Erika Boeckeler

The *Hamlet* First Quarto (1603) & the Play of Typography

I argue that the First Quarto of Hamlet *(1603) expresses a more intense sensitivity to polysemous typography than has been critically articulated. The orthography, typography, and layout functioned as rich sources of meaning-making for early modern readers, poets, and publishers. Performances happened on the playtext page that were often unavailable in a live theatrical setting. This article makes a crucial critical intervention by recuperating the poetic value of Q1, a text that has historically generated interest mostly within analytical bibliography, performance studies, and character studies. Readers were sensitive to how visual wordplay activated important themes to which my critical analysis attends.*

Early modern textuality is a culture of orthographic variation, yet the scholarly disciplines have inconsistently heeded D.F. McKenzie's call in 1986 to consider how the specific forms of words contribute to scholarly interpretation. His examination of typography in William Congreve's 1710 play *The Way of the World* 'bears upon the most obvious concerns of textual criticism — getting the right words in the right order, on the semiotics of print and the role of typography in forming meaning; on the critical theories of authorial intention and reader response; on the relation between past meanings and present uses of verbal texts'.[1] Scholars have likewise ignored the ground-breaking but challenging suggestion made by Margreta de Grazia and Peter Stallybrass in 1993 that we attend to the semantic fields prompted by spelling variation, despite the fact that we now have better tools than ever to aid us in that goal.[2] This essay argues that orthography (spelling) and typography (in the graphic design sense that includes page layout and individual letterforms, like f and ſ and s) shaped poetic practices and the semiotic experiences of readers, and that early printed playtexts generated performances of their own through the play of typography. Early modern theatre provides a particularly rich environment for thinking about the culture of

Erika Boeckeler (e.boeckeler@northeastern.edu) is an associate professor in the English department at Northeastern University.

orthographic variation: when it appears as a print genre, drama lies at the cross-roads of oral performance and privately read text as well as at the generic cross-roads between poetry and prose. In particular, my approach considers the visual features of the First Quarto *Hamlet* (1603; also known as Q1) as rich sources of meaning-making for early modern readers who could work out connections that might disappear on stage.

We cannot definitively know where intentionality lies in early modern typesetting. Myriad influences can produce the way the words appear on a printed page: printing conventions for vernacular dramatic works, in-house printing conventions, attempts to protect delicate pieces of type or save paper, justification of a line to fit into the page, availability or scarcity of type, difficulties in reading copytext handwriting, incomplete copytext, printing house practices at an oral proofing stage, individual compositors' spelling preferences, carelessness of compositors and proofers, perceived importance of a job by printing house professionals, copy text abbreviations, disparities in regional dialects, shifts in pronunciation between the time of performance and the event of printing, formal schooling and writing/reading practices, and varying respect for etymology as well as compositors'/proofreaders'/authors'/publishers' deliberate exploitation of spelling to create visual and aural resonances. And still other influences could have conjured up this quintessence of playfull type called Q1.

I will suggest sources of intentionality specific to Q1, but for the most part my argument necessarily takes a readerly approach, keeping in mind that authors and publishers are also readers. In the fluid world of early modern spelling and allographic pieces of type, the early modern eie saw visual relationships between seemingly unlike words much like those the eare heard, and the Quarto typesetting often works to activate visually and aurally similar words and phrasings. Does it matter that *Hamlet*'s first print public saw 'To be, or not to be, I there's the point' (D4v) in a speech about why the self, or the I, persists in the face of adversity?[3]

Why Q1 *Hamlet*?

Although the following analysis might be relevant to any early modern literary text, I use the Q1 *Hamlet* as an example for two primary reasons. Although Q1 is equally authoritative as a *Hamlet* text, scholars have not traditionally valued its literary qualities in the ways they have the Second Quarto (Q2, 1605) and the First Folio (F1, 1623) versions. Responses typically read it (1) as a way of making sense of the other *Hamlet*s we 'really' care about; (2) as an exercise in analytical and

historical bibliographic questions surrounding the plays; (3) in terms of source questions; or (4) as part of a New Historicist tissue in the cultural *Hamlet* web.[4] The 2008 work of Peter Stallybrass and Zachary Lesser opened new avenues for thinking about the literariness of Q1 and its performance on the page in light of book historical research.[5] In looking at orthography, typography, and page layout to highlight the texture and literary experiences of this culturally important playtext, my approach intervenes into traditional responses while still taking them into account. My readings do not necessarily provide a radically different view of Q1 but rather point to subtle ways in which the text's visuals enhance thematic concerns. Homographic words from vastly different parts of the lexicon, for example, efficiently link disparate ideas: power and pour (both **powre**) link the power-grab with poison. Visual wordforms may nuance character and character relations, such as the orthographically expressed brother-sister parallelism between the **aloofe** Ofelia and the **abroode** Leartes. Or format and homophonic printing can tease out crucial statements of identity, calling for a rereading of the iconic 'To be or not to be' speech.

A second reason to focus on Q1 is to provide a model for considering the critical challenges and pitfalls of normative standards more generally. In addition to reading Q1 through today's standardized orthography, this text also confronts us with the near impossibility of reading unconstrained by a First Folionic or a Q2 norm — a practice that early moderns may have grappled with themselves given *Hamlet*'s publication history. Once upon a time, for a fleeting moment in 1603, this text was the only printed *Hamlet* game in town. Less than a year after Q1's publication, the Q2 *Hamlet* title page lays claim to a prior originary status with the boast that it is 'enlarged to almoſt as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie'.[6] That said, in terms of performance the going theory argues that Q1 was the last of the three to come into creation, making it, oddly, both the alpha and omega *Hamlet*. Certainly it has served as the alpha and omega of *Hamlet* readings as the first available *Hamlet* text in the early seventeenth century and the last one 'rediscovered' in the bottom of a closet in 1823.

The play has symbolically functioned as an interruptive force in *Hamlet* studies. The performance, publication, and textual transmission histories of the three versions are so intimately imbricated that no critic can afford to ignore Q1. Holding out as potentially the final vndiſcouered *Hamlet* country, the questionable Q1 offers both the promise of tantalizing new text-based readings and, equally, of their impossibility. Thinking about Q1 from the perspective of typography suggests a new avenue of corrective disruption in interpretive practices. I ask what our

critical and orthographic norms both reveal and conceal about an early modern playtext.

Why haven't the texture and literary experiences of Q1 been valued? The general attitude towards the Quarto assumes that Q1's poetry and its nuances are comparably weaker and that Q1's impact as a performance text is comparably good or at least adequate since it moves at a quick pace with stagecraft flourishes and the length is playable. These two judgments have shaped the critical response with the exception of character studies; most critical analysis has hardly focused on the kinds of poetic, psychological, and philosophical questions about the other two versions that have excited centuries of readers. The virtues of Q1 as a performance text lie behind the first editorial decision to include it in a major contemporary scholarly Shakespeare series. The 2006 Arden edition asserts that 'Q1 has now acquired enough of a theatrical history to have a claim to an edition of its own'.[7] No doubt such decisions come as part of an ongoing feedback loop that involves the genesis theories of Q1 as an actor's (or actors') memorial reconstruction and/or a stage adaptation, theories promoted by the title page of Q1's note that it has played in London, Cambridge, and Oxford, among other places. But even at its supposed moment of textual ascendancy, Q1 retains its derivative status: the Arden edition presents Q1 either as a bibliographic oddity that must (along with the First Folio) defer its annotations to the Q2 control text or as a text primarily accessible through its onstage performance history. In the latter case, Q1 generates its value through the very virtue of being perceived as an inferior other. The chronicled success of these performances, in other words, relies primarily on their novel deviation from a familiar First Folionic or Q2 norm. As a performance text, Q1 is still better and worſe. But what if we evaluate it based on its on-page performances, rather than its translatability to the stage?

Scholars have acknowledged that the three *Hamlet* texts are separate versions interesting on their own terms only in the past fifteen years or so, and several diplomatic editions do replicate orthographic features, though not necessarily all typographic ones. In 2016, operating with a primarily undergraduate audience in mind, the Norton online edition of Shakespeare's collected works began offering all three *Hamlet*s along with the edited hybrid that appears in their print version, but with many regularizations and modernized typography. At the more advanced scholarly level, early modern citation practice puts its object of study under frequent typographical erasure: see, for example, *Early Theatre*'s paleography guide ('the standard and elongated forms of "s" are uniformly transcribed as "s"') or *Shakespeare Quarterly*'s style pages ('Retain original capitalization, spelling, and punctuation in titles and quotations from early modern sources, except

for the long s. Do not modernize'). Because of such scholarly conventions, we miss important visual connections between words, like the typographically expressed logic between distance and the preservation of virginity: Ofelia must 'keepe a **looſe**' (C2r), since 'that we thinke / Is ſureſt, we often **looſe**' (D4r). How much do we lose in our distance, and how much richer might our arguments be if we account for the play of typography?

I do not insist that intent lies behind the readings I suggest below although I do propose that authors, printers, publishers, and readers were primed to compose or read in such a way. In the following analysis of textual examples, I seek to articulate connections motivated in multiple, reinforcing ways, whether through plot, rhyme, metrical stress, or repetition.

Visual Powre

We can never replicate an early modern reading experience, armed as we are from early literacy with a sense of standardized spelling. But we can become more sensitive to how our norms operate to direct interpretation. My initial example examines the anagrammatic **power/powre**. Our contemporary word pour is entirely absent in Q1, although with the w sometimes appearing typographically as the double uu (hence the letter name), the early modern word subtly exudes an underlying u.[8] 'Powre' works synonymously as our power and pour, while 'power' only ever refers to the meaning we typically assign today to that combination of letters.[9] To take proper account of the former word's orthographic and semantic power, we mark it in action referring to (1) supernatural might, as in 'vniuersall **power**' (G1v), 'immortall **powers**' (G1v), '**Powers** aboue' (G2v), 'nor Witch hath **powre** to charme' (B3r); (2) murder, both instances describing poison poured into an ear, when the Ghoſt describes how someone 'through the porches of my eares / Did **powre** the leaprous distilment' (C4v) and when the same action is remediated by Hamlet through the players' dumbshow, '*Then enters Lucianus with poyson in a Viall, and **powres** it in his eares*' (F3r); (3) a narrative of a jester's antics, describing how 'He **powred** once a whole flagon of Rhenish of my head' (I1r); and (4) Leartes's in-grave request to be buried with Ofelia, 'Now **powre** your earth on' (I1v). These may seem like disparate uses of dissimilar words, but they are part of the same powre structure, or as de Grazia and Stallybrass would call it, the same semantic field.

Power is powring, pouring is power. When two words converge homographically, they may expand semantic categories. And while the pronunciation may have been closer to a dipthong, the Ghoſt's description of how the poison was poured

into the 'porches' of his ears links it to the word group that includes poore (many instances), report (three instances), Porpentines (C4r, taken as Porcupine), ſport (D4r), poring vppon a booke (D4v), opportunitie (E1r), porrige (F2v), portraiture (G3r), and Portall (G2r).[10] Still staying away from arguments about intentionality, I want to suggest that the power of this specific anagram may have spoken to 1603 readers as a performative instance of powre's uncanniness and to show how letters poured into words in particular orders may generate particular effects.

The word group **do/due/doo/doe** in Q1 makes for a particularly interesting test set since Hamlet is concerned with doing, that is to say enacting his revenge, especially in the Hecuba soliloquy. Studies in early modern pronunciation have noted contemporaneous instances in which some or even all of these words may sound the same; Q1 also deliberately pairs some of them to riff off similar sounds as well as sights, as I note below.[11] The scholar of early modern English pronunciation E.J. Dobson cautions against basing arguments on pronunciation alone, as 'there were many variant pronunciations, many levels and styles of speech, co-existing at any time; and … the accepted norms of pronunciation of one generation were not merely apt to differ from, but were sometimes not even directly developed from, those of a previous generation'.[12] Printed twenty years earlier than the First Folio on which David Crystal bases his recent study of Shakespearean pronunciation, Q1 contains orthographic options that Crystal does not identify — including **adue** for our present-day and First Folio **ado**, or **poring** for **pouring**.[13] In the case of the playtext, we must contend with a rich variety of speaking, writing, and printing practices shaped by the dialect-diverse natures of the play- and print-houses situated in metropolitan London.

To an eighteenth- to twenty-first-century reader, **do** flies under the radar as a normal spelling, but **doe**, **due**, and **doo** stand out. Jakobsonian linguistics calls the normalized form do unmarked and the other forms marked. Unmarked terms tend to hide important differences and privilege one member of a group over another, as in the oft-cited case of the unmarked lion, which encompasses both the female and male animals, and the marked lioness, which denotes a specifically female animal. Q1 is the marked *Hamlet* text.

Critics have frequently taken the Hecuba soliloquy as the articulation of Hamlet's famous delay in exacting revenge for his father's death: 'What would he **do** and if he had my loſſe?' he exclaims about the actor who cries over Hecuba (F1r). We might argue that the pace of Q1 moves so fast that Hamlet hardly has time to formulate a plan, but the play does link doing to duty both visually and aurally. This connection emerges explicitly in Roſſencraft and Gilderſtone's first speeches, appearing in response to the king's request to seek out what's bothering Hamlet:

'**Doe** this, the king of Denmarke ſhal be thankefull' (D3r). Roſſencraft describes them as 'bound / By loue, by **duetie**, and obedience' (D3r).[14] Gilderſtone further emphasizes the connection between doing and dutie: 'So in all **duetie doe** we take our leaue' (D3r).[15] The King's father-son-like intercourse with Hamlet's school friends recalls the previous one between the Ghoſt and Hamlet, wherein the Ghoſt departs by repeating 'Hamlet **adue**, **adue**, **adue**: remember me' (C4v) after he has urged him on to a particular kind of doing and filial duetie — revenge. Hamlet also repeats these specific words as he records them in his memory tables although the text hardly carries as much weight as other parts of the Ghoſt's speech: 'Now to the words: it is **adue adue**: remember me' (D1r).[16] Crystal notes the shared potential spelling of **due** and **deaw** (our contemporary **dew**). While these seem semantically unrelated, a single speech of Horatio's contains doe/deaw/duetie, linking native beliefs about spirits' limitations on earth and the watchers' own duty to inform Prince Hamlet following the Ghoſt's limited interaction with them. The page B3r is an echo chamber of that word group, with doe, deaw, duetie, doo't, do, dutie (twice). (See Figure 1.) Ofelia's mad song tells of a false steward who 'dupt the chamber **doore**' (H2r),[17] emphasizing the symbolic virginal door with the comment that 'Yong men will **doo't** when they come too't' (H2r); this aural and visual connection between duplicity, doors, and sex augments the critical strand that suggests Ofelia has had intercourse with Hamlet. Both the tetrameter stress and internal rhyme reinforce the visual and aural connections. This cloud or cluster of do spellings slide meaning across the chain of signifiers, into which must also enter the Ghoſt's '**doomd** for a time / To walke the night' (C3v), Hamlet's **doome** as prescribed by the King's death writ, and the Gravedigger's 'the gallowes **doth** wel, mary howe **dooes** it well? the gallows **dooes** well to them that **doe** ill' (H4r). The King worries that Hamlet's actions doom Denmark itself: Hamlet will '**undoe** our ſtate' (G3v). In rare cases does the do/due/doo/doe word cluster include positive doings.

These particular results might emerge through a careful acoustic reading of normalized typography, but the typesetting of Q1 throws the play of visual and aural language into high relief. Evidence from within the play, from other Shakespearean texts, and from early modern English examples of writing, orthography, and typography more generally point to a readerly sensitivity to latent visual and aural word connections. The *Hamlet* editor puzzles over the fine lines separating typos, typographical contingencies like kerning and line justification, and deliberate spellings.[18] Kathleen Irace, editor of a 1998 Q1, points to Hamlet's comment, 'Mouse-trap: mary how trapically' (F4r), at the play-within-a-play: 'With its pun on "Mousetrap", Q1's reading seems intentional'.[19] In the same
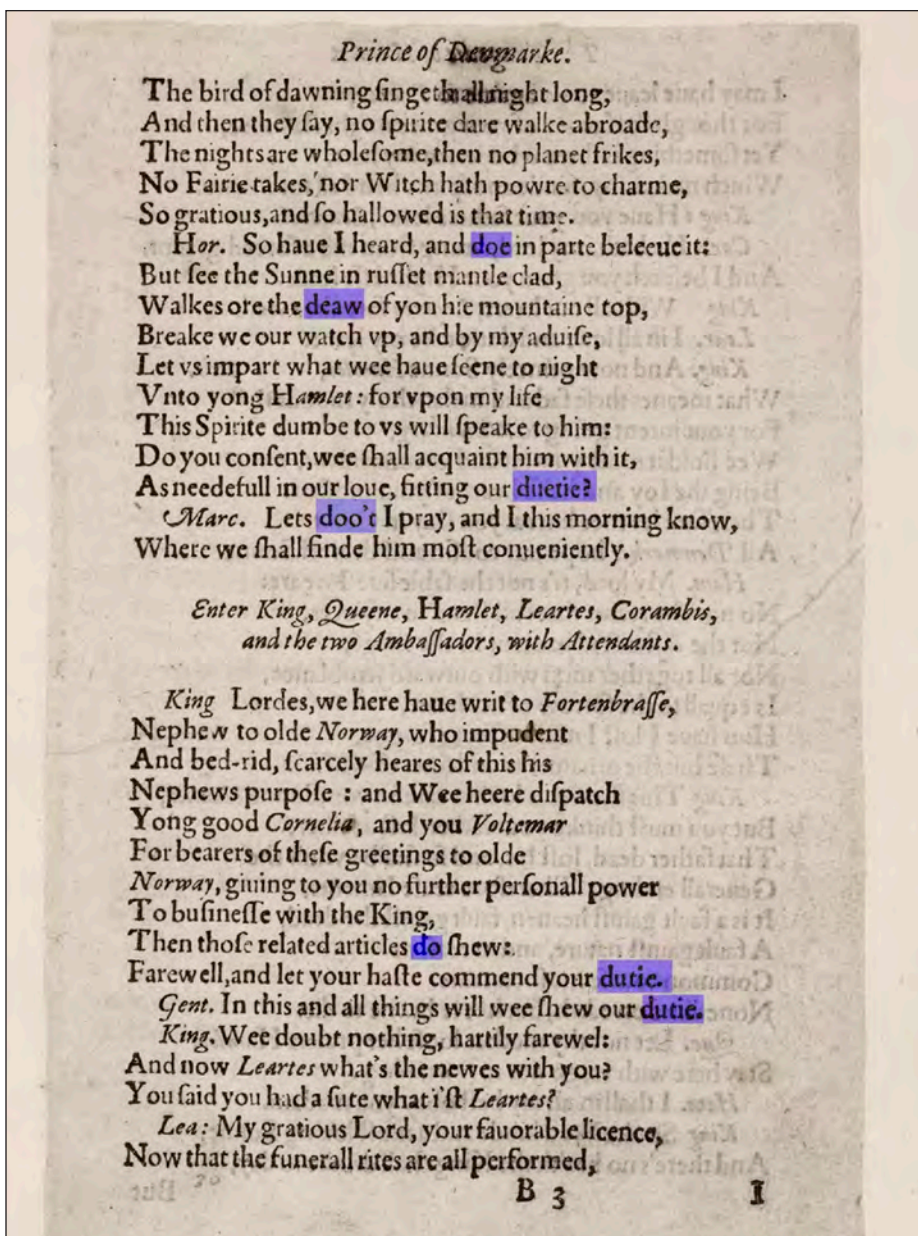
Prince of Denmarke.

The bird of dawning singeth all night long,
And then they fay, no fpirite dare walke abroad,
The nights are wholefome, then no planet frikes,
No Fairie takes, nor Witch hath powre to charme,
So gratious, and fo hallowed is that time.
    Hor. So haue I heard, and doe in parte beleeue it:
But fee the Sunne in ruffet mantle clad,
Walkes ore the deaw of yon hie mountaine top,
Breake we our watch vp, and by my aduife,
Let vs impart what wee haue feene to night
Vnto yong *Hamlet*: for vpon my life,
This Spirite dumbe to vs will fpeake to him:
Do you confent, wee fhall acquaint him with it,
As needefull in our loue, fitting our duetie?
    Marc. Lets doo't I pray, and I this morning know,
Where we fhall finde him moft conueniently.

*Enter King, Queene, Hamlet, Leartes, Corambis,
and the two Ambaffadors, with Attendants.*

    King Lordes, we here haue writ to *Fortenbraffe,*
Nephew to olde *Norway,* who impudent
And bed-rid, fcarcely heares of this his
Nephews purpofe : and Wee heere difpatch
Yong good *Cornelia,* and you *Voltemar*
For bearers of thefe greetings to olde
Norway, giuing to you no further perfonall power
To bufineffe with the King,
Then thofe related articles do fhew:
Farewell, and let your hafte commend your dutie.
    Gent. In this and all things will wee fhew our dutie.
    King. Wee doubt nothing, hartily farewel:
And now *Leartes* what's the newes with you?
You faid you had a fute what i'ft *Leartes?*
    Lea : My gratious Lord, your fauorable licence,
Now that the funerall rites are all performed,

B 3   I

Figure 1. **do/deaw/doe/doo't/duetie/dutie** Q1 *Hamlet* (London, 1603; stc: 22275), B3r.
    Call # 69304, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

play-watching scene, our protagonist comments, 'This is myching Mallico, that meanes my chiefe' (F3r), and Irace remarks that '"my chief" could be an error for Q2's and F's "mischief", or it could link the King ("my chief") with "mischief", at the same time emphasizing Hamlet's pretended madness'.[20] Internal evidence comes from deliberate punning by characters; for example, Corambis comments that the players can play Plato (E3v), as opposed to the Q2 or F reading of Plautus (Q2 F3r; F1 263/oo4r) that accurately refers to a Roman playwright but eliminates the pun. Other potentially deliberate puns for Irace include 'ceasen' (B4v) invoking both cease and season; 'beckles' (C3v) beetles and beckons; and 'ghest' (H4r) guest and Ghoſt.[21] Other editors have struggled with additional individual words. Such ambiguities receive reinforcement in the text's own heavy symbolic accumulation that watches a word or image snowball into densely compacted meaning clusters, like the ear in *Hamlet* texts, or — to take an example from another play — the concept of the zero/nothing/whole in the *Lear* texts outlined by David Wilbern.[22] I find the German word überladen (literally meaning over-burdened or over-loaded) apt for describing this phenomenon with its semantic aura of individual terms as heavy nodes drawing in meaning from disparate parts of the lexicon.

Within the Ofelia-Leartes-Corambis plot, significant word clusters coalesce to emphasize brother-sister parallelism, represent the binary options for Ofelia's behaviour, and highlight Ofelia's own linguistic manoeuvres. When we meet them, Leartes 'must **aboord**' (C1v) and Ofelia 'keepe **a loofe**' (C2r; later 'walke **aloofe**', D4v): in the same opening, a parallel structure and visibly parallel activities unite the two as they part. These words appear in the same speech by Leartes, with '**aboord**, **aboord**' repeated again by Corambis within the same page opening (C1v and C2r). Corambis's speech later picks up on the typographically slippery loofe and looſe (loose): with dramatic irony in light of her later madness, he comments about her that 'that we thinke / Is ſureſt, we often **loofe**' (D4r). Ofelia then becomes the 'looſe' object who must 'walke **aloofe**' (D4v) in her father's plan to test his theory of Hamlet's lovesickness.[23] Later lines by Leartes reintroduce the word just before he lets loose in the fatal swordfight, noting he must 'stand **aloofe**' (I3r) in fully accepting Hamlet's apology.

A case can be made for the typographic — and the resultingly semantic — connection between **ſoule** (soule) and **foule** that dots C4r (see Figure 2), for which readers have been primed with Hamlet's earlier alliterative rhymed couplet anticipating the Ghoſt's appearance: 'Till then, ſit ſtill my **ſoule**, **foule** deeds will riſ/ Though all the world orewhelme them to mens eies' (C1v).[24] This typographic cueing appears in the Ghoſt's periphrastic descriptions of his punishment; such a
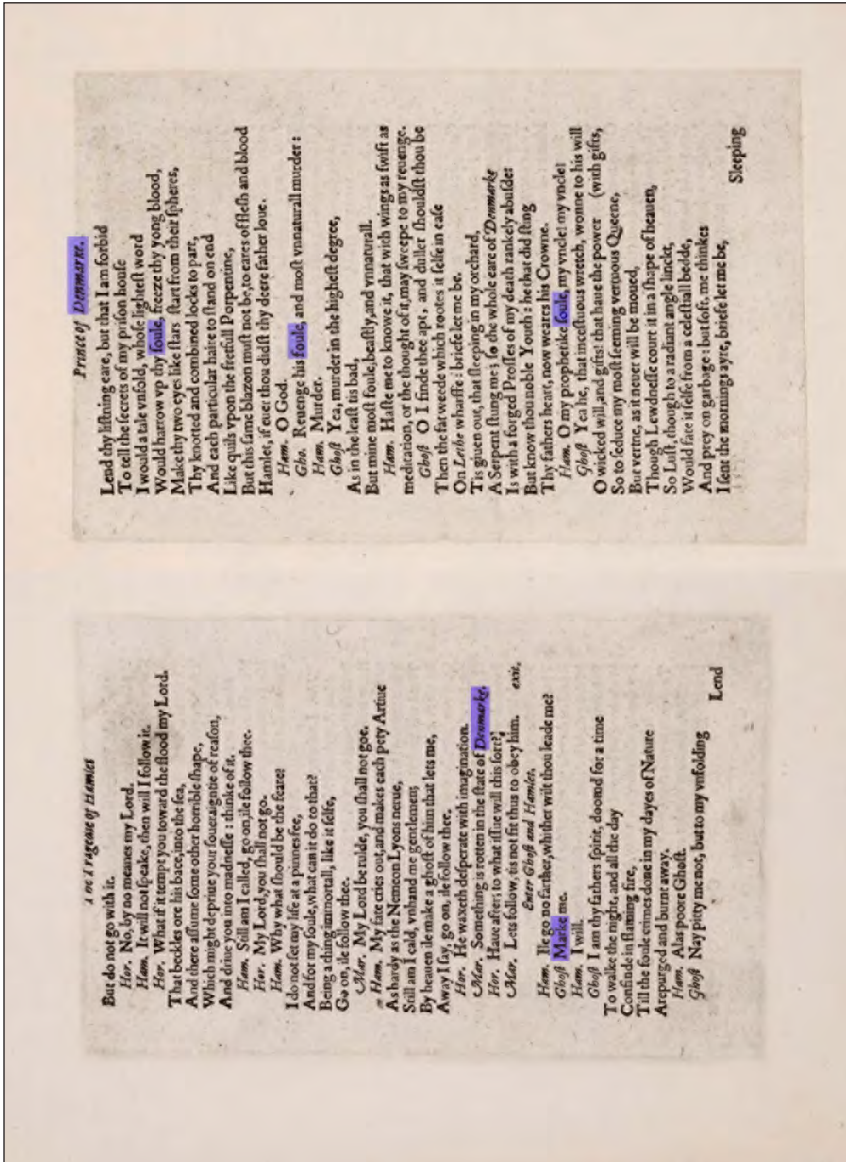
Figure 2. **foule** (soule) and **foule** / **Denmarke, Marke me** Q1 *Hamlet* (London, 1603; stc: 22275), C3v and [C4]r. Call # 69304, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

tale 'Would harrow vp thy **foule**' (C4r). A succession of references to soule/foule follow down the page in almost the same line position, 'Reuenge his f**oule**, and moſt vnnaturall murder'. 'But mine moſt f**oule**', 'O my prophetike **foule**'.

The orthography and appearance of Q1 (and, indeed, of all early modern textuality) further encourage readerly connections across a narrative. Marcellus's famed comment that 'Something is rotten in the ſtate of Denmarke' (C3v) gets echoed in the same page a few lines later when the rotten thing, or the thing representing the 'ſtate of *Denmarke*', speaks his first words of the play, '**Marke** me'. (See Figure 2.) The visual stress of italicization augments the acoustic; Q1 regularly italicizes place names, but here *Denmarke* appears prominently at the end of a line on the same page.[25] The visual impact of this interchange lingers on the recto of every page, where the running headline reads '*Prince of Denmarke*' (in conjunction with *The Tragedie of Hamlet* on the verso). In the same scene, the Ghoſt describes his siesta: 'In the after **noone**, vpon my ſecure houre' (C4v); the orthography of 'noone' emphasizes the privacy of the ritual into which no one or none may intercede.[26] The secure hour refers not only to his regular seeking of this precious time away from the cares of state and its curative role, but also to the orchard's safety and security from human interruption.

Q1 visually prepares its readers for 'to be, or not to be, I there's the point' from the beginning of the play. The exclusive printing of 'I' for what we would render 'Ay' in contemporary typography is a feature unique to, and consistent across, all of Q1 vis-à-vis Q2 and F. Its first appearance is remarkable within Corambis's palindromic response to Ofelia's description of Hamlet's gifts: 'Tenders, **I, I**, tenders you may call them'—a chiastic sequence found only in Q1 (C2v). In the same opening, C2v and C3r, Hamlet uses one word typographically but two words (ay and I) semantically in his preamble to the famed line about the King's partying habit: '**I** mary i'ſt and though **I** am/ Natiue here, and to the maner borne / It is a cuſtome, more honourd in the breach' (C3r). Soon thereafter, as Hamlet responds to his friends' request to tell what he heard from the Ghoſt, the page puts a series of negated Is in parallel with an affirmative (Figure 3) in rapid sequence.[27]

Echoes of the exchange appear on the following verso as well. Corambis employs I in the sense of Ay a few more times leading up to Hamlet's iconic soliloquy. From the very first line, this soliloquy's deviation from the expected Q2 or F versions' 'That is the question' strikes contemporary readers. Viewed in the original 1603 orthography, the deviation appears all the more shocking with the estranging substitution of 'I' in the supposedly deviant line 'Ay, there's the point'. (See Figure 4.) The soliloquy continues in the same vein, with unexpected phrases and a series of equally unexpected uses of I in the next two lines. The Q1 speech
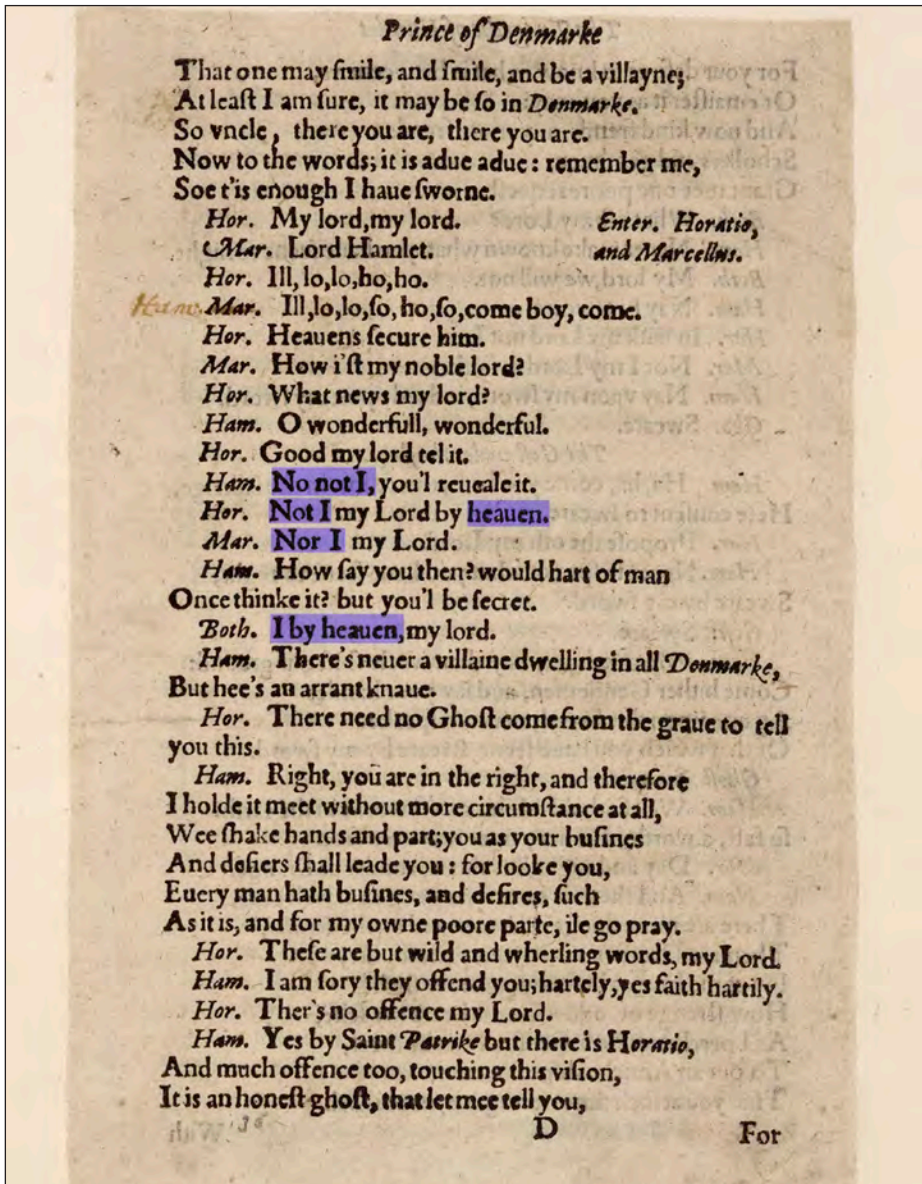
Figure 3. **I/Ay** Q1 *Hamlet* (London, 1603; STC: 22275), D1r. Call # 69304, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

The Tragedy of Hamlet

And so by continuance, and weakenesse of the braine
Iuto this frensie, which now possesseth him:
And if this be not true, take this from this.
    King Thinke you t'is so?
    Cor. How? so my Lord, I would very faine know
That thing that I haue saide t'is so, positiuely,
And it hath fallen out otherwise.
Nay, if circumstances leade me on,
Ile finde it out, if it were hid
As deepe as the centre of the earth.
    King. how should wee trie this same?
    Cor. Mary my good lord thus,
The Princes walke is here in the galery,
There let *Ofelia*, walke vntill hee comes:
Your selfe and I will stand close in the study,
There shall you heare the effect of all his hart,
And if it proue any otherwise then loue,
Then let my censure faile an other time.
    King. see where hee comes poring vppon a booke.
                    Enter Hamlet.
    Cor. Madame, will it please your grace
To leaue vs here?
    Que. With all my hart.   *exit.*
    Cor. And here *Ofelia*, reade you on this booke,
And walke aloofe, the King shal be vnseene.
    Ham. To be, or not to be, I there's the point,
To Die, to sleepe, is that all? I all:
No, to sleepe, to dreame, I mary there it goes,
For in that dreame of death, when wee awake,
And borne before an euerlasting Iudge,
From whence no passenger euer retur'nd,
The vndiscouered country, at whose sight
The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd.
But for this, the ioyfull hope of this,
Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world,
Scorned by the right rich, the rich curssed of the poore?
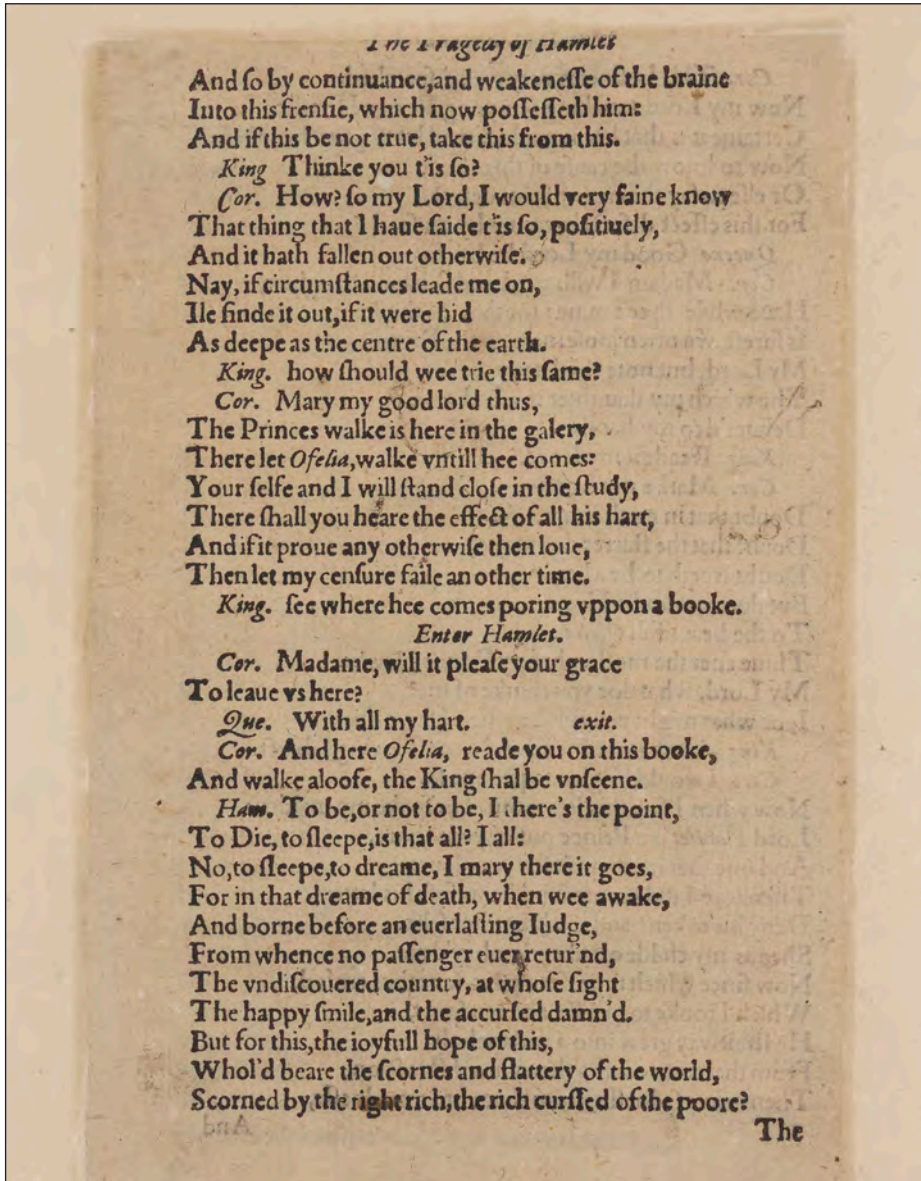   The

Figure 4: "To be, or not to be, I there's the point," Q1 *Hamlet* (London, 1603; STC: 22275), D4v. Call # 69304, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

itself admittedly presents serious syntactic challenges, as contemporary editors have noted. What sense might 1603 readers have made of it?

I think it matters that these three Is of affirmation visually mark the page in a vertically sequential, post-caesura isocolon. In a speech questioning why the I, the self, continues to exist in a world of pain, it matters that the I stands tentatively before its readers, for no first person pronoun appears in the entire soliloquy. The soliloquy truly presents, visually, a meditation on the I's (and eie's) existence and persistence in the face of erasure, on the inherent life-affirming qualities of the I that 'makes vs rather beare thoſe euilles we haue'.[28] The speech is simultaneously personal and general. Hamlet's divided self stands before us here, with the I absent in content but present in form. The capitalized 'Iudge' links back to the series of Is above in a visual statement confirming that we have a share in divinity and a share in divine judgment, for we all have an internal judge in the 'conſcience' that 'makes cowardes of vs all'.

Q1 renders visible Hamlet's struggle with and assertion of identity through this typographic subtext and by placing this speech within a framework of questions and assertions of identity and identification. In an exchange appearing quite differently in Q2 and F, Q1's first two lines ask and answer a question about identification. (See Figure 5.) These two opening lines distinguish themselves typographically as a single unit both spatially and with a large capital S the height of two lines of type. Both of the lines follow with a uppercase T, the first as the second letter in the first word of the first line, 'STand: who is that?' and the second within an independent word in the second line, 'Tis I' (B1r). The latter phrase is positioned such that, inclusive of the large S running into it, it takes up as much space as STand, with the I's ascender at the end parallel to the d. The two Ts visually evoke the image of the two 'Centinels' standing in front of each other. Q2 and F (and the British Library version's manuscript marginal note on Q1) identify the speakers of these two lines as Francisco and Barnardo/ Bernardo. Q1 significantly leaves unidentified these two speakers who initiate the play's concerns about identification, labeling them simply as 1. and 2., eventually distinguishing Barnardo in the dialogue but never in the character tag. The Q1 visuals force the reader into distinguishing the identities of the two sentinels.

In this moment's counterpart toward the end of the play, Hamlet responds to Leartes's grief by leaping into Ofelia's grave after him: 'Beholde tis I, *Hamlet* the Dane' (I1v). Where the first line of the play concerned itself with identification, this parallel moment moves beyond that to assert an identity. Q1's unique stage direction, noting that '*Hamlet leapes/ in after Leartes*' (I1v), appears in the margin to indicate the simultaneity of action with Leartes's speech, rather than in the text
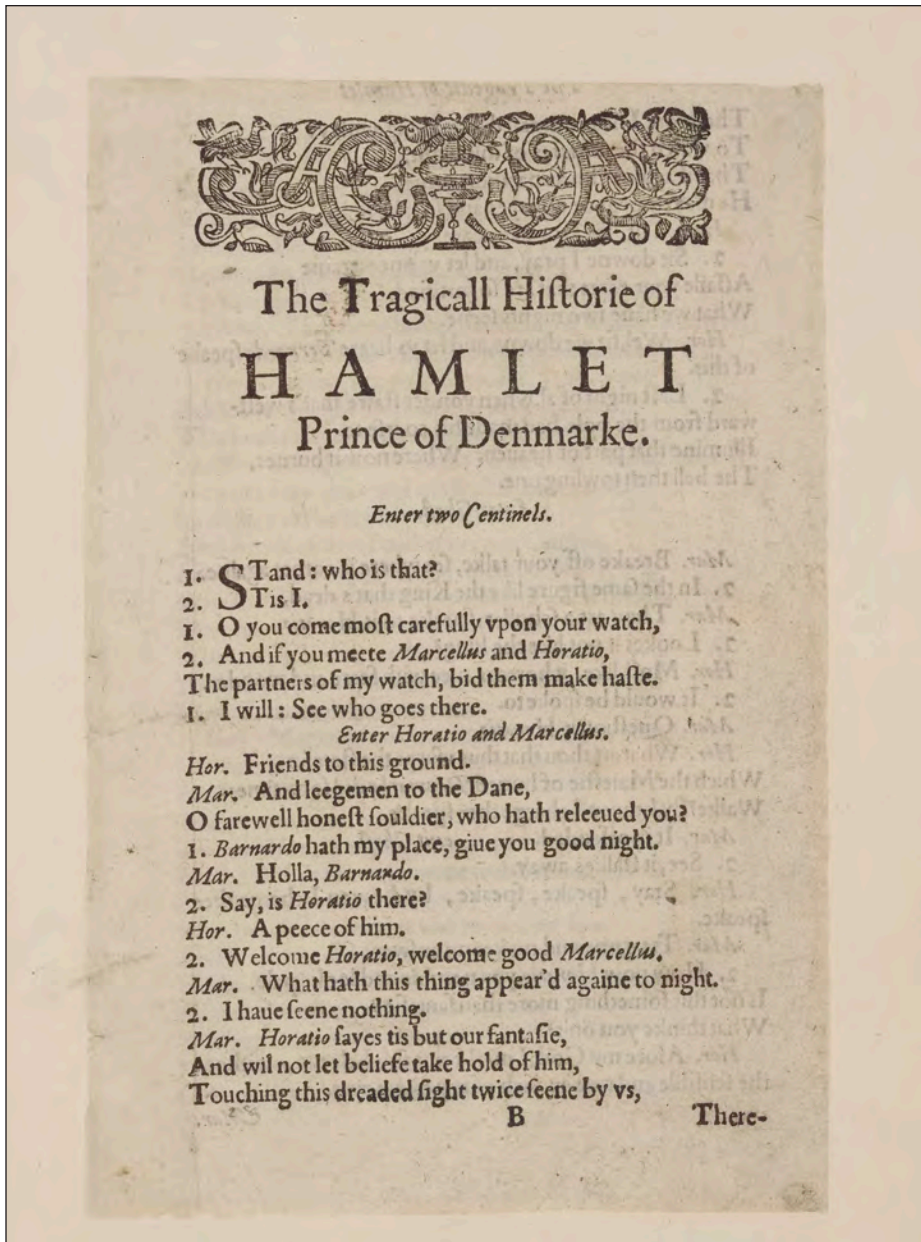
Figure 5. First page Q1 *Hamlet* (London, 1603; STC: 22275), B1r. Call # 69304, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

as Leartes's own stage direction leap does. Hamlet's italicized name as a result receives more visual emphasis than it would have had it appeared immediately after an italicized stage direction. Q2 and F, which do not contain the famous stage direction, let Hamlet ask a rhetorical question, to which the answer is 'This is I, / *Hamlet* the Dane', spread across two lines (Q2 M4v; F1 278/pp5v).[29] The 1603 readers received a unique typographic sequence that drives towards Hamlet's dramatic social re-emergence.

Contexts, Critics, Conclusions

There have always been literary texts crafted deliberately for the eie: a notable example is the substantial body of pattern poetry (figured poetry, concrete poetry, calligrams, technopaegnia, etc.) in continuous production from classical to present times.[30] Scholarship has appreciated how some early modern authors wrote for the eie in subtle ways; most critics readily identify Edmund Spenser as a poet of the eie as much as of the eare.[31] But this article is not about such deliberate inventions. I instead argue that a larger portion of more visually quotidian early modern literary production, including playtexts, ought to be situated nearer to such works on the visual spectrum. In considering where Q1 *Hamlet* falls, we might turn our attention to its publisher, Nicholas Ling (aka Lyng), the preferred publisher of Spenserian poet and sonneteer Michael Drayton. Ling was a publisher who valued Shakespeare more as a poet than a playwright, according to Terri Bourus.[32] She notes that the Q1 *Hamlet* is the only first edition play from the commercial playhouses published by Ling and, remarking on the text's few musical cues along with the absence of actors' names and duplicated stage directions, she agrees with Lesser and Stallybrass that this play looks more like a literary text than a typical playtext.[33] How might the visual play noted above compare to Drayton's?

Drayton's sonnet sequences *Idea* and *Idea's Mirror* do not seem visually exemplary, and yet they illuminate how a typical early modern English poet and/or a publisher may deliberately draw on typographic effects. Drayton heavily curated the printed editions of his sonnets, which appeared in some fifteen editions and reprints bearing one or neither of those two titles above over the course of twenty seven years.[34]

The sonnet 'NOthing but no and I, and I and no' (P1v) hinges on the relationship between two key words: 'no' and 'I'. (See Figure 6.) The clever poem manages the typical sonnet addressee's resistance to the speaker's romantic advances through apophasis: what, ultimately, the no negates or even refers to is further
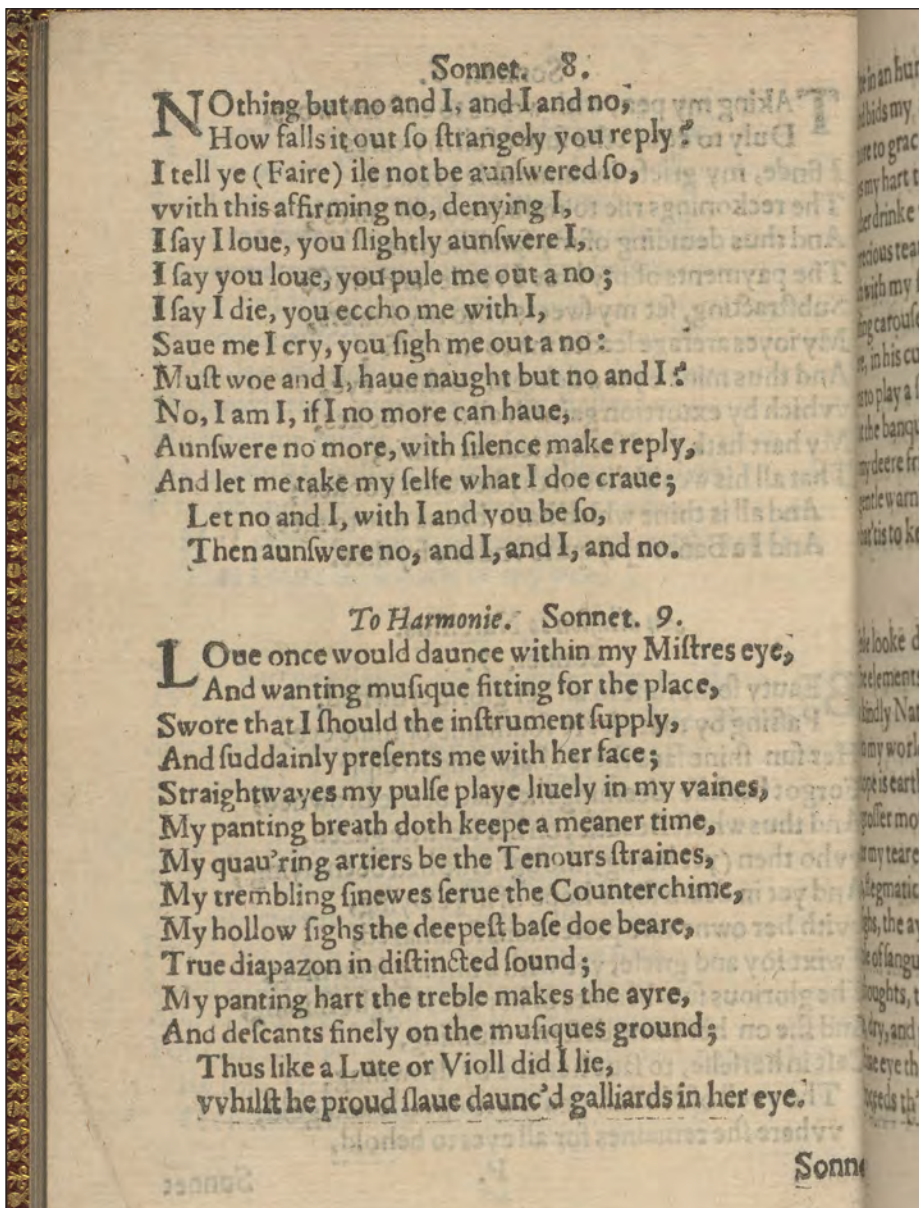
Sonnet. 8.

NOthing but no and I, and I and no,
 How falls it out so strangely you reply?
I tell ye (Faire) ile not be aunswered so,
vvith this affirming no, denying I,
I say I loue, you slightly aunswere I,
I say you loue, you pule me out a no ;
I say I die, you eccho me with I,
Saue me I cry, you sigh me out a no :
Must woe and I, haue naught but no and I?
No, I am I, if I no more can haue,
Aunswere no more, with silence make reply,
And let me take my selfe what I doe craue;
    Let no and I, with I and you be so,
    Then aunswere no, and I, and I, and no.

To Harmonie.   Sonnet. 9.

LOue once would daunce within my Mistres eye,
 And wanting musique fitting for the place,
Swore that I should the instrument supply,
And suddainly presents me with her face;
Straightwayes my pulse playe liuely in my vaines,
My panting breath doth keepe a meaner time,
My quau'ring artiers be the Tenours straines,
My trembling sinewes serue the Counterchime,
My hollow sighs the deepest base doe beare,
True diapazon in distincted sound ;
My panting hart the treble makes the ayre,
And descants finely on the musiques ground;
    Thus like a Lute or Violl did I lie,
    vvhilst he proud slaue daunc'd galliards in her eye.

Sonne

Figure 6. "Nothing but no and I, and I and no," Michael Drayton, Englands heroicall epistles. Nevvly enlarded. VVith Idea. By Michaell Drayton (London, 1602; STC: 7197), P1v. STC 7197, Houghton Library, Harvard University

complicated by the tensions generated in the typographically conflated I/aye. The mostly palindromic first line suggests immediately that the poem will be exploiting a reversal of the Faire's position; it concludes with the same chiasmus, suggesting the reversal worked. While the moments when the speaker means I or aye can be more or less distinguished (as modernized spelling editions demonstrate), it is quite clear that altering the orthography severely compromises the full semantic effects of visual punning. The poem operates on an incredibly minimal visual vocabulary. Of the 125 words total in the poem, I and no (or no's variants: naught, not, nothing) make up roundly one third of them, and just four words — no, I, and, you — comprise forty-five percent of the text. While this poem's efficiency is clever, it also does not seem to read itself as atypical. Metatextual moments typical of early modern English sonnets appear within other poems of Drayton's sequence.

The most well-known of all sonnet sequences, Shakespeare's *Sonnets,* shares a similar visual efficiency. The Will sonnets pun on both the sounds and the spellings of key words. In addition to playing with the sounds of will, fill, and full, these lines from Sonnet 136 also play with how full (or not ful) of lls the very words are:

> Thus farre for loue, my loue-ſute ſweet fullfill.
> *Will*, will fulfill the treaſure of thy loue,
> I fill it full with wils, and my will one, (I1r)[35]

In a poem invested in sophisticated linguistic number play, the orthographic account performs the way a single sound may be perceived when represented as either a single or double letter. Thus 'wils' and 'wills' are ful(l) of many wils/wills: semantically, acoustically, and graphically.

Some critics of *Sonnets* and other early modern lyric poetry have been reading visually and acoustically, acknowledging the significant contributions of the visual poetic experience of these works to their meaning-making. Helen Vendler sees words within words, for example the sun's **car** in Sonnet 7 unleashes g**rac**ious, s**acr**ed, and t**rac**t, and its aging spawns hom**age**, **age** (x2), **gold**en, and pilgrim-**age** (B2rv). Couched in more tentative language, she suggests that the golden sun (since the French word for 'gold' is *or*) generates French-English puns in **or**ient, ad**or**e, m**or**tal, f**or**e.[36] She points to significant spelling choices unique to printed editions, characterizing Sonnet 9 as a 'Fantasy on the Letter W' initiated by the near-palindromic properties of the Quarto spelling of 'widdow' (B2v).[37] This reading appreciates the visual balances of words and even letters made manifest through spelling.

One might argue that, because these examples appear in the often more meticulously constructed, self-contained genre of lyric and because Shakespeare may have exercised more control over his lyrical work in print, there is stronger justification for attending to the particular orthographic choices of *Sonnets.* And yet these poems originate with the author of plays that naturalize sonnets or sonnet-like pieces in their dialogue and that feature characters composing sonnets for one another. The plays also include word anagrams like Thurio's 'sonnet' and 'onset' in *Two Gentlemen of Verona,* and name anagrams like Cordelia and Lear in *King Lear* as well as the anagrammatic triad Viola-Malvolio-Olivia in *Twelfth Night.* The readers of the plays may have also been (and likely were) also the readers of Shakespeare's poetry; some certainly came to his plays through his poetry as his name gradually achieved more recognition as that of a playwright, and many other contemporaneous poets also wrote plays.

The stakes of this approach involve the status of visual language as a bearer of information in the early modern era.[38] The gateway phenomenon for contemporary non-bibliographer critics into the challenges of early modern spelling has typically been the pun. Stephen Booth, the pun-sensitive editor of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* known for his exhaustive commentaries on the resonances of individual words, grudgingly admits in a long discussion about the spelling and punctuation of Sonnet 129 that 'an ocular pun on *proud* (= modern "proved") and proud (= modern "proud") may have momentarily crossed a Renaissance reader's mind' (H3v).[39] For Booth, a spelling choice can potentially become an orthographic signal in the context of a line, maybe extending as far as an entire sonnet, but in the context of an entire playtext it achieves nothing more than orthographic peculiarity.

What he had in mind with orthographic peculiarity was something like what Stallybrass and de Grazia point out in *Macbeth,* in which our contemporary words hair and heir appear as hair, heir, heire, and here and as heir, aire, are, haire, and here respectively.[40] These puns are not motivated by context. To early modern eies unaccustomed to ideal forms of vernacular words, what is the relationship of the things we now designate as hair and heir to all of those other spelled forms? What is the status of the physical form of the word on the early modern page as signifier? What does it tell us about the early modern understanding of written language?

Some critics like Jonathan Hope would have the eies imagining a single, platonic word realized orally with many different visual instantiations appearing in spellings, which he calls 'signals'. This approach contrasts with the contemporary eye's one-to-one sign-to-signifier, that is, one word to its one (occasionally

two) fixed spelling correspondent.[41] It also calls for the active participation of the reader in the text as she or he reads, overlooking the 'surface level of spelling' and determining which 'word' is intended.

This approach makes perfect sense in most cases. But early modern writers who so eagerly exploit the verbal pun also could turn to visual resources for semiotic expansion in the visually sensitive culture of the early modern world. Even the prescriptive George Puttenham, who deplores a weaker poet's use of 'vntrue orthographie to wrench his words to helpe his rime', concedes that tweaking spelling might productively advance both visual as well as aural rhyme:

> [I]t is ſomewhat more tollerable to help the rime by falſe orthographie, then to leaue an vnpleasant diſſonance to the eare, by keeping trewe orthographie and looſing the rime, as for example it is better to rime [*Dore*] with [*Restore*] then his truer orthographie, which is [*Doore*].[42]

The point here is not only that some rhymes may emerge — whether in sound or appearance — only through orthography but also that poets did selectively alter spellings for poetic purposes, and the visual appearance of the poem mattered. Rhyme in this formulation works on the eie as well as the eare. Puns, I argue, work the same way.

De Grazia has commented on the centrality of punning to early modern thought itself, speculating that Renaissance puns 'literally made sense; that is, they constituted sense through their copious troping resources rather than representing it as something pre-existent in mind or world'.[43] Critics tend to focus only on the aural pun. Even de Grazia's influential article begins with the centrality of the aural pun bear to *The Winter's Tale*, showing how it resonates from bearing a child, a 'barne' (F1 288/Aa6v), to the famous 'Exit, pursued by a Beare' (F1 288/Aa6v) stage direction.[44] In Jonathan Hope's understanding of Renaissance linguistics, puns are oral because the written word or words only signal the appropriate (oral) referents involved and do not reference other similarly written words. According to his theory, the various punning possibilities already exist in the minds of readers when they see a written word, and, should the context call upon multiple such options, a pun is activated.

My claim is that orthographic puns are not mere surface play to be brushed aside in search of a holy grail word but rather one function in the literary work of the graphic letter as it links ideas. The visual effects of language materialized through orthography also constituted sense in the way de Grazia describes the sense-making of aural language. These effects may be local: proved (spelled

'proud') and proud may be meaningfully linked in the tightly packed literary landscape of Sonnet 129. Effects may also be cumulative across a larger work, like the playscape of *Merchant of Venice,* as Marc Shell has argued in his reading of the visual and verbal punning generated through 'Iewes' and words including Jews, use/usury, ewes, jewels, etc.[45] Perhaps *Macbeth*'s early modern readers may have also located meaningful connections between heir and here since Duncan's heir is mostly not here, that is to say not in Scotland. A word might take many different forms on the page, and those forms constituted the word's presence in the physical world of the text. Words had both an aural existence that linked them to other words and a physical existence that linked them visually to other words in the text (and outside of it). But these associations only make sense contextually. I agree with de Grazia and Stallybrass that the single early modern word is always enmeshed in a semantic field of acoustic (and visual) cognates, but it is a semantic field that the physical, self-contained form of the text itself determines. Drama, poetry, and Renaissance literary writing could toy with orthography to unlock and widen the semantic field and generate meaning. In the wilds of nonstandardized English orthography and typesetting practices aimed to preserve type and to physically fit pieces into a line, early modern printing was homophonic and homographic.

Rather than a barrier to close reading, I see particular spellings and typographic features — however they got there — as a gateway into the richness of early modern vernacular reading. Early modern readers and their texts reside at the intersection of four practices that encourage this approach: (1) an attentiveness to visuals within an ongoing manuscript culture and its medieval inheritance, and a visual approach to early modern printing that frequently involves pictorial elements such as printer's flowers, decorative borders, decorated initials, even varieties of type;[46] (2) a reading practice engendered in Renaissance Latin reading pedagogy that relentlessly cycles vowels through consonantal combinations and isolates phonemes from word contexts; (3) sixteenth-century inquiries into, and experimentation with, vernacular English as a literary language in all forms of literary expression; and (4) the influence of vernacular oralities in the playhouse and the mixed oral and written transmission of poetry, along with the lack of standardized orthography and other writing and printing practices (for example, abbreviations or the insertion of letters to protect serifs on type). Early modern writing itself was a highly self-conscious visual and material practice, exploratory of and interactive with both its physical material supports and its alphabetic ones. In a book dedicated to writing on a variety of materials from walls to pots to bodies, Juliet Fleming asserts that 'paper was not necessarily the most obvious,

or suitable, medium for writing in early modern England'.[47] Wherever and however encountered, playtexts, poetry, and often other kinds of early modern texts encourage readers to read aurally, visually and for multiple meanings.

Poet John Powell Ward identifies such typographical and orthographical wordplay as a feature available to, and characteristic of, alphabetical languages due to the limited number of letters available for word making. He describes a 'microscopic but perpetual stress in all our reading', modulated by what he calls the centripetal and centrifugal effects of spelling with only twenty-four letters.[48] The contemporary poet must draw out the resonances, recognize and render meaningful the words within words. Ward suggests the potential psychological effects of daily reading's 'nano-experiences'[49]—words within words, anagrams, near-misses like **cover** and **co**w**er** — that must colour our comprehension of contemporary texts. But the average early modern English readers had a readier eie and eare for such play. 'Cover' might have been rendered covver, couer, or couuer, categorizing such words not as near-misses but as part of the same semantic grouping. The period's orthography and typography tend to foreground the materiality of words saturated with latent connectivity.

Scholars who take aim at literary interpretation through book history are continually confronted with the challenge of relating form to content as they grapple with what Jerome McGann has called the critical separation of the linguistic code from the bibliographic one.[50] Without such multiple motivating factors as plot, context, rhyme, metrical stress, and repetition, the play of typography must register as visual background noise. In another era, this paper might have taken a psychological approach, like Wilbern's 'Shakespeare's Nothing'. But it is important to ground this inquiry in the Q1 text as a visual object engaging readers materially in its unique poetic resonances. The reading I offer here can certainly be performed on Q2 or F1 (or most early modern literary texts) with different, likely interesting, results. The First Folio, in fact, actively encourages a visual approach to the text in its prefatory materials. On its first printed page, Ben Jonson's verse 'To the Reader' playfully places the visuals of image reproductive technology — copperplate engraving — on a spectrum with printed text as it encourages readers to 'looke, / Not on his Picture, but his Booke' — using ellipsis to highlight that readers engage in the same activity (looking on) with both pictures and books. Folio editors John Heminge and Henry Condell's prefatory 'To the Great Variety of Readers' bills the book as available to anyone who can see letters: 'From the moſt able, to him that can but ſpell'. Looking irresistibly back on Q1, we can note that its title page and the first page both pair image with text, as is common printed texts of the period. (See Figure 5 for the first page.) My

choice to read Q1 visually rests in a desire to recoup some of its poetics for literary study by reading its texture as visually and acoustically effectual in generating its meanings.

Such textual performances of the play tend to nuance and enhance rather than radically revise our understanding of Q1. We see ideas clustering together through a potent mix of orthographic and acoustic equivalencies, or particular thematic strands highlighted through page layout and font. With the 'to be or not to be' soliloquy, orthography renders visible the verbally suppressed first person. It is time to let typography and orthography speak, and update our critical practices by acknowledging the visual semantics of early modern playtexts.

Notes

1   D.F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge UK, 2004), 21, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511483226.

2   See Peter Stallybrass and Margreta de Grazia, 'The Materiality of the Shakespearean Text', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 44.3 (1993), 266, http://doi.org/10.2307/2871419. Two notable exceptions are Jeffrey Masten's recent *Queer Philologies: Sex, Language and Affect in Shakespeare's Time* (Philadelphia, 2016) and my *Playful Letters: A Study of Early Modern Alphabetics* (Iowa City, 2017).

3   As contemporary editions of the plays do not capture the play of early modern typography, I provide only signatures as citations to Q1 (*The tragicall historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke by William Shake-speare* [London, 1603; STC: 22275]), Q2 (*The tragicall historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke. By William Shakespeare* [London, 1604; STC: 22276]), and F1 (*Mr. VVilliam Shakespeares comedies, histories, & tragedies. Published according to the true originall copies* [London, 1623; 22273]). Facsimiles of the entire Shakespearean corpus are freely available online through *Internet Shakespeare Editions,* although I am mindful that variants always exist among single early modern editions.

4   For an overview of these histories and editorial responses, see Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, 'Introduction' and 'Appendix 2', Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (eds), *Hamlet,* Arden Shakespeare (London, 2006). Indicative of how entrenched the bibliographic approach is, the 2017 Norton Shakespeare's online bibliography for Q1 includes only works treating genesis theories or editing issues.

5   In their 'The First Literary *Hamlet* and the Commonplacing of Professional Plays', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 59.4 (2008), 371–420, http://doi.org/10.1353/shq.0.0040, Lesser and Stallybrass read the commonplace markers in the text as indicative of the intended literary reception of Q1. Since then, scholarship has begun to step away from bibliographic questions but still retains an interest in book historical ones.

See Terri Bourus, *Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet: Print, Piracy, and Performance* (New York, 2014) and Zachary Lesser, *Hamlet After Q1: An Uncanny History of the Shakespearean Text* (Philadelphia, 2016). An important character study is Deanne Williams, 'Enter Ofelia Playing on a Lute', Kaara Peterson (ed), *The Afterlife of Ophelia* (New York, 2012), 119-36, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137016461_8. Kirk Melnikoff's 'Nicholas Ling's Republican Hamlet (1603)', Marta Straznicky (ed), *Shakespeare's Stationers: Studies in Cultural Bibliography* (Philadelphia, 2013), 95-111, uses Corambis to situate the playtext and its producers within political dynamics.

6   Bourus reads this line as Q2 announcing its 'freshness'; *Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet,* 26.

7   Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, *Hamlet*, 505.

8   Line four in the Drayton poem reproduced in figure 6 typographically articulates the letter, but as vv.

9   In its dual role as power and pour, **powre** is also a crux from the First Folio's *Anthony and Cleopatra*:

> And hauing lost her breath, ſhe ſpoke, and panted,
> That ſhe did make deſect, perſection,
> And breathleſſe **powre** breath forth. (F1 347/x4r; TLN 946–8)

Some editors have glossed the line as 'And, breathless, pour breath forth'; see John Wilders (ed.), *Anthony and Cleopatra* (London, 2006), 141 and Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (eds), *The Complete Works* (Oxford, 1988), 1011. Eighteenth-century editor Edward Capell and his inheritors have unraveled it as something like 'And, breathless, breathe forth power'; Capell calls it "power of charming" which "Cleopatra breath'd forth even by being breathless (*Notes and various readings to Shakespeare, part the first; containing,* All's well that ends well*, Antony and Cleopatra*, As you like it*, Comedy of Errors*, Coriolanus*, Cymbeline*, Hamlet*, 1 Henry IV*, 2 Henry IV, London, 1774, Q1r). See also Wilders, *Antony and Cleopatra*, 141. Others have offered 'And breathe forth breathless power'; see Norman Blake, *A Grammar of Shakespeare's Language* (Basingstoke, NY, 2002), 2.3.2,31, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4039-1915-1). Thanks to the anonymous reviewer who reminded me of this controversy.

10 On the variable pronunciation of pour, see E.J. Dobson, *English Pronunciation 1500–1700* (Oxford, 1968), 2.688–9. David Crystal's entries for power and pour match the phonetics of these words in *The Oxford Dictionary of Original Shakespearean Pronunciation* (Oxford, 2016).

11 Taking account of spelling, orthoepists' writing, and rhyme and homophone lists among other sources, Dobson cites many examples in which the contemporary-spelled

doe, do, dow, dough, or doo might be rhymed with our contemporary to, tow, two, toe, go, goo, shoe, who, woo; Dobson, *English Pronunciation*, 1,18, 418, and 433–4; 2.514–15. We typically pronounce due similarly with a 'diu' sound, but one grammarian notes that ado and adieu are 'near-alike' (Ibid, 2.707).

12 Ibid, 'Preface to the First Edition', vii.

13 The generational gap renders Crystal's excellent study of limited use for present purposes since his conclusions depend on 'spellings, rhymes, puns, and observations by contemporary writers'. Generally he considers 'printer's rhymes' or 'eye rhymes' to be infrequent although he admits these exist and he comments that more research needs to focus on slant rhymes. Crystal, *Oxford Dictionary*, xx, xxiii.

14 The King is unnamed in Q1.

15 Corambis immediately continues the connection between duetie and doe on the top of this same page's verso, and sig. E3v contains an exchange between Hamlet ('And doe you heare ſirs'?) and Gilderstone ('Our loue and duetie is at your commaund').

16 While due and do are not pronounced similarly according to Crystal's study of First Folio pronunciation, adue (which does not appear there) links the two.

17 While dupt may be part of this group, it seems unlikely. Crystal notes that it would have been pronounced differently in the First Folio.

18 Of special relevance here is Randall McLeod, 'Spellbound: Typography and the Concept of Old-Spelling Editions', *Renaissance and Reformation* n.s. 3.1 (1979), 50–65.

19 Kathleen Irace, 'Introduction', *The First Quarto of* Hamlet, ed. Kathleen Irace (New York, 1998), 16.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid, 9

22 David Willbern, 'Shakespeare's Nothing', Murray M. Schwartz and Coppélia Kahn (eds), *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays* (Baltimore, 1982), 244–63.

23 Resonances of this appear in Polonius's Q2 and F scheme to 'looſe' his daughter on Hamlet. In Q1, this language applies to Hamlet as the King plots his death on the same page's recto and verso: his nephew 'shall aboorde to night' (G4r) where he will 'looſe his head' (G4v) at the king of England's hands.

24 Q2 prints 'fonde deedes'. F1 matches with Q1. This closing couplet about eies before Leartes and Ofelia's leave-taking is visually striking, with 'till' and 'sit' as partial anagrams of 'still' and the base word ill as a common denominator.

25 Q2 and F1 emphasize the connection through capitalization only, with 'state of Denmark' and 'State of Denmark', respectively.

26 Q2 and F1 both print the combined 'afternoone' (Q2 D3r; F1 258/oo1v).

27 D1r also toys with the 'I' sound in its hunting calls ('Ill, lo, lo, ho ho') near the start of this stichomythic call and response.

28 On the I/eye dynamic, see Joel Fineman, *Shakespeare's Perjured Eye: The Invention of Poetic Subjectivity in the Sonnets* (Berkeley, 1986).

29 I have used a slash to indicate a line break in the prose. Compare Q2's

> What is he whoſe griefe
> Beares ſuch an empheſis, whoſe phraſe of ſorrow
> Coniures the wandring ſtarres, and makes them ſtand
> Like wonder wounded hearers: this is I
> *Hamlet* the Dane'. (M4v)

30 See Dick Higgins, *Pattern Poetry: Guide to An Unknown Literature* (Albany, 1987). Of note in the late sixteenth century are Thomas Watson, *Hekatompathia* (London, 1582; STC: 25118a) and King James I, *The essayes of a prentise, in the divine art of poesie* (London, 1585; STC: 14374).

31 Statistical computational analysis has recently challenged the actual archaism of Spenser's orthography, but that work does not address his strategic deployment of existing orthographic fluidity to emphatic effects — the unique *Faerie* in *The Faerie Queene* (London, 1590; STC: 23081) signals Spenser's commitments to this practice. See Anupam Basu, 'Spenser's Spell: Linguistic Change and Historical Stylometrics', presentation (Northeastern University, Boston MA, 3 March 2016); Matthew Woodcock, 'The First Sightings of Spenser's Faeries', *Notes and Queries* 50.4 (2003), 390–1, http://doi.org/10.1093/nq/500390; and Jeffrey Paul Eicholz, 'Play in the Poetry of Edmund Spenser', PhD thesis, (Yale University, 1970), 114.

32 Bourus emphasizes that Ling was Drayton's preferred publisher (*Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet*, 18, 20). John Trundle also published the play, and he would go on to a larger investment in publishing commercial theatre plays (Ibid, 23).

33 Ibid, 20–1. Ling also published the third edition of Ben Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour* in the same year as Q1. Perhaps Jonson's investment in the look of his plays (especially the use of tobacco smoke 'as parenthesis') influenced Ling's work on Q1. See Ben Jonson, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, ed. Helen Ostovich (Manchester, 2001), 10, n 3.3.73.

34 Signature numbers reference Michael Drayton, *Englands heroicall epistles. Nevvly enlarged. VVith Idea* (London, 1602; STC: 7197).

35 Citations reference William Shakespeare, *Shake-speares sonnets. Neuer before imprinted* (London, 1609; STC: 22353).

36 Helen Vendler, *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Cambridge MA, 1997), 76. I have retained Vendler's modernization of the typography here and in all subsequent modern critical quotations.

37 Ibid, 84.

38 Masten insists that relational knowledge is importantly preserved in early modern orthography in *Queer Philologies*. For a pan-European view of how early moderns reimagined alphabetic letters, see my *Playful Letters.*

39 The full line reads 'A bliſſe in proof and proud and very wo'. (Most editors emend the second and to a.) Stephen Booth, *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (New Haven, 1978), 448. For his take on how early modern readers saw orthography, see vii–viii.

40 Stallybrass and de Grazia, 'The Materiality of the Shakespearean Text', 265–6.

41 Jonathan Hope, *Shakespeare and Language: Reason, Eloquence and Artifice in the Renaissance* (London, 2010), 90–3, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511617379.

42 George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesy* (London, 1589; stc: 20519), 2.67.

43 Margreta *de Grazia, 'Homonyms Before and After Lexical* Standardization', *Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft West: Jahrbuch* 127 (1990), 143–156, here 155–6.

44 Ibid, 143–152.

45 Marc Shell, 'The Wether and the Ewe: Verbal Usury in *The Merchant of Venice*', *The Kenyon Review* 1.4 (1979), 47–92.

46 See Juliet Fleming, 'How Not to Look at a Printed Flower', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies Spring* 38.2 (2008): 345–71, http://doi.org/10.1215/10829636-2007-029.

47 Juliet Fleming, *Graffiti and the Writing Arts of Early Modern England* (Philadelphia, 2001), 10.

48 John Powell Ward, *The Spell of the Song: Letters, Meaning, and English Poetry* (Madison NJ, 2004), 157.

49 Ibid, 156.

50 Jerome J. McGann, *The Textual Condition* (Princeton, 1991), 56.