“OF WHOM PROUD ROME HATH BOASTED LONG”: INTERTEXTUAL CONVERSATIONS AND POPULAR HISTORY

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In their introduction to Textual Conversations, Zachary Lesser and Benedict S. Robinson cite Petrarch’s letters to ancient philosophers as manifestations of “humanist educational principles and philological techniques [that] provided readers with a complex set of tools – annotation, commonplacing, glossing, cross-referencing – for enabling conversation with texts” (1-2).

Petrarch, and the writers who followed him, actively engaged with the classical works they read by continuing what they perceived to be an ongoing conversation – in the manner of Plato and Cicero before them – and inviting their readers to do the same. Sometimes these engagements appear in the form of marginal notes (or simply manicules) in personal copies, while other evidence, as Jeffrey Todd Knight has argued, can be found in how individual texts were purchased and bound together at the reader’s discretion: “Models of literary production in the period were to a perhaps surprising degree predicated on the possibility that a text could be taken up and joined to something else” (Bound to Read 8). Developing alongside these evolving material texts are conversations between those texts, where authors not

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1 Character names will appear as originally printed, i.e. “Elstride” in the 1574 Mirror for Magistrates, “Elstred” in Thomas Lodge’s 1593 complaint, and “Estrild” in the 1595 play Locrine. Similarly, “Jane Shore” refers to the character in Thomas Heywood’s Edward IV, Parts I & 2 (1599) and thereafter; all earlier texts call her “Mistress Shore” or “Shore’s wife.” I have also silently modernized spellings.

2 Historically, a “manicule” is an annotation that takes the form of a special character rather than prose notes. Later typographical examples conventionally represent the manicule as a pointing finger directed at a portion of a larger text.
only allude to, but actively respond to, one another’s works on the assumption that their shared audiences will be able to follow the dialogue.

Katherine R. Larson’s 2011 study of conversation in the early modern period as “an embodied and gendered act that held the capacity to negotiate, manipulate, and transform social relationships” begins with an example from Act III of William Shakespeare’s Richard III (Early Modern Women 20). Larson argues that the elision between the “open guilt” of William Lord Hastings’s adulterous “conversation with Shore’s wife” and his alleged treason is made possible by the multiple associations of conversation, particularly conversation with women (RIII 3.5.30-31). In a play full of women conversing, grieving, and ultimately cursing their way to a pyrrhic victory over Richard III, it is perhaps less surprising that conversation with Shore’s wife proves fatal for Lord Hastings. The conversation I wish to draw attention to, however, lies behind Larson’s example. I should like to ask: who is Shore’s wife, who never appears onstage in Shakespeare’s play? And, perhaps more importantly, why does Shakespeare assume that his audience knows or cares about her? To whom is he responding when he alludes to her with an implied wink and nudge as he does here? The simple answer would be Thomas More, whose History of Richard III (written c. 1513; printed 1543) is a main source for Shakespeare’s play, but by the time Shakespeare was writing in the early 1590s, one could make the argument – as I have to my students – that Shore’s wife was the Marilyn Monroe of her time and therefore required no additional explanation. He could rely on a shared audience awareness of the character such that he barely needed to introduce her before using her, as Larson demonstrates, to illustrate the dangers of indiscreet speech.

The story of Shore’s wife is so pervasive in the sixteenth century that it even infiltrates arguments about legal precedent and religion. In his second, greatly expanded, 1570 edition of Actes and Monuments, Protestant polemicist John Foxe includes several direct addresses to his Catholic detractors, most notably Nicholas Harpsfield, formerly archdeacon of Canterbury under Queen Mary I. While imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1566, Harpsfield, under the pseudonym Alan Cope, had written Dialogi Sex Contra Summi Pontificatus, a thousand-page Latin refutation of all things Protestant, an entire section of which is devoted to Foxe. One of his many points of contention is Foxe’s account of early fifteenth-century Lollard martyrs in England; Foxe included Eleanor Cobham, Duchess of Gloucester, who had been convicted of witchcraft and sorcery in November 1441 and died in prison soon afterward (Foxe, Actes 1:III, 371). Against Cope’s assertion that sometimes a witchcraft
conviction is only a witchcraft conviction and not martyrdom in disguise, Foxe defends himself:

For (not to repeate the like forgeries against the Lord Cobham and syr Roger Acton. &c.) why may not this accusation of the Duches and Onley, be as false, as that in the tyme of K. Edward the fift, which was laid to the charge of the Quene, and Shores wyfe, by the Protectors, for inchaunting & bewitching of his withered arme? Which to be false, all the world doth know, and but a quarell made, onely to oppresse the life of the L. Hastinges, and the L. Standley. &c. (Foxe Actes 2:832)

This excerpt appears to be a routine claim for historical and legal precedent, but Foxe invokes an unusual authority. Richard III’s Titulus Regius of 1483 accuses the late king’s wife and mother-in-law of having used “sorcerie and wichecrafte” to lure him into marriage, and it is known that Edward IV had a mistress named Elizabeth Shore, but the bewitched and withered arm appears nowhere in the official record. Instead of historical or legal precedents, Foxe invokes popular manifestations of both Shore’s wife and also Richard III to appeal to his English-speaking, historically and culturally literate audience.

More’s History describes Shore’s wife as King Edward IV’s “merriest” concubine – the other two superlatives being “holiest” and “wiliest” (57). Upon his death and the usurpation of his younger brother Richard III, Shore was accused of treason and made to do penance in the streets of London for her sins. In More’s text, Richard accuses Shore of conspiring with the disgraced Queen Elizabeth to kill him with witchcraft, citing his withered arm as proof, but the staged unveiling fails to convince the other members of the royal council. More’s narrator wryly remarks:

For wel thei wist, that the quene was to wise to go aboute any such folye. 
And also if she would, yet wold she of all folke leste make Shoris wife of counsaile, whom of al women she most hated, as that concubine whom the king her husband had most loved (More 48).

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3 See: Parliament Rolls XV.15-16. Richard never pursued a criminal conviction against the queen, nor was that the main reason her children were disinherited. The crux of the argument was that Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville’s marriage was not held in a church nor performed by a priest. Elizabeth Lambert was married first to a London goldsmith named Shore and eventually, in spite of her ensuing disgrace, to Richard III’s solicitor Thomas Lynom, explicitly against the king’s advice.
4 For additional materials discussing Shore’s wife, see Brown, Helgerson, Steible, and Scott.
It is this scene that Foxe draws upon, including the exact phrasing – “but a quarell” – that More gives to the doomed Lord Hastings, whose disagreement with Richard’s witchcraft tale leads to his immediate execution.

Although Thomas More was well known as a Catholic martyr, an English text of his Richard III had been anonymously interpolated into Protestant chronicles beginning in 1543, embedded within an English translation of Polydore Vergil’s Anglica Historia. Edward Hall’s Vnion of the Two Noble & Illustre Houses of Lancastre & York (1548) is the first chronicle to distinguish the text of the History using marginal notes, and the first to acknowledge More’s authorship. It was only during the reign of the Catholic Mary I that several of More’s written debates with William Tyndale were printed, as well as the first English edition of his complete works.

In 1563, the same year as the first edition of Actes and Monuments, a syndicate of poets led by William Baldwin published the second edition of the popular Mirror for Magistrates, newly enlarged with additional verse tragedies to supplement those first published in 1559. One, specifically commissioned by Baldwin from Thomas Churchyard, was the tragedy of Mistress Shore. In this poem, Shore’s ghost appears before Churchyard and begs him to write down the “truthe” of her life as she tells it, which largely follows Thomas More’s account but also includes several digressions on the subject of arranged marriage, a monarch’s duty to his subjects, and the much-debated witchcraft (Myrrour sig. Z2v). Foxe’s invocation of her in 1570 therefore presupposes his audience’s knowledge – “all the world doth know” – of a sort of fifteenth-century urban legend that had since become enshrined in popular history.

The development of popular historical culture in England in the mid-to-late sixteenth century has garnered much scholarly interest over the past two decades, particularly the relationship between historical narratives and

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5 The textual history of More’s Richard III is too complicated to summarize here (see Sylvester’s introduction), but Foxe was at least familiar with Hall’s Vnion, which he mentions several times.

6 In the 1577 edition of Holinshed’s Chronicle, the chapter is titled “The historie of king Edward the fifth, and king Richard the third unfinished, written by Maister Thomas Moore then one of the under-Sheriffes of of London, about the yeare of our lorde 1513, according to a Copie of his owne hande: printed amoong his other workes,” thus calling attention to its use of an “authoritative” text, that of More’s nephew William Rastell in his 1557 edition of More’s collected works (STC 18076).
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contemporary political concerns. Part of this phenomenon can be traced to the emphasis in Protestant teachings on reading scripture – translating the Old and New Testaments into the vernacular not only gave the wider reading public the ability to read scripture for themselves, but these translations engendered a sense of responsibility to do so. Since the rise of Protestantism in England was closely tied to the development of an English national mythos (one specifically connected to the rise of the Tudor dynasty and culminating in Henry VIII’s break with Rome), historical exempla served two connected but distinct functions: teaching moral lessons, and reinforcing a joint Protestant-English mythology that justified the break with Rome and celebrated a largely imaginary imperial past. Foxe’s history was but one among many designed for this purpose, as was the Mirror for Magistrates, albeit indirectly. What concerns me here is how popular historical culture manifests itself in intertextual conversations that transcend both medium and genre. Shore’s wife is only the most prominent example within a category of historical women who inspire a series of intertextual conversations during the last decade of Elizabeth’s reign and early in the reign of James I. I focus here on the significance of such conversations to the development and proliferation of an early modern historical culture. What can they tell us about how early modern English readers viewed history and historical figures? What are the implications of references that cross between different mediums and genres that transcend what modern readers would view as fact and fiction? Ben Jonson’s famous quip from The Devil is an Ass that the character Fitzdotterel learned his history from playhouses might not be far from the truth.

1. Complaint and Conversation

One of the many strains of literary-historical intersection in the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods is historical complaint poetry, a subgenre of first-person narrative poems centered – with one exception – on female protagonists, all of which engage to varying degrees with the “uses and abuses of power,” both political and sexual (Dubrow, “A Mirror for Complaints” 401). They include, in roughly chronological order,

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7 See Patterson and Djordjevic for Holinshed’s Chronicles; Kewes, and Woolf for early modern historical culture in general, and Lucas for A Mirror for Magistrates.

8 See Thomas (especially 111-119); also King on Foxe’s Actes & Monuments.

9 The exception is Michael Drayton’s Peirs Gaveston, not included in Dubrow’s article since she focused specifically on female characters.
Samuel Daniel’s 1592 *The Complaint of Rosamond*, the 1593 reprinting of “Shore’s Wife” in *Churchyards Challenge*, Anthony Chute’s 1593 *Beawtie Dishonoured*, Thomas Lodge’s 1593 *Tragicall complaynt of Elstred*, William Shakespeare’s 1594 *Lucrece*, the 1594 *Willobie His Avisa*, attributed to Henry Willoughby, and two 1594 poems by Michael Drayton, *Peirs Gaveston* and *Matilda*. Although the complaint genre, and particularly female-voiced complaint, has been a mainstay in English poetry since the Anglo-Saxon period, the specific genre of *historical* complaint poetry picked up new resonances in the early modern period.\(^\text{10}\) Georgia Brown has argued:

The historical complaints not only contribute to Renaissance debates about the nature of history and the nature of Englishness, but also contribute to the reordering of literature in the late sixteenth century whereby new conceptions of literary function are developed, and private recreative experience becomes a legitimate focus for literature. (*Redefining Elizabethan Literature* 182)

Brown attributes the complaint trend in part to the popularity of George Turberville’s translation of Ovid’s *Heroides*, titled *Heroicall Epistles* and printed in 1567, but the *Mirror for Magistrates* and its offshoots were also influential in both the subject matter and style of these later Elizabethan poems.

The *Heroides* are a series of letters in verse, purportedly written by classical heroines such as Penelope, Helen of Sparta, and Medea that inspired a multitude of both then-contemporary and early modern responses and sequels that, as Brown contends, were concerned more with private emotion than with public duty or political maneuvering. Bart Van Es similarly argues that “Ovid’s speakers are the opposite of the self-condemning figures of the *Mirror* tradition: they speak instead of the wrongs they have suffered and argue for their own desires” (“Michael Drayton, Literary History, and Historians in Verse” 258). The *Mirror*, at least in its earlier editions, focused predominantly on the political and only in later iterations, and especially in tragedies featuring women, did personal desire begin to creep in as a factor in the speaker’s fall from grace.\(^\text{11}\) The *Mirror* speakers vary in their degrees of self-defense and self-condemnation, but they all speak with the knowledge of how their stories

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\(^{10}\) For a concise history of complaint, see Kerrigan’s introduction to *Motives of Woe*.

\(^{11}\) One exception is the tragedy of Richard II (1559 onward). See Frost, especially 189-92.
end, and their awareness that Ovid’s letter-writers, anchored in a specific narrative moment, are denied.

The Elizabethan historical complaints, like those in the early editions of the *Mirror*, build upon one another and initiate dialogues that suggest their readers’ familiarity with not simply the historical facts but also the literary backdrop for the complaints’ narrators. Compulsive editors like Daniel and Drayton published an endless array of “revised” and “augmented” editions of their poems, reflecting not only the “lack of fixity” and “potential for change” that Knight characterizes in early modern texts, but also further contributing to a conversation being carried out largely through the medium of ventriloquized women’s voices (6). Nor are these dialogues limited to complaint poetry; as Foxe’s example demonstrates, chroniclers too engage in these moments of pop culture referentiality, relying as much on their readers’ (and, in Foxe’s case, likely listeners’) knowledge of tropes and motifs as they do on their sources. As these characters and their interpretations of events proliferate, moreover, we begin to see them on stage in popular drama, thus moving beyond the printed text and reader to a wider and more diverse audience.

Although Daniel’s *Complaint of Rosamond* is generally regarded as the beginning of the brief craze for historical complaint poetry, the poem itself functions as part of a larger conversation that Daniel is having with himself. In 1591, twenty-seven of Daniel’s sonnets appeared in Thomas Newman’s pirated edition of Sir Philip Sidney’s *Astrophel and Stella* (STC 22356),1 Sydne’s sister Mary, Countess of Pembroke, had the edition suppressed, and in February 1592, Daniel registered with the Company of Stationers for his own authoritative edition of fifty sonnets, several incidental poems, and a historical complaint poem, all under the title of *Delia*. Ilona Bell has called attention to the major revisions Daniel made to the sonnets themselves, reshaping what she sees as a failed courtship in the pirated edition into a perfectly Petrarchan romance, with Delia – an anagram of *ideal*, as she points out – at its heart, and proposes *The Complaint of Rosamond* as the story’s logical conclusion (see *Elizabethan Women* 126-151). In short, rather than ending his authorized edition with “a female subject whose existence outside the poem enables her to affirm or to scorn his lyric suit,” Daniel gives the last word to Rosamund Clifford, a woman who famously said yes to King Henry II and, at least in the popular imagination, died for it (Bell 141). Daniel and his printer Simon Waterson also make specific choices in typography and

12 *Syr P.S.* sigs. I3v-L2v. Daniel’s poems appear alongside several other poets, some identified and some anonymous, in the second half of the volume, following *Astrophel and Stella* (sic. here and throughout).
mise-en-page that later serve as a sort of visual shorthand to denote texts participating in this particular conversation.

Within the poem, Rosamond approaches Daniel and proposes that he tell her story; her goal therefore is “not to resist or rewrite the male text in which she exists...but rather to place herself in a new male text,” thus rendering her more compliant than the elusive Delia (Guy-Bray, “Rosamond’s Complaint” 341). Like Shore’s wife before her, Rosamond shows little remorse for having engaged in an adulterous affair with a king, pointing instead to the questionable power dynamics that define such relationships. Indeed, the conversation between Churchyard and Daniel begins in 1592 when Daniel’s Rosamond sets up an implicit challenge motivated by her own vanity:

Shore’s wife is grac’d, and passes for a saint;  
Her legend justifies her foule attain’d;  
Her well-told tale did such compassion finde,  
That she is pass’d, and I am left behinde. (II.25-28)

Daniel’s task therefore is to write a tale for Rosamond that will surpass that of Shore’s wife. In this endeavor – if perhaps not in wooing Delia – he was apparently successful, based on Churchyard’s revision and republication of “Shore’s Wife” the following year.

Churchyard’s verse tragedy appears “much augmented with diverse newe aditions” in his collection Churchyards Challenge in 1593 (sig. S4r). In a new dedication, Churchyard defends himself against charges of fraud and as a demonstration offers a new and improved version of “Shore’s wife”:

I hope in as fine a forme as the first impression thereof, and [have] sette forth some more Tragedies and Tragicall discourses, no whit inferior as I trust to my first worke, and good Madame because Rosimond is so excellently sette forth (the actor whereof I honour) I have somewhat beautified my Shores wife, not in any kind of emulation, but to make the worlde knowe, my device in age is as ripe & reddie, as my disposition and knowledge was in youth. (sig. S4v)

“Shore’s wife” was Churchyard’s claim to fame and the resurgence of complaint poems into the market was the perfect opportunity to reintroduce the character without losing her in the multivocal framework of the Mirror for Magistrates. Churchyard also took advantage of the opportunity to posit her as a respondent to Daniel’s Rosamond. By calling attention to his “beautification” of the poem, he additionally signals his status as Daniel’s precursor who is, nonetheless, still a viable and active
contributor to the evolving literary marketplace. Instead of characterizing Shore’s looks as “seemely,” or of “sober grace,” as she was represented in the *Mirror*, Churchyard’s presentation of her “rare beautie bright / As summers day,” challenges Daniel directly:

The damask rose, or *Rosamond* the faire,
That Henry held, as deere as Jewells be,
Who was kept close in cage from open ayre
For beauties boast could scarce compare with me.

(*Myrrour* sig. Z2v; *Churchyard* sig. T2r)

These verbal echoes illustrate Churchyard’s awareness of both his past and potential future readers. Furthermore, it is clear that Churchyard’s readers – and, indeed, later writers – understood and disseminated the parallels he drew; the narrator of *Willobie His Avisa* (1594), for instance, dismisses both Rosamond and Shore’s wife in a single verse:

*Shores* wife a Princes secret friend
Faire *Rosomond*, a Kings delight:
Yet both have found a gasty end,
And fortunes friends, felt fortunes spight:
What greater joyes could fancie frame,
Yet now we see, their lasting shame. (sig. C2r)

Striking a less condemnatory tone, an anonymous Jacobean broadside ballad, *The wofull lamentation of Mistris Jane Shore* (printed c. 1620), opens as follows:

If Rosamond that was so faire
Had cause her sorowes to declare
Then let Jane Shore with sorow sing
That was beloved of a king. (II.1-4)\(^1\)

This ballad follows the plotline of Thomas Heywood’s c. 1599, two-part play, *Edward IV* that was based on More and Churchyard. Both play and ballad also include oblique references to a third poetic treatment of Shore’s wife by Anthony Chute registered by John Wolfe several months after *Churchyards Challenge* in the summer of 1593.

Thomas Lodge’s 1593 *Tragical complaynt of Elstred* has little in common with Daniel’s *Rosamond* on the surface; a closer analogue would

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\(^{13}\) There is no date on the extant copy of this ballad, nor is there a specified printer beyond “G.F.”
be John Higgins’s 1574 tragedy of Elstride in *The First Parte of the Mirour for Magistrates*, on which Lodge’s complaint is clearly based. Higgins’s *First Parte* is a partial misnomer, in that four editions of the *Mirror* predate his, but his subject matter precedes that of William Baldwin, the earlier editor, and the collection includes the paired tragedies of King Locrinus, the son of Britain’s mythological founder Brutus of Troy, and his mistress Elstride, the widow of the Scythian commander Humber. Lodge’s complaint, however, also echoes Daniel by having Elstred imprisoned within a “second Cretan wonder” just as Rosamond becomes a “Minotaure” within the labyrinth built by King Henry. In Higgins’s *Mirror* tragedy, Locrinus visits his mistress by “secrete wayes” and “vaults, by cunning Masons crafty feates” to hide her from his queen, but the description of the maze in Lodge’s complaint derives as much from Daniel as from this suggestion (4.192-93). Furthermore, when Elstred debuts in print in 1593, it is as a coda to the Delia-esque *Phillis*, a combination of sonnets, “Elegies, and amorous delights.” Lodge’s volume, printed by John Busby, reproduces Daniel’s typographical choices with striking fidelity. The form and meter of *Elstred* differ slightly from those of *Rosamond* but they evoke one another nonetheless in terms of presentation, and are therefore presumably aimed at the same subset of potential readers.

A nexus of intertextual conversation emerges in Michael Drayton’s 1594 complaint, *Matilda*. In the poem’s opening stanzas, Matilda remarks that she has waited “three hundred yeeres by all men over past,” and suspects that this is due to a popular preference for sinful women; she points out that “Shore’s Wife,” “Faire Rosamond,” and “famous Elstred” are all celebrated in modern verse and concludes (one imagines primly) that “Vice oft findes friendes, and vertue seldom any (sigs. B1r-B2r).” Lucrece, she allows, has been given due credit, “acting her passions on our stately stage,” but the result is that “she is remembered, forgetting me, / Yet I as fayre and chast as ere was she” (*Matilda* sig. B2r). Just as Daniel’s *Rosamond* references Churchyard to challenge her poet to do his best, Drayton aims to overcome most of his literary circle. Supporting Drayton’s endeavor, Matilda invokes the most powerful symbol of all, Queen Elizabeth I:

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14 Lodge, *Phillis* sig. K2r; Daniel, *Rosamond* (l.478). The story of the labyrinth appears as early as Ranulf Higden’s *Polychronicon* (c. 1350), and is a common fixture in sixteenth-century accounts of Henry II and Rosamund Clifford. It is not, however, mentioned in Giraldus Cambrensis or other contemporary sources.
And thou ô Beta, Soveraighe of his thought,
Englands Diana, let him thinke on thee,
By thy perfections let his Muse be taught,
And in his breast so deepe imprinted be,
That he may write of sacred Chastitie;
Though not like Collin in thy Britomart,
Yet loves asmuch, although he wants his arte. (sig. B2v)

Drayton alludes here to Spenser, with whom he had been carrying on a separate intertextual discourse by way of Colin Clout and, of course, The Faerie Queene. Matilda, in the meantime, extols the Virgin Queen as someone who ought to appreciate a poem about chastity before beginning her tale of virtue defended to the death. Despite their diametrically opposed attitudes toward adulterous relationships with kings, Matilda and Rosamond both desire above all things to be remembered – Rosamond for her beauty and emotional suffering and Matilda for beauty and virtue. In spite of her saintly trappings, therefore, Matilda is very much of this world, seeking acclaim for her martyrdom. While Rosamond’s tragedy is a private one, carried out within the bounds of King Henry’s fictitious labyrinth, King John’s desire for Matilda ignites a civil war and sees her father exiled at the king’s whim. Frustrated with her refusals, the king sends one of his henchmen to Matilda bearing an ultimatum: “I, only waite upon thy resolution, / To win thy love, or see thy execution” (sig. F3v). Matilda chooses death over dishonor – unlike Rosamond, who is forced to drink poison only after she becomes the king’s mistress – and Drayton calls upon the language of saints’ lives and martyrs when he describes her grieving father “With deepe devotion kneele him downe to pray: / Kissing the place whereas my body lay.” / Washing my Tombe with his repentant teares, / And, being wet, yet dried it with his Hayres” (sig. H3v). Unlike Rosamond, whose words are meant to move the unattainable Delia, or Shore’s wife, designed to further exalt Churchyard’s skill as a poet, as Brian Vickers observes, Matilda solicits an “ethical as well as emotional response” from the reader (“A Lover’s Complaint” 76).

Like Matilda, Shakespeare’s Lucrece seeks a similarly ethical response from her readers. But Lucrece is torn between her fear that her shame will become publicly known and her desire to proclaim her innocence to the world. By highlighting this dilemma, Lucrece diverges from her more straightforwardly fame-seeking predecessors Rosamond and Mistress Shore. Shakespeare also presents her story in the third person, eschewing the direct address of the other 1590s complaints and the Heroïdes but calling attention nonetheless to the genre’s Ovidian roots. Echoing Daniel’s praise of Churchyard’s “well-tun’d” tale of Mistress Shore,
Shakespeare uses the “well-tun’d warble” of Philomela – transformed in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* into a nightingale – as a metaphor for the night coming to an end, and Lucrece herself vows to join Philomel in her song: “For burthen-wise ile hum on TARQUIN still / While thou on TEREUS descants better skill” (II.1131; 1184-85). She finds Ovid insufficient, however, and when seeking “means to mourn some newer way,” she recalls a painting of “PRIAMS Troy, / Before which is drawn the power of Greece, / For HELENS rape the Cittie to destroy” (II.1417; 1419-20). Rather than ruminating on who has or has not been immortalized in poetry and for what reasons, Lucrece considers the larger question of art versus life. She “shapes her sorrow,” as Hamlet eventually does, to reflect Hecuba, the ultimate early modern example of feminine dolor (II.1509). The slipperiness of this scene, calling on multiple media at once – Lucrece’s recollection of a painting and her own extemporaneous recitation of the fall of Troy in Hecuba’s voice – leads to both the theatrical evocation in Drayton’s *Matilda* and the reference in the dedicatory poem to *Willobie His Avisa* where “Shake-speare, paints poor Lucrece rape” (sig. A4r).

*Avisa*, though clearly part of this conversation, is not strictly a complaint so much as a dialogue between the titular character and her various suitors. We discover in Hadrian Dorrell’s preface that even Avisa’s name is an acronym for “Amans. Vxor. Inuiolata. Semper. Amanda., that is in effect, A louing wife, that neuer violated her faith, is alwaies to be beloued” (sig.*3v). The poem itself refuses to confirm Avisa’s historical existence, praising her at once as an example of chastity alongside Penelope, Susanna, and Lucretia (specifically Shakespeare’s), while allowing that her name may be “a feigned name like unto Ovid’s Corinna” (sig.*3r). Nonetheless, she inspires a separate conversation of her own when Peter Colse remarks in his 1596 preface to *Penelope’s Complaint: or, A Mirrour for Wanton Minions* upon his choice of a shorter, less complex meter, claiming that “a vainglorious Avisa (seeking by slanduer of her superiors, to eternize her folly) is in the like verse,” and that he is therefore deliberately mimicking the poem attributed to Willoughby, which had since proven very popular (sig. A4v). The accretion of dedicatory poems and epistles that frame *Penelope’s Complaint* clearly echo *Willobie His Avisa*, much like Lodge’s *Phillis* is modeled on Daniel’s *Delia*. Although Drayton published both *Matilda* and *Peirs Gaveston* individually rather than coupled with his sonnet sequence *Idea*, concludes her complaint with “the Muses own delight / Idea, mirrour
of all patience,” thus indirectly linking the complaint to the sonnet sequence, if not within the same edition.\footnote{Matilda sig. H3v. Drayton was likely inspired by Daniel’s Rosamond, who invokes the absent Delia at the beginning and end of her complaint. Lodge, conversely, does not refer to Phillis in the Complaint of Elstred, nor do any of the sonnet sequences explicitly mention the complaints. A worthwhile counterexample to consider is the 75th sonnet in Sidney’s Astrophel and Stella, which praises King Edward IV for his willingness to “loose his Crowne rather than fail his Love” (l.14).}

Kelly Quinn convincingly places Drayton’s 1594 Peirs Gaueston Earle of Cornwall within the feminine complaint genre, while additionally acknowledging that Gaveston wields considerable political power and perhaps better resembles the men of the Mirror for Magistrates than the women whose complaints he stylistically echoes. Unlike Rosamond, who finds herself imprisoned in a labyrinth, and Shore, whose influence in the Mirror is eroded in Churchyard’s revisions, Gaveston is granted titles, lands, and wealth, and represents a legitimate political threat. It is telling that Drayton’s allusions here are to Cleopatra, the “famous brave Egyptian Queene” whose luxurious feasts inspire those that Gaveston and King Edward enjoy, rather than to the ultimately powerless women of complaint (Gaueston sig. H1r). As Quinn demonstrates, Gaveston’s transgression isn’t his homoerotic relationship with Edward (which is quite explicit in the poem), but the power dynamic within that relationship: “whereas the female plainants are constrained by fixed gender roles and cannot assail the dominance of a male king, Gaveston demonstrates the powerful mobility of a male lover” (450). Further contributing to the anxiety generated by Gaveston’s ambiguous gender is his indeterminate relationship with witchcraft – like Mistress Shore, he is accused of enchanting the king, and he later deploys a similar volley of curses against his enemies. Whatever one feels about the relationship between Peirs Gaveston and the female complaint genre, it clearly belongs in a stylistic sense and in the sense that it continues the conversations begun in the other complaints, albeit along a rather different line. Shore’s wife might claim to “bare the sword, though [Edward] did weare the Crowne,” but Gaveston’s combination of sexual attractiveness and military prowess turns a double entendre into a legitimate threat (Churchyard sig. T4v).

In 1594, perhaps in response to the spate of complaints published by Drayton, Shakespeare, Lodge, Willoughby and others, Daniel completed another edition of the Delia-Rosamond composite text with a prefatory sonnet addressed to Mary Sidney Herbert and a new work appended: The Tragedy of Cleopatra, a closet drama focused on the final hours of the
Egyptian queen. Daniel’s tragedy drew on two French plays – Estienne Jodelle’s 1574 *Cleopâtre captive* and Robert Garnier’s 1578 *Marc-Antoine* – as well as the English translation of Garnier by none other than the volume’s dedicatee, the Countess of Pembroke, thus conflating her role as both patroness and poet-dramatist. This edition of the complaint also includes 161 additional lines, primarily dialogue for Rosamond, in her confrontation with the queen and subsequent forced suicide. Here, she further bewails not only the manner of her death, which condemns her to hell, but also that “thy tale untold / Must heere in secrete silence buried lie” (sig. G5v). Although there is no explicit reference to any other text embedded in these additional lines, Daniel’s revisions and additions represent his continued participation in the conversation he started and, more interestingly, invite responses not just from male poets speaking through female voices, but also from women (namely the Countess of Pembroke) acting as patrons of such poems.

Partly owing to changing trends in typography and formatting amongst the printers in London, a different kind of intertextual conversation can be found on the printed page itself. Daniel and Spenser have been credited with starting the vogue for Roman and italic type specifically for the printing of sonnet sequences. Although texts were printed in Roman type prior to 1590, black-letter remained the dominant typeface in England, used in Bible editions, royal proclamations, historical chronicles, didactic poetry, and broadside ballads alike. All of the early editions of *A Mirror for Magistrates* were printed primarily in black-letter, as were the Marian editions of the *Mirror*’s predecessor, John Lydgate’s *Fall of Princes*, both printed in 1554. Mark Bland argues that the choices made by Daniel and his printer Simon Waterson in his authorized edition of *Delia* – choices in typography and formatting that became the shorthand for the historical complaint genre – emerged at least in part as a reaction to the carelessness with which Thomas Newman compiled his pirated edition of *Astrophel and Stella* (*The Appearance of the Text* 114-18). *Delia* restricts itself to one sonnet per page – thus allowing for copious blank space and the inclusion of Continental flourishes such as arabesques – and we find nearly identical formatting choices in Lodge’s *Phillis*, printed by John Busby, as well as in the attached complaints of Rosamond and Elstred.

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16 Daniel’s *Cleopatra* also underwent a series of revisions, most notably in 1607, when he substantially reworked the entire tragedy so it more closely followed Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra*.

17 See Bland 91-154.
THE COMPLAINT
OF ROSAMOND.

OVT from the horror of Infernal deepes,
My poore afflicted ghost comes here to plain it,
Attended with my flame that never sleepe.
The spot where—with my kinde and youth did itaine it.
My body found a grave where to containe it.
A sheete could hide my face, but not my sin,
For Fame findes neuer tombe t’inclose it in.

And which is worse, my soule is now denied,
Her transport to the sweet Elision rest,
The ioisful bliss for ghosts repurified,
The euer-springing Gardens of the blest:
Caron denies me waftage with the rest.
   And saies, my soule can neuer passe the Riuers,
   Till Louers sighes on earth shall it deliver.

So shall I neuer passe, for how should I
Procure this sacrifice amongst the liuing?
Time hath long since wore out the memorie
Both of my life, and liues must depriuing,
Sorrow for me is dead for aye renewing.
   ROSAMOND hath little left her burre name,
   And that disgrac’d, for time hath wrong’d the same.

B b  No
Fig. 1. Daniel, *Complaint of Rosamond* (1592, STC 6243.2, sig. 11r); Lodge, *Complaint of Elstred* (1593, STC 16662, sig. H4r). With permission of the Huntington Library.
Although this is only one of the two editions of *Delia* printed by Simon Waterson for Daniel in 1592 (STC 6243.3 includes a separate title page for *The Complaint of Rosamond* that STC 6243.2 does not), it is clear that John Busby is following Waterson’s typographical choices and deliberately placing Lodge’s poems within the same visual framework as Daniel’s.

Thomas Churchyard alone adheres to the black-letter type and formatting of the *Mirror for Magistrates*. Although there were some incursions of roman type, notably in tables of contents, prefaces, and titles, even the additional volumes penned by John Higgins (1574) and Thomas Blenerhasset (1575) followed the visual cues set forth by William Baldwin in the early editions. *Churchyards Challenge*, similarly, is printed entirely in black-letter and is therefore set apart visually from the rest of the 1590s complaints and fits more closely with the multi-genre compilations of George Gascoigne and Thomas Nashe. Whether the decision rested with Churchyard’s printer, John Wolfe, or Churchyard himself had a hand in it, we cannot know for certain. Wolfe, as Bland and others have illustrated, brought both materials and training from Italy back to London and is responsible for not only *Churchyards Challenge*, but also for Chute’s *Beawtie Dishonoured*, which he prints entirely in italic type, a peculiar typographical choice that may reflect an attempt to differentiate two poems on the same subject.

The stand-alone poems of Drayton (*Matilda* and *Piers Gaveston*), Chute (*Beawtie Dishonoured*), and Shakespeare (*Lucrece*) also adopt a similar *mise-en-page* to Daniel, with three to four verses per page, depending on their length, and judicious use of blank space. The title pages for these poems are also strikingly similar, featuring large roman type for the text and the copious use of arabesques and blank space, often with the printer’s device foregrounded at the centre of the page, and no author attribution.

Although this conversation takes a different, non-textual form, it is clear that these printers and poets are aiming at the same audience, and that visual shorthand is serving a similar purpose to the references, both explicit and implicit, within the poems themselves.

Drayton revisits Rosamond, Matilda, and Shore’s wife in *Englands Heroicall Epistles*, his 1597 reimagining of Ovid’s *Heroïdes* peopled with notable men and women from English history whose title is a clear echo of Turberville’s translation thirty years earlier. The temporal shift from a retrospective narration spoken beyond the grave into the framework of Ovidian *epyllia* allows Drayton to re-imagine each woman at a climactic point in her story and rely on his audience’s knowledge of what happens afterward to heighten the dramatic tension. The conversations continue:
BEA W T I E

dishonoured vvritten

UNDER THE TITLE OF

SHORES WIFE.

Chacun se plaît ou il se trouve mieux.

LONDON

Imprinted by John Wolfe.

1593.

G.STEEVENS
LUCRECE.

LONDON.
Printed by Richard Field, for John Harrison, and are
to be sold at the signe of the white Greyhound
in Paules Church-yard. 1594.
Fig. 2. Title pages from Chute, Beawtie Dishonoured (STC 5262); Shakespeare, Lucrece (STC 22345); Drayton, Peirs Gaueston (STC 7214). With permission of the Huntington Library (Image 4) and the Houghton Library, Harvard University (Images 3&5).
within the *Heroicall Epistles*; the characters speak not only to one another but also to Drayton’s contemporaries. In Rosamond’s epistle, for instance, she uses a portrait of Lucrece to emphasize the gravity of her own shame just as Lucrece turns to Hecuba and Troy in Shakespeare’s poem. Drayton explicitly echoes Shakespeare’s conceit of red and white from Collatine’s initial praise of his wife in describing the painting. ¹⁸ Later, in her epistle to King John, Matilda takes the link one step further and sets herself up as in chaste opposition to Rosamond, who should have “taken our Cloister, left the wanton Court” rather than give in to the king’s advances and thus become “subject to all tongues” (*Heroicall Epistles* sig. C7v). These references proliferate between the different epistles, thus illustrating the accretion of both historical and literary tropes. *Englands Heroicall Epistles* appeared in new editions almost annually during the late 1590s, with five new epistles (two new pairs and one epistle on its own) in 1598 and the final epistle in 1599, bringing the total to twenty-four in twelve pairs, ranging in subject matter from the twelfth to the early sixteenth century.

The 1559 edition of *A Mirror for Magistrates* included no tragedies narrated by women, and the 1563 edition featured only that of Shore’s wife. ¹⁹ There were a number of intertextual conversations that linked the verse tragedies, sometimes but not always occurring in the prose links between them. In the case of the 1590s complaint trend and its poetic and theatrical ramifications, it is striking to note that, unlike the many and varied subjects on which the men’s conversations turned, other women in complaint poetry are almost always being held up as a point of comparison for physical beauty. To some extent, therefore, the network of referentiality functioning in these complaints relies on a sense of interchangeability amongst the women being portrayed. Rosamond may claim that her situation is unique and worth a reader’s attention, but alluding to Shore’s wife, or Matilda remarking upon Lucrece, merely emphasizes the parallels between the women’s situations and the literary tropes that frame them. These parallels are not at all surprising in light of how women are generally portrayed in early modern texts, particularly those falling within the exemplary tradition. Encapsulated in Giovanni Boccaccio’s c. 1367 *De mulieribus claris* (*On Famous Women*) and its

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¹⁸ *Heroicall Epistles* sigs. B2v-B3r; Shakespeare, *Lucrece*, l.62, 101-35. In the epistle from Queen Isabel to Richard II, Drayton alludes to an episode that only appears in Daniel’s *Civil Wars* (1595), which is not a complaint but nonetheless illustrates the proliferation of these tropes and motifs outside the genre.

¹⁹ For women in the early editions of the *Mirror for Magistrates*, see Corrigan “‘But Smythes Must Speake’”; also Finn, *The Last Plantagenet Consorts*, 105-24, as well as the studies of Mistress Shore cited in n. 3.
countless offshoots, the literary framing and embedding of women – particularly politically active women – into narratives is a commonplace in medieval and early modern historiography. The particular subgenre of complaint addressed here falls within the exemplary tradition, and although all of the protagonists are largely depoliticized (most noticeably in the revisions Churchyard made to “Shore’s wife” for its re-publication), the poems’ preoccupation with their own representational strategies make them useful for looking at the process of historiography, especially when dealing with depictions of women.

2. Conversations between Page and Stage

A slightly different conversation begins at the height of the historical complaint’s popularity in the middle years of the 1590s, and this conversation once again begins – as so many seemingly do – with Shore’s wife. In 1594, a year after both Churchyards Challenge and Beawtie Dishonoured emerged from John Wolfe’s printshop, Thomas Creede printed one of the plays recently performed by the Queen’s Men, the anonymous The True Tragedie of Richard the Third. The most prominent female character in the cast is none other than Mistress Shore, who is included on the title page as “an example for all wicked women.” Shore appears onstage in several brief scenes, but what little power she has – including to “feather her neast” in case of mischance – evaporates when the king dies (sig. B2r; TLN 225). In the midst of his usurpation, Richard of Gloucester takes the time to plan out her demise in detail:

And now that Shores wifes goods be confiscate, goe from me to the Bishop of London, and see that she receive her open penance, let her be turnd out of prison, but so bare as a wretch that worthily hath deserved that plague...none shall releeve her nor pittie her, and privie spies set in everie corner of the Citie, that they may take notice of them that releues her: for as her beginning was most famous above all, so will I have her end most infamous above all. (sig. E3r; TLN 1007-16)

Richard here both confirms his own villainy (by condemning Shore to penury and starvation) and collapses a century of literary mythmaking into the several hours’ traffic of the play by calling attention to Shore’s famous beginning and infamous end; both of which were well known to an Elizabethan audience as they would not have been to witnesses of Shore’s penance in 1483. In the scene immediately following, a former suitor named Lodowick happens upon the penniless Shore, but instead of aiding her, he vows to “shun her company and get me to my chamber, and there
set downe in heroicall verse, the shameful end of a Kings Concubin,” thus completing Shore’s journey from fame to infamy to immortality (sig. E2r; TLN 1076-78).

A month later, Creede registered *The Lamentable Tragedie of Locrine* with the Stationer’s Company, another anonymous Queen’s Men tragedy potentially aimed at those familiar with the *Mirror for Magistrates*, albeit Higgins’s version rather than William Baldwin’s.20 Rife with vengeful ghosts and a cameo by the Greek goddess of mischief and folly, Atē, *Locrine* also features frequent Latin asides and other trappings of both Senecan tragedy and its popular Elizabethan counterpart, revenge tragedy. One of the clearest verbal echoes can be found in Act 4, scene 1, where Locrine woos Estrild after having defeated her husband in battle – where Thomas Lodge restricted himself to describing his Elstred’s plea for mercy, the anonymous playwright gives her and Locrine a fast-paced stichomythic exchange similar to those found in Thomas Kyd’s c. 1587 *Spanish Tragedy* and Shakespeare’s first history tetralogy (c. 1590-95). The labyrinth of Lodge’s poem is further transformed into a luxurious underground chamber, “the walls whereof, garnish with diamonds / ...Lighten the room with artificial day” (sig. H3v; TLN 1707-09). The biggest divergence, however, is in the ending, where Locrine and Estrild, a veritable Romeo and Juliet of Troy-novant, stab themselves onstage and partly cheat Locrine’s wrathful wife Gwendoline of the vengeance she successfully prosecutes in the poems. By the rules of Senecan drama, however, Gwendoline’s choice to deny Estrild burial rites is sufficient punishment.

These diversions exemplify the generic shift between complaint and revenge tragedy – while the climax of Lodge’s complaint is the confrontation between Elstred and the queen over the dead Locrine, the play excises that confrontation altogether and focuses instead on the political wrangling between Locrine and his father-in-law Corineus. Gwendoline nonetheless gets the last word, promising her faithless husband “a stately tombe, / Close by his aged father Brutus bones” while in the same speech consigning the arguably less culpable Estrild “without the shallow vaunts, / Without the honour due unto the dead, / Because she was the author of this warre” (sig. K4v; TLN 2258-59; 2262-64). Confirming Gwendoline’s assessment, Atē’s epilogue blames “a woman” as “the only cause / That civil discord was then stirred up,” but proceeds to

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20 *Locrine*’s authorship, like that of the *True Tragedy*, is an open question. The reference to “W.S.” on the title page suggests that Shakespeare may have had a hand in the play’s revisions, and both Robert Greene and Thomas Lodge have been proposed as possible authors, but none have been conclusively identified.
praise the queen who “for eight and thirty years the scepter swayed / In quiet peace and sweet felicity” and threaten anyone who seeks to harm Elizabeth with her sword (sig. K4v; TLN 2274-75; 2277-78). These two female characters, Gwendoline and Atê, therefore, serve the same purpose in Locrine as Master Lodowick in The True Tragedie of Richard III, confirming that Estrild, like Shore’s wife, is duly punished with an ending fit for a king’s concubine.

This representation of Shore’s wife, at least, changes dramatically in Thomas Heywood’s two parts of Edward IV (1599), where her fall from grace completely overshadows the comic antics of the titular king. It is also in this play that she is first christened “Jane Shore,” the name by which she is best known today. Although Heywood is clearly taking Churchyard, Chute, and the anonymous author of the True Tragedy as models, his departures from all three, particularly the heroic characterization of Shore’s husband Matthew, suggest the audience’s interest in the lives and tribulations of middle-class characters at the mercy of usurping royal tyrants, rather than in the rise and fall of the tyrants themselves.

Heywood also diverges from the complaint tradition by portraying Jane’s marriage as a happy one and highlighting her unwillingness to commit adultery. Her reputation and the audience’s foreknowledge of her fate demand that she become the king’s mistress – as Maria Margaret Scott suggests, like Heywood’s 1603 heroine Mistress Frankford in A Woman Killed With Kindness, “Jane Shore’s infidelity is predetermined” – but Heywood’s choice to retain Matthew Shore as an active character and to conclude the second part of the play by having husband and wife die in one another’s arms, contrary to the historical record, allows him to present a resilient and positive image of middle-class marriage in the midst of, and in spite of, tyranny and chaos (Re-presenting “Jane” Shore 60).

Heywood’s 1608 The Rape of Lucrece, as Paulina Kewes has argued, similarly offers “a virtually unqualified endorsement of active resistance to tyranny, whether royal, patrician, or decemviral” (Roman History and Early Stuart Drama 245). In spite of its title, the assault upon Lucrece comprises only three or four scenes within a much larger narrative depicting the fall of the Tarquin kings and the rise of the Roman republic under Junius Brutus along with the patently Jacobean antics of a variety of clowns, rapscallions, and women of ill repute. Heywood’s depiction of Lucrece herself is clearly based on Shakespeare’s, although he shortchanges the emotional journey of both her and Tarquin in order to focus on his

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21 For Edward IV and middle-class concerns, see Howard, Stage and Social Struggle; also Corrigan “The Merry Tanner, the Mayor’s Feast, and the King’s Mistress.”
overarching political theme. Ironically, although Shakespeare’s Lucrece—or, in an eerie foreshadowing of Othello, “she that was thy LUCRECE”—demands of the assembled lords “Be sodainely revenged upon my Foe” and later specifies that they “let the Traytor die,” the poem’s ambiguous ending, and indeed historical fact, speak against it (II.1733-34; 1737). It is instead Heywood’s play that alters the historical record to give Lucrece the full extent of her revenge and, according to Kewes, “[realize] the political and historical potential of the ‘Argument’ prefixed to Shakespeare’s poem” (253). This Argument, presented in a block of italic prose on the facing page from the first two verses of the poem, includes the larger political consequences of Lucrece’s death even though the poem itself ends just moments afterward with a vague reference to Sextus Tarquin’s exile. Heywood’s play concludes with an ahistorical single combat in which Junius Brutus kills Sextus Tarquin and takes over leadership of the new, republican Rome. Brutus and his fellows have spent much of the play feigning antic dispositions—exemplified in Valerius, the “merrie Lord amongst the Roman peeres,” who swears to communicate only in song and whose songs increase in number in each subsequent edition. Valerius adds a layer of low comedy that is uncomfortable to witness alongside the more serious material of Lucrece and Tarquin, yet his antics simultaneously appeal to the audience’s familiarity with popular songs and jokes (Rape of Lucrece sig. A1r). They replace the values of “civic engagement and high seriousness about matters of state,” as Nora Corrigan suggests, with “a more expansive and egalitarian form of male bonding through communal performance and appreciation of song” (“Song, Political Resistance, and Masculinity” 3). This egalitarian ideal, however, completely excludes Lucrece, whose complaints have no place in a communal and masculine setting.

I wish to conclude with what I feel is the most striking juxtaposition of these complaining ladies, which occurs in the midst of Aemilia Lanyer’s 1611 Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum. In a section designated with a marginal note “An invective against outward beuty vnaccompanied with virtue,” Lanyer invokes Helen of Troy, Lucrece, Cleopatra, Rosamond, and Matilda to illustrate the dangers of excessive beauty: “For greatest perills do attend the faire, / When men do seeke, attempt, plot and devise, / How they may overthrow the chastest Dame” (sig. A4r-v). Although all of these women come to their unfortunate ends by different paths, all begin with their beauty catching the eye of a powerful man. The only woman Lanyer explicitly praises is Matilda, who “by heavenly grace...had such true direction, / To die with Honour, not to live in Shame” (sig. A4v). Lanyer assigns her patroness, the Dowager Duchess of Cumberland, this same
grace while her interlaced references suggest that this imagined community of (almost exclusively) women would have been familiar with the discourse to which she was contributing.

The conversations that occur within and between these texts do so on both the level of the characters (Matilda addressing Drayton as though Rosamond et al had real relationships with contemporary writers) and that of the writers conversing amongst themselves, most often praising one another even as the women trade barbs. These exchanges are similar to the group engagement at work in the earlier editions of the *Mirror for Magistrates*, where the poets analyze the verse tragedies in the prose links between them while the characters question one another’s historical accuracy within the tragedies themselves. Since the complaints of the 1590s were individually published rather than gathered by a single editor, as Baldwin gathered the *Mirror* contributions, it makes sense that early cross-referencing would be minimal. If *Matilda* and *Salve Deus* are any indication, however, they suggest readers were eager to make thematic connections between these various historical figures. Furthermore, the typographical conventions at work illustrate the interest printers and, to a lesser extent, authors, had in appealing to shared audiences through easily identifiable visual as well as textual tropes.

Shakespeare’s *Richard III*, with which I opened this essay, does not include Mistress Shore as a speaking part or even a silent part, but features several vague references to her that modern productions usually cut to avoid confusing their audience. An early modern audience, however, would not have been at all confused by Richard’s leering jokes about Mistress Shore’s anatomy even though this paragon of beauty never appears. They would, as Larson argues, have understood the accrual of metaphorical connotations associated with Shore’s wife and, consequently, why Richard’s invocation of her dooms Hastings. What I hope to have illustrated through this discussion of intertextual conversations is the proliferation of motifs and tropes from popular history (or, to borrow a term from the growing field of fan studies, popular history *fanon*) across multiple genres and multiple media from the early 1590s into the Jacobean period. Much like certain ubiquitous popular fictions today such as the *Harry Potter* series, *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *The Avengers* comics and films, or the *Game of Thrones* series, to name a few, even if you have not read or seen these works, you’ve read or heard about them, and that is more than enough to start a conversation.

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22 See Lucas, especially 18-66.
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