

JUSTIN SHAW

‘Rub Him About the Temples’: *Othello*, Disability, and the Failures of Care

Focusing on how race and disability deconstruct and expose the facades of friendship, this article explores the ethical differences in models of care in Shakespeare’s Othello. It examines the networks of care surrounding the character of Othello — particularly his interactions with Cassio — and demonstrates how, by revealing the many pretensions and failures of relationship, the play develops a theory and praxis for ethical caring that attends to the complexity of a black and disabled character. The play, this essay argues, finally presents a solution to the problem of care in the symbolic and material web of the ancestral handkerchief.

Eric Garner was murdered in Staten Island, New York on 17 July 2014 after being relentlessly harassed and subsequently choked on Bay Street by Daniel Pantaleo and eight other New York Police Department officers at the scene. At least eleven times during Pantaleo’s chokehold, Garner cried out his now infamous last words, ‘I can’t breathe!’, and then lost consciousness. The officers released their grip and for seven minutes left the unconscious man handcuffed on the sidewalk, watching him die, waiting for the ambulance to arrive. The medics who came refused to place Garner in a stretcher and neglected to administer oxygen or other emergency aid for the brutally attacked man. One hour later, at Richmond University Medical Center, Garner was officially pronounced dead. Despite his repeated requests before the chokehold for the police to stop harassing him, and repeated pleas during the chokehold for breath, Garner remained both hyper-visible and inaudible to the officers and medical care team. Caught in what Anna Mollow outlines as the interstices of ableism, racism, and fatphobia, Garner was deemed by the commanding officer a perpetrator, or, in other words, fantasized as a clearly visible threat worthy of intense surveillance, discipline, and perhaps even

Justin Shaw (justin.shaw@emory.edu) is a PhD candidate in the department of English at Emory University and the James T. Laney Dissertation Fellow in the James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference.

elimination.¹ At the same time, Garner's cries for breath, which disclosed not only his asthma and aspects of heart disease but also basic human needs for space and respiration, remained fatally inaudible throughout the duration of the chokehold and its aftermath.² With brief attention to Garner's asthma, Leon J. Hilton asserts that the harassment of black disabled people points to the 'persistent scientific, social, and cultural pathologization of the black psyche as preternaturally irrational, unruly, criminal, and insane'.³

In exploring the performances of care on the early modern English stage, this essay begins with the case of Eric Garner as a modern and factual analogue to the representational violence in Shakespeare's *Othello*. Such a comparison showcases the often deadly outcomes that portend when the possibilities for ethical care fail in both the imagined worlds of the early modern theatre and the realities of our own time. Care, as Eva Feder Kittay reminds us, is 'a labor, an attitude, and a virtue'.⁴ In other words, care is work, care is a mode of thought and being, and, when done properly, care is a fundamental good. In this essay, I build on Kittay's notion of a feminist care ethic to explore the ways that the Jacobean stage works to develop, and fails to develop, a vision of ethical care through race and disability that is, rather than individualized labour, attitude, and virtue, expressed through a network of relationships and interdependency. Such a vision of ethical care disrupts hierarchical paradigms through what Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha identifies as care webs or horizontal collectives that, through internal reciprocity, offer sites of liberation for disabled people of colour.⁵ Following work by Jay Dolmage and Allison P. Hobgood, this essay uses *Othello* to examine ways of performing care 'from and through' disability, particularly mental disability, through care webs that are inclusive and sensitive to the social constructions of racial difference.⁶

Care shapes the ways that characters in the play relate to one another and the ways that we as readers relate to a character like Othello. An ethical care that begins with and is oriented through race and disability is, I suggest, crucial to engaging a critically honest identification with not just a black Othello, as Ian Smith desires, but a disabled Othello, too.⁷ In the pioneering collection on early modern disability studies, Hobgood directs our critical attention to the work of epilepsy in *Julius Caesar* as a portrayal of a 'disability that thwarts this ableist demand for control over the non-standard body'.⁸ Extending this reading to Othello requires reckoning with the interdependency between the representation of this particular disability and the complexities of this character's racialized identity. But my reading also requires attention to Othello that resists re-centring him as the hyper-visible centrepiece of curiosity and anti-black harassment while

resisting the impulse to homogenize and elide all types of difference, since doing so would render the needs and desires of the titular Moor of Venice invisible, inaudible, and unnecessary.

This essay examines the relationship between Othello and Michael Cassio in *Othello* to develop a critical framework for addressing the forms of structural violence that arise when care fails at the nexus of anti-black racism and disability on the early modern English stage. Though positioned as a potential caregiver in the play, Cassio's authority, agency, and reputation depend upon his complicity in the ableist and anti-black systems that pervade Shakespeare's second imagining of Venice. I argue that attempts to procure, police, and anatomize Othello — who is described as both a 'wheeling stranger' and an 'erring barbarian' — must be understood in concert with social realities of surveillance as a technology of power active in the coalescence in the early modern world of both race and disability as categories of difference (1.1.134, 1.3.356).⁹ To compare with my earlier example, Cassio is not like Daniel Pantaleo, but rather like the potential care web of medical personnel and Kizzy Adoni, the commanding officer on the scene who watched Eric Garner die.¹⁰ I further argue that such performances of care that privilege medical expertise over relational experience are at best misguided, and at worst violent, ensuring the persistent policing of neurologically divergent modes of personhood. This essay locates a nexus for critical attention to black studies and disability studies in early modern drama, and offers ethical care as a corrective to the surveillance and policing of black disabled subjects. Toward this end, I consider how surveillance and observation enforce racial difference and are antithetical to ethical care in the webs around Othello. Operating at the junction of racial blackness and mental disability, Othello's construction as, for example, 'erring' and 'wheeling' relates to constructions of 'barbarian' and 'stranger' and becomes adulterated as a dangerously unstable and medicalized category of bodily movement. This essay moreover shows how dimensions of the experience of mental disability on Shakespeare's stage become embodied, sensory, and especially haptic through the work and web of the handkerchief.

Knowledge and Theatre

Ethical care begins with Othello but also figures as a web of interconnectedness and responsibility between all 'caring' figures in the play. Following Othello's death and famous 'speak of me as I am' speech at the end of the play, those remaining begin to remember Othello differently than he had hoped. Lodovico and Gratiano interject with shock and disgust after he stabs himself, and

once Othello is dead, Cassio eulogizes: 'This I did fear, but thought he had no weapon, / For he was great of heart' (5.2.359–60). Cassio's words come across as a compassionate and remorseful reflection on his eloquent superior. If, however, we focus on the first clause, 'This I did fear', and question the antecedent of 'this' and 'fear', the eulogy also serves as an example of Cassio's continual and insincere commitment to caring from and through Othello. Ernest Honigmann's gloss of the line suggests that the term 'great of heart' denotes 'great-heartedness', 'great-spirited', or 'proud'.¹¹ But the sixteenth-century physician Timothie Bright associated heaviness of the heart and abundance of passion in the brain with the disease of melancholy, which many medical writers at the time described as having a disabling effect on the brain, liver, heart, and emotional capacity.¹² While Othello may certainly be magnanimous, if we consider both the material and cultural constructions of Othello's heart, the word 'great' complicates what we assume to know about his body and mind here at the end and prompts a review of Othello's plight and relationships across the entire play.

Cassio is an agent of Venetian social power, though his relation to that power, and to Othello, functions differently than does Iago's. Cassio is not a native Venetian but rather comes from Florence, another significant Italian city-state mythologized as a centre of Renaissance art and learning. Early in the play, a jealous Iago plays on Florentine stereotypes and slanders Cassio as 'a great arithmetician', a romancer who 'never set a squadron in the field', one who doesn't understand 'the division of a battle' unless proposed by 'the bookish theoretic', 'mere prattle without practice' in soldiership, a 'counter-caster' or accountant, a man of the desk (1.1.17–32). As Patricia Parker observes, these descriptions illustrate Cassio's precarious position as an outsider in the context of aging forms of logic and philosophy.¹³ Because his 'bookish theoretic' affords him a more efficient way of moving throughout the play's landscape, his relationship to ethical care must be understood through his commitments to arithmetical logic and efficiency — and, as we shall see, medical knowledge of the body learned from books rather than experience — or to a different extent, expediency. At the end of the play, then, one must reassess 'honest' Iago's slander, since Cassio reveals himself to be a person of thought rather than one of action. He is more concerned with what he knows about Othello and about maintaining social distinctions of order and rank than he is about developing an ethic of care through this knowledge.

Like Iago, Cassio is Othello's professional subordinate and thus exercises domination through disciplining practices that employ not just a white gaze but also an ableist one that requires and enforces the constructed otherness of the Moor. These terms shape every interaction between the two as the lieutenant observes

Othello from a perceived state of social equation or subordination. In his first appearance on stage, Cassio comes to interrupt Brabantio's interrogation, having been sent by the Venetian Duke as a sort of messenger to collect Othello (1.2.34–49). While the anti-black disciplining of Othello by Roderigo, Iago, and Brabantio is more personal in nature, Cassio's arrival is not benign. It introduces a different facet of social control over Othello's presence. Because he is charged with locating and producing Othello's body for the senate, and later in act 2 with keeping watch over Othello's marriage bed in Cyprus, Cassio's role as 'friend' — a term that Othello invokes — and potential caregiver is inherently compromised by his political obligations (2.3.1–10). He invests more in maintaining socio-cultural hierarchies and proximity to Venetian political power than in caring for Othello's well-being.

By contributing the term 'friend' to describe his relationship, Othello considers the Florentine, who might too be deemed a 'stranger' (1.1.134), as a part of the care web that would also include Desdemona and Brabantio. But the play stages the progressive denigration and fragility of this collective when the behaviours of the caregivers neglect an ethic of caring from and through disability and practice the self-centredness of 'caring for'. Cassio's relation to Othello realizes itself in the disciplining that manifests when ableism and anti-blackness guide relationships of care and codependency. When he begs for Othello's forgiveness, through the safety of Desdemona, he fears that Othello will forget his 'love and service' (3.3.18). While he seems sincere in his desperation, this pretension of care is self-serving as he expects continued reciprocation for services rendered and increased social capital for tending to and procuring the black body. Moreover, he fears a loss of access and proximity to Othello, and, at his expense, to the network of social power. Ethical care, in contrast, would be more concerned with operating relationally in a web that emphasizes mutual well-being rather than the reputation of the self. While he fails in ethical care, Cassio succeeds in his initial charge to survey and procure Othello for the Venetian authorities and is, by the end of the play, rewarded.

Further demonstrating what may seem like care, Cassio briefly appears in the pivotal moment of the play when Othello experiences what Iago characterizes as his second 'fit' in two days. The racial terms used earlier in the play by Roderigo and Iago to describe Othello — 'wheeling stranger' and 'erring barbarian' — here become medicalized through a drama of anatomy. Where 'wheeling' and 'erring' could generally mean nomadic and mistaken respectively, I suggest that these terms evolve in the play to signal the phenomenon known in the early modern period, and discussed by Carol Thomas Neely, as distraction, a form of mental

disability generally analogous to modern autism but more specifically connected here to melancholy and madness.¹⁴ After Iago has allowed Othello to eavesdrop on Cassio using his handkerchief to woo the courtesan Bianca, Othello 'falls into a trance'. Cassio enters the scene and is quickly ushered off stage by Iago when the Moor begins to wake (4.1.35–59). In five short lines, Iago provides three different diagnoses for Othello's condition — epilepsy, lethargy, and the potential for madness — and Cassio suggests that Iago 'rub him about the temples' (4.1.50–5, 53). Iago's ambiguity is either clumsy and amateurish or an intentional misdirection. Cassio's recommendation invokes debates around treatments for epilepsy, lethargy, madness, and melancholy in the period; rubbing the face with herbal oils was a common remedy.¹⁵ But the French surgeon Ambroise Paré disagrees and claims that the best treatment for such 'inveterate diseases of the brain' is to ingest errhines through the nostrils to induce sneezing and increase the flow of mucus.¹⁶ Cassio's focus on the temples obscures this medical advice as much as Iago obscures his diagnosis, proving the limitations of the medical model in an effective and ethical relationship of care.

This brief act of emergency-response care, where the lieutenant leaves as quickly as he arrives, can be read as a performance of anatomy theatre where the formally educated Cassio plays the role of consulting physician overseeing and dictating the more physical contact work of the barber-surgeon Iago. Popularized by Andreas Vesalius in the sixteenth century, these theatrical spaces, such as one designed in 1604 by Inigo Jones for barbers and surgeons in London, employed stadium-like seating where medical students and physicians would crowd in to literally oversee the dissections of the bodies of executed criminals on an anatomical table. These viewings would often accompany lectures given by the physicians on the philosophical aspects of the practice demonstrated in the theatre.¹⁷ The surgeon's more hands-on role was quite distinct from the consulting role of the physician in medicine. Barber-surgeons, like Paré, were more often found treating wounded soldiers on the battlefield or cutting hair in shops than overseeing anatomical classrooms.¹⁸ If we recall Iago's earlier statement, Cassio's ignorance of 'division in battle' takes on new meaning here. By offering some rudimentary but abstract expertise in this metaphorical anatomizing, Cassio employs his liberal and logical education to employ Iago to 'fix' Othello and return him to social expectations, not unlike his procurement of Othello for the senate in the first act. While Iago persists as the leading anatomist of the play, a point that Michael Neill has emphasized, this scene gives Cassio that responsibility as he, discomforted by witnessing someone else's pain, willfully relinquishes to Iago what could otherwise have been an ethical relationship of care.¹⁹ Instead of embracing such

discomfort, he retreats and protects himself from both the sight of and proximity to the experience of pain. Even more insidious in this notion of an anatomy theatre is that Othello is neither a criminal nor a cadaver on the surgeon's table. Rather, in the context of the play, he is a living person who continues to be socially produced and violently objectified under the gaze of psychological dissection and racial pathologizing in early modern Venice. The actors and audience members surrounding Shakespeare's stage become either witnesses or accomplices to this anatomizing act as we subsequently fail in our responsibilities to care.

Coupled with Iago's interpretation, Cassio's surveillance of Othello's trance disables and racializes him. Part of the purpose of the anatomy theatre is to reveal what is unknown — something with which this play is obsessed. Between Iago's misleading characterizations of Othello's state and Cassio's patronizing remedy float philosophical debates about how expressions of disability and disease manifest around the efficacy of fixing or curing Othello and around the fear of disability as contagious. The mini-anatomy theatre within the play dramatizes the racial surveillance that Simone Browne insists is inevitable to objectifying blackness while subjecting black life to the anti-black work of white racial power.²⁰ While Browne persuasively points to the slave ship, rather than Foucault's prison, as the genesis of the disciplining gaze of surveillance, I look back to uses of racialized and disabled bodies in the early modern anatomy theatre. In maintaining a spatial distance that protects the fiction of his able-bodiedness, Cassio's behaviour reifies a metaphorical distance between the imagined contagion of Othello's blackness and the purity of his own whiteness. Not only is Othello constructed as unfit for care, but also Cassio — who himself later becomes impaired — proves unwilling to engage in a practice of care through him. Cassio's passing observation then functions as a precursor to the more powerful surveillance that he will embody once he is made governor at the end of the play.

The anatomy theatre in act 4 occurs in the context of Cassio's attempt to regain his reputation with Othello, and in this scene he is more concerned with centring himself than with Othello. His refusal to be near or spend time with Othello demonstrates his commitment to his own position in and proximity to social power and makes him just as complicit as Iago in the plight of the Moor. His brief eulogy in act 5, then, reads as the much too belated and guilt-ridden follow up to this earlier anatomical scene. And yet if Cassio can objectify Othello through reacting to him as if he is the criminalized body of an anatomical cadaver, then this eulogizing moment is a reflection that positions Othello's body and mind now as physically, not just socially, dead. In the aftermath of the murder-suicide, Othello is again subject to the theatre of anatomy. As his body lies on the stage

for all to briefly observe — as an ‘object’ no longer deserving ethical care, but one that ‘poisons sight’ and requires obscuring and removal — he has fulfilled Cassio’s fearful expectation (5.2.362). Cassio’s elegiac response to Othello’s death then becomes a confirmation of what he knew rather than a reflection on what he did not.

The events that precede Othello’s death prepare us for the removal of his body from the social sphere of the play as well as from visibility on the stage itself. In order to discern the matters of fact and significance, Othello must be concealed and subjected to strict surveillance in prison ‘till that the nature of [his] fault be known / To the Venetian state’ (5.2.334–5). In this final scene, Lodovico completely reworks the channels of power that will outlast the play. Promising harsh ‘torment’ for the ‘slave’ Iago, he announces to Othello: ‘Your power and command is taken off / And Cassio rules in Cyprus’ (5.2.229–30). While Lodovico has letters confirming Iago as the mastermind of the crimes that have taken place, he nonetheless marks the already misfitting Othello as lacking the able-mindedness that is compulsory not just for governance but also for civic participation at large. The intention to imprison Othello indefinitely after divesting him of his titles demonstrates yet another act of unethical care that focuses on the imagined needs of the ‘Venetian state’ rather than on racial and disability justice. Lodovico gives Othello’s authority in Cyprus to Cassio, moreover, which once again repositions his relation to Venetian power. This shift initiates the ‘friend’ Cassio into a practice of surveillance explicitly over the ‘hellish villain’ Iago, and implicitly over Othello’s soon-to-be dead body (5.2.366).

The Fabric of Care

Iago’s purpose in the play is to methodically dismantle any possibility of ethical care that allows Othello to access human sociability. Cassio’s persistence reveals his own complicity in and enforcement of unethical and interconnected systems of ableism, diagnosis, and anti-blackness. With the failure of whiteness to participate in ethical care, Othello’s handkerchief then becomes both a physical and metaphysical web of care, imbued with the histories and myths of his community that are illegible to and transcend white and ableist gazes. He is what Sara Ahmed, in her critique of multiculturalism, would call a melancholic migrant, as he resides in the colonial capital and exchanges his services in a contract for some of the benefits of partial Venetian citizenship.²¹ In his early use of the term ‘stranger’ (1.1.134), Roderigo conjures the dually racist and ableist notion that Othello, whose access to full participation in society is contingent on his service to the

state, will take from them more than he can produce. Othello worries as much in his final speech when he, having been divested of his title, counts on his record of doing 'the state some service' as currency that will afford him 'a word or two' about his continued need for ethical care, in both life and death (5.2.336–7). His movements throughout the city and the pseudo-colonial space of Cyprus are met with friction and curiosity at every point, such as when he recalls his history with Brabantio who, he says, once 'loved' him (1.3.129–71). Though his Africanness should not be anomalous in early modern Europe, such tension demonstrates how his social environment, and the structure of the play itself, is designed to alienate Othello from any sense of community. This denigration circulates around the handkerchief and is the essence of Othello's slow dispossession in the play.

In the absence of consistent and ethical care webs, Othello develops a practice of self-care that resists the public and progressive dissolution of his relationships in the play. Koritha Mitchell regards black artistic production as liberatory self-care and a means of clarifying practices of white mediocrity, which, I argue, saturate practices of care in this play.²² Othello's self-care counters the mediocre and anatomizing observations of Cassio and manifests in the spiritual and complicated genealogy of his handkerchief. In fact, when recounting this genealogy to Desdemona, Othello refers to the 'magic in the web of it' (3.4.71). European characters in the play misread and misappropriate the handkerchief, understanding it solely in terms of its ability to produce or cast a different kind of magic, instrumentalizing it rather than embracing its strange significance.²³ As such, Desdemona loses and tries to replace it, Iago uses Emilia to steal it, and Cassio encourages Bianca to 'take out the work' (3.4.180, 4.1.146–55). Without the 'work', however, the significance of the handkerchief, like Cassio's pretension of care, erodes. Othello observes as it infiltrates the façade of Cassio's platonic fidelity. This 'ocular proof' allows Iago to wedge himself between Othello and his 'friend' after manipulating the Florentine out of his position as lieutenant (3.3.363). As 'ocular proof', the handkerchief clarifies the complex relationship between Othello and Cassio and reveals what Othello believes to be the unfortunate truth of Cassio's commitment to care. In Bianca's possession, we never see the handkerchief again and its plight reflects that of Othello himself who is progressively concealed over the course of the drama. His connection to the handkerchief functions as a spiritual care web that both preexists and coexists with his time in Venice. This object offers both refuge and liberation from a social environment overly concerned with honesty, order, and productivity. In the absence of human collectivity in a foreign land, Othello depends on the consistency of the cultural collective that is woven into

the handkerchief, allowing him to hope for a future through the melancholic fabric of the past.

As a so-called 'erring barbarian' among 'super-subtle Venetians', Othello poses a dilemma for the typical ways of imagining care that assume a connection between a consistent geographical residence and a consistent care web (1.3.356–7). He requires a care web that accounts for his migrations across various geopolitical and dramatic spaces in Africa, Venice, and, metaphorically, London.²⁴ As the 'antique token / my father gave my mother' (5.2.214–5), the handkerchief functions as a means for care that transgresses time incorporating multiple lineages and gesturing toward alternative futures, which itself is a radical act of self-care for the black and disabled Moor. Like race and disability, however, it also moves across various spaces both with and without Othello, developing significance as it moves and changes hands. By bequeathing it to Desdemona, for example, Othello expects that she will become a part of this web in Venice. In losing the handkerchief, she reveals her own inadequacy in the ethical care that Othello needs, and her inability to recognize the significance of this inadequacy hastens the tragedy of the play. His care web must then evolve as he moves across and through various spaces. Both Othello's presence in Venice and move to Cyprus call for an extended care network that encompasses his ancestral past, the realities of his present, and the possibilities of a future — even though we never actually see that future any more than we see that of the handkerchief.

Like the characters in the play, playgoers are baffled at Othello's obsession over a mere handkerchief. As we move to develop a practice of caring from and through disability, however, we must embrace the fullness of who Othello is, was, and could be — on his own terms — just as we must embrace the totality of the handkerchief and all it signifies. In other words, we must attend to the web of 'magic' woven into the cloth that affords Othello a connection to other people and places. To echo Ian Smith's charge, we must consider the ways that we choose to remember Othello and his call to 'speak of me as I am', a challenge to his interlocutors to care from or through his black bodymind, even after his death.²⁵ This challenge extends not only to Cassio, who eulogizes Othello with a belated diagnosis, or Lodovico, whose political authority elects to relate Othello's 'heavy acts with heavy heart', but to all those who encounter and think through Othello (5.2.369).

The presence and activity of the handkerchief invites a more ethical practice of caring from and through disability. On an early modern stage obsessed with melancholic affectation, the significance of the handkerchief, the natural performance of melancholy in the epileptic seizure, and Cassio's reflection on Othello's

great-heartedness invite a desirable disability for actors and playgoers vis-à-vis a more complex understanding of oneself. Ethical care from and through race and disability demonstrates the sort of mutual responsibility that comprises a true care web. The persistence by which Iago works to denigrate or manipulate this web, coupled with the ignorance claimed by Cassio, reflects the disciplining and surveillance that ableism and white racial power bring to bear on black and disabled people. As readers we must instead develop a sense of ethical care that justly works from and through Othello. Disability justice takes Othello at his word and truly ‘speaks of’ him, locating care not in oneself but as a relationship between all bodies and minds for the benefit of those people under constant threat of erasure and death by systems of anti-blackness and ableism.

Notes

- 1 Anna Mollow, 'Unvictimized: Toward a Fat Black Disability Studies', *African American Review* 50.2 (2017), 105, <https://doi.org/10.1353/afa.2017.0016>; Rolando Pujol and Nicole Johnson, 'Exclusive: Police Report in Eric Garner's Death Conflicts with Videos, Witnesses', *WPIX-TV*, 31 July 2014, <https://pix11.com/2014/07/31/exclusive-police-report-in-eric-garners-death-conflicts-with-videos-witnesses/>.
- 2 Deborah Bloom and Jareen Imam, 'New York Man Dies after Chokehold by Police', *CNN*, 8 Dec 2014, <https://www.cnn.com/2014/07/20/justice/ny-chokehold-death/>.
- 3 Leon J. Hilton, 'Avonte's Law: Autism, Wandering, and the Racial Surveillance of Neurological Difference', *African American Review* 50.2 (2017), 223, <https://doi.org/10.1353/afa.2017.0023>.
- 4 Eva Feder Kittay, 'When Caring is Just and Justice is Caring: Justice and Mental Retardation', *Public Culture* 13.3 (2001), 560, <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-13-3-557>.
- 5 Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice* (Vancouver, 2018), 30–42.
- 6 Jay Dolmage and Allison P. Hobgood, 'An Afterword: Thinking Through Care', *Pedagogy* 15.3 (2015), 559–67, <https://doi.org/10.1215/15314200-2917185>.
- 7 Ian Smith, 'We Are Othello: Speaking of Race in Early Modern Studies', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 67.1 (2016), 108–9, <https://doi.org/10.1353/shq.2016.0000>.
- 8 Allison P. Hobgood, 'Caesar Hath the Falling Sickness: The Legibility of Early Modern Disability in Shakespearean Drama', *Disability Studies Quarterly* 29.4 (2009), n.p., <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v29i4.993>.
- 9 All references to the play are from William Shakespeare, *Othello*, Arden Third Series, ed. E.A.J. Honigmann, introd. Ayanna Thompson (New York, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781408160206.00000010>.
- 10 Pujol and Johnson, 'Exclusive: Police Report in Eric Garner's Death', n.p.
- 11 Honigmann, ed., *Othello*, 335.
- 12 Timothie Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholie, Containing the Causes thereof, & Reasons of the Strange Effects it Worketh in Our Minds and Bodies* (London, 1586; STC: 3747), *Early English Books Online (EEBO)*, 198.
- 13 Patricia Parker, 'Cassio, Cash, and the "Infidel O": Arithmetic, Double-entry, Book-keeping, and *Othello's* Unfaithful Accounts' in *A Companion to the Global Renaissance: English Literature and Culture in the Era of Expansion*, ed. Jyotsna G. Singh (Hoboken NJ, 2009), 223–41, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444310986.ch13>.
- 14 Carol Thomas Neely, *Distracted Subjects: Madness and Gender in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture* (Ithaca, 2004), 2–4, <https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501729133>.

- 15 For the connection between these disorders, see Helkiah Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia, a Description of the Body of Man* (London, 1615; STC: 6062), *EEBO*, 507.
- 16 Ambroise Paré, *The Workes of that Famous Chirurgeon Ambrose Parey* (London, 1665; Wing: P350), *EEBO*, 714–15. Many thought the nose to be a quick way through the body to the brain.
- 17 Hillary M. Nunn, *Staging Anatomies: Dissection and Spectacle in Early Stuart Tragedy* (London, 2005), 111–20, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315242521>; Howard Marchitello, ‘Vesalius’ *Fabrica* and Shakespeare’s *Othello*: Anatomy, Gender and the Narrative Production of Meaning’, *Criticism* 35.4 (1993), 529–58.
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- 19 Michael Neill, *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford, 1997), 144–5, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198183860.001.0001>.
- 20 Simone Browne, *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness* (Durham NC, 2015), 6–10, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822375302>.
- 21 Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham NC, 2010), 121–59, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822392781>.
- 22 Koritha Mitchell, ‘Identifying White Mediocrity and Know-Your-Place Aggression: A Form of Self-Care’, *African American Review* 51.4 (2018), 253–62, <https://doi.org/10.1353/afa.2018.0045>.
- 23 Ian Smith, ‘Othello’s Black Handkerchief’, *Shakespeare Quarterly* 64.1 (2013), 1–25, <https://doi.org/10.1353/shq.2013.0017>.
- 24 Peter Erickson, ‘Race Words in *Othello*’ in *Shakespeare and Immigration*, ed. Ruben Espinosa and David Ruiter (London, 2016), 159–76, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315608570>.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 123–4. For more on ‘bodymind’, see Sami Schalk, *Bodyminds Reimagined: (Dis)ability, Race, and Gender in Black Women’s Speculative Fiction* (Durham NC, 2018), 5–6, 59–84, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822371830>.

