

500 YEARS OF LOOKING FOR  
**RICHARD III**

*Jeffrey R. Wilson*

*Thomas Varga*

**UCI** New Swan  
Shakespeare Center





1. “Now is the winter of our discontent” (4:05-07)

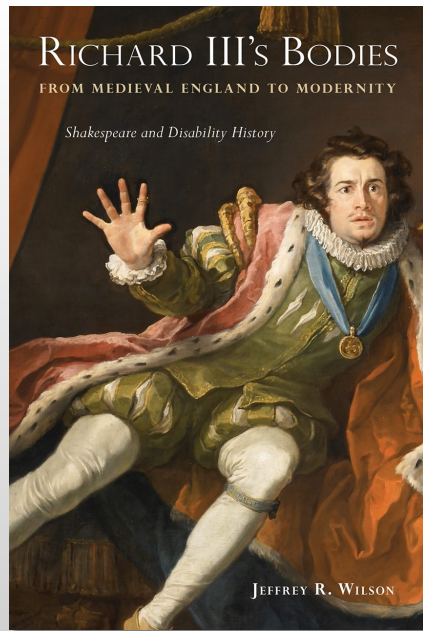
Now is the winter of our discontent  
Made glorious summer by this son of York,  
And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house  
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.  
Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,  
Our bruised arms hung up for monuments,  
Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,  
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.  
Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front,  
And now, instead of mounting barb'd steeds  
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,

He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber  
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.  
But I that am not shaped for sportive tricks,  
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass,  
I that am rudely stamped, and want love's majesty  
To strut before a wanton-ambling nymph;  
I that am cùrtailed of this fair proportion,  
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,  
Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time  
Into this breathing world scarce half made up,  
And that so lamely and unfashionable  
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them—  
Why, I in this weak-piping time of peace  
Have no delight to pass away the time,  
Unless to see my shadow in the sun  
And descant on mine own deformity.  
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover  
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,  
I am determinèd to prove a villain,  
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.



## 2. Opening Stories (4:07-08)

A year ago, I walked into my first-year writing class six inches off the ground and proudly announced,



“I just turned in the final manuscript for the book

Jeff Wilson  
English 298: Thinking with Shakespeare  
Dr. Reinhart-Lupton  
11 June 2006

- definitions of typological (8)
- theory requires more nuance, Wilson 1  
Theory vs magical thinking?
- lump vs hump
- emblematic - 11
- endure vs. admire - 12
- post-modern or modern?

<develop local vocabularies>

The face is the mirror of the mind.  
- St. Jerome,  
Fifth Century

= conclusion - 17

define: *theological*  
*dialectical*  
*transformational*

A pretty face can hide an evil mind.  
- Johnny Rivers,  
Twentieth Century

### SHAKESPEARE'S HUMP

The historical evidence I marshal in this essay supports two claims: 1) Shakespeare's contemporary crowd, which I shall refer to as the *pre-modern audience*, interpreted Richard's hump typologically. Thus, in my first section, I shall demonstrate that it was both historically and scientifically conventional for Shakespeare and his contemporaries to understand Richard's physical deformity as a sign of his innate psychological deformity. Nevertheless, 2) Critical readers after the mid-1700s or so, which I shall refer to as the *post-modern audience*, do not view Richard's hump as a sign of his damaged psyche. As such, my second section will show how both of the conventions that led to the pre-modern interpretation unraveled over the course of the eighteenth century, resulting in a radical revision of the way in which readers understood Richard's hump. In both these sections, I follow the same trajectory: I provide the historical and scientific context that informed the period's hermeneutics, then I read the play through that lens. From this perspective, these two sections are basically the same essay written twice in a row, only in the context of different time periods. Finally, my method in this essay is dialectical: I use my reading of the play to make cultural generalizations, and I use cultural generalizations to read the play.<sup>1</sup> Any readers disagreeing with such a practice will likely disagree with my argument.

More importantly, this essay hinges on what Thomas Kuhn calls a "paradigm-induced gestalt switch."<sup>2</sup> For Kuhn, the *gestalt* refers to the collection of beliefs used by a scientist to order sensory perceptions of the natural world. In other words, a scientist's gestalt predates and conditions how she will perceive raw data. This notion follows from Kuhn's observation that "something like a paradigm is prerequisite to perception itself" (113), and it finds a rough equivalent in literary studies with Stanley Fish's work on interpretive communities. According to Fish, a reader always perceives a given text through an already in-place hermeneutical lens. Critics do not read the words on a page and then decide what those words mean, because no temporal separation exists between acts of perception and interpretation. Instead, a reader's community determines how she

From: "Julia Reinhard Lupton" <jrlupton@uci.edu>  
Subject: **RE: Shakespeare Independent Study**  
Date: March 16, 2006 8:51:15 AM PST  
To: "Robin Stewart" <tyronefielding@hotmail.com>, <jrwilson@uci.edu>  
Cc: <sarkin@uci.edu>

Are you guys free MONDAY AFTERNOON, 12:00 or 1:00, for a short organizational meeting? We can calendar our group sessions and establish some guidelines and topics.

I am in the HCC office these days, HIB 187, next to the Arts Bridge.

Julia

Julia Reinhard Lupton  
Professor of English and Comparative Literature  
www.ThinkingWithShakespeare.org  
Acting Director, Humanities Core Course  
http://eee.uci.edu/programs/humcore/  
Director, Humanities Out There  
www.humanities.uci.edu/hot/  
Co-editor of web log  
www.design-your-life.org

*in HCC  
conference room.*

*Plays  
R111*

*Meetings - Fri - 1-2*

*Thames  
u*

*Lupton  
"Ablative Absolutes from Paul, to Shakespeare"*

-----Original Message-----

From: Robin Stewart [mailto:tyronefielding@hotmail.com]  
Sent: Saturday, March 11, 2006 2:12 AM  
To: jrwilson@uci.edu; jrlupton@uci.edu  
Cc: sarkin@uci.edu  
Subject: RE: Shakespeare Independent Study

I think finals week would be okay for myself.

I'm very interested in the proposed topics of natality (though my Arendt

knowledge is currently slim...is this tied in with her notion of the human conditions as located in the concept of beginning?), evil, and containment.

I'm on board with Sam's request to do some of the history plays and have

done a lot of work personally on the Henry tetralogy (Richard II, Henry IV 1 and 2, and Henry V), which also offer a really great framework for studying Shakespeare's notion of "History" itself that Sam mentioned in conversation as a potential point of interest.

I'll also propose a few themes as possibilities, although I'm not sure to what extent Julia has already covered them: 1) legitimacy and authority in the political sense (looking at where and how Shakespeare locates the source of political power), 2) Shakespeare's use or depictions of "Nature" and 3) Shakespeare's understanding of Agency. These may be a little broad in the terms I've used, and I welcome any suggestions to narrow their fields.

*1-19  
in Berlin*

*Dartmouth - Tempest + Locke  
Covell - MolV + Paul + Tambes - wk 1*

*Week 1-7  
\* MolV + Tambes + Lupton*

*2-14*

*3-21  
Titus*

*4 - April 29  
\* R111 + Arendt (Eichmann)*

*\* 5 - May 5  
Tempest + Locke*

*\* 6 - May 12  
Winters + Hale*

*7 - May 19  
JRL in Berlin  
Hamlet + Schmitt*

*\* 8 - 26*

*\* 9*

*\* 10*

*Against Ben.  
Benjamin  
(Crim. Trj)*



We met in a small conference room over by the Arts Bridge.

When I came to UCI, I didn't know much about Shakespeare.





both the insistent materiality of their local habitations and the restless ecstasy of their universal ambitions. This small collective serves both as an opportunity for students to gain exposure to the “Thinking with Shakespeare” approach as well as a forum for the professor to preview and develop upcoming lectures.

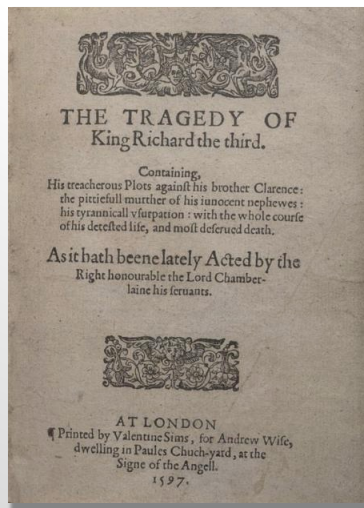
#### Requirements

Students will meet once a week, sometimes independently, to discuss readings. Students will also write a seminar paper (20-30 double-spaced pages).

#### Schedule

- Week 1 William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* □  
Jacob Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul* □  
Julia Reinhard Lupton, “Ablative Absolutes from Paul to Shakespeare” □  
(Optional) Julia Reinhard Lupton, “Citizen Paul” in *Citizen-Saints*  
(group meeting, HCC office, 4/6, 1:30-2:45) □  
\*\*Later start time accomodates departmental job talk □
-  Week 2 William Shakespeare, *Henry V* □ Duty (meet independently) (4/13)
-  Week 3 William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* □ Piety (meet independently) (4/20)
- Week 4 William Shakespeare, *Richard III* □  
Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem : A Report on the Banality of Evil*  
(group meeting, HCC Office, 4/27, 1:00-2:45)
- Week 5 William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*  
Selections from Arendt, *The Human Condition* □  
(group meeting, HCC Office, 5/4, 1:00-2:45)
- Week 6 William Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure* □  
(group meeting, HCC Office, 5/11, 1:00-2:45) □ □

sure you’ll want to do *Richard III*.” Robin was the smartest person I’d ever met, and I didn’t want to look unintelligent, so, even though I’d never heard of *Richard III*, I said “obviously.”



## SHAKESPEARE'S *RICHARD III*

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### 3. Summary of *Richard III* (4:08-09)

I learned that *Richard III* is part history, part myth.



It tells the story of generations of civil war in medieval England reaching a crisis point.









## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—London. *Before the Tower.*

*Enter, on one side, QUEEN ELIZABETH, the DUCHESS of YORK, and MARQUIS of DORSET; on the other, ANNE DUCHESS of GLOUCESTER, leading LADY MARGARET PLANTAGENET, CLARENCE'S young daughter.*

<sup>a</sup> Who meets us here? my niece Plantagenet? The opening of this scene is thus exhibited in the folio text:—

“DUCH. YORKE. Who meets us heere?  
My Niece *Plantagenet*,  
Led in the hand of her kind Aunt of Gloster?  
Now, for my Life, shee's wandring to the Tower,

552

DUCH. Who meets us here? my niece *Plantagenet*?<sup>a</sup>

Q. ELIZ. Sister, well met! whither away so fast!

ANNE. No farther than the Tower; and, as I guess,

On pure hearts love, to greet the tender Prince.  
Daughter, well met.

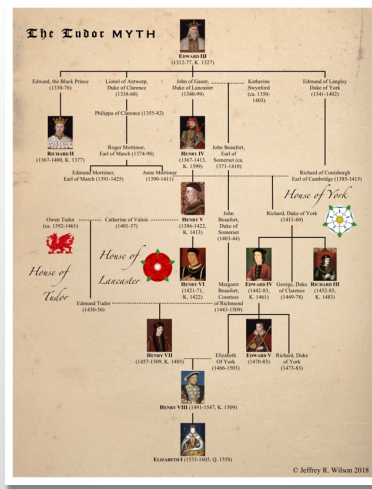
ANNE. God give your Graces both, a happie  
And a loyfull time of day.

QU. As much to you, good Sister: whither away?

ANNE. No farther then the Tower,” &c.







## THE TUDOR MYTH

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### 4. Wars of the Roses (4:09-12)

I also learned that *Richard III* was just one of Shakespeare's history plays that, taken together, tell the story of what's called "the Tudor myth" because it gives a politicized, mythologized origin story of the House of Tudor.

The Tudor myth claimed that Henry IV's 1399 usurpation of Richard II, an anointed king ruling by divine right,

prompted almost a century of disorder that culminated in the Wars of the Roses.

Here's how it goes.

# The Tudor MYTH



**EDWARD III**  
(1312-77, K. 1327)

Edward, the Black Prince  
(1330-76)



**RICHARD II**  
(1367-1400, K. 1377)

Lionel of Antwerp,  
Duke of Clarence  
(1338-68)

Philippa of Clarence (1355-82)

Roger Mortimer,  
Earl of March (1374-98)

Edmund Mortimer,  
Earl of March (1391-1425)

Anne Mortimer  
(1390-1411)

John of Gaunt, .....  
Duke of Lancaster  
(1340-99)



**HENRY IV**  
(1367-1413,  
K. 1399)

John Beaufort,  
Earl of  
Somerset (ca.  
1371-1410)

Katherine  
Swynford  
(ca. 1350-  
1403)

Edmund o  
Duke o  
(1341-

Richard of C  
Earl of Cambric

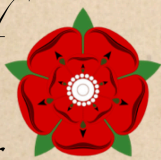
Owen Tudor  
(ca. 1392-1461)



*House of  
Tudor*

Catherine of Valois .....  
(1401-37)

*House of  
Lancaster*



**HENRY V**  
(1386-1422,  
K. 1413)



**HENRY VI**  
(1421-71,  
K. 1422)

John  
Beaufort,  
Duke of  
Somerset  
(1403-44)

Margaret  
Beaufort,  
Countess  
of Richmond  
(1443-1509)

Richard, Duke of York  
(1411-60)



**EDWARD IV**  
(1442-83,  
K. 1461)

George, Duke  
of Clarence  
(1449-78)

**RICHARD III**  
(1452-85,  
K. 1483)

Edmund Tudor  
(1430-56)



**HENRY VII**  
(1457-1509, K. 1485)

Elizabeth  
Of York  
(1466-1503)



**EDWARD V**  
(1470-83)

Richard, Duke  
of York  
(1473-83)

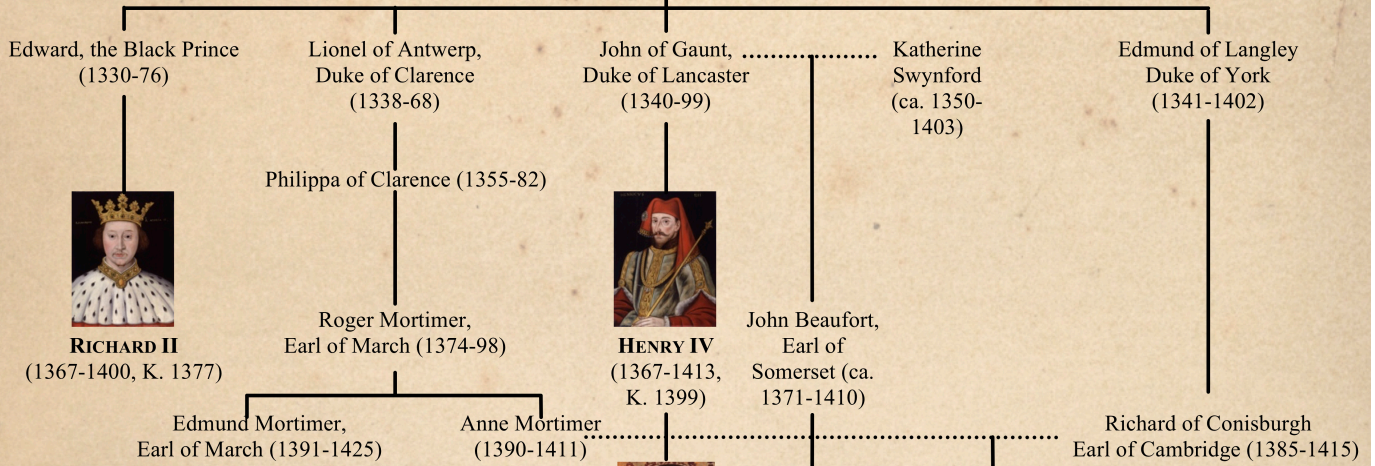


**HENRY VIII** (1491-1547, K. 1509)

# The Tudor MYTH



**EDWARD III**  
(1312-77, K. 1327)



Owen Tudor (ca. 1392-1461)



*House of Tudor*

Catherine of Valois (1401-37)

*House of Lancaster*



Edmund Tudor (1430-56)



**HENRY V**  
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**HENRY VII**  
(1457-1509, K. 1485)



**HENRY VIII** (1491-1547, K. 1509)



**ELIZABETH I** (1533-1603, Q. 1558)

John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset (1403-44)

Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond (1443-1509)



**EDWARD IV**  
(1442-83, K. 1461)



Elizabeth Of York (1466-1503)

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(1470-83)

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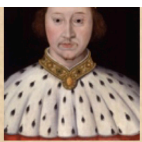
Richard, Duke of York (1473-83)



**RICHARD III**  
(1452-85, K. 1483)

*House of York*





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Earl of March (1374-98)



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Richard, Duke of York  
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*House of*

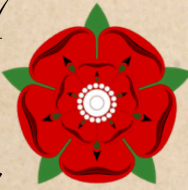
Owen Tudor  
(ca. 1392-1461)

Catherine of Valois  
(1401-37)



*House of  
Tudor*

*House of  
Lancaster*



**HENRY VI**  
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Margaret  
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George, Duke  
of Clarence  
(1449-78)



**RICHARD III**  
(1452-85,  
K. 1483)

Edmund Tudor  
(1430-56)

of Richmond  
(1443-1509)



**HENRY VII**  
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Elizabeth  
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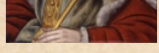


**HENRY VIII** (1491-1547, K. 1509)



**ELIZABETH I** (1533-1603, Q. 1558)

ner,  
374-98)



**HENRY IV**  
(1367-1413,  
K. 1399)

John Beaufort,  
Earl of  
Somerset (ca.  
1371-1410)

Anne Mortimer  
(1390-1411)



Richard of Conisburgh  
Earl of Cambridge (1385-1415)

*House of York*

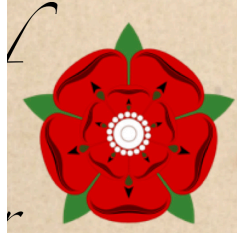


alois .....

**HENRY V**  
(1386-1422,  
K. 1413)

John  
Beaufort,  
Duke of  
Somerset  
(1403-44)

Richard, Duke of York  
(1411-60)



**HENRY VI**  
(1421-71,  
K. 1422)

Margaret  
Beaufort,  
Countess



**EDWARD IV**  
(1442-83,  
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George, Duke  
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(1449-78)



**RICHARD III**  
(1452-85,  
K. 1483)

..... of Richmond  
(1443-1509)



**HENRY VII**  
(1457-1509, K. 1485)

Elizabeth  
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**EDWARD V**  
(1470-83)

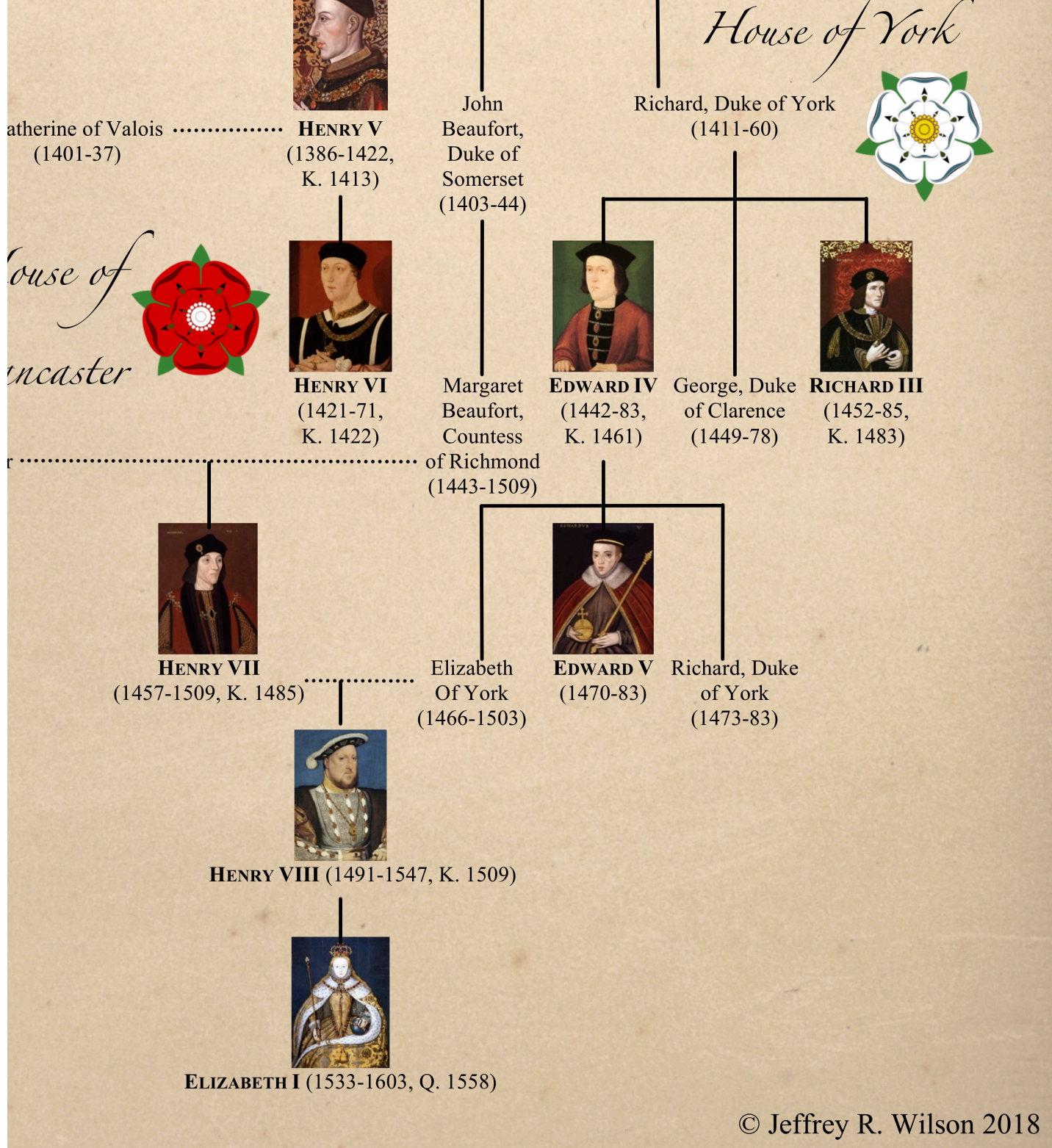
Richard, Duke  
of York  
(1473-83)



**HENRY VIII** (1491-1547, K. 1509)



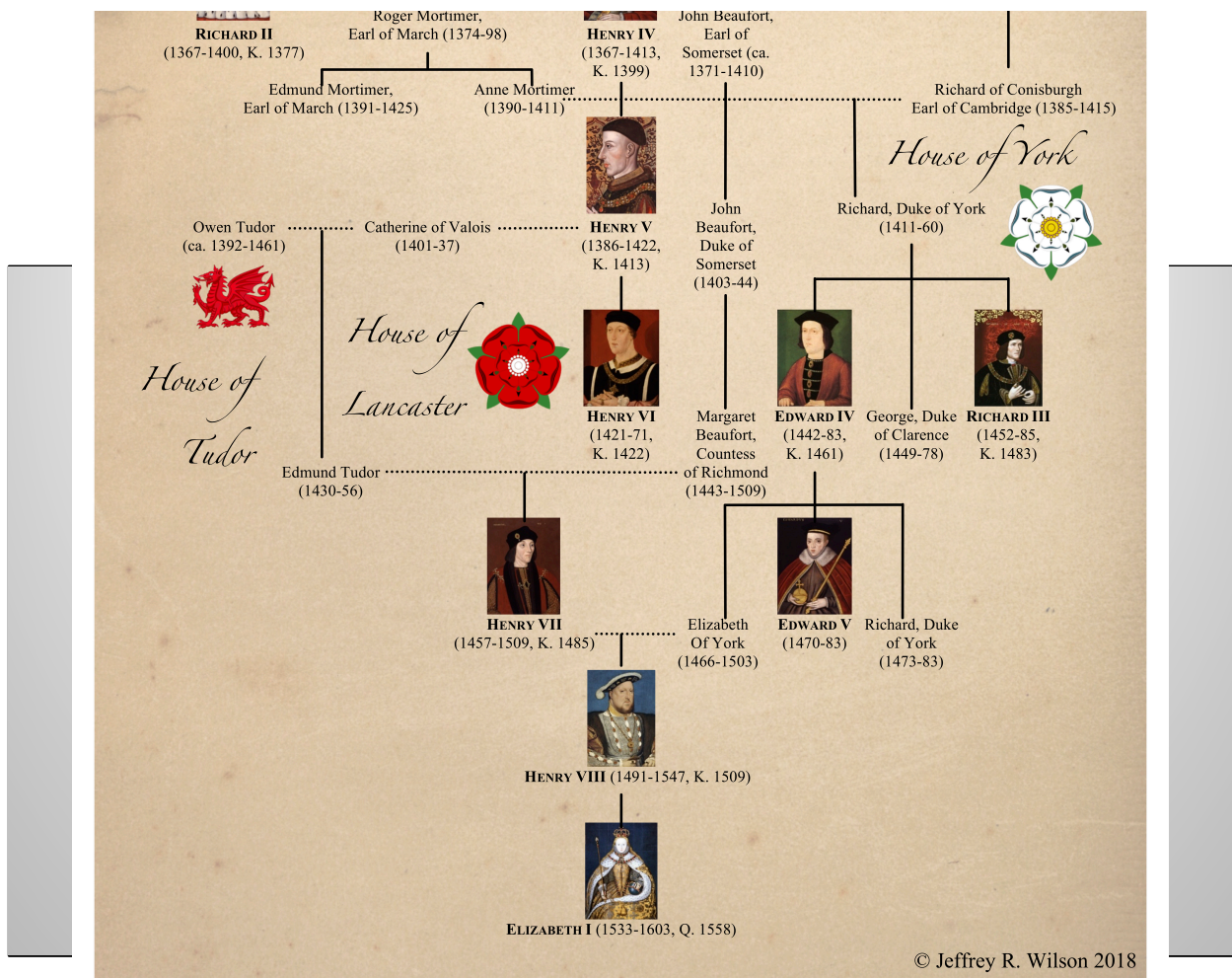
**ELIZABETH I** (1533-1603, Q. 1558)



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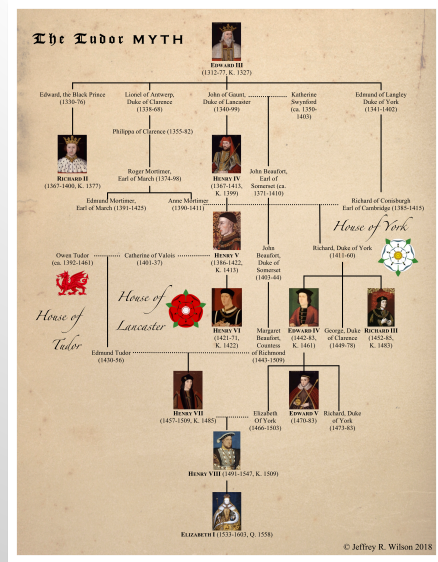
the next in the line of royal succession, King Edward's younger brother Richard (these are the "princes in the tower"). Only with all these royal claimants out of the

way could Richard III become king, which he did in 1483.



The centerpiece of the Tudor myth is the notion that Richard III—evil incarnate—was defeated in 1485 at the Battle of Bosworth by Henry Tudor, a young Welsh earl who, on his father’s side, was the grandson of Owen Tudor (who had secretly married Catherine of Valois, the widow of Henry V) and, on his mother’s side, was the great-great-grandson of John of Gaunt and his mistress (whose illegitimate children, born out of wedlock, had been legitimized during the reign of Richard II), giving the young Henry Tudor a tenuous claim to be the last surviving Lancaster.

Henry Tudor then married the heiress of the house of York, united the two rival dynasties, inaugurating a period of peace and prosperity in England that included the reigns of Henry VIII and his daughter, Elizabeth I, who was the Queen of England when Shakespeare wrote Richard III.



Historians have charted how this myth was invented by chroniclers commissioned by the Tudors. And disability scholars have shown how the myth stigmatized physical disability to demonize Richard III as the embodiment of evil.



## DISCOVERY OF THE SKELETON

UCI New Swan Shakespeare Center

### 5. Discovery of the Skeleton (4:12-13)

It's been 10 years since archaeologists discovered Richard III's skeleton under a parking lot in Leicester, England.



The skeleton confirmed Richard's disability as historical fact, upending the certainties of earlier scholars who thought it was fabricated by his political enemies.



The Tudor historians of the sixteenth century did not invent Richard's disability but did exaggerate it greatly: the exhumed skeleton shows signs of scoliosis, a sideways curvature of the spine, and perhaps uneven shoulders, but not kyphosis, the medical term for what Shakespeare called a "bunch-back."



Shakespeare and his contemporaries also treated it as a congenital condition present at Richard's birth when in all likelihood Richard's scoliosis was adolescent onset—it didn't surface until his teenage years.

"These essays are to the heart, the bones,  
and the blood of Disability Rights."  
—Gaylyn Lee, musician and activist

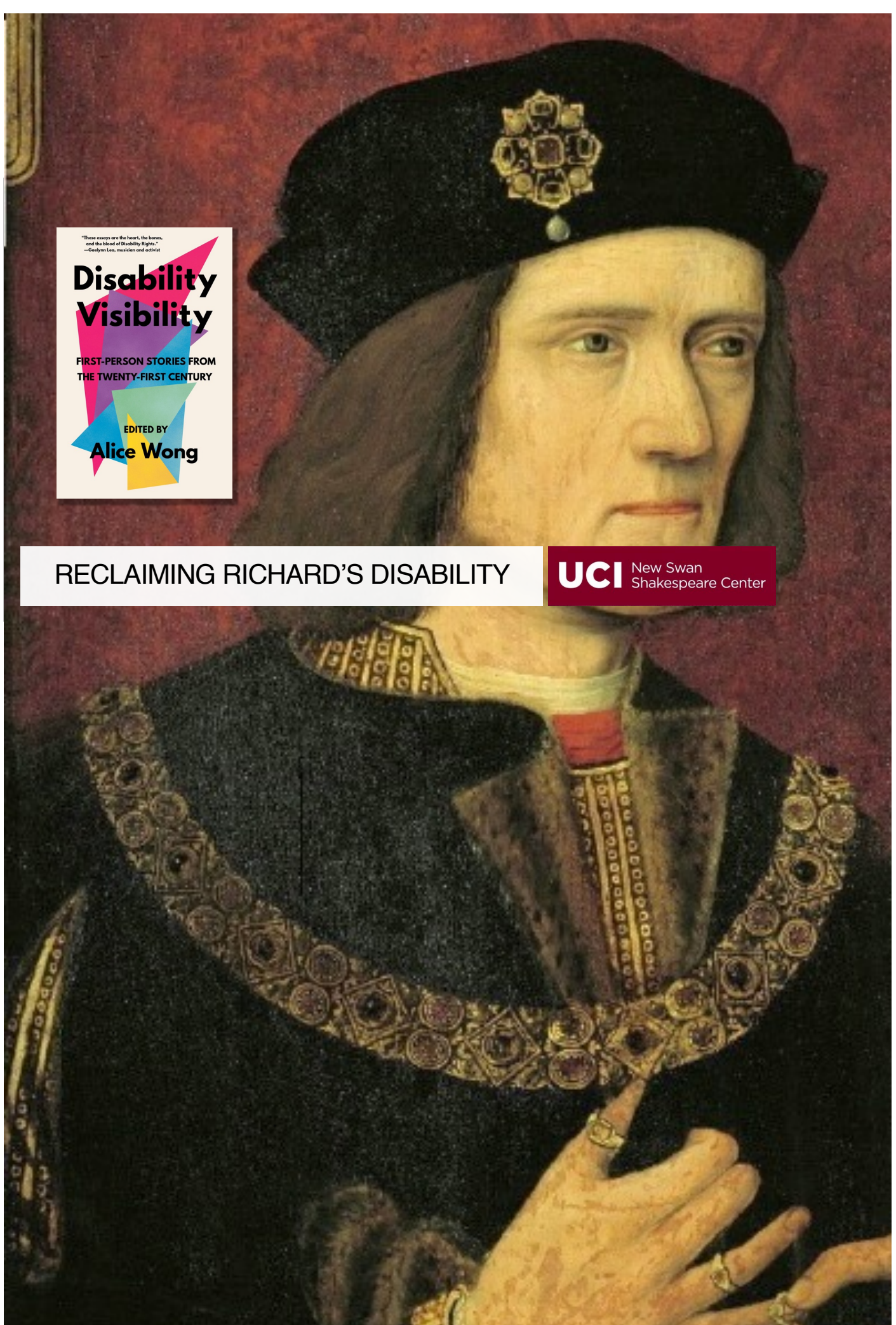
# Disability Visibility

FIRST-PERSON STORIES FROM  
THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

EDITED BY  
**Alice Wong**

## RECLAIMING RICHARD'S DISABILITY

**UCI** New Swan  
Shakespeare Center





			<b>R</b> emus et amicus: ut sicut mors alienus.	
xvi	A		<b>Advent.</b> S. c. e. p. o. r. m. i. n. i. g. i. g. e. r. m. a. m. l. o. c.	
v	b	vi	id. S. a. n. c. t. i. l. e. o. d. g. a. m. e. p. i. e. t. m. i. s. h. a. c. d. i. e. n. a. t. i. v. i.	
	r	v	id. S. r. a. t. v. i. c. t. o. r. u. s. A. l. e. x. a. n. d. r. i. m. a. g. i.	
iiii	d	iiii	id. A. p. u. d. f. f. e. d. e. r. i. n. g. a. y. A. n. n. o. S. p. i. r. i. t. u. s. s. c. i. l. i.	
iii	e	iii	id. S. a. n. c. t. e. f. i. d. i. s. u. n. g. e. t. m. i. s.	4.
ii	f	ii	id. S. a. n. c. t. e. f. i. d. i. s. u. n. g. e. t. m. i. s.	5.
i	g	Nonas	id. S. c. e. r. m. a. m. m. a. r. c. h. i. e. t. a. p. u. l. m. i. n.	6.
	<b>A</b>	viii	id.	7.
xviii	b	viii	id. S. a. n. c. t. i. d. y. o. n. i. s. i. j. n. i. s. t. i. a. m. i. s.	8.
xvii	c	vi	id. S. a. n. c. t. i. g. e. r. o. n. i. s. l. o. c. e. t. m. i. s.	9.
	d	v	id. S. a. n. c. t. i. n. i. g. a. l. i. e. p. i. l. o. c. e. t. m. i. s.	10.
xv	e	iiii	id.	11.
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xiii	<b>A</b>	idibus	id. S. a. n. c. t. i. w. o. l. f. r. a. m. u. e. p. i. e. t. e. f.	14.
ii	b	xviii	id. S. o. u. e. n. b. S. a. n. c. t. i. m. i. c. h. i. s. i. n. m. o. n. t. e. n. i. l. a.	15.
	c	xvii	id.	16.
xi	d	xv	id. S. a. n. c. t. i. l. u. c. e. e. u. n. g.	17.
	e	xiiii	id.	18.
xix	f	xiii	id. S. a. n. c. t. u. n. d. e. a. m. n. i. l. i. a. u. n. g.	19.
xviii	g	xii	id.	20.
	<b>A</b>	xi	id.	21.
xvii	b	x	id. S. a. n. c. t. i. r. o. m. a. n. e. p. i. e. t. e. f.	22.
xvi	c	ix	id.	23.
	d	viii	id. S. c. e. r. m. i. s. p. i. u. e. t. a. i. s. p. i. n. a. m. i. m. i. s.	24.
xiiii	e	vii	id.	25.
xiii	f	vi	id. S. y. m. o. n. i. s. e. t. j. u. d. e. a. p. t. o. s. <b>Vigilia</b>	26.
xii	g	v	id.	27.
	<b>A</b>	iiii	id.	28.
xi	b	iii	id. S. a. n. c. t. i. q. u. i. n. t. u. m. m. i. s. <b>Vigilia</b>	29.
x	c	ii	id.	30.
				31.

**Post haec horas xiiii. Dies x.**





mother? His brothers? His friends? A doctor? Was he experiencing pain? Many with scoliosis don't during the early years. Did others at Middleham Castle in Yorkshire, where Richard spent his formative years, know about his condition? Did cruel kids tease him? If he experienced isolation, it didn't stop Richard from fathering two children out of wedlock, probably during his late teen years.







spine with ropes? How did Richard manage the pain of these medical procedures?



of power in northern England during his twenties, did the adult Richard consider scoliosis to be a central feature of his identity, or was it no big deal? Would Anne massage his back? Was that a moment of intimacy that would have been missed if Richard hadn't been disabled?









SIXTEENTH-CENTURY RICHARDS

**UCI** New Swan Shakespeare Center



chief ato  
 and a get  
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 at the m  
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 nar.

**Rich Richard<sup>o</sup> caus** born in the  
 castel of fodevyngray a myghty knyght  
 in hys dayes he was lord to the  
 tallin & lordshyp of wyndesore wher  
 yn the castel he did gett cast off  
 byldyng yn the which he most noble  
 lady & lady born. And at yett instance  
 of hys he of hys bounty gave to othit fee  
 or fow graunt to the feyd lordsh  
 hly by chartur do byng William  
 Conquerour his noble gowt a fine  
 tym gett p<sup>re</sup>ceded

**Enchas** a. byng f  
 juste. by born at a  
 forshapd yn to fwar  
 of the chomond cap  
 by myracles to the  
 malior of hys steplam  
 perion kept by a hoh  
 warning of an dny  
 to freyt for hys and the  
 golesto of fold and r  
 hys that brent the ro

completu est in isto mfo rex Ricardus tunc  
in Gloucestria dux. Erat iste rex Ricardus  
in edifitio laudandus ut Westm. Noting.  
Hamme. Warr. Eborac. & ap. andlam mult.  
q. alijs locis. ut ad oculum manifeste em-  
det. Hic Eborac. in ecclesia cathedrali no-  
bilibus cantaria aditu capellanorum fun-  
davit et ap. midla vlt. Eborac. collegium  
fecit. aliud in London. in t. m. ap. sta-  
maria de berbyng fundavit et colle-  
gium regie Cantebrie in quibus mab. i.  
anno redditis indotavit pecunias sibi a  
contatibus London. Gloucestria. Wigorn. sibi  
oblatae respuit in gratia actionibus p. o. g.  
assensu cor. h. corda q. opes se vult  
h. r. p. r. n. e. stat. erat curia h. u. b. fa-  
cie. in quibus h. u. n. o. s. d. e. p. t. o. r. s. i. t. a. q.  
inferior. d. o. r. d. e. h. a. s. t. i. n. g. e. c. u. b. i. c. l. a. r. u. m.  
regis Edwardi q. r. t. i. s. u. i. n. d. i. c. i. o. d. e. c. o. l. l. a. t.  
d. i. o. c. h. e. p. m. e. b. o. r. a. c. i. e. & e. p. m. p. l. i. d. u. n. t. e. b. a.  
r. i. t. l. o. c. i. t. i. n. c. a. r. a. n. t. A. d. h. m. a. g. i. e. d. e. s. u.  
d. e. t. e. h. e. r. i. c. o. d. u. c. e. b. u. l. l. y. n. g. h. u. n. c. d. u. b.  
e. d. e. s. t. a. n. l. e. y. c. r. a. t. v. u. l. n. i. a. t. u. s. c. a. p. t. u. s. & i. n. c. a. r.

...ntq̄ indotavit pecunias sibi a  
London. Gloucestre. Wigornu sibi  
essunt cū gr̄are actionibz p̄oig  
re h̄or corda q̄ opes se velle  
vne state<sup>2</sup> erat curia h̄ub fa  
ualob h̄unob dextor Prior<sup>1</sup> q̄  
doi<sup>m</sup> de Hastings cubiculari  
wardi q̄ti su iudicio decollant  
Eborac<sup>1</sup> e ep̄m h̄iduse ba  
incardant. Ad h̄ maxie desu

In this Latin manuscript, the passage was written with  
blanks. Someone later filled in the blanks to make the  
“dexter,” right, shoulder higher than the “sinister,” left.

2-15-7

THOMÆ MORI  
ANGLI, VIRI ERVDI-  
TIONIS PARITER AC VIR-  
TVTIS NOMINE CLARISSI-  
MI, ANGLIÆQVE OLIM  
CANCELLARIJ,

Omnia, quæ hucusque ad manus nostras peruenerunt, Latina Opera:  
quorum aliqua nunc primum in lucem prodeunt, reliqua  
verò multo quàm antea casti-  
gatiōra.

HORVM OMNIVM ELENCHVM  
*Pagina duodecima commōstrabit.*

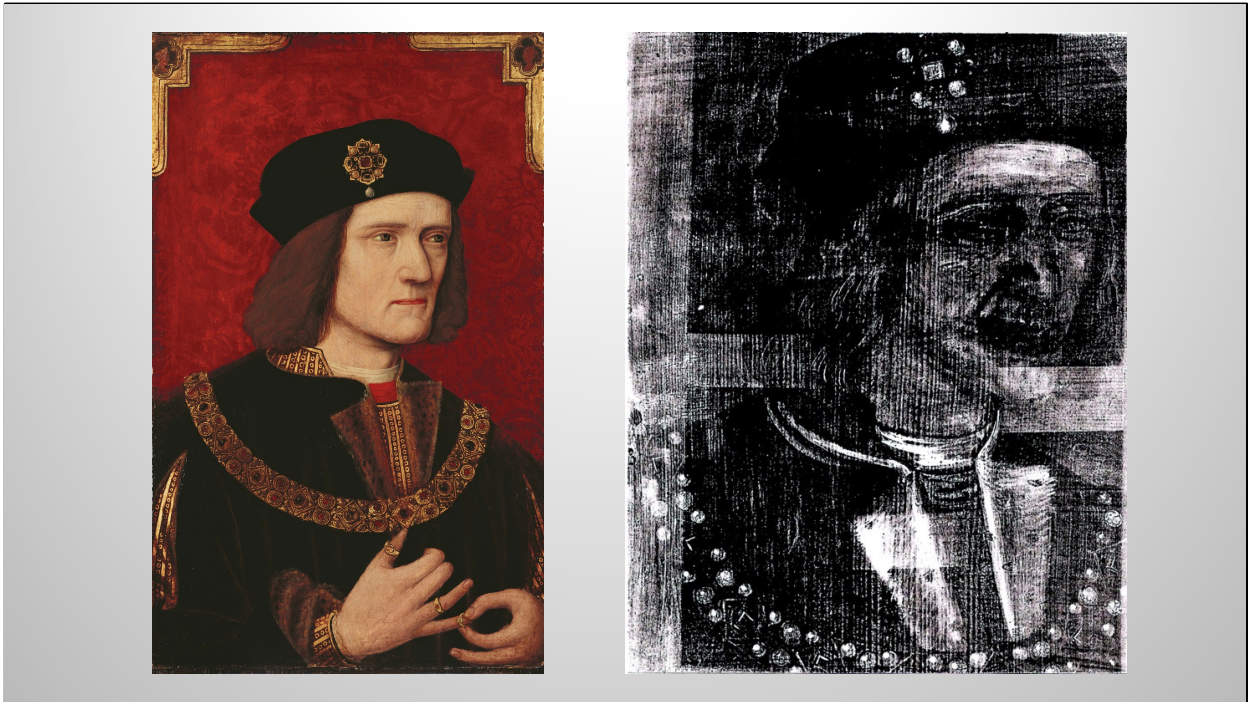


*Sum Ben. Goujem Libr.*

*Amici primo, et eruditi primo  
viro Guib. Dabins  
J. M. Goujem  
D. D.*

LOVANIJ,  
Apud Ioannem Bogardum sub Biblijs  
Aureis, Anno 1566.

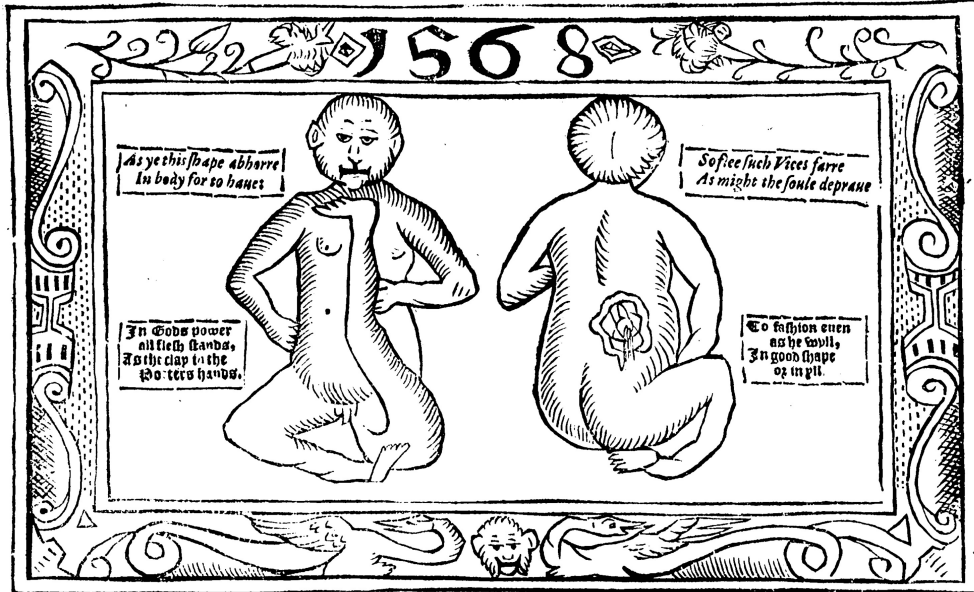
*Joanni Blumfeldt doctiss. amico  
dono dedit amoris causa hunc librum  
Guilielmus Dabins.*



The Royal Collections portrait shows an uneven shoulder line, right higher than left. X-ray examination has revealed the portrait originally did not depict a noticeably deformed Richard. After its initial composition around 1520, someone modified the portrait later in the sixteenth century to include sneering eyes, a tight frown, and a hunchback: the jeweled chain hanging from Richard's shoulders was pulled to the left in the revision to suggest a massy shoulder.



**The forme and Shape of a Monstrous Child / bozne**  
 at Maydstone in Kent, the .xxiiiij. of October. 1568.



**A**t Maydstone in Kent there was one Marget Mere, Daughter to Richard Mere of the sayd Towne of Maydstone, who being buried, played the naughty packe, and was gotten with childe, being deliuered of the same childe the .xxiiiij. daye of October last past, in the yeare of our Lord. 1568. at .vij. of the clocke in the after noone of the same day being Sunday. which childe being a man child, had first the mouth sitted on the right side like a Barbets mouth, terrible to beholde, the left arme lying vpon the brest, fast thereto ioyned, hauing as it were stumps on the handes, the left leg growing vppward toward the head, and the ryght leg bending toward the left leg, the foote therof growing into the buttocke of the sayd left leg. In the myddest of the backe there was a broad lump of flesh, in fashion lyke a Rose, in the myddest wherof was a hole, which voyded like an Issue. Thys sayd Childe was bozne alyue, and lyued .xxiiiij. houres, and then departed this lyfe. which may be a terrour as well to all such workers of filthynes & iniquity, as to those vngodly liuers, who (if in them any feare of God be) may moue them to repentance and amende ment of lyfe. which God for Christes sake graunt both to them and vs. Amen. Witneses hereof were these, William Plomer, John Squier Stafier, John Sadler Goldsmith, besides diuers other credible persons both men and women.

**A warnyng to England.**

**T**his monstrous shape to thee England  
 Playn shewes thy monstrous vice.  
 If thou eeh part wylt vnderstand,  
 And take thereby aduice.

For waying first the gaspyng mouth,  
 It doth full well declare:  
 What raine and oppression both  
 Is bred wyth greedy care.

For, for the backe and gorging paunch,  
 To lyue in wealth and ease:  
 Such toylmen take that none may haunch  
 Their greedy minde, nor please.

For in such sort, their mouthes they infect,  
 With lying othes, and slaightes:  
 Blaspheming God, and pynce relect,  
 As they were brutish bestes.

Their filthy talke, and poysoned speech,  
 Distigures so the mouth:  
 That some wold thinke ther good by breech  
 Such filthy it breatheth forth.

The hands which haue no fingers right  
 But stumps sit for no ble:  
 Dorch well set forth the sole plight,  
 Whych we in these dates chuse.

For rich and poore, for age and youth,  
 Eche one wold labour flye:  
 few seekes to do the deedes of truth,  
 To helpe others thereby.

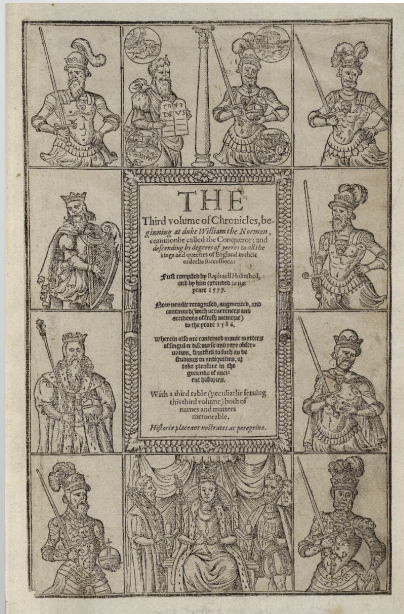
The leg so clymyng to the head,  
 What meaneth it but this:  
 That some do seeke not to be lead,  
 But for to leade amis.

And as this makes it most monstrous,  
 For foote to clyme to head:  
 So thole Subiects be most vicious,  
 That refuse to be lead.

The hinder part doth shew vs playne,  
 Our close and hidden vice,  
 Whych doth behind vs run amayne,  
 In hyle and shameful wyse.

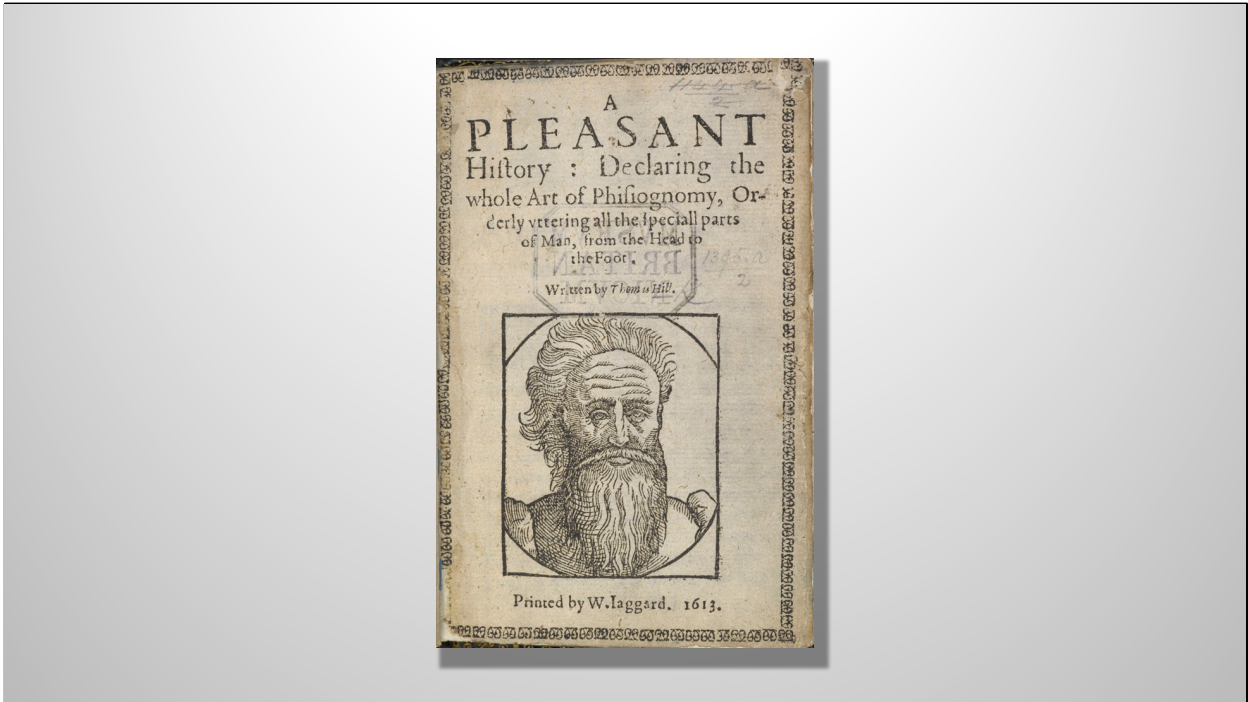
Whereto for eeh in England now,  
 Let this Monster them teach:  
 To mend the monstrous life they show,  
 Least endles death them reach.

**Printed at London by**  
 John Wodeley, dwelling in little  
 Brittain streete without Aldersgate.  
 The .xxij. of December.

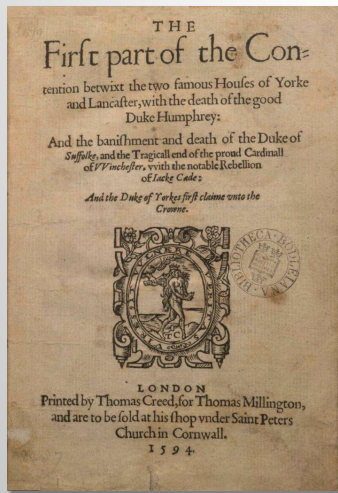


The full confluence of these qualities, with the defects of fauour and amiable proportion, gaue prooffe to this rule of physiognomie: *Distortum vultum sequitur distorsio morum* [‘A deformity in appearance follows a deformity in character’]

The second edition of Holinshed’s *Chronicles* (1587) added something else. It quoted More then editorialized: “The full confluence of these qualities, with the defects of fauour and amiable proportion, gaue prooffe to this rule of physiognomie: [and then in Latin, *A deformity in appearance follows a deformity in character*]” (3.712).



Physiognomy, which translates to “recognizing natures,” is the pseudo-science claiming that internal essences can be read through external appearances.



**Heap of wrath, foul indigested lump,  
As crooked in thy manners as thy shape.**

**Where's that valiant crookback prodigy,  
Dickie, your boy?**

## SHAKESPEARE'S RICHARD

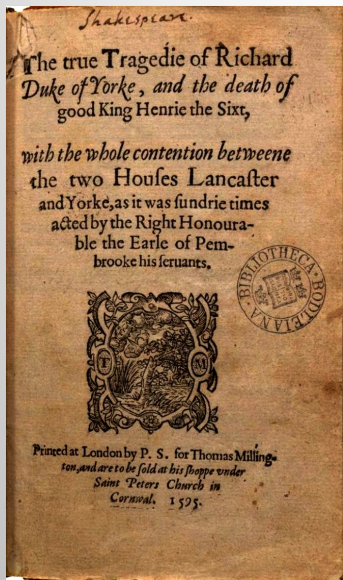
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### 9. 2 and 3 Henry VI (4:19-21)

Shakespeare's Richard first appears in a couple brief scenes at the end of Henry VI, Part 2. It's like the post-credits scene of a superhero flick, where we catch a glimpse of the villain who will emerge in the sequel. And he's the figure of Tudor lore. One character calls Richard a "Heap of wrath, foul indigested lump, / As crooked in thy manners as thy shape."

His enemies call him a "crookback prodigy," employing a spiritual model of stigma in which the shape of material human bodies in the here and now signifies the orderly

construction of reality by the divine.



Then, since this earth affords no joy to me  
But to command, to check, to o'erbear such  
As are of better person than myself,  
I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown  
And, whiles I live, t'account this world but hell  
Until my misshaped trunk that bears this head  
Be round impalèd with a glorious crown.

But half-way through Henry VI, Part 3 Shakespeare swerved to consider the emotional life of a man subjected to stigma. Richard starts talking to the audience in soliloquies and asides, giving voice to his inner-life, his torment, his anger, his ambition, his irreverence, and his plans to deceive, betray, and kill his family.

Then, since this earth affords no joy to me  
But to command, to check, to o'erbear such  
As are of better person than myself,  
I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown  
And, whiles I live, t'account this world but hell

Until my misshaped trunk that bears this head  
Be round impalèd with a glorious crown. (3.2.165–171)



first modern representation of physical disability in English literature.

This movement from the spiritual model of stigma to the psychological—from sign to cause, from metaphor to metonymy—can be seen as progress from medieval to modern ways of thinking, but Shakespeare questioned each model equally: the spiritual by ascribing it to

Richard's mortal enemies, whose hatred infects their interpretation, and the psychological by ascribing it to Richard himself, a habitual liar and murderer.

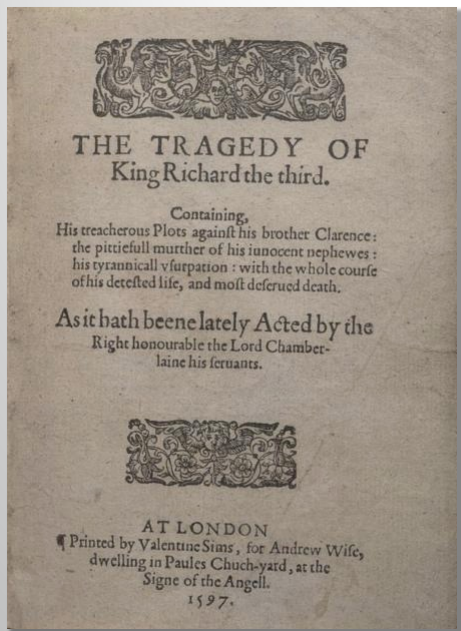




10. “Die prophet in thy speech...” (4:21-23)

What, will the aspiring blood of Lancaster  
Sink in the ground? I thought it would have mounted.  
See how my sword weeps for the poor King's death.  
O, may such purple tears be always shed  
From those that wish the downfall of our house!  
If any spark of life be yet remaining,  
Down, down to hell, and say I sent thee thither,  
*Stabs him again*  
I that have neither pity, love, nor fear.  
Indeed, 'tis true that Henry told me of,  
For I have often heard my mother say

I came into the world with my legs forward.  
Had I not reason, think ye, to make haste,  
And seek their ruin that usurped our right?  
The midwife wondered, and the women cried,  
'O Jesus, bless us, he is born with teeth!'—  
Link And so I was, which plainly signified  
That I should snarl and bite, and play the dog.  
Then, since the heavens have shaped my body so,  
Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it.  
I had no father, I am like no father,  
I have no brother, I am like no brother.  
And this word 'love', which greybeards call divine,  
Be resident in men like one another,  
And not in me. I am myself alone.  
Clarence, beware. Thou keep'st me from the light,  
But I will sort a pitchy day for thee;  
For I will buzz abroad such prophecies  
That Edward shall be fearful of his life;  
And then, to purge his fear, I'll be thy death.  
King Henry and the Prince his son are gone.  
Clarence, thy turn is next, and then the rest,  
Counting myself but bad till I be best.  
I'll throw thy body in another room,  
And triumph, Henry, in thy day of doom.



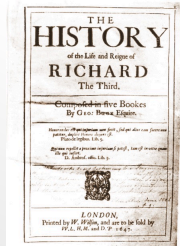
I am determined to prove a villain.

## 11. Richard III (4:23-24)

“I am determined to prove a villain,” he says at the start of *Richard III*, but should we hear the “determined” in that line as I have been destined for villainy or as I have resolved myself to villainy?

In a quintessentially Shakespearean exchange, the playwright’s dramatic mode, both tragic and ironic, calls upon some of life’s biggest questions (because it is tragic) but defers answers to the audience (because it is ironic), leaving Richard’s body open to interpretation in different ages embracing different attitudes toward

stigma. The changing meaning of disability repeatedly recontextualized through shifting perspectives and circumstances in Shakespeare's history plays has thus prompted and sustained more than four hundred years of changing interpretations of Richard, his body, his behavior, and his status as either the villain or the victim of Tudor history. The meaning of Richard's disability changes with time, not only in the course of Shakespeare's plays but also in the broader cultural history surrounding them.

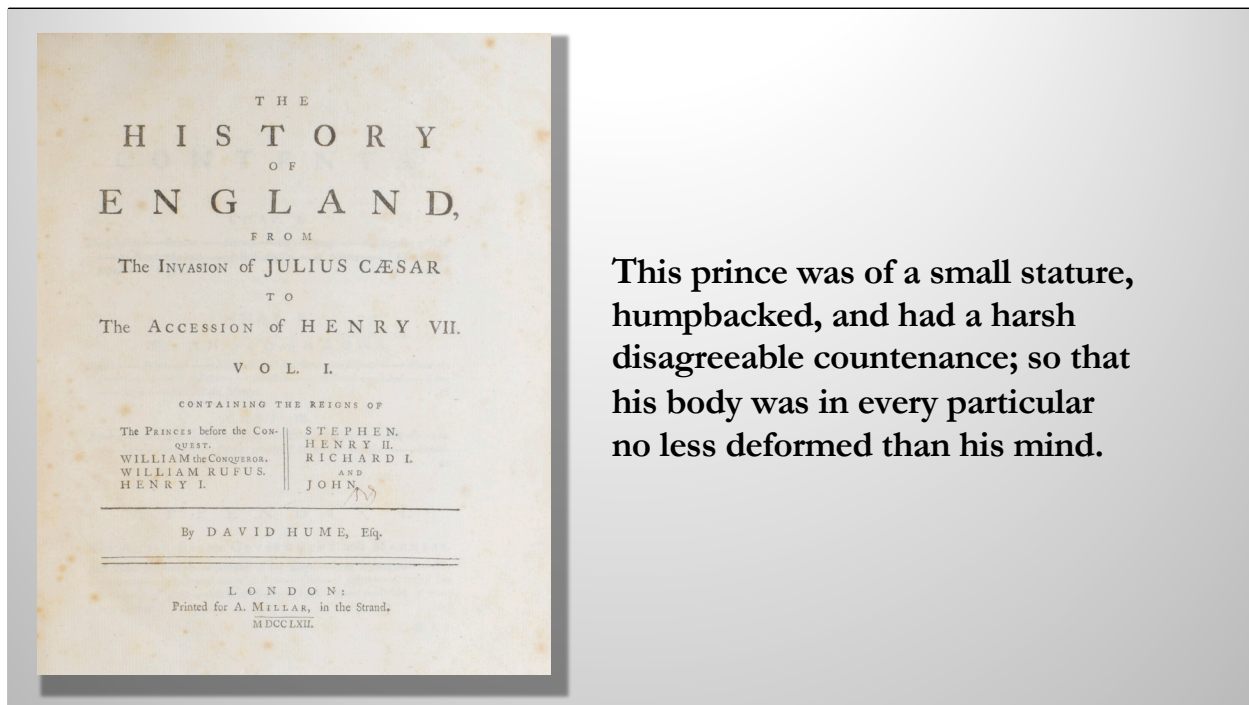


## INTO THE MODERN AGE

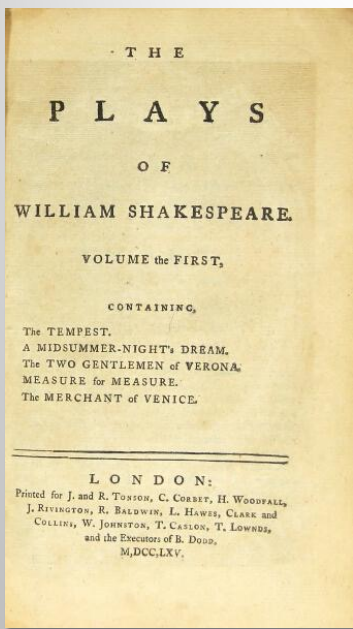
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### 12. 18th c. readings (4:24-27)

Here's the thing. You won't believe me when I tell you, but I've scoured the seventeenth century, and no one even noticed Shakespeare's causal reading of Richard's disability. No one said, "Hey, that's interesting that everyone before Shakespeare saw Richard's body as a sign of his evil behavior, but Shakespeare saw disability as not the sign but the cause."



Here's David Hume giving a figural interpretation in 1762: "This prince was of a small stature, humpbacked, and had a harsh disagreeable countenance; so that his body was in every particular no less deformed than his mind." (2.439)

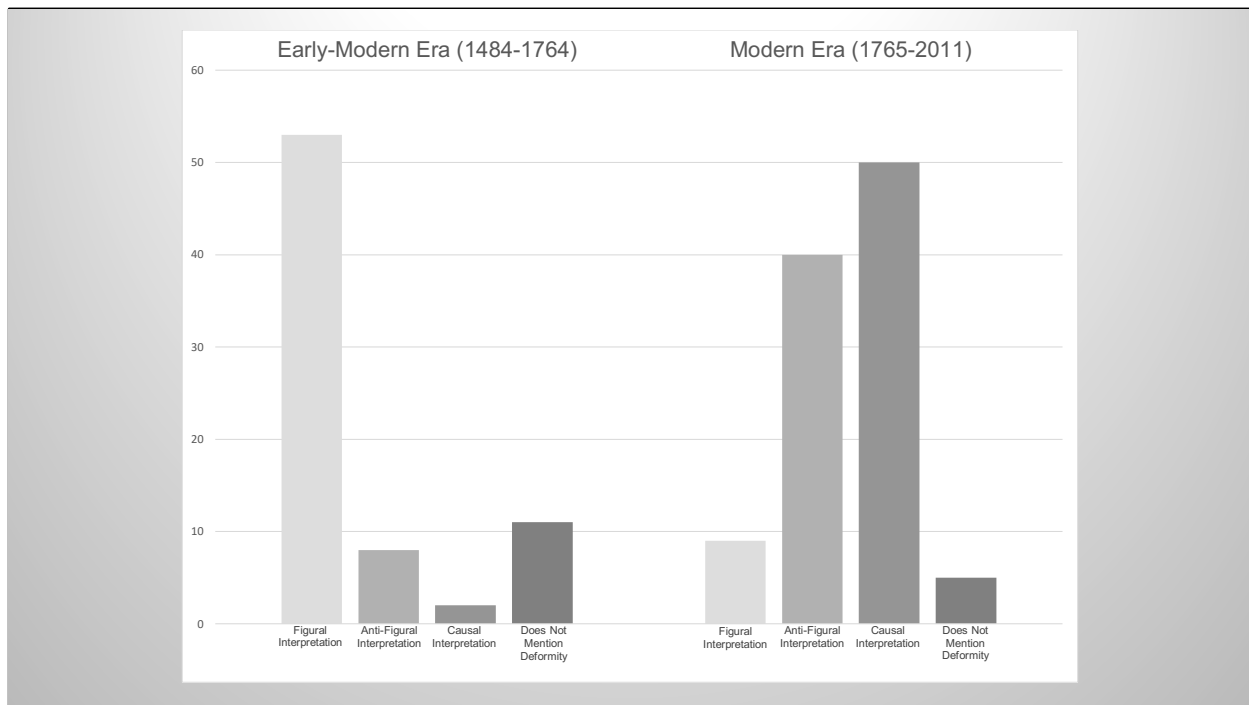


Richard speaks here the language of nature. Whoever is stigmatised with deformity has a constant source of envy in his mind, and would counterbalance by some other superiority these advantages which he feels himself to want.... The deformed, like other men, are displeased with inferiority, and endeavor to gain ground by good or bad means, as they are virtuous or corrupt.

But here's Samuel Johnson giving a causal interpretation only three years later, in 1765: "Richard speaks here the language of nature. Whoever is stigmatised with deformity has a constant source of envy in his mind, and would counterbalance by some other superiority these advantages which he feels himself to want.... The deformed, like other men, are displeased with inferiority, and endeavor to gain ground by good or bad means, as they are virtuous or corrupt." (173n4).

Text	The Question of Deformity			The Interpretation of Deformity					The Question of Evil			Subject		Discipline				
	Richard Was Deformed	Richard Was Not Deformed	Does Not Mention Deformity	Figural Interpretation	Anti-Figural Interpretation	Causal Interpretation	Both Figural and Causal Interpretations	New Figural Interpretation	New Causal Interpretation	Richard Was Evil	Richard Was Not Evil	Makes No Distinction	Makes Distinction, Addresses Historical Richard	Makes Distinction, Addresses Shakespeare's Character	History	Literary	Literature	Criticism
Malherbe <i>Reul</i> (ca. 1483)			x												x			
Thomas Maccles, <i>The Comparison of Richard the Third</i> (1483)			x												x			
Archibald Winton, "Address to King Richard III" (1484)			x								x					x		
Nicholas von Poppinga, <i>Theory</i> (1484)			x												x			
John Ross, <i>Reue des Rois</i> (1484)			x								x				x			
John Ross, <i>Historie Rois de France</i> (1486)	x			x						x					x			
<i>The Escorial Chronicle</i> (1459-86)			x												x			
William Barlow, in the <i>York Civic Record</i> (1491)	x			x						x					x			
Bernard Apoll, <i>Fin Regis Decessu</i> (ca. 1500-01)			x												x			
Humphrey Breton, "The Song of the Lady Beron" (early 16 <sup>th</sup> c.)				x													x	
Humphrey Breton, "The Ballad of Bosworth Field" (early 16 <sup>th</sup> c.)				x													x	
Richard, <i>Virgils English History</i> (1512-13)	x			x						x					x			
Thomas More, <i>The History of King Richard the Third</i> (1513)	x			x						x					x			
Robert Estienne, <i>Dece Scepticorum of England and of France</i> (1516)			x												x			
Richard Grafton, <i>A Commemoration of the Chronicle of England</i> (1543)	x			x						x					x			
Edward Hall, <i>The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York</i> (1548)	x			x						x					x			
<i>The Junius Poem</i> (ca. 1552)	x			x						x							x	
Richard Pynson, <i>The Expedition of Christopher Columbus</i> (1563)	x			x						x						x		
George Leland, "George Plantagenet" (1559)	x			x						x						x		
John De Witt, "Lord Hopton" (1563)	x			x						x						x		

I collected up all the representations of Richard's disability that I could find.

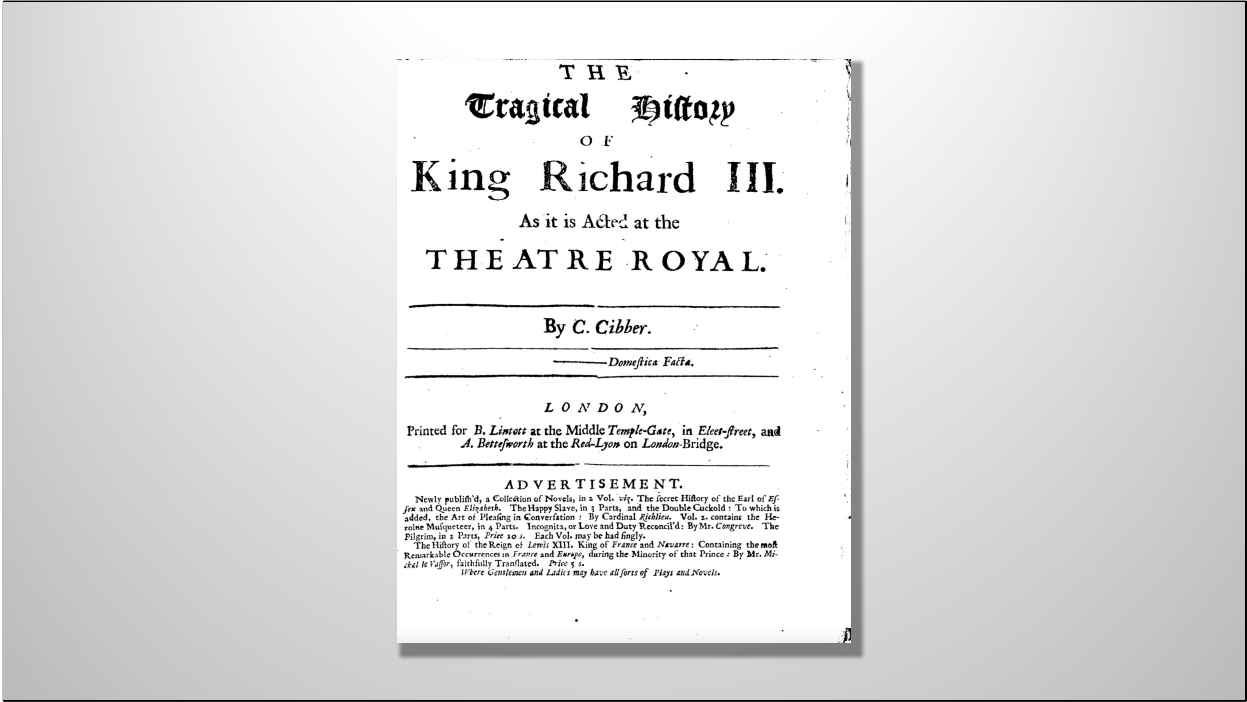


This chart shows that during the early modern era – before Samuel Johnson in 1765 – more than two-thirds of all discussions of Richard III (51 out of 73) advanced a figural interpretation. In the sources from this period that I’ve looked at, there were 53 figural interpretations of Richard’s deformity compared to 8 explicitly anti-figural interpretations, only 2 causal interpretations (being Shakespeare’s 3 Henry VI and Richard III), and 11 sources that did not mention any disability.

The chart for the modern era shows how swiftly and decisively the figural paradigm fell from favor in the third quarter of the eighteenth century (the time of Johnson).

Why did the interpretation change?

I don't think it did. Let me explain.

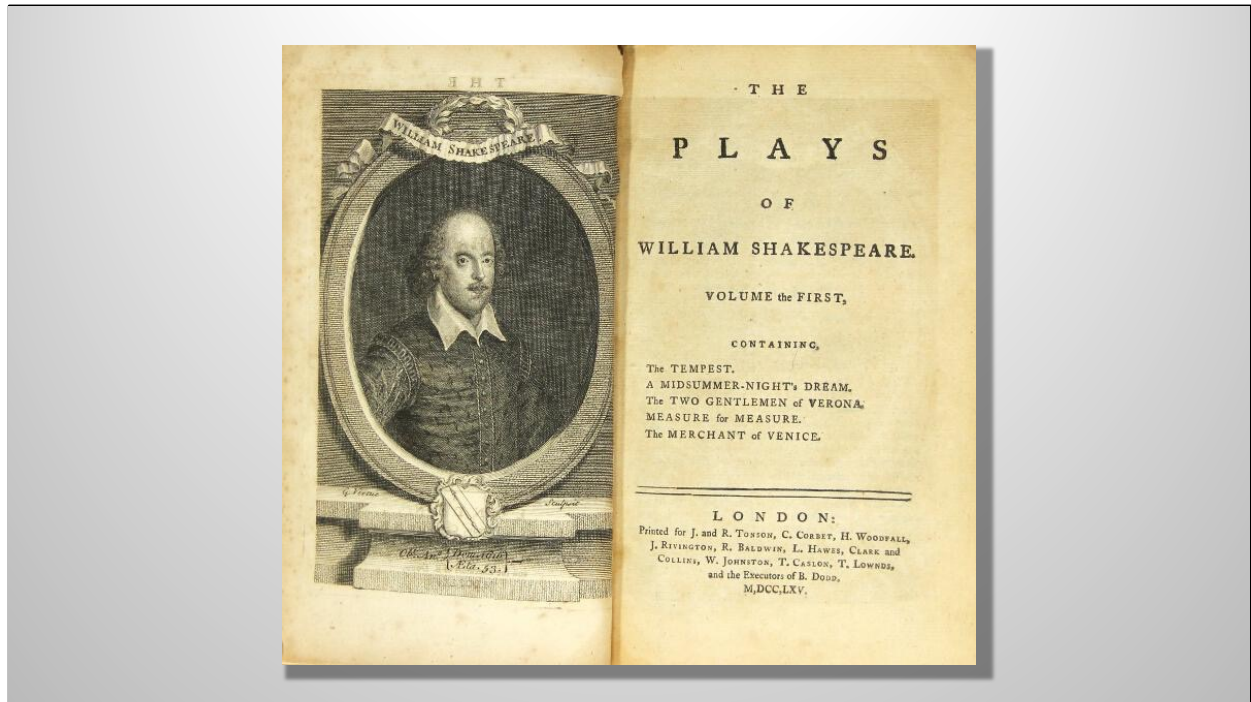


Colley Cibber adapted Richard III in 1699, cutting lines and characters who convey the spiritual model of stigma.

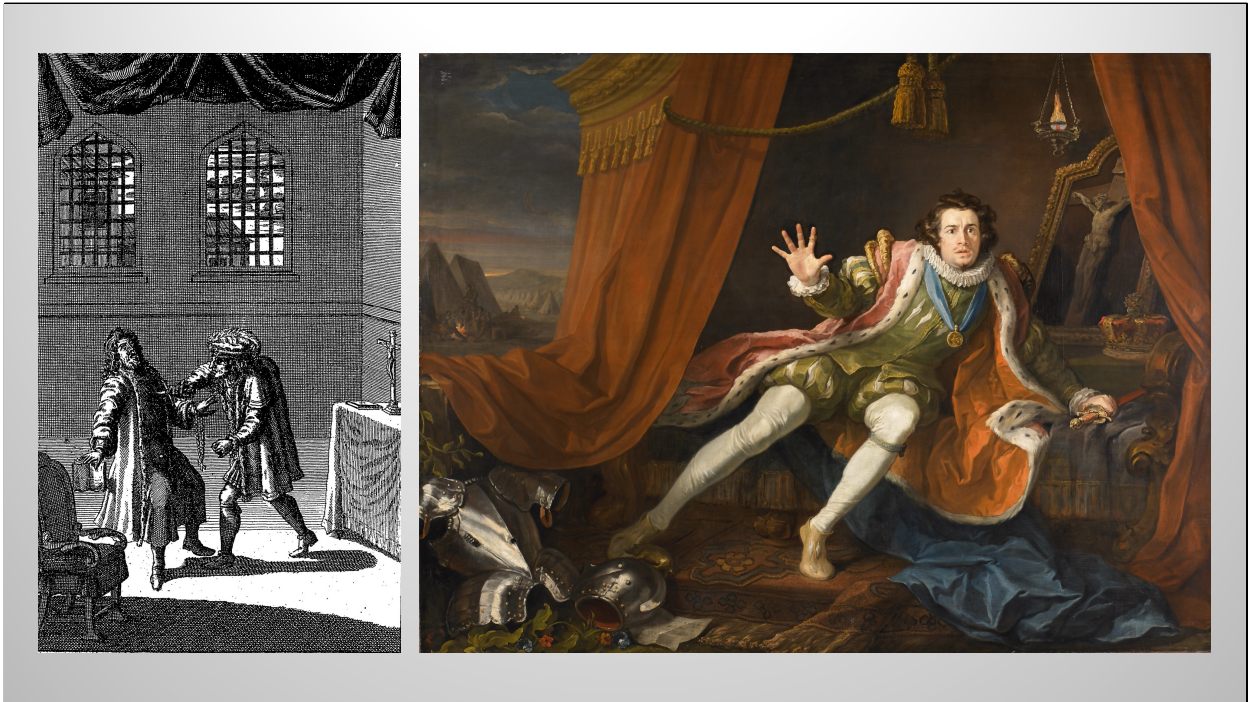




William Hogarth painted Garrick as Richard in 1745, showcasing a rising realism in the visual arts.



Samuel Johnson's 1765 edition of Shakespeare's Plays included several glosses explaining the psychological model of stigma to readers.



The interpretation of Richard's body didn't change in the third quarter of the 18th c. Instead, the thing that people were interpreting changed. It wasn't a case of two people looking at the same thing, and one thinks X while the other thinks Y. Thanks to Cibber, Garrick, Hogarth, and Johnson, people before the mid-18th c and people after literally saw different things when they saw Richard III.



## NEW BODIES

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### 14. Women and Children (4:31-32)

The first woman to play Richard III was a Mrs. Le Fevre at a benefit on her behalf in London on March 4, 1782. Little is known about her, but a surviving drawing shows no discernable disability.



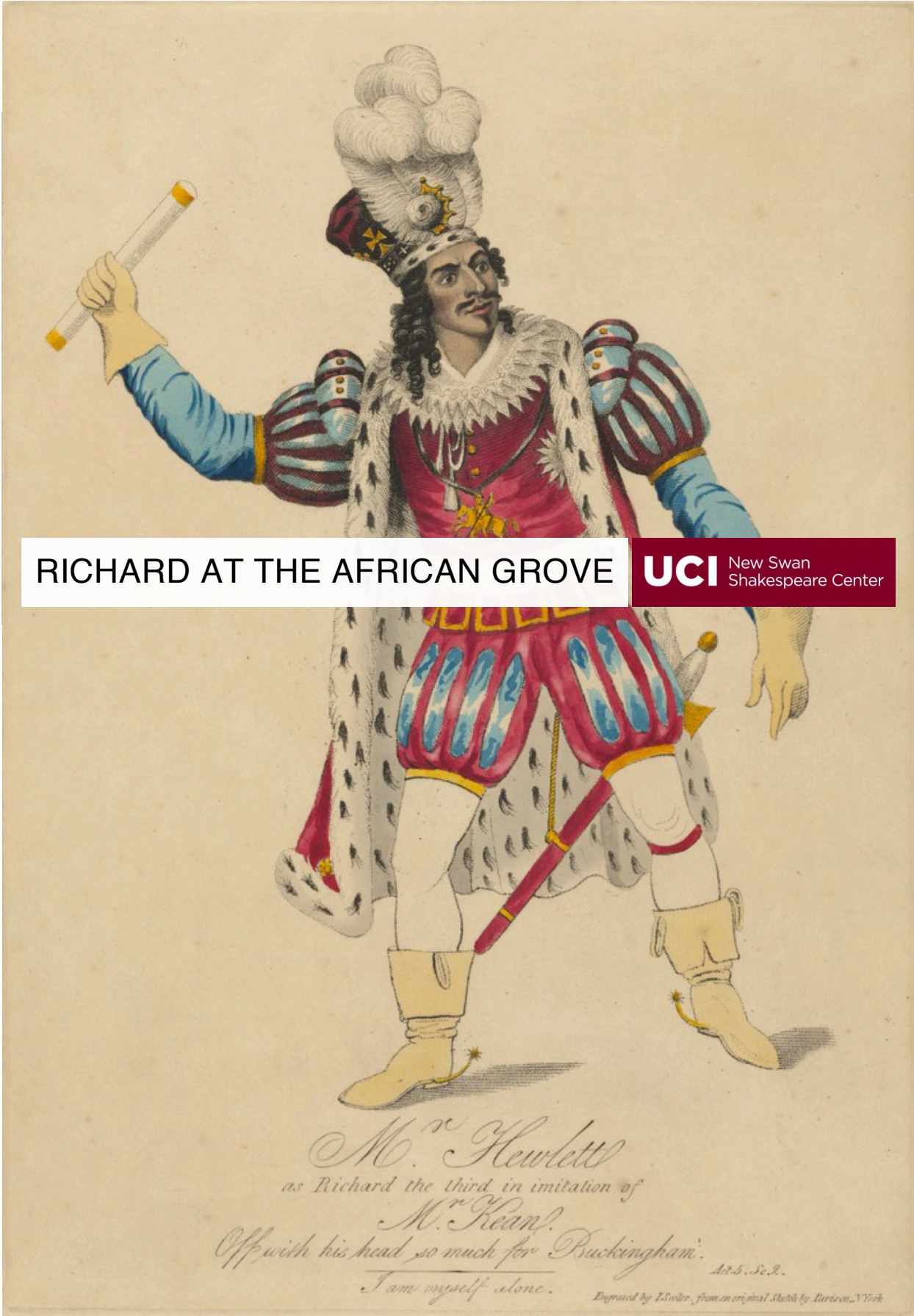
**Monstrosities, such as  
have ever been objects of  
disgust to me,—male  
characters performed by a  
female.**

In Philadelphia in 1836, Elizabeth Morton Woodson, known as Mrs. Henry Lewis, played Richard III, among other male parts, described by the theater manager as “monstrosities, such as have ever been objects of disgust to me,—male characters performed by a female.”



**A most preposterous  
notion. . . . Such an  
attempt is unsexly and  
indelicate.**

No reviews survive of Australian actress Eliza Winstanley's scandalous performance as Richard at Sydney's Australian Olympic Theatre in 1842, perhaps a sign of critics boycotting. One who refused to attend called women playing men "a most preposterous notion. . . . Such an attempt is unsexly and indelicate."



RICHARD AT THE AFRICAN GROVE

UCI New Swan Shakespeare Center

*M<sup>r</sup> Hewlett*  
*as Richard the third in imitation of*  
*M<sup>r</sup> Kean!*  
*Off with his head so much for Buckingham.*  
*I am myself alone.* Act 5. Sc. 2.  
*Engraved by L. Walter, from an original sketch by Durran, N York.*







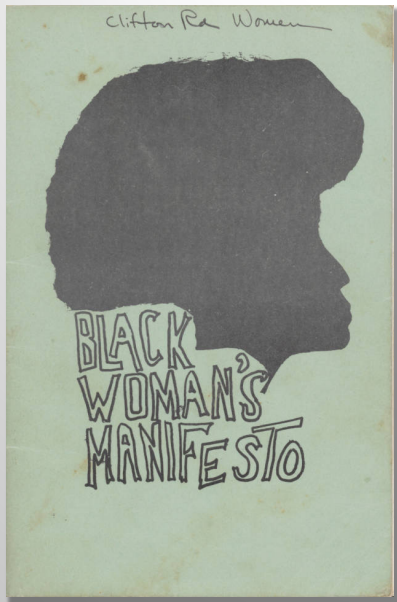
The actor had made the King hump backed, instead of crooked backed, having literally a hump behind his neck little less than a camels. Shaping 'the legs of an unequal size' was also difficult but was overcome by placing false calves before, and wearing a high heeled shoe.

King Richard had some robes made up from discarded merino curtains of the ball rooms.

Now is de vinter of our discontent made glorus summer by de son of New-York.

“The actor had made the King hump backed, instead of crooked backed, having literally a hump behind his neck little less than a camels. Shaping ‘the legs of an unequal size’ was also difficult but was overcome by placing false calves before, and wearing a high heeled shoe,” Noah wrote. For Taft’s royal garments, “King Richard had some robes made up from discarded merino curtains of the ball rooms.” Taft’s first lines Americanized Richard III to thunderous applause from the African Grove: “Now is de vinter of our discontent made glorus summer by de son of New-York.”





### Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought\*

PATRICIA HILL COLLINS, *University of Cincinnati*

*Black women have long occupied marginal positions in academic settings. I argue that many Black female intellectuals have made creative use of their marginality—their "outsider within" status—to produce Black feminist thought that reflects a special standpoint on self, family, and society. I describe and explore the sociological significance of three characteristic themes in such thought: (1) Black women's self-education and self-advocacy; (2) the interlocking nature of oppression; and (3) the importance of Afro-American women's culture. After considering how Black women might draw upon their key themes as outsiders within to generate a distinctive standpoint on existing sociological paradigms, I conclude by suggesting that other sociologists would also benefit by placing greater trust in the creative potential of their own personal and cultural biographies.*

Afro-American women have long been privy to some of the most intimate secrets of white society. Countless numbers of Black women have ridden buses to their white "families," where they not only cooked, cleaned, and executed other domestic duties, but where they also nurtured their "other" children, shrewdly offered guidance to their employers, and frequently became honorary members of their white "families." These women have seen white elites, both actual and aspiring, from perspectives largely obscured from their Black spouses and from these groups themselves.<sup>1</sup>

On one level, this "insider" relationship has been satisfying to all involved. The memoirs of affluent whites often mention their love for their Black "mothers," while accounts of Black domestic workers stress the sense of self-affirmation they experienced as seeing white power demystified—of knowing that it was not the intellect, talent, or humanity of their employers that supported their superior status, but largely just the advantages of racism.<sup>2</sup> But on another level, these same Black women knew they could never belong to their white "families." In spite of their involvement, they remained "outsiders."<sup>3</sup>

This "outsider within" status has provided a special standpoint on self, family, and society for Afro-American women.<sup>4</sup> A careful review of the emerging Black feminist literature reveals that many Black intellectuals, especially those in touch with their marginality in ac-

\* I wish to thank Lynn Weber Carston, Bernice Thornton Dill, Alison M. Jagger, Joan Harman, Ellen Messer-Davodian, and several anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments about earlier drafts of this paper. Correspondence to: Department of Afro-American Studies, University of Cincinnati, ML 370, Cincinnati, OH 45221.

1. In 1940, almost 60 percent of employed Afro-American women were domestics. This 1970 census was the first time this category of work did not contain the largest segment of the Black female labor force. See Bellin (1980) for a discussion of Black domestic work.

2. For example, in *Of Women Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*, Adrienne Rich has listed memories of her Black "mothers," a young contemporary Afro-American scholar has noted. Similarly, 1915-1980 study of Black domestic workers reveals Black women's sense of affirmation in knowing that they were better mothers than their employers, and that they frequently had to teach their employers that babies, children and institutions in general. Even though the Black domestic workers were officially subordinates, they gained a sense of self-worth in knowing they were good at things that frequently had to be learned.

3. For example, in spite of Rich's warm memories of her Black "mothers," she had all too high hopes for racial hegemony expressed in her book. Similarly, the Black domestic workers in both Dill's (1985) and Bellin's (1985) studies discovered the limitations that their subordinate status placed on them.

4. For a discussion of the status of a special standpoint or point of view of oppressed groups, see Harrook (1987).

This Richard exhibited what Frances Beal calls “double jeopardy,” vulnerable to ableism and racism, although on the different levels of dramatic illusion and theatrical reality. Richard the character in the imagined story and Taft the actor on the actual stage were “outsiders within,” to use Patricia Hill Collins’s phrase, adding disability to “the interlocking nature of race, gender, and class oppression.”

**MULTIPLE JEOPARDY, MULTIPLE CONSCIOUSNESS: THE CONTEXT OF A BLACK FEMINIST IDEOLOGY**

DEBORAH K. KING

Black women have long recognized the special circumstances of our lives in the United States; the commonalities that we share with all women, as well as the bonds that connect us to the men of our race. We have also realized that the interactive oppressions that circumscribe our lives provide a distinctive context for black womanhood. For us, the notion of double jeopardy is not a new one. Near the end of the nineteenth century, Anna Julia Cooper, who was born a slave and later became an educator and earned a Ph.D., offers spoke and wrote of the double enslavement of black women and of our being "confronted by both a woman question and a race problem."<sup>1</sup> In 1904, Mary Church Terrell, the first president of the National Association of Colored Women, wrote, "Not only are colored women . . . handicapped on account of their sex, but they are almost everywhere baffled and mocked because of their race. Not only because they are women, but because they are colored women."<sup>2</sup>

I am greatly indebted to Elva B. Brown, Elaine Upton, Patricia Palmieri, Patricia Hill Collins, Dianne Funderhughes, Rose Brewer, and Signa<sup>3</sup> referees for their thoughtful and critical comments on this paper.

<sup>1</sup> Gerda Lerner, ed., *Black Women in White America: A Documentary History* (New York: Vintage, 1973), 573.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Church Terrell, "The Progress of Colored Women," *Voice of the Negro* 1, no. 7 (July 1904): 292.

<sup>3</sup> *Diapsa: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 1999, vol. 14, no. 11.  
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**Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics**

Kimberlé Crenshaw<sup>1</sup>

One of the very few Black women's studies books is entitled *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us are Brave*.<sup>2</sup> I have chosen this title as a point of departure in my efforts to develop a Black feminist criticism<sup>3</sup> because it sets forth a problematic consequence of the tendency to treat race and gender as mutually exclusive categories of experience and analysis.<sup>4</sup> In this talk, I want to examine how this tendency is perpetuated by a single-axis framework that is dominant in antidiscrimination law and that is also reflected in feminist theory and antiracist politics.

I will center Black women in this analysis in order to contrast the multidimensionality of Black women's experience with the single-axis analysis that distorts these experiences. Not only will this juxtaposition reveal how Black women are theoretically erased, it will also illustrate how this framework imports its own theoretical limitations that undermine efforts to broaden feminist and an-

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<sup>2</sup> Gloria T. Hull, et al. ed. (The Feminist Press, 1992).

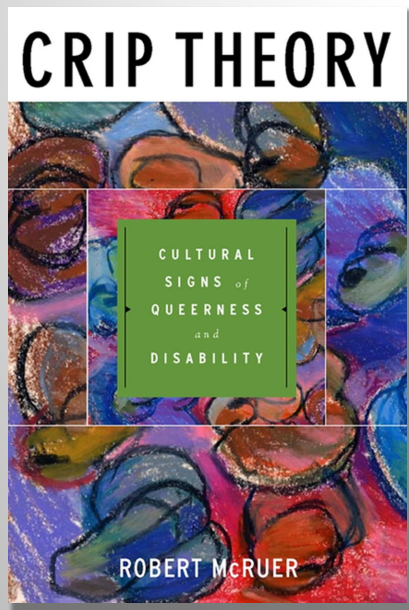
<sup>3</sup> For other work setting forth a Black feminist perspective on law, see July Seaman-Trent, *Black Women and the Constitution: Finding Our Place, Asserting Our Rights (Voices of Experience: New Directions in Gender Discourse)*, 24 *Mary Cr. L.J.* 1, 105-9 (1989); Regina Austin, *Sophisticated: forthcoming in Wm. Women's L.J.* (1989); Angela Harris, *Race and Exclusionism in Feminist Legal Theory* (unpublished manuscript on file with author); and Paulette M. Caldwell, *A Hair Piece* (unpublished manuscript on file with author).

<sup>4</sup> The most common linguistic manifestation of this analytical dilemma is represented in the conventional usage of the term "Blacks and women." Although it may be true that some people mean to include Black women in either "Blacks" or "women," the context in which the term is used actually suggests that often Black women are not considered. See, for example, Elizabeth Shtrom, *The Intersectional Women* 114-15 (Harvard Press, 1985) (discussing an article on Blacks and women in the military where "the racial identity of those identified as 'women' does not become explicit until reference is made to Black women, at which point it also becomes clear that the category of women excludes Black women"). It seems that if Black women were explicitly included, the preferred term would be either "Blacks and white women" or "Black men and all women."

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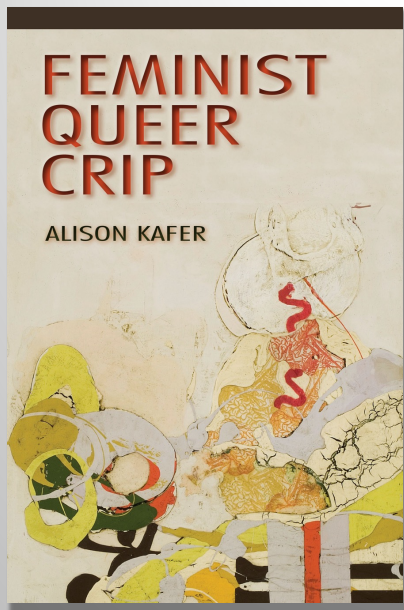
The need to account for multiple identity when considering how the [theatrical] world is constructed.

At times there will be analogies, but experiences and histories of ableism are qualitatively different than those of racism, as Deborah K. King discusses, and moments of "multiple jeopardy" involve different systems of discrimination with different internal structures. Adapting a line from Kimberlé Crenshaw, who coined the term intersectionality in 1989, Taft's Richard shows "the need to account for multiple identity when considering how the [theatrical] world is constructed."



What it means, for the purposes of solidarity, to come out as something you are—at least in some ways—not.

With a little imagination, Taft’s embodiment of Richard may show, to quote Robert McRuer, “what it means, for the purposes of solidarity, to come out as something you are—at least in some ways—not.”



**Such claims might be more available, more imaginable, to some people than others.**

To the extent that Taft, by performing Richard, was “claiming crip,” to use Alison Kafer’s phrase, his Richard III suggests that “such claims might be more available, more imaginable, to some people than others.”

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Coming to Claim Crip: Disidentification with/in Disability Studies

**Coming to Claim Crip: Disidentification with/in Disability Studies**

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**Keywords:**  
crip, identity, queer theory, race

**Abstract**  
*This creative-critical paper combines creative non-fiction and theory to trace one non-disabled scholar's personal experience with disability studies as a field and a community. Using disidentification and crip theory, this paper theorizes the personal, political, and academic utility of identifying with crip as a nondisabled, fat, black, queer, female academic. This crip identification then undergirds and informs the researcher's scholarship in and relationship to disability studies as a field. Specifically referencing the Society for Disability Studies dance as a potential space of cross-identification, this paper suggests that disidentification among/across/between minoritarian subjects allows for coalitional theory and politics between disability studies and other fields, particularly race/ethnic and queer/sexuality studies.*

As a young gender, race, and disability studies scholar, my entry into and relationship with/in this last field of study is not the story many expect when I tell them that I do disability studies. Unlike many people in the field, I am not (yet) a person with a disability and I am not (yet) the parent, guardian, sibling, or partner of a person with a disability. Ten to 15 years ago, being a nondisabled disability studies researcher with no immediate, personal experience with disability would have been relatively unusual. However, due to the growth of disability studies as an academic field since the 1990s, more people are encountering disability theory in the course of their academic careers

**[Disidentification] among /  
across / between minoritarian  
subjects can allow for  
coalitional theory and political  
solidarity.**

Taft's Richard shows what Sami Schalk calls disidentification, which  
“among/across/between minoritarian subjects can allow for coalitional theory and  
political solidarity.”



imagined dramatic world of the character and the real theatrical world of the actor.

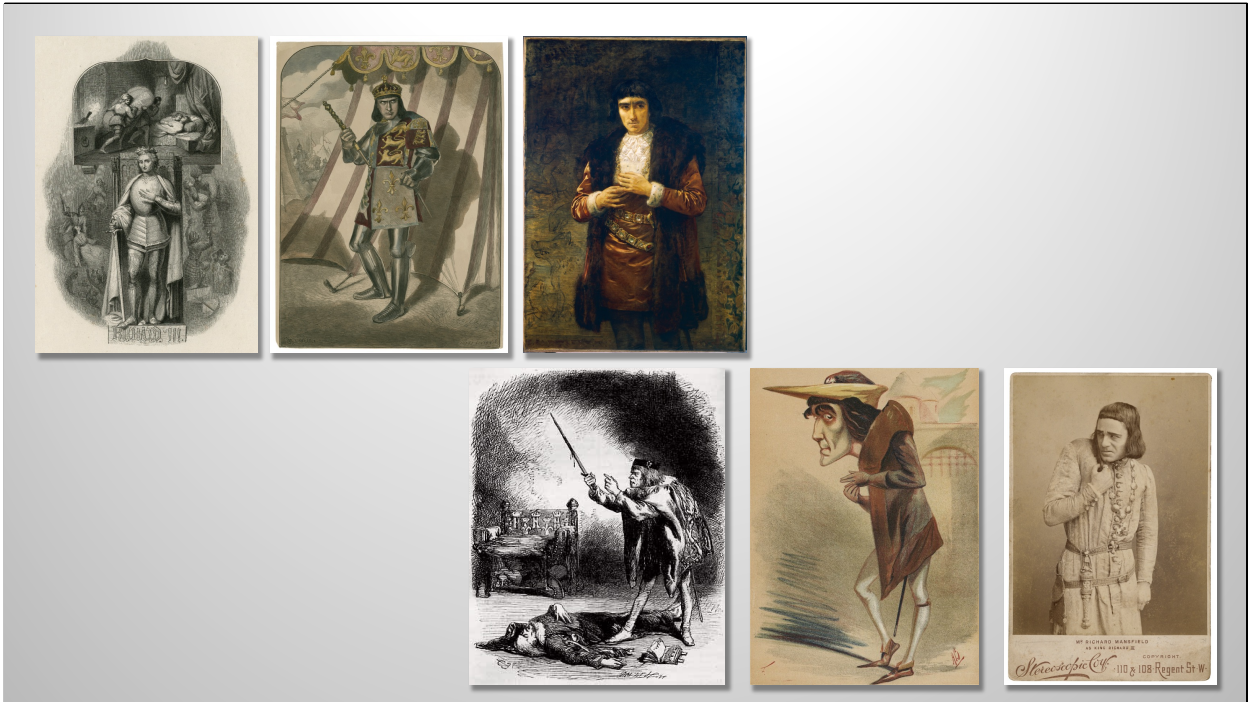
An able-bodied actor may bring social privilege to their performance of a disabled character. Audiences may read an actor's racialized or gendered body in relation to a character's disabled body. When actor and character are differently stigmatized, different formulations will occur. There may be an analogy suggested between two discrete traditions of stigma or two experiences of stigmatization. There may be multiple jeopardies suggested in which identities held by the actor are added into identities held by the character. The privileges and prejudices of the audience may

mirror or sharply depart from those of the characters on stage. Above all, it will be impossible to conduct single-issue analysis. Matrix analysis will be needed.



## 16. 19th c. Disability (4:32-34)

When we line up late-eighteenth- and nineteenth-century actors playing Richard in chronological order, we see the size of his hump decrease down to nothing over the first half of the century.



And then in the second half of the century, it grows back up.



portrait of Richard, as drawn by Shakespeare, and it was from this he should fashion his person; indeed, the very language required it" (254). The stigma levied at

Richard's body in Shakespeare's text makes no sense if Richard isn't disabled. Rees had an idea.



“Let me advise you to present him in the two pictures, one historical, the other Shakespeare.”

“How so?”

“You make him history from the first to the last. Why not make him Shakespeare up to the wooing of Lady Anne? He is here in all his deformity, for she says:

‘Blush, blush, thou lump of foul deformity.’

“These words will not apply to your Richard, but to that of Shakespeare’s. Still, the lady listens to his vows, and is won by a tongue that can wheedle the devil.”

“Well, what then?”

“Why, after this, follow history. Carry out the words of Richard; change your dress, and appear ‘a very proper man, as fashioned by a score of tailors.’”

“Let me advise you to present him in the two pictures, one historical, the other Shakespeare.”

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“Well, what then?”

“Why, after this, follow history. Carry out the words of

Richard; change your dress, and appear 'a very proper man, as fashioned by a score of tailors.'"



RICHARD ON THE COUCH

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## 17. Freud (4:34-35)

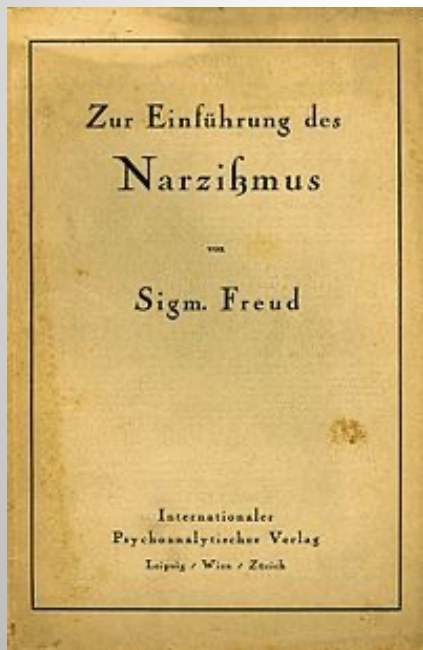
Sigmund Freud's "libido theory" posits a social economy of loving and being loved.



**Oh, she that might have intercepted thee,  
By strangling thee in her accursèd womb.**

Richard has instincts to love those who care for and protect him, especially his mother. But Richard's mother does not love him back: "Oh, she that might have intercepted thee, / By strangling thee in her accursèd womb."





... an ideal in himself by which he measures his actual ego.... What we call our conscience has the required characteristics.

Toward the end of his essay “On Narcissism,” Freud explains that a healthy person’s mind sets up “an ideal in himself by which he measures his actual ego.... What we call our conscience has the required characteristics” (75). Conscience comes from parents and culture. Since both have taught Richard to interpret his body figurally, however, each is a source of agony. The rise of Richard’s narcissism leads to the repression of his conscience.



**The final form of the work of repression in the obsessional neurosis is a sterile and never-ending struggle.**

According to Freud, “The final form of the work of repression in the obsessional neurosis is a sterile and never-ending struggle” (115), which seems to be what is happening in Richard’s final soliloquy.



## 18. "Richard loves Richard" (4:35-37)

Give me another horse: bind up my wounds.  
Have mercy, Jesu!--Soft! I did but dream.  
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!  
The lights burn blue. It is now dead midnight.  
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.  
What do I fear? myself? there's none else by:  
Richard loves Richard; that is, I am I.  
Is there a murderer here? No. Yes, I am:  
Then fly. What, from myself? Great reason why:  
Lest I revenge. What, myself upon myself?

Alack. I love myself. Wherefore? for any good  
That I myself have done unto myself?  
O, no! alas, I rather hate myself  
For hateful deeds committed by myself!  
I am a villain: yet I lie. I am not.  
Fool, of thyself speak well: fool, do not flatter.  
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,  
And every tongue brings in a several tale,  
And every tale condemns me for a villain.  
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree  
Murder, stem murder, in the direst degree;  
All several sins, all used in each degree,  
Throng to the bar, crying all, Guilty! guilty!  
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me;  
And if I die, no soul shall pity me:  
Nay, wherefore should they, since that I myself  
Find in myself no pity to myself?  
Methought the souls of all that I had murder'd  
Came to my tent; and every one did threat  
To-morrow's vengeance on the head of Richard.



The core of any modern encounter with Richard III is interpretation—not just in the context of other interpretations but in the context of interpretations of interpretations of interpretations of interpretations.





theatrical performance of an early-modern work of literature based on medieval history—gesturing to the refractions of Richard over time (just as Olivier appears three times in the photo: once in the chair, once in the mirror, and once on Dalí’s canvas). As the viewer of this photograph, we consider one artist (Dalí) considering another artist (Olivier) considering another artist (Shakespeare) considering Richard III and his body.



## POLITICAL RICHARDS

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There are two ways to politicize Richard. The first emphasizes his impairment, drawing a parallel to the body of some political figure to degrade him, whether it's Robert Cecil in Shakespeare's day or Nazi Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels, who was born with a clubfoot.

Such efforts are older, less prominent, and less interesting than the second model, in which the central feature of Shakespeare's character—disability—is ignored to draw an analogy between Shakespeare's play and modern politics.



We see this in Richard Eyre's Nazi-themed production starring Ian McKellen, made into a film in 1995.



But I, whose chest is weighed with a  
weather-proof heart,  
Shorn of a mug to lock the lusty female eye;  
I, born to the mother with the narrow pelvis,  
spat into this world so beaten, buckled and  
battered that even maids start at me.  
No lover I.

After the Iraq War, Sulayman Al-Bassam rewrote Richard III as an allegory for Saddam Hussein, excising and reimagining disability:

But I, whose chest is weighed with a weather-proof  
heart,  
Shorn of a mug to lock the lusty female eye;  
I, born to the mother with the narrow pelvis,  
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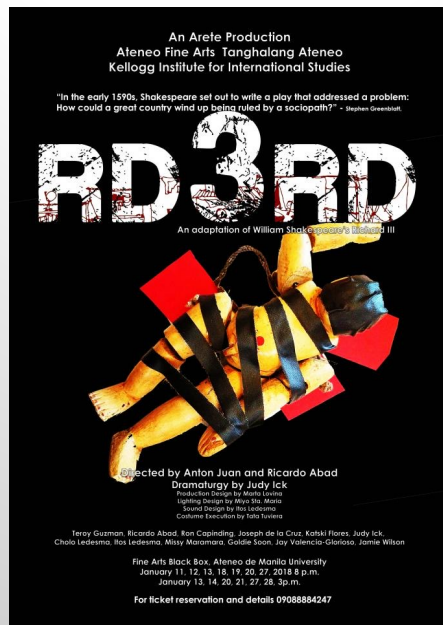
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Started in 2012, the gag Twitter account @Richard\_Third—filled with jokes about kingdoms for horses, happenings around Leicester, and years-long rivalries with @KngHnryVIII and @Wwm\_Shakespeare—only mentions “disability” in 4 of its 9,617 tweets.



Stephen Greenblatt’s 2016 op-ed for the New York Times, “Shakespeare Explains the 2016 Election,” ignored disability to draw an analogy to Donald Trump. On the one hand, both are craven tyrants. On the other, Greenblatt shifts from character criticism to cultural criticism, listing five ways in which Richard’s England, like America, is “a nation of enablers.”



Anton Juan and Ricardo Abad's play RD3RD (2018) erased Richard's disability to analogize him to the president of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte.





CRIPPING RICHARD

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## 20. Disability Theater (4:39-45)

Years before playing Richard, Antony Sher's Achilles tendon snapped during an accident on stage. He used arm crutches for six months, finding the experience frustrating. Those emotions rushed back when he went looking for Richard. He used his crutches for the performance, emphasizing Shakespeare's description of a "bottled spider."



Kingdom by the Disability Discrimination Act in 1995—to inaugurate a new age in the casting of Richard III.



The Czech star Jan Potměšil juxtaposed medieval costumes and sets with his modern wheelchair, swapped at times for a palanquin throne or a horse moved by an able-bodied actor under the saddle.



The focus for the spectator is not so much what the lines are saying, but how they are made to read on Dave's body.

In October 2001, a play called *Dave Wants to Play Richard III* ran in the basement of the Sainte-Justine Children's Hospital in Montreal, Quebec. With the patients upstairs in mind, audiences saw Dave Richer, an actor with cerebral palsy who uses a wheelchair, adapt Shakespeare's play into a reflection on the relationship between a disabled actor's body and the English language's most famous disabled character. In one account, "the focus for the spectator is not so much what the lines are saying, but how they are made to read on Dave's body."





Theater in New York, society's impulse not to stare at people with disabilities allowed Richard III to get away with things when people aren't looking.



Henry Holdens 2009 Richard III in New York gave us an exhausted employee in the workplace who grows increasingly frustrated with day-to-day discrimination.





Stephen Madigan performed Richard, also in a wheelchair, in an amateur 2015 production. Madigan wanted to inspire people with disabilities to achieve success. Perhaps it was not earth-shattering theater, but it was life-affirming for him and many in his audience.



The tone was indignant in a 2016 Richard III in Winnipeg starring Debbie Patterson—advertised as “a disability revenge play.”



Michael Patrick Thornton pinned his enemies in his walker, showing Richard's willingness to use disability to gain leverage over others. In the scene of his coronation, Thornton's Richard used a robotic exoskeleton suit that allowed Richard to stand and walk—physical ability representing Richard coming into power.



“I saw his skeleton on TV and it was like looking at an X-ray of my own spine,” said Australian actor Kate Mulvany. Mulvany said, alluding to cancer treatments she underwent in childhood. “I have the same condition as Richard, severe scoliosis. I know exactly the kind of pain he suffered.”



Mat Fraser saw himself as an ambassador for disabled actors, and press coverage simmered with his calculated anger.



Every single theatre in Britain should be able to answer yes to the question: *Have you employed one disabled actor in the last year?* If the answer to that question is no, then the theatre should hang its head in shame and know that it is a relic of the past.

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When Arthur Hughes took the role in 2022, the headline was “‘There’s a truth to it’: RSC Casts Disabled Actor as Richard III.” The motive behind the crippling of Richard III, however, is not simply that a disabled actor can connect with and portray Shakespeare’s disabled king better than an able-bodied actor. If we see this attitude as the aesthetic motivation behind the crippling of Richard, the political motivation has exerted more force: a disabled actor playing Richard III exemplifies the recent push for greater inclusion in theatrical casting.



The political motives behind the crippling of Richard III are most fully present not in performances of Shakespeare’s play but in adaptations, which then activate the aesthetic motives for crippling Richard by infusing the disability movement’s key sensibility: “nothing about us without us.”

In 2012, Gregg Mozgala—founder and artistic director of the Apothetae, a New York theater company exploring the disabled experience—commissioned Mike Lew to write an adaptation of Richard III set in an American high school. A proponent of Asian American theater, the able-

bodied Lew saw parallels between barriers to disability in the theater industry and racist exclusions he had experienced himself. A note at the start of their play—with its un-Google-able title, *Teenage Dick*—doesn't mince words: "Cast disabled actors for Richard and Buck. They exist and they are out there. Also cast diverse actors."



Phillip Zarrilli and first performed by Sara Beer in 2018, is “a one woman show about Richard III from a disability perspective, performed by someone with the same physicality as the historical Richard.” O’Reilly’s political motives are strategic, precise, and explicit: “As a counter to the tradition of ‘cripping up’ in Shakespeare’s Richard III, we offer the rights to this text solely to the atypical performer: those who identify as disabled.” Ultimately, *richard iii redux* reveals the inseparability of the political and aesthetic motives of crippling and the priority of the political: casting people with disabilities is necessary for

an accurate dramatic representation of the disabled experience.

**RICHARD'S GLORIOUS SUMMER**

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## 21. Richard's Glorious Summer (4:45-47)

Summer 2022 really was a “glorious summer” for Richard III, with four major productions appearing all at once.



The Lost King, a feature film starring Sally Hawkins, commemorated the tenth anniversary of the discovery of Richard III's skeleton on August 24, 2012, stirring controversy about the representation of academic work in mainstream media.

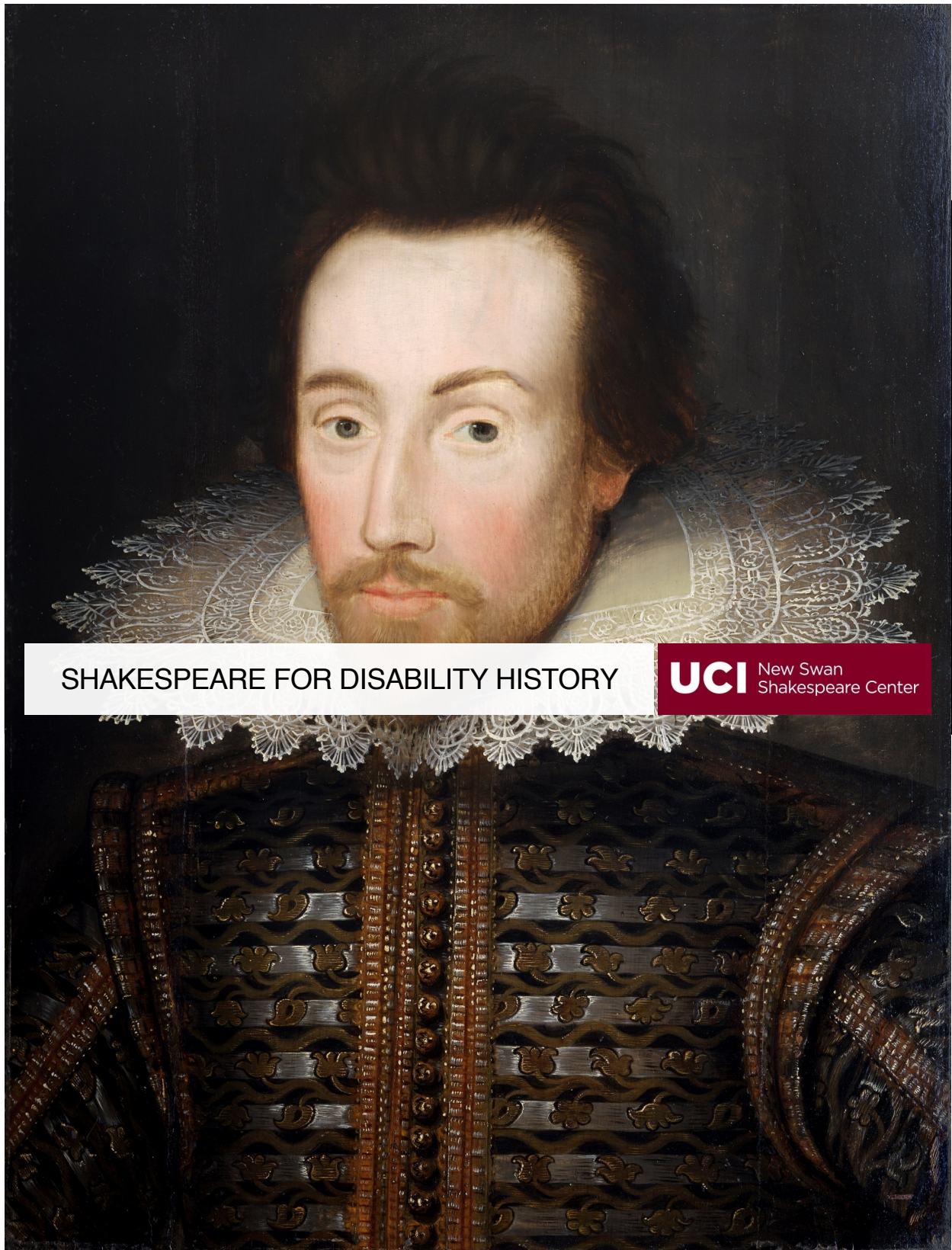


Danai Gurira was the first Black woman to play Richard III on a major stage. That casting has been celebrated for opening up ideas about intersectionality—how does a disabled character’s body read when seen via a Black actress’s body? The production has also been questioned for having an able-bodied actor “crip up” to play disabled,





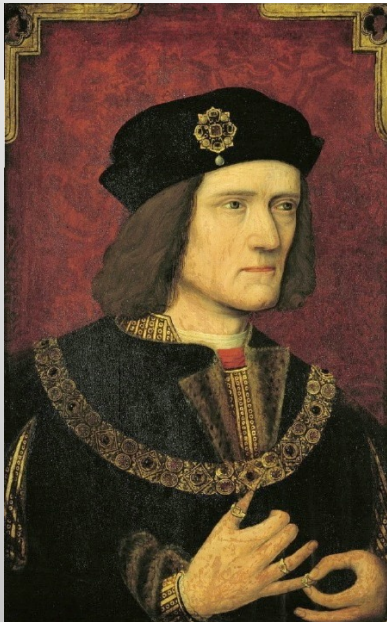
The Public instead featured disabled actors throughout the ensemble—Ali Stroker as Lady Anne, Monique Holt as the Duchess of York, and Gregg Mozgala as Henry Tudor, among others.



SHAKESPEARE FOR DISABILITY HISTORY

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extend to Falstaff, Ophelia, Hamlet, Lear, Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Othello, Caliban, and many others.



An interpretation of Richard's body is never just an interpretation of Richard's body. When we interpret Richard's disability, it interprets us in return. Shakespeare's plays, their sources, and receptions are an opportunity to see disability through time.

500 YEARS OF LOOKING FOR  
**RICHARD III**

*Jeffrey R. Wilson*

*Thomas Varga*

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