SHAKESPEARE / NOT SHAKESPEARE

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Edited by Christy Desmet,
Natalie Loper, Jim Casey

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Shakespeare / Not Shakespeare

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Dedicated to the memory of

Kevin Scott Crawford
(April 25, 1970–December 2, 2013)

… and when I shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night
And pay no worship to the garish sun.
Romeo and Juliet (3.2.21–25)

PERMISSIONS

Portions of Graham Holderness's "This is not Shakespeare!" were previously published as "The Seeds of Time," *Critical Survey* 25, no. 3 (2013): 88–113. Permission to republish granted by Graham Holderness.

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CONTENTS

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Graham Holderness as a writer and critic has published over 40 books, mostly on Shakespeare, and hundreds of chapters and articles of criticism, theory, and theology. He was one of the founders of British cultural materialism, and is acknowledged as a formative contributor to a number of branches of Shakespeare criticism and theory. He has published pioneering studies in Arabic adaptations of Shakespeare, culminating in *The Arab Shakespeare Trilogy* by Sulayman Al Bassam (Bloomsbury/Methuen Drama, 2014). Extending these methods, and published in 2014, are *Tales from Shakespeare: Creative Collisions* (Cambridge University Press, June 2014) and *Re-writing Jesus: Christ in*

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List of Figures

Introduction

Christy Desmet, Natalie Loper, and Jim Casey

In April and May of 2010, the Royal Shakespeare Company and Mudlark Productions presented a version of *Romeo and Juliet*, entitled *Such Tweet Sorrow*, as a series of improvised, real-time tweets on Twitter that relied on the actors' own words rather than Shakespeare's. Of the three supposedly representative comments on the story posted on the BBC's website, only Lara from Bournemouth praised the idea, claiming the Tweetspeare performance "breaks down this negative stereotype" of Shakespeare as "elitist" when "he was of the people and writing for the people"; Elizabeth from Chicago, in contrast, called the experiment "unacceptable" and a "travesty to the English language," while Nic from Manchester dismissed the performance as "ridiculous" and "the biggest load of rubbish ever," arguing that "This will make people who have never seen the play completely miss the actual excitement

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1

and beauty this play presents […] Shakespeare must be spinning in his grave."[1] Such a negative reaction to this radical new-media adaptation of "Shakespeare" reveals that, despite some critics' claims that we are in a "putative post-fidelity moment" (Lanier 27) in which the Shakespearean text is no longer considered sacred and no one obsesses over what is "really Shakespeare," many potential consumers of the Bard still reject "low" art adaptations or performances that dramatically alter or abandon Shakespeare's original. Richard Burt argues that issues of fidelity or questions of orismology rarely concern today's critics of Shakespeare and adaptation:

> Now the distinction between authentic and inauthentic Shakespeares is not even made consistently, much less policed. Few academic critics want to ask anymore how Shakespearean a given adaptation of a given play is because we all know there is no authentic Shakespeare, no "masterpiece" against which the adaptation might be evaluated and interpreted. (17)

Outside academia, however, the distinction between authentic and inauthentic Shakespeares is made and policed on a daily basis, with readers and viewers continually claiming that a performance or adaptation is or is not "really" Shakespeare. But how are such judgments made? What is the scale? And where is the line? Adaptations such as *Such Tweet Sorrow* are declared travesties, while Justin Kurzel's 2015 film version of *Macbeth* is praised by the *Telegraph*'s Robbie Collin as possibly "as good as Shakespeare on film gets," with "cosmically powerful performances from Michael Fassbender and Marion Cotillard." Yet, as the *Guardian*'s Peter Bradshaw notes, Kurtzel's version of the film itself indulges in a number of "interpretative flourish[es]" while freely "tinkering with the text." Thus, the film is lauded as an excellent version of "Shakespeare" even as it is acknowledged to be "not quite" Shakespeare.

This essay collection addresses the paradox that something—a play, a film, an object, a story—may not merely resemble its corollary in the Shakespeare canon, but perhaps more puzzling, at once "be" and "not be" Shakespeare. This phenomenon can be a matter of perception rather than authorial intention (audiences may detect Shakespeare where the author disclaims him or may have difficulty finding him where he is named); it may equally be a product of intertextual and intermedial relations, processes that work on the level of semiotics and material substrate, apart from more overt processes of influence and reception.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concept of artistic relations as rhizomes, a spreading, growing network that sprawls horizontally to defy hierarchies of origin and influence, is fundamental to this exploration, and many of the essays in the collection address the concept in exploring different examples from both high art and popular culture. Some essays examine the notion of artistic legitimacy by considering Shakespearean afterlives as acts of either creativity or what Michel de Certeau calls textual "poaching" (xii). Others discuss perceptions of Shakespeare in terms of cognitive gestalts, Shakespearean rabbit-ducks that fade in and out of recognition. Several essays explore the theoretical implications of Shakespearean adaptation, translation, and appropriation.

Finally, some focus on Shakespearean ontology as an interplay between accidental and substantive variations in textual criticism.

What is at stake in confronting the binary opposition between what is and what is "not" Shakespeare? In *Tales from Shakespeare*, Graham Holderness reminisces that "when I first read Shakespeare at school, the plays were firmly located within a set of contingent discourses marking out what was Shakespeare from what was not" (ix). These discourses were scholarly and historical ones. How Shakespeare was used in popular culture—from popular songs to advertisements for beer—was a whole different world, and the space between them seemed incapable of being bridged. Such is no longer the case if Holderness is correct that all of "the basic activities constituting Shakespeare studies—scholarly editing; historical contexualization and analysis; critical and theoretical interpretation; creative adaptation—exist in a continuum, and when compared, prove to be remarkably similar to one another" (xi). One thrust of this volume is to see the realignment of Shakespearean binaries along a continuum as a robust project of multiplication and amplification: imagined through the spreading roots of a rhizome or network, the replication of memes and thickening of intertexts, fecund but unruly processes of spreading out through space. A second recognition prompted by the essays collected here is a renewed appreciation for the operations of chance and accident. In *Tales from Shakespeare*, Holderness favors the metaphor of the Large Hadron Collider of particle physics, which breaks down atoms into smaller constituent units to release creative energy—and often, through that energy, produces new particles. The LHC creates in the act of destroying; accidental identifications of Shakespeare in artifacts previously accepted as "not Shakespeare" can be equally energizing. Writing about the concept of an "accident" in the early modern

period, Michael Witmore proposes that "accidents are some of the most luminous and enigmatic events" (1), recognized by no less an authority than Aristotle's *Poetics* as "particularly qualified to provoke wonder" (2). Creative energy, surprise, wonder—these are the effects of appropriation as collision between what is and is not Shakespeare. In this case, examining (and enjoying) the line between what is and what is not Shakespeare becomes a crucial aspect of Shakespeare studies in general.

ADAPTATION, APPROPRIATION, AND THEORY

As Christy Desmet and Sujata Iyengar's "Appropriation, Adaptation, or What You Will" argues, the theoretical premises that undergird our terminology are significant. Perhaps the most prominent current theory of Shakespearean adaptation is Douglas Lanier's Shakespearean rhizomatics, which co-opts Deleuze and Guattari's conceptual rhizomes and allows for multiple, non-hierarchical nodes of meaning and interpretation (rather than one centralized, hierarchical system of base and branches). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari propose the rhizome as an alternative to binary logic (associated with the hierarchical image of a tree and its roots) and circular, cyclic, or unified understanding (5–6). The authors' examples of rhizomes include bulbs and tubers, crabgrass, potatoes, rats, burrows, ants, and even Amsterdam; all of these are constantly moving and evolving, creating and breaking connections, allowing for multiplicity and possibility rather than static understanding.

Deleuze and Guattari provide six principles that characterize the rhizome. According to the "principles of connection and heterogeneity," a rhizome can connect to other things at any point; it "ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles" (7). The Shakespeare rhizome, then, can move across texts (intertexts), histories, and peoples, connecting his corpus to virtually anything. According to the "principle of multiplicity," a rhizome multiplies as it grows and contains "no points or positions […] such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. There are only lines" (8). Deleuze and Guattari describe rhizomes as planes, which "are flat, in the sense that they fill or occupy all of their dimensions: we will therefore speak *of a plane of consistency* of multiplicities, even though the dimensions of this 'plane' increase with the number

of connections that are made on it" (9). In this sense, Shakespeare is not a singular Author; rather, his plays, works, and biography exist on a plane with all of the stories and histories he adapts and all works that do and will adapt, appropriate, or refer to him. The works discussed in this volume occupy the *plane of consistency* called Shakespeare, as do digital and web editions of the plays, websites, blogs, and tweets, along with their hyperlinked and hashtagged notes, images, and connections.

This leads to Deleuze and Guattari's next point, the "principle of cartography and decalcomania" in which the authors explain the rhizome as a map:

> The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation. Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that it always has multiple entryways. (12)

The Shakespeare rhizome, then, contains infinite possibilities. The opposite of this is a tracing, which seeks to reproduce or reinterpret something. Deleuze and Guattari disparage tracings, but Shakespeare is both a rhizome and a tracing: many people treat him as a map, using his works to create new lines of flight; others, however, seek to reproduce him and to discover and maintain what is "really" Shakespeare. He can never truly be a rhizome in the way that Deleuze and Guattari describe it, because people will always return to the Shakespeare tree, the author trunk of the quartos and folios that we preserve in climate-controlled library vaults. Deleuze and Guattari assert that "Unlike the tree, the rhizome is not the object of reproduction: neither external reproduction as image-tree nor internal reproduction as tree-structure […] The rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots" (21). Shakespeare expands through both types of processes, but this collection seeks to explore and understand the latter.

For Shakespearean adaptation studies, approaching Shakespeare as a rhizome removes the Shakespearean text from its position of centralized privilege and situates both it and other rhizomatic adaptations as equally important nodes within the larger structure. Lanier suggests that

this method also liberates the scholar from questions of textual fidelity or authenticity and instead focuses the critical impulse on the ever-changing cultural processes that make up "Shakespeare":

> By emphasizing difference as essential to the cultural afterlife of "Shakespeare," and by refusing to treat the Shakespearean text as a regulative standard or mystified icon of value, a rhizomatic approach seeks to demonstrate how "Shakespeare" becomes ever-other-than-itself precisely through the varied particularities of its manifestations, which proliferate according to no preordained teleology. (31)

Rather than simply dismissing the works discussed in this collection as outside the boundaries of Shakespeare, these essays examine the liminality of the category "Shakespeare" itself, with works and performances and ideas constantly phasing in and out of the Shakespeare-plane—now Shakespeare, now "not Shakespeare," now "really Shakespeare" once again. This "ever-other-than-itself" nature of (Not) Shakespeare is perhaps the most troubling and liberating attribute of the Shakespeare rhizome. It is troubling for bardolaters who want to control, delimit, regulate, and memorialize Shakespeare, but for bardoclasts and bardocreators who want to celebrate Shakespeare's boundlessness, multiplicity, and unlimited potential, it is liberating.

Shakespeare/Not Shakespeare's discussion of these exponentially expanding Shakespeares brings to the foreground the relationship between medium and message. The volume discusses examples in mediated genres ranging from the novel to film, television, comics, manga, immersive theatre, and social media. Many of the essays examine appropriation across media, whether in the form of fictional drama within a novel, cross-media appropriations, or adaptations from one genre into another. They highlight the "medium rather than the source" (Fischlin 10) in order to make Shakespearean remediation an explicit topic of consideration. "Shakespeare" as a signifier emerges from these intermedial encounters, but as Daniel Fischlin writes, intermedial adaptation or appropriation "is not solely a function of technologies." Rather, it "reminds us that the genealogy of adaptations is often nebulous and spectrally intertextual, a web of meaning waiting to be made out of convergences and unthought relations that continue to be created and identified across multiple spaces and times" (25). In other words, we get to Shakespeare through "not Shakespeare." Concomitantly, the metaphors

through which the Shakespeare/Not Shakespeare paradox is formulated migrate from one realm of experience and knowledge to another. The meme moves from genetics to the Internet and then back to the medium of television. Accidents, once the subject of philosophy and natural science, are discovered in prose fiction and film. Textual metaphors from Gérard Genette help to explain the highly visual nature of comic art. Conceptually speaking, *Shakespeare/Not Shakespeare* itself proceeds rhizomatically.

Infinite Romeos and Juliets

Just under half of the essays in this collection directly engage with some adaptation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, so it may be worthwhile to examine the way the "Romeo and Juliet" rhizome holograms the Shakespearean rhizome (although each is propagated under different circumstances, by different means, and for different purposes) as a *plane of consistency* that is always-already constituted in the culture while simultaneously materializing in myriad new, hyperreal iterations. Well before they ever encounter the lovers on stage in Shakespeare's play (if they ever do), most people have heard of "Romeo" and "Juliet" through countless pop culture references and parodies. In recent years, for example, songs featuring one or both of the lovers' names in the title have been recorded by such varied artists as Hanson, LMNT, Corey Smith, Pat McGee, Emilie Autumn, Nick Tangorra, Sublime, Ronnie Dunn, The Killers, and Matt Nathanson (covering The Killers's song) and have been alluded to in such different songs as Push Play's "Midnight Romeo," We The Kings's "Check Yes, Juliet," Taylor Swift's "Love Story," Pop Evil's "Another Romeo and Juliet," Scary Kids Scaring Kids's "Star Crossed," and Bob Schneider's "40 Dogs (Like Romeo and Juliet)." Television shows such as *Raising Hope*, *Perception*, *Psych*, and *Fresh Off the Boat* have developed Romeo and Juliet-themed episodes and the CW network even produced a short-lived SF romantic drama in 2014 called *Star-Crossed* that referenced the play in the show's title, episode titles, and overall situation, while ABC's single-season of *Still Star-Crossed* (2016–17) explored the aftermath of the lovers' deaths. Postmodern comic adaptations, such as Stan Lee's *Romeo and Juliet: The War* (2011) or Anthony Del Col and Conor McCreery's *Kill Shakespeare* (begun in 2010) have radically refashioned the lovers and their story. And recent film adaptations have included such varied refigurings as the all-male

Private Romeo (2011), the animated *Gnomeo and Juliet* (2011), the Bollywood *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela* (2013), the zombie romance *Romeo & Juliet vs. The Living Dead* (2009), the other zombie romance *Warm Bodies* (2013, based on Isaac Marion's 2010 novel), and the Tamil romantic comedy *Romeo Juliet* (2015).

Of course, this is nothing new. The name "Romeo" probably marked a lover or sweetheart in the cultural consciousness well before Shakespeare was even born. In John Phillip's *The Commodye of Pacient & Meeke Grissill* (c1566), for example, a character sings, "A Romeo I will rest to thee, / In whome the fruites of Faith appeare" (E1ᵛ). Shakespeare's "original" is actually an adaptation/translation, having been preceded by Arthur Brooke's poem *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, which itself is a translation of Pierre Boaistuau's French cautionary tale (*Histoire* [...] *de deux amans dont l'un mourut de venin, l'autre de tristesse*), which is translated from Matteo Bandello's Italian novella *Giuletta e Romeo*, which borrows from Luigi da Porto's *Historia novellamente ritrovata di due nobili amanti* (the first work to use the names Romeo and Giulietta), which adapts Masuccio Salernitano's *Mariotto and Ganozza*, which probably owes debts to earlier stories of tragic love, such as Ovid's account of Pyramus and Thisbe in *The Metamorphoses*.

During his own lifetime, Shakespeare's version of the tale was incredibly popular; as Gary Taylor notes, "Shakespeare's most popular plays, in descending order, were apparently *1 Henry IV*, *Richard III*, *Pericles*, *Hamlet*, *Richard II*, and *Romeo and Juliet*" (18). Henry Porter's *Two Angry Women of Abingdon* (1598) and Thomas Dekker's *Blurt, Master Constable* (1607) both parodied *Romeo and Juliet* while Shakespeare still lived (Bly 52), and following his death, the lovers became even more popular. As Jill Levenson observes, "*Romeo and Juliet* has had a remarkable career on the stage since the Restoration [...] During the late eighteenth century *Romeo and Juliet* outran *Hamlet*; during the twentieth century only *Hamlet* has outrun *Romeo and Juliet*" (69–70). All this highlights the power of *Romeo and Juliet* to inspire new versions of the tale while admitting to the hyperreal nature of these newly star-crossed lovers. Douglas Brode claims that "*Romeo and Juliet* has been filmed more often than any other play, Shakespearean or otherwise" (42), but the most recent "straight" version of *Romeo & Juliet* (2013), which dramatically altered the language, posts only a 22 percent freshness rating on *RottenTomatoes.com*, lower than any of the more radical adaptations listed above. It may be that fans and critics react more negatively to

adaptations that align themselves more closely with the early modern text than they do to those that present themselves as engaged in a more playful "epistemic dialogue" with *Romeo and Juliet*.[2]

Categorizing Shakespeare/Not Shakespeare

The essays in *Shakespeare/Not Shakespeare* are organized into paired categories—not to re-establish binary opposition as a dominant mode of thinking, but in order to consider these Shakespearean appropriations in terms of what James O. Young, following Wittgenstein, calls "family resemblances" (15). Games, for example, come in all kinds of material and logical configurations. Some are played with a ball on a field, some on a computer. There is no essential characteristic that defines a game, and no game will exhibit all the qualities associated with the noun "game": "Something is a game if it possesses a sufficient number of a certain range of properties" (15). At the point when those qualities fail to cohere as a recognizable *gestalt*, however—when the game-as-rabbit instead comes into focus as a duck—then the activity may be recognized as "not game" rather than "game." In breaking these essays into categories, we are not trying to establish rigid taxonomies or inflexible divisions. Rather, we are putting concepts or metaphors from different theories and realms of experience into dialogue with one another.

Networks and Pastiches

The essays in this volume defy easy categorization, and many of them overlap, weaving in and out of methodologies and modes of considering what is and what is not Shakespeare. These intertwined associative networks mirror what Lanier describes as the "vast web of adaptations, allusions, and (re)productions that comprises the ever-changing cultural phenomenon we call 'Shakespeare'" (30). But Shakespearean networks extend well beyond the realm of adaptation/appropriation and even beyond the world of the Shakespeare scholar; today, several putatively non-Shakespearean human networks are themselves examining "Shakespearean" networks in novel and interesting ways. For example, Martin Grandjean, a researcher in contemporary history at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland, has developed network visualizations of character interactions in Shakespeare's tragedies; Seth Chandler, a Professor of Law at the University of Houston Law Center, has designed computer-generated character networks of several of Shakespeare's plays; Stephan

Thiel of Berlin's Studio NAND collective has created visualizations of linguistic and dramatic structures in Shakespeare's work by applying computational tools to data-sets from the WordHoard project at Northwestern University; and Eric Nalisnick, a Computer Science PhD candidate at the University of California, Irvine, and Henry Baird, a retired Professor of Computer Science and Engineering at Lehigh University, have modeled character-based "sentiment networks" of several of Shakespeare's plays.[3] Fredric Jameson believes that emerging cultural rhizomes have created Babel-like divisions in the world, with each separate group speaking "a curious private language of its own, each profession developing its private code or ideolect, and finally each individual coming to be a kind of linguistic island, separated from everyone else" (114). In the case of Shakespeare, however, the opposite seems to occur, with various disparate groups wanting to learn the *lingua Shakespeare* and join in the conversation.

Within the Shakespearean rhizome, these networked conversations often intersect in texts that Jameson would describe as *pastiches*. The term "pastiche" is itself derived first from a mixed pasta dish and then from the musical *pasticcio*, which is an opera or other musical piece comprising works of different composers who may or may not have worked together to create the arrangement; as an unauthorized (some would say inauthentic) adaptation/localization of an existing work, the pastiche is described by Jameson as a "blank parody" (114) of the original. The essays that begin our collection engage with various networks and pastiches in order to illuminate the sometimes simultaneous presence and absence of "Shakespeare" within their respective texts: the first combines literary analysis with creative writing and will probably be described by some as "not-criticism"; the second discusses the re-appearance of hauntological ghosts and examines the specter of the "not quite" Shakespeare; and the third explores the limits of the rhizomatic model and traces the genealogy of (not) Shakespeare through the anti-pastiche of *Romeo x Juliet*. Together, these three essays present an opening conversation that talks to (and sometimes against) Jameson's claim that we are now "condemned to seek the historical past through our own pop images and stereotypes about that past, which itself remains forever out of reach" (118). For Jameson, the pastiche is the only access-point left to unattainable pasts such as Shakespeare; he suggests that "in a world in which stylistic innovation is no longer possible, all that is left is to imitate dead styles, to speak through the masks and with the voices of the styles in the imaginary museum" (115). But these opening chapters show that we can

still speak with the dead, creatively and critically, through more than just lifeless imitation.

In "This Is Not Shakespeare!" (Chap. 2), Graham Holderness follows up on the argument made in *Tales from Shakespeare: Creative Collisions* (2014), arguing for the legitimacy of fiction as a form of Shakespearean interpretation. Through the examples of Anthony Burgess's historical novel *Nothing Like the Sun*, his unrealized Hollywood film of Shakespeare's life, and *Shakespeare*, his imaginary biography, Holderness argues that Burgess uses fiction to search out the inner truth of experience that lies hidden within the documentary facts of Shakespeare's life. The second half of the essay models this argument through an abbreviated version of Holderness's short story, "The Seeds of Time," which examines the presence of Shakespeare in the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the 2012 London Olympics via a fantasy of time travel. In a "mashup" of H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine* with the *Back to the Future* films, two time travelers go in search of Shakespeare but find only a history of reproductions: "The story is an exercise in mingling creativity with criticism, and in forcing interactions between Shakespeare and 'not Shakespeare.'"

Maurizio Calbi's "Chasing Shakespeare: The Impurity of the 'Not Quite' in Norry Niven's *From Above* (2013) and Abbas Kiarostami's *Where Is My Romeo* (2007)" (Chap. 3) situates the "not Shakespeare" of this volume within the theoretical problematics of the "post-textual." It re-elaborates the "post-textual" as the uncanny *re*-appearance of Shakespeare in the form of heterogeneous fragments that are made to cohabit with various textual and media environments. These media products include a "Shakespeare" that is not *quite* Shakespeare, an "entity" that becomes the site of unceasing transactions (for instance, between an "outside" and an "inside," between visibility and invisibility, between the "original" and its iteration) and multiple contaminations (through media, characters, and plays).

In "HypeRomeo & Juliet: Postmodern Adaptation and Shakespeare" (Chap. 4), Jim Casey combines Lanier's Shakespearean rhizomatics with Jean Baudrillard's hyperreality in order to explore more effectively the theoretical boundaries of "Shakespeare" and provide a new paradigm for understanding the Shakespearean landscape. Pairing the neutrally evaluative tool of rhizomatics with the theoretical concept of hyperreality in order to present a much more accurate relational map, Casey examines Fumitoshi Oizaki's anime *Romeo x Juliet* as a perfect example of both the iterative process of translation and the multiple voices of a "Shakespeare" that has become increasingly hyperreal.

Memes and Echoes

The 2015 essay collection *Shakespearean Echoes*, edited by Adam Hansen and Kevin J. Wetmore Jr., examines echoes of Shakespeare in film, television, novels, music, and other texts. In the book's introduction, the editors consider the literary history of echoes, including the Echo scene in John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, in which Antonio seeks solace following his wife's murder. In this play, echoes "convey morbid, unsettling criticism of both creators and listeners, ruining the integrity of words and the identities depending on them. Echoes give and take away; they enhance and diminish; they prolong and distort. Echoes validate and protect their originating sources but also negate and unsettle those sources. So acute is this unsettling and negation that they become a form of displacement" (7–8). This leads to larger questions about the relationship between literary echoes and their sources: "Does the echo succeed and overdub the source? Who *is* the source, then, and who the echo?" (8). As in the present collection, many of the book's essays engage with *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*, whose ideas and characters reverberate across centuries, cultures, and genres. Some of these echoes are obvious, revealing themselves through the names of characters or quotations from Shakespeare's plays; at other times, "the challenge is in bringing faint echoes into a clearer contrast. Some texts do not wear their Shakespeare on their sleeve, but carry him in inner pockets, if we may mix the metaphor […] Subtle Shakespearean presence can be difficult to detect, and one is forced to ask: Is it an echo of Shakespeare if no one hears it?" (Hansen and Wetmore 17). Hansen and Wetmore's collection, like ours, suggests that the answer is yes.

A growing body of evidence helps secure the space of Shakespeare in contemporary texts. The more often people detect echoes of Shakespeare in particular works, the more definitively these works become part of the Shakespeare canon, whether or not they are "really" Shakespeare. They may take us back to Shakespeare while also moving us further ahead, further away from the plays and poems—an echo. Or they can repeat themselves in different iterations—the Shakespearean meme. Like Internet memes, in which users take a stock image (such as Gene Wilder's Willy Wonka or the Grumpy Cat) and customize it with their own text, creators customize Shakespeare to suit their own purposes: inserting a storyline of star-crossed lovers or a hero with father issues, for instance. These memes and echoes are distinct from Shakespeare, but they also become part of "Shakespeare" as audiences identify them as such.

In "'I'll always consider myself Mechanical': Cyborg Juliette and the Shakespeare Apocalypse in Hugh Howey's *Silo Saga*" (Chap. 5), Charles Conaway explores the relationship between apocalypse, trauma, and memory, invoking Shakespeare by referring to a play-within-the-novel—*The Tragic Historye of Romeus and Juliett*—whose title suggests that in this post-apocalyptic world, "Shakespeare" has somehow become "(not) Shakespeare." In the fictional world of the novel, such a transformation results from the systematic loss and gradual recovery of cultural memory that occurs in the wake of traumatic events. At the same time, the novel dramatizes the coming of age of Juliette Nichols, who becomes "(not) Juliet(te)"—that is, neither Shakespeare's Juliet nor *The Tragic Historye*'s Juliette—when she responds to her own personal tragedies and traumatic events by attempting to fix things and prevent future catastrophes. She revises the script that previously defined her, becoming "(not) Juliet(te)"—a tool-wielding cyborg who selects her own profession and rewrites her own identity.

In "Guest Starring *Hamlet*: The Proliferation of the Shakespeare Meme on American Television" (Chap. 6), Kristin Denslow examines *Hamlet* memes in several popular American television shows—*Gossip Girl*, *Arrested Development*, and *Sons of Anarchy*—in order to demonstrate how the play *Hamlet* can move memetically, or in small, discrete, and sometimes difficult-to-identify units. The concept of the meme, invoked from its biological roots to its contemporary Internet usage, demonstrates that the meme, an agent of encoded repetition-with-a-difference, provides a metaphor for how adaptation sometimes works not as a conscious process but as an embedded element within the cultural (un)conscious. Shakespeare's "stickiness," argues Denslow, can be attributed to his worth in the cultural meme-pool, meaning that even texts that may appear initially to devalue the Bard's work may contribute to his ongoing relevance and continued citation.

Kirk Hendershott-Kraetzer's "Romeo Unbound" (Chap. 7) suggests that an understanding of a Shakespearean character is bound by one's knowledge of the facts of the text, so there may be little surprise afforded by Romeo's behaviors in performances of the playtext. Further, understandings of the character are bound by iconic beliefs about how textual facts are activated in performance: audiences already "know" Romeo. However, through the processes of poaching and recycling, one-hour scripted TV dramas can destabilize these assumptions. These TV Romeos echo the character we know but also offer less familiar conceptions of the