the chance that Lavinia will look back. But why turn away from that look? I would argue that the primary reason people turn away is guilt. There is a pleasure in the spectacle, but when the spectacle becomes a person, someone who looks back, the pleasure is

condemned. In such an intimate theatre, audience members are caught in their perverse pleasure, a level of guilt so intense that many may turn away to avoid its direct stare.

While this may suggest the primary difference in the intensity of the reaction to the injured Lavinia is between a small theatre and a large, the intimacy level of this moment, and therefore its propensity to cause feelings of guilt, is determined more by the style of the production.⁹² Some productions choose to follow Brook's (1955, RSC) *Titus Andronicus* in using ribbons for blood at Lavinia's reveal (and, occasionally, for Titus's self-mutilation).⁹³ This production began an ongoing divide between "realistic" and "stylized" productions, the effects of which are counterintuitive to Brecht's theory of the use of abstraction to produce alienation (an audience awareness of the artificiality and messages of the performance). The stylized productions give weight to Marcus's word-picture, encouraging the audience to continue their own participation in the production of the theatrical meaning. Here again Cook's work on metaphoric language suggests that this encourages continued interpretative participation. Stylized productions allow the audience potentially to produce a much more gruesome mental image than what is possible in even the most "realistic" of stagings. The ribbons provide audience members with a comfortable distance and allow them to say, "it's only a play," yet undercut the expected effects of alienation by making them more emotionally invested in the play. As Pinedo points out, an "awareness of artifice . . . is not a flaw but an essential ingredient of recreational terror" (55). By allowing the audience this way of "not-seeing," productions may increase how much the audience participates by looking and listening. Certainly, the über-artifice of the stylized productions seems to prevent the fainting seen at the 2006

Globe production, so both an absolute affect and an absolute refusal to see are avoided by using ribbons.

“Stylized” productions reduce the potential effects of the rape and perversely increase the effect of the display of Lavinia by making it enticing. If they do not pay close attention to the words, audience members may miss that Lavinia has been “ravished” (2.3.2) as it is not visually marked. The layer of desire in the violence may be ignored, reducing the audience’s feelings of guilt and thereby their willingness to participate in the revenge. By *not* giving the audience what they have anticipated, the production may leave the audience members vaguely disappointed, again distancing them from the emotions the play needs to generate for community-building and the turn to revenge. A Lavinia draped in ribbons rather than swimming in her own blood often also adopts a stylized way of moving, rather than the gut-wrenching “accurate” portrayal of a rape victim common since Warner’s (1987-88, RSC) production. While this movement may in part be a simple necessity (everyday gestures become tricky if not impossible), both ribbons and the movement may be “a translation of the language of the text” into ritual (Bate 60). This translation may be more affective than the attempt to replicate a rape-and-mutilation-victim’s experience by keeping audience members engaged with the actions onstage.⁹⁴

Audience reactions, however, suggest that the “stylized” reveals do not have the immediate horror of the “realistic” ones. Rather than fulfilling the anticipation built by the delay, the “stylized” reveal allows Lavinia to retain her beauty, perhaps even her desirability. Rather than horror, audience members are given an aesthetically pleasing picture. Evelyn Waugh described Vivien Leigh’s Lavinia in Brook’s (1955, RSC)

production in diminutive terms, comparing her to “a demure Victorian bride” on collecting Chiron and Demetrius’s blood and to “Dick Whittington’s cat” on identifying her attackers. Although engaging—Waugh credits her with having “established complete confidence between the audience and the production”—it is clear that she did not inspire the revulsion and guilt a “realistic” production might (255). This would not be problematic, save that this is the moment to transfer the audience into the system of the red world. These productions complicate or deny the audience’s opportunity to participate in the red world way of seeing, which may distance audience members from participation by not moving them cleanly from desire to guilt to revenge. To bring the audience to long for revenge and see it as a rational solution, it needs to be stirred deeply by Lavinia’s injuries.

By being able to mark the horror of rape, “realistic” productions are able to call attention to the role of desire in Lavinia’s injuries. Although many critics argue that Titus and Marcus do not understand or believe in Lavinia’s rape until she demonstrates it through Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Lavinia’s rape is evident far earlier in “realistic” productions.⁹⁵ As mentioned before, Nunn’s (1972, RSC) production put the beginning of the rape onstage. Janet Suzman transformed Lavinia from “buxom and spirited” (“Titus”) to an “old woman, hump-backed, almost crawling” on her reveal (Wendy Monk). Generally, responses were lukewarm to this reduced Lavinia. B. A. Young found that “Janet Suzman did not move me as much as I hoped” (“Titus”). Warner’s (1987-88, RSC) production opened the blank space of the rape by continuing Lavinia’s screams offstage. This choice strongly encourages audience members continue their imaginative participation. On her return, Lavinia was covered in mud and blood head to

toe, seemingly torn from the world, as though in a red world all her own (performance notes). Alexander's (2003, RSC) and Bailey's (2006, Globe) productions have followed Warner's lead in staging the display of Lavinia (performance notes).⁹⁶ These "realistic" Lavinias also attract attention until the end of the act. A Lavinia in this mold rolls on the floor, moans, seems to be in shock, curls in on herself with her stumps covering her genitalia, and is nearly always placed downstage center. These Lavinias have been forced into the worst depths of the red world, disconnected completely from their former reality. This movement and placement forces audience members to begin processing Lavinia's new appearance, to learn to see with sympathy rather than desire. The scale of this reaction suggests more than mutilation, gruesome though it is, yet the signals are so broad as to be difficult to interpret correctly.

Unlike postmodern horror films, the "body horror" in *Titus Andronicus* is not "presented in an emotionally detached manner" thanks to Marcus (Pinedo 19). Instead, he is a foil to Chiron and Demetrius. Marcus is one of the few adult males in the play who does not seem to desire Lavinia.⁹⁷ Because he has not evidenced desire for Lavinia, he can more easily assuage audience members' feelings of guilt; he is where they now want to be, having seen the results of violent desire. He is not, however, emotionally detached. Marcus is able to observe her, as the audience does. He is distant enough to be able control his own reactions, rather than being absorbed in them as Titus might be.⁹⁸

Marcus demonstrates how to read body horror, even as his words magnify the excess of horror that typifies the red world. Marcus demonstrates the difficulty of listening to Lavinia's body and the process of developing sight that can interpret red world violence.⁹⁹ Literary scholar Cynthia Marshall likens Marcus's speech to "a

photograph or a freeze frame in cinema” because it “arrests the temporal movement of the plot as he trains all eyes on her” (130). But this comparison neglects two key things: the audience has already had half a scene in which to watch Lavinia (or more, if she is given a pre-Chiron and Demetrius entrance as in the Warner (1987-88, RSC) production) and what Marcus is describing is distinctly and all the more disturbingly *not* static. Lavinia is *not* dead and her blood still; her moving body slowly reveals its layers of wounds. Wells describes it as “a sense of a suspension of time” (304). The effect of Marcus’s language is to create a long, slow reveal for Lavinia—the cinematic equivalent of slow motion.¹⁰⁰ The onstage and offstage audiences are repeatedly instructed to stare at Lavinia. As Garland-Thomson has illuminated, “We don’t usually stare at people we know, but instead when unfamiliar people take us by surprise” (3), as when Marcus finds Lavinia. Staring “is the time required by the brain to make sense of the unexpected” (Nancy Burson and J. McDermott qtd. in Garland-Thomson 17). Marcus and Titus transforms the “furtive, guilty pleasure” of voyeuristic staring into an “intense visual engagement [that] creates a circuit of communication and meaning-making” (Garland-Thomson 3). Onstage, looking at Lavinia will begin to make meaning from her injuries, “converting the impulse to stare [or turn away] into attention” (Garland-Thomson 22). Looking is transmuted from desirous and guilt-wracked to a mark of acceptance and caring. Marcus demonstrates this process and Iserian blank-filling in this speech, interpreting as he chooses the “signs and tokens” of Lavinia’s body (2.3.5).¹⁰¹ His speech progresses through successively more complex “readings” of Lavinia. Beginning with a gruesome metaphoric catalog of her wounds, he moves to a literary analogy to Philomel’s story. He then complicates that analogy by analyzing how this situation actually exceeds

that one in its horrors, finally turning to expressions of sympathy and sorrow. He once again speaks for the audience—parroting their disgust, pity, sorrow, and guilt—but also offers up the initial steps in transforming those reactions into the longing for revenge. The injured Lavinia is the very kind of intermediate novelty that the brain finds so compelling. Marcus’s slow description serves to renew the novelty of Lavinia’s injuries, keeping audience members cognitively engaged in the vision before them far longer than they would otherwise.¹⁰² Marcus also models the use of staring as “an interrogative gesture that asks what’s going on and demands a story,” though his interpretations gained through the sight of Lavinia are limited (Garland-Thomson 3).

Once believing, Marcus—and thereby the audience—begins to come to terms with what has happened by cataloging Lavinia’s injuries, a catalog that demonstrates Cook’s argument about the engagement of metaphoric language.¹⁰³ Marcus begins with simple metaphoric language, comparing her hands to “lopped and hewed . . . branches” and her bloody mouth to a “crimson river of warm blood, / Like to a bubbling fountain stirred with wind” (2.3.17-23). This is the most straightforward “reading” of her physical state, an attempt to reconcile himself and the audience to her injuries. The metaphoric language distances him from the bare facts but also connects the extreme situation to the everyday world, underscoring Pinedo’s point that horror comes from the exaggeration of the terrors implicit in everyday life. This may help him, and the audience, to grasp the situation and encourage participation in the interpretation of the metaphoric language. Marcus demonstrates the audience’s process of observing and analyzing. To describe her physically while she is in front of the audience forces the audience to dwell at length on what they are seeing, to fully recognize and feel its impact.

Marcus's catalog is a red-world blazon that replaces desire with horror in its description of Lavinia's injuries.¹⁰⁴ Marcus's catalog of her dismemberment simultaneously dismembers Lavinia. Using the language of the blazon emphasizes the horror of Lavinia in the contrast between the eloquent language and the mute spectacle before the audience: "a lyrical speech is needed because it is only when an appropriately inappropriate language has been found that the sheer force of contrast between its beauty and Lavinia's degradation begins to express what she has undergone and lost" (Bate 63). Instead of a list of Lavinia's virtues, it is through the blazon that Marcus illustrates what Lavinia has lost. Because the audience (especially an early modern one) can fill in what *should* appear, it is made doubly aware of Lavinia's losses—though the catalog of them and through noticing what the catalog should be. The speech stands in stark contrast to the pitiful object before us. Marcus even catalogs talents the playgoer otherwise would not know to mourn the loss of: sewing, lute playing, and singing (2.3.43-51).¹⁰⁵ The focus on Lavinia's losses stresses that her situation is actually worse than Philomel's. Raped by two attackers instead of one and losing her hands as well as her tongue, Lavinia also has no expectation of a mystical metamorphosis.¹⁰⁶ Revenge and death are the best she can hope for.

However, Marcus performs only superficial readings of Lavinia—reading her surface and producing only shallow conclusions. Marcus's one reach for greater depth draws from Lavinia only an uncertain sign and from Marcus an admission of the uncertainty of analysis based solely on the body. He briefly seems to recognize that she has been raped: "But sure some Tereus hath deflowered thee / And, lest thou shouldst detect him, cut thy tongue" (3.2.26-7). By connecting her story to a literary analogy,

Marcus is moving into a more complex metaphor. The allusion offers the possibility of a narrative for Lavinia, a way to communicate what has happened to her, but Lavinia's response only expresses her innocence and embarrassment; it does not confirm Marcus's supposition. Marcus's descriptions of Lavinia's actions are surprisingly specific: "now thou turn'st away thy face for shame [. . . and] thy cheeks look red as Titan's face, / Blushing to be encountered with a cloud" (2.3.28-32). Marcus seems to recognize the uncertainty of her response, as immediately afterwards he questions his ability to read Lavinia: "Shall I speak for thee? Shall I say 'tis so? / O that I knew thy heart, and knew the beast" (2.3.33-4).¹⁰⁷ He seems to realize that his surface reading yields only uncertain conclusions and, although he once more mentions the Philomel story, he does not attempt any further deductions.

Marcus's speech provides the audience the first step in processing the red world, increasing audience guilt but also moving it towards sympathy with the Andronici. Marcus's speech has more than its fair share of detractors and defenders. Most detractors see a jarring disconnection between his high language and the pitiful sight before him, arguing that his language is an unrealistic reaction.¹⁰⁸ Supporters tend to focus on the speech's beauty, arguing that it increases the pathos of the situation.¹⁰⁹ More important for this argument is how cutting the speech changes an audience's experience. Warner's (1987-88, RSC) production kept all of Marcus's lines on his discovery of Lavinia (Wells 303) and played his suggestion of her deflowering as firm truth, as would be logical when the actress clearly indicates the rape. However, these lines are often significantly cut, as they were in Nunn's (1972, RSC) production (prompt book). Marcus begins to process the red world, helping the audience move from their guilt into sympathy with the

Andronici. Without the bridge between guilt and sympathy, audience community is fragile, at best. Cutting makes it easier for the audience to disengage, turning away from their guilt and horror and not entering into sympathy. A disengaged audience will laugh at the excess and revenge, rather than participating in it, as shown by the laughter elicited by the Barton (1981, RSC) production (Barber “Side”).¹¹⁰ By cutting Marcus’s speech, a production risks a disengaged, fragmented audience that will not long for revenge.

Titus’s acceptance of Lavinia is the next step of transmuting audience guilt over the results of desire into the longing for revenge as it begins to build an onstage family community that the audience is invited to mimic. By the time Marcus brings Lavinia to Titus, Titus has already entered the red world through the condemnation of his sons. Despite this, Titus immediately begins building a new community by emphasizing inclusion and the acceptance of horror and its results. On introducing the injured Lavinia to Titus, Marcus says, “This *was* thy daughter,” a mistake Titus immediately corrects saying, “Why, Marcus, so she *is*” (emphasis mine, 3.1.63-4).¹¹¹ Titus is not ignoring or downplaying Lavinia’s wounds with this correction; she is, in her current state, an apt daughter for a ruined man. With this, Titus admits her back into his household, her ruination a figure for his own.

Titus also repeats the lessons of Marcus, Quintus, and Martius by demanding attention to horror from his onstage spectators, the other members of the family community. He tells Lucius to “arise and look on” Lavinia (3.1.66), repeatedly tells others to “mark” or “look” at her (3.1.111, 144, etc.), and counsels young Lucius not to be afraid (4.1.1-9). For Titus, as for Marcus on finding Lavinia, visual attention is a sign of respect and acceptance; he encourages the other members of the family to follow his

example in recreating a family circle. These repeated instructions are for audience members as well; they too are to reinterpret “looking” at Lavinia as a mark of acceptance and care.

The onstage circle is now held together by grief, demonstrating the “sympathy of woe” that binds them together (3.1.149). Grief serves as an intermediary step for the audience between guilt and the longing for revenge. The Andronici share each other’s sorrows and their community is defined by them. Titus often expresses his sorrow over Lavinia in terms that might seem self-centered but also demonstrate a communal approach to her pain. One such moment occurs when Titus and Marcus echo earlier language of the red world in punning on Lavinia as a deer. Now stripped of the language of desire, the deer/dear puns ring with pity and emotion for the victim rather than the thrill of the hunt. Marcus claims to have found Lavinia “straying in the park, / Seeking to hide herself, as doth the deer / That hath received some unrecuring wound” (3.1.89-91). Titus picks up the reference and again focuses on the interpersonal: “It was my dear, and he that wounded her / Hath hurt me more than had he killed me dead” (3.1.92-3). Despite the distant “It” and past tense “was,” the overall point of the statement is to demonstrate personal sorrow and a shared grief. Titus expresses a similar idea in speaking of the excess of their sorrow. Their grief “disdaineth bounds” and is repeatedly compared to encompassing expanses (the sea, the fire of Troy, etc.), implying its communal nature (3.1.69-70, 72, 220-32). Finally, the play explicitly comments on their shared grief, as when Lucius ask Titus to “cease your tears, for at your grief / See how my wretched sister sobs and weeps” (3.1.137-38). As guilt-ridden outsiders, audience members are drawn into this group through this expression of sympathy, experiencing a pity that helps

cleanse them of their guilt over the displayed result of their violent desire. In accepting Lavinia despite her broken virtue, in accepting her injuries as their own, the Andronici insist on belonging, encouraging audience participation in that community despite and even because of its sorrow and suffering.

The play pushes the audience to its limits on sorrow and sympathy before beginning the drive to revenge. Save for dwelling on Lavinia's injuries, the Andronici's woes follow hard on one another. Although profound, the stage time devoted to the Andronici's grief is relatively short to continue audience engagement. The grief causes guilt and sympathy, emotions the audience wants to be rid of. As for Titus, the grief is just long enough for audience members to tire of it, to want to move out of sorrow and into revenge. The combination of Marcus's continued reliance on the old world's logic and Titus's realization of the red world's logic of blood and excess fully shifts Titus and the audience from sorrow to revenge. This change derives from the exchanges about "reason" and the limits of grief. Marcus asks Titus to "speak with possibility, / And do not break into these deep extremes" (3.1.215-16). Titus, on the other hand, repeatedly compares his sorrow to the sea (3.1.226, 69, 95, etc.), an image of excess: "Is not my sorrows deep, having no bottom? / Then be my passions bottomless with them" (3.1.217-18). Marcus continues to urge limits, asking that Titus "let reason govern thy lament," but that kind of reason has no place here (3.1.219). Titus's answer indicates the excess of the red world but not yet knowing how to navigate it, not yet knowing that revenge is the way to proceed out of the sorrow: "If there were reason for these miseries, / Then into limits could I bind my woes" (3.1.220-21). When Marcus returns to this theme after Titus knows of his sons' execution, he has adopted red-world excess:

now no more will I control thy griefs:

Rend off thy silver hair, thy other hand

Gnawing with thy teeth, and be this dismal sight

The closing up of our most wretched eyes.

Now is a time to storm” (3.1.260-64)

Marcus plays on Titus’s references to the sea in his claim that “Now is a time to storm.” Titus, however, has also progressed in his understanding of the red world. Now, rather than “storming,” he is “still” and laughs. Titus interprets Marcus’s call to “storm” as a call for action, rather than a flood of tears. This is where Titus turns the play and audience toward revenge. Titus refuses the “closing up of our most wretched eyes” and instead asks “You heavy people” to “circle me about” to “let me see what task I have to do” (3.1.276-77). Titus found that “sorrow is an enemy / And would usurp upon my watery eyes / And make them blind with tributary tears” (3.1.268-70). He has learned the repeated lessons of looking. Seeing horror, Titus argues, leads to sorrow. Too much sorrow, however, will prevent you from further looking, which, like the gestures of sympathetic destruction, would be useless. Instead, seeing must be changed into appropriate action, the “task” that the vision calls forth. This parallels the cognitive process of audience members who move from understanding to interpretation; Marcus and Titus guide the audience from an attention to Lavinia’s wounds to a “proper” interpretation of them as a call for revenge.

As with audience communities, the Andronici build a red world community that is based on participation and bound together by a common cause—revenge. To be a part of the community is to participate in the revenge, as demonstrated by its seemingly least

active member, Lavinia. Her participation begins at the first vow for revenge, even before she is able to reveal the names of her attackers.¹¹² Titus tells Lavinia “thou shalt be employed” in the revenge (3.1.282). Titus’s inclusion of her in the acts of revenge parallels his welcoming her back into the Andronici family. The actual task assigned here, to carry Titus’s hand in her teeth, can seem unnecessarily cruel.¹¹³ Each surviving adult member of the Andronici bears a symbol of their mutual sorrows; the sorrows are all communal, rather than individual. Lavinia carrying Titus’s hand can express her sorrow over his loss, mark her own loss of hands, show that she can still be a functional part of the Andronici family’s activities, and demonstrate that her sorrows are, implicitly, also theirs. The task is often the excess that forces people out of the play, to laugh at it, but the laughter can also be read as an expression of sympathetic discomfort, a marker of an audience’s communion with the Andronici. A similar logic may underlie Lavinia’s participation in Chiron and Demetrius’s death. The gesture of inclusion strengthens the *community* of revenge—that the revenge is not purely about or achieved by Titus, though he leads it. Lavinia holding the bowl “’tween her stumps” reminds the audience of the crime even as the punishment is enacted (5.2.182).

Lavinia’s largest task, however, is the one that delays and then fulfils the possibility of revenge—to create a new way of communicating. Lavinia must help Titus and Marcus to develop a new language shared by the Andronici to be able to convey the details of what has happened to her and the names of her attackers. According to Carolyn Williams, “Renaissance presentation of rape victims follows classical tradition in making the victim’s body, living or dead, communicate with an eloquence and credibility beyond the range of words” (106-7). Lavinia’s body does communicate; she “persuades through

the pathos of her sufferings, through non-linguistic means” (Carolyn Asp qtd. Detmer-Goebel 80). Marcus and Titus may read the fact of her rape from her body, but this is only a fraction of the information that she needs to communicate. With only her body to read, the family is trapped in sorrow. As Emily Detmer-Goebel notes, “Lavinia needs to do more than evoke pity; she needs to reveal the rape” for the play to move from sympathy to revenge (80). Lavinia’s communication through a combination of action and metaphor is especially effective in creating community. It combines the cognitive participation of the mirror neurons in watching physical actions with the pleasure of interpreting metaphoric language. Audience members are bound into the Andronici family community by their shared ability to communicate with Lavinia.

This new communication strengthens the onstage and audience community and frees both to find satisfaction in revenge. Because the Andronici need time to learn to communicate, Lavinia is left alive far longer than most of her literary examples, increasing the audience’s guilt, sympathy, and longing for revenge. Until she illustrates her case through Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, it could be argued Lavinia is alive because the men need the information locked in her mind. Once revealed, she, should, if she follows other classical rape stories, kill herself, be killed, or simply die. As Williams puts it, most stories of rape common in the early modern period depict the “necessity of a speedy death” to remove the unchaste woman from the story so that revenge can control the chaos caused by the rape (106). By building in a delay between the attack and the naming of the attackers, Shakespeare leaves the audience in their guilty sympathy. Because Lavinia cannot immediately communicate, there is the fear that the Goths might go unpunished and the audience, therefore, might not be cleansed of its guilt. To be

cleansed, to get out of these negative emotions, the audience needs a red-world method of communication to develop. Audience members are in the same position as Lavinia, knowing, but unable to communicate and therefore unable to affect the action onstage. The delay increases the audience's eventual participation in the acts of revenge because they have been left in anticipation of it.

Although Titus has tried to include Lavinia in other ways, it is learning to read her "signs" that fully connects the Andronici. Many scholars have criticized Titus for assuming he can read Lavinia, arguing that the play gives all authority to the male voice.¹¹⁴ However, these readings place too much weight on two lines—Titus's claims that "I understand her signs" and "I can interpret all her martyred signs" (3.1.145, 3.2.36). While Titus does attempt more interpretation than Marcus, the fly-killing scene makes clear this is because Titus is determined to *learn* how to communicate with Lavinia. Titus commits to finding a new method of communication:

I will learn thy thought.

In thy dumb action will I be as perfect

As begging hermits in their holy prayers.

Thou shalt 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. (3.2.39-45)

Comparing himself to a school boy in his learning and to a hermit's fervor in his dedication to the task, Titus emphasizes repetition, "practice," as the key to developing a means of gestural sign language.¹¹⁵ He is the patient "listener" that Tamora refused to be

and humbles himself to give Lavinia a means of communication. He does not speak over her—he offers to be her voice.

Bodies provide one piece of this new language, but, as Marcus has already demonstrated at the exhibition of Lavinia, this piece of red-world communication is inexact. When Lavinia first hears that Martius and Quintus are condemned for Bassianus's death, Titus sees “fresh tears” on her cheeks (3.1.112-14). Marcus tries to read her body but repeats his earlier action—speaking across her rather than directly addressing her—as though she is deaf as well as mute. He presumes she cannot communicate with them: “Perchance she weeps because they killed her husband, / Perchance because she knows them innocent” (3.1.115-16). By phrasing his “reading” this way, Marcus prevents Lavinia from being able to provide more accurate information. Titus, on the other hand, is more attentive and interactive. He too begins with questioning—“If they did kill thy husband”—but then quickly turns to reading the evidence Lavinia provides: “No, no, they would not do so foul a deed: / Witness the sorrow that their sister makes” (3.1.117-20). But this evidence is apparently not enough. Marcus and Titus do not rush Lavinia to “witness” in front of Saturninus and Tamora because her meanings are too uncertain, still open to misinterpretation. They are communicated only within the Andronici, the beginning of a red-world, Andronici method of communication that will draw them (and the audience) even closer together.¹¹⁶

The Andronici fully develop their red-world language in the scene of reading Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In this scene, the family moves through several pieces of red-world communication—literary analogy, questioning, and gesture—before adapting old tools into new uses to create a language capable of expressing complexity. Only with the

development of a system of communication capable of precise meanings do the Andronici and audience move from the longing for revenge to action. Lavinia takes the first step by allowing her body to be read and bringing forth the literary analogy in an attempt to make her meaning more clear. Titus uses questioning and interpretation to interpret her various “signs” while Marcus, although he begins in his previous style, learns from Titus’s approach and provides the final piece of the language—red-world writing. Even young Lucius is given a role, as he provides the books and captures Marcus and Titus’s attention. The combination creates a fully functioning red-world language within the Andronici, the foundation for community.

In chasing down Lucius and the *Metamorphoses*, Lavinia accepts Titus’s offer to learn. Now forced to be silent, Lavinia has learned the importance of communication and pursues it with such intensity that she frightens young Lucius (4.1.1-28).¹¹⁷ Her largest “task” in the pursuit of revenge is to make her meaning unambiguous by taking an active role rather than passively relying on her body to transmit meaning for her.¹¹⁸ Lavinia is attempting to rectify the imprecision of reading a body, but to do this she needs a willing pupil to make meaning with her; persistence is not enough. Titus’s commitment to learning how to interpret her signs has its crucial fulfillment in Lavinia’s sharing the Philomel story, as he proves an able student and co-developer of meaning. Warner (1987-88, RSC) displayed Lavinia’s engagement by having her repeatedly stop Titus from wandering off after she found the *Metamorphoses* (production notes). Lavinia clearly guided the communication here, but the choice undercut Titus’s offer. Alexander (2003, RSC) chose to underline her dedication to the task as Lavinia was “reduced to

kneeing her little nephew in the stomach” to get him to drop his books (Taylor “How to” 16).

Although reading gestures and asking questions are the introductory stages of the red-world language, they reveal much of the information that Lavinia wants Marcus and Titus to know. They are not less useful than the writing that will develop at the end of the scene. Marcus begins the scene by attempting to read Lavinia’s body. Despite reading intentional, conscious gestures, Marcus illustrates the desperate uncertainty of body-reading. Gesture, although more communicative than merely interpreting an unresponsive body or near-reflexes like blushing and tears, does not provide much detail, depth, or surety. This parallels the audience members’ cognitive process, which needs language to reach similar conclusions from the broad range of possible interpretations inspired by actions. Titus and Marcus first misread Lavinia’s intentions, with Marcus still judging her current acts by her past behavior. Marcus suggests that Lavinia searches *Metamorphoses* “for love of her that’s gone,” Lavinia’s sister-in-law, rather than associating it with the Philomel story he mentioned at the reveal (4.1.43). He doubts his ability to read Lavinia when she “lifts . . . up her arms in sequence” (4.1.37). Marcus begins to interpret this gesture based on Titus’s previous suggestion of a Tarquin-esque rapist, but interrupts his own expression of certainty with an alternative, incorrect reading, underlining the ambiguity of gesture: “I think she means that there were more than one / Confederate in the fact. Ay, more there was— / Or else to heaven she heaves them for revenge” (4.1.38-40).

Many critics have focused on Marcus’s strange inability to recognize that Lavinia is looking for the Philomel story and argue that this scene reveals the rape to Titus (and

perhaps confirms it for Marcus). I would argue, however, that the text, like “realistic” productions, makes clear that Titus already knows of Lavinia’s rape before she finds the Philomel story. When Lavinia turns to the story, Titus evidences no surprise or discovery; he comments, “rape, I fear, was root of thy annoy” (4.1.49). This rather offhand statement has nothing about it to connote that this is a new thought for Titus. Instead, this scene confirms details, details crucial to actually acting on the previous vow for revenge; it is a scene about the development of red-world communication. Rather than firmly leaping to conclusions and taking Lavinia’s voice from her, Titus asks questions: “shall I read?” “wert thou thus surprised,” “What Roman lord . . . durst do the deed” (4.1.46, 51, 62). He emphasizes her confirmation of his interpretations rather than usurping her story. He focuses on specifics, stressing the rape but also confirming where and how the incident occurred: “wert thou *thus* surprised, sweet girl, / Ravished and wronged as Philomela was, / Forced in the ruthless, vast and gloomy woods?” (emphasis mine, 4.1.51-3). Unlike Marcus at the reveal, Titus frames this comparison as a direct question of Lavinia and watches her for an answer. Marcus’s omission allows for Titus to correctly read Lavinia’s meaning, again showing him as a leader and reifying his decision to accept her back into the family.

Titus continues with particulars but lapses into questions framed in such a way that Lavinia cannot answer them: “What Roman lord it was durst do the deed, / Or slunk not Saturnine, as Tarquin erst, / That left the camp to sin in Lucrece’ bed?” (4.1.62-64). Having seen Lavinia’s ability to communicate with Titus, Marcus now adjusts how he uses his conservative approach. Marcus’s literalness and reliance on the past is useful, for he turns an old tool to new use. Following Lavinia’s lead in using a book, Marcus

creates a new, red-world method of writing. Appropriately grotesque and horror inducing, the method also combines gesture, excess (a stick instead of a pen), and writing. Its product is blunt and effective. Although she writes only three words, they communicate far more specific information and accuracy than the other methods tried. Oddly, the most complex and useful method of red-world communication is a “sign” Chiron and Demetrius supposedly took away from her. Rather than Marcus or Titus having to read Lavinia, she is able to “speak” her thoughts. That this communication comes from her may be made more emphatic through two production choices. First, Lavinia might grasp the stick in her mouth and stumps as the stage directions suggest. Few productions actually follow this stage direction for Lavinia. Instead, she usually holds the stick between her head and shoulder (as in the productions of Alexander, Warner, and Brook) (performance notes).¹¹⁹ This symbolic repetition of the attack also reminds the audience of why she cannot sew (as Philomel did) or speak her accusations. The squeamish reaction it provokes may also be useful—the audience is again reminded of its guilt even while relieved of it as Lavinia names her rapists and begins the path to revenge. Yet, this is also a less readable sign for the audience than her gestures. Seldom legible for those who can see the stage and far less meaningful than an actress’s actions, her writing tells the audience nothing new. For a modern audience, the choice of “Stuprum” is also problematic, since few would know its meaning.¹²⁰ Her most precise sign, then, must come through layers of “interpretation”—Titus reading it from the stage and Marcus translating it into English (4.1.78-9).

The humor blended into the horror and sorrow also keeps the audience engaged in the red world, a touch that increases the feelings of loss but also lightens the audience’s

guilt. Grotesque humor is one of the lighter pleasures of horror, one that relies on the audience's interest in recognizing horror's artifice. One reviewer described "gulping down the giggles" as "the obvious self-defence" (Y.M.). Warner's (1987-88, RSC) production was praised for its use of laughter: "The audience is allowed to laugh, but at the right moments, and is made to see that here laughter need neither be innocent nor happy (H.R. Woudhuysen "Savage").¹²¹ The punning on hands lost, when the audience knows the actors have not been mutilated; the chef's hat for the final meal; and Chiron and Demetrius suspended upside down on stage to be bled—these moments call attention to the artificiality of the horror, allowing the audience to take pleasure in it.¹²² These moments allow for the "awareness of artifice" that, according to Pinedo, "is not a flaw but an essential ingredient of recreational terror" (55). This maintains audience members' interpretative participation. Without the humorous marking of artificiality, audience members might refuse to enter and participate in the red world by leaving, looking away, or fainting. The text provides its own moments of pulling the audience out of its participation in horror and the feelings of terror to encourage it to continue participating in the bloody revenge. These moments also have a Brechtian effect, as they are reminders to the audience of its own power. Audience members are told again that they create meaning here—that the red world exists only through their participation in creating it. This is also part of the pleasure of such markers of artificiality.

Lavinia's death, however, has not been played for laughs onstage. First and separated from the rapid sequence of Tamora, Titus, and Saturninus's deaths, it also stands alone in not being an act of revenge. As Saturninus claims, this act is "unnatural and unkind" but only in the logic of the real world. In the red world, Titus is belatedly

following his literary precedents. Philomel's story is no longer accurate, for Lavinia cannot hope for that kind of *Metamorphoses*. To live on after Titus would end the "renew[al] of his sorrows" that seeing Lavinia causes, but not end Lavinia's suffering. As Titus says, "Die Lavinia, and thy shame with thee, / And with thy shame thy father's sorrow die" (5.3.45-6). Within the red world, Lavinia's death is for "A reason mighty, strong, and effectual"; it is logical and surprising only in being so delayed as to be unexpected when it does happen and in being so public (5.3.42). Like Lucrece, Lavinia's shames are publicized before her death to explain and justify the revenge. Lavinia's death also cuts Titus's last firm hold with sorrow to allow him to give everything to finish his revenge. Tender yet violent, most stagings replicate for modern audiences the meaning of Titus's (admittedly inaccurate) allusion to his version of the *Virginius* story. Brian Cox (Titus) recalls the rehearsal that creating the staging of this scene in Warner's (1987-88, RSC) production:

I asked her [Lavinia] to sit on my knee and as she was sitting there I realized that this image, this classic image of parent and child, was also an image of vulnerability and of potential brutality. You could do incredible damage, you could poke somebody's eyes out, when they are that close, trusting you as a little child, a little animal, might trust you. It suddenly occurred to me that this would be perfect for breaking her neck, this close and this intimate. There was something about the image that was tender but at the same time ultimately brutal, and I started really from that point. The whole of the creation of Titus came from that one image of a man

sitting in a chef's outfit with a little girl on this knee about to break her neck like a chicken. (340)

Productions tend to highlight Titus's tenderness and Lavinia's acceptance or lack of fearful anticipation, as the example above demonstrates.¹²³ The second reaction is less consistent with the text, however, since the play makes a point of Lavinia's learning—she should fully understand the reference to Virginius. This moment can seem like a rational solution to a modern audience, which demonstrates the power the play has to build sympathy for the Andronici and a longing for revenge. Most often, audiences display Titus's calm sadness rather than the (perhaps feigned) shock of Saturninus and Tamora. Bailey's (2006, Globe) audience showed sadness rather than crying out or shifting or turning away in disgust (production notes). For this to be a communal moment relies a great deal on the production choices, more so than many other moments. The staging must create a "reason" for Titus to kill Lavinia that carries the weight of the text for the original audience for the audience community to hold.

If the longing for revenge has been well built, an audience should delight in the final downward spiral into blood. Audience members should gloat together at Chiron and Demetrius's downfall, laugh together at Titus's emergence at the feast in a chef's hat, anticipate Tamora's every bite, and remain engaged throughout the final bloodbath. Unlike Lavinia's reveal, audiences seldom turn away from or faint at the final carnage. In the Globe 2006 Front of House reports, for example, many people fainted on seeing Lavinia after her rape and mutilation. None are reported to have fainted during the final scene. If audience members do disconnect from the longing for revenge it is usually revealed in laughter at either the excess of the genre or its staging. The laughter might be

at the horror itself, an indication of anticipation finally satiated. That kind of laughter may indicate audience members getting exactly what they want from the play—the pleasure of horror. Alternately, laughter might arise as a kind of congratulatory relief that the Andronici have finally achieved their revenge, indicating audience pleasure in revenge, in consummation, and in the final cleansing of guilt.

The ending of *Titus Andronicus* resembles a postmodern horror film more than most revenge tragedies. According to Pinedo,

The classical horror film constructs a secure universe characterized by narrative closure, one in which (hu)man agency (human agency understood as male agency) prevails and the normative order is restored by film's end. In contrast, violating narrative closure has become *de rigueur* for the postmodern genre. (italics mine, 29)

In postmodern horror, “either the monster triumphs or the outcome is uncertain” (Pinedo 31). While the carnivalesque green world facilitates a return to order, the red world's effect is a less certain order, a less certain cleansing. While those who actively injured the Andronici are dead and the Andronici who were visibly altered by the red world have been lost to it, this is not a closed ending. The possibility of a sequel exists in Aaron's uncertain future death, in the survival of young Lucius (now well schooled in the lessons of horror), and the existence of Aaron and Tamora's son (4.1.107-22). Other contaminations of the red world appear in Rome's new leadership. Again the popular choice (see 4.4.72-6, 5.3.136-39), Lucius is not of the previous emperor's house and comes at the head of a Goth army. Marcus, too, still demonstrates lingering contamination of the red world in being unable to speak of his experiences there (5.3.87-

94). They cannot be incorporated into the reemerging real world. The ending confirms again Pinedo's point—that horror comes from the terror implicit in everyday life writ plain.

Chapter 3

Desiring Difference

One of the areas of greatest change between early modern and twentieth- and twenty-first-century audiences is in their expectations of and reactions to Jewish characters. Arguments for the various ways early modern English audiences understood *The Merchant of Venice*'s Shylock or *The Jew of Malta*'s Barabas are often introduced by remarks on this vast distance. As one reviewer responded to the 1964 RSC production of *The Jew of Malta*, it "is only acceptable as long as we can put the twentieth century out of our minds, and treat Barabas as nothing more than part of a remote Elizabethan fantasy" (John Gross "The Jew" 9). This chapter questions the ability to "put the twentieth century out of our minds." The very acknowledgment of this need for distance demonstrates that the specter of the Holocaust overlies all productions of *The Jew of Malta* and *The Merchant of Venice* for those currently producing the play and for those now watching. Although *The Jew of Malta* is seldom produced, it has seen two Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) productions, in 1964-65 and 1987, more than many other non-Shakespearean early modern plays. *The Merchant of Venice*, on the other hand, remains surprisingly popular.¹²⁴ I posit that these plays continue to please audience members despite their affront to modern attitudes because these plays cause them to long for a single, tolerant group onstage. The formation of such a group would, through imaginative participation, draw audience members together into a community. Both plays build this longing for a tolerant community by separating Jews and Christians and then offering a desire-based possibility for reconciliation. Abigail, daughter of Barabas, and Jessica, daughter of Shylock, are desired by Christian suitors. Their blend of

Christian and Jewish traits is eroticized, emphasizing the possibility for a diverse society based on their marriages. Although both plays suggest the possibility for tolerance, causing the audience members to long for its fulfillment, both deny it. Nevertheless, a few productions work against the text of *The Merchant of Venice* to create a society at the end of the play that incorporates difference.

Both post-Holocaust productions of *The Jew of Malta*—by the RSC in 1964-65 (director Clifford Williams) and in 1987 (director Barry Kyle)—pushed the play toward melodrama and black farce.¹²⁵ According to reviewer Herbert Kretzmer, Williams's choice to stage the play as a “dazzling farce” worked: it “uncorked repeated bursts of loud, lusty laughter” (“Horror”). In the only mention of the play's possible anti-Semitism in any of the reviews collected by the RSC, Kretzmer simultaneously acknowledged the play's possible offence and dismissed it: “This is an evening of the most brutal satire in which nobody—Jew, Gentile, infidel, monk, or nun—is spared. The charge is brilliantly led by Clive Revill as the Mediterranean Fagin” (“Horror”). No reviewer, it seems, was willing to address what would seem to be obvious: that a depiction of a “Fagin” could be reviewed and apparently appreciated as unproblematically funny. But perhaps that was because this Fagin was in a farce. Few reviews mentioned the play's possible anti-Semitism, as though the genre erased the need to address the play's content, and the productions were popular. Reception by these audiences seemed to be uncolored by the Holocaust. The only “horrors” of the play were its lack of fine poetry (a reported audience complaint in Barker's review) and its bloodthirstiness (as in Kretzmer's review). There is also a clear preference in the reviews for Williams's (1964-65, RSC) *Jew of Malta* over the paired production of *The Merchant of Venice*, perhaps because the

first is allowed to be less complex in its pleasures (though some of the negativity arose from the novelty of seeing *The Jew of Malta* in comparison to the apparently uninspiring rendition of *The Merchant of Venice*). Reviewers clearly preferred the clear-cut lines of the melodramatic villain over the sympathetic, complex character. John Gross and Philip Hope-Wallace seem to be the only reviewers of Williams's production to truly question the kinds of pleasures this play and production offered post-Holocaust viewers ("Jew" and "Jew"). Gross's review for the *Jewish Chronicle*, the conclusion of which is quoted above, began with the sub-headline, "After 40 years in limbo, this crudely anti-Jewish play has been revived" ("Jew"). The play being "inferior . . . means that Marlowe sets much less of a problem for Jewish readers and theatergoers than Shakespeare. It is impossible not to think of Shylock with mixed feelings; but it is tempting to write off Barabas altogether as mere unsavoury nonsense" (Gross "Jew"). The review also states,

[b]ut unfortunately it is impossible to treat 'The Jew of Malta' as a straightforward farce, particularly after all that has happened in the forty-odd years since it was last performed . . . However, I don't think the current revival will do any harm, provided the play is set firmly in its historical context. By and large, the Aldwych production is a good one, which can be enjoyed even while it disturbs. (Gross "Jew")

Like Gross, Hope-Wallace included a dismissal of such issues—"We are told 'The Jew of Malta' has not been done in London for forty years. Small wonder when you think what has been done to the Jews themselves in the last thirty." He asked audience members to "leave aside the preposterous lip smacking anti-Jewishness"—but, for him at least, the "anti-Jewishness" is not easily set aside. While he stated that "my early indignation at

the way the play seemed to be played for laughs—and played tentatively for laughs, which seemed doubly culpable—wore into a tired acceptance,” he also damned with faint praise: “Merry laughter, some of it sounding rather false, was brought in to disinfect the ugly anti-Jewish, anti-foreigner, anti-human jibes” (Hope-Wallace “Jew”).

By 1987, the references to “Fagin” have faded out and there are more explicit acknowledgments of the play as anti-Semitic, but Melanie Phillips is the only reviewer of the 1988 production to directly address the possible anti-Semitism of an audience that “can clutch its sides in helpless laughter at a vicious caricature of the Jew as devil” (“Society”). She argued that the choice to make *The Jew of Malta* a farce “distances the audience from the message of the play and most crucially, enables reviewers to claim that the anti-semitism [*sic*] is thus diminished” (“Society”).¹²⁶ By emphasizing the humor, “any sense of Barabas’s tragic dignity as the victim of Maltese rapacity—a dignity which is in Marlowe’s text and provides the dramatic justification for the revenge Barabas then wrecks—is entirely removed” (Phillips “Society”).¹²⁷ Perhaps Irving Wardle put the contrast best, however, by restoring at least some motive to Alun Armstrong’s Barabas:

it is not until he has been abandoned by the rest of the Jewish community as well as fleeced by the Christians that he snaps. By that time, he has the audience on his side, and the atrocities he commits are an exuberant comic fiction in contrast to the cold political villainies in the background.

Playing for sympathy does not come into it, but the zestful variety of Armstrong’s performance is almost endearing. (“Swarm”)

Few reviews bother to mention Barabas’s motives for his acts, though nearly all recounted his list of atrocities. There was no domineering Christian state, nor even a

miserly Barabas in most of these accounts. Instead, the reviews followed the lead of the production, presenting a Barabas as hollow as a melodrama would have him be. The general popularity of *The Jew of Malta* in performance raises disturbing questions: Do audience members perhaps prefer Jews as villains? Or wish that villainy, supposedly, can be clearly detangled from Judaism in these plays?

More so than for many of Shakespeare's plays, critics' responses to *The Merchant of Venice* seem to be guided by contemporary understandings of what the play is "about." Performances immediately after World War II and the Holocaust saw the play as, primarily, a romantic comedy—the word used most often is "fairytale"—with a bit about a moneylender, a moneylender whose Jewishness gradually increases in importance.¹²⁸ This is not to suggest that reviewers did not notice that Shylock is a Jewish character, as they and the productions made that clear; instead, his religion was his identity—they were uncomplicated and corresponding facts. In these productions and reviews "Who is Shylock?" and "What is Shylock?" had the same, straightforward answer. There were very few references to any anti-Semitic content in the play or to any relation between the play's content and recent history. It is startling to realize, however, that the premier Shakespeare company in the UK produced *The Merchant of Venice* for fifteen years without connections being drawn between it and recent history, yet the change to emphasize historical relevancy demonstrates Peter Hall's impact on the company and the New Wave's impact on British theatre. The RSC's 1956 production, directed by Margaret Webster, was the first to refer to the Holocaust by having both Jessica and Shylock wear prominent felt Stars of David, but reviews of the production omitted any reference to this, instead repeatedly describing Shylock as the "representative of his race"

(A.M.).¹²⁹ This production was developed before Hall's reconception of the Stratford company and before the sea change in English theatre that began with John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* the same year.

By Michael Langham's 1960 RSC production, however, many reviewers connect the play and contemporary issues; pure "fairytale" productions of any Shakespeare play by the RSC, Globe, and NT would take many years to resurface. Reviews of the RSC's 1960 production were the first to begin to consider an audience's response to the anti-Semitism of the plot. The most explicit consideration is J.W.M. Thompson:

In some ways this familiar play is a difficult proposition nowadays.

Shakespeare's ingenious tricks of plot long ago proved stale. And, more seriously, the brazen anti-Semitism of the Venetians disturbs today where once, no doubt, it drew a cheer from the mob. Today we look uneasily for the relevance to us of this ugly clash between Jew and Christian.

Everything depends in the end on what is made of Shylock, the hated and despised Jew.

This is also the first production for which reviewers noted distasteful Christians. Creating more sympathetic, fully rounded Shylock (and Peter O'Toole's 1960 Shylock was famously affecting) went hand-in-hand with both a demonizing of the Christian characters and a self-conscious awareness of the effect of the anti-Semitism of the plot on the audience. Edmund Gardner raised the question of a post-Holocaust response to the play, only to disregard it. In larger type at the beginning of the article he posed these questions: "Why does 'The Merchant of Venice' remain one of the best-known and most popular of Shakespeare's plays? It can hardly be the theme—Jew baiting Christian,

Christian baiting Jew—for so many of us are still too conscious of the horrors of Auschwitz and Belsen to be amused by that sort of thing” (“Virile”). His answer, however, is not what one might expect, as it entirely evades religion and recent history: “*The Merchant* does more than just entertain an audience. Matters of great purpose are brought before us; not simply friendship, but the degrees of friendship; the bonds of love; the problems of usury; the plea for mercy. To these we add the tremendously strong drawing of character, and more than a pinch of fairy-tale romance” (“Virile”). It is impossible to unpick the cause and effect here, whether a general awareness of anti-Semitism resulted in both the production highlighting it and the reviews noting it or whether the increase in anti-Semitism in the production alone resulted in the reviewers’ new attention to this aspect of the play. As with most history, there was a not a single moment when this change occurred, but there was a rather dramatic shift in the *bulk* of the reviews between the Webster’s and Langham’s productions.¹³⁰ Both were popular, but O’Toole’s detailed and finely-crafted Shylock was an individual who was Jewish, rather than a “representative of his race” Shylock.

Reviews of Clifford Williams’s 1965 RSC production, in which Eric Porter played a purely villainous Shylock, seem to move backwards, usually noting the plot’s anti-Semitism by mentioning only once, obscurely, the Holocaust and then by reflecting on the paired production of *The Jew of Malta*. Penelope Gilliatt’s review was the most explicit in analyzing what the audience’s pleasure means:

We fear our sadism too much to declare it publicly. The sick joke is our only sanction for it, and this is really what the production is: a mechanism of cunning coarseness built on the sick joke’s fundamental tacit

recognition that we are all going to die, which ropes us so firmly together on the cliff face that it no longer seems indecent to laugh at a caricature of a Jew like Marlowe's or to admit the mysterious funniness of nuns

Although begun with Langham's 1960 production, it was Jonathan Miller's 1970 National Theatre (NT) production fully and explicitly emphasizes the anti-Semitism of the play's Christians. Miller, explaining his choice to set the play in the Victorian era, acknowledged that "the whole issue of anti-Semitism [*sic*] becomes much more ominous and dramatic when one sees it just half a century before the holocaust [*sic*]" (Interview 3). Reviewers of John Barton's 1978 RSC production consistently noted the "troubling" aspects of the play for a post-Holocaust audience and by the 1980s reviewers often presumed that the play *is* anti-Semitic. The presumptions about what the play is "about" shifted. Oddly, there is an inverse rise in Portia's prominence in the reviewers' depictions of the play. As the importance of Shylock's Jewishness increased, so too did the importance of the trial scene. More and more reviews focused on that scene as a keynote of a production as both sides of the forced conversion come to be regarded as central to the play. Even as Shylock ceded column inches to Portia, his religious difference took center-stage as the primary theme of the play.

By the 1980s, almost all reviewers mention the play's possible anti-Semitism, though with predictably mixed conclusions, and many address the differences between post-Holocaust and early modern audience expectations. Most agree that *The Merchant of Venice* "gives you that special sense of discomfort and uneasy excitement which you experience when an apparently remote argument unexpectedly cuts close to the bone" (Peter "Putting"), but reviewers now often suggest that the Holocaust will automatically

come to mind on watching any production of *The Merchant*, the antithesis of the fairytale understanding of the play from the 1950s. Michael Billington's comment demonstrates the implicit attitudes of the other reviews:

No doubt about it: *The Merchant of Venice* presents problems in the modern theatre. We will apparently sit stoically through a dramatized atrocity report like *Titus Andronicus*. But we know too much about the persecution of the Jews not to shift a little uneasily in our seats at *The Merchant*, and wonder, each time we see it, how the production will avoid the taint of anti-Semitism. (Billington "Merchant")

Those behind the productions began to agree. Bill Alexander's 1987 RSC production chose to stage a physical attack on Shylock, enacting the spitting and kicking later attributed to Antonio. While reviewers divided over whether this was a sympathetic Shylock, these reviews demonstrated a marked increase in mentions of Nazi parallels in comparison to earlier productions. Peter Rhodes described the atmosphere this way: "Sher's Shylock is diminutive and lame, cursed and spat upon by the tall, arrogant young bucks of Venice with all the fearless enthusiasm of a bunch of Brownshirts" ("Power"). Director David Thacker saw his 1993 RSC production as a necessary post-Holocaust reinterpretation of the play:

My overriding priority as a director is to serve the playwright . . . I have come to the conclusion that, in the light of 20th-century experience, Shakespeare would be likely to withdraw permission for the play to be performed in its present form. If he were to rehearse it with us, I believe he would rewrite it . . . I am against rewriting Shakespeare and

manipulating or distorting his plays to suit current tastes or particular ideologies can be anathema to those who truly love his work, but I have only been able to direct *The Merchant of Venice* [*sic*] by shifting its perspective. Our re-emphasis crucially involves Shylock, for our Shylock is a post-holocaust Jew in a post-holocaust Western world.

(“Understanding”)

This choice was generally well received (Benedict Nightingale being the prime exception) and John Peter actually claimed that Thacker’s production “ought finally to lay to rest the venerable nonsense that this is an anti-Semitic play” (“A Lear”).

The strongest explicitly post-Holocaust reactions, however, were for a production that pitted the audience against the critics: the first production of *The Merchant of Venice* at the new Globe theatre in 1998. Audiences, acting as though they were at a theme park rather than a theatre, made the production’s early modern staging ring with modern anti-Semitism. Actors seem unsure how to handle the space and the presumption that it necessitated a “large” playing style led to a Shylock who was close to caricature (production notes). As reviewer Anthony Julius reports:

The audience at the performance I attended sank to the occasion, unselfconsciously celebrating Shylock’s defeat and the lovers’ triumph . . . The Globe’s audience responded to this straightforward account of an anti-Semitic play with a troubling enthusiasm. It moved them as melodrama, enlisting them in the lovers’ camp, setting them against the spoilsport Jew with his funny accent and murderous schemes. It was indecent. (“Theatre I”)

His report was echoed by several others and many reviews report that, at the reviewed performance at least, there was laughter at Shylock's forced conversion.¹³¹ Critics and audiences alike, it seems, were distracted enough by the experience of the Globe that they focused on it more than on the production or play. For Rebecca Gatward's 2007 Globe production, the audience seemed more educated—both about the play from things like “Understanding *The Merchant of Venice*: The New Essential Guide” inserted into *The Independent* and from repeat experiences at the theatre. Yet, one review notes that “Some first-nighters reported the crowd jeering Shylock, Borat-style, but last weekend it was the man-on-man snog [between Antonio and Bassanio] that drew an ‘Euuw’ from the Globe groundlings, always only an interval drink away from a lynch mob” (David Jays). Yet the production was on sounder footing; Shylock may have been “diminished,” but he also wore a yellow badge on his gabardine; this production avoided caricature and gave the audience a blatantly unfriendly context for any anti-Semitic laughter (Jays).

Overall, directors and audiences have not been able to “put the twentieth century out of [. . . their] minds” nor do *The Jew of Malta* or *The Merchant of Venice* seem to be “nothing more than a remote late-Elizabethan fantasy.” Literary scholar Marion Perret argues that

[b]ecause current preconceptions are different from the Elizabethan ones, productions of *The Merchant of Venice* today are often shaped defensively. Directors have to deal with our assumption or fear that the play is anti-Semitic; accusations of prejudice dog the play because our consciousness, scarred by modern persecution of the Jews, encourages a stubborn tendency to see this Jew as symbolic of all Jews. (264)

Why, then, are *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Jew of Malta* so well received? If we cannot put the twentieth century out of our minds, what makes these plays acceptable? The answer, I will argue, lies in a specifically post-Holocaust performance effect—that each play stimulates a longing for and then denies the possible construction of an overarching group that incorporates without eliminating difference. A modern audience’s understanding of and participation in difference, especially religious difference, has shifted. This change is not merely an acknowledgment of the more religiously diverse and secular society of modern playgoers. While even early modern audiences would have arrived at performances with varying levels of religiosity and religious identity, the Holocaust is now the dominant force shaping audience reactions to “Jewishness” in these plays.¹³² Although the early modern associations with and definitions of Judaism are no longer prominent in a post-Holocaust audience, the plays’ divisions are based on an underlying early-modern-Christian frame of reference.¹³³ As a result, the constant reification of divisions between the two onstage societies of the plays is in tension with the effect of these divisions on modern audiences, the longing for a single cohesive but tolerant group. This group could incorporate both Jews and Christians while allowing each to retain their individuality and difference. The plays inspire in modern audiences a longing for a coherent group tolerant of difference unthinkable within the playtext as this drive is derived from the lessons of the Holocaust about the dangers of separate societies. This is essentially a longing for the kind of community queer desires create in the theatre—one that retains difference yet offers the pleasure of sharing experiences.

Audience longing for community begins with the plays' construction of two separate identity communities founded on definitions of Jew and Christian. These communities are groups founded on a single portion of a member's identity—his or her religion—and often overwhelm other identity categories held in common (such as gender). “Community” in this chapter, then, will be used in three ways. “Audience community” continues to refer to the open, loose association in part built by queer desires. “Identity communities” refer to the conservative, tight-knit, identity-based, divided groups on stage. Finally, “tolerant communities” will also be used; parallel to the audience community, this is what the separate groups on stage cause the audience to long for. This longing takes two forms—audience members wish to see tolerant community realized on stage and to participate in it. Although audience members are participating in one level of audience community already in their conscious and unconscious interpretations of the stage, these plays use that engagement to build up a longing for dual participation in tolerant community—in its staging as well as simply enjoying participation. “Community” is used throughout to demonstrate this interconnectedness of the groups staged and the audience members' experience.

The audience members' longing for tolerant community in *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Jew of Malta* begins with the creation of distinct Jewish and Christian identity-based communities. These communities are founded on early modern conceptions of Jew and Christian that are especially repugnant to post-Holocaust audiences. Much of the post-Holocaust critical work on *The Jew of Malta* and *The Merchant of Venice* focuses on early modern conceptions of Judaism.¹³⁴ James Shapiro's seminal work—*Shakespeare and the Jews*—brings together many of these

considerations, all of which emphasize one effect—the intended separation of Jew from Christian. The divide was sometimes geographical, such as the physical separation and control of ghettos or banishment, but more often a malleable blend of physical and ethnic characteristics. Jews were accredited with “large hooked noses, red or dark curly hair, dark skin, hidden cranial horns . . . or prehensile tails, an unpleasant odour—the *foetor judaicus*—and the ability of both male and female Jews to lactate and menstruate” (Hirsch 122). But these many elements do not result in a “reliable” definition of “Judaism.” As Shapiro demonstrates, the early modern collection of possible of “Jewish” traits was a move away from a medieval certainty about the division between Jew and Christian (7). The many traits signal an anxiety about newly unstable categories and uncertain boundaries. As Shapiro points out, “The challenge of preserving these boundaries was intensified by the difficulty of pointing to physical characteristics that unmistakably distinguished English Christians from Jews” (7). In each play, the dividing line between the two communities, even when concerning physical traits, is in need of constant reification. The repetition necessary to uphold the perceived difference also demonstrates the uncertainty and artificiality of the division—the constant expression of how different the two communities are gestures to how similar they might otherwise appear to be, how easily individuals from one community might slide into the other. There is no solid definition of “Jew” or “Christian” in these plays, but a shifting “symbolic Jewishness,” the function of which is to divide two communities based on perceived differences in identity.¹³⁵ This shifting, however, may be perceived by modern audience members as a space for possibility, if Jew cannot be distinguished from Christian, then tolerant community seems all the more possible.

The Jew of Malta begins with a mixed community but quickly constructs a division. Barabas is defined by Machevill's prologue as a Jew, though the play presents Barabas's version of this as primarily an individual rather than a group identity. The play begins without a cohesive Jewish community. On hearing of the approach of the Turkish fleet in 1.1, the other Jewish merchants "fear their coming will afflict us all," an expression of concern for either the entire town or other Jews (1.1.155). While Barabas includes himself in the group, referring to the other Jews as "countrymen" and presuming that the men "flock" together because some new "accident's betided to the Jews" (1.1.142-44), he also disagrees with them on this vital point: "Why let 'em come, so they come not to war; / Or let 'em war, so we be conquerors" (1.1.149-50).

Wealth is a part of Barabas's definition of Judaism, at least as important to his self-definition as his religious beliefs. It is questionable whether this "Jew of Malta" has religion as part of his identity, or whether, like Machevill, he "count[s] religion but a childish toy" (Prologue 14). Although Barabas seldom mentions his identity without connecting it to wealth, the relationship between the two is more complex than in *The Merchant of Venice*. Barabas is not a usurer but a merchant; he is more Antonio than Shylock. Yet, Barabas attributes his wealth to his Judaism—"There are the blessings promised to the Jews, / And herein was old Abram's happiness" (1.1.104-5)—and others' hatred of him to both his religion and its resulting wealth:

Who hateth me but for my happiness?
 Or who is honoured now but for his wealth?
 Rather had I a Jew be hated thus,
 Than pitied in a Christian poverty. (1.1.111-14)

Certainly, this is not a deep understanding of or commitment to Judaism, but Barabas also includes himself in the catalog of a “scattered nation” of wealthy Jews (1.1.120-126) and claims that Jews and wealth are intimately interconnected, for they are “wealthy every one” (1.1.126). In the 1987 production, Alun Armstrong delivered these lines with an aspect of questioning and wonder, as though not understanding why anyone would choose Christianity and its accompanying poverty (production notes). It is interesting to note that Marlowe is directly addressing the reasons Jews are hated, rather than merely delivering a stereotype. There is a bit of metadrama here, a recognition of the stereotypes that Barabas embodies, is perceived to embody, or comes to embody. Although Barabas links Judaism and wealth, as does the play as a whole, the consistent use of the first person plural in this speech makes clear that he sees his Judaism as foundational to his identity even though he distances himself from Malta’s Jewish community.

Barabas is also reluctant to give up his Jewish identity on several occasions. When the governor of Malta, Ferneze, offers the Jewish merchants the three-way “choice” of paying half their estate to the Turks; if they will not pay, a forced conversion; or if they deny a conversion, then the loss of all their estate, the other Jewish merchants see no choice (1.2.68-74). They immediately and simultaneously confirm “Oh my lord we will give half” (1.2.78). Barabas’s initial reaction, on the other hand, is to question: “How, a Christian? Hum, what’s here to do?” (1.2.75).¹³⁶ He spends the next several lines seriously considering what the others have demonstrated should not be a decision. By embodying a particular miserliness, Barabas plays into stereotype but also demonstrates that the other Jews do not fit the stereotype. Barabas’s miserliness serves as another mark of his separation from his community. Barabas responds to the decision

of the other Jews with frustration and derision: “Oh earth-metalled villains, and no Hebrews born! / And will you basely thus submit yourselves / To leave your goods to their arbitrament?” (1.2.79-81). Barabas conflates submission, covetousness, and Judaism, but he also claims himself, on those counts, to be more truly “Jewish” than the Jewish community, separating himself from the “impure” base metal villains who are willing to submit to the Christians and give up their wealth. When threatened with conversion, Barabas tries to fit himself in the Jewish community’s mould at the last moment, asking “Let me be used but as my brethren are,” but Ferneze seizes on Barabas’s proclamation of separation and turns it to his advantage (1.2.92). Although he still identifies Barabas as “Jew,” he also leaps on Barabas’s questioning to claim that Barabas has “denied the articles” (1.2.93). He gives Barabas the surface of his wishes—to remain Jewish and not lose half his wealth—while simultaneously benefiting himself by gaining all of Barabas’s wealth and confirming Barabas’s separation from the Jewish community.¹³⁷ As Ronald Bryden noted about the otherwise farcical 1964 production, “The scene where the Jews are stripped of their property to pay the Templar’s overdue tribute to the Turks can’t be played in any way but brutally.”

Ferneze’s actions also define a Jewish community that includes Barabas by defining the group based on its difference from the Christian majority. Ferneze creates a “symbolic Jewishness,” a difference that “correspond[s] to a . . . set of values to be found in Christian society” (Dessen 232). Ferneze’s symbolic Jewishness differentiates Jew from Christian in a manner that tacitly acknowledges their underlying similarities. The Governor creates a “set of values” rather literally, using stereotypes of Jews and money to define a usefully separate and disempowered community for the Christian state to

exploit. Ferneze acknowledges that the Christian community has lived alongside Jews (certainly those who work with Barabas at the beginning of the play seem to have no particular qualms about working for a Jew). Ferneze actually blames tolerance for the current misfortunes: “through our sufferance of your hateful lives / Who stand accursed in the sight of heaven, / These taxes and afflictions are befallen” (1.2.63-5). Ferneze scapegoats the Jews *and* Christian tolerance for the Jews’ pecuniary fate and the fate of Malta. It is precisely because Jews have not been divided from Christians, Ferneze claims, that the Turks demand tribute. The solution is to define two separate and inherently unequal communities: the Christian in the majority with power, the Jewish in the minority with money. Ferneze only mentions religious difference as the third reason for exploiting the Jews, a momentary and shallow acknowledgement of religious difference in a definition that otherwise rests entirely on otherness and money. Religion is merely a convenient marker of difference, one noted only to be exploited.¹³⁸

Unlike the play’s text, recent productions of *The Jew of Malta* associated Barabas with a larger Jewish community immediately, most often through costuming. In Williams’s (1964-65, RSC) production of *The Jew of Malta*, all of the characters were equally marked as different—there was no clear community in this production and therefore no clear outsider.¹³⁹ Unlike Williams’s production, the costumes in Kyle’s (1987-88, RSC) production defined three communities—Turks, Hassidic Jews, and Christians. The sheer number of Christians made their community dominant: several nuns, two friars, knights in white robes with red crosses on the front (reminiscent of the KKK or Knights Templar), and Ferneze in a matching white suit. Despite these

divisions, the production's emphasis on comedy reduced the divisions to costume choices, as reviewer Michael Billington stated:

Kyle's new production is full of vivacious villainy, [but] it lacks underlying seriousness . . . There is a serious commitment to the heroism of the outsider [in the play] which gets blurred in Mr Kyle's production . . . This Jew of Malta [*sic*] simply shows a resilient financier turning to comic-opera villainy as a second option. The fault may partly be Marlowe's. It is also Mr Kyle's for failing to create a ghettoised world in which violence is the only redress. ("Revenge")¹⁴⁰

The production lacked a meaning behind the clear division of the communities; without a sense of power inequity, the production lost the driving force behind Barabas's revenge. The choice to play *The Jew of Malta* for comedy *and* for winning audience members' affection for Barabas as a roguish villain, rather than providing him with a sympathetic motive as a victim of minority exploitation, yields a rather perverse joy. Rather than reveling in righting a wrong, if in excess, the audience was instead encouraged to enjoy pure villainy—an indulgence that these audiences apparently responded to with gusto.

The reiteration of difference in *The Merchant of Venice* confirms the separate communities established at the outset. As Shapiro demonstrates, religious difference in the early modern period was figured along racial, ethnic, and cultural lines, all of which are used in *The Merchant of Venice* to create a division between the two communities. As with Jewishness in *The Jew of Malta*, the need for repeated utterances of difference suggests that the two communities "were not quite different *enough*," that "Jews could not be counted on to be reliably different" (Janet Adelman "Her" 10, emphasis original).

The initial establishment of difference occurs in 1.3 in drawing up the bond. The audience's first view of Shylock, the scene makes clear that although the two communities are shown together, there is a long-standing animosity between them and a presumption of deep differences on several of the layers Shapiro notes. Famously, Antonio has publicly spit on and spurned Shylock (1.3.109-10). This might be seen as Antonio's personal grudge against Shylock save for Shylock's plural references to "these Christians" and "*we* would have monies" (emphasis mine, 1.3.153, 108). Bassanio's wariness about the bond also demonstrates that he follows stereotype. Bassanio and Shylock seem to speak at cross-purposes, with Shylock repeatedly having to elucidate his meaning for Bassanio. Bassanio, for his part, consistently presumes the worst possible meaning for Shylock's words, the same stereotype that Antonio makes explicit in comparing Shylock's words to the devil "cit[ing] Scripture for his purpose" (1.3.90).

Although many productions amend or cut the most explicitly negative lines in pursuit of a sympathetic Shylock, Shylock also primarily focuses on the acrimonious differences between the two communities. Shylock begins by illuminating cultural distinctions between the two communities in his refusal to "eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you," his rejection of pork, and his reference to his "Jewish gaberdine" (1.3.30, 27, 104).¹⁴¹ Shylock obviously believes in the solidity of his community. When he cannot raise three thousand ducats, he dismisses this easily: "What of that? / Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe, / Will furnish me" (1.3.48-50).¹⁴² While dealing with Antonio is fraught with uncertainty, Shylock does not question whether Tubal will be willing to lend the money.¹⁴³ However, in the line most often cut to convey a sympathetic Shylock, Shylock says he hates Antonio "for he is a Christian," for his

community affiliation (1.3.34). Playing into stereotypes, this hatred is secondary to a monetary slight—

I hate him for he is a Christian;
 But more, for that in low simplicity
 He lends out money gratis, and brings down
 The rate of usance here with us in Venice. (1.3.34-7)

Shylock hates Antonio *more* for the free lending than for his religious difference, an injury that Shylock explicitly frames as communal, harming “us,” not “me.” Like Barabas, Shylock ties his behavior and identity to “our sacred nation,” but while Barabas associates wealth and Judaism, Shylock specifically links usury to his lineage. While Shylock admits he will take the bond in hopes that Antonio will default and “feed fat the ancient grudge *I* bear him,” the use of “ancient” suggests a deep and longstanding animosity between their two communities, one merely played out again between the two individuals (1.3.39). Shylock frames his patience as an individual representation of a community, claiming that he bears Antonio’s slights because “suff’rance is the badge of all our tribe” (1.3.102).¹⁴⁴ Shylock also confirms his commitment to the bond with a link to larger community responsibility: “Cursed be my tribe, / If I forgive him” (1.3.43-44). Shylock’s eventual attempt to take the pound of flesh, then, is not mere personal revenge in his eyes; it is mandated by his commitment to his Jewish community. It is not that Shylock is a stereotypical early modern Jew; Shylock figures his selfhood as one of a cohesive community, the representative of others like himself. To wrong him is to wrong his tribe; for him to revenge Antonio’s slight is to revenge Jew against Christian more broadly.

Reviews of “early” post-war productions (through 1960) accepted at face value actors playing “Jewish” Shylocks. The reviews suggested that how one enacts Jewishness is uncomplicated and questions of whether one should fulfill a stereotype to do so were omitted entirely. Accents, wigs, gaberdine, broad gestures, and false noses were all accepted as unproblematic or even traditional depictions of Shylock, as were fully villainous Shylocks.¹⁴⁵ Later productions (Alexander’s [1988, RSC] version is a compelling example) present villainous Shylocks, but always with depictions of the cause for his villainy; in the early post-war productions, he was regarded as *being* a villain, written as such, and sympathy was simply unnecessary. Williams’s (1964-65, RSC) production is a nice borderline example—most reviews claimed the play’s Christian community and Jessica’s betrayal “cause” Shylock to turn into a villain, but some continued to rely on the previously made claim that Shylock is the villain of a romantic comedy. Again, presumptions of what the play is about guide the responses.

This is not to suggest that pre-1970s productions always presented Shylock as a melodramatic villain, despite reviewers occasionally suggesting that was the only textual option; there was already established a long tradition of Shylock as “a dignified, proud figure provoked beyond endurance by prejudice to a psychopathic act of hatred and revenge” (Milton Shulman “This Shylock”). Shylock develops across the mid-twentieth century from being “The Jew” to “a Jew.” By Emrys James’s 1971 Shylock for the RSC, audiences may have responded positively to a melodramatic caricature of a Jewish villain, but reviewers were far less certain: “I found myself at variance with most of last night’s audience who clearly liked Emrys James’s Shylock” (David Isaacs). By 1984, they were positively vicious: “Of the traditional choices here facing the actor, almost

heroic dignity or grotesque character playing, Mr McDiarmid opts for the latter”; his response to “his renegade daughter may be wrenched out of visceral agony, but two minutes later he is kissing Jubal [*sic*], shrieking and capering at the good news of his enemy’s failure. With a throaty mid-European tenor and a snappy line in deflationary throwaway, this Shylock is fascinating, sometimes funny, but never remotely moving” (Martin Hoyle “The Merchant”).

By John Barton’s (1978-79, RSC) production at the RSC’s Other Place, Patrick Stewart’s intimate portrayal of a distinct individual was accepted as “right” for almost precisely the opposite aspects of the early post-war productions. Stewart’s Shylock was “not a detestable jew [*sic*], but a detestable human being The result . . . is Portia’s play. The often incompatible romantic interludes to the main action are here part of a cohesive development, the pivot of the play’s movement from barren, money-dominated relationships to those dependent on esteem, respect and love” (“Like So Much of Life”). This was a fully individualized Shylock, “never . . . a caricature,” but one whose cynicism and anger must be eliminated for the production’s happy ending to take place (Desmond Christy).

Shylock as an alien outsider dominates late twentieth-century productions, though with a few notable exceptions. The first approach was most forcibly demonstrated by Alexander’s (1987-88, RSC) production, which created a violent division between clearly delineated Jewish and Christian communities. What the two approaches have in common is the demonizing of the Christian community, which opens up a range of possible Shylocks from Antony Sher’s (1987-88, RSC) “totally unassimilated Levantine Jew burning with an obsessive sacerdotal lust for revenge” who “never for a second seeks our

pity” (Billington “Shining”) to David Calder’s Shylock (1993, RSC) who began the play as “Genial, shrewd and totally lacking in Hebraic trademarks . . . indistinguishable from any other Western businessman” (Irving Wardle “Restyled”).

The play is also concerned with how one *shows* a communal difference, a concern doubled in the choices of set and costuming. Productions most often chose to stress difference, clearly separating for the audience the Jew and the Merchant (thereby also undercutting Portia’s question in 4.1), but the two extremes are demonstrated by the RSC productions by Alexander (1987-88, RSC) and David Thacker (1993, RSC). Unlike *The Jew of Malta* production with which it was paired, Alexander’s *The Merchant of Venice* strenuously blockaded the distinction between the Jewish and Christian communities. The rear wall of the stage began the division, with one side painted with an ornate framed icon of Mary and the infant Jesus and scrawled on the other side a graffiti Star of David. Although a bridge spans the upper reaches of the stage, this suggested an occasional meeting of two separate communities, rather than their blending. The details of each setting were strongly marked as well. Belmont had the three caskets downstage, constantly the center of attention; Shylock’s home, in which the bond negotiation took place, was signaled by a canopy, rugs, pillows, and a hookah. The division between Jew and Christian was also a division between ethnicities. Reviewer Michael Coveney noted that Shylock was “a sympathetic stranger,” depicted as an alien in more than religion; he found Sher’s Shylock to be “exhilaratingly thickly accented, long-haired and colourfully Semitic” (“Merchant”). As mentioned above, several reviewers commented on the “Jewishness” of Sher’s Shylock, who was played as an “a totally unassimilated Levantine Jew” (Billington “Shining”).¹⁴⁶ Even those reviewers who did not find Shylock

sympathetic argued that the Christians were worse. The violence inflicted on Shylock and the ethnic distinctions rendered two clear-cut communities on the stage.¹⁴⁷ As the reviews demonstrate, the construction of two communities, even one abused community, does not automatically translate into audience sympathy with the abused. Reviewers mentioned “discomfort and uneasy excitement” and “shuddering admiration” (Peter “Putting”) and that “there are times when the racism and anti-semitism [*sic*] have modern, liberal audiences shifting uncomfortably in their seats” (Steve Hoselitz).¹⁴⁸ Overall, however, the mass of reviews suggested that the sharp division between Jewish and Christian communities and the unpalatable Christian one led to sympathy for the Jewish community.

Thacker’s (1993, RSC) production, in contrast, made both interpretation and setting modern, but also reduced the distinction between Jew and Christian in the first half of the play. The set, a metal and glass office space, dominated early impressions, emphasizing the commonality of finance among the similarly-suited businessmen rather than religious difference: “Genial, shrewd and totally lacking in Hebraic trademarks . . . This Jew is indistinguishable from any other Western businessman” (Wardle “Restyled”). The violence of Alexander’s (1987-88, RSC) production was also gone; instead, “[t]he deal over the pound of flesh is no more than a joke” (Charles Spenser “Shylock”).¹⁴⁹ As many critics noted, this was a very sympathetic Shylock: “You can’t fail to warm to him” (Spenser “Shylock”). The cold, hard, mercantile sets contrasted with the effect of the production; David Calder’s performance as Shylock was consistently described as being emotion-filled and having a significant emotional impact on the audience.

In addition to these public constructions of difference between two contrasting communities, both plays use private households to define Judaism in its own terms rather than solely against another identity. Households offer the possibility for an intimate portrait of the construction of community. Although the concept of the house as a retreat, a private realm of the family, is still under development in the early modern period, current audiences are inculcated with the concept.¹⁵⁰ The prominent depictions of Barabas's and Shylock's households provide fertile ground for the formation of the Jewish community, one strengthened by being a religious minority and a father-daughter pairing. However, both households demonstrate a breakdown of commonality and cohesion, a litmus test for the broader community relationships. If communion cannot thrive here, it is unlikely to foment elsewhere; audience members are left uncertain, lonely, and longing for community.

For Barabas, the only Jewish group he wishes to be associated with and certainly the only one he expresses care for is his household. The family and home take the place of a larger Jewish community. Unlike *The Merchant of Venice* where much of the play and therefore many of the representations of community take place in the rialto, *The Jew of Malta* focuses on private spaces.¹⁵¹ On hearing of the Turkish fleet, Barabas privileges the household community over the larger Jewish one: "Nay, let 'em combat, conquer, and kill all, / So they spare me, my daughter, and my wealth" (1.1.151-52). Here, then, is all that Barabas needs. While the other Jews are "brethren" in loss, they are "silly brethren" and Barabas claims to have stood alone, even as he was being thrown together with his fellow Jews: "Why did you yield to their extortion? / You were a multitude, and I but one, / And of me only have they taken all" (1.2.178-80). Barabas's logic is

questionable—the other Jews rejected the choice before them as no choice at all—but his repeated expressions of solitude are telling. There may be a Jewish community in Malta before Ferneze attempts to construct one, but Barabas does not see himself as a part of it. Barabas frames his world in terms of personal connections rather than accepting the broader religious community definition that Ferneze is relying on. Barabas actually argues that taking his life is at least as serious a crime as taking “my wealth, the labour of my life, / The comfort of mine age, my children’s hope” (1.2.150-52). More than avariciousness, Barabas demonstrates a commitment to family.¹⁵²

When introducing his wealth and its connection to past Jewish individuals, Barabas also links himself to the present and future, not through the Maltese Jewish community, but through family: “I have no charge, nor many children, / But one sole daughter, whom I hold as dear / As Agamemnon did his Iphigen: / And all I have is hers” (1.1.135-38). While the comparison to Agamemnon and Iphigen bodes ill for the end of their relationship, it does also capture the level of Abigail’s preciousness to Barabas.¹⁵³ That he builds his wealth for her use demonstrates the close connection he feels to Abigail and in part explains the violence of Barabas’s reaction to Abigail’s conversion.

Barabas and Abigail also share one trait the text of the play defines as Jewish—the ability to fool Christians. It is only after Ferneze has injured Barabas that his thoughts turn to revenge. In so doing, however, he also opens up a new and less flattering part of the definition of Judaism, one based on the ability to deceive. Barabas explicitly connects this ability to his—and Abigail’s—Judaism. When Ferneze takes the Jews’ money, Barabas claims that “The man that dealeth righteously shall live” (1.2.117). Barabas refers to the Christian dealing unfairly (unrighteously) with his “living,” his

livelihood, yet the sentence also rings with an ironic reference to the afterlife promised by Christianity to its believers. Barabas also reworks this proverb in his turn to revenge: those who have dealt unrighteously with him shall not live, taking on God's role in Exodus 34: 6-7 by "visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."¹⁵⁴ Barabas claims he is "not of the Tribe of Levi" because he cannot "so soon forget a injury," a reference to the Levite cities that offered temporary refuge to accused criminals to prevent immediate revenge killings (2.3.18-19, n18). Barabas again defines his Judaism against a community, yet he immediately claims a Jewish and communal origin for his ability to deceive:

We Jews can fawn like spaniels when we please;
 And when we grin we bite, yet are our looks
 As innocent and harmless as a lamb's. (2.3.20-22)

He also claims that various Jewish stereotypes have their origin in Christian inequities:

I learned in Florence how to kiss my hand,
 Heave up my shoulders when they call me dog,
 And duck as low as any bare-foot friar (2.3.23-25)

His stoop and servile manner, he claims are the result of Christians and yet imitate Christians, including a suggestion that he learned from friars to feign obsequiousness for profit. It is only when he is with other Jews in the privacy of "our synagogue" that he rebels, spitting into the "offering-basin" (2.3.27-29). Yet again, he seems to distance himself from other Jews. They, after all, are presumably taking up and contributing to the collection.¹⁵⁵

Barabas's daughter Abigail also displays his ability to feign, though she lacks his motivation and skills. When the state has taken their home for a convent, Abigail agrees to help Barabas regardless of his plan: "Father, whate'er it be to injure them / That have so manifestly wronged us, / What will not Abigail attempt?" (1.2.274-76). Although tinged with revenge—she will "injure" those that "manifestly wronged us"—Abigail's motivations are carefully constructed as different than Barabas's. Abigail first appears crying, "Not for myself, but aged Barabas (1.2.230). Although Barabas initially thinks of Abigail's welfare, he never does so at the expense of himself; he benefits her when doing so would also benefit himself. Abigail also has a caveat—she will work against only those who have "manifestly wronged us," the killing of Lodowick and Mathias will not fit her careful delineation. It is this qualm that will drive her later, genuine conversion. Unlike Barabas, Abigail also questions her ability to lie:

Abigail: Ay, but father they will suspect me there.

Barabas: Let 'em suspect, but be thou so precise

As they may think it done of holiness.

Entreat 'em fair, and give them friendly speech,

And seem to them as if thy sins were great,

Till thou hast gotten to be entertained.

Abigail: Thus father shall I much dissemble. (1.2.283-89)

Unlike Barabas, Abigail never connects these abilities to her religion, yet she seems to repeatedly believe his excuses that religious difference excuses treachery. When Barabas returns home with Lodowick, he tells Abigail to:

Entertain Lodowick the Governor's son

With all the courtesy you can afford;
 Provided, that you keep your maidenhead.
 Use him as if he were a (Philistine.
 Dissemble, swear, protest, vow to love him,
 He is not of the seed of Abraham.) (2.3.227-32)

This excuse based on religious difference comes up again:

It's no sin to deceive a Christian;
 For they themselves hold it a principle,
 Faith is not to be held with heretics;
 But all are heretics that are not Jews (2.3.311-14)

Abigail's unwillingness and faltering abilities cause Barabas to emphasize his new definition of Judaism: "Kiss him, speak him fair, / And like a cunning Jew so cast about, / That ye be both made sure ere you came out" (2.3.236-38). And when Abigail finally breaks and leaves crying from her betrothal to Lodowick, Barabas falsely claims yet another piece to Judaism, one which relies on Lodowick's lack of cultural knowledge and his inability to see Abigail's true feelings: "Oh, muse not at it, 'tis the Hebrews' guise, / That maidens new betrothed should weep a while" (2.3.327-28). It is important to note that although this feigning plays into an early modern stereotype there is no suggestion in the play that the other Jews share this trait. Yet, because it follows stereotype and is shared by the two most prominent Jewish characters, it is associated with the definition of Judaism in the play. It is also the trait Abigail will give up on her death, the moment she perhaps becomes fully Christian.

Barabas and Abigail offer the possibility for the display of a Jewish family, an intimate part of community the audience is invited into (in part because the family community begins in public, with their meeting in the street after Malta commandeers Barabas's house). In both RSC productions, however, Barabas's family was only loosely connected visually. In 1964-65, the abstract sets by Ralph Koltai worked to create a single location rather than settings individualized for each community. The large blocks, looking rather like dull, inverted Lego pieces, were moved around the stage to suggest different locations, yet their constant presence demonstrated more continuity between the locations than difference. The 1987 production offered even less distinction between settings, choosing a nearly bare stage augmented by a few key props. While the props suggested a few clues about setting—as when Barabas and Lodowick chat at café tables at the slave market—they were used as often to convey information about general atmosphere—the tables do not convey “slave market” but “the casualness with which society regards slavery.” Costumes could draw Barabas and Abigail together into a community, but both productions chose utterly unremarkable costumes for Abigail. Instead of standing out or being distinctly Jewish, there was nothing “distinct” about them at all, and Williams's (1964-65, RSC) production put Abigail in a somber, plain dress.¹⁵⁶ In its pursuit of laughs, Kyle's (1987-88, RSC) production attempted to eliminate difference. While Barabas was dressed as a Hasidic Jew—his *rekel* (long overcoat, worn only briefly), hat, *payot* (sidelocks), and facial hair the markers of this production's definition of male Judaism—Abigail's costuming was distinguished only by its lack of distinction.¹⁵⁷ While her outfit did follow Hasidic laws for modest dressing, that trait only distinguished her from Bellamira, not from the Christians as a whole (in

part because there is not visual coherence for “Christians as a whole” in this production either). While the darkness of the Jewish costumes contrasts with the white KKK-esque robes of the knights in the Kyle’s production, most of the characters in the Williams’s production wore dark robes (including Barabas, the nuns, the friars, and even Bellamira). This lack of clear distinctions again gives audience members hope that tolerant community is possible.

The Jewish household in *The Merchant of Venice* is already fragmented, invaded, and not truly a private space. Rather than being part of a community standing together in defiance of the exterior Christian world, Shylock’s house demonstrates the power of the Christian community—it can invade and fragment what ought to be a reassuring wholeness. The play presents very little of Shylock’s household. Jessica has one scene with Shylock and a mere two lines addressed directly to him. She is already focused on the disintegration of her current household and the possibility of a new family. Rather than being given a safe space of commonality, the audience is unsettled.¹⁵⁸

Productions often provide a far more cohesive family community for Shylock and Jessica by adding extra-textual elements engineered to bind them together. While these elements are used to make Shylock more sympathetic and to make his grief over Jessica’s elopement appear genuine, they also work to build the image of an intimate and specifically Jewish family. Loveday Ingram’s (2001-02, RSC) production made a small but affecting choice to have Shylock at prayer offstage before entering to speak to Jessica in Hebrew, a key mark of their difference from the Christian community and of their connection. In Thacker’s (1993, RSC) production, a photo of Leah was given a prominent position in a formal house. Before Jessica entered, Shylock cradled the photo

to his heart (production notes). The presence of the missing parent created a “marvelously touching little scene” (Spenser “Shylock”) that emphasized family onstage and increased audience sympathy and involvement, as Spenser’s remark demonstrates. Jessica’s costuming often echoes Shylock’s, coding certain choices as “Jewish.” Shylock and Jessica are frequently dressed more conservatively than the Christians, in darker colors with less decoration. The simplest shared element is the head covering. Most Shylocks wear a yarmulke in 2.5 and some Jessicas wear a cap or headscarf (1964 RSC, 1998 RSC, 2007 Globe). In Alexander’s (1987-88, RSC) production, Jessica and Shylock shared distinctive Levantine “gypsy” costuming that set them apart from the Christians doublets, trousers, and elaborate, formal silk dresses. This production—as Richard Olivier’s (1998, Globe) and Trevor Nunn’s (1999, NT) productions—used a strong accent to define Judaism. These production choices define certain visual and auditory cues as Jewish, cementing the communal identity.

Unlike Barabas and Shylock who are immediately defined by their texts as Jewish, Abigail and Jessica demonstrate a more malleable form of identity. Including a consideration of female Jewish traits is vital to establishing an understanding of early modern English conceptions of Judaism, doubly so for plays whose main characters center their Jewish identity in the homes they share with their daughters.¹⁵⁹ One possible reason for the omission of female Jewish examples from studies of early modern English conceptions of Judaism may be because the traits defining female Judaism were apparently even more uncertain than those for male Judaism. Lacking “the obvious sign of circumcision,” the one solid marker of male Judaism, there seems to be no serious attention given to separating Jewish female bodies from Christian ones (Shapiro 7).

Shapiro notes one brief-living Italian regulation for Jewish women to wear pierced earrings (and its possible echo in Shylock's comment, "I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear!" (3.1.70-71)) and only two extant portraits of Jewish women printed in sixteenth-century English books (Shapiro 120, 38). While the idea of a cap and wig for the early modern stage Jew now has its own long history of support and contention, the markers of early modern female stage Judaism seem to be lost to history. *The Jew of Malta* and *The Merchant of Venice* capitalize on the uncertainty.

Abigail and Jessica blend Christian and Jewish traits, inhabiting different degrees of "Judaism" as the plays progress. It is this blend of traits and identities that is eroticized, in part by the play but primarily by production choices and modern audiences' responses. The plays mix Jewish and Christian traits by suggesting the women's Judaism is limited by time and location and by using the lack of a certain marker of female Judaism to reconstruct the female Jewish body as Christian. These factors reduce the potential negative impact of the daughters' betrayals and conversions by refiguring the incidents as escapes to live with their own kind. However, Jewish traits and identity markers linger long after they "should"; conversion is not a straightforward or final change for either character. Instead, "Jew" and "Christian" are especially troubled terms when applied to Abigail and Jessica, before and after their conversions. By applying the Christian markers to Jewish women's bodies, the terms are unsettled. The Jewish women are appropriate objects of Christian male desire and ripe for conversion. Portia's loaded question ("Which is the merchant here and which the Jew?") resonates even more strongly when considering Abigail and Jessica (4.1.170). Shapiro's definition of early modern "Jew"—"those who believe themselves to be Jews," "those whom other Jews

accept as Jews,” and/or “those whom non-Jews have thought of as Jews” (5)—comes to the forefront, as Jessica and Abigail’s relationship to these definitions are constantly in flux. The traits of Judaism are not fully subsumed under a new Christian identity for either woman. Instead, just as Christian markers are applied to Abigail and Jessica before their conversion, Jewish ones are attributed to them afterwards, continuing the eroticized blended identity and the possibility for an onstage tolerant community. The desire for them, therefore, is one that eroticizes the malleability of identity. By staging desire for these blended-identity women, the plays continue to offer for modern audiences the possibility for the construction of a tolerant community.¹⁶⁰

Abigail and Jessica’s combination of Jewish and Christian characteristics does not wait for their conversions; both are repeatedly complimented by the Christian community for being “fair,” a distinctly Christian attribute, especially when held up against the early modern assumption that Jews had a darker coloring.¹⁶¹ Abigail and Jessica are acceptable objects of Christian desire because they are made “fair”; the constant reiteration of the compliment partially Christianizing them before conversion and highlighting their appropriateness for conversion.¹⁶² The Christianizing of Abigail and Jessica’s bodies occurs through a reiterated claim that they have always been so.

The terms of praise used to describe Abigail are those an early modern audience would associate with Christianity, but it is less certain that a modern audience would see these as anything other than general praise. *The Jew of Malta* offers a few cues to the modern audience that “gentle” may pun on “gentile” or that “fair” is associated with Christianity. Lodowick, just before their betrothal, when Abigail seems to waver, prods her by calling her “gentle Abigail” (2.3.317) but the term is most often used later by

Bellamira towards Ithamore as an ironic complement. Barabas tells Abigail to “Intreat ‘em fair” (1.2.286) to fool the nuns and to “speak him fair” to fool Lodowick (1.2.236). To speak “fair” is to disguise one’s true intentions in a particularly Christian guise, but these are isolated incidents. All of the other uses of “fair” in *The Jew of Malta*’s first act refer to Abigail alone, so modern audiences have no particular reason to associate this trait with Christianity save that the Christians in the play repeatedly remark on it. It is clear, however, that her desirability to the young Christian men rests in that fairness. The initial conversation between the rival suitors Mathias and Lodowick describes Abigail as “fair” four times in 22 lines. According to Mathias, Abigail

were fitter for a tale of love

Than to be tired out with orisons:

And better would she far become a bed

Embraced in a friendly lover’s arms,

Than rise at midnight to a solemn mass. (1.2.366-70)

This is quite a salacious response to a supposed conversion, yet it seems to be this demonstration of virtue that brings her to his attention. Lodowick too dwells on her fair virtue as the foundation of her desirability, the extended conceit of her as a diamond confirms both her status—worthy—and her gentile purity.¹⁶³ Abigail is “so fair” that to see her is to “have moved your heart” (1.2.381-83). Mathias equates her fair beauty with an affective ability; she *moves* those who see her “to love, / Or at the least to pity” (1.2.383-84). Mathias and Lodowick demonstrate what the audience should see in Abigail and suggest that the appropriate place for Abigail is as the object of desire. *The Jew of Malta* productions do little to help or hinder Abigail’s blended identity. The

choice to clearly signal male Judaism—as in the 1987 production—but not female or to not demonstrate religion at all—as in the 1964-65 production—makes Abigail’s transitions both easier and questionable. While there is nothing to definitively mark her as one or the other, it is impossible for her to verify belonging to either religion. Female Jewish identity is thereby uncertain, its boundaries strangely fluid in comparison to the constant reifying of the male Christian / Jew divide.

In *The Merchant of Venice*, however, the same terms are more clearly Christianized, even for a modern audience, because the play repeatedly associates certain terms with female Christianity and emphasizes the pun on gentle/gentile. As many others have noted, the Christian characters point to Jessica’s blended existence by consistently describing her as “gentle” before her conversion (2.4.19-20, 2.4.34, 2.6.51). This obvious play on “gentile” reemphasizes the idea that her inherent, internal ethnicity is not Jewish, but Christian.¹⁶⁴ The Christianizing of Jessica’s body focuses on her physicality, especially on removing the taint of Judaism from her blood, figured as the contrast between dark and fair. The play often uses “fair” to praise Portia’s desirable beauty; similarly, Jessica’s praise almost always includes a reference to her fairness as a sign of both her Christian virtues and desirability.¹⁶⁵ Even before her conversion, Lorenzo dwells longingly and repeatedly on her gentile fairness. In describing a letter from Jessica, he puns: “I know the hand, ‘tis a fair hand / And whiter than the paper it writ on / Is the fair hand that writ” (2.4.12-14). When Shylock refers to Jessica as “my flesh and my blood,” Salerio corrects him vehemently: “There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory, more between your bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish” (3.1.37-42). Salerio’s comment extends their difference to

fundamentals—Jessica’s body is so Christian that she and Shylock are made of different elements: she the fair, he the dark.¹⁶⁶ Jessica also participates in the Christianizing of her body and characteristics. Echoing Salerio, Jessica begins this process in her soliloquy:

Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
 To be ashamed to be my father’s child!
 But though I am a daughter to his blood,
 I am not to his manners. (2.3.16-19)

Jessica’s shame is balanced by the particulars of her objection. She carefully navigates respecting her father (seeing her shame as a sin) while objecting to his non-Christian behavior, his “manners.” Her “heinous sin” is supposedly excused by her motives—conversion and marriage.

Production choices can emphasize Jessica’s blended identity. While Jessica often shares costume traits with Shylock, as mentioned above, these can also demonstrate her shifting loyalties and identity. In Williams’s (1965, RSC) and Alexander’s (1987-88, RSC) productions, Jessica removed her head covering before her arrival at Belmont, but in Nunn’s (1999, NT) production, she removed it on declaring that Shylock has “a daughter lost,” effectively pre-converting herself in a single gesture (production notes). This state of ambivalent conversion also occurs in Alexander’s production when Lancelot Gobbo delivered a cross to Jessica with Lorenzo’s letter. Although Jessica crossed herself on “Became a Christian and thy loving wife,” here she claimed this new identity for herself by snatching the cross Gobbo dangled before her on his exit (2.3.20). However, Jessica was not fully transformed into a new identity. She hid the cross from Shylock to take Leah’s ring. She wore both these tokens at the end of the scene and

although she raised the cross in front of her on “if my fortune be not crossed” (2.5.54), she was simultaneously raising Leah’s ring on her finger and the question of her fortune and identity (production notes, prompt book).

The Christian desire for the Jewish daughters suggests the possibility for a diverse community to be built on stage. According to Claude Lévi-Strauss’s theories of kinship, the desirability of Abigail and Jessica offers Barabas and Shylock the opportunity to form an intimate bond with the Christian community through the gift of their daughters to Christian husbands. Barabas and Shylock could formally link Christian and Jewish communities by giving these “most precious of gifts” (Rubin 231), thereby creating formal, recognized ties between the Jewish fathers and the Christian husbands. Both fathers, however, close down the possibility for this kind of community building. Barabas manipulates the gift-giving transaction, emphasizing Abigail’s worth only to lure her suitors to their deaths. Shylock, on the other hand, rejects the possibility for these formal ties.

Mathias and Lodowick’s desire for Abigail is structured to increase the audience’s longing for community. Although secret, what Barabas offers Mathias and Lodowick is a formal tie, one that is framed in an acknowledgement of Abigail’s worth. Mathias and Lodowick are both required to acknowledge her worthiness; the marriage may be secret, but Barabas has made the men express Abigail’s equality (or greater worth) despite her Judaism. Abigail being Jewish and the marriage being clandestine suggests the possibility for pandering or the young Christian men exploiting their position of power for purely sexual gain. By emphasizing Abigail’s worth and the need for marriage,

Barabas demands a formal alliance of Jew and Christian through the particularly precious gift giving of marriage.

Although *The Jew of Malta* raises this possibility, increasing the audience's longing for a tolerant community, it also dashes it. Barabas uses his daughter's worth and desirability to manipulate Mathias and Lodowick to their deaths. Barabas explicitly sets himself up as Ferneze's equal—his new house is “As great and fair as is the Governor's” (2.3.14)—in preface to a marriage. Although he has recovered a portion of his wealth equal to Ferneze's status, he wants Ferneze's “heart . . . Ay, and his son's too” (2.3.16-17). Barabas promises Abigail to each man and their duel rests on the belief that the other has subverted the rules of wooing. Mathias believes Lodowick has evaded the proper channels, sneaking behind Barabas's back to woo Abigail directly and clandestinely. For his part, Lodowick believes Mathias is wooing an uninterested woman (2.3.87-88) who is both in love with him and his legal betrothed. It is in how this conflict is seasoned that results in the audience following Abigail's preference for Mathias. Lodowick repeatedly brings up class issues as a part of his objection to Mathias's wooing of Abigail. Barabas has so successfully sold Abigail's worth that Lodowick now fully believes she is his equal—and his alone. When he hears Mathias has supposedly sworn to kill him, Lodowick immediately focuses on rank (“What is the base born peasant mad?”) and does so again on receiving the challenge (“What, dares the villain write in such base terms?”) (2.3.283, 3.2.3). Mathias, on the other hand, objects to Lodowick deceiving him by perusing his love—Mathias is the first to notice Abigail's beauty and Lodowick woos her based on Mathias's report and Barabas's urging. Mathias has Abigail's love, expressed at the same time as her moral qualms about deceiving

Lodowick (2.3.239, 318-19, 359-60). These two qualities divorce her from Barabas, who is simultaneously expressing hate, villainy, and revenge for the first time. Neither suitor is fully guiltless to a modern audience, however. Mathias fears his mother's knowledge of their union—"I cannot stay; for if my mother come, / She'll die with grief"—and Lodowick's emphasis on Abigail's worth outweighs his platitude about loving her more than Barabas's wealth (2.3.300, 355-56). Yet neither to a modern audience seems worthy of death, an opinion shared by Abigail. Lodowick has the sins of his father visited on him, while Mathias seems to die for his hypocritical wooing of a Jew and perhaps his father's actions (2.3.31, 146, 252).

Shylock assiduously guards against the potential diverse community based on marriage, figured as a protection of his household from the "shallow foppery" of the outside, Christian world (2.5.34). By protecting his household from penetration by Christians, Shylock also guards against the very event his daughter has already organized. Somehow, Shylock's house has already been open enough, thanks in large part to Lancelot Gobbo's pandering, for Jessica and Lorenzo to come to desire each other. What Shylock hopes to lock out has already crept in by the keyhole before the play begins. Shylock's fear of desire and the possible contamination of his household community comes forth most forcefully in his instructions to Jessica on leaving for dinner with the Christians (2.5). He is concerned about Jessica and his house being vulnerable to outside forces through her temptation. His repeated calls for her to "Lock up my doors," "stop my house's ears," and "shut doors after you" demonstrate his house's vulnerability to invasion (2.5.28, 33, 51). This invasion is also figured in terms of bodily invasion, an invasion that intimately concerns Jessica's virtue. Shylock not only orders her to lock the

doors and shut the casements, he also orders her not to “thrust your head into the public street” (2.5.31). He worries that she will make the house permeable by being tempted to join that “shallow foppery” of the outside world. He fears a kind of infection by sound or sight of his “sober house” by the masques outside.¹⁶⁷ The things he fears are those that Barabas claims are possible:

. . . when he comes, she locks herself up fast;

Yet through the keyhole will he talk to her,

While she runs to the window looking out

When you should come and hale him from the door. (2.3.264-67)

Jessica, however, does not have the “thrifty mind” that Shylock needs her to have (2.5.53). As Stanley Fish argues is true of *Paradise Lost*, Shylock suggests that stillness and inaction are next to godliness.¹⁶⁸ Jessica will simultaneously prove her virtue (as defined by the play’s Christian world view) and her lack of chastity in her active opening of her house and body to the Christians. Shylock rejects the formal community of an arranged marriage, but Jessica’s actions open up the potential for a different kind of tolerant community, one based more on her desire and identity than on gift giving.

Abigail and Jessica have one act that may cause a modern audience to despise them: each “betrays” her father. Because these betrayals also involve a conversion, they are especially likely to cause a modern audience to dislike Abigail and Jessica. John Drakakis notes that the Christian community approves of Jessica’s betrayal because her father’s “constitutive infidelity . . . provides the justification for rebellion,” in contrast to Portia’s demonstration of proper fidelity (152). The approval of Jessica’s betrayal continues to mark her father as “other” (Drakakis 152). However, the betrayals seldom

turn audience members against Jessica and Abigail. In the 1964-65 and 1987 *Jew of Malta* productions, any negative associations with Abigail's betrayal were downplayed by the choice to present the play as a black farce with Barabas as the central, though not sole, melodramatic villain. With this larger goal in mind, there seems to be only two choices for Abigail's character—to play her as the butt of cruel laughter or to play her “straight” but attempt to minimize her impact on the play as a whole. Both productions chose the second track, though apparently Kyle (1987-88, RSC) was more successful in emphasizing the comedic elements or his audiences were more willing to laugh at black comedy. It is Barabas who wins the affection of these audiences,¹⁶⁹ not Abigail, yet her “betrayal” does not seem to result in any ill will or laughter aimed at her, as one might expect in a production aimed at winning affection for Barabas. The production choices around Abigail attempt to reduce any potential negative emotions she might produce in the audience.

Most reviewers reduce Abigail to a simple mention. There is an odd trend in the reviews of Williams's (1964-65, RSC) production, however, to use inaccurate plot details to contrast her to Jessica (the same actress played both parts). As one reviewer put it: “There is not one decent character in his play, except the Jewish girl, Abigail, who is exemplary in her filial love and devotion. Barabas is a usurer, a murderer, a schemer, but in a world of rogues, he manages to attract all the sympathies” (Landstone).¹⁷⁰ This is the most consideration the 1964-65 Abigail gets in the *RSC Clipping Book* reviews and it, interestingly, did not address either of her conversions, presenting her as a moral (and therefore uninteresting) character. Given Jessica's negative reputation for her conversion, it is notable that Abigail's was not mentioned; she was instead “exemplary in

her filial love and devotion.” Contrast this with the same critic’s view of Jessica: “Katherine Barker, after playing the loving daughter of the Malta Jew with great feeling, contrives the rare and difficult feat of bringing some sympathy to Shakespeare’s hateful Jessica” (Landstone). Faint praise indeed in a reaction clearly colored by pre-existing expectations. In the end, this production played everything for laughs, even Abigail’s death (Bernard Levin).¹⁷¹ The 1987 production was also effective in reducing the impact of Abigail’s serious subplot. It presented a very young Abigail; her devotion to her father’s schemes was in part played off as the obedience of a sheltered teen desperate for her parent’s approval. Most reviewers noted her performance with the brief mention of its quality, but only two reviewers mentioned that she was “affecting” (Eric Shorter “Cruelty”) and “strong, intelligent and touching” (Hoyle “Jew”).¹⁷² The lack of attention to an apparently well-played part demonstrates the production’s overwhelming push toward comedy and its success in reducing Abigail’s influence on the audience’s reactions.

Jessica, on the other hand, inspires a wider range of more passionate reactions. Although Landstone above indicated surprise at Jessica being sympathetic, this is the more common choice for post-Holocaust productions; Jessica, it seems, is “Jewish enough” to be rehabilitated alongside Shylock. On the surface, this seems an illogical choice; as reviewer Nightingale points out, a sympathetic Shylock raises a key question about Jessica: “why is Kate Duchene, Jessica, who seems a nice, sensitive girl, so alienated from a father as sensitive as, yes, nice as this?” (“Shylock”).¹⁷³ The logical production choice would be to make Jessica the antithesis of Shylock; if a production wants to increase audience sympathy for Shylock, one way to do so would be to make

Jessica simply “bad and disloyal, a thief; frivolous, greedy, without any more conscience than a cat and without even a cat’s redeeming love of home” (Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch qtd. in *Slights* 357). Certainly one of the more well-known recent *Merchant of Venice* productions used this technique. Laurence Olivier’s 1970 Shylock displayed profound grief over the loss of Jessica and Leah’s ring while she was “no longer the devoted daughter won away, but a bit of a bitch, a saucy minx infected with an anti-father complex” (Thomas Curtiss).¹⁷⁴ Yet, as Curtiss’s words reveal, this is the exception; most performances do make her the “devoted daughter won away.” This is done through the emphasis on the romance of Jessica and Lorenzo’s relationship, the display of her mixture of Jewish and Christian traits throughout the play, and the production choices for Tubal’s report on her actions in Geneoa.

Although the women become Christian with their betrayals, the most common way to reduce any negative impact is for Abigail and Jessica to retain Jewish characteristics after their conversion. The effect is the continuance of the possibility for building a community accepting of difference. For each layer of betrayal—economic/patriarchal, familial, and communal/religious—the playtext and production choices emphasize community possibilities rather than condemning the women. If audiences retain interest in Abigail and Jessica, continue to find them desirable, then the possibility for audience community is continued. If Abigail and Jessica are perceived negatively, however, that possibility is destroyed.

While religious belief plays little if any role in either conversion, this aspect attracts significant attention from post-Holocaust audiences. In plays “about” religious difference, these conversations are no longer *pro-forma* reiterations of a common story

line.¹⁷⁵ Conversion now seems a fundamental betrayal, especially when the conversion is presented as an escape from a persecuted minority to join the persecuting majority, an act that rings with suggestions of Nazi collaboration. Playing *The Jew of Malta* as a farce makes Abigail's conversion less significant, but Jessica's conversion in *The Merchant of Venice* is inevitably weighty due to Shylock's forced conversion. Although there are negative associations with Abigail and Jessica turning from their faith and faith community, by presenting the women as having both Jewish and Christian traits and eroticizing that blend, the plays mitigate even this "betrayal." By presenting in Abigail and Jessica as Jewish and Christian, productions suggest the potential for a tolerant community—if the Christian community desires and accepts such an individual, then there is the possibility that a community may be built while differing identities are retained. The sole exception to this lack of emphasis on religious conversion is Alexander's (1987-88, RSC) production. As mentioned above, here Lorenzo's acceptance of Jessica's plan was signaled not by a letter, but by a cross on a long chain that Lancelot Gobbo dangled for her to grab. She declared that Shylock has lost a daughter to the upheld cross—the loss is a religious one at that moment, rather than romantic (production notes, prompt book).

Abigail's second, genuine conversion demonstrates the insignificance of belief in *The Jew of Malta*, again reducing the possible negative impact of the betrayal on audiences' understanding of her character. Abigail's betrayal indirectly creates a new household, the image of a total breakdown of the initial community and the construction of a new, inclusive one. Barabas's negative reaction to Abigail's conversion culminates in her murder, but his initial act is to adopt Ithamore "for mine only heir" (3.4.43). This

act hearkens back to his first lines about Abigail, even as he divests her of his love and wealth and passes both on to Ithamore:

Ne'er shall she grieve me more with her disgrace;

Ne'er shall she live to inherit aught of mine

.....

Oh trusty Ithamore; no servant, but my friend;

I here adopt thee for mine only heir,

All that I have is thine when I am dead,

And whilst I live use half; spend as myself (3.4.29-30, 42-45)

Yet what Barabas leaves out is as telling as what he says: Ithamore is “my friend” who may “spend as myself,” yet Barabas does not require Ithamore to convert to Judaism, even though this adoption is predicated on his frustration with Abigail’s conversion. This suggests that Abigail’s conversion is less important to Barabas than the conclusion he draws from it: “For she that varies from me in belief / Gives great presumption that she loves me not” (3.4.10-11). Yet the same logic apparently does not apply to Ithamore (who does, however, express repeated protestations of his devotion in 3.4.). Barabas and Ithamore may actually have more in common than Barabas and Abigail did. As Barabas remarks on meeting him: “make account of me / As of thy fellow; we are villains both: / Both circumcised, we hate Christians both” (2.3.215-17). They share physical traits and attitudes that mark them as different; they are more alike in being “not Christian” than Abigail and Barabas are in being family. What is central in *The Jew of Malta* is Abigail’s betrayal of the family, not her conversion.

In *The Merchant of Venice*, the cultural differences of Jessica's religious conversion are given some attention, but again the change in faith is downplayed. With her conversion, Jessica will, in her mind, "Become a Christian and thy loving wife" (2.3.20). Fully renouncing her Judaism on leaving her father's household and embracing her new religion on her marriage would, according to Jessica, "end this strife" between being "daughter to his [Shylock's] blood" but not "to his manners" (2.3.17-18). For Jessica, the manners win out over the blood. She suggests that her conversion will cause her inner and outer aspects to come into alignment. While Jessica does disagree with Shylock's "manners"—a term that incorporates the cultural differences between the two communities, such as pork-eating—the play never explicitly says that becoming Christian is one of her motives for leaving; it seems instead merely a necessary step to elopement. Her speeches to Lorenzo at the elopement seem to confirm this; only Gratiano mentions a kind of conversion and then in the pun on her financial generosity, "a gentle, and no Jew!" (2.6.52), while they speak about love (2.3.29-33, 37-40, 53-58).

Although Barabas and Shylock's households are the primary model for Jewish community, by emphasizing their negative qualities, the plays provide a partial justification for the betrayals. The negative aspect of Abigail's home seems solely Barabas's plotting; his manipulating her desirability and ignoring her love for Don Mathias are in direct contradiction to his love for Abigail (even if it is usually expressed in economic terms).

Abigail's betrayal is based on her initial reservations over revenge. When Barabas plans to steal his hidden gold and jewels from his former house, Abigail readily agrees to "injure them / That have so manifestly wronged us" (1.2.274-75). Abigail here

agrees to take a specific revenge directly against their tormentors (although her logic is shaky—such a revenge should be against Ferneze). When Barabas expands the terms of the revenge to Lodowick and Mathias, Abigail first worries—as seen by Barabas’s need to repeatedly reassure her and finally lock her away from the men she would “make . . . friends again” (2.3.359). It is only on confirming that Barabas caused Mathias’s death that she converts. Her reasoning is again delicate, at best: “Admit thou lovedst not Lodowick for his sin, / Yet Don Mathias ne’er offended thee: / But thou wert set upon extreme revenge” (3.3.42-44). As discussed before, it is unclear what Lodowick’s “sin” is, save for perhaps covetousness. Abigail seems to excuse the death of Lodowick as repayment for Ferneze’s actions but to fully condemn the death of her love. The moral grounds for such fine distinctions are certainly questionable. Abigail’s only reason for conversion, it seems, is Barabas’s excess and his choice of victim; revenge itself is acceptable and religious faith inconsequential. As for Jessica, conversion is more about escape than religion. Barabas has redefined “Judaism” as inherently about feigning, which would seem to suggest that Abigail will give up lying on her conversion, yet she claims that “never shall these lips bewray thy [Barabas’s] life” (3.3.77). In refusing to confess her father’s part in killing Lodowick and Mathias, she continues to dissemble, continues what is now marked as a Jewish trait, in the convent.

Jessica makes far more explicit claims of a negative household experience, yet audiences see very little of Shylock’s household. She claims that “Our house is hell” (2.3.2) and is introduced as already plotting to leave it. Lorenzo reveals that in the already-written letter she gives to Lancelot Gobbo in 2.3

She hath directed

How I shall take her from her father's house,
 What gold and jewels she is furnished with,
 What page's suit she hath in readiness. (2.4.29-32)

Jessica has carefully planned her elopement; this is no mere spur-of-the-moment act, but a pre-meditated action.¹⁷⁶ This forethought also appears in Jessica's ability to unravel unspoken meanings, as Launcelot leaves her with the cryptic rhyme, "There will come a Christian by, / Will be worth a Jewess' eye" in answer to her letter (2.5.42-43). She synthesizes the information quickly enough to immediately reply to her father's question with a blatant lie: "His words were 'Farewell, mistress!'—nothing more" (2.5.45). Certainly Jessica's false actions should not be viewed favorably by an audience. This is a callous, premeditated escape, not a crime of passion. Her final brief comment to her off-stage father, "Farewell, and if my fortune be not cross'd, / I have a father, you a daughter, lost," suggests that she already accepts the repercussions of her future actions and the couplet adds an air of flippancy and finality to her decision (2.5.56-57). She recognizes that she condemns herself in her father's eyes through this betrayal, but her statement is cold in its equating of a positive "fortune" with his loss.

Few productions emphasize the hellishness of Shylock's home in favor of keeping or increasing the audience's sympathy for Shylock, yet this choice would rationalize or excuse Jessica's plotting. In Barton's (1978-79, RSC) production, Shylock hit Jessica on "go in" (prompt book), a choice that fit with this Shylock being "a detestable human being" ("Like So Much of Life"), but also "came across as shocking, gratuitous cruelty" (Ann Cook 159). John Simon's review of Nunn's (1999, NT) similar choice echoed this reaction: "Nunn has cleverly turned Shylock into a father not above slapping his grown

daughter, which helps justify Jessica's defection." Two productions used makeup to demonstrate the restrictions of Shylock's home. The 2007 Globe Jessica added striking red lipstick once in Belmont, while the 2001 RSC Shylock vehemently cleaned Jessica's lips, bringing tears to her eyes (production notes). Although unwilling to create a hellish house, many productions incorporate extra-textual elements to increase sympathy for Jessica. In 1987, she caught Shylock's hand after his "Farewell," knelt, and kissed it (production notes). He, in turn, kissed her forehead before departing (production notes). In 1993, she completed "fast bind, fast find," reached out to Shylock as he departed to kiss him, and delivered "daughter lost" with a marked melancholy (production notes). This now-common choice to attempt to resuscitate Jessica's good character keeps the audience involved in her desirability, emphasizing her being a "devoted daughter won away" instead of "a bit of a bitch, a saucy minx infected with an anti-father complex" (Thomas Curtiss).

Jessica's confirmation as an object of desire comes through her marriage to Lorenzo. Jessica claims that it is the boy's clothes that are her "shames" (2.5.41), rather than the betrayal, but reduces both to being the "pretty follies" of lovers (2.5.37).¹⁷⁷ Yet Jessica's desirability shines through her disguise, merely the "lovely garnish of a boy" (2.5.45), as it inspires Lorenzo to reiterate his love for her being "like herself, wise, fair, and true" and Gratiano to pre-convert her: "Now by my hood, a gentle, and no Jew" (2.5.51). Although Gratiano's line can be quite mocking, referring as it does to her "Christian" fiscal generosity, it fits with the general, ongoing attempt to emphasize both Jessica's distance from Shylock and her Christian characteristics. From this moment on, she is "placed in [Lorenzo's] constant soul" and saved through taking on the faith of her

husband (2.6.57). As Mary Janell Metzger puts it, “Jessica’s marriage reconstitutes her as a body, for according to Christian ecclesiastical and legal authorities, a woman was incorporated into the body of her husband in marriage, becoming both one with and subject to him” (57).

When the house is not hellish, the rationale for Jessica’s betrayal is almost always purely romantic, a choice that emphasizes the role of desire in Jessica and Lorenzo’s elopement. By making this a romantic subplot, productions tilt toward an approval of rebellion, individuality, and love—the same elements that make *Romeo and Juliet* popular for audiences. While a romantic elopement may win sympathy and audience involvement, it can jar against the choice to demonize the play’s Christians. Productions like Alexander’s (1987-88, RSC) violent one leave critics wondering “why on earth would Jessica throw in her lot with a bunch of Venetian Fascists?” (Billington “Shining”) and reduce her to “a particularly unattractive personality [. . . of] creepy callousness” (Shulman “Shylock”). Although Jessica objects to being a torchbearer, this is usually intentionally underplayed in favor of her ecstatically running out of the house, often to a swooping hug and kiss from Lorenzo (1956, 1965, 1984, 1987, 1993, 2008). Alexander’s (1987-88, RSC) production even made a joke out of her complaint that she would “hold a candle to my shames” (2.6.42, production notes). The sole exception is Jonathan Miller’s NT production, which took the opposite tack, as he explained in an interview:

They usually play it as romantic lovers (YES) and I feel that the character of Jessica is much more explicitly that of a—of a frustrated, rather bitchy young Jewess who hates her Jewish background, hates the restraint and is on the edge of trying to assimilate and the only person that she can find

who will have her is a dull rather romantic silly boy who floats her out of her father's house, takes her off to Belmont, and she discovers in—in the end that she's rather bored with it.

Eventually, Miller admitted to simply being “fatigued by the . . . passages of pure romantic verse” and that he “felt that first of all it was necessary to do something just simply to get over that” and on to the ending because “an audience doesn't really tolerate that sort of sentimental romance too easily nowadays.”

More important, however, are the reactions of Lorenzo's friends, the most outspoken definers of the divide between the Christian and Jewish communities. Thacker's (1993, RSC) production played Gratiano's line “a Gentile and no Jew” as though he were making a dirty joke; Lorenzo's claim to “love her heartily” and defense of her gentile characteristics was vehemently angry until “placed in my constant soul” which was said to her face followed by a long kiss (2.6.52-58, production notes). Though unusual, this choice fit with the production overall; in a production that emphasized the role of money over religious or ethnic difference, Lorenzo here demonstrated a passion for *Jessica* rather than her fortune. What comes out, then, even more strongly, was the romance of the elopement against the contrasting emphasis on money in much of the rest of the play, a choice increased the audience's approval of the couple. More commonly, however, the whole scene has been played lightheartedly, encouraging the audience to see Jessica as an acceptable object of desire for a young Christian, and, even though still Jewish, accepted by the community she enters, providing a brief onstage demonstration of a tolerant community.

The most damning moment for Jessica is Tubal's report of her actions to Shylock, a moment that clearly can lose her any audience sympathy or engagement that productions have otherwise won her. Crucially, however, what is staged is Tubal and Shylock's conversation, not Jessica's actions. The audience is directed to focus on Shylock, on his emotions, rather than on Jessica's character. The effect of the report on an audience's conception of Jessica is further diluted by the scene's rapid transitions between the past and the more compelling implications for the future of Antonio's news. Finally, a second- or third-hand report may be less credible and less affecting than the already-seen and already-approved romance.¹⁷⁸ The audience has been trained by the play and the genre expectations of Lorenzo and Jessica's subplot to find Jessica sympathetic. This sympathy can be increased by this scene if Shylock shows more regret over the loss of his wealth than his daughter or if the wish to have her "dead at his foot" is played without apology (3.1.70). Far more often, however, productions use the scene to win sympathy for Shylock as a grieving father and as a moment of decision, making his perusal of the pound of flesh revenge for his emotion pain over Jessica.¹⁷⁹ Shylock's reaction has varied between a distancing "murderous rage" and "blind fury" in 1987 (Peter "Putting") and a "deeply moving" sorrow in 1993 (Spenser "Shylock"). In 1993, Shylock paused after a vehemently delivered wish for her death and then gave Tubal an apologetic look that expressed his recognition of the comment as unintended emotional excess rather than a serious wish (production notes). In a bid for sympathy by productions, Shylock often cries over Tubal's report of Jessica trading Lead's ring for a monkey (e.g., 1993, 1998). From here, Jessica and Shylock move in new directions,

redefining the associations with “Jewishness” in the play and changing the audience’s relationship to it.

Like Barabas’s reaction to Ferneze’s trick, this scene can also provide a key moment of community definition or redefinition. Although this is the only time a public Jewish community is staged in *The Merchant of Venice*, since Tubal appears only halfway through the play, the definition of “Judaism” for a given production is already well established. The text of *The Merchant of Venice* suggests a visual marker of Judaism, since Solanio immediately identifies Tubal as “another of the tribe” (3.1.62). Tubal’s repeated favors to Shylock—lending him money for the bond with Antonio and searching for news of Jessica—also suggest a cohesive Jewish community. Tubal’s costuming and accent also usually follow Shylock’s and reinforce its messages of inclusion or distinction. Although Tubal’s example may not alter the production’s definition of Judaism in itself, his speech may shift Shylock’s character in ways that redefine Judaism. Tubal may be conciliatory or scheming, pushing Shylock into bloodthirsty revenge or aghast at his choices. Thacker’s (1993, RSC) production highlighted religious difference for an especially effective switch in Shylock’s character. The moment was used to begin a new stage in Shylock’s “Jewishness” that explicitly elicited sympathy in the audience; according to Spenser, “You can’t fail to warm to him, and his grief over Jessica’s flight is deeply moving” (“Shylock”). It is after her betrayal that Shylock turned to revenge, but also he “returns to his faith He adopts a skullcap, he rends his clothes as he curses his child, even his accent seems to become more guttural. He makes you feel his loss so keenly that you entirely understand his desire for revenge” (Spenser “Shylock”).¹⁸⁰ Thacker agreed: “The catalyst for his revenge is the

loss of his daughter, releasing the deep-rooted pain and anguish of centuries of oppression.” Although tipped into revenge by a personal grief, Thacker presented a Shylock who saw that grief as a reflection of a larger anti-Semitism.¹⁸¹ The loss of Shylock’s home caused him to commit to revenge and a more explicit Judaism; as Alastair Macauley said, Shylock “is a Jew” but only later “enacts ‘Jewishness.’” Yet this production also alienated Shylock at this very moment. Thacker recounted: “In our production, Tubal’s plea for mercy is ignored, and Tubal turns his back on his friend, dissociating himself and, by implication, the Jewish community from Shylock’s course.” Revenge, even in the guise of avenging religious prosecution, is beyond the pale.

The scene, however, inevitably shakes the possibility for an onstage or audience community. If a desirable, sympathetic Jessica is to be preserved, Shylock must be unsympathetic, reducing the pull for him to be incorporated into a tolerant community. If Jessica is blackened by the scene—her betrayal played as fundamental and Shylock sympathetically—then the possibility for Jessica to effectively continue the lure of tolerant community in Belmont is greatly lessened. The greatest possibility for the audience’s longing for community to continue is in productions that reduce the emotional impact of Jessica’s elopement, thereby allowing her to retain the possibility of creating a community built on desire. A villainous, unsympathetic Shylock actually extends the possibility for community. By pushing the audience out of participation and into observation, a villainous Shylock inversely increases the appeal of participating in the desire-built possibility for community that Jessica represents as the only remaining appealing outsider.

Unlike the romance of *The Merchant of Venice*'s elopement, Abigail withdraws from her desirability on entering the nunnery. Abigail's choice to become a nun is one that simultaneously confirms her previous desirability and negates its continuing; transforming her from a potential bride to a bride of Christ. In becoming a nun, Abigail removes herself as an appropriate object of desire and cuts herself off from Barabas, preventing him from continuing to manipulate her desirability. On entering the nunnery she states, "I perceive there is no love on earth, / Pity in Jews, nor piety in Turks" (3.3.49-50). Abigail condemns in one breath Jews and Turks, but does not suggest that earthly Christians are necessarily better. She claims that "Mathias was the man that I held dear, / And for his sake did I become a nun" (3.6.24-25), but also suggests that their love was one of the "follies of the world" that she "was chained to" (3.3.62). In becoming a nun, Abigail turns her back on the world, since "there is no love on earth" (3.3.49). She now looks for salvation and a heavenly love, but this choice also changes her ability to inspire desire. The Second Friar's cutting line after her death reflects the problem with her choice: she dies "a virgin too, [and] that grieves me most" (3.6.41).¹⁸² The friar's line on Abigail's death inspires a "complex response"; the friar does not "merely make Abigail ridiculous, but intensifies the pathos and difficulty of her attempt to live decently" (N. W. Bawcutt 35).¹⁸³ In taking herself out of the world, removing herself as a proper object of desire for the characters or audience, she takes away the play's only potentially effective tool for building a tolerant community.¹⁸⁴ The 1987 production gave this moment a surprising bit of emphasis by placing it just before intermission; yet this choice also allowed the production to return in full farcical mode,

having given the audience members time to digest this more serious moment with their ice cream and drinks.

While Jessica no longer identifies herself as Jewish, it is uncertain how the Christians define her. The Christians in Belmont seem to doubt the depth and sincerity of Jessica's conversion. Adelman argues that "[t]he play carefully does not distinguish a moment after which Jessica is converted; and that omission allows for a chronic tension between Jessica and the others, in which she persistently regards her conversion to Christianity as complete, and they persistently regard her as a Jew" ("Her" 7). According to James O'Rourke, "Christian converts from Judaism in the early modern period were stereotyped as possessing an essential Jewishness, an interior perversion, that transcended their actual behavior" (383). Lacking an incontrovertible marker of her Judaism allows Jessica to convert, but also means that Jessica lacks any clear way to confirm her Christianity. James Shapiro quotes Samuel Purchas's *Purchas His Pilgrimage* (1613) as evidence of a general doubts about the efficacy of Jewish conversion:

. . . among "unChristian Christians, who Jewishly hate the name of a Jew," that name cannot "be washed from it with the sacred tincture of baptism." The "vulgar scoff and point at them, saying, 'There goes a baptized Jew' (a term best fitting themselves)." Purchase is also quick to note that this leaves baptized Jews in limbo, since "on the other side their own countrymen hate and abhor them as apostates, renegados, and fugitives." (213-14 qtd. Shapiro 19-20)

This tension, I argue, is read by an audience as a chance for the Christian community to be a tolerant one, for Jessica to demonstrate difference yet still be accepted. Rather than

fully fitting either category, Jessica's blended position embodies the kind of community that could be developed if the two sides of the play could come together. After Jessica's elopement, production choices drive the possibility for accepting community onstage or among audience members.

The text of the play clearly evades displaying a full-fledged tolerant community, as Jessica is only questionably welcomed at Belmont. As Adelman states, Jessica is always an "outsider in Portia's Belmont" ("Her" 6); she may see herself as Christian, but there are strong suggestions that the Christians around her may not. Certainly her first welcome, being immediately described as both Lorenzo's ("his") and "infidel" (3.2.217) suggests that her marriage (being "his") has not overcome her Judaism in Gratiano's mind.¹⁸⁵ Introduced as "infidel," she is also labeled as a "stranger," a term which suggests "foreignness by blood or nation rather than simply lack of recognition" (Adelman "Her" 7). Gobbo resorts to slanders of bastardy in order to "save" Jessica: "you may partly hope that your father got you not, that you are not the Jew's daughter" (3.5.8-9). Just as "Jew" must be continually differentiated from Christian, Jessica must be continually made "fair" even after her conversion and marriage or, in contemporary usage, "blood will out." If Jessica is a bastard of a Christian father, then she is only half-Jewish; she is all the more easily separated from her father and from her only remaining physical mark of Judaism, her absent mother. As with her virtuous betrayal, being a bastard is redefined as a positive attribute because of its inclusionary effects. Rather than ostracizing her, for Jessica, illegitimacy is the possible path to legitimacy and inclusion, a path that would, if true, more than likely exclude her from the proper company she seeks.¹⁸⁶

Jessica's welcome into Belmont is the audience's first time to see her as a Christian and a key moment in productions' demonstration of creating either a dominant, subsuming Christian community or continuing the potential for a tolerant one.¹⁸⁷ Choices about Jessica's welcome into Belmont and the Christian community are usually determined by the production's view of Portia. Alexander's (1987-88, RSC) "nasty" Portia (Coveney "The Merchant") neglected Jessica as part of a general racism, as she "cuffs her negro servant with a relish which looks customary, and she keeps a polite but distinguishing distance from Lorenzo's new bride" (Pitcher "Edges"). Most productions, however, seem to, intentionally or not, made Jessica an outsider by setting her far enough away from the others to make necessary Portia's urging of Nerissa to welcome her. (There is, of course, also a staging issue here; in a crowded scene, Jessica needs to hang back until her lines.) Adelman points out that Gratiano's order for Nerissa to "cheer yond stranger, bid her welcome (3.2.236) is "a stage direction indicating her physical isolation on stage and her demeanor during the awkward moments in which she is pointedly not introduced" ("Her" 6), a reading most productions followed, though with differing degrees of pointedness.¹⁸⁸

Jessica's first lines at Belmont acknowledge her blended identity. She speaks in the past tense of Shylock—"When I was with him"—in a phrase that is redolent of distance in mentioning only a physical proximity, not their familial relationship (3.2.283). Yet, the knowledge Jessica passes on is intimate. She conveys insider knowledge to outsiders, repeating what Shylock only said to his "countrymen" (3.2.284). She demonstrates what she was but uses that intra-community knowledge to benefit her new community. However, her knowledge is also a reminder that she was on the inside of

that community and the knowledge itself is a kind of taint of that former identity, even as she attempts to use it to benefit and join the new community. Her moment of fitting in, of demonstrating her new loyalties and proving herself of use to the new community, also shows how her history continues to mark her as partly alien. What Jessica brings to Belmont is her Judaism, her knowledge of the other, and she offers it up willingly, without being asked. It is her blended identity that gives her a voice at Belmont—she has something to offer from her former identity but is there able to convey it because of her conversion and marriage.

Productions often adjusted the degree of Jessica's new Christianity; just as she was "fair" before her conversion, she often retained Jewish traits afterwards. Having escaped in a "page's suit" (2.4.32), she only once arrived in it at Belmont (Thacker, 1993, RSC). The presumption of most productions is that time elapses—time enough for a conversion, wedding, and monkey-buying—and the change of costume serves as a visual marker of Jessica leaving behind her Judaism in favor of an adherence to the fashions of Belmont. Most often productions chose to clothe her in a dress and hairstyle that more closely mimicked Portia and Nerissa than her "Jewish" ones. In the 1964-65 RSC production, for example, she lost a distinctive cap and conservative dress in favor of an elaborate hairstyle and embroidered sleeves, elements that reflected Portia and Nerissa's costuming.¹⁸⁹ This choice suggested a Jessica who was fully Christian but also completely subsumed her former identity under her new one. She was fully reconstituted as a Christian and productions that make this costuming choice often played Jessica as both fully Christian and welcome in Belmont.

In some productions, Jessica's post-conversion costume incorporated at least one element of her "Jewish" costume, a subtle signal to audience members that she has not completely turned her back on her previous identity. In Gatward's (2007, Globe) production, Jessica kept her distinctive red-and-black layered skirt and her undershirt of black lace for her welcome into Belmont, though by the pork-eating scene (3.5), she had discarded all of her "Jewish" costuming in favor of "Christian" clothing and makeup. Despite this apparent attempt to appear a part of the Christian community, she also ate a bit of pork to prove her Christianity to Lancelot Gobbo, a bite she then threatened to immediately vomit up before washing it down with a quick gulp of wine. Being able to "stomach" her husband and the Christian norms was clearly a challenge for this Jessica even as she tried her hardest to adapt. Alexander's (1987-88, RSC) *Merchant of Venice* had one of the most interesting choices. In this production about violent divisions, Jessica actually kept her distinctive shirt, undershirt, and a layered overskirt even as the rest of her costume radically changed on conversion. While the shirt could "pass" for Christian, the undershirt's horizontal stripes clearly echoed Shylock's robe. Although this Jessica discarded her pantaloons and long tunic and half-turban in favor of a fitted bodice, formal full skirt, and bare head, a residue of Judaism lingered after her conversion.¹⁹⁰ A similar blended identity is created when Jessica retains her accent. Although this choice reflects real life, it has a definite impact on the kind of conversion Jessica has undergone. Retaining a "Jewish" accent after conversion, especially in a divided production like Alexander's (1987-88, RSC), marks Jessica as different; she may have Christian traits, but she clearly still has Jewish ones as well. This makes her

conversion more easily questioned, but again opens up the possibility for a tolerant community if the Christians were to accept her.

Although Abigail gives up the last trait marked as Jewish on her death, it is unclear if the friars accept her as fully Christian. On her second conversion, the friar warns Abigail “see thou change no more, / For that will be most heavy to thy soul” (3.3.72-3). This uncertainty seems to linger at her death, now expressed in humor. After her death the friar confirms she died at Christian “and a virgin too, that grieves me most” (3.6.41). He also differentiates between the dead nuns that need burying and “this,” Abigail’s body reduced to an object (3.6.45). After all, Abigail’s death-bed confession reveals that “in this house I lived religiously, / Chaste and devout, much sorrowing for my sins,” but hid her greatest sin from the friar that converted her, her confessor, until now (3.6.13-4). Despite her desperation and guilt, she still combined traits marked as specifically Christian and Jewish.

Although the Kyle’s (1987-88, RSC) production of *The Jew of Malta* primarily played Abigail as a straight-man to her father’s plotting, in keeping with the choice to create a black farce, the emotional impact of her death was minimized in both productions. This production gave Abigail a serious moment, but it was undercut by the friar’s utter unconcern for her. Abigail appeared, mid-collapse, at the back of the stage, in a nun’s habit. As she fell, she pulled off her wimple to reveal newly close-cropped hair. This full visual transformation into Christianity was still colored by her remaining Jewish accent. The friar approached her only on seeing the letter; she died at his feet while he read, engrossed. As reported for Williams’s (1964-65, RSC) production, his comment about her dying a virgin grieving him the most received a laugh.¹⁹¹ Both

productions clearly played the moment for its comedy, rather than pathos: “If I report that one of the biggest laughs [*sic*] was the line ‘ . . . All the nuns are dead. Let’s go and bury them,’ you will see what kind of evening it was” (W.H.W.). Although written about Williams’s production, it applies almost equally well to the later one, where the line was milked for two laughs—one at the hysterically delivered “All the nuns are dead” and a second at the deadpan “Let’s go and bury them” (production notes).¹⁹² The largest laugh in Kyle’s production of the scene, however, was, strangely enough, at the friar’s anti-Semitism. When he straight-facedly presumes that the letter must indicate that Barabas has “crucified a child” the audience responded with hoots of laughter. By dismissing Abigail’s death in this way, the production suggested that she was quite unimportant, tossing away the possibly radical implications of her conversion and blended identity. By playing the friars as generally unconcerned about the nuns, Kyle’s production also downplayed the question of the quality of her conversion. She was just another body; only the letter implicating Barabas was important, a choice that echoes Barabas’s own sentiments in 3.4. By producing *The Jew of Malta* as a farce, a production closes down the possibility for tolerant community that a blended-identity Abigail could offer. This choice is in keeping with the text, which also rather cavalierly sets up the audience’s longing for community only to deny it.

The ending of *The Merchant* cements the message of the production and its potential for community creation. There is one key choice—making Jessica an insider or an outsider—though a host of variations on that theme adjust the possibility and the degree of onstage and audience community. While the beginning of 5.1 of *The Merchant of Venice* has little if any religious content, productions often used the scene to create a

happy, romantic, and communal atmosphere or a melancholic, divided one, setting the stage for the final “lessons” of the play. Productions sometimes played Jessica and Lorenzo as a teasing, happy couple, as in Gatward’s (2007, Globe) production, which presented much of their banter while cuddling, partly undressed, on the ground. The darker side to their language was undercut as teasing, a recitation of “what we are not” rather than “what we might become.” The light tone suggested that Jessica had found a home at Belmont, at least when alone with her husband, and since this production also kept Jewish elements of her costume, there was at least a suggestion of a diverse community onstage.¹⁹³

More often, however, Jessica is or becomes melancholy, as the text indicates (5.1.69), a choice that can close off the possibility for a tolerant community. If Jessica demonstrates merely a short sadness at “sweet music,” then the moment can be played as romantic and loving with Lorenzo comforting her, suggesting that Jessica is at home. The quality of this home, however, is dependent on the degree to which she has been presented as a blended character. In darker productions, Jessica can demonstrate a deep melancholy throughout the scene, emphasizing Lorenzo’s broken promises to her—“In such a night / Did young Lorenzo swear he lov’d her well, / Stealing her soul with many vows of faith, / And ne’er a true one” (5.1.16-19)—and the list of tragic lovers suggests the possibility of an unhappy ending for the couple.¹⁹⁴ This line can again raise questions about Jessica’s conversion. It is unclear how Lorenzo’s “vows of faith” are unfaithful; if this is not teasing, then the options seem to be that the “vow” is untrue—that Lorenzo has not married Jessica as he promised—or that his “faith” is lacking—so perhaps her conversion or his religion is somehow tainted. Ingram’s (2001, RSC) production

emphasized Jessica's melancholy to make her blended identity sympathetic. Lorenzo and Jessica's bantering soured when he mentioned that "In such a night / Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew" (5.1.14-15).

Some productions fully assimilated Jessica to present a happy, unified community at the end of the play, but this choice destroyed the possibility of an onstage or larger audience tolerant community. The suggestion instead was of an eradication of difference by a dominant—even totalitarian—Christian community. In Thacker's (1993, RSC) production, Jessica and Lorenzo were merely another couple in a physically affectionate relationship. The transition from Jew to Christian was made easier by the modern dress of this production. When little divides Jew from Christian, it takes little more than a costume change for a complete assimilation. Although Jessica was accepted, this was not a particularly straightforward ending. The possibility for a tolerant community has been lost in Jessica's assimilation and Antonio was left standing alone center-stage at the blackout (production notes). This version yielded a particular schism: the production "enlists your sympathies on both sides of the central divide, Shylock versus the rest" (Gross "Merchant"), but this was also the production that Peter said "ought finally to lay to rest the venerable nonsense that this is an anti-Semitic play" ("A Lear"). If this "Shylock [was] . . . a post-holocaust [*sic*] Jew in a post-holocaust world," this was not an ending that satisfied a primary post-Holocaust longing.

Adoption does not always result in successful integration. Alexander's (1987-88, RSC) brutally divided production emphasized Jessica's conversion from "become a Christian and thy loving wife," yet Belmont remained a distinctly chilly place for her. Although it depicted a happy elopement, Jessica had difficulty adapting. Wearing a cross

from Lorenzo did not hide the red overskirt from her pre-conversion costume or her “Jewish” accent. Pre- and post-conversion Jessica wore lightweight, flowing, Empire-waist dresses with tassels around the waist in contrast to Portia and Nerissa’s fitted corsets and rigid Elizabethan skirts. Portia and Nerissa wore their hair up, while Jessica always had the back of her hair down, covered by a veil. Lorenzo’s costume, on the other hand, clearly echoed Bassanio and Gratiano’s, although it suggested he was slightly less wealthy. Jessica’s “joking” with Gobbo in 3.5 was in earnest—a torment for her—while Lorenzo’s praise of music was an attempt at comfort. This Jessica demonstrated “a frantic anxiety to gain acceptance in the Christian community” (Viv Thomas), and the ending was the death-knell for any tolerant community. Though Jessica and Lorenzo left the stage together as one of the happy couples, Jessica turned back alone to recover the cross she dropped as she exited. Antonio picked it up and the lights faded to black as she knelt, hands outstretched, begging for the cross as he dangled it over her (production notes). This complex image was interpreted variously as “ironic contrition; or maybe, less charitably, it is a sign of the Christians’ continued belief in their own superiority” (Billington “Merchant”) or, as Pitcher described, the final image was “of Jessica, half kneeling before Antonio, trying to get back the long chain and cross she . . . dropped in her haste to keep up with Lorenzo. Antonio draws it from her, mastering for a moment a victim who is still nothing but a Jew and a woman” (“Edges”).¹⁹⁵ The common ground is telling—of domination and continuing religious difference. The moment demonstrated Jessica continued *need* of the cross; it was the solid marker of her conversion, but was acquired before conversion and can be too easily left behind. She had only a surface acceptance by and conformity to the dominant Christian society.

Jessica does not always attempt to fit in, however. As mentioned above, Ingram's (2001, RSC) production presented a melancholy Jessica in Act 5. While she had a silk dress reminiscent of Portia and Nerissa's, she also demonstrated a deep sense of loss, playing on the sympathies of the audience by declaring her guilt over her betrayal. At Belmont's music, she sat alone downstage, eventually breaking into Hebrew song and then choking tears. Although Lorenzo came to comfort her, they were often apart as Portia unfolded the ring trick. He exited ahead of her, leaving her to share a moment alone onstage with Antonio. She made a brief, uncertain gesture before hurrying off after Lorenzo. The final impression is of two outsiders—one made so by religion and heritage and the other by his continued bachelorhood.¹⁹⁶ An overarching community was clearly lacking here. There are outsiders, and the audience was left to contemplate their alienation. Presenting the audience with such alienation may be more effective in creating the longing for a community; by denying the audience an onstage tolerant community to participate in yet emphasizing the hollowness without one, the production leaves the audience wanting the fulfillment only tolerant community can provide.

The Globe's 1998 production also offered the audience a tolerant community, but the audience reactions to the play added a twist. This Jessica retained her accent and braids, markers of difference, as a Christian. However, this audience was notorious for the groundling behavior that many reviewers interpreted as anti-Semitic. Yet, to repeat the review by Julius, "The Globe's audience responded to this straightforward account of an anti-Semitic play with a troubling enthusiasm. It moved them as melodrama, enlisting them in the lovers' camp, setting them against the spoilsport Jew with his funny accent and murderous schemes." Jessica's retained her accent and her, albeit different,

scheming, yet the audience seemed to accept her as a part of “the lovers’ camp.” Romance or conversion assimilated Jessica in audience members’ minds; despite being different, she was treated as if a part of the Christian community. The audience echoed Belmont by accepting Jessica as she is, yet when combined with the audience’s reaction to Shylock, this means the audience privileged Jessica’s claim to religious conversion over all her markers of blended identity. By accepting Jessica, the audience remade her as fully Christian based solely on her religious choice and contrary to the remaining markers of Judaism. The tolerant community displayed on stage was overridden by the conservative and assimilating definition of identity created by the audience. It is also possible that the audience acceptance of Jessica as a part of Belmont despite her differences signals that the reviewers were wrong in identifying the audience’s reactions as anti-Semitic. If the audience accepted the still-Jewish Jessica, then perhaps their taunting of Shylock was a reaction to the performance style of villainy bordering on melodrama rather than his Judaism.

Nunn’s (1999, NT) production had an ending of mixed messages. Jessica, having traded her modest cardigan and pinned-up hair for a version of a clinging silk dress, like Portia wore for a casket scene, and a slick bob to be included in the community, yet distanced herself from them. As Jessica began to cry at the music, Lorenzo immediately came to comfort her, even before her declaration that she was saddened. Portia too made a point of reassuring Jessica, attributing to Jessica “you are not satisfied” and promising to “answer all things faithfully” to her (5.1.296-99). Nunn rearranged the ending of 5.1 so that this line was followed by her claim that “This night methinks is but the daylight sick, / It looks a little paler” (5.1.124-25, production notes). The Christian couples kiss,

but it is a calm moment, as though after a battle won but with lives lost. Portia continued with “Such a day is when the sun is hid,” and immediately after her line Jessica began singing in Hebrew the song she shared with her father before his dismissal of Gobbo (5.1.126). As she continued, she fell to her knees, weeping. Lorenzo knelt behind her, but did not touch her. Jessica’s delivery of the song may have begun as a lament, but it strengthened to a proud declaration. The production ended with Portia’s simple and solemn declaration that “It is almost morning” (5.1.295). Nunn claims that Jessica sang the song because

she realizes what has happened to her father and what has happened to her. She realizes that people continue to see her as an alien and even joke about her alien nature, and she feels very much an outsider. She sings that song again in Hebrew because that is her identity, and she is not going to masquerade in a different identity ever again. (Nunn)

Although Jessica may be accepted by the Christian community and is visually one of them, she marks her difference. Nunn provides more insight than is apparent in the filmed version; there Jessica seems sad but not an outsider and the majority of Belmont seems unconcerned with her difference. It appears, in other words, that although vaguely discontent it is a community tolerant of difference, satisfying the audience’s longing on the one hand, but suggesting it is unfulfilling on the other.

Finally, there is the unusual choice of Langham’s (1960, RSC) production. While Jessica changed clothes on conversion, both dresses had a distinctive “gypsy” look not echoed by Portia and Nerissa. This was a welcoming Belmont, one that visibly accepted Jessica’s difference while creating a light-hearted community. The only onstage tolerant

community in a post-war production, this Jessica kept her heritage while being welcomed into a new community and this choice was profoundly pleasing. The reviewer for the *Nottingham Guardian Journal* reports “waves of applause that seemed to come spontaneously throughout the evening” (W.T.) while Peter Sykes stated that “Had a massively pleased audience had its way, the actors might be bowing still. But, wisely, after a five-minute ovation—increasing greatly in volume whenever the two principals alone held the stage—the actors decided to call it a night.” This production, the first with a fully individualized yet still villainous Shylock, also chose a fairytale, romantic ending. This audience was particularly satisfied because they got what the play and the production told them to want—participation in the creation of a community that accepted and transcended difference. Unlike the other choices for Act 5, by creating the onstage community, this production allowed for fulfillment, rather than emphasizing what was lacking or increasing longing. It told audience members what they should want and then gave it to them.

Chapter 4

Desiring Youth

Many scholars working on *As You Like It* argue that the ending presents a conservative social message in its confirmation of patriarchy and “correct” hierarchical order.¹⁹⁷ That message would not seem to be widely popular with audience members given the social changes of the last fifty years. Instead, the freedom of Arden is what many, including scholars, find most pleasurable, based on the easing of many social restrictions over the last fifty years. On the other hand, individuals who prefer the maintenance of a conservative social order might be prepared to enjoy the ending of the play but less so its liberal center. This chapter investigates the paradoxical popularity of *As You Like It*, arguing that new understandings of the overall structure of the play and key production choices illuminate what makes the play generally popular with modern audience members of either inclination.

Many of those working on *As You Like It* in the last fifty years have followed the lead of literary scholars C.L. Barber and Northrup Frye, arguing that the play divides the court’s social restrictions from the Forest of Arden’s freedom, returning to social restriction with the closing marriages and Duke Senior’s restoration. This formulation has led to an increased attention to the center of the play, the time in Arden, a focus encouraged by recent scholarly work on to gender and sexuality issues in the play.¹⁹⁸ Theatrical productions of *As You Like It* have most often highlighted the divided interpretation by using two sets: Duke Frederick’s Court and the forest of Arden.¹⁹⁹ In reading, the two Dukes’ courts are foils; on stage, the staging of the climax in the forest set visually draws the final courtly moments closer to Arden than to the tyranny of Duke

Fredrick's Court. Adrian Noble's 1985 RSC production was unusual in its stark visual division between the initial Court and Arden. It began darkly in a disused room, its furniture covered in cloth as if to keep the dust off, which mutated into a "tree" of white cloth and a brook, a change that received spontaneous applause (production notes). Yet, even this dramatic change did not mute similarities between the Court and Arden, as there was a marked parallel between the "tyrannical cruelty of the court and the natural harshness of Arden" (Billington, "Jung Ones").²⁰⁰ Often, productions that divide the Court and Arden set the Court in a rather generic formal indoor room and signal Arden with a single tree, as the RSC did in 2003 (production notes).

However, the pleasure audiences take in the entire play suggests that there is little separation between the Court and Arden. Audience members' engagement comes not from a split between Court and Arden but from a gradual progression. The play as a whole builds a pleasurable longing for and installment of the social bonds of a patriarchal, hierarchical community. It is especially important to recognize this continuous play drive because comedies "appeal for audience participation" on a narrative as well as cognitive level (Peter Smith 23). For comedy, the "emphasis on social bonds" means that the narrative participation is "peculiarly dependent upon audience gratification" (Lynda Boose 241). Comedies encourage participation through their comedic elements but also enforce social bonds through their content. Literary theorist Smith continues, "The comedies attempt to assert the existence of what we might usefully think of as an ideal interpretative community . . . –not simply in terms of the formulation of a stable and secure society in the plays, but also in their usually successful attempts to elicit the audience's corroboration" (30). If comedies ask audience members

to “ally ourselves with the structure of comic values in place and embrace them,” then it is vital to realize that *As You Like It* stages an ongoing argument for the patriarchy, not a sudden turn from “freedom.” Comedies dramatize—and encourage audience members to participate in—“a common structure which binds individual women and men and also admits these new partnerships to the institution of marriage itself Consensus is again in operation” (Smith 30-31). Arden, in this formulation, is the spoonful of sugar that makes patriarchy pleasurable.²⁰¹

The general feeling of satisfaction and pleasure at the play is produced by the continued emphasis on the growth of the main characters from youth into adulthood. As literary scholar Marjorie Garber notes, “the audience will usually find itself much more deeply engaged with those characters who do grow and change in the course of the plays. Not only are they more complex, they are also closer to our own challenges and our own experience” (*Coming* 22-3).²⁰² If audience members’ conscious interpretation is guided by species-wide and individual experiences, as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson find, then the universal experience of gaining adulthood should create an especially cohesive audience community, as all will be engaged in a similar way on a fundamental level. Both Rosalind and Orlando learn to want the conservative conclusion and take their audiences along in their persuasion. Audience members are taught the correct response to patriarchy as Orlando and Rosalind are educated into adults—ones who can and will take on their proper adult roles in continuing the patriarchal and hierarchical community established at the end of the play. *As You Like It*, for all its playfulness, works to essentialize and naturalize heterosexuality bound by marriage.

Audience members are drawn into approving participation through the common event of maturation and an emphasis on the desirability of this stage of life. The desirability of youth cuts across modern sexual orientations—it is generally idealized. Neuroscientists Ursina and Christof Teuscher’s 2006 study finds that both men and women have a distinct bias towards youth regardless of sexual orientation: “Male subjects exhibited a stronger youth bias than females, but only if the target picture was a potential sexual partner. Females showed an equal amount of preference for youthful faces, independent of the targets sex and regardless of whether the target was a potential sexual partner” (631).²⁰³ Sociologists Laura Hurd Clarke and Meridith Griffin illuminate the emphasis on looking youthful in their study of “beauty work,” including plastic surgery, and ageing in women.²⁰⁴ They argue for a “pervasive obsession with youthfulness and physical attractiveness in contemporary society” (653). Film historian Heather Addison discovers that this “cult of youth” was well established by the 1950s.²⁰⁵ These studies primarily focus on the apparent age of models in still images, emphasizing the visual component of youth. Given the importance of action in audience participation, I expand the definition of “youthful” to include other visual and kinetic markers, such as clothing and physical movements appropriate for a young teen.

The critical debates over desire and what audience members see agree on one point: that there is a plethora of desire in *As You Like It*. As literary scholar Penny Gay discusses, “*As You Like It* offers not only a narrative of socialization, but also . . . a visual and aural, moment-by-moment embodiment of the workings of desire (5). Literary scholar Valerie Traub attributes the play’s pleasure to the “multiple erotic possibilities and positions” it offers (*Desire* 128). This excess is key to *As You Like It*’s ability to

draw audience members into imagined participation. Unlike *Titus Andronicus* or *The Merchant of Venice*, audience members of *As You Like It* are not encouraged to share a single overarching desire. Instead, the play combines youth with a variety of desires to draw audience members into the play.²⁰⁶ This variety is centered on Orlando and Rosalind's complex, gender-bending wooing, but encompasses the other couples as well. An audience member may slip between desires—indeed, the play's lack of differentiation may increase overall imagined participation; the audience member may slide easily among desires that do not trouble their sexual orientation moment to moment as the play progresses. For *As You Like It*, it is the shared experience of desiring that creates the audience community. Like Rosalind and Orlando, the audience is driven by desire into approving of the conservative ending because it is, according to the play, the only way that desire will be satisfied.

Gender play is a related fundamental pleasure of *As You Like It*, but one that many current audience members may take less pleasure in because of the modern identity categorization by desire. The depictions of desires in *As You Like It* are entangled in recent history. Audience members may still embrace love at first sight in *Romeo and Juliet* or condemn for different reasons rape in *Titus Andronicus*, but the gender-bending desire of *As You Like It* has been inexorably changed by modern understandings of homosexual and bisexual desire.²⁰⁷ While a staged Orlando may find the layers of Rosalind playing Ganymede and imitating “Rosalind” attractive, audience members are likely to find that only certain layers of her costuming fit with their self-definition of appropriate desire. As discussed in Chapter 1, on a cognitive level most audience members will engage with what they see and hear. Their mirror neurons will fire as

through they were enacting desire. However, modern desire-based identity categories make it likely that an audience member will consciously interpret only some experiences as desire, only those that are not threatening to his or her self-identity. An audience member who identifies as a straight male, for example, may be willing to acknowledge only an attraction to the “original” Rosalind and the female actor, regardless of the subliminal cognitive processes involved in blending the many layers.²⁰⁸ The play may offer many kinds of desire, but only some may be as one likes it.

This is also where critical attention has fallen. There are many recent arguments concerning how an audience “sees” Rosalind’s character when she is cross-dressed as Ganymede and playing “Rosalind.” Many literary and cultural scholars’ arguments presume a reader or audience member “sees” Rosalind, a female character who play-acts her other gender roles. Stephen Orgel argues that early modern audience members would have “seen” the boy actor as well as the character, while Ann Jones and Peter Stallybrass suggest that the tension or play among “a fetishistic attention to particular items of clothing, particular parts of the body of an imagined woman, [and] particular parts of an actual boy actor” were a particular pleasure of early modern theatre (207).²⁰⁹ I do not examine here the cultural meanings of cross-dressing as Jean Howard, Sue-Ellen Case, Lisa Jardine, and Peter Stallybrass, among others, do. Nor do I read the “*theatricality* of disguise” as Peter Hyland calls for (emphasis original, 78) and Robert Weimann and Douglas Bruster attempt to fulfill (*Shakespeare*). Instead, I find that audience members recognize and respond to all layers of the actor and Rosalind’s character. In this arena, Michael Shapiro argues that

An audience would be confused unless the performer, regardless of gender, made it clear when Rosalind herself was speaking, when the character was speaking as Ganymed [*sic*], and when Ganymed was posing as the stereotyped ‘Rosalind.’ In the minds of the audience and the performer, all three of these layers are understood as forming the complex amalgam of the female character, but an attempt to convey them simultaneously would produce confusion. (122-23)²¹⁰

Jean Howard also questions if “gender identity is ever made indeterminate” (*Stage* 112).

However, Alisa Solomon argues,

[w]ith all the textual references to boy-actresses, it’s hard to imagine that the [early modern] audience forgot altogether that they were actively participating in the theatrical evening by consciously taking one thing for another . . . The spectator holds at least two things in mind at once: the engaging fictive world taking shape in word and action, and the framing theatrical artifice that enables that fictive world. (37, 39)

Cognitive theory supports Solomon’s argument, suggesting that audience members see character and actor interchangeably, perhaps simultaneously. Theatre scholar

McConachie summarizes the work of cognitive scientists Giles Fauconnier and Mark Turner on the particular “blend” of actor and character: “Spectators are active agents in the process of combining actors and characters into blended actor/characters . . . As viewers, we oscillate millisecond by millisecond among blends and singular identities” (McConachie 44). Though McConachie applies Fauconnier and Turner’s work to the blending of actor and character, the same cognitive processes would result in blending the

layers of a cross-dressed character. Modern reviews suggest that such gender blending occurs and is pleasurable. The most popular Rosalinds are nearly always described with mixed-gender adjectives (see discussion below), implying that part of the pleasure of watching *As You Like It* is the inability to separate the layers of actor, Rosalind, Ganymede, and “Rosalind.”²¹¹

As the centerpiece of *As You Like It*, Rosalind’s growth, desire, and desirability are central to the formation of onstage and audience community. Focusing on Rosalind’s influence on the audience, Hugh Richmond explains: “Shakespeare manages to convince us thoroughly of the plausibility of her emotional growth to womanhood, from her initial unawakened state, through casual sexual excitement, to wry self-awareness and tough recognition of her lover’s conventionality, to which she reconciles herself in marriage” (26). According to literary scholar W. Thomas MacCary, it is Rosalind’s “definition of love and her view of reality we finally accept” (171); therefore, it is vital, as theatre scholar David Richman points out, that the actor playing Rosalind gain “control of the spectators’ moods” (132). It is in the acting of *As You Like It* that audience members can most clearly see desire’s role in the lessons for the construction of community. Reviews demonstrate—especially negative reviews—that there is a “correct” combination of traits that is especially affecting during the last fifty years. The ideal Rosalind seems to be one who creates some gender ambiguity, is desired onstage and desirable to the audience throughout her transformations, and is more youthful than arch.²¹² The long use of female actresses for Rosalind’s part strips away one layer of the gender uncertainty possible in production.²¹³ A female actor no longer exposes a breast to simultaneously prove both her gender and the “true” gender of her character as Jones and Stallybrass

note for eighteenth-century productions (208). Yet, as for previous centuries, “the play of difference . . . [often has] no necessary relation to the anatomical specificities of the actor’s body” (208)—as when a female actor’s short hair may be used for Ganymede while a wig signals her character’s return to the “real” Rosalind; the truth of the female body is then used to prove the fiction of male disguise. Some productions worked to keep the audience in a “safe” place outside the confusions of Arden by keeping the female actor or Rosalind foremost in the audience members’ minds, but productions with gender play generally received more positive reviews, suggesting a more engaged audience. Creating a desirable Rosalind draws audience members into imagined participation; making her youth the primary desirable aspect keeps audience members participating through her gender shifts. Audiences for these Rosalinds are involved in her story, form a more close-knit audience community, and are united in their support her manipulations of Orlando and the plot (rather than finding her manipulations abusive). There are few RSC, NT, and Globe productions that illustrate an ideal version of these events, but those that present some combination of these traits received the best reviews and seemed to absorb their audiences more.²¹⁴

Three performances aptly captured the power of combining youth, desire, and gender play. All used an adult female actor as Rosalind, which means that a certain level of “youth” must be found in the performance choices, rather than the physicality of the early modern boy actor. Undoubtedly, the best reviews belonged to Vanessa Redgrave’s 1961 Rosalind in Michael Elliott’s RSC production. Some of this pleasure surely came from defied expectations. Rather than the formal and artificial pre-war *As You Like It* productions, known for their combination of “rustic slapstick and convoluted, courtly

wit” (Gerald Fay, qtd. Marshall 70), this production showed off the abilities of the new RSC. The production combined abstraction in the sets, including a single central tree for Arden, with a more nuanced and naturalistic delivery and acting style. Hardened reviewers were rhapsodic:

“Vanessa Redgrave makes an utterly successful Rosalind” (Robert Muller “Rosalind”).

Rosalind was “utterly charming” (W.H.W. “Sunlight”).

Rosalind was “a creature of fire and light, her voice a golden gate opening on lapis-lazuli hinges, her body a slender supple reed rippling in the breeze of her love” (Bernard Levin “Found”).

These reactions were driven by Redgrave’s combination of youthfulness, gender play, and desire—her and Rosalind’s desirability and her depiction of Rosalind’s desire.²¹⁵

While most of the publicity photos normalized Rosalind’s desirability by presenting her in her wedding dress, the reviews were tellingly divided over whether she seemed boyish or womanish as Ganymede. Muller notes that Rosalind was “richly feminine, rosily impetuous, and incontestably in love, and one can only marvel how Orlando and Phoebe could have been fooled for so long” (“Rosalind”), while reviewers for the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* and *Nottingham Guardian Journal* found the boy dominating the woman underneath.²¹⁶ Youthfulness was definitely present. Played by a young actress, barefoot in Arden, tussling with Orlando, this was a playful, teasing Rosalind, “bubbling over with youthfulness, exuberance, and intelligence” (Muller “Rosalind”). Desire—both on stage and off—was also evident and varied. Reviewer J. W. Lambert objected to Orlando “respond[ing] much more eagerly to the apparent boy than to the dream of the

lost girl” but Julian Holland claimed in his review that all single (and presumably straight) men in the audience were in love with Rosalind by the end (“Sunbeam” and “She’s Our”).²¹⁷

In 1985 at the RSC, Adrian Noble directed a production of AYLI starring Juliet Stevenson as Rosalind. While the reviews focused more on the program’s framing of the production in Jungian terms, the performance video reveals a teasing and girlish Rosalind who lures Orlando in with a particularly playful sexuality. Although some reviewers did not see the gender play, most noted Rosalind’s “boundless energy,” a choice that made her seem especially youthful (Hoyle “As You”).²¹⁸ In the forest, Rosalind

begins to discover herself, first in easing clown [*sic*] routines with Hilton McRae’s Orlando, and then entering deeper waters where neither she, her lover, nor the audience can tell truth from masquerade. I have never seen their late dialogues played with equivalent erotic force; nor seen the mock-marriage take on such sacramental qualities. (Irving Wardle, “Playground”)²¹⁹

This Rosalind was “equally convincing as boy or girl” and slid easily between the two moment to moment while incorporating desire and desirability (Roger Warren “Britain” 116; production notes). This production emphasized desire all around, as even a love-struck Phoebe had to douse herself from the onstage brook after meeting Ganymede (production notes). The characters’ maturation was framed as a gendered, Jungian self-discovery; Stevenson described *As You Like It* as “a vital exploration of gender, the male and female within us all” (interview by Leech). This “exploration” was also maturation

and Fiona Shaw (Celia) and Stevenson have described the theme of the play as “the power of love as an *educator*” (emphasis original, Shaw and Stevenson 62).

Terry Hands’s production in 1980-81 for the RSC is a test case for the appeal of desire. Already a popular production for its comedy, youthfulness, and gender bending on its début in Stratford, reviewers were even more positive when the production added a greater emphasis on desire for the 1981 transfer to London. Susan Fleetwood’s Rosalind was youthful—she “had a great verve and some scenes were played with a breathless charm and pleasurable excitement”; she was “never a serious girl at all” being “buoyant, dramatic, witty, silly, teaching and tempting” with “girlish cunning” and “alive with nervous energy . . . as she quivers for Orlando.”²²⁰ The leads demonstrated a “child-like pleasure” that yielded “the abiding impression . . . of children enjoying themselves on an afternoon in the forest” (Ian Stewart “All’s Well”). Reviewer Ann Fitzgerald directly identified the pleasure of the production: it had an “exuberant pleasure which is essentially youthful” (“Spirited”). Reviewers used an even mixture of “girl” (or “lad”) and “woman,” which suggests Fleetwood’s depiction slipped easily between adult desire and youthfulness. Few critics found her sexual, though one commented that Orlando and Rosalind’s “mutual attraction for each other is as electric as that of Romeo and Juliet” (P.J.B. “As You”).²²¹

On the transfer to London, Rosalind was still “as mischievous as a naughty child” (John Barber “Delightful”) and “her voice [was] constantly switching from the ludicrously butch tones of her disguise to the trembling vulnerability of a woman lost of the first time in the wonder of love” (Charles Spencer “Yes”), but generally reviewers commented far more on the sexuality of the production than in Stratford. Reviewer John

Barber reports that Rosalind presented “an open sexual invitation” to Orlando on “Am I not your Rosalind?”: “She even lies on the ground and pulls him towards her” (“Delightful”). Charles Spencer saw “the mood . . . [as] positively randy” (“Yes”) while Michael Coveney found Rosalind “seductive” (“As You”). These reviews raved about the quality of the production and its effect on the audience, whereas those of Stratford were positive but more reserved.

For both productions, most reviewers noted there was an additional layer of desire—between Jaques and Rosalind. Their descriptions of it aptly demonstrated the range of Fleetwood’s performance in their varying assumptions of her femininity, masculinity, and age. Benedict Nightingale saw in Jaques “pronounced paedophilic [*sic*] propensities” (“Agonised”) and Robert Cushman reported that Jaques enfolding Rosalind in his cloak was “what others believe to be an attempt at rape” (“A Mad”). There was also confusion over whether “Jaques is shown falling for Rosalind” (Wardle “Playground”) or “Rosalind is strangely drawn to Jacques [*sic*]” (Coveney “As You”), and whether “he knows her real sex all right” (B. A. Young “As You”) or if he might be confused: “it is not quite clear if he is aware of exactly who she is” (D.A. “Love’s”). One reviewer also saw Celia as “a sexual competitor for Orlando” and “an unusually heated Phoebe who not only crooks her finger, but also very suggestively fingers her crook” (Billington “Forest Frenzy”).

There are also several productions that demonstrate that the combination of youthfulness and a variety of desires that pulled audience members into imagined participation. Dorothy Tutin’s turn as Rosalind in the RSC’s 1967 production was well

received for her youthful portrayal and her believability as a boy. One reviewer wondered,

Can a play four hundred or more years old, staged, taught, parroted endlessly, can such a play be discovered as if new? By its director, its actors—its first night audience of critics and habitues? The answer is at the Aldwych where the audience met this David Jones production—listening for the next line, waiting for the next picture. As if they did not know the play. Laughing at lines lost in boredom for years. Feeling empathy with characters and situations which have become almost unstagable clichés (“Shakespeare Is”)

W.A. Darlington’s review reported that “It promised to be—and the promise was not falsified—one of those happy evenings in the theatre when an audience is manifestly enjoying itself and signifies the fact with frequent bursts of applause” (“When Shakespeare”). Tutin was “stocky and tomboyish,” “gamin,” “rather like Tom Sawyer,” “impish,” a “breathless tomboy,” and a “bright, excited, tomboyish figure.”²²² Yet the terms used to describe the emotions on stage were not those of desire. Tutin was “pouring out the joys of young love,” a “sighing maiden . . . like an ageless piece of Dresden,” or “a girl in love” who was “warmly in love” with “all the breathless excitement of first love.”²²³ W.T. at the *Nottingham Evening Post & News* said, “She wears her doublet and hose endearingly, much as a girl might wear a pair of men’s pyjamas [*sic*] which are too big for her.” Reviewer Herbert Kretzmer perfectly analyzed the difference between Redgrave’s performance and Tutin’s:

Dorothy Tutin's soft, polite face is like a mirror in which the fleeting anguish and agonies of young love are wondrously reflected. She is at her best suggesting fidelity and vulnerability. She is like a rose that might be bruised by the first contact with the real, unmerciful world All this may be splendid, but it makes her Rosalind in 'As You Like It' [*sic*] a fetching but somewhat incomplete character, like a well-loved, convent-educated schoolgirl who is not altogether capable for fending for herself. One feels that her reserves of strength are severely limited. She calls out for our protection and concern. I found, in this instance, her helplessness a distraction rather than a lure. ("Rosalind Loses")

Tutin's Rosalind was seen as a girl in the first blushes of youthful adoration—a crush—rather than a woman with adult desires and feelings. Though clearly enjoyable in its combination of youth and gender play, the performance lacked the drawing power of desire. When Janet Suzman, formerly Celia, took over Rosalind in the 1968 version of this production, the responses demonstrate the difference desire makes: "Miss Tutin played Rosalind as a coy eager sixth-former wilting bashfully from the pangs of calf-love. Miss Suzman plays her—as she played Celia last year—as a young woman of enormous intelligence and sensitivity who falls head over heels in love" (Don Chapman, *Oxford Mail*, 22 May 1968, qtd. Gay *As She* 61).

Samantha Bond hit the right notes with Rosalind's disguise for the RSC in 1992. With a "a clinging open-necked shirt and trousers cut as if positively to emphasize her femininity," some found her "a very convincing youth" who did "look like an adolescent boy" while others found she was "not in the last persuasive in her male imposture" with a

“forever girlish” voice.²²⁴ It is not surprising Bond received such diametrically different responses, as others found she presented an “exquisite portrait of sexual ambiguities” (Jack Tinker “As You”) as “a kind of androgynous elf or sprite, part Ariel and part Peter Pan” (Nightingale “Subdued”). The Peter Pan comparison demonstrates Bond’s emphasis on youth (echoed in comments on her “gaminesque” Ganymede).²²⁵ Reviewers also found growth in this Rosalind. Bond “touchingly charts the growing confidence and emotional maturity” of Rosalind (Spencer “Darkness”), “shares Rosalind’s development with us from infatuation to deeper passion and understanding” (Paul Lapworth “A Lyrical”), and “mock[s . . .] her own unfolding sensuality while trying to understand it” (John Peter). Although generally well received, only a few reviewers noted any desire.²²⁶

That lack of desire on stage is not uncommon in modern productions. Perhaps not surprisingly, many productions shied away from emphasizing desire in Arden, save in its comic forms. There are several ways of defusing the Ganymede-Orlando situation. Many productions have had a particularly feminine Ganymede—this created a rather oblivious Orlando, but also consistently displayed a “safe” heterosexual desire. Other productions tried to eliminate desire between the pair, instead creating a non-sexual, often “playful” or “childish” wooing that emphasized the “game” of their time together. Some productions left only Silvius’s heterosexual desire for Phoebe and hers for Ganymede, making both so excessive and misplaced that they were primarily comedic events, rather than subversive desires. Although Phoebe is attracted to the mixture of masculine and feminine traits that Ganymede embodies, the humor of her character softens the radical potential of her desire, especially if her desire is clearly “mistaken.”²²⁷ In performance, a clearly feminine Ganymede can emphasize the idea of a “mistake.” On the one hand, this

defuses the radical possibilities of Phoebe's desire by confirming that only heterosexual desire is "correct"; on the other, what the audience sees is a woman desiring feminine traits or a female, more radical possibilities. The 1961 production defused the situation by casting a very young Phoebe, a choice that turned her desire for Ganymede into a crush and her seeing Ganymede as a man into a seemingly understandable, because childish, mistake (photo collection). These productions were often popular with audience members but poorly reviewed. They offered a good time but were not as compelling as productions that emphasize desire.

Gregory Doran's 2000 production for the RSC illustrates the difficulty of working with reviews to determine audience response; there is sometimes a significant divide between the reviewers who pan a production and the clearly positive response of an audience (as heard on the video of the production and mentioned in some reviews). As with Tutin's performance, most reviewers found Alexandra Gilbreath's Rosalind to be boyish but lacking the serious desire associated with the adult woman beneath. Gilbreath was also hampered by a set that emphasized the lighter side of the play and poorly reviewed fellow cast members.²²⁸ Yet the audience on the archive video clearly loved her performance (performance notes). Light and playful, she consistently received loud laughter for her mugging with (or at) Orlando, but the effect is cotton candy—enjoyable but quickly fading and easy to overdose on. A few reviewers found desire in the production; Spencer thought Gilbreath was "sexily boyish in her disguise" ("As Shoppers") and Anne Tugwell described her "a sensuous and provocative Rosalind" ("Rural Love"). However, Nicholas de Jongh represented the average reviewer's reaction:

Alexandra Gilbreath's exuberantly elegant Rosalind . . . takes real trouble to slip into her male disguise. She manages to look and sound something quite like a slightly effete, teenage youth. Buoyant in love rather than in ecstasy over it, her low, precious voice takes on a male timbre. Then disguised as Ganymede, she sets about wooing Anthony Howell's medium-cool, unlove-lorn Orlando. Howell proves himself perversely determined not to be mad about the 'boy'. [*sic*] He even retreats as Rosalind advances upon him, as if defying the text and insisting that his Orlando is not going to succumb to anything so gay Strange bisexual and androgynous forces are at work [in Arden]. These are here ignored. The eros meter never rises high when the couple come to grips or into contact, while Danielle Tilley's rustic Phoebe, Rosalind's second love-victim, serves as a simple comic turn. ("This Risk-Free")

It is difficult to reconcile the poor reviews with the laughing audience on the archive video. Most reviews did not mention the different responses, save in an occasional snide remark that this was "a production for the tourists rather than true lovers of Shakespeare" from Spencer's review, tellingly titled "As Shoppers and Tourists Might Like It." The audience's response captured on the video shows the fun of seeing *Peter Pan*—the lighthearted enjoyment and approval of youthful shenanigans and of a *performance* of gender rather than believability (performance notes). The layers of desire were missing, replaced by a game. These audience members want the fulfillment of a comedy, of the expectations of the genre, rather than seeing desire depicted on the stage or feeling desire themselves.

Clifford Williams's all-male 1967 production for the National Theatre at the Old Vic is equally problematic for determining audience response. This was not an experiment in original practices but rather an attempt to "transcend the issues of physical eroticism altogether" (Stephen J. Lynch 148). In an essay in the program, Williams stated his intention:

The examination of the infinite beauty of Man in love—which lies at the very heart of *As You Like It*—takes place in an atmosphere of spiritual purity which transcends sensuality in the search for poetic sexuality. It is for this reason that I employ a male cast; so that we shall not—entranced by the surface reality—miss the interior truth. (qtd. Marshall 72)

Generally, it seems that reviewers were not sure how to obey Williams's dictum to see "past" his all-male casting choice, so it is unclear how audience members might have responded. Reviewers commonly mentioned twentieth-century contexts, especially drag; in all else, the reviewers were split. While Roland Pickup's Rosalind was usually praised, it was also seen as "completely non-erotic" (Wardle, *Sunday Times* 4 Oct. 1967 qtd. Gay *As She* 63). Reviewer Harold Hobson stated, "Its real effect turns out to be that it puts eroticism, whether ambiguous or straightforward, out of the theatre altogether" (*Sunday Times* 8 Oct. 1967, qtd. Gay *As She* 63). Literary scholar Cynthia Marshall reports that other reviewers found Pickup "effecting something like the transcendence of gender [. . . while] Jeremy Brett's strongly masculine Orlando helped to validate Pickup's performance and to offset Rosalind's gender" (74-75). One reviewer found that "The play is about love and here love was portrayed as sexless, or rather sexually ambiguous"; most, it seems, had a similar difficulty distinguishing between "sexless" and "sexually

ambiguous” (Peter Lewis “Bard Knew”). Hobson came the closest to analyzing the difficulty of this approach:

Pickup’s performance ‘divorces love from sex. So do the performances in the other transvestite parts. The result is that when one comes to the marvellous [*sic*] quartet on the ache and unfulfilled desire of love near the end of the play there is a purity . . . that has probably not been achieved in any professional performances in the last 300 years.’ (qtd. Marshall 75)

It is interesting to note that Hobson only found the *transvestite* parts to be lacking in desire and did not unpack the apparent contradiction of a “pure” (suggesting love but not desire) “quartet” on the “unfulfilled desire of love” (a curious phrase indeed). Overall, it seems that Williams’s attempt “to exclude feminine sexual attraction from the role [Rosalind], making it a play not about erotic attraction but about ideas about erotic attraction” succeeded on one level (Lynch 148). Although a few reviews found eroticism on stage or between the stage and the audience, most did seem to feel that the characters were distanced from each other. The variety of responses suggests that the play lacked the erotic force to draw audience members into a shared imaginative participation.

In addition to the disparity between audience and reviewer responses, *As You Like It* presents a special problem in using reviewers’ responses for this argument—they presume that Rosalind and Orlando are, fundamentally, the same across the play. Reviewers offer only a few snapshots of the characters (or often a single snapshot for Orlando), usually based on the opening of the play and their wooing in Arden. What each Rosalind and Orlando were like in the final act and in the epilogue is seldom mentioned; the presumption is that they are portrayed consistently throughout the play.

For this argument, therefore, it is difficult to provide evidence from reviewers for many points, though academic reviews and production videos can provide some details of Rosalind and Orlando's growth and audience responses.

Although he begins the play, Orlando clearly plays second fiddle to Rosalind in modern reviews. There, Orlando is known for his obliviousness. The mentions of his character tend to focus on his inability to recognize Rosalind as Ganymede. This plot point was more reasonable on the early modern stage, when Ganymede would presumably look like the boy actor and not much like Rosalind. Casting a female as Rosalind usually makes Orlando appear foolish and Shakespeare's text does little to alleviate that unforeseen difficulty. In the modern theatre, Orlando is usually a thankless role and very little about it is recorded in newspaper reviews. With Tutin's feminine Ganymede (1967, RSC), Michael Williams's Orlando won praise for "making tremendous comic capital out of the carefree love-smitten boy" even as he was "myopic" (Irwin Ferry "As You"); the emphasis on his youth ("boy") and the comedy of his character seems to have reconciled reviewers to his role better than other choices do. Some especially masculine Orlandos have received tacit approval; Williams's and John Bowe's (1980, RSC) performances were praised in this way.²²⁹ Orlando has also garnered praise when he is acted with explicit sexual desires, especially diverse desires, and rebuke when he is not. Peter McEnery's Orlando for the RSC in 1977 was mocked for his lack of desire:

Her enchanting personality captivated everyone except, perversely, Peter McEnery's Orlando. Having wooed her as a proxy man, he appeared almost disinterested when she emerged . . . as a beautiful girl at the end. A

love-sick hero, Mr. McEnery, can't for a moment take his eyes off his beloved. (Felix Barker "Chilly Day")

As noted above, de Jongh critiqued both Rosalind and Orlando in the RSC's 2000 production for not demonstrating the "[s]trange bisexual and androgynous forces" of the play, but focused on "Anthony Howell's medium-cool, unlove-lorn Orlando" who seemed "perversely determined not to be mad about the 'boy'" as a particular problem ("This Risk-Free").

As for Rosalind, youth and desire are key performance choices for Orlando. Overall, audience members seem to enjoy most Orlandos that uphold ideals of romantic comedy and modern companionate marriage. The RSC's 1980-81 production received the most praise for its clear depiction of desires. Reviewer Peter Collins thought that

John Bowe's Orlando and Susan Fleetwood's Rosalind were ideally matched, his wide-eyed innocence providing a foil for her mental gymnastics as she switched from feminine charm to boyish exuberance. The constant manipulation of the sexual tension between them made for an increasingly highly charged electric atmosphere. ("The End")

Comedy has often been appreciated, as it was for Hilton McRae (1985, RSC) and John Bowe (1980, RSC). Playing Orlando for laughs could make him appear more youthful though it often also reduced any sexual tension between Rosalind and Orlando. A comedic Orlando's foolishness about Ganymede's identity would be forgivable as the "wide-eyed innocence" of youth, rather than being imbecilic, and he can become a fit match for Rosalind's wit (Collins "The End"). Only one production explicitly addressed Orlando's growth during the play. Noble's 1985 RSC production presented *As You Like*

It as “a vital exploration of gender,” an exploration that was framed as a gradual maturation connected to gendered behaviors and desire. Actress Stevenson described Orlando’s development:

Rosalind is very relieved when her masculine aspect is allowed release . . . Orlando is able to discover the female in him too. He starts off in a furious rage, seeking to get out of that stage by fighting, which is the classical male stance—but he falls in love, and becomes the most wonderfully whole person, very much allowing his female side to come out, and he’s utterly faithful and while she dances he remains utterly fixed on her. (“Stevenson’s Season”)

Orlando’s process of “discover[y],” although framed in gendered Jungian terms, was a maturation.

Despite his secondary position in reviews, Orlando has possibly an even more significant development across the play than Rosalind, as he lacks both appropriate adult behavior and behavior fitting to his status. Orlando opens the play desperately aware that he is not fulfilling what is expected of “the youngest son of Rowland de Boys” (1.1.53). Orlando is triply “youthful”: in his age, his behavior, and his status as a youngest son.²³⁰ Garber states that “youth,” the term most often applied to Orlando (and later Ganymede), was considered “a separate stage of human development between sexual maturity in the teen years and marriage in the middle twenties” (*Coming* 122-23). Literary scholar Louis Montrose finds that “[b]y the end of the play, Orlando has been brought from an impoverished and powerless adolescence to the threshold of manhood and marriage, wealth, and title” (Montrose 41). He continues,

Orlando's mastery of adversity could also provide support and encouragement to the ambitious individuals who identified with his plight . . . For the large number of youths in Shakespeare's audience—firstborn and younger siblings, gentle and base—the performance may have been analogous to a rite of passage, helping to ease their dangerous and prolonged journey from subordination to identity, their difficult transition from child's part to adult's. (65)

By the end of *As You Like It*, Orlando will have developed into a landholding gentleman, ready to marry and take on the adult patriarchal role.

Orlando's initial rashness, violence, and high emotions mark him as youthful. It is not merely that Orlando has been neglected; he has been "trained . . . like a peasant" and Oliver is the "enemy of all . . . [his] graces" (1.1.64, 2.3.18). The suggestion is twofold: first, that Orlando has not been educated but trained, and second, that he did not merely suffer a benign neglect but was shaped into having peasant-like qualities. Oliver tries to reduce Orlando to a bestial state: "something that nature gave me his countenance seems to take from me. He lets me feed with his hinds, bars me the place of a brother and, as much as in him lies, mines my gentility with my education" (1.1.16-20).²³¹ Yet, Orlando's growth is naturalized; he is becoming what he was always meant to be: "he's gentle, never schooled and yet learned, full of noble device, of all sorts enchantingly beloved" (1.1.56-58).²³² Montrose also reads the play as leveling Orlando's training and birth:

what happens to Orlando in the forest is Shakespeare's contrivance to remedy what has happened to him at home The process of comedy

. . . works against the seemingly inevitable prospect of social degradation suggested at the play's beginning Shakespeare uses the machinery of pastoral romance to remedy the lack of fit between deserving and having, between Nature and Fortune. (40, 44)

That he does not fit what a gentleman should be is troubling to the play's dominant ideology, but that he can and will be is the play's message and the audience's expectation. Oliver is not merely keeping Orlando untrained, but supposedly attempting to mar his inborn gentility, his "gentle condition of blood" (1.1.42-3). Orlando sheds the exterior elements that, the play suggests, are the result of Oliver and develops the interior "true" elements that demonstrate he is a gentleman's son. Productions have often shown Orlando violently attacking Oliver in 1.1. If not attributed to a youthful lack of control, an audience might believe Oliver's claim that Orlando would revenge himself on Charles by "poison . . . some treacherous device, and never leave thee till he hath ta'en thy life by some indirect means or other. For . . . there is not one so young and so villainous this day living" (1.1.141-45).²³³ Michael Williams (1967, RSC) chose to play Orlando as "an honest yokel" (Colin Frame "Fine Acting"); although it is unclear if he grew out of this status as the play progressed, this choice helped the production receive excellent reviews.

The strongest markers of Rosalind's youth in the first act are the presence of a contrasting older generation, Celia's dominance of their relationship, and the prominence of a homosocial community. Rosalind's moves from father to husband, from homosocial to heterosocial relationships, and from the first flush of love and its accompanying rash behavior to marriage and proper behavior for an adult woman of her status. Most productions have not emphasized Rosalind's youth in Act 1. The usual choice has been

to contrast the restriction of Duke Frederick's court to the freedom of Arden with to formal, stiff clothing—corseted bodices and cumbersome skirts. This formality does not register with a modern audience as “young” and restricts the movements of the actresses so that youthful gestures—lying on the floor, quick movements, etc.—are difficult to execute.

Like Orlando, Rosalind begins the play in a subservient position. A guest in her uncle's court, she is also dominated by Celia until they arrive in Arden. Many scholars have analyzed Rosalind's behavior along gender lines, but it is also marked by her age. Her subservience to Duke Frederick is due to both her sex and her age; her subservience to Celia, however, has little to do with her sex but does suggest immaturity. Shaw and Stevenson found that “it is clearly Celia throughout this section of the play, who leads and drives the scenes—the rhythms of her language are very indicative of a confident, even assertive, young woman” (59). When Celia asks her to be “merrier,” Rosalind complies with little resistance (1.2.4, 15). Although Rosalind turns the conversation to love and corrects Celia's conflation of Fortune and Nature, Celia dominates the overall discussion; of their 55 opening lines, Celia has 36.

Part of Celia and Rosalind's maturation is turning from the homosocial to the heterosexual to privilege heterosexual desire and its cultural positioning over homosocial companionship. Their initial conversation emphasizes the homosocial over the heterosocial. Friendship, she demonstrates, puts the friend ahead of the self “I will forget the condition of my estate to rejoice in yours” (1.2.15-16). (This is this love that Le Beau will call “dearer than the natural bond of sisters” (1.2.265).) Celia expresses the fundamental primacy of homosocial bonds in her offer to restore to Rosalind what Duke

Frederick took from Duke Senior. She does not offer the dukedom back to Duke Senior; instead, she makes Rosalind Duke Frederick's heir, the position that should be reserved for her future husband (1.2.18). Celia goes so far as to promise this to Rosalind, stating "And when I break that oath let me turn monster" (1.2.21-2). To be a married woman, then, is to "turn monster"—to change her allegiance from Rosalind to Oliver. Celia warns Rosalind, "love no man in good earnest, nor no further in sport neither than with the safety of a pure blush thou mayst in honor come off again" (1.2.26-9). Heterosexual love is only for sport and even then, Celia cautions Rosalind not to be caught up in the sporting. Celia in John Caird's (1989, RSC) production clearly emphasized the homosocial or even homosexual implications of the line by stressing the line as "love no *man* in good earnest" (production notes). For Rosalind, however, the whole conversation will shortly be moot, as she ignores Celia's reminder of proper behavior twice over.

Although Rosalind and Orlando's transition to heterosocial realms begins almost immediately, they remain immature. Throughout the wrestling the emphasis is still on Orlando's youth. He is called "the youth" (1.2.142), "young gentleman" (1.2.165), "young sir" (1.2.172), "young gallant" (1.2.191), "young man" (1.2.201, 204, 210, 226), and "gallant youth" (1.2.191). Orlando's choice to wrestle Charles is as rash and violent as his reaction to Oliver, though contained in formality. The unequal wrestling with its echoes of David and Goliath also works to make Orlando seem younger and with less status than other adult male characters. Hands's production (1980, RSC) augmented this reaction by having Orlando thrown off the stage into the audience, a move which united audience members on his side.²³⁴ Lucy Bailey's production (1998, Globe) also tried to engage audience members through interaction with the wrestling. It was staged in the

yard and some nearby audience members could empathize with the risk Orlando was taking as the wrestling spilled out among them.²³⁵ In Noble's production (1985, RSC), Orlando's speedo encouraged desire, especially when compared to Charles's traditional wrestling suit. Though the scene was played for comedic effect—Orlando once released himself from Charles's grip with a kiss—audience members clearly supported Orlando, even booing Charles (production notes).²³⁶ Emphasizing Orlando's underdog status and virility helps the audience "believe" Rosalind's sudden emotions for Orlando; these elements provide a psychological underpinning to the moment, which is appealing to the modern audience accustomed to novelistic characters.

Whereas Orlando's youthful love is demonstrated in his tongue-tied response to Rosalind, hers is shown in her dismissal of proper behavior as she does not keep love a "sport." Rosalind is improper from her first moments with Orlando. Le Beau calls Orlando to Rosalind and Celia on behalf of "the princess," Celia, but Rosalind speaks out of turn, causing Orlando to address her as "fair princess" (1.2.157-62).²³⁷ From their first speaking, Rosalind has already shown herself too eager, too ready to engage herself for propriety. As Rosalind puts it, her "pride fell with her fortunes" (1.2.224-28). She, like Orlando, acts in a way unsuited to her "true" position. Celia provides the contrasting example of propriety; in keeping her earlier warning to Rosalind, Celia tries to keep Rosalind and Orlando within bounds. She addresses Orlando's rashness in telling terms: "Young gentleman, your spirits are too bold for your years If you saw yourself with your eyes or knew yourself with your judgment, the fear of your adventure would counsel you to a more equal enterprise" (1.2.165-70). Throughout, she reminds both of the expected adult behavior.

It is not surprising that Celia and Rosalind's parts have been played in so many ways—Celia jealous of Rosalind's waning affection for her, Celia also interested in Orlando, Celia disinterested in the whole affair save for preserving Rosalind's reputation, etc. There is little in the text here to express Celia's, Rosalind's, or Orlando's emotions. Strangely, it is Celia who first mentions romantic love to Orlando (1.2.232-34), though Rosalind first suggests an affection for him. This affection is presumably unromantic, as it is parallel to the love her father had for Sir Rowland (1.2.224-28). So too with Rosalind's gift—it is a favor from a beloved but framed as a replication of her father's emotion for his liegeman. Their emotions, therefore, must be conveyed primarily in performance, allowing for a broad range of textually “appropriate” choices because the text offers so little guidance. Shaw and Stevenson found the scene “tragic and comic and erotic all at once” (61). They saw Celia as feeling the “impending isolation that a girl experiences when her best friend's passions are diverted to the opposite sex and suddenly a gulf gapes between them” (61). In Hands's (1980, RSC) production, Celia and Rosalind “competed for Orlando's attention” (Warren “Performance” 149).

Love almost instantly begins to mature Rosalind. No longer willing to obey Celia or to follow her advice to treat love lightly, Rosalind is both youthfully exuberant and very adult in her joking about “my child's father” (1.2.11). Gay finds this moment the “first sign” of Rosalind's “development towards full adulthood” (*As You* 14). Celia again counsels against heterosexual love, tasking Rosalind to treat it as “burs” or, if more serious, as an emotion to be wrestled into submission, but Rosalind does not even try to obey her this time (1.3.13-20). Rosalind is also less obsequious to Duke Frederick. Rosalind's timid request to see the wrestling (1.2.149)—which fits with Duke Frederick's

comment that she and Celia “crept hither”—has been replaced by argument. Rosalind begins here to give up her definition as Duke Senior’s daughter in favor of imagining herself in the adult role of wife and mother.²³⁸

Literary scholar Garber identifies “three distinct stages in Orlando’s development as a lover”: being tongue-tied after wrestling, expressing his love through poor poems he does not expect Rosalind to read, and his final ability to banter with Ganymede-as-Rosalind (“Education”).²³⁹ It is on arrival in Arden that Orlando begins to take on more adult characteristics, growing into proper behavior for his status. Orlando’s association with Adam initially emphasizes his youth in the contrast between their ages but also provides the first indication of his maturing.²⁴⁰ Although Orlando must rely on Adam’s money—a further infantilization—Adam also makes clear the contrast between Oliver’s uncouth mastery and the gentility Orlando must grow into:

What, my young master? O my gentle master,

O my sweet master, O you memory

Of old Sir Rowland! Why, what make you here?

Why are you virtuous? Why do people love you?

And wherefore are you gentle, strong, and valiant? (2.3.2-6)

Orlando is the embodiment of the proper patriarch in his resemblance to his father and both his good traits and their accompanying “right” to eventual patriarchal status are again naturalized.²⁴¹ Orlando gains an adult role when he cares for Adam, yet he also demonstrates he is not yet fully grown. Although Orlando is willing to take responsibility for another, being the “doe” to his “fawn” (2.7.129), his behavior is demonstrably still that of a youth.²⁴² When he rashly attacks an entire camp to find food

for Adam, the Duke Senior rebukes his uncouth action and begins a debate about proper behavior for a gentleman. Orlando claims that “bare distress hath ta’en from me the show / Of smooth civility” and again references his birth: “yet I am inland bred / And know some nurture” (2.7.97-8). Duke Senior, however, tells him that “Your gentleness shall force / More than your force move us to gentleness” (2.7.103-4). Although Orlando explains that “I thought all things had been savage here” (2.7.108), he is the one who has learned the lesson. The reactions of Duke Senior and his followers have demonstrated the kind of behavior that will be expected of Orlando in the society he wants to join. Violence is here a mark of his youth and lack of training. Yet his innate nature is again confirmed as he says he will “blush”—an involuntary reaction indicating his shame at his incorrect behavior—“and hide my sword”—the conscious choice to demonstrate that he has learned the lesson the Duke provided (2.7.120).

Like Orlando, Rosalind takes on an adult caring role once she arrives in Arden yet retains youthful characteristics. She is no longer dominated by Celia, in part due to their disguises: “I could find it in my heart to disgrace my man’s apparel and cry like a woman, but I must comfort the weaker vessel” (2.4.4-6). She continues her newfound willingness to be outspoken in her negotiations with Corin. Here again Rosalind’s age is less emphasized by the text than Orlando’s because the early modern audience would see youth in the boy actor dressed as a young man. The textual emphasis is instead on others believing that she is male: Corin addresses her as “sir” on their initial meeting (2.4.69, 74) and only switches to “young Master Ganymede” later on (3.2.83), though Orlando begins by calling her “pretty youth,” “fair youth,” “good youth,” and “youth” (3.2.323, 370, 378, 407, 415). Orlando’s emphasis makes clear for the audience that he does not recognize

Rosalind in Ganymede and suggests that he has grown enough to call others “youth” rather than being called one himself (Rosalind addresses him as “forester,” “sir,” and “man” [3.2.289, 299, 356, 367]). The use of “youth” also underlines her male costume, since the “concept of ‘youth’ . . . did not . . . apply to the young women of the period” (Garber *Coming* 123). This is usually termed Rosalind’s new “freedom” and attributed to her cross-dressing.²⁴³ While I do not discount the powerful effect that masquerading as the dominant sex has on both Rosalind and those who encounter her, placing her cross-dressing in the context of the play as a whole illuminates its effects on Rosalind’s character and the audience even after she has returned to patriarchal society. The presumption that her cross-dressing is a contrasting interlude leads easily to the assumption that it does not continue to affect her at the end of the play. This leads to suggestions that she has had to “give up” her “freedom,” her admission to patriarchal society as a reduction in her character, a reining in. Placing her cross-dressing on a continuum of growth occurring throughout the play makes it possible to both acknowledge that Rosalind gives up freedoms at the end and that the play presents this as a rewarding choice, a natural part of stepping into adulthood, essential for participation in community, and as much a pleasure for the modern audience as the time in Arden. Freedom, the play suggests, is antithetical to community.

Rosalind’s cross-dressing allows her to converse easily with Orlando but only by continuing to privilege homosocial relationships over heterosocial ones. As a “youth,” Rosalind may speak at length with men. The only heterosocial relationships are, at least in part, feigned—Ganymede feigning “Rosalind” with Orlando, Ganymede with Phoebe, and Aliena and Ganymede—or dysfunctional—Phoebe and Silvius. Rosalind and

Orlando use the comfort of the homosocial to play at their adult heterosocial and sexual roles, growing out of the homosocial as the play progresses.²⁴⁴

In addition to luring audience members into imagined participation through growth and depictions of desire, *As You Like It* presents love in a way especially appealing to modern audiences. Despite the contrived and alien situations, the play develops Rosalind and Orlando's relationship as a "naturalistic" love.²⁴⁵ Actors signal that the couple have deep-seated and genuine feelings for one another to engage the audience in their story. The text aids them in this endeavor by discounting the "artificial" language and posturing of Petrarchanism—associating it with youth—in favor of a naturalistic language of love—which the play accords to adulthood. Literary scholar Marianne Novy argues that "[i]t is part of Rosalind's role in the play to mock . . . the Petrarchan preoccupations that sharply differentiate and isolate the roles of lover and beloved . . . [to move] Orlando to more awareness of the inadequacy of a love that is confined to idealization without response" (36-37). Recent audiences respond far more to Rosalind and Orlando's naturalistic relationship than Silvius and Phoebe's though they are introduced with equal emotional intensity (though for Silvius and Phoebe that intensity is, of course, one-sided). This is in part due to the distance recent audience members have from Petrarchan courtly love conventions and the play's exaggeration of Petrarchanism's less pleasant features. The overall effect is to encourage audience members to follow Rosalind's privileging a "natural" expression of love and desire over an "artificial" one.

Phoebe and Silvius, with their traditional names, are the much-mocked model for pastoral, Petrarchan love and show all too clearly why it is a foolish one to modern

audiences.²⁴⁶ Before Phoebe falls for Ganymede, she is acting the role of the Petrarchan love object, distancing herself from her ardent lover. Silvius identifies himself as the inevitably thwarted Petrarchan wooer. Because he praises her, fulfilling his role, she fulfills that of the ideal Petrarchan woman by denying him; as MacCary puts it, “he sees her differently, and she sees herself differently” (174). It is up to Ganymede to point out the inherent foolishness of this system and their compliance to it. Ganymede presumes Silvius’s wooing has a basis in genuine affection, and he merely mocks Silvius’s choice of delivery rather than trying to change its object or “cure” it.²⁴⁷ Ganymede mocks him only for inappropriately praising Phoebe:

You are a thousand times a properer man
 Than she a woman. . . .
 ’Tis not her glass but you that flatters her,
 And out of you she sees herself more proper
 Than any of her lineaments can show her. (3.5.52-57)

The error is that of degree—Silvius is not to see himself as above Phoebe nor should she continue to see herself as above him. Neither is behaving “properly” because they are adhering to the Petrarchan roles rather than participating in (an undefined) mutual love. Novy also reads this mockery as reducing a status difference in favor of “mutuality”;

Orlando

acts as if he sees her [Rosalind] as far above him, and the poems he writes about her show at greater length the image of love as idealization without hope of mutuality . . . It is part of Rosalind’s role in the play to mock both

of the Petrarchan preoccupations that sharply differentiate and isolate the roles of lover and beloved and thus prevent mutuality (36).

What is correct behavior is not positively defined, but, for the man, it is not to follow and flatter and, for the woman, it is not to “insult, exult,” or be “proud and pitiless” (3.5.37, 41). What is correct, Ganymede suggests, is the antithesis of these things—for Silvius to reduce the expression of his ardor in favor of action (“take her to thee, shepherd” and “ply her hard”) and for Phoebe to yield to it (“Cry the man mercy, love him, take his offer” and “look on him better, / And be not proud”) (3.5.62, 64, 77-79). What Ganymede does not address is key: he mocks one behavior but does not set up a new set of codes in its place. Instead, the play suggests there is a natural way of behaving in love, one that presumes a balanced set of surprisingly traditionally gendered actions, the man to act and the woman to yield. The “natural” behavior naturalizes conservative gender roles. It teaches Rosalind and Orlando to accept—even to long for—the patriarchal community established at the end of the play. Rosalind, Orlando, Oliver, Celia, Phoebe, and Silvius will all eventually follow this code and the audience has been primed to approve of it.

Orlando also begins in youthful Petrarchanism. Rather than gaining a fully adult place in Duke Senior’s group, he embraces a new youthful category, the “lover, / Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad / Made to his mistress’ eyebrow” (2.7.148-50).²⁴⁸ He fits this identity so well that he even writes the necessary poor poetry in the requisite quantities. Garber sees Orlando’s embracing of this role as “adolescent posturing” (“Education” 172); literary scholar Wolfgang Iser also finds Orlando’s identity as a Petrarchan lover lacking:

through Ganymede's criticism we can discover Rosalind's own desire to provoke Orlando so that she can hear more about his love. For Ganymede's critique of the Petrarchan clichés in Orlando's verses expresses Rosalind's own dissatisfaction with a love that clearly regards the Petrarchan code as an adequate means of describing itself. The reproach that Orlando does not look like a Petrarchan lover turns into an appeal to make Orlando reveal the true nature of his love, and evidently this can only be done if the conventional code is now abandoned. (Iser "Dramatization" 34)

Rosalind's "cure" encourages Orlando to move out of stereotype and into individuality by demonstrating the limits of this identity and its conception of love and desire. For a modern audience, the Petrarchan language of love also sounds youthful in its excess and absolutism. Rosalind's game breaks down Orlando's flights of fancy, exploring with him many of the negative possibilities of love while continuing to fan his desire.

For Rosalind and Orlando, a naturalistic language for expressing emotion supplants the artificialities of Petrarchan convention. As MacCary puts it, "Shakespeare always forces his lovers to learn from their own experiences of love, to see for the first time with their own eyes, and not to allow their experience of love to be patterned by previously existing forms of love" (2). This choice appears to a modern audience as the privileging of real emotion over false expression, of interiority over show, and suggests that Rosalind and Orlando are developing towards a companionate marriage. Orlando begins fully in the trope of the Petrarchan lover, writing poetry to his untouchable beloved enumerating her beauties and virtues in simile- and metaphor-heavy language

and placing her in the company of Helen, Cleopatra, Atalanta, and Lucretia (3.2.142-45). Through the “cure” of Ganymede and “Rosalind” they are able to add desire to the casual and witty give-and-take of Rosalind and Celia’s homosocial conversations to create a new, naturalistic language of love.²⁴⁹ Garber argues that Rosalind teaches Orlando “to make him speak to her in the natural language of men and women” so that he can “communicate his feelings” (“Education” 171).²⁵⁰ In addition, “learning to speak is a sign of responsible adulthood” (Garber *Coming* 82). I argue that the play praises and naturalizes the language of desire that “Rosalind” and Orlando develop together and it is a key part of their growth from youth into full adulthood.²⁵¹

As Garber has argued, Orlando’s need for a proper education also justifies Rosalind continuing to masquerade as Ganymede (“Education” 169). Rosalind is not only teaching Orlando how to woo, “[h]er disguise as Ganymede permits her to educate him about himself, about her, and about the nature of love” (Garber “Education” 169). Ganymede (not “Rosalind”) allows Orlando the ease of homosocial conversation (as Garber notes) and provides an example for Orlando of what he should be.²⁵² Like Duke Senior, Ganymede assists Orlando overcome his “rude” upbringing, helping him to fashion himself as Rosalind’s equal. When they first meet, Ganymede runs verbal circles around Orlando. Though Ganymede and “Rosalind” will continue to dominate their conversations, Orlando begins to hold his own by the end of 4.1.²⁵³ Most obviously, Orlando gives up writing poor poetry in favor of listening to “Rosalind” and Ganymede’s lessons about love. More subtly, on meeting Ganymede, Orlando’s primary mode of speaking turns from declamations to questions.²⁵⁴ This change allows

Ganymede/“Rosalind” to dominate their conversations but also subtly suggests to an audience that Orlando is learning.

Orlando and Ganymede’s first meeting in Arden (3.2) is usually less crucial to the audience’s engagement than the wooing in 4.1. What is vital is that Orlando not appear to be an idiot. The scene, then, is crucial in establishing either that Orlando knows that Ganymede is Rosalind (a rare choice) or that Orlando reasonably believes in the Ganymede disguise.²⁵⁵ Productions often reinforce both youth and her disguise by augmenting their conversation with non-sexual physical contact—slaps, punches, etc.—that Ganymede must give and take “like a man” though Rosalind may wince once Orlando’s back is turned in a further reinforcement of conservative gender norms. As others have noted, the “cure” also allows Rosalind to test Orlando’s love. I would suggest that this too has to do with maturity—Rosalind discovers that Orlando is constant even in the face of the most outlandish possibilities she can devise. This constancy can be read by a modern audience as the difference between a youthful crush and sincere adult emotions.

Noble’s production was unusual for adding explicit desire to this scene. When Ganymede approached, Orlando was wiping water from his eyes after dunking his head in the onstage stream. He stared long and hard at Ganymede, as though he might recognize her but dismissed the thought. When Ganymede explained that the cure involves “imagin[ing] me his love,” he wrapped himself in the white cloth hanging from the fly loft, creating a sleeveless dress, slowly lifting off his bowler hat to become an alluring woman drawing in Orlando (3.2.391). On “being but a moonish youth,” Ganymede threw off the “dress,” dropped the hat back on, but kept his weight on one leg,

hip up, in an sexually alluring posture. He slipped between boy and woman, passion and game playing. “I would cure you” was pure sexual seduction as Ganymede lay himself down his back under the tree, hat off, one hand extended above his head (3.2.408).

Orlando was tempted by but questioned the earlier mix of genders, ages, and desires, but this final gesture won him as he ran to join her (production notes).

By 4.1, the second meeting of Orlando and Ganymede, Orlando has incorporated bantering into his questioning conversational style. Although “Rosalind” is able to whip him from one extreme to another, from marriage to cuckolding in a moment, he follows her lead relatively well. Rosalind too has grown. In performance, this scene is crucial to creating the idea of a modern companionate relationship. Gay argues that “most audience members, when quizzed, would locate the play’s charm in the courtship scenes” due to the “multiple erotic possibilities and positions’ they offer.” (*As You* 128, quotation from Traub *Desire* 128). Traub argues that the mock marriage “legitimizes the multiple desires it represents. The point is not that Orlando and Ganymede formalize a homosexual marriage, but rather that as the distance between Rosalind and Ganymede collapses, distinctions between homoerotic and heterosexual collapse as well” (*Desire* 126). This concept may work on the page or perhaps for an early modern audience, but it seems questionable for a modern audience. Instead, at this particularly fraught moment in the history of same-sex marriage, Rosalind’s perceived gender is especially meaningful. Many in the audience are likely to see three of Rosalind’s layers, making the marriage heterosexual. Some, however, might see (or also see) two males marrying—it is the reaction to that possibility that is so particularly divided for current audiences. Some may see but deny that possibility; others may find it desirable; still others may find

themselves angry or wistful in its representation of something denied to themselves or loved ones. Regardless, very few in the audience would find that “distinctions between homoerotic and heterosexual collapse.” Despite these reservations, it seems that “Shakespeare has scripted a scene . . . that allows everyone in the audience an experience of romantic bliss” (Gay 64), though I would add a “almost” before her “everyone.”²⁵⁶

In Noble’s production, Orlando burst into the scene with all the exuberance of a young lover visiting his beloved (production notes). Stevenson’s Rosalind faced an Orlando ready to toss away her flowers on the suggestion of cuckoldry who had to be wooed back to her with a heady mix of identities and desire. On asking Orlando to “woo me, woo me—for now I am in a holiday humor and like enough to consent,” Stevenson drew the cloth descending from the fly loft around her as an alluring a sleeveless dress and then dropped it in an evident sexual invitation on “consent” (4.1.62-63). But what Orlando and the audience saw under the “dress” was a fully dressed “youth,” not the naked woman her tone implies. Stevenson gave a small “oh!” of surprise that conveyed both “oh, dear, I’ve lost my dress, I’m naked” and “oh, what a surprise, I’m a boy in trousers underneath,” a choice that elicited approving laughter from the audience (performance notes). Noble’s production also underlined the replacement of the homosocial with the heterosocial at the mock wedding; Stevenson reported that “Celia is *appalled* . . . rendered speechless by the loss of [her] friend” (Rutter 116).

Many productions use this scene to give Rosalind and Orlando physical closeness and Doran’s (2000, RSC) and Bailey’s (1998, Globe) productions combined comedy and sexuality in ways that emphasized the youthfulness of the characters. The RSC’s Rosalind and Orlando played with their sexuality. Ganymede interrupted himself on “by

this hand” (4.1.102) with an admiring “whoooo” as he touched Orlando’s arm muscles, a moment of desire instantly dissolved by his leaping up to run across the stage, only to be resumed on “I will be your Rosalind in a more coming-on disposition” (4.1.103-4). The two actors built up the desire by almost (but never quite) kissing, snuggling and then pulling away, and nearly touching. In Bailey’s (1998, Globe) production, Orlando completed the mock wedding with a long kiss; he then dissolved the moment of desire with a “yuck” (production notes, Lois Potter 77). Vanessa Redgrave ended the scene by grabbing Orlando’s (Patrick Allen’s) leg to keep him near, a gesture so telling of her Ganymede that it became a publicity photo.

At the end of 3.2 and 4.1, both Rosalind and Orlando are left wanting more but content to continue the “cure.” Orlando agrees to “come every day to . . . woo” at the end of 3.2 and promises to return at the end of 4.1; Rosalind elicits his promise of future visits and anxiously awaits his second (3.2.409). The delay of desire’s fulfillment is a pleasure in itself for much of the play. However, Celia and Oliver push Rosalind and Orlando out of their game-playing and into adulthood. While Rosalind and Orlando follow a modern audience’s expectations of a romantic comedy, Oliver and Celia’s path is the way love “ought” to work in the context of the play. The proper pattern hinted at in Ganymede’s critique of Phoebe and Silvius is now made explicit and repeated three times with a subtly changing emphasis. Orlando expresses the proper pattern first, though with amazement: “Is’t possible that on so little acquaintance you should like her? That but seeing, you should love her? And loving, woo? And wooing, she should grant? And will you persevere to enjoy her?” (5.2.1-4). While members of modern audience might prefer Rosalind and Orlando’s game on the basis that it allows the two to “get to know

each other,” Orlando, Rosalind, Oliver, and Celia all loved at first sight and it remains a popular trope. Orlando’s language is frank—they liked, they loved, and they acted on that love in a manner appropriate to their station and approved by the patriarchal culture—but his amazement is telling. It is as though Orlando did not know or believe things could go so smoothly from meeting to marriage, even though that is the play’s ideal. Orlando also suggests a mutuality to their emotions; Orlando attributes to Oliver “like,” “love,” and “woo” while Celia does at least “grant.” Oliver’s version increases the emphasis on mutuality: “Neither call the giddiness of it in question, the poverty of her, the small acquaintance, my sudden wooing nor her sudden consenting. But say with me, I love Aliena. Say with her that she loves me. Consent with both that we may enjoy each other” (5.2.5-9). Although Orlando gives his “consent” to their “wedding” (5.2.13), both men use “enjoy” as the final verb in their list, a verb loaded with sexual suggestions. Ganymede’s rehearsal echoes their emphasis on mutuality while unambiguously increasing the role of desire in their plans:

There was never anything so sudden but the fight of two rams, and Caesar’s thrasonical brag of “I came, I saw and overcame.” For your brother and my sister no sooner met but they looked; no sooner looked but they loved; and no sooner loved but they sighed; no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason; no sooner knew the reason but they sought the remedy; and in these degrees have they made a pair of stairs to marriage, which they will climb incontinent or else be incontinent before marriage. They are in the very wrath of love and they will together. Clubs cannot part them. (5.2.28-40).

Without some explicit inflections or gesturing, “incontinent” is likely to be lost on a modern audience, but the repetition of violent imagery aptly illustrates their overwhelming passion (if giving it a disturbing valence).

The excess of Ganymede’s version seems to drive Orlando over the edge. Orlando does not wax eloquent on Rosalind’s beauty or the depth of his love as he did as the young Petrarchan poet-lover; instead, he laments not having Rosalind. The “happiness” he will see only “through another man’s eyes” can no longer be filled by “Rosalind” (5.2.43). His lament, “I can no longer live by thinking,” is the frustration of desire (5.2.49). He is willing—longing—to give up his identity as the young lover and the joy of the “cure” for adulthood and the socially structured fulfillment of his desire. As Garber puts it, this moment is “both a graduation and a commencement, a change and a new beginning. Imagination and play, which had brought him to this point, are no longer enough to sustain him” (Garber 174). Ganymede specifically offers a marriage to Rosalind for Orlando’s fulfillment here (5.2.60-62), though later he promises to “satisfy” Orlando, a sexual innuendo then and now (5.2.110).

The ridiculous exchange between Phoebe, Silvius, Orlando, and Ganymede that follows is the remaking of the abstract language of Petrarchanism into everyday wants driven by desire, the bubbling over of desire caused by the long delay before fulfillment. The language is still excessive, but it is also straightforward. To love is “to be made of sighs and tears . . . of faith and service” and

. . . of fantasy,

All made of passion, and all made of wishes,

All adoration, duty and observance,

All humbleness, all patience and impatience,

All purity, all trial, all obedience. (5.2.80-94).

Like the story of Oliver and Celia, this adoration is shared by all parties, not directed at an untouchable female beloved. It is this peaking of desire that leads Ganymede to promise satisfaction to all parties—satisfaction that is explicitly tied to marriage (5.2.108-13). This exchange is a peak for the audience as well. The excess and tension of desire explodes in audience laughter at the rapid-fire exchange and eager anticipation of the fulfillment of their desires.²⁵⁷

The play ends with the construction or reconstruction of a hierarichal, patriarchal community that allows Rosalind and Orlando an approved way to fulfill their desires—marriage. The final scene of *As You Like It* is often remarked on for its effect on the audience. Literary scholar David Richman mentions the “amazed hush in the audience when Rosalind gives herself to her father and her lover” (17) while reviewer Hoyle sees the ending as “a near-ritual of loving resolution that never fails to move” (“As You”). The rules by which the final community comes together are unspoken and it is unclear whether they are a restitution of a pre-play community order or an organic construction of a new one. The participants’ knowledge of the rules suggests that they reconstruct the rules of Duke Senior’s realm as his family and his dukedom are reestablished. The lack of articulation of the rules serves to naturalize them, regardless of their fictional origins. *Every* character should *naturally* know that the *right* way to behave is the one demonstrated at the end of the play. Following these rules *inevitably* creates community and gives one a proper place in it, yet as the events of the play witness, even one person acting as an individual against the rules can have a major impact. As this illustrates, there

is a paradox here—the community seems inevitable, but is not. Rule following seems to be innate, but is not. The community depends on and is constructed by the naturalizing of those two ideas.

This is not to suggest that such a group need be egalitarian, but each member has *chosen* to participate and participates according to a set of rules. There is a firm hierarchy here despite Rosalind and Orlando moving into adult positions. Instead of a clear divide between youth and age, the final scene emphasizes rank, restoring “proper” authority and adding Hymen as the consummate authority.²⁵⁸ Yet, even here there are subversive elements working against the hierarchy. Orlando’s behavior may now match his blood, but his inheritance of Sir Rowland’s property is certainly unorthodox. Rosalind, at the time of the match, is merely the daughter of an exiled Duke, a gentlewoman only in her training not her possessions or status.

That Rosalind and Orlando are ready to marry and blessed by Hyman to do so are the strongest indications of their adult standing. The lack of lines from either makes the planned marriage itself the mark of adulthood. Juliet Stevenson also found Rosalind’s silence as mark of “the patriarchy . . . reasserting itself” (Stevenson qtd. Rutter 119). Rosalind in her transformation from a youth to a woman also seems to add a few years (at least in the modern conceptions of “youth” and “woman”) and her few lines are usually presented with solemnity rather than the light-hearted wit and quick gestures of Acts 1-4. Rosalind giving herself away—“[to Duke Senior] To you I give myself, for I am yours. / [to Orlando] To you I give myself, for I am yours”—is another suggestion of adulthood, but this moment seems less certain than many would have it (including productions) (5.4.114-15).²⁵⁹ Duke Senior would give Rosalind to Orlando (5.4.6-7) and Orlando will

marry Rosalind if she appears (5.2.60-62, 5.4.9) while Hymen declares that she appears solely to be given to Orlando by the Duke Senior (5.4.112-13) and sets them together (5.4.130). Orlando too demonstrates some final maturation. Though he learns throughout the play, his largest lesson is the revelation that Rosalind is someone who can and would perform an extended masquerade. Orlando must, in that moment, incorporate all of Ganymede into his idea of Rosalind rather than basing it on his first sight of Rosalind and his experience with “Rosalind.”

Finally, there is also the question of the audience’s pleasure in the play as a whole. It is only when Rosalind is *not* following the rules that she is amusing, yet the conclusion of the play is usually pleasing. That audience members are usually pleased with the ending suggests that they too may be part of the “everyone” mentioned above—that they too are inculcated by society and the play to approve these rules as guides to their pleasurable imagined participation in the final community.

In modern productions, the last scene lets the audience have it both ways: it fulfills the modern ideal of a companionate and romantic relationship and provides the comforting stability of patriarchal structure, the righting and solidifying of a hierarchy, and the presence of a seemingly socially diverse yet stable community. It suggests that these romantic ideals—though they emphasize individualism—can be fulfilled within conservative structures, even help to build and solidify them. You can have it as you like it and as it “should” be. There is a danger here of overemphasizing the conservativeness of *As You Like It* as presented or experienced in the modern theatre. There seems little doubt that what audiences, actors, and directors most enjoy is the time of freedom in Arden, not the conservative ending. Repackaging the ending in accord with modern

romantic comedies reduces audience awareness of its patriarchal message while naturalizing it in the terms of that genre.²⁶⁰ Most productions emphasize Rosalind's role at the end and create the firm impression that she and Orlando (and Celia and Oliver) have mutually satisfying romantic attachments.²⁶¹ This choice is not necessarily a misreading of the play, but it elides the deeply conservative structure of the final scene and the play as a whole.

Or nearly as a whole, for one cannot ignore the epilogue. Its ability to rewrite the overall message of the play is questionable, given it is a paratext and that its ability to question the play's overall message depends on whether Rosalind or the actor playing Rosalind delivers it and whether it is heteronormalized.²⁶² The epilogue confirms the conservative lesson of the play while reconfirming more subversive message of the cross-dressed desires. It reminds the audience of Rosalind's cross-dressing but emphasizes heterosexual couplings. Both sexes are conjured to like the play based on their love for the other and it is only "If I were a woman" that the actor playing Rosalind would kiss the men of the audience (Epilogue 16-17). Yet this line is often cut for female actors (Dusinberre Epilogue n16-17) and when delivered, the actor is usually in Rosalind's wedding dress.²⁶³

Who delivers the Epilogue—the actor or the character—also changes its meanings. When delivered as Rosalind, "If I were a woman" makes little sense, but the choice allows for a further confirmation of her control of the play. By stepping into a metatheatrical stance while still a character, the suggestion emerges that Rosalind has a power over the plot greater than that of Iago or Hamlet and closer to an authorial role. This can emphasize the lingering female power in the new social structure, especially if

the Epilogue is played to a listening and approving Orlando, as it was in the Caird (1989, RSC) production.²⁶⁴ When the Epilogue is delivered by the actor playing Rosalind, rather than the character, then the suggestions are less significant to the lessons of the play. This choice marks Rosalind as the starring role and the actor as the star of the show. It reminds the audience of the gap between the actor and the role and closes off the imagined participation of the audience while the actors remain on stage.

The epilogue also suggests, however, that the male and female members of the audience will experience *different* pleasures from this play. The women are conjured to “like as much of the play as please you” and it is only “between you [men] and the women the play may please (Epilogue 12-16). The Epilogue suggests that each sex will like a part of the play; that only together will the play fully please. Even as the Epilogue ends imagined participation by stepping outside of the play’s world, it encourages the audience to remain together, though by appealing primarily to heterosexual desires, which may break the audience apart. By repeatedly mentioning the two sexes and suggesting that they will enjoy different parts of the play or enjoy the play differently, the Epilogue simultaneously acknowledges the imagined participation of the audience and its seeming cohesiveness while ending its participation and suggesting that the feeling of community has in fact been fiction all along, since audience members were divided in what they were enjoying. This reconfirms for the audience the final lesson for Rosalind and Orlando—that pleasure needs the coupling of male and female—yet it suggests these are not shared pleasures. Juliet Stevenson declared that, “I would hope that the audience go out of the theatre talking to each other. Wouldn’t it be good? Talking to each other, maybe even ringing each other up over the next week or two?” (qtd. Rutter 121). It is

only by enjoying their separate pleasures that the audience became a community. By finding *As You* [singular] *Like It*, they experienced *As You* [all] *Like It*, the pleasure of community.

Conclusion

This dissertation argues against two trends in audience studies—the uncritical use of “the audience” as a single, cohesive being and the contrary emphasis on individual audience member reactions. Those writing in the first group have been rightly criticized by the second for suggesting without support that all audience members react in the same way to performance. Yet the second group denies the common sensory experience of audience members—that they are, somehow, a part of something larger. Media scholar Laura Mulvey’s well-known theory of the lone audience member communing with the screen in the darkened movie theatre has proven fundamental to the work of the second group; I argue in this dissertation that this concept should not be applied to live theatre. The cognitive theory discussed in Chapter 1 provides one layer of evidence for rethinking the theatrical audience experience as a communal experience; lived experience provides another. To repeat the statement by Anne Ubersfeld, a leading semiotic theatre theorist, “Theatrical pleasure is not a solitary pleasure, but is reflected on and reverberates through others; it spreads like a train of gunpowder or suddenly congeals. The spectator emits barely perceptible signs of pleasure as well as loud laughter and secret tears—their contagiousness is necessary for everyone’s pleasure” (“Pleasure” 128). The effects of cognitive participation in theatre and the effects of hearing (and in some theatres, seeing) the reactions of other audience members results in this pleasurable “contagion.” My reframing of “the audience” should encourage rethinking of the theatre experience as a whole.

There remain many areas in which this theory of audience would need to be tested. I have chosen queer desires as an especially affecting element of performance yet

believe that other elements of theatre also reward participation with pleasure. Modern plays, although lacking the intermediate novelty offered by the language of early modern dramas, are still powerful in the theatre, so must also encourage participation. Other kinds of theatre and other audience events (such as sporting events and rock concerts) should also be examined through the lens of cognitive participation.

The cognitive theories described here are only beginning to be applied to the psychological and sociological study of crowds. These fields began with and continue to be primarily focused on the study of social movements, though the recent focus on the individual has taken its toll on the popularity of crowd studies.²⁶⁵ Generally, a “crowd” includes most of the following elements: communication, a lack of clear structure and perhaps a lack of clear purpose, a shared “sense of urgency,” an “emergence of a norm,” and the ability to act in ways unusual for the individuals involved.²⁶⁶ The lack of structure and the significant focus on unusual activity make crowd studies a poor means of explaining audience behavior. Sociological crowd studies usually attempt to determine why and how a movement grew, while psychological studies describe the shifting power dynamics of groups. On the surface, the attention to the “mental unity of crowds,” as crowd theorist Gustav Le Bon puts it in his foundational study, would seem applicable to audiences, yet the existing theories of crowds focus overwhelmingly on the actions and interactions of crowds and the psychological results of anonymity, neither of which applies well to audience interactions. The related discipline sociophysics developed in the twenty-first century, which explores how humans physically and mentally interact. This growing field seems to offer some significant possibilities for

intersection with my theory of audiences. In addition, my theory of audience could possibly be expanded to illuminate hitherto unexplained moments of crowd cohesion.²⁶⁷

The use of “community” to describe an audience follows those working on Internet groups in expanding the range of what is considered a community. In agreement with the work begun by leading the leading Internet sociologist Barry Wellman, since joined by many others, I expand the traditional definitions of “community” and counter the prevailing concept that “community” belongs to an idealized pre-industrial time.²⁶⁸ These works attempt to create a new, usable definition of community that can encompass contemporary feelings of cohesion and support, including some group experiences on the Internet. By applying the term to audiences, I open up “community” to include experiences—such as sporting events and concerts—not previously thought of in these terms. Bringing this terminology to bear on such events may provide new insight into the experience of them, as I hope the term’s use for theatre audiences does here.

A similar, potentially productive expansion comes from my definition of “queer desires.” As mentioned in “The Communal Audience,” this use is an intentional counterargument to those theorists who present queer desire as a non-productive or destructive force. It also provides an accurate terminology for discussing desires beyond those encapsulated in modern identity positions, expanding the work on desire to encompass the broader range of human experience.

My theory of “audience” should revise the understanding of the “quiet” proscenium audience.²⁶⁹ While audience members might “feed” off seeing and hearing the audience reactions in a surround- or thrust-stage theatre, their neural reactions, on a physical level, are driven by the actions and language on the stage. Even in a thrust stage

or theatre-in-the-round auditorium, audience members' attention needs to be primarily on the stage to avoid a Panopticon effect. Yet there is an element of the Panopticon in all audiences in their regulation of appropriate theatrical behavior. While all may laugh or applaud together, early reviewers of shows at the Globe attempted to regulate audience member's "inappropriate" behavior (booing, cheering, and rustling rain ponchos).²⁷⁰ One portion of the audience—with the potential power to affect future audience members through the public venue for their opinion—attempted to regulate the behavior of others based on their presumptions about how theatre "should" work and how theatre audiences "should" behave.²⁷¹ In addition, as the scholar of early modern literature and culture Bruce Smith has examined, sound should be seen as a powerful theatrical force. Not only are audience members interpreting mentally and being acted on physically by the sounds from the stage, as Smith proves, audience members also hear the reactions of others. This oral confirmation builds and maintains the audience community, even in the darkest of theatres.

The concept of cognitive participation also adds weight to cultural arguments such as Barbara Hodgdon's in *The Shakespeare Trade* about the importance of surroundings to the theatre experience. The tourist packaging of the RSC in Stratford-upon-Avon or the bustle of the Thames Path are potentially as interactive as the experiences inside the theatre and should rightly be considered as a continuum of experience rather than separate events. My theory may also have an impact on those theatre scholars, like Dennis Kennedy, working on how theatre structures affect the audience experience.²⁷² The RSC's changes to its main stage conform to my theory, though they are seemingly based only on anecdotal reports of pleasure generated from

participation and cohesion rather than cognitive theory. Those working on and in the Globe, the Swan, and the Courtyard Theatre often note their “intimacy”—the sense of a connection between the stage and the audience members.²⁷³ RSC Associate Designer Tom Piper suggests the importance of audience participation in the design of the new RSC stage:

It allows for a much better connection between the actors on stage and the audience members. It is a relationship that we know works well for Shakespeare’s plays.

It feels intimate. Having a thrust stage means that the audience has multiple view points [*sic*] wrapped around the action on stage, unlike in a cinema or in a proscenium arch theatre where the audience are all looking from the same view point [*sic*], but those in the cheap seats are forced miles from the stage. This is a much more democratic space, where the audience is intimately involved in the action . . . The audience . . . becomes part of the environment and their reactions, clearly visible to cast and other audience members alike, become part of the world of the play.
(“Interview”)

The idea that a thrust stage is fundamental to the RSC—when their primary stage has always been a proscenium—demonstrates the popularity of even un-theorized conceptions of audience engagement.²⁷⁴ Clearly the RSC is monetarily investing in the hope that such engagement makes theatre pleasurable and sells tickets. However, Piper’s comments also point out an aspect that may complicate the use of my theory: that

although the audience is more “democratic” in its relationship with the stage, each seat has a different viewpoint in a thrust-stage auditorium.

This new conception of the cognitively participatory audience could also have an impact on playwrights or artistic decisions. With the knowledge that audiences prefer “intermediate novelty,” designers and directors might intentionally balance abstract and realistic elements of a production to increase participation or skew the balance to intentionally alienate audience members from participation and each other. When audience members leave the theatre vaguely dissatisfied despite having attended a quality production, it may be because this mixture is unusual. I found this to be the case for the National Theatre’s 2009 production of *Phèdre* starring Helen Mirren. The production was tilted towards the abstract with starkly simple sets, a translation by Ted Hughes that emphasized a poetic line over narrative or novelistic characterization, and a plot that called for rapid emotional crises—which left me interested but unsatisfied. The quiet audience appreciated the performance but seemed unengaged with the stage during the performance and unconnected with each other afterwards.

While the method of this dissertation cannot be applied to the study of early modern audiences, the theory of audience creation may. Robert Weimann, a leading scholar of early modern performance culture, argues that the “authority” of early modern theatre “needed to be validated by the audience and was unlikely to result without the cooperative effort of the audience’s ‘imaginary forces’” (403-5). Since Weimann’s writing in 1988, little has been done to theorize his conception of an active role for early modern audiences.²⁷⁵ Recent works by literary scholar Allison Hobgood and theatre scholar Amy Cook have begun to examine the relationship between the embodied

experience of the early modern audience member and the playtext.²⁷⁶ Andrew Gurr, the leading scholar of early modern audiences, and literary scholar Karoline Szatek argue that “early modern playgoing audiences as a whole” felt a “magnitude” of emotion; in the early modern thrust-stage theatres, they state, “audiences could not behave like . . . passive eavesdroppers” (162, 164). These factors suggest that early modern audience members may also have become “an audience.”

My dissertation attempts to unravel a question fundamental to many works on early modern theatre: why do human beings continue to be compelled by live performance? Cognitive theory has begun to open up a new way of understanding the process of this fascination. I hope that this new theorization of “an audience” will provide a useful addition to cognitive science’s current emphasis on the individual spectator while demonstrating the continued need for literary and theatrical theories to interpret the effects of particular plays. By expanding our focus from the stage to the audience, we can begin to understand why and how drama continues to thrive. We can examine critically how performance and particular plays create the “palpable, critical energy created by the presence of the audience” that is the pleasure of theatre (Andy Goldsworthy qtd in Janek Liebetruht 20).

Endnotes

¹ See for example Giovanni Buccino et al (“Action” 400) and Gallese, Christian Keysers, and Giacomo Rizzolatti (396). See Chapter 1 for more details.

² See Lakoff and Johnson’s *Philosophy in the Flesh* for the foundations of cognitive linguistics. See Chapter 1 for more details.

³ Northrop Frye defines “green world” in *The Anatomy of Criticism* (182-4).

⁴ See Chapter 3 for details about the popularity of *The Merchant of Venice* and the positive reception for *The Jew of Malta*. In simple terms, *The Merchant of Venice* has been produced 30 by the RSC times since 1956. In comparison, the RSC has produced *Hamlet* 44 times and *As You Like It* 37 times. (These numbers come from a search of the online RSC Performance Database on 4 March 2010.) The reviews of *The Jew of Malta* consistently report that the performance of the play was a pleasurable experience (see Chapter 3 for details).

⁵ See for example Ann Jones and Peter Stallybrass or Stephen Orgel.

⁶ McConachie develops this conclusion from the work of Melissa Hines (29-31).

⁷ McConachie also analyzes Pierre Jacob and Marc Jennerod’s theory in relation to theatrical spectatorship (56-9). Gallese’s survey also found a connection between intentionality in movement and the particular reactions of the brain that suggests that the brain distinguishes between mere movement and intentional movement (Gallese “Motor Abstraction” 488). Andrew Meltzoff found that toddlers who saw a human attempt an action but fail to complete it would correctly complete the action; toddlers who saw a machine try and fail would replicate the unsuccessful act, rather than perceiving and

attempting the final intention. Harold Bekkering, Andreas Wohlschläger, and Merideth Gattis also found that toddlers replicate the goal of the action rather than the particulars of the movement. Audience members are especially engaged in performance because it is conceived of as a series of intentional acts, each mirrored by the spectating brain.

⁸ Gallese et al. in “Motor Cognition and its Role in the Phylogeny and Ontogeny of Action Understanding” discuss some studies that begin to provide confirmation of this state in humans (105). Buccino et al. find that “In the case of object-related actions, a further object-related analysis is performed in the parietal lobe, as if the subjects were indeed using those objects” (“Action” 400). We do not merely see an object; in his work on monkeys, Gallese found that “physical entities, 3D objects, are identified, differentiated, and *represented* not in relation to their mere physical appearance, but in relation to the effect of the interaction with an acting agent” (488-89). Though drawing conclusions about the human brain based on this research is somewhat risky, it is likely that we understand physical objects, even physical objects merely observed, in terms of our potential interactions with them.

⁹ The primary proponents of the motor system’s principle role in human’s “mind reading” of others’ intentions are Vittorio Gallese, Marc Jennerod, and Giacomo Rizzolatti. As Gallese et al. note, understanding the cognition of language, emotion, and affect are all necessary to explain how humans understand one another (“Motor Cognition” 103), and therefore necessary for a complete description of how humans understand theatre. Gallese does also mention “that actions may be differently perceived—and understood—on the basis of the individual’s motor capabilities and experience,” yet the overall

similarities in the Western human experience result in more similarities in interpretation than differences (“Motor Abstraction” 492). He is also careful to differentiate between intentions that are “*embedded*” in the act which “we simply detect” and the separate cognitive process to “*ascribe intentions to others*” (emphasis original, “Motor Abstraction” 493). Ebisch et al. in their study of the neurological responses to the sight of touching also found a statistically significant difference in reactions to the sights of intentional and unintentional touches. Gallese summarizes all of these findings: “[t]he observation of an object-related action leads to the activation of the same neural network active during its actual execution. Action observation causes in the observer the automatic simulated re-enactment of the same action” (“Motor Abstraction” 491). See also Susan Hurley and Nick Charter, eds., *Imitation, Human Development, and Culture* and Maxim I. Stamenov and Vittorio Gallese, eds., *Mirror Neurons and the Evolution of Brain and Language*.

¹⁰ It is currently unknown if this reaction depends on naturalistic acting and what impact, if any, the knowledge of the fiction of theatre has on these cognitive processes.

McConachie suggest that the process occurs regardless of these factors, but with little discussion of the complexity of these issues (see 65 and 81 for examples).

¹¹ Marc Sato et al. cite studies by Lawrence Barsalou, Gallese and Lakoff, Arthur Glenberg, Lakoff, Friendemann Pulvermüller, Rolf Zwaan, and Zwaan and Lawrence Taylor (83).

¹² See Olaf Hauk, Ingrid Johnsrude, and Pulvermüller (2004), Marco Tettamanti et al. (2005), and Pulvermüller, M. Harle, and F. Hummel (2001).

¹³ It remains unknown precisely how all of embodied language works. A study by Véronique Boulenger et al. (2006) found that action verbs stimulated the motor sections of the brain while nouns that could not be acted on did not, but their study leaves undetermined whether the effect was due to the noun/verb, action/non-action, or both divides. This work therefore presumes that, while audience members may have a greater response to verbalized or acted on verbs, they have some active role in all language and visual processing, without which productions would not have meaning.

¹⁴ This is a “possible” way in which audience members participate and share interpretations because the embodied theory is only one branch of cognitive linguistics rather than a generally agreed-upon theory.

¹⁵ The conceptions of Lakoff and Johnson’s *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge for Western Thought* (1999) have been accepted as foundations of cognitive linguistics.

¹⁶ Generally, audience members rarely ask one another “what happened?” when compared to the number of moment-by-moment interpretations an audience member must make to understand a performance. Most often, questions come from a lack of clarity in an action (so no interpretation is clearly more “right” than another), from missing an action or words (from an inability to hear or see or comprehend), or from an omission in cultural knowledge necessary to interpret the performance. Gender or word play in Shakespeare’s plays may escape many audience members unfamiliar with early modern culture.

¹⁷ Yet, all theatergoers have experienced occasional moments that cannot be interpreted,

that seem contrary to previous interpretations, or that other audience members interpret differently.

¹⁸ Fauconnier and Turner argue for a similar emphasis on the brain's ability to "blend" basic concepts in "[m]etaphoric thinking" (17 and elsewhere).

¹⁹ Cook applies this cognitive linguistics-based portion of conceptual blending theory to analyze the effects of Shakespeare's language on theatre audiences in "Interplay: The Method and Potential of a Cognitive Scientific Approach to Theatre."

²⁰ McConachie uses David Z. Saltz's article "Infiction and Outfiction: The Role of Fiction in Theatrical Performance" to explain this point (54-5).

²¹ Harvey Zorbaugh, David Lee and Howard Newby, Anthony Giddens, and Amitai Etzioni among others all explicitly argue for the pattern of development, while Frankenberg argues for a continuum between "community" and "association." These theories echo many literary theories of modernism and postmodernism in their emphasis on fragmentation as a result of growing industrialization and urbanism.

²² Those who argue the Internet is improving or including community include Howard Rheingold; Christian Fuchs; Nessim Watson; David Bell; Nancy K. Baym; Anabel Quan-Haase; Barry Wellman; Jane McGonigal; Peter Niecharz, Jr.; and Robert Kraut (after an earlier study supporting the counterargument). Those who argue the Internet cannot support or destroys embodied community include Suzanne Keller; Norman Nie, D. Sunshine Hillygus, and Lutz Erbring; Michael Bugeja; Robert Putnam; Jean Baudrillard; James Beniger; and Sherry Turkle; among others.

²³ Gerard Delanty creates a similar argument from a different starting point: "the

postmodern age is also an insecure age, which, in calling into question the assumptions of modernity, has made the problem of belonging more and more acute. The quest for belonging has occurred precisely because insecurity has become the main experience for many people” (131).

²⁴ Other public places where community can be experienced will be discussed in the conclusion.

²⁵ This also suggests why a theatre experience is not the private one Laura Mulvey theorizes for movies. Even those nation/audience members that the individual cannot see are included in the imagined community—others are presumed to be participatory, presumed to be an active part of the same group experience.

²⁶ After this definition of an imagined community, Anderson claims that the particular imagined community of a nation must include further concepts—that it is both “limited” and “sovereign.” A version of “limited” will be discussed further. However, this work will not take up Shakespeare’s relation to the definition of national community and therefore not address the imagined theatre community as “sovereign.”

²⁷ There is a distinct parallel here to Michel Foucault, Eve K. Sedgwick, and Judith Butler’s work on the construction of sexuality and gender identities. While identities are constructed, they are still felt to be essential, whole, and preexisting their performance; the experience is one of essentialism.

²⁸ McConachie also analyzes Ellis’s application to theatre, though not in relation to naturalism and abstraction (51).

²⁹ General information about RSC history can be found in Steven Adler’s *Rough Magic*:

Making Theatre at the Royal Shakespeare Company, Sally Beauman's *The Royal Shakespeare Company: A History of Ten Decades*, and Colin Chambers' *Inside the Royal Shakespeare Company*. Dominic Shellard's *British Theatre Since the War* provides an excellent introduction to the variety of post-World War II UK theatres and their (inter)relationships.

³⁰ In a rare attribution of influence, John Barton credits the 1956 visit to London by Brecht's Berliner Ensemble as 'the greatest theatrical experience I've ever had without a doubt. . . . It's one influence that I totally acknowledge, and it's haunted me. It goes into my work" (qtd. Greenwald 26). The RSC showed this trend most clearly in their set design and, more recently, in their various theatre renovations. These renovations will remove any proscenium theatre in Stratford in favor of the more "active" thrust-stage structure, similar to the Swan Theatre. Shellard describes well the lasting impact of Berliner Ensemble visit on UK theatre, as well as the landmark first performance of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, now considered the beginning of the New Wave, a movement against naturalism (see, for example, Stephen Lacey's work *British Realist Theatre: The New Wave in its Context 1956-1965*).

³¹ There is a second potential line of influence. William Poël and Henry Irving had previously experimented with "original practices" and text-driven performances, but these experiments did not change the overall approach to UK productions of early modern drama and seem to have had little effect on Hall and Barton's choices.

³² Russell Jackson describes Tree's style as "lavishly pictorial and heavily cut . . . spectacular, sentimental, and unashamedly actor-centered" (127) and Granville-Barker's

as having “brisker, less operatic speech and acting” (125). Beaman’s book includes the following quotations about the RSC’s new style (268): Peter Hall describes the style as “dry, cool and intellectual”; John Barton says “it was a kind of rational style; we stressed the pointing up of meaning”; according to Peter Brook, the style “depended on a rational appraisal of the material, not just playing on feeling and intuition.”

³³ A note on “naturalism” versus “realism”: I am using “realism” as the more general term for any attempt on stage to mimic everyday life as “naturalism” can refer to a particular anti-realist movement in late-nineteenth-century drama (e.g. Strindberg). Quotations, however, especially those that are translations, tend to use both terms interchangeably to refer to the stage mimicking everyday life. Many works on British theatre follow this choice, but Lacey’s *British Realist Theatre* has an excellent discussion of the slippery distinction (98-103).

³⁴ Method also potentially opens up a kind of blank only a modern or postmodern audience could see or fill—the psychology of the character. This might even be another kind of identity position for some performances or audience members, providing a diagnosis as a formation of identity (a schizophrenic, e.g.). This is, perhaps, another resemblance between early modern and post-1950s theatre—early modern audience members might have filled similar blanks with humoural identity positions (a melancholic, e.g.).

³⁵ Barton himself repeatedly gives the credit to Rylands; a selection of these attributions is reproduced in Michael Greewald’s *Directions by Indirections*, 20-21. The emphasis on verse in Shakespeare rehearsal is attributed to William Poël.

³⁶ Instigated in the Peter Hall years, these classes also originally taught the “cold” style of verse delivery, supposedly derived out of the verse itself (in reaction to the dominant emotional delivery style which was considered laid onto the verse and a distortion of it).

³⁷ Thanks go to Michael Evenden for this wording.

³⁸ The term has this use in GLBTQ culture but can also be found in critical works such as *Gender Queer. Voices From Beyond the Sexual Binary* and *The Transgender Studies Reader*.

³⁹ See, for example, Lee Edelman’s *No Future* or Leo Bersani’s “Is the Rectum a Grave?” or *Homos*.

⁴⁰ Louise Sloan touches on a similar potential for a “queer community”: “I often imagine it will be the ‘queer community’—the oxymoronic community of difference—that might be able to teach the world how to get along.” From Louise Sloan, “Beyond Dialogue,” an article on The 2nd Annual Lesbian and Gay Writers’ Conference in the *San Francisco Bay Guardian Literary Supplement*, March 1991 p.3 (qtd. in Lisa Duggan 57).

⁴¹ Anderson’s full point is that “it is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship” (7).

⁴² See, for example, Andrew Gurr or Terrence Hawkes.

⁴³ They are, of course, also a force on other theatre in the UK, influencing other works and working styles, commanding a large share of the audience (and thereby setting audience expectations for theatre as well as for early modern drama), and in taking the lion’s share of state funding for the arts. Hall’s revamping of the RSC in the 1950s was

followed by the founding of the NT in 1962, and the Globe opening in 1996.

⁴⁴ Again, their ability to consistently get state funding for their productions demonstrates their relatively conservative nature and their need to keep it so. At the same time, the state funding supposedly allows for more artistic freedom since the companies do not have to rely solely on ticket sales for their financial success. Both the RSC and the NT dabble in more diverse theaters and performances, but these tend to be short-lived experiments that are secondary to their main productions and overall thrust. For both, the content of their plays has proved more radical than their “theatre” or “performance.”

⁴⁵ This work will not discuss, for instance, the influence of the theatre building and its surroundings which, as Susan Bennett, Barbara Hodgdon, and Iain Mackintosh have astutely argued, provide their own cultural meanings to the performance.

⁴⁶ Eversmann confirms these peak experiences in ways impossible for the productions examined here because of the lack of interviews available with audience members, yet his findings suggest a full and engrossing imaginative participation. Eversmann found that spectators at peak experiences reported “that they are fully concentrated—all their attention focused on the stage. They are completely wrapped up in and carried along by the performance, forgetting everyday worries. At times it seems there is a heightened consciousness and the sense of time is lost. Often the spectator is deeply moved on a personal and emotional level, which causes the performance to have such an impact that it is stored in memory for a very long time . . . The end of such a special performance is experienced as if awakening from a dream” (139).

⁴⁷ Mary Conway, for example, offers a persuasive argument for differences in production

choices, viewing practices, audience members' expectations, and interpretations that sexual orientation makes.

⁴⁸ The only other revenge tragedies I have located that incorporate the act to be revenged into the play are *The Duchess of Malfi* and *Antonio's Revenge*, neither of which has been often produced since 1965.

⁴⁹ Royal Shakespeare Company essay on past responses to the play found at <http://www.rsc.org.uk/titus/about/history.html>.

⁵⁰ The term and definition of a "postmodern horror film" is Isabel Pinedo's, from *Recreational Terror: Women and the Pleasures of Horror Film Viewing*.

⁵¹ See note 5 for information about *Titus Andronicus*'s unpopularity. The increasing frequency of productions—demonstrated in the next paragraphs—by companies that must sell tickets indicates the increasing popularity of the play.

⁵² The RSC report on this unpopularity at <http://www.rsc.org.uk/titus/about/history.html>.

⁵³ The RSC report on this at <http://www.rsc.org.uk/titus/about/history.html>.

⁵⁴ A.L. Rowse agrees: "Such is the horror of our own age, with the appalling barbarities of prison camps and resistance movements paralleling the torture and mutilation and feeding on human flesh, of the play, that it has ceased to be improbable" (<http://www.rsc.org.uk/titus/about/critics>). Susan Clapp reiterates, "No one who's watched the news recently is likely to dismiss *Titus Andronicus* as macabre invention. The vengeance that once looked deranged and barbaric now also looks like documentary truth" (13).

⁵⁵ Nunn's production cut many of the lines in praise of Lavinia in Act 1, referencing Rome, and addressing to the audience are cut, which would seem to reduce the cohesion that the "Roman" identity and its associated desire build in the first part of the play (prompt book). Lavinia's insulting lines to Tamora also cut, so there is very little of Lavinia in Nunn's production (prompt book). She could be simply an object to be desired, but the production does not use the text to build her into an object of Rome's desiring nor the audience into Rome. The production also cut most of Quintus and Martius's pit scene, much of Marcus's speech at the reveal, the use of "Stuprum," and other pieces of the interpretation of Lavinia in Ovid-reading scene (prompt book). For further analysis of the twentieth-century history of cutting *Titus Andronicus* see Dessen, 51-57.

⁵⁶ In 2006 the Ninagawa Company of Japan visited the RSC (dir. Yukio Ninagawa) and in 1995 the Market Theatre of South Africa visited the National Theatre, which had helped produce the production (dir. Gregory Doran). Julie Taymor's 1999 film *Titus* was also spawned by Warner's production and significantly influenced the popularity of *Titus Andronicus* because of its success.

⁵⁷ The Captain who announces Titus's entry, for example, does so to a potentially empty stage, thus the "Romans" who need to "make way" for "good Andronicus" are likely the audience (1.1.67). Bate, citing G.K. Hunter's article "Flatcaps and Bluecoats: Visual Signs on the Elizabethan Stage," suggests this as a possibility in his note on the line. Taymor (1999, film) uses microphones to suggest a larger listening public.

⁵⁸ Warner's (1987-88, RSC) production is unusual in addressing the audience as both the warring factions and as Rome (Dessen 67). Taymor's (1999) film had Titus and Marcus address a large crowd divided between the two factions.

⁵⁹ Details from Lucy Bailey's 2006 Shakespeare's Globe production come from my notes on viewing a live performance of the production, notes from viewing an archive video of the production, and, where cited, from other archive materials at Shakespeare's Globe.

⁶⁰ The idea of a continuum of violent desire echoes the work of various feminist theorists on power inequities in heterosexual sex. Michael Hall argues that Shakespeare also conflates consensual and non-consensual sex in that poem.

⁶¹ Titus's lines do not imply an incestuous relationship and the play has not been presented that way; therefore, the importance of Lavinia's desirability on the audience's experience has been ignored.

⁶² See the central argument of DiGangi's *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama* where he argues that the early modern definition of "sodomy" was socially disruptive male-male sex, separate from an unnamed and uncriminalized male-male sex between equals. In *Sodometries*, Goldberg reads Mortimer and Isabella's sex as "sodomy" because of its violation of the social structures of hierarchy and patriarchy. This redefinition, he finds, "allows for ways of conceiving sexual relations and gender construction that cannot be reduced to the normative structure of male/female relations under the modern regimes of heterosexuality" (129).

⁶³ Taymor (1999, film) has Lavinia kiss Bassianus as Titus is offered the position of emperor. Titus later reacts with shock at Saturninus's smiling offer and scrambles to

react correctly. Lavinia and Bassianus, standing in a loose embrace, have an emotional separation, but Lavinia does to Saturninus and kisses his hand in obedience.

⁶⁴ Taymor's film (1999) suggests Saturninus must already know Lavinia, as she is previously introduced in private conversation in the Andronici tomb. This choice emphasized the connection between Titus and Lavinia, making his over-reaction to her elopement more understandable.

⁶⁵ Taymor's film (1999) emphasized the importance of Tamora's beauty in Saturninus's choice in his approving looking on removing Tamora's outer layer clothing. This interpretation was solidified by their Bacchanalian marriage rites.

⁶⁶ "Shakespeare mainly reserved the term 'spousal' as a synonym for a marriage made in contexts involving great social or dynastic significance. It seems that for him 'spousal' was an elevated term, mainly useful for bearing political import" (Bassianus Sokol and Mary Sokol 23). These marriages could be expected to be formal, since property and politics were at stake, such as that of Henry V and Princess Katherine in *Henry V*.

⁶⁷ Sid Ray points out the fine distinction between a betrothal, which uses *de futuro* (future tense), and an informal marriage ceremony, which uses the same language as the betrothal save *de praesenti* (present tense) (24). Ray also takes Bassianus at his word (33), as to many others, but the hints of violence and Lavinia's silence lead me to read his claims as more uncertain.

⁶⁸ Information about the variety of marriage and betrothal contracts in early modern England comes from Sokal and Sokol's *Shakespeare, Law, and Marriage*. Information about the legalities and definitions of "rape" current in the 1590s is summarized in Emily

Detmer-Goebel's article "The Need for Lavinia's Voice" (77-78). She reads Saturninus's use of "rape" as referring, solely, to an older definition, that of the abduction of property.

I disagree with her reading, seeing an element of desire in his term.

⁶⁹ Lucius's line and the general family support for the elopement suggest that perhaps Bassianus and the Andronici not away at war formed a formal arrangement for Lavinia's marriage.

⁷⁰ Mary Fawcett presents a similar reading of the "rape" and Lavinia's silence towards a different conclusion (266). Saturninus in Taymor's (1999, film) version strongly emphasizes this line as a political move to dishonor Bassianus.

⁷¹ All of these details are true for Warner's, Alexander's, and Bailey's productions.

⁷² Or fewer than 100 lines, if, as Jonathan Bate argues in his Introduction to the Arden edition, the onstage burial of Mutius is a later addition (103-07).

⁷³ This is not always true of scholars. Without textual proof, Carolyn Williams drops in that Lavinia "returns a few minutes later, a virgin bride" (100).

⁷⁴ *OED*, "consummate, v," first and second definitions.

⁷⁵ Taymor (1999, film) presents a consistently violent Chiron and Demetrius; Aaron's task is to turn their violence outwards, away from each other.

⁷⁶ "Reveal" here refers to the moment at which Lavinia is brought forth after her rape and mutilation (2.3).

⁷⁷ Bassianus and Lavinia discover Tamora kissing Aaron in Tamor's (1999, film) version.

⁷⁸ Tamora does urge them on with Alarbus's death later, to override Lavinia's pleadings for mercy (2.2.163-65).

⁷⁹ There is further confirmation of this link when Lavinia questions Chiron and Demetrius's commitment to revenging for Tamora. Chiron answers Lavinia's plea for mercy with a significant dismissal: "What, wouldst thou have me prove myself a bastard?" (2.2.148). Though the biology is shaky—Chiron means he would prove himself not Tamora's son—he makes his point about the depth of the Goths' commitment to revenge.

⁸⁰ This presumes, of course, that the presentation of Lavinia carries off the text. It is possible to wish a wailing Lavinia be delivered more quickly to her fate.

⁸¹ In Taymor's (1999, film) version, Chiron and Demetrius have begun to strip Lavinia even before she mentions Titus's pity on Tamora.

⁸² See Ayfer Dost and Bilge Yagmurlu for an overview of these studies (110).

⁸³ See for example David Fredrick's reading of Taymor's (1999, film) choices, "Titus Androgynous."

⁸⁴ Pinedo also points out that horror and desire are intimate relatives: "Throughout [the viewing of a horror film], the element of control, the conviction that there is nothing to be afraid of turns stress/arousal (beating heart, dry mouth, panic grip) into a pleasurable sensation. Fear and pleasure commingle" (39).

⁸⁵ An offstage attack may be more participatory than an onstage one, since audience members might choose to look away or otherwise disengage from a visible rape and mutilation yet participate in blank-filling through the parallels.

⁸⁶ Despite the phrasing, Pinedo does not seem to be referencing Laura Mulvey's conception of the male gaze in this section of her argument. This is most strongly

suggested by the fact she is here discussing seeing/not-seeing the monster, rather than the female victim.

⁸⁷ The term is Peter Boss's (qtd. in Isabel Pinedo 18).

⁸⁸ Taymor (1999, film) began the scene with a long tracking shot, revealing a Lavinia through short cuts with wild hair, a ripped shift, and twigs for hands, standing on a tree stump in the center of dead, grey marsh.

⁸⁹ There were suggestions at the beginning of the summer that the fainting was caused by the unusually warm weather and the decision to cover the Globe's open roof with black fabric. However, the Front of House (FOH) reports show far more fainters at *Titus Andronicus* than at the other plays staged that year on days with similar weather conditions. The FOH reports also definitely record that the vast majority of fainting and nausea occurred at Lavinia's reveal. By the end of the season, the matter-of-fact recording of these record numbers suggests that 20-25 people needing to leave the theatre at the reveal had simply become expected. Taymor (1999, film) suggests this is a particularly crucial moment, slowing down this portion of the scene to $\frac{3}{4}$ of full speed (Director's Commentary). This choice gives the scene a grace, formal, dream-like pace and makes the blood from Lavinia's mouth fall with a slight delay that is quite affecting.

⁹⁰ This groaning moved in waves around the theatre as Lavinia turned her head during the performance I attended, indicating that it was specifically that detail that elicited the reaction. The groaning is also audible on the video of the production.

⁹¹ Rosemarie Garland-Thomson attributes looking away to the "ocular super-ego" that "guiltily retracts" the stare (79).

⁹² Other authors have addressed these differences, though often mix or conflate the style and the theatre. For example, Jonathan Bate, in his excellent introduction to the Arden edition of *Titus Andronicus*, renders the performance choice as “Stylization or intimacy?” (59), wording that suggests a particular bias for the bloody but also an unparallel mix of choice and effect.

⁹³ This is a very specific use of “stylized” or “realistic,” which is why I have kept these descriptors in quotation marks. The terms refer only to the choice of ribbons versus blood; the productions are otherwise the usual RSC/Globe/NT mix of “abstraction” and “realism” in their acting and production choices. Notable “stylistic” productions include Brook’s (which cut Marcus’s speech) and the guest production in 2006 at the RSC. Notable “realistic” productions include Nunn’s, Warner’s, and Alexander’s at the RSC and Lucy Bailey’s at the Globe.

⁹⁴ G. Harold Metz, in his discussions of Brook’s 1955 and Nunn’s 1972 productions suggests that the “stylized” choice is the more affecting. In describing another “stylized” production (Joseph Papp’s 1967 for the New York Shakespeare Festival) he reports: “The use of understated techniques in handling the horrors, which actually increased the dramatic effect, draw general admiration from the critics” (166).

⁹⁵ See for example Detmer-Goebel’s article, which relies heavily on Titus and Marcus’s previous ignorance of the fact of Lavinia’s rape, not just the names of her attackers. I will argue that the Ovid-reading scene shows that Titus and Marcus do already know of Lavinia’s rape, in agreement with “realistic” productions.

⁹⁶ Alexander also gave audience members time to accustom themselves to the horror by leaving Lavinia onstage alone for a long interval between Chiron and Demetrius's exit and Marcus's entrance, letting her body speak for itself.

⁹⁷ Marcus will also catalogue how undesirable Lavinia now is, a subtle emphasis on his not finding her desirable.

⁹⁸ That a closer relative, like Titus, is in danger of this absorption in emotion appears in the various comparisons to other father-daughter pairs. For example, in 5.3 Titus identifies with Virginius, and both he and Saturninus equate the daughter's shame to her father's sorrow—that one is the other.

⁹⁹ This eventual skill in doing so might be usefully compared to a courtier's skill with language as described by Catherine Bates.

¹⁰⁰ As mentioned above, Taymor (1999, film) enhances this effect in her use of $\frac{3}{4}$ normal film speed for the reveal in *Titus*, matching the pace of the visuals to the verbal action (Director's Commentary). Marcus walks along the path of the tracking shot that showed Lavinia to the audience, mimicking the audience's discovery of her injuries as he approaches her during his speech.

¹⁰¹ If read as a demonstration of the kind of blank-filling that is consistently asked of the audience, then one can see exactly how much power really lies with the audience in the creation of a production's meaning. Lavinia has little impact on how Marcus and Titus choose to interpret her signs, or even determining what they consider signs, just as actors may have little influence on how audience members interpret their "signs."

¹⁰² Rosemarie Garland-Thomson emphasizes the connection between novelty and staring (18-19). Garland-Thomson also points out that some stares are unconscious, “a disconcerting hijacking of our visual agency” by the body’s response to novelty (19). “Intermediate novelty” is Michael Ellis’s term (92).

¹⁰³ Dessen reads this scene to different conclusions (60-61).

¹⁰⁴ Mary Fawcett makes a similar point to other ends (273).

¹⁰⁵ Cataloging these abilities only after their loss also prevents a young actor from having to demonstrate them. These lines are often cut, as in Taymor’s film (1999).

¹⁰⁶ Titus later explicitly makes this point to Chiron and Demetrius: “For worse than Philomel you used my daughter” (5.2.193).

¹⁰⁷ There is a divide between scholars over when Marcus and Titus recognize Lavinia has been raped. Fawcett claims that Marcus here “immediately recognizes” the rape (273), while Coppelia Kahn argues that Marcus wipes it from his mind, rediscovering it during the scene of reading Ovid, so as to shore up the patriarchal structures of the play. Detmer-Goebel also offers an interesting reading of Lavinia’s blush: “Although she has the opportunity, Lavinia does not immediately ‘admit’ the rape . . . Lavinia’s silent blushes again underscore how the cultural prescription of silence ‘denies’ women ‘the tongue to tell.’” (81). Williams points out that blushing is a sign of rape in Ovid’s story of Lucretia (109).

¹⁰⁸ Eugene Waith finds the speeches “appallingly overwrought” (39) and Dover Wilson argues that Shakespeare here satirizes his contemporaries (li-lvi).

¹⁰⁹ See for example Stephen X. Mead's "The Crisis of Ritual in *Titus Andronicus*" which reads Marcus's speech as a ritual of mourning. Those who support the divide as a positive addition to the play include Pascale Aebischer, Mary Fawcett, Joseph Ortiz, and Ann Thompson.

¹¹⁰ This is different than laughing at the grotesque humor of the red world, a sign of connection and participation.

¹¹¹ Taymor (1999, film) has Marcus uncover Lavinia between their lines to show the twigs that have replaced her hands, emphasizing Titus's knowledge and acceptance of her changed state.

¹¹² Fawcett also notes that Lavinia "is involved by Titus and Marcus in the rituals of revenge" (266).

¹¹³ There is no need for Lavinia to carry Titus's hand; Marcus could. This is, therefore, an intentional gesture by Titus.

¹¹⁴ Three such examples: In "'Scars can witness': Trials by Ordeal and Lavinia's Body in *Titus Andronicus*" Karen Cunningham argues that Marcus and Titus's "reconstitution" of Lavinia's story "is ambiguous and untrustworthy" (149). In "'The Swallowing Womb': Consumed and Consuming Women in *Titus Andronicus*" Marion Wynne-Davies argues that the men want to control Lavinia and language. In "Interpreting 'Her Martyr'd Signs,'" Douglas Green argues that Lavinia's silence is a figure for a general silencing of women by a patriarchy, which, although shaken, firmly reestablishes itself by the end of the play.

¹¹⁵ Several scholars have put special pressure on Titus's choice to "wrest an alphabet," but I think this choice sometimes demonstrates a rather specific misreading of the line. Titus says that he will wrest an alphabet "of these"—from Lavinia's "signs" not from Lavinia herself, as arguments that prefer Titus to usurp Lavinia's voice would have it. The articles of Green and Detmer-Goebel present such arguments. Marcus actually comes closer to the usurpation that critics want to assign to Titus. He does not attempt to develop a new system of communication with her, instead presuming that they cannot communicate. He guesses, usually incorrectly or inconsistently, at her meaning based on her pre-red-world behavior. This approach is repeatedly shown to be foolish, since it yields only incorrect answers. Marcus's continued use of "old world" logic makes him believe he cannot know Lavinia's heart, since she has lost traditional methods of communicating. The Andronici depend on this communication; without it, they cannot act on their revenge. If Titus were appropriating Lavinia's voice, the revenge could proceed immediately. He could ascribe whatever meaning or guilt he wanted to by reading, according to his own alphabet, her body. Instead, the men wait and rely on Lavinia as a source of information. Marcus's long staring at Lavinia could also indicate dominance (see Garland-Thomson 40-44), yet his sympathetic descriptions and misreading suggest otherwise. Taymor (1999, film) presents Titus's pledge to learn after the audience has struggled with him to read Lavinia's signs.

¹¹⁶ This could also offer a new reading of Titus's "mad" language. It may be either a piece of the same red-world language that Lavinia helps to develop (what she too would say if she had a tongue) or a second one.

¹¹⁷ Titus also uses this opportunity for yet another lesson in the need to look at horror and to include Lavinia as a fully accepted member of the Andronici family.

¹¹⁸ The comparison to Philomel also demonstrates the need for Lavinia to be active in pursuing communication; as Green puts it, Lavinia “can and should overcome the severest of restrictions on communication” (324).

¹¹⁹ Taymor’s (1999, film) production cut much of their learning. Lavinia, after contemplating taking the staff in her mouth, tucks it between her head and shoulder. Her writing is intercut with images of deer and tigers and her screaming in the white shift Marcus found her in after the attack.

¹²⁰ Detmer-Goebel points out that “Stuprum” is not used in the Philomel story; where it is used in Ovid it indicates both rape and a resulting pregnancy (86). If that is the intended meaning, then Titus’s killing of Lavinia takes on new significance. Taymor (1999, film) has Lavinia write Chrion and Demetrius’s names but not “Stuprum.”

¹²¹ Cultural scholars Ann R. Jones and Peter Stallybrass note that early modern plays often draw attention to physical attributes of female characters that boy actors lack, such as breasts. This contract, they argue, must be pleasurable for the audience, since it is so often repeated. The actor’s body’s potential contradiction of the play’s text produces a kind of voyeuristic pleasure in the tension between the audience’s knowledge of the artifice and its fascination with the actor’s real body. This pleasure appears in the red world in humor and excess.

¹²² These elements are also conspicuously absent from the attack, reveal, and Marcus's and Titus's reactions, unless the last are played with overblown sentimentality and Chiron and Demetrius with an abundance of buffoonery.

¹²³ Lavinia seems to know of the plan in Taymor's (1999) film, signaling her acceptance by calmly positioning herself in front of Titus and layer her head on his shoulder for him to snap her neck.

¹²⁴ In simple terms, *The Merchant of Venice* has been produced 30 by the RSC times since 1956. In comparison, the RSC has produced *Hamlet* 44 times and *As You Like It* 37 times. These numbers come from a search of the online RSC Performance Database on 4 March 2010.

¹²⁵ As one reviewer put it, "This is a grand late-Elizabethan melodrama—if we can refrain from laughing" (Trewin "Jew").

¹²⁶ One such review begins *without irony* "Racism, schmacism, what's it matter so long as you blacken the name of Catholics as well as Jews?" (Lindsay Cook). While this review's tone is light, it is difficult to read it without cringing because of its unsavory "accidents" of wording: "Of course, the Christians are little better" . . . but apparently they are a *little* better; without explaining the motivation, Cook states that "Marlowe's tragedy loses all grip with reality [. . . as Barabas] becomes the devil incarnate," thereby wiping clean any previous "reality" of Jews being called devils. It is also apparently enjoyable to watch a character that is, from the beginning of the review, described as "an outrageous caricature of a Jewish money-lender"—she does here refer to the *character* itself, not the portrayal, and incorrectly identifies Barabas as a money lender. By not

focusing any attention on the audience, Cook is blithely able to recommend a play that she acknowledges is “racist, anti-religious [not anti-Semitic], cynical and funny.”

¹²⁷ It is perhaps critical that she has written what is titled a “Commentary” instead of a “review”—her focus is not on the acting, the qualities of the theatrical production, or a critic’s professional reaction to a piece of theatre, but on the audience’s response to an anti-Semitic play.

¹²⁸ Most are consciously echoing Granville-Barker’s opinion of *The Merchant of Venice*.

¹²⁹ Similar comments are made by J.A.P.’s review “Venetian Revels at Stratford” and Rosemary Anne Sisson’s “Shylock According to the Letter of the Law.”

¹³⁰ John O’Connor found the same increase in Holocaust references (399).

¹³¹ See for example Michael Billington’s “Exit, pursued by boos” or the videotapes of the 14 June 1998, 4 pm performance, where Shylock’s entrance into the courtroom is accompanied by booing. I do think it is questionable, however, whether this is anti-Semitic booing. This production made Shylock almost a melodrama’s villain—this booing is more like the theatrical reaction that, for example, Darth Vader’s entrance gets at a fan screening of Star Wars—and because this entrance comes immediately after an interval’s entertaining of the audience.

¹³² The Holocaust may make audiences less diverse than they were in the early modern period as it overwhelms (rather than colors) the portion of the definition of Judaism that derives from the plays’ texts and drives audiences’ reactions to *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Jew of Malta*. No matter how much audience members might try to set it aside, even the attempt to “set it aside” is actually an acknowledgement of how much it shapes

reactions to and understandings of Judaism in these plays.

¹³³ James O'Rourke has the unusual argument that "*The Merchant* deliberately frustrates any possibility of identification with its characters as it cites, rather than iterates, the stereotypical Jewish/Christian opposition. Its critical force then emerges from the production of denaturalized perspective that makes it possible, as Bertolt Brecht's terms, to 'alienate the familiar' and make an audience 'distrust what they are used to'" (376). O'Rourke is discussing the effects of the play on an early modern audience. As this chapter will demonstrate, I disagree with his point that the play "cites, rather than iterates the stereotypical Jewish/Christian opposition" and attribute to the play's age any power to alienate audience members.

¹³⁴ See for example Janet Adelman's *Blood Relations*; Lynda Boose's "'The Getting of a Lawful Race'"; Dymphna Callaghan's "Re-reading Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedie of Miriam, Faire Queene of Jewry*"; Sander Gilman's *Difference and Pathology*; Kim Hall's *Things of Darkness*; G. K. Hunter's "The Theology of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*"; Ania Loomba's "'Delicious Traffick'"; Verena Stolcke's "Invaded Women"; and Joshua Trachtenberg's *The Devil and the Jews*."

¹³⁵ While "symbolic Jewishness" is Hunter's term, its quotation is from Dessen's summation in "Stage Jew" (232). As the sentence and chapter should make clear, however, I do not embrace Hunter's argument for a purely theological construction of "symbolic Jewishness," agreeing more with Kim Hall's and James Shapiro's demonstrations of broader social constructions of "Judaism." For summary of their response to Hunter's work, see Brett Hirsch (120-121). A note about terms: Although

many works use “Venetians” to describe Portia’s and Antonio’s circles, this term seems incorrect for the argument of this chapter. Because the focus is on the play’s division between the religions, the use of “Venetians” would seem to offer a confusing emphasis on Shylock’s status as a lonely alien, to neglect the Jewish community that is a focus of the chapter, and to provide a term only appropriate to *The Merchant of Venice*. For these reasons, I will continue to identify each community in *The Jew of Malta* and *The Merchant of Venice* by its religious and ethnic identity.

¹³⁶ This moment could be productively read in the current critical conversation about converting Jews. Much has been written about the early modern worry over “proving” Jewish conversions and the assumption that “the converts [would . . .] be Jewish by blood, Christian by political exigency rather than the true calling of real faith” (Hirschfeld 62). Barabas’s questioning whether to convert suggests either that he considers this a true conversion, so deserves thought, or mark his wondering if he will be able to hide his true religion. Ferneze presumes that conversion is *not* an acceptable choice, which could be read in support of the suspicion of conversion (that he does not even allow a Jew to potentially convert) or against it (that he presumes no Jew would willingly convert).

¹³⁷ Ferneze’s skill at manipulation, rather than outright force, is under-examined in a play that opens with Machevill.

¹³⁸ This layering of religious difference as a way to exploit the wealth of others is paralleled in the relationship between the Turks and the Christians. The Turks are not interested in conversion or even particularly in conquering; they seek the “The ten years’

tribute that remains unpaid” and even allow Malta an extra month to collect it before conquering to recover the debt (1.2.7).

¹³⁹ The most striking costumes are those of the nuns. In dark robes, the nuns wear headpieces with enormous ruffs that entirely encircle their faces, ruffs six to twelve inches in width. The effect is not unlike a halo on a medieval religious icon, but with a clear push toward absurdity.

¹⁴⁰ Perhaps tellingly, on transfer to the Barbican in the spring of 1988, the reviews note a more serious element to the play. Michael Ratcliffe says that the production “swings between resilience and despair” and that “Kyle tempers the anti-Semitism with a corrosive critique of Christian behavior true to Marlowe’s cast of mind, if not quite so explicit in the play.”

¹⁴¹ Shylock divides public from private in wanting to “be friends” with the Christians and “have your love” (1.3.131). He offers to “Forget the shames that you have stained me with” and to “take no doit / Of usance for my monies” (1.3.132-34), to “buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following” (1.3.28-9). He excepts only those things that are private: “I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you” (1.3.30), a distinction that fits with his concern over the possible contamination of his household in 2.5 even as he breaks from this pattern.

¹⁴² M. M. Mahood points out another possible mention of community in these lines. As Shylock does not mention interest (and will soon offer Antonio a bond without it), it can be presumed that “Jews in Venice follow the injunction of Deut. 23.20 in lending freely to each other and taking interest only of non-Jews” (1.3.49n).

¹⁴³ This is also one of the most interesting points about comparing these two plays: no Jew is ever seen charging usury. While Shylock freely admits to doing so in the past and contemplates the rate for the current bond, the deal he actually offers Antonio is that he will “take no doit / Of usance for my monies” (1.3.33-34). Barabas, of course, is a wealthy merchant, not a usurer (though he claims “after that was I an userer” in his long list of previous, dubious professions, but the term is pointedly in past tense [2.3.192]). As others have pointed out, Shylock is not even a wealthy Jew, having to turn to Tubal for the balance of the bond with Antonio. The presumption that the plays depict usurious Jews continues, however, as demonstrated all too clearly by Charles Landstone’s review of the 1964-65 production of *The Jew of Malta*: “Barabas is a usurer, a murderer, a schemer, but in a world of rogues, he manages to attract all the sympathies.”

¹⁴⁴ Post-Holocaust, this line now also echoes with the meaning “suffering is the badge of all my tribe”; while not its prime textual meaning, the connotation is not out of place in the scene, as Mahood notes (1.3.102n).

¹⁴⁵ The reviewer for the *Daily Mail* stated about Emlyn Williams’s 1956 RSC Shylock,

This grey, greasy shambling Shylock, a distinctly Welsh Jew, efficiently embraces all the obvious characteristics, but misses the passionate racial pride and the full tragic stature of the man. The thick speech, the breast beatings, the hard waggings, the all the mechanics of the part are efficiently realised, but they have the detached efficiency of his Dickensian readings. (“This Shylock is Conventional”)

Correctly fulfilling the stereotype of the stage Jew is what the reviewer praises about

Williams's performance.

¹⁴⁶ Milton Shulman stated:

In these post-holocaust [*sic*] days, actors have been troubled about how much Jewishness they ought to inject into their Shylocks . . . Wearing the beard and nose reminiscent of anti-Semitic Nazi cartoons, Sher is a volcano of suppressed vengeance always ready to erupt his lava of hate over a society that has tolerated him and his tribe only because of their financial usefulness. This is no cringing apologetic member of an inferior people.

Jeremy Brien found “[t]he charismatic Sher is easily the most Jewish Jew of Venice I have ever seen.”

¹⁴⁷ According to Giles Gordon, the Jews in this production “are very much a close-knit community.”

¹⁴⁸ The shifting in the seats gets mentioned in more than one review, suggesting perhaps a literal event on the first night: “No doubt about it: *The Merchant of Venice* presents problems in the modern theatre. We will apparently sit stoically through a dramatized atrocity report like *Titus Andronicus*. But we know too much about the persecution of the Jews not to shift a little uneasily in our seats at *The Merchant*, and wonder, each time we see it, how the production will avoid the taint of anti-Semitism” (Billington “Merchant”).

¹⁴⁹ Yet, this production also kept Shylock's aside about hating Antonio (Spenser “Shylock”).

¹⁵⁰ Works on the early modern concept of the household include Corinne Abate's

Privacy, Domesticity, and the Early Modern Woman; Roger Chartier's (editor) *The History of Private Life (Vol 3): Passions of the Renaissance*; Jean-Louis Flandrin's *Families in Former Times*; Peter Laslett's (editor) *Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations* and *Household and Family in Past Times*; and Wendy Wall's *Staging Domesticity: Household Work and English Identity in Early Modern Drama*.

¹⁵¹ One could argue that much of this play is about the *loss* of community and private space, since the first element of the plot is the dominant community seizing Barabas's house, destroying his private space and immediately leading to the disintegration of his family community.

¹⁵² This is in contrast to Shylock's worry for "my house" and "my life" at the end of the trial scene (4.1.371-72).

¹⁵³ The film of the 1987 production suggests that this reference is not entirely lost on a modern audience. The film records a single knowing laugh and Barabas ad-libs thanks to that audience member for it.

¹⁵⁴ G.K. Hunter is the source for this reference.

¹⁵⁵ This is also an inaccuracy about synagogue services on Marlowe's part since there is a prohibition against carrying money on Jewish holy days.

¹⁵⁶ One reviewer noted, however, that this choice was not in keeping with the play as a whole: "Abigail also falls short of expectations, particularly because of her plain, drab dress, without ornamentation to be expected in the only daughter of the rich Jew" (C.W.R.). However, this choice emphasizes Barabas's miserliness in its defiance of expectations.

¹⁵⁷ As Melanie Phillips pointed out, the only markers of Judaism in this production could be read as “heightening the caricature” so that “[t]he stereotype [of “the Jew as anti-Christ”] is ruthlessly reinforced” (“Society”).

¹⁵⁸ This fragmentation is not limited to the Jewish family; instead, the fragmentation of households and communities is pervasive. Opening with the melancholic Antonio “losing” Bassanio to Portia, the effects of fragmentation are increased by productions that emphasize a close emotional relationship between Antonio and Bassanio or place that scene in Antonio’s home. These production choices make the opening of the play “read” as the breaking up of a relationship, Antonio’s melancholy the effect of a private affair. This deemphasizes the public economic motives for Antonio’s melancholy and focuses audiences’ attention on the interpersonal relationships that will be built and torn down across the play. Belmont, the only other private space demanded by the text of either play, never functions as a family, private, or communal space. Instead, Belmont is introduced as a space controlled by what it lacks and what it is failing to replace—a family. Even once Bassanio has won Portia, Belmont is not given any stage time as a home (save perhaps to the interlopers Jessica and Lorenzo, a point that I will address later). Instead, its newly formed family is immediately separated from each other and the house, tempting the audience with the possibility of community, only to deny its fulfillment.

¹⁵⁹ Literary scholars who have considered the definition of female Judaism at length include Adelman, Anna Beskins, Boose, Callaghan, John Drakakis, Hall, Joan Holmer, and Verena Stolcke. They too emphasize the increased fluidity of the definition of

Judiasm when applied to female bodies. Hall finds Christian traits in Jessica before her conversion and Beskins mentions some potential audience response to Abigail's conversion, but no author provides an extensive study of modern audience response to the blend of Christian and Jewish traits.

¹⁶⁰ Adelman finds that “[c]onversion, danger to the commonwealth, race and miscegenation come together in Jessica's body” because of her multiple layers of identity (*Blood* 97). Adelman reads Jessica as a destabilizing force in the play, however, rather than emphasizing the force of her identity in performance. Lindsay M. Kaplan, on the other hand, argues that “Jessica cannot be a source of miscegenation . . . precisely because she is represented as racially other than her father” (26-27).

¹⁶¹ Hall argues for the English and Christian associations with “fairness,” citing Jessica as a key example (8-9). Adelman persuades that Shylock is also darkened to separate him from his daughter (*Blood* 82-6). Kaplan states that “The play. . . establishes a gendered distinction in the construction of Jewish race” rather than Jessica blending Christian and Jewish traits (1). She finds that “[t]he representation of a Jewish woman lacking in racial difference from Christians and compliant to conversion develops” in thirteenth-century England and is continued in *The Merchant of Venice*, yet also argues that “Christian identity can be perceived through its whiteness” (2, 19).

¹⁶² Several arguments—including those by Adelman, Hall, Hirsch, and Kaplan—argue that the “fair” compliments either make Jessica already Christian or do not succeed in making her Christian. Rather surprisingly, the idea that it might make Jessica a mixed character seems not to have been argued. Marjorie Garber comes closest to this

argument, stating that “Shakespeare presents a series of what seem to be clear-cut opposites, but each of those opposites begins, as the play goes on, to seem oddly like, rather than unlike, the other,” and Shapiro notes that early modern English Christian and its supposed opposite, the othered Jew, show an anxiety about shoring up the slippery differences between them (Garber 283, Shapiro 33). Neither, however, presents a more significant argument about how these ideas apply to Jessica’s identity.

¹⁶³ Lodowick eventually goes to see her “For Don Mathias tells me she is fair” (2.3.35), an idea confirms in the extended conceit of Abigail as a diamond (2.3.49-140).

¹⁶⁴ Holmer suggests that the “gentle/gentile” pun may also be particularly applied to the “gentle sex” thus emphasizing feminine desirability as well as Christianity (115).

¹⁶⁵ Portia is described as “fair” in Bassanio’s initial description of her to Antonio (1.1.160-63), Antonio in response (1.1.181), Nerissa about Portia (1.2.97), and elsewhere, and Shylock also uses it about Antonio (1.3.118, 143).

¹⁶⁶ Even Jessica’s role as “torch-bearer” and the repeated puns on “light” can be seen as reinforcing this gentile description. However, this reinvention of Jessica is in distinct contrast to her earlier admission that she “is a daughter to his [Shylock’s] blood” (2.3.18) and Lorenzo’s comment that “she is issue to a faithless Jew” (2.4.37).

¹⁶⁷ This also fits with the early modern conception of an object shooting beams into the eye. Jessica and Lorenzo can be infected just by seeing each other, so Shylock is correct that he would have take extreme measures in order to protect Jessica. In addition, Shylock breeds his money (1.3.92) and fears the breeding of Jessica: “Jessica thus in effect gelds Shylock twice, taking away his family lineage and his money, both ways he

could ‘breed’” (Garber 307).

¹⁶⁸ See Chapter 4: “Standing Only: Christian Heroism.”

¹⁶⁹ See for example the reviews by Phil Tusler, Richard Edmonds, and Michael Billington.

¹⁷⁰ This emphasis on Abigail as a moral and praiseworthy character appears in several reviews, including Mervyn Jones’s for the *Tribune*. Literary critic Anna Beskins describes Abigail in similar terms: “Merciful, kind, and devoted . . . Abigail embodies the saintly traits of femininity during the early modern period . . . Abigail, who is singularly good, arouses only sympathy” in a modern audience (133).

¹⁷¹ “There is only one thing to do [with a bad text], when the heroine expires on the line ‘Witness that I die a Christian’ and the friar murmurs, ‘Aye, and a virgin, too; that grieves me most’—namely, play hard for the laugh that will come anyway” (Levin). “If I report that one of the biggest laughs [sic] was the line “. . . All the nuns are dead. Let’s go and bury them,” you will see what kind of evening it was” (W.H.W. in a positive review).

¹⁷² For reviewers mentioning the quality of her performance and no more, see Michael Billington and J.C. Trewin as examples of a larger trend.

¹⁷³ Alastair Macaulay also points out this lack of motivation for Jessica: “the only obvious reason that Jessica might have for leaving such a father is that she prefers partying to loud rock music to staying at home with his piano-quartet CDs” (“Credible”).

¹⁷⁴ Although part of Miller’s purpose was to play-up the anti-Semitism of the play by re-framing its setting, he also decided to make Jessica a less-appealing character.

¹⁷⁵ Marjorie Garber argues this point even more broadly, that “*The Merchant of Venice* is above all Shakespeare’s great play about difference” (283).

¹⁷⁶ Joan Holmer finds that Jessica’s “inner rebellion against her father [is] signified by the outer rebellion of her apparel” when she dresses as a page to elope (118).

¹⁷⁷ Even if a double meaning is read into her “shames” so that they also refer to the betrayal, they remain “too too light” (2.5.41-2), a lack of concern that is echoed in the frivolous tone of the entire exchange.

¹⁷⁸ It is possible, however, that this too is a Iserian blank that the audience could take pleasure in filling.

¹⁷⁹ Alan Dessen reports that “in at least two productions I have seen, directors have sought to make Shylock’s vindictive posture in Act IV more understandable for the audience by presenting it as a reaction to Jessica’s elopement. But Shakespeare has forestalled such an interpretation (which might satisfy out sense of psychological progression) by including passages which show decisively that the Jew’s animosity toward Antonio antedates the bond of flesh (“Stage Jew” 232).

¹⁸⁰ Most of the critics and my own performance notes from the RSC video make this same connection—that Jessica’s betrayal, theft, or particularly the theft of Leah’s ring turn Shylock to revenge and to a more explicit Judaism.

¹⁸¹ This linking of personal revenge to a reaction to a larger anti-Semitism would seem to forestall the critique of linking the bond to Jessica’s betrayal. Thacker’s choices seem to incorporate both the earlier hatred of Christians and the use of Jessica’s elopement as a kind of tipping point for Shylock into violence.

¹⁸² There is here the potential to read Friar Bernardine's comment as suggestive of a continued desirability in Abigail, otherwise her virginity would not be something to especially mourn.

¹⁸³ Some scholars read Abigail as fully incorporated into the Christian community despite this line; see for example Beskins. Emily Bartels argues that the "thinness of her [Abigail's] characterization" helps to "create a distance" between Abigail and the modern audience member (*Spectacles* 21).

¹⁸⁴ Marlowe's choice to abruptly poison her can be seen as a sardonically frank commentary on the usefulness of her new position.

¹⁸⁵ Janet Adelman notes that Gratiano also refers to Shylock as "infidel" as Portia resolves the trial scene (4.1.330, *Blood* 73).

¹⁸⁶ Shylock's wish that Jessica were "dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear" (3.1.70) and statement that "She is damned" for her elopement (3.1.26) suggest that he no longer considers her part of the Jewish community. At the same time, however, he consistently refers to her as "my daughter" (3.1.20-21, 30, 64, 69, and even in Solanaro's report 2.8.15-21) and emphasizes that she is "my flesh and blood" (3.1.30), the very level of Jewish identity that Jessica attempts to erase with her marriage. Salarino bites in to Shylock at every opportunity, so his willingness to convert even Jessica's flesh and blood is perhaps less acceptance of her conversion than it is tormenting Shylock. Yet he does respond in the same terms that both Jessica and Shylock have used, claiming for Jessica an already-existing Christianity that denies her father a hand in her creation: "There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between

your bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish” (3.1.31-33). This might also work as a community building moment for the audience. If even a betraying bastard is welcomed to Belmont, then the audience is assured that they too, despite their flaws, can participate in this community.

¹⁸⁷ Presumptive Christianity is more accurate, as Adelman’s point quoted earlier nods to. The play does not stage the moment at which Jessica became “a Christian and thy loving wife.” The assumption is that Gratiano’s welcome is simply inaccurate and that the marriage has occurred offstage.

¹⁸⁸ A few productions highlight “cheer” rather than “yon stranger” by playing Jessica as downcast rather than alone.

¹⁸⁹ The counter-example is the 1956 choice to include a felt Star of David on Jessica’s costume. Although this did not remain after conversion, the publicity photos were of Jessica with Portia and Nerissa, Jessica positioned so that her star faced the camera.

¹⁹⁰ There is another element to the costuming that I will not address here—wealth. Most productions give post-conversion Jessica a dress nearly as fine as Portia’s and almost always finer than she has under Shylock’s roof. This would seem to emphasize Jessica fitting in with the Christian community and her reportedly being a spendthrift. Yet in John Caird’s (1984, RSC) production, Jessica did not mirror the “opulence” of the Christians (Eagles 34). On leaving Shylock’s house, Jessica discarded an outfit that demonstrated her wealth and status—a rather primly cut gown that was nonetheless shining with embroidery (production notes). After her conversion, Jessica’s outfit matched Lorenzo’s in its simplicity and relative dullness (production notes). While the

change was marked, because Lorenzo wore an equally simple outfit, the effect was to suggest their relative poverty rather than the conversion or any lingering “Jewishness” on Jessica’s part. By suggesting that Lorenzo had not benefited financially in a significant way from the marriage, the production emphasized the romantic element of their relationship. This choice also had an interesting effect on Tubal’s speech, however. Either Jessica squandered all her money on things other than new clothes or Tubal’s “report” of her actions in Geneva is inaccurate. This raises the question of whether Tubal is intentionally “inaccurate”—given the rapid switches in his report between Jessica’s and Antonio’s fortunes, it is easy to push his speech into an intentional fiction meant to goad Shylock into revenge.

¹⁹¹ “There is only one thing to do [with a bad text], when the heroine expires on the line ‘Witness that I die a Christian’ and the friar murmurs, ‘Aye, and a virgin, too; that grieves me most’—namely, play hard for the laugh that will come anyway” (Levin).

¹⁹² Oddly, the nun’s body that unexpectedly drops from the ceiling almost on top of the friars removing Abigail’s body does not get a laugh; perhaps there is a limit on how far one can milk a dead nun joke (production notes).

¹⁹³ The audience’s need for reconciliation was fulfilled after the play’s end, when, after his solitary bow, Shylock removed his beard and embraced Jessica and shook hands with Lorenzo, acts that were not echoed with any of the other characters/cast members (production notes). A similar gesture was made in at the end of the RSC’s 2008 production.

¹⁹⁴ Adelman points out that the couples listed are also childless, perhaps a further degree

of melancholy (*Blood* 88). Matthew A. Fike argues that “the allusions convey doubts about the stability of their marriage. Perhaps Jessica will betray Lorenzo as she has already betrayed Shylock—Lorenzo’s reference to Cressida suggests that he is not unaware of that possibility” (Fike 14-15). In addition, Fike notes that “the recollection of Jason and Medea suggests mutual disappointment in marriage” (16). Against Adelman and Lampert’s arguments, Kaplan claims that “Lorenzo’s reply indicates that Jessica’s profound response to the music is entirely appropriate” rather than a lingering marker of her Judaism (Kaplan 26).

¹⁹⁵ Reviewer Kingston agrees with Pitcher’s reading of the final image: “The final Belmont scene is also too dry and bloodless to exert any healing power . . . Even after the last words are spoken, and John Carlisle’s supremely melancholy Antonio is left alone on the stage, he is left there with Shylock’s daughter and makes use of this opportunity to taunt her with a crucifix held just out of reach” (“Potent”).

¹⁹⁶ Picker argues that Shylock can have a similar impact; Shylock’s “threatening presence” can “undermine closure,” which demonstrates the “paradoxical principle” that “communal identity” is formed “through exclusionary practices” (173).

¹⁹⁷ Literary scholars who have expressly used “freedom” to describe the time in Arden include Wolfgang Iser in “The Dramatization of Double Meaning”; Wendell Berry in “The Uses of Adversity”; Cynthia Lewis in “Horns, the Dream-Work, and Female Potency in *As You Like It*”; and Susan Carlson in “Women in *As You Like It*: Community, Change, and Choice.” In emphasizing the final message, I am following literary scholars Catherine Belsey (“Disrupting”), Barbara Bono (“Mixed Gender”), Lynda Boose (“The

Family”), Peter Erickson (“Sexual”), Ejner Jensen (*Shakespeare and the Ends of Comedy*), Carol Neeley (“Lovesickenss”), and Clara Park (“As We”), among others.

¹⁹⁸ The framework expressed here seems to often result in what literary scholar Valerie Traub has named “a capitulation to the logic of binarism” (*Desire* 120). In his article comparing Shakespeare and Lodge’s versions of the story, Nathaniel Strout nicely encapsulates many of the binarisms found in *As You Like It*:

Over the years, critics have noted a variety of thematic oppositions in *As You Like It*: fortune versus nature, country versus court, a view of time "as the medium of decay" versus time "as the medium of fulfillment," "contrary notions of identity," "the conspicuous narrative artifice of the opening scenes" versus the "equally prominent theatrical artifice in the forest scenes," two different "manipulative modes," and, most recently, the concerns of a "generally privileged audience" versus "the concerns of wage laborers, servants, and clowns." (277).

Literary scholar David Young on the binary divisions of the pastoral observes, “The social antitheses are perhaps the most obvious: urban versus rural, court versus country. They could deal variously with manners (polished versus rustic), with class divisions (aristocrat versus commoner), and with economic differences (rich versus poor)” (32). He adds, according to literary scholar Penny Gay, “active life versus the contemplative, worldliness versus innocence, nurture and nature, Art and Nature and Art and Fortune” (*As You* 51). Gay adds masculine versus feminine (*As You* 51).

¹⁹⁹ I do not wish to suggest that the separation of Duke Fredrick's Court from Arden or both courts from the central time in the forest are not legitimate critical or theatrical choices. The many dichotomies found in *As You Like It* as well as its roots in the pastoral tradition clearly justify those approaches to the play.

²⁰⁰ A few reviewers did not find cohesion in this production; Martin Hoyle writes that Noble "displays no consistent approach to the play, and no overall vision beyond trying out a number of gimmicky ideas, not all of which come off" ("As You").

²⁰¹ There are a number of productions that choose to create some continuity across the play, and these can most easily mimic the plot's structure of continuity and growth. On occasion, continuity is a theatrical necessity driven by the set design—a set change may be saved to mark a particular moment or for intermission—or by philosophical considerations—as in Lucy Bailey's 1998 original practices production on the bare Globe stage. Those productions that follow director Glen Byam Shaw's lead (such as Terry Hands's 1980 RSC production) adjust the seasons of the play, maturing the sets along with Rosalind and Orlando.

²⁰² Literary scholar Marjorie Garber's recent work on the maturation of Shakespeare's characters—*Coming of Age in Shakespeare*—brought me to this conception of *As You Like It*. However, she does not deal with *As You Like It* at length and many of her points do not seem to apply well to Rosalind and Orlando's growth.

²⁰³ See Teuscher and Teuscher for previous studies on male bias. See also Adrian Furnham, Disha Mistry, and Alastair McClelland's "The Influence of Age of the Face and the Waist to Hip Ratio on Judgements [*sic*] of Female Attractiveness and Traits"; A.

H. Eagly, et al.'s "'What is beautiful is good, but . . .'; A. Feingold's "Good Looking People Are Not What We Think"; and J. H. Langlois et al.'s "Maxims of Myths of Beauty?" Bram Buunk et al. found, to the contrary, that men seek younger "mates" while women prefer "mates" of their own age (241). In sociobiology, Nigel Barber argues that men's attraction to youthful traits in women stems from early man looking for signs of fertility.

²⁰⁴ Clarke and Griffin's study is one of many on the psychological aspects of cosmetic surgery. The journals *Annals of Plastic Surgery*, *Body Image*, *British Journal of Plastic Surgery*, and *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery* offer many such studies.

²⁰⁵ She finds its existence beginning in Hollywood of the 1920s.

²⁰⁶ Clearly, the combination of desire and youth could also backfire on a production. If "youth" slips into "childishness," the specter of pederasty can discourage imagined participation. Yet that possibility has also been shown to have its titillating side (or at least, an ability to sell tickets). Daniel Radcliffe, best known for playing Harry Potter in the film series, raised an enormous furor in the international press for playing a role that calls for nudity and discussion of sexual desire in Peter Shaffer's *Equus*. Few articles explicitly addressed *why* this was considered news—it was not merely that a young male actor, best known for a child role, would be discussing desire; he would also be the potential object of voyeuristic desire. But the articles themselves also encouraged a further layer of voyeurism, beyond what the play offers, framing the story in their headlines with variations on "Harry Potter Nude." (In contrast, although Ian McKellen dropped his trousers the same summer in *King Lear*, this only received the slightest

mention in reviews, if at all.) Radcliffe's nakedness, the pre-play articles suggest, is both shocking and irresistible. A similar strange intersection occurred around the JonBenet Ramsay case, though coverage and reactions there framed desire as a perversion. Her beauty pageant dress and makeup were sometimes described with the innocent "doll-like" but were framed as "adult" when casting aspersions on the Ramsays. Desire for JonBenet was the unspoken fear—the question was only the degree of its perverseness (TV viewer voyeur, random attacker, stalker, or family member).

²⁰⁷ The limits of this study preclude the production most entangled with these issues—Cheek by Jowl's all male production in 1991. It is a striking example of the line productions must tread if they are to entice a large percentage of audience members into imagined participation. For analysis of this production see Alisa Solomon's *Re-Dressing the Cannon*, James Bulman's "Bringing Cheek by Jowl's *As You Like It* Out of the Closet," and Yu Jin Ko's "Straining Sexual Identity," among others.

²⁰⁸ Literary scholar Stephen Orgel points out a similar situation for early modern audiences in Lady Mary Wroth's *Urania*: an observing character is no more moved "than if he had seene a delicate play-boy acte a loving woman part, and knowing him a boy, lik'd only his action" (qtd. Orgel *Impersonations* 31).

²⁰⁹ Other literary scholars who have addressed the layers of Rosalind's gender include Orgel in *Impersonations*, Jeffrey Maston in "Textual Deviance: Ganymede's Hand in *As You Like It*," and Theodora Jankowski in "'Where there can be no cause of affection': Redefining Virgins, Their Desires, and Their Pleasures in John Lyly's *Gallathea*," as

well as cultural scholars Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass in *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory*.

²¹⁰ Literary scholar Nancy Hayles also seeks a clear division between Rosalind, Ganymede, and “Rosalind,” describing her as “on-layering” and “off-layering” her disguises.

²¹¹ The preference for a blend follows Peter Stallybrass’s argument that “moments of greatest dramatic tension” are also those when “the Renaissance theater stages its own transvestism” (77). Literary scholars Robert Weimann and Douglas Bruster privilege the ability to “look *through* the ruse of role-playing” to the underlying actor (or, for *As You Like It*, the underlying character and actor), a process which creates a “awareness shared between player and spectator” (*Shakespeare* 119). The acknowledgement of artifice leads “spectators . . . into a kind of participation, whereby they understand the help facilitate, even assist by their own innocent connivance, their blinking cooperation with the working of the theatre” (*Shakespeare* 119). The audience’s unconscious blending of the layers of Rosalind’s character may come into tension with the conscious recognitions and interpretations of desire. It may be that desire-based identity categories override the conscious recognition of blended actor-character to acknowledge only straight, gay, or bisexual desires, not the amalgam presented. I have not found any cognitive studies that show which might be dominant.

²¹² The particular mix of characteristics that I am arguing makes for a good Rosalind is true only for the last fifty years. Cynthia Marshall’s “Introduction” to the *Shakespeare* in

Performance *As You Like It* provides an excellent summary of the kinds of Rosalinds that were popular in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries.

²¹³ Clifford Williams produced an all-male production in 1967 for the NT at the Old Vic.

²¹⁴ Many scholars often privilege the gender play over a recognition of how youth figures in *As You Like It*. Orgel, for example, argues that Orlando wooing Ganymede is both a scene of male-male wooing and that “the model for it must be a homosexual flirtation” because “the name Ganymede cannot be used in the Renaissance without this connotation” (*Impersonations* 43). Orgel often makes this inexplicable move between pederasty and the what labels adult “homosexuality” in the period, at one point even stating that “homosexuality is generally, though not exclusively, conceived to be pederastic in the period” (*Impersonations* 58). Setting aside his willingness to privilege the male-male layer over the others, it is questionable whether Ganymede really would call to mind a “homosexual flirtation.” As “Jove’s own page,” Ganymede is unquestionably younger and certainly less powerful than his partner (1.3.121). Marlowe makes this point explicit at the beginning of *Dido, Queen of Carthage*. Not only is Ganymede written as a peevish and demanding child, Jupiter refers to him as a “sweet wag” and “my little love,” refers to his “youth,” and asks him to “Sit upon my knee” (1.1.23, 28, 42). Alone these might be diminutive terms, echoing those common for an adult female lover, but Venus makes the case for youth explicit in her chiding “You can sit toying there / And playing, with that female wanton boy” (1.1.50). Bruce Smith similarly points out that “the forcible rape of an underaged boy” is what is legally recognized as sodomy (51).

This is not to suggest that the term “Ganymede” was not applied to adult men, but that it signaled more than a reciprocal adult male-male desire. Works which call Ganymede a “boy” include John Dickenson’s *Arisbas, Euphues amidst his slumbers: or Cupids iourney to hell* (1594), Christopher Middleton’s *The historie of heauen containing the poeticall fictions of all the starres in the firmament* (1596), Henry Petowe’s *Philochasander and Elanira the faire lady of Britaine* (1599) while Robert Kittowe’s *Loues load-starre* (1600) calls him a “Nymph” and Philip Sidney’s *Astrophel and Stella* (1591) describes him as “young.” In Michael Drayton’s *Peirs Gaueston Earle of Cornvall* (1594), Gaveston compares himself to Ganymede, but he is of a lower status than his Jovian lover, King Edward II. There is also the interesting choice of Abraham Fraunce’s *Countess of Pembrokes Yuychurch* (1591 and following), which claims that Ganymede was “rapt by the Thunderer” (1591) and talks of “the rauishing of Ganymede by Iupiter” (1592). John Marston associates “Ganymede” with effeminacy in *The scourge of villanie* (1598).

²¹⁵ Redgrave was not as groundbreaking as these reviews may sound. “Modern” girlish Rosalinds began with the second production with Esmé Church in the role (at the Old Vic), played at 47 years old in 1937:

she can move like an arrow, she can roll over the ground in a delight of comedy, she can mock and glitter and play the fool with a marvellous [*sic*] ease and grace; and if the boyishness—or girlishness—is not there, is it because she has decided to reject it in favour of a feminine guile that is her

own edge to the part” (unidentified clip of 2 December, 1937 qtd. in Marshall 62)

That of Elisabeth Bergner in the 1936 film of *As You Like It* was also “younger and less ‘arch’ than the familiar conception of the role” (Marshall 66).

²¹⁶ Reviewer J.W.M. Thompson “Visually” and “Girlish.” Marshall also cites a review in the *Glasgow Herald*, “She ‘never [let] the woman peep out from under the jerkin and top boots’ except when alone with Celia” (7 July 1961, qtd. Marshall 70).

²¹⁷ Reviewer Edmund Gardner echoed Holland: “Any male who does not fall in love with Miss Redgrave for this performance alone must be as insensible as a plastic acorn” (*Stratford-upon-Avon Herald*, 7 July 1961, qtd. Marshall 70).

²¹⁸ Reviewer Hoyle said that Rosalind’s “vigorous mock-wooing . . . is overtly feminine (no ambivalence or puzzled undertones here)” (“As You Like It / Stratford-upon-Avon”).

²¹⁹ According to Marshall, the *Daily Telegraph* review of 25 April 1985, also found “a significant erotic charge” between Rosalind and Orlando (85).

²²⁰ Susan Fleetwood’s Rosalind was youthful—she “had a great verve and some scenes were played with a breathless charm and pleasurable excitement” (Gareth Lloyd Evans “Oh Dear”); she was “never a serious girl at all” (B.A. Young “As You”) being “buoyant, dramatic, witty, silly, teaching and tempting” (John Pifer “Enchanting Forest”) with “girlish cunning” (David Ford “Truly Remarkable”) and “alive with nervous energy . . . as she quivers for Orlando” (D.A. “Love’s Sweet”).

²²¹ There are a few exceptions in the reviews: Evans saw Rosalind as “an essentially physical, sexy young woman” (“Oh Dear”) and Sally Aire saw her as “overly sexual” (“As You”).

²²² Tutin was “stocky and tomboyish” (Wardle “Some”), “gamin” (“Miss Tutin”), “rather like Tom Sawyer” (Roland Bryden “Two Routes”), “impish” (J.C. Trewin “As You”), a “breathless tomboy” (Peter Lewis “Bard Knew”), and a “bright, excited, tomboyish figure” (J.A.P.).

²²³ Tutin was “pouring out the joys of young love” (“Miss Tutin”) as a “sighing maiden . . . like an ageless piece of Dresden” (Lewis) or “a girl in love” (Trewin) who was “warmly in love” (Trewin) with “all the breathless excitement of first love” (Frame).

²²⁴ With a “a clinging open-necked shirt and trousers cut as if positively to emphasize her femininity” (David Murray “As You”), some found her “a very convincing youth” (Susanne Williams “A Real”) who “really does look like an adolescent boy” (Spencer “Darkness”) while others found she was “not in the least persuasive in her male imposture” (Kenneth Hurren “A Set”) with a “forever girlish” voice (de Jongh “Romantic”).

²²⁵ Paul Lapworth called her “gaminesque” (“A Lyrical”), Lindsay Duguid said she has “gamine gestures” (“As You”), while Murray also called her Peter Pan (“As You”).

²²⁶ Nightingale noted, “perhaps her passion for Orlando could be stronger” (“Subdued”), while John Gross found “a tender eroticism” in her wooing (“A Touch”).

²²⁷ Phoebe’s description of Ganymede highlights male, female, and youthful characteristics:

'Tis but a peevish boy—yet he talks well.
 But what care I for words? Yet words do well
 When he that speaks them places those that hear.
 It is a pretty youth—not very pretty—
 But sure he's proud, and yet his pride becomes him.
 He'll make a proper man. The best thing in him
 Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue
 Did make offence, his eye did heal it up.
 He is not very tall, yet for his years he's tall;
 His leg is but so-so, and yet 'tis well.
 There was a pretty redness in his lip,
 A little riper and more lusty red
 Than that mixed in his cheek. 'Twas just the difference
 Betwixt the constant red and mingled damask. (3.5.111-24)

Phoebe constructs a better blazon in her off-the-cuff remarks than Orlando does in all his poetry combined. This hints that the blend of male, female, and youth of Ganymede is even more appealing than Rosalind.

²²⁸ See de Jongh's "This Risk-Free Forest Wins Only Faint Praise" and Evans's "Oh Dear, Another Big Letdown, RSC—It's a Potboiler."

²²⁹ "Michael William's Orlando is handsome virile and very delicately ironic" ("Royal Shakespeare").

"a manly Orlando" (Trewin "The Wood").

“Michael Williams is a stocky, muscular Orlando” (P. “Gay Production”).

“John Bowe’s Orlando was more virile than is customary for this part. This was not good but virility does not always have to be expressed with a mixture of rough-and-tumble and excessively sinuous movement. Again, a touch of stillness would do wonders” (Evans “Oh Dear”).

²³⁰ In 1.1, Orlando is called “boy” (49, 161), “youngest son” (53), “young and tender” (122), “young fellow” (134), and “young” (144). Orlando also claims that the one status he should not assume—that of landholder over his brother—is the most flexible of statuses: “The courtesy of nations allows you my better in that you are the first-born, but the same tradition takes not away my blood” (1.1.44-46). Orlando claims that mere “courtesy” determines primogeniture and courtliness is paramount.

²³¹ Orlando actually compares his treatment to Oliver’s oxen, horses, “animals on his dunghills,” and hogs (1.1.10, 14, 35)

²³² Gay also points out that “Orlando is in danger of losing his ‘gentility,’ his class status” (*As You* 9).

²³³ Oliver also undergoes a transition from rash and violent behavior to behavior more suited to his station that allows him to fulfill his desire; this growth, however, is framed as a conversion.

²³⁴ “John Bowe landed on a woman’s sandwich box during a recent performance [1980, RSC] of *As You Like It*. ‘I think she was as surprised as I was,’ said Mr. Bowe, who plays Orlando in Terry Hands’ current production for the RSC at Stratford-upon-Avon. ‘Anyhow, I picked up her chicken leg and handed it back to her before climbing back

onto the stage. She asked me if I was OK, then made a nasty face at Terry Wood who plays the villainous Charles. There's always a gasp from the audience when I get slung off the stage and land among them. The knack is to make it appear spontaneous” (Richard Edmonds “Throws”).

²³⁵ From Chantal Miller Schütz's “Findings from the 1998 Season: *As You Like It*” in the *Globe Research Bulletin*, Annex to Issues 10 and 11 (July 1999). Quoted Marshall 92.

²³⁶ In Caird's (1989, RSC) production, “some of the cast joined the audience in the stalls and shouted encouraging suggestions,” modeling the “correct” blending of the roles of spectator and participant (Holland 161).

²³⁷ Like Romeo, Orlando will have to ask Rosalind's identity (1.2.256 and following).

²³⁸ Garber finds a similar pattern in Desdemona's growth to adulthood: “Her choice of a husband over a beloved father . . . is a rite of separation and incorporation at once, an explicit and definitive rite of passage” (*Coming* 24).

²³⁹ Garber's primary focus is on Rosalind as teacher, rather than on growth.

²⁴⁰ Garber points out that as Orlando is educated by Rosalind, “the father-figure Adam disappears from the plot” (“Education” 170). This suggested the reverse equation—that the presence of Adam made Orlando appear youthful.

²⁴¹ The positioning of Orlando as the proper heir to Roland de Boys is confirmed by the bastardization of Oliver:

Within this roof

The enemy of all your graces lives.

Your brother—no, no brother, yet the son—

Yet not the son; I will not call him son

Of him I was about to call his father (2.3.17-21)

²⁴² The most compelling contrast is to Celia, who on claiming she is about to “faint almost to death” asks Ganymede to “question yon man / If he for gold will give us any food” (2.4.60-62). Ganymede then speaks formally and politely to Corin (even scolding Touchstone for his more abrupt approach).

²⁴³ See Note 1.

²⁴⁴ Marjorie Garber has noted that Rosalind’s disguise as Ganymede unties Orlando’s tongue because he is talking to another male (“Education” 169). Hugh Richmond finds that Shakespeare “suspends Rosalind’s awareness precariously between the two poles of human eroticism formed by the conventional roles of men and women. As a maturing person, Rosalind eagerly investigates both sexual potentialities” (24).

²⁴⁵ This “natural” is not the equivalent of a Stanislavskian realism.

²⁴⁶ MacCary also argues that “Shakespeare forces his young lovers to dispense with idealization in their objects of desire and with abstraction in their thinking about life, i.e., the courtly love tradition and medieval Platonism” but does not address this piece of his larger argument in his discussion about *As You Like It* (219).

²⁴⁷ Only once does Ganymede briefly suggest that Silvius find a new object for his love. After reading Phoebe’s letter aloud to Silvius, she chides: “Wilt thou love such a woman? What, to make thee an instrument and play false strains upon thee? Not to be endured!” (4.3.66-8). Yet, even here she dwells on Phoebe’s actions, rather than explicitly telling Silvius to end his love or find another, and quickly follows on this

commentary with the injunction to “go your way to her, for I see love hath made thee a tame snake,” another confirmation of the sincerity of Silvius’s underlying emotion (4.3.68-9).

²⁴⁸ Silvius and Ganymede further outline the traits of this identity to include: running to folies, talking or writing constantly about the beloved, acting unexpectedly, having a starved and unkempt look (2.4.30-39, 3.2.345-67). Gay argues the opposite that Orlando “is not caught up in the conventional discourses of courtly love” (43).

²⁴⁹ It must be acknowledged that this “natural” language is unlikely to seem explicitly “natural” in the modern theatre. Its language, the association of Shakespeare with high art, and the very fact it is on stage all work against the audience perceiving Rosalind and Orlando’s language as natural. The play itself, however, offers very explicit models to compare their language against; I would argue that even if the audience is primarily unconscious of this, the effect of this naturalism remains.

²⁵⁰ Garber takes this argument in a different direction. She does not see this as a mutual growth, nor does she unpack what a “natural language of men and women” might be.

²⁵¹ Although I argue that “Rosalind” and Orlando develop this preferred naturalistic language of love *together* as a part of their mutual growth, I agree with Garber that Rosalind is the leading partner. She is able to learn more about the “real” Orlando whereas he is learning only about a fictional Rosalind throughout most of the play.

²⁵² MacCary takes this idea even further: “What do lovers learn to look for in their beloved? Shakespeare’s answer is clear: the mirror images of themselves. He carefully takes his young men through four stages of object-choice: first, they love themselves (or

seek themselves); then, they love mirror images of themselves in twins or friends; after that, they love those same images in transvestized young women; finally they learn to love young women in all their specific, unique, and complex virtues” (5). This pattern, however, does not seem to hold for *As You Like It*.

²⁵³ Overall, Rosalind has 686 lines to Orlando’s 304 in the folio edition (Dusinberre Table 2, “Appendix 2” 361).

²⁵⁴ After their meeting, he asks 28 direct questions of Ganymede, “Rosalind,” and Oliver as well as requesting further information (“recount” (3.2.344), “tell me” (3.2.353-54), and “Tell me” (3.2.410)).

²⁵⁵ Marshall cites only two productions that had Orlando recognize Rosalind: Kjetil Bang-Hansen for the Bergen National Theatre in 1983 and John Dexter’s for the NT in 1979. Many productions fail to make Orlando’s belief in the Ganymede disguise believable, as discussed above. Rarely, a production will simply embrace the absurdity of Orlando not recognizing Rosalind, as Caird’s (1989, RSC) production did. There Rosalind failed to maintain her “manly” voice throughout 3.2 and Celia did her best to signal to Orlando that this was indeed his Rosalind, all to no avail but great audience pleasure (production notes).

²⁵⁶ Juliet Stevenson presented another desire-based reading of the mock marriage: Rosalind “has to play out the marriage ceremony because she’s just raised the issue of humanity’s potential for sexual excess. Human sexual appetites are not by nature monogamous! Yet they have to be controlled, especially in a place that is itself chaotic and unstructured, like Arden” (qtd. Rutter 112).

²⁵⁷ The audience has less wonderment than the characters at the solution, being aware of Rosalind's disguise and so knowing how she will fulfill her promises.

²⁵⁸ The hierarchy is troubled when Hymen's role is cut or when another actor doubles as Hymen. The first places more emphasis on Rosalind giving herself away while the second highlights the other elements that might subvert the hierarchy (Orlando's inheritance, Duke Senior's lack of real status, etc.). Marshall states that "Corin played Hymen in the 1963 RSC/BBC version and in Hands's Stratford production . . . In Caird's [1989 RSC] production, Hymen was played by the same actor who played William and Charles the Wrestler . . . At Shakespeare's Globe [in Bailey's 1998 production], Leader Hawkins, who had played Adam and appeared as old Sir Rowland in the invented prologue returned as Hymen" (5.4.92 SD n). In Noble's production, Hymen was a silhouette at the back of the stage while in London he was a light coming from behind the audience (Shaw and Stevenson 70).

²⁵⁹ This is of course a problem for any reading of early modern marriage based on Lévi-Strauss's theory. Rosalind has already wed herself to Orlando once. Here she usurps the father's gift-giving, but also makes herself property of both her father and her husband in the same breath, rather than an exchange of one for the other.

²⁶⁰ Audience discomfort with Phoebe and Silvius's ending indicates how firmly the romantic comedy expectations are entrenched.

²⁶¹ Howard similarly reads the text as supporting a "space of mutuality within relations of dominance" with the "text . . . narrow[ing] the range of erotic possibilities . . . in the direction of heterosexual coupling" (118-20). Traub, on the other hand, finds that

“gender hierarchies seem to be both temporarily transgressed *and* formally reinstated, the question of subversion versus containment can only be resolved by crediting *either* the expense of dramatic energy *or* comedic closure.

²⁶² The best example of this is Czinner’s 1936 film version where Elisabeth Bergner’s costume “magically” changes so that her “I would” statements are addressed to the opposite sex. This too had complications, of course, since the audience knows a female actor underlies her costumes. Richman argues that “[t]he three final surprises—the news of Frederick’s conversion, Jaques’s self-exile coming after a speech that seems to be the play’s last, and the epilogue spoken by a lady—create a sense of dissolution that underlies the final merriment. Even as the play is coming to a triumphant conclusion, it is coming apart. Like Shelley’s cloud, the dramatist seems to arise and unbuild his fragile creation just as it approaches completion” (Richman 169).

²⁶³ Traub, working primarily with the text rather than performance, disagrees with my reading and argues that the epilogue as “highlight[ing] the constructedness of gender and the flexibility of erotic attraction as precisely the point when the formal impulse of comedy would be to essentialize and fix both gender and eroticism” (*Desire* 128).

²⁶⁴ In this production Orlando stepped forward to give the Epilogue, but found himself as tongue-tied as at the wrestling; Rosalind, in character, rescued him (*Shakespeare Survey* 41, 1989-90, p 492, qtd. Marshall Epilogue note). Gay’s reading of this moment conflates actor and character: “Orlando stepped forward to speak the Epilogue, had a fit of stage-fright, and Rosalind came to his rescue” (*As You* 8). While the Epilogue is labeled as Rosalind’s, surely the correct names in this sentence should be those of the

actors? After all, it is not as if Orlando can truly have stage fright; nor, one presumes, does the actor playing Orlando—the audience sees an actor feigning stage fright, simultaneously acting and drawing attention to the fact he is an actor, just as the Epilogue does. Yet the sentence is also correct—the relationship between Orlando and Rosalind is what makes “sense” out of the bit of extraneous stage business. We presume that the actor does not have stage fright at the end of the play and many know that Rosalind speaks the Epilogue in the text. What is staged is a multi-layered intersection of actors and parts, an echo of the Epilogue’s play with these layers.

²⁶⁵ Other than the 2006 *Crowds*, most volumes on crowd studies were published between 1970 and 1995.

²⁶⁶ The traits quoted are from Ralph Turner and Lewis Killian’s *Collective Behavior* (79-80) and the list compiled from that volume and general reading in the field, including Andrew Adamatzky’s *Dynamics of Crowd-Minds*, Le Bon’s *The Crowd*, Clark McPhail’s *Myth of the Madding Crowd*, and Serge Moscovici’s *The Age of the Crowd*.

²⁶⁷ Few theatre or literature scholars have worked with crowd studies. William Egginton’s article “Intimacy and Anonymity, or How the Audience Became a Crowd” and Anthony Dawson and Paul Yachin’s book *The Culture of Playgoing in Shakespeare’s England* take up crowd studies only to dismiss them in their work on early modern audiences.

²⁶⁸ See Chapter 1 n 16 for references to each side of this debate.

²⁶⁹ Many scholars have presumed the proscenium theatre results in a less-involved audience. Jennifer Low in “Bodied Forth” makes such an assumption (18), as do Andrew Gurr and Karoline Szatek in “Women and Crowds at the Theater” (164).

²⁷⁰ These directives were also interwoven with a serious concern about anti-Semitism, as the reviewers were reacting to audience members booing Shylock. Paul Prescott’s article “Inheriting the Globe” studies early reviewer reactions to the new Globe and the distracting audience.

²⁷¹ Indeed, it seems that Globe audiences have become more like audiences in other British theatres—perhaps the novelty of the Globe as early-modern-tourist experience has worn off in favor of participating in “correct” behavior guided by previous experiences in other theaters. The general annoyance with not being able to hear the actors seems to have outweighed the initial exuberant attempts to imitate the popular understanding of groundling behavior or the Globe’s potential similarity to a mosh pit.

²⁷² As Edward Hall’s study of “proxemics” uncovers, how spectators react to the physical spaces, including the theatre, may differ by gender, class, era, etc. Hall also argues that even the closeness of a thrust stage to the audience members falls into the category of “public distance” rather than intimate communion (120).

²⁷³ Theatre consultant Gavin Green notes that intimacy was the primary goal of the new stage design for the RSC: “the RSC’s brief was very clear—get as many people sat as close to the stage as possible . . . in this case a thrust stage is a statement of how the company approaches its work” (“Meet the Theatre Consultant”). RSC Artistic Director Michael Boyd states that with the new theatre, “We want to move away from the 19th

Century proscenium ‘picture frame’ to a theatre which celebrates interaction. Our commitment to bring an immediacy and clarity to Shakespeare means we need to bring the audience to a more engaged relationship with our actors” (“Royal Shakespeare Theatre”). Actors working at the Globe also emphasize the intimacy of the theatre, reporting that they were able to convey meaning through naturalistic acting rather than the exaggerated projection and gestures they expected (this is mentioned repeatedly in Pauline Kiernan’s *Staging Shakespeare at the New Globe*).

²⁷⁴ Many scholars have presumed the proscenium theatre results in a less-involved audience. Jennifer Low in her 2005 article makes such an assumption (18). The RSC’s choice to rebuild their main theatre into a thrust stage reflects a similar perception.

²⁷⁵ Weimann has continued an interest in these conceptions in *Author’s Pen and Actor’s Voice*, but as the title suggests, while a latent suggestion of an active audience role pervades the work, it receives less emphasis than the relationship between the playtext and its staging.

²⁷⁶ See for example Hobgood’s 2007 dissertation at Emory University, *Affecting Passions on the Stage: Audience, Emotion, and Early Modern Drama*, and Amy Cook’s “Interplay: The Method and Potential of a Cognitive Approach to Theatre.”

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