

AN ESSAY ON CULTURAL CRITICISM AND SITES OF
CULTURAL PRODUCTION

by

Georgina Elizabeth Hildick-Smith

**A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of MASTER OF
ARTS**

**Department of English
School of English, Drama and American & Canadian Studies
College of Arts and Law
University of Birmingham
September 2018**

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham Research Archive

e-theses repository

This unpublished thesis/dissertation is copyright of the author and/or third parties. The intellectual property rights of the author or third parties in respect of this work are as defined by The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 or as modified by any successor legislation.

Any use made of information contained in this thesis/dissertation must be in accordance with that legislation and must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the permission of the copyright holder.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank wholeheartedly my supervisor at Birmingham, Tom Lockwood: his enthusiasm, support, and acuity have been invaluable in the construction and execution of this project.

CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Chapter One: Critical Consciousness in the Classroom – The Intuitive Practitioner	8
Chapter Two: Critical Consciousness – The Conceptualisation of a Curriculum	18
Chapter Three: Critical Consciousness – The (Re)Conceptualisation of a Curriculum	29
Chapter Four: Critical Consciousness – The Conceptualisation of the Study of ‘English Literature’	37
Chapter Five: Critical Consciousness – The Conceptualisation of ‘Literature’; or, the Role of the (Un)Common Reader	44
Chapter Six: Critical Consciousness: Conceptualisations of Culture and Cultural Value	51
Culture and Cultural Value (1)	51
The Phenomenological Approach	63
Culture and Cultural Value (2)	67
Chapter Seven: Critical Consciousness in Engagement with John Webster: A Case Study	77
Webster at the Red Bull	77
Webster at the Sam Wanamaker Theatre	88
Chapter Eight: New Sites for Critical Consciousness in the Twenty-First Century – (Re)Conceptualisations of the Moment of Experience in Theatre Reviewing and Live Broadcast Performances	93
Theatre Reviewing	93
Live Broadcasts	99

Conclusion; or, the Impossibility of Concluding	111
Bibliography	114

INTRODUCTION

Central to this project is the exploration of a habit of mind: an ongoing critical consciousness which responds actively and interactively with sites of cultural production and, by so doing, creates meaning and value. This will be both what I will explore in this thesis and also what I will seek to demonstrate in my approach. In doing this, I wish to explore specific contexts and ‘readers’ who demonstrate, or may be encouraged to demonstrate, such an approach.

The genesis of this project came about through my interest as an English teacher in what and how I am ‘teaching’, particularly how I might encourage a way of thinking to and with a text, rather than inculcate prepared responses. So this thesis will begin in the classroom and with what it means – or might mean – to be an English teacher. I then wish to consider various key terms and concepts at the heart of what I do, applying both my own critical consciousness and also those of others who have participated in these debates: I will explore conceptions of the subject ‘English literature’ and how it might be taught, including discussion of the National Curriculum; I will also look at the development of the subject and the ways in which the subject of ‘English literature’ has come to be part of an academic framework, rather than the premise of Victorian ‘men of letters’. From this, I want to broaden the discussion to situate literature within the context of culture and its later descendant, cultural value, looking to critically interrogate all of these terms, such that I am applying a critical habit of mind to what I teach and also its contextualisation. For the purposes of this thesis, I have taken culture to mean the interactions across a wide set of personal, institutional and artistic practices; I have taken cultural value to mean the ways both that value is produced in those interactions and the way in which value is attributed, at different times and for different reasons, to those cultural practices. These terms – ‘English literature’ and ‘culture’ – form the basis of much of what I do on a day-to-day basis in the classroom and yet such concepts do not always receive sustained critical attention: this thesis is intended to allow me the space to rectify this.

I then wish to consider a case study, using Early Modern drama: I intend to put into practice some of the material I will have discussed regarding conceptualisations of value and also how one may engage with a specific text or theatrical event, in considering John Webster’s two best-known works, *The Duchess of Malfi* and also *The White Devil*. This section will in some ways close the circle by looking more widely at responses to plays which I also teach in the

classroom in their current and contemporary cultural contexts and how readers/audiences then and now may respond to them.

The crucial figures in my argument will be the Victorian poet and essayist Matthew Arnold, the critic Stanley Fish and – to a lesser extent – the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl. Whilst these figures are of course separated in time, my interest is in the parallels in their thinking: not only in their focus on the consciousness of their own consciousnesses engaging with the text or situation, but perhaps more importantly the significance each places on, essentially, the suspension of both a final judgement and the provision of conclusions. All three conclude by *not* concluding. Thus an *ongoing* critical consciousness is fostered, such that the text or experience can always be engaged with afresh and in-the-moment. The interaction between an active, critical mind and a text or experience is key.

These moments of encounter often take place within a ‘critical community’, as well as the individual critical consciousness. Teaching, literature (studied and, in the case of drama, performed and watched), and culture itself are all dependent on communities of interpretation and communities of practice, often within a site of cultural production: not only this, but all three depend for their very conceptualisation on the creation of, or an engagement with, a community of interpretation or, as Stanley Fish famously termed it, an ‘interpretive community’.¹ Each new encounter with a text then creates again a new community, a new process of interpretation, and a new interaction. Importantly, it is the *process* of this community, as much as the product, which is of value. I am also aware that these communities are what give (or deny) ‘value’ to a text.

I will then conclude by looking forward into the new avenues for critical engagement offered by the twenty-first century, specifically how the digital age is reworking our conceptions of time, cultural hierarchy, and also of seeing. With the advent of recorded performances, theatrical reviewing can be liberated from its somewhat uneasy position of recording a single performance in the present and yet in a ‘timeless present’; online archives of theatre reviews and also the new closeness of the academic and the journalistic reviewing communities permit new approaches and revisions. Viewing platforms such as YouTube allow striking

¹ Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*, (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp.13-14.

juxtapositions of material which overturn conventional hierarchies of approach and also make available recordings which may not have been seen for decades. The rise of the ‘live broadcast’ – from the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company, to name two – is providing us with new and exciting ways of engaging with such events in new sites of cultural production.

The role of the active reader or spectator – aware of his or her own consciousness and its interaction with the text, concept or situation before them – is at the heart of this project: without it, there is only entropy. I intend to begin where the germ of this thesis began: in my own classroom and teaching practice.

CHAPTER ONE

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE CLASSROOM: THE INTUITIVE PRACTITIONER

The classroom is where many students first become part of an interpretive community and this is where they will hopefully begin to sharpen a critical consciousness which questions, rather than accepts. The classroom is doubly important as a starting place, because I argue that the teacher's own critical consciousness is crucial in not only developing this skill within pupils, but also in honing his or her own teaching practice. This is because in order for teachers to tailor their lessons as specifically as they can towards the needs of the students in front of them, they should aim 'to see the object [in this case, the lesson] as in itself it really is' and, whilst also *being part of* the lesson, maintain a 'disinterestedness' which permits them to be responding to the lesson *as a whole* and as it is, rather than as the lesson plan says it should be.¹ This response to the lesson *as it is in progress* may involve shifting the whole aim of the lesson if necessary in order to try to reach the best outcome for the students.²

So how does one reach this sort of practice in the classroom? My educational trajectory as a student of English Literature at an independent, co-educational school and then at Oxford University gave me access to certain ways of studying and defining Literature. My career now as an English teacher has made me even more aware of the way in which I, and the children I teach, approach this discipline; I have also become more interested in the way I can facilitate the engagement and enjoyment of children in their studying English literature, as I create and manage an interpretive community within the classroom and enable the honing of the critical consciousness. I wish to consider what it means to 'teach' literature, by considering the changes in approach to teacher training and also my own point of view as a self-taught – and subsequently and regularly validated – classroom practitioner.

The attitude towards teacher training and pupil education in English has shifted a great deal over the course of the twentieth century and continues to change into the twenty-first. This

¹ The concepts and phrasing here acknowledge Matthew Arnold's conception of criticism.

² Peter John, 'Awareness and intuition: how student teachers read their own lessons', in *The Intuitive Practitioner: On the value of not always knowing what one is doing*, ed. by Terry Atkinson and Guy Claxton, (Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000), pp.84-106, (p.88).

echoed some of the shifts in wider movements and attitudes towards culture and literature: rigidity, passive reception and ‘closed’ systems in all of these areas were gradually exchanged for an encouragement to be excited and challenged by constant flux and renewal, rather than resistant to it. In this way, to use Stanley Fish’s terms, teaching practice began to move from considering a text (and lesson) as ‘an object, a thing-in-itself’ to thinking of a text (and lesson) as an ‘occurrence’.³ Even the style of questioning which has become increasingly highly regarded in classrooms is evidence of this shift, moving more towards open rather than closed questions and therefore being more about instigating thinking rather than about the right or wrong answer.⁴ Much of this is, of course, an implicit acknowledgement of the significance of the critical consciousness on the part of both the teacher and the students.

Is this shift particularly significant as regards English teaching? Does it mean anything different to be ‘an English teacher’, as opposed to a teacher of any subject? Oddly enough, it may do. When, nearly thirty years ago, Robert Protherough and Judith Atkinson surveyed one hundred ‘effective’ teachers, these were some of the responses:

Typical comments about ‘good relations with students’, ‘better relationships with children’, suggested in very broad terms that English teachers were ‘more sensitive to pupil needs’, ‘more aware of the centrality of the pupil’, ‘more understanding of young people’s sense of *their* world’, ‘more in touch with learners’, showing ‘a wish to connect with young people’s experiences’. This meant in school that ‘they tend to be more aware of process in learning’; they are more conscious of ‘collaborative learning, of the nature of learning, of the importance of affective and aesthetic development’; ‘their response to children’s work requires more flexibility/insight/penetration/work/time[...]’

Half of the sample felt that English teachers worked in the classroom in a different way from teachers of other subjects[...]⁵

They went further in defining how an English teacher and the subject itself is seen:

³ Fish, p.26.

⁴ Frank Hardman, ‘Promoting a dialogic pedagogy in English teaching’, in in *Debates in English Teaching*, edited by Jon Davison, Caroline Daly and John Moss (London: Routledge, 2011), pp.36-47.

⁵ Robert Protherough and Judith Atkinson, *The Making of English Teachers* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991), pp.13-14.

English has a special power to challenge conventions, institutions, governments, business interests – any established system. This resides in the fact that English is concerned with the uncontrollable power of a shared language that we all speak and the uncontrollable responses to what we read. The work of English teaching involves continual pressing for the expression of alternative ideas, inviting challenge to received opinions, seeking strong personal responses, establishing debate. The teacher's special relationship with students depends on democratic openness, not on knowing the answers.⁶

The 'democratic openness', rather than 'knowing the answers', is something to which I intend to return, as it is central to my argument about the involvement in process and performance, rather than passive reception. Implicitly suggested in Protherough and Atkinson's argument here is that many other curriculum subjects require a transfer of knowledge, of content; English, on the other hand, requires the present participles of '*pressing* for the expression of alternative ideas, *inviting* challenge [...] *seeking* strong personal responses, *establishing* debate' (my emphases). There is no closing down of the system, but instead a perpetual openness. Protherough and Atkinson also quoted the 1910 Board of Education report which, perhaps most remarkably of all, described the requirements of the practitioner as follows: 'No subject gives more scope for individuality of treatment or for varied experiment; in none is the personal quality of the teacher more important.'⁷ It would seem that English teaching is a monumental challenge to undertake.

In terms of what it means to 'be' an English teacher, Protherough and Atkinson note the importance of the Newbolt Report in 1921 for creating 'a climate in which English teaching as a specialized profession became inevitable'; this was a notable development after the rather belittling attitude of the preceding years.⁸ The Report established the following:

The recommendations of the Newbolt Report implied that such a person would require a literary training [...] a range of personal qualities [...] an ability to unlock the

⁶ Ibid. p.15.

⁷ Board of Education (1910). *The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools*. London, HMSO, para. 3, quoted in Protherough and Atkinson, p.15.

⁸ Ibid. pp.6-7.

creative potential of children [...] a social concern for all kinds of children and some (largely undefined) expertise in language [...] Nor was their chief concern the imparting of knowledge, but the changing of lives.⁹

This echoes the impressions of English teachers recorded by Protherough and Atkinson in their work seventy years later. As Stefan Collini noted in his book *Matthew Arnold: A Critical Portrait*, the Newbolt Report – with its focus on the significance of English teaching and the transmission of not only information but indeed a way of looking at the world – was also heavily influenced by Matthew Arnold, to whom I will return in greater detail later.¹⁰ So what might these impressive aims look like in practice? The Newbolt Report provided little practical detail about this: whilst this may seem frustrating, there is perhaps actually something rather liberating about such openness. Indeed, it is also in keeping with what Collini describes as one of Arnold's defining qualities in his writing of not necessarily proposing answers to the big questions; rather, 'we begin to be drawn to the habit of mind that emerges from the way in which he handles these questions.'¹¹ This focus on developing a way of thinking – rather than receiving information passively – is central to my argument about both the formation of teachers and learners.

Perhaps understandably, later developments in the century sought to quantify an approach towards 'becoming' an English teacher. In his book *The Expert Teacher of English*, Andrew Goodwyn wrote that the earlier PGCE courses required knowledge of the history, philosophy and sociology of education; these courses disappeared in the 1970s to be replaced by a competency model. He noted a corresponding shift in terminology: 'the term education *not training*, was, and is, significant'. For most of the previous century, teachers only received initial training and there was little or no support for a newly qualified teacher, as is indicated by the fact that the term NQT (Newly Qualified Teacher) is comparatively recent; it took until 1999 for an NQT to be offered any timetable reduction or mentor support. Goodwyn concluded that by comparison with other professions, 'this is an extraordinarily primitive model'.¹² His summary of the change in approach was that active engagement became more

⁹ Protherough and Atkinson, p.12.

¹⁰ Stefan Collini, *Matthew Arnold: A Critical Portrait* (Oxford: Clarendon, first published 1988, reissued 2008), p.112.

¹¹ Ibid. p.9.

¹² Andrew Goodwyn, *The Expert Teacher of English* (London: Routledge, 2011) p.59.

valuable than passive reception of set ideas and forms: the teacher him/herself became much more of a central figure in the process.

Making a teacher is not just about that initial training, as Goodwyn was at pains to point out. His book considered not only the genesis of the English teacher, but also the continued development of the professional. He noted the creation of Chartered Teachers in Scotland (and in some areas of England) and discussed the Advanced Skills Teacher as posts for those who continue to develop their own practice and, equally importantly, *that of others*. Since the publication of his book in 2011, the education sector has also seen the possibility of the Master Teacher. This is a role offered both in the state sector and also by some independent schools, such as Roedean: the Independent Schools Inspectorate's Report (March 2016) on the latter stated that 'The creation of master teachers, who share best practice within the school with their colleagues, has had an extremely positive impact on teaching and learning.'¹³ Master Teachers were also part of Labour's education policy as announced in 2014 by the then Shadow Education Secretary, Tristram Hunt.¹⁴ Such roles aim not only to acknowledge excellent teachers, but also to encourage them to remain in the classroom and share their best practice with others in what Goodwyn, using Lave and Wenger (1991), termed a 'community of practice' in which the knowledge is contained within that community.¹⁵ Rather than a learner gaining a body of knowledge which they then transport, '(s)he acquires the skill to perform by actually engaging in the process, under the attenuated conditions of *legitimate peripheral participation*', where a learner involves themselves to an extent in the practice of an expert.¹⁶ Crucial to this argument is defining meaning, understanding and learning as 'relative to actional contexts, not to self-contained structures'.¹⁷ In addition, the site of learning shifts:

Learning is a process that takes place in a participation framework, not in an individual mind. This means, among other things, that it is mediated by the

¹³ Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) Integrated Inspection Report of Roedean School, March 2016, via the Roedean website <<http://www.roedean.co.uk/ISI-Reports>> [accessed 31 May 2017] p.6-7.

¹⁴ Toby Helm, 'Master teachers' set to be new classroom elite', *Guardian*, Saturday 5th July 2014, <<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/jul/05/master-teachers-labour-education-tristram-hunt>> [accessed 31 May 2017].

¹⁵ Goodwyn, p.63-64.

¹⁶ Foreword by William F. Hanks to Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p.14.

¹⁷ Ibid. p.15.

differences of perspective among the coparticipants. It is the community, of at least those participating in the learning context, who “learn” under this definition. Learning is, as it were, distributed among coparticipants, not a one-person act. While the apprentice may be the one transformed most dramatically by increased participation in a productive process, it is the wider process that is the crucial locus and precondition for this transformation.¹⁸

Lave and Wenger’s belief that ‘agent, activity, and the world mutually constitute each other’¹⁹ and their awareness of the significance of ‘actional contexts’ rather than ‘self-contained structures’ sounds very similar to Stanley Fish’s statement:

I now believe that interpretation is the source of texts, facts, authors, and intentions. Or to put it another way, the entities that were once seen as competing for the right to constrain interpretation (text, reader, author) are now all seen to be the products of interpretation.²⁰

In either case, the sharing of and engaging with practice are crucial: the teacher joining that community should not be static. Instead, so that the community might develop and grow, ‘one must join the community, [and] be not just part of its activity but actively part of its development.’²¹ This is viewed positively, rather than as a cause for suspicion at the possibility of challenge to what might be termed established practice. As I will discuss later, a similar shift became apparent in the twentieth century in the attitude towards culture and literature, where the focus moved to consideration of the *effects* of culture and literature rather than merely its transferral from generation to generation in order to ensure its survival. Arnold’s ‘habit of mind’, in Collini’s phrase, is a forerunner of such an approach and Stanley Fish’s discussion of questions to ask of a text could also be applied to the shift in approaches to teaching, culture and literature: ‘what does this do? – with “do” equivocating between a reference to the action of the text on a reader and the actions performed by a reader as he negotiates (and, in some sense, actualizes) the text.’²² The ‘reader’ here is the pupil, the teacher, the theatre-goer, the participant in culture: the list goes on.

¹⁸ Ibid. p.15.

¹⁹ Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, p.33.

²⁰ Fish, pp.16-17.

²¹ Goodwyn, p.64.

²² Fish, p.2.

I was in some senses insulated from much of this discussion regarding developments in teaching practice because my own route into teaching was different. I did not enrol for a PGCE before beginning to teach: instead, I taught for two years unqualified at an independent senior school and then chose to take the Assessment-Based Option to Qualified Teacher Status in my third year of teaching, achieving my qualification on the job and then completing my NQT year during my fourth year. Goodwyn stated that ‘it might be argued that the graduate teacher route is even more immediately intensive than the PGCE and certainly offers less opportunity for “reflection on action”’, but I disagree with the latter part of this.²³ I found that, because of that intensity and my being in the classroom so much, I spent a great deal of time thinking about what had and had not worked, learning and making adjustments to my practice all the time. In fact, I would argue that such a training route has made me a *more* reflective teacher than I might have been otherwise because I did not have a set ‘repertoire’ of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) ideas on which to fall back. Indeed, the danger with a proscribed teaching approach is that techniques and behaviours can be too easily applied without taking the ‘complex context’ of the actual situation into account.²⁴ Instead, I was constantly interrogating my own practice and this allowed me to discover what works best for me and for the students in the classroom, rather than giving primacy to the methods I had been ‘taught’: I feel that this has improved my ability as an *intuitive* practitioner.

The 2000 book *The Intuitive Practitioner: On the value of not always knowing what one is doing* offered a discussion of teaching which parallels my own discoveries in the classroom, where Terry Atkinson defined the key skills for teachers as ‘those of reading the context, interpreting conditions and making adjustments to the lesson’.²⁵ He then went on to note how student teachers can believe ‘that teaching is an entirely conscious activity in which the teacher knows everything and simply has to tell it to their class’: they suppress the intuitions which would actually help them, thinking those intuitions to be personal and subjective and

²³ Goodwyn, p.61.

²⁴ Laurinda Brown and Alf Coles, ‘Complex decision making in the classroom: the teacher as an intuitive practitioner’, in *The Intuitive Practitioner: On the value of not always knowing what one is doing*, pp.165-181 (p.169).

²⁵ Terry Atkinson, ‘Learning to teach: intuitive skills and reasoned objectivity’, in *The Intuitive Practitioner: On the value of not always knowing what one is doing*, pp.69-83, (p.75).

therefore of little worth, in favour of established 'recipes'.²⁶ Instead, active engagement by the teacher is crucial, in constant reflection on and tweaking of the lesson as necessary.

Perhaps the most well-known discussion of the profession and its development came in the Cox Report, which stressed connections between pre- and post-18 learning in such a way that even those who disagree violently with the report's conclusions have not since been able to ignore them. Brian Cox's views on education became widely known: between 1969-1977, Cox and A. E. Dyson published five articles on British education – known as the Black Papers – in *Critical Quarterly*, the journal they co-founded. These reports, which were as much political as educational interventions, wished to draw the government's attention to the changes made in British education, which Cox and Dyson termed as 'disastrous mistakes'. Cox and Dyson acknowledged strong arguments in favour of new initiatives such as 'the introduction of free play methods in primary schools, comprehensive schemes, the expansion of higher education, the experimental courses at new universities'; however, they were also concerned about what they saw as 'progressive collapse' and that '[a]narchy [was] becoming fashionable'. The shift in the student/teacher relationship worried them and the fact that 'students do not *know* as much as they should'.²⁷ In 1988-9, Cox then chaired the official working group responsible for the English national curriculum for schools in England and Wales: the report 'sought high standards and a knowledge of a literary canon alongside free expression – drama, creative writing, discussion, and reading for pleasure'.²⁸ Cox gave various possible models of English teaching in his report:

It is possible to identify within the English teaching profession a number of different views of the subject. We list them here, though we stress that they are not the only possible views, they are not sharply distinguishable, and they are certainly not mutually exclusive.

2.21 A "**personal growth**" view focuses on the child: it emphasises the relationship between language and learning in the individual child, and the role of literature in developing children's imaginative and aesthetic lives.

²⁶ Ibid. p.79.

²⁷ 'Comment', C.B. Cox and A.E. Dyson, *Critical Survey*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Fight for Education: A Black Paper (WINTER 1969), pp. 1, 3-6, published by: Berghahn Books accessed on JSTOR <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41553758>> [accessed 2 August 2017], pp.2-6.

²⁸ Brian Cox, entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, written by Lindsay Paterson, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/99827>> [accessed 2 August 2017].

2.22 A "**cross-curricular**" view focuses on the school: it emphasises that all teachers (of English and of other subjects) have a responsibility to help children with the language demands of different subjects on the school curriculum: otherwise areas of the curriculum may be closed to them. In England, English is different from other school subjects, in that it is both a subject and a medium of instruction for other subjects.

2.23 An "**adult needs**" view focuses on communication outside the school: it emphasises the responsibility of English teachers to prepare children for the language demands of adult life, including the workplace, in a fast-changing world. Children need to learn to deal with the day-to-day demands of spoken language and of print; they also need to be able to write clearly, appropriately and effectively.

2.24 A "**cultural heritage**" view emphasises the responsibility of schools to lead children to an appreciation of those works of literature that have been widely regarded as amongst the finest in the language.

2.25 A "**cultural analysis**" view emphasises the role of English in helping children towards a critical understanding of the world and cultural environment in which they live. Children should know about the processes by which meanings are conveyed, and about the ways in which print and other media carry values.²⁹

From my point of view as a professional, it is important to note that such a report must needs try to create such distinctions but that in practice, it is possible to meld many of these different models in the classroom. Goodwyn traced Cox's approach back to a book by James Dixon, *Growth in English*, first published in 1967. Dixon identified three dominant approaches to English in the 1960s – 'skills', 'cultural heritage' and 'personal growth' – and he focused on the 'personal growth' model, which emphasised process rather than the content, so that the learner becomes the focus, rather than the knowledge taught. This movement towards the importance of the individual rather than the material they 'should' learn echoed what was happening with 'culture' more widely, as will be discussed later. There is, however, potentially an inherent tension in the way in which the individual and an interpretive community interact: is it possible or paradoxical for the individual to be at the centre of a community? Does that focus short-circuit the very concept of community? Surely one must

²⁹ 'The Cox Report' (1989) *English for ages 5 to 16*
<<http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/cox1989/cox89.html>> [accessed 9 August 2018]

benefit at the expense of the other? Added to this is the difficulty suggested by the 'cultural heritage' and 'personal growth' models: are these two mutually exclusive?

These questions become even more pertinent when one considers the difference in approach between some of the stake-holder communities, as Goodwyn explained:

The other major finding of my surveys is that personal growth remains the most important model of English teachers regardless of age and experience. They generally put cultural heritage last and cultural analysis and adult needs close together, but they do “recognise” that these models capture what goes on in the community of their practice. When asked to identify what the official curriculum demands, they often put cultural heritage first, perfectly illustrating the difference between the prescribed form of English and its lived reality in practice.³⁰

How is this tension between what governments and teachers consider to be most important to be resolved, especially since it is governments that control the educational policy and influence the production of the the curricula? This issue also opens up wider questions, such as the purpose of culture and literature. Who – or what – are these things actually for? How have successive governments defined the subject and what might this tell us about shifts in focus? How did the Cox Report and its resulting impact on the National Curriculum shape these discussions? Is the focus more on the process or the product? What impact might this have on independent schools which, whilst not bound by the National Curriculum, may still necessarily be shaped by it? In order to consider these questions, I shall discuss what is essentially the play-off between personal growth and cultural heritage in the construction of the National Curriculum, which governs many schools. How do the competing interpretive communities – politicians, teachers, universities, employers – understand, interact with and thus construct the concept of ‘English’? How might one engage critically with this concept?

³⁰ Goodwyn, p.71.

CHAPTER TWO

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS: THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF A CURRICULUM

The debate over what (and what does not) constitute ‘English’ has been even more in the public eye in recent years due to the curriculum reforms instituted by Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education 2010-2014 under the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government (2010-2015). These changes are, of course, still working through the system as – at the time of finishing this thesis (August 2018) – universities have still only dealt with two years of linear A levels and some subjects remain unreformed. Before I consider in more detail these changes and what they might tell us, I wish to consider the place of English more widely in our contemporary society, beginning with the National Curriculum: how do various important interpretive communities respond to the study of ‘English’, both at school and beyond?

The revised National Curriculum for Key Stages 3 (Years 7-9, ages 11-14) and 4 (Years 10-11, ages 14-16), published in December 2014¹, opens its section on English with the following paragraph:

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.²

¹ This was the most up to date National Curriculum document available at the time of writing.

² Department for Education, *The national curriculum in England: Key Stages 3 and 4 framework document*, December 2014, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/381754/SECONDARY_national_curriculum.pdf [accessed 22 October 2015] p.13.

What is perhaps surprising here is that this opening statement in the National Curriculum predominantly focuses on the language itself, not on literature at all. The grandiloquent opening statement establishes that ‘English has a pre-eminent place’, but as a language primarily: the intention is that pupils will be able to use the language fluently in order to communicate and thus become integrated within society, rather than being ‘disenfranchised’. ‘Value’ will be discussed at greater length later on, but it would seem that the ‘value’ of English is that it will enable the learners to ‘participat[e] fully as a member of society’ and therefore add to its economic ‘value’, rather than being a ‘disenfranchised’ drain on that society. The importance of English is presented as more of a warning than an achievement: proficiency is paramount. By way of comparison, the Cox Report of 1989, which I discussed in the previous section, also championed language but in a noticeably different way. In that report, it was stated:

First, English contributes to the personal development of the individual child because of the cognitive functions of both spoken and written language in exploratory learning and in organising and making sense of experiences... Secondly, **English contributes to preparation for the adult world:** people need to be able to communicate effectively and appropriately in all the widely differing social situations in which they find themselves. [Cox’s emphasis]³

Cox’s report, which was so influential on the creation of the *first* National Curriculum, put the ‘personal development of the individual child’ first; the mention of ‘making sense of experiences’ also suggested the importance of engagement with literary texts essentially doing just that. The social – and, one assumes concomitantly – the economic role of the future adult was a secondary concern. The National Curriculum of 2014 apparently reverses this: communication and appropriate use of language are now key. The importance of reading is acknowledged, but in a sentence piled high with adverbial vagueness and pomposity. The aesthetic potential of language, ironically, is side-stepped and instead the focus is on accurate and appropriate communication using the English language: the needs of the business world are apparently uppermost.

³ ‘The Cox Report’ (1989) *English for ages 5 to 16*, p.59.

By comparison, here is the opening statement from the 2014 National Curriculum about Mathematics:

Mathematics is a creative and highly inter-connected discipline that has been developed over centuries, providing the solution to some of history's most intriguing problems. It is essential to everyday life, critical to science, technology and engineering, and necessary for financial literacy and most forms of employment. A high-quality mathematics education therefore provides a foundation for understanding the world, the ability to reason mathematically, an appreciation of the beauty and power of mathematics, and a sense of enjoyment and curiosity about the subject.⁴

There is no threat of possible disenfranchisement here, but instead encouragement about the engaging power of Mathematics. One can see that Mathematics is much easier to justify in terms of its position within the curriculum, classed as 'essential to everyday life, critical to science, technology and engineering, and necessary for financial literacy and most forms of employment'. The English language is thought to be a social glue; Mathematics has an explicitly economic pay-off. It is intriguing that the words 'beauty and power' and 'enjoyment and curiosity' are included in the opening statement about Mathematics, but not in the opening statement about English; 'creative' is used of Mathematics, but not of English. There is what could almost be described as a discomfort in the latter which becomes even clearer when viewed alongside the former.

Both opening statements are driven by the creation of the 'adult' and the economic society to which they will belong. This is quite clear in the statement about Mathematics, but also in the focus on accurate and appropriate communication using the English language: the needs of the business world are apparently uppermost. This is confirmed by recent statements made by that business world. For example, in 2015 the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) produced the *Inspiring Growth CBI/Pearson Education And Skills Survey 2015*. The CBI says that it speaks for '190,000 businesses, employing 7 million people - about one third of the private-sector workforce' and 'communicates the British business voice around the world'.⁵ The *Inspiring Growth CBI/Pearson Education And Skills Survey 2015* 'was

⁴ Department for Education, *The national curriculum in England: Key Stages 3 and 4 framework document*, December 2014, p.40.

⁵ CBI website, <<http://www.cbi.org.uk/about/about-us/>> [accessed 5 January 2017].

conducted online in the spring of 2015. Useable responses were received from 310 employers, collectively employing more than 1.2 million people, equivalent to 4.6% of all employees in the UK. Participant organisations are drawn from all sectors of the economy and range from very small firms to organisations with workforces in excess of 5,000 people.⁶ Three points made are of particular note: concern about faulty basic literacy in employees, the wish to employ STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) graduates, and the desire to see universities prepare students better for the business world. I wish to focus on the second of these: the preference for STEM graduates.

The CBI report stated that employers are wanting to hire and indeed prefer STEM graduates:

The biggest growth in graduate opportunities in the past year has been in engineering, science and hi-tech (+20% balance) and manufacturing (+16% balance)

A degree in a STEM subject gives graduates a clear advantage in the jobs market, with two in five employers (40%) reporting that they prefer STEM qualified graduates, and businesses want to see a boost to both the number of STEM graduates (38%) and their quality (29%)⁷

This is a noticeable shift and the change becomes even more obvious when one considers the acronym ‘STEM’ itself: the OED lists it as being rare before the 21st century and gives only one example of its usage before 2000, which was in the *Journal of Engineering Education* in 1968; that the word is still not that common is perhaps suggested by the fact that, at the time of writing this section (August 2017), it is listed as a *draft addition* for September 2016, showing that it is not yet even fully incorporated into the OED.⁸ The change is happening fast. This new focus has, unsurprisingly, had an effect on undergraduate choices:

...aspiring undergraduates are responding by opting in increasing numbers for subjects that have strong employment prospects and good potential earnings returns.

Compared with 2012 levels, UK applications so far for undergraduate courses starting

⁶ *Inspiring Growth CBI/Pearson Education And Skills Survey 2015*, <http://www.cbi.org.uk/index.cfm/_api/render/file/?method=inline&fileID=92095A98-3A90-4FBD-9AF891997B103F50> [accessed 5 January 2017] p.16.

⁷ Ibid. p.8.

⁸ *Oxford English Dictionary*, accessed online 2 August 2017.

in 2015/16 are up 7% overall. They are up, however, by 28% for engineering, 23% for biological sciences and 11% for physical sciences. Over the same period, computer sciences applications are up by 33%.⁹

This interest in STEM subjects has also received clear support from the Government. In November 2014, the Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP – Secretary of State for Education July 2014 to July 2016 under the Conservative government – gave a speech at the launch of the Your Life campaign: the intention of Your Life was to increase the number of young people studying Maths and Physics post-16 by 50% by the end of 2017.¹⁰ Her speech was therefore understandably geared towards underlining the importance of these subjects; however, she did this by denigrating the arts subjects:

Even a decade ago, young people were told that maths and the sciences were simply the subjects you took if you wanted to go into a mathematical or scientific career, if you wanted to be a doctor, or a pharmacist, or an engineer.

But if you wanted to do something different, or even if you didn't know what you wanted to do, and let's be honest - it takes a pretty confident 16-year-old to have their whole life mapped out ahead of them - then the arts and humanities were what you chose. Because they were useful for all kinds of jobs.

Of course now we know that couldn't be further from the truth, that the subjects that keep young people's options open and unlock doors to all sorts of careers are the STEM subjects: science, technology, engineering and maths.¹¹

The former Secretary of State for Education not only put STEM subjects in the limelight but also denied that arts and humanities are 'useful for all kinds of jobs'; she declared instead that 'now we know that couldn't be further from the truth'. In addition, she made the explicit economic connection too:

⁹ *Inspiring Growth CBI/Pearson Education And Skills Survey 2015*, p.15.

¹⁰ <https://www.yourlife.org.uk/> [accessed 2 August 2017].

¹¹ Nicky Morgan, speech made on 10th November 2014 at the launch of Your Life campaign, <<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/nicky-morgan-speaks-at-launch-of-your-life-campaign>> [accessed 15 February 2016].

And yet maths, as we all know, is the subject that employers value most, helping young people develop skills which are vital to almost any career. And you don't just have to take my word for it - studies show that pupils who study maths to A level will earn 10% more over their lifetime.

These figures show us that too many young people are making choices aged 15, which will hold them back for the rest of their life.¹²

She went on to say that:

Nor are they subjects that you can only succeed in if you went to the right school or had the right connections. In fact, quite the opposite - success in the sciences is one of the biggest drivers of social mobility, enabling young people from a range of backgrounds to access highly paid careers and opportunities... Your Life's specific aim to raise the status of STEM subjects, and increase the number of students studying maths and physics at A level by 50% within 3 years.

And let's just think about what that means - that's 50% more highly qualified and skilled young people equipped to take their place in modern Britain, equipped to compete against the best in the world in our increasingly global economy, and equipped to win the top jobs and reap the rewards. An increase that benefits not just them, but our whole country [...] we can ensure that STEM subjects aren't just the preserve of a few, that we never tell our young women that certain subjects, jobs and careers aren't for them, and that the young people of today have the skills to turbo-charge the economy of tomorrow.¹³

The arts and humanities are sidelined completely. Whereas Conservative and New Labour educational policy from the 1980s onwards foregrounded education and English as important for economic prosperity, this shift towards the opposite end of the spectrum, towards STEM subjects, is perhaps the next policy initiative for improving the economic status of the country

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

following on from the recession.¹⁴ However, this explicitly economic spin given to education, particularly in the political sphere, is older than the last decade.

In her 2011 Ph.D. thesis ‘Shakespeare Valued: Policy, Pedagogy and Practice in English Education, 1989-2009’, Sarah Olive traces the history of political interventions as regards education, noting the similarity of the Conservative (Thatcher, Major) government’s policies and those of New Labour. Her discussion of the original National Curriculum for English finds that ‘skills-based education rivals (if not outstrips) a traditional liberal-humanist orientation’, focusing on standards rather than appreciation.¹⁵ Indeed, Olive goes further, saying that ‘It would not be unreasonable to suggest that Thatcher’s interest in the value of literature in the curriculum was limited, unless it could be demonstrated that it would help achieve the government’s agendas of, and methods for attaining, economic growth and social cohesion.’¹⁶ Olive then explores the transition to a New Labour government which utilised different terminology, but continued the business-slanted approach to education which the Conservatives had begun. Both parties encouraged increased competition between schools, measurement and standards, financial incentives offered for good performances by schools, the finding of ‘sponsors’ and schools sharing good practice. Perhaps most importantly, both parties put at the centre of their education politics ‘constructions of parents and students as consumers and of their consumer sovereignty – again, a concept borrowed from the free-market economics’ in ‘encouraging parents and students to see themselves as valued customers or consumers with a role to play in determining provision’.¹⁷ Political parties borrowed the terminology and approach from economics and suggested a shift which would re-align the relationship between culture/education and the interpretive communities involved, giving consumers a far more decisive role.

What interests me are the evident parallels between the movement in political and educational spheres, and the shift taking place in academic circles: there is a corresponding awareness of the significance of the ‘consumer’ and how they might respond to literature and culture. There are two ways of looking at this: whilst the concept of the ‘consumer’ places an

¹⁴ Sarah Olive, ‘Shakespeare Valued: Policy, Pedagogy And Practice In English Education, 1989-2009’, January 2011, University of Birmingham Research Archive e-theses repository, pp.56-57.

¹⁵ Ibid. p.58.

¹⁶ Ibid. pp.51-52.

¹⁷ Ibid. pp.69-71.

obvious financial focus on the discussion, there is still perhaps a sense here of the importance of *active appreciation* rather than passive reception. The financial slant may cause alarm bells to ring, as discussed by John Guillory in his 1993 book *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation*. The book was about the formation of the canon; however, his argument also contained an exploration of how the canon debate itself might be a red herring and merely distracted people from the more worrying issue:

It has proven to be much easier to quarrel about the content of the curriculum than to confront the implications of a fully emergent professional-managerial class which no longer requires the cultural capital of the old bourgeoisie. The decline of the humanities was never the result of newer noncanonical courses or texts, but of a large-scale “capital flight” in the domain of culture.¹⁸

Guillory believed that in the face of economic realities, students were choosing degrees accordingly: this would appear to be borne out by the examples I have given. Rather frustratingly, Guillory uses the term ‘professional-managerial class’ frequently but leaves this concept tantalisingly undefined, which is strange when he considers its impact to be so titanic:

Yet it is the market itself which produces the effect of cultural capital flight. The professional-managerial class has made the correct assessment that, so far as its future profit is concerned, the reading of great works is not worth the investment of very much time or money. The perceived devaluation of the humanities curriculum is in reality a decline in its *market* value. If the liberal arts curriculum still survives as the preferred course of study in some elite institutions, this fact has everything to do with the class constituency of these institutions.¹⁹

This takes us towards the universities: it may be useful here to consider what the universities themselves have to say on the subject. The Benchmark Material for the English Literature university syllabi would be a good place to start. The 2007 version opens with defining principles, the first of which is as follows:

¹⁸ John Guillory, *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p.45.

¹⁹ Ibid. p.46.

- 1.1. English is a versatile academic discipline characterised by the rigorous and critical study of literature and language. It is concerned with the production, reception and interpretation of written texts, both literary and non-literary; and with the nature, history and potential of the English language. The study of English develops a flexible and responsive openness of mind, conceptual sophistication in argument, and the ability to engage in dialogue with past and present cultures and values. The subject also has a special role in sustaining in the general community a constantly renewed knowledge and critical appreciation of the literature of the past and of other cultural forms.²⁰

This conception of English makes its academic nature clear from the opening, referring to ‘rigorous and critical study of literature and language’, as well as developing ‘a flexible and responsive openness of mind, conceptual sophistication in argument, and the ability to engage in dialogue with past and present cultures and values’. The ‘learner’ and their academic experience is put at the forefront of the purpose of this subject, as well as a confidence in engagement with the texts in question. This is an interesting contrast to the 2014 draft guidance, where the opening defining principle reads as follows:

- 1.1. English is a core academic subject encompassing study of the structure and usage of the English language, critical analysis of literature written in English, and the practice of creative writing. Students of English engage with multiple forms of communication, study past and present cultures, and learn to use language and literature to reflect critically on their own learning and thinking. English is relevant to contemporary society as its focus on the production, interpretation and negotiation of meaning develops the capacity to understand the world from a variety of perspectives.²¹

²⁰ *QAA English 2007*, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, <<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Subject-benchmark-statement-English.pdf>> [accessed 27 October 2016], p.1.

²¹ *QAA English 2014: Draft Guidance*, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, <<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-consultation-English.pdf>> [accessed 27 October 2016], p.5.

This reads as being a more cautious document, which seeks to retrench rather than strive forward, and which is at pains in the first sentence to point out that English is a ‘core academic subject’, something which the previous guidance seemingly took as so much of a given as not to require a mention. The language is more straightforward and ‘communication’ is given greater weight. Whilst the second defining principle in the 2007 version focuses on ‘critical reading and writing’, as well as ‘the interrelationships between literary texts’ and the ‘study of the English language’, the 2014 draft moves on to the totemic idea of culture:

- 1.2. English makes a vital contribution to cultural life through literary festivals, book and poetry readings, theatre performances, screen adaptations, digital discussions and reviewing, among other forms of public engagement. The status of English as a global language gives added significance to the study of both English language and literature written in English, offering opportunities for international exchanges in learning and teaching. The subject attracts international interest in the UK's cultural heritage and creative industries, promoting tourism and other economic activity. The variance of the written and spoken forms of English across the globe, and the range of world literatures written in and translated into English, enriches the subject and its study.²²

‘[C]ultural life’ moves quickly towards ‘tourism and other economic activity’: English, it would appear, is not studied so much for its own merits, but rather because it is a ‘core’ subject which contributes to ‘cultural life’. Rather than a depiction of a subject in dialogue with itself and individual readers, this moves the focus of the subject outwards to the community, communication with that community (both nationally and internationally), and its impact on cultural life. Its value has become linked explicitly with its impact on community and cultural life and therefore, to borrow ideas from aesthetics, its value is not intrinsic but conveyed by an endorsement by the subject. Is this intended to make the subject more attractive to Guillory’s ‘professional-managerial class’, enabling them to justify choosing to study literature because of its clear benefits to society and the economy? Is English rebranding itself? Literature is expected to not only have a purpose, but actively contribute to the economic community.

²² Ibid. p.5.

This necessitates a longer discussion of culture and cultural value, which I will deal with in a later chapter, but for the moment it is worth reflecting that there appears to be an uncertainty – almost a discomfort – about the position of English literature and what value it might have. Studying ‘our rich and varied literary heritage’ may have the sort of vague but impressive-sounding value suggested in that list of adverbs from the National Curriculum statement but it is difficult to quantify.²³

²³ Department for Education, *The national curriculum in England: Key Stages 3 and 4 framework document*, December 2014, p.13.

CHAPTER THREE

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS: THE (RE)CONCEPTUALISATION OF A CURRICULUM

Re-evaluation of the subject – what is taught and for what reason – might well bring to the fore the experiences and skills which studying English provides. I wish to approach this by exploring the changes Michael Gove made to English in the National Curriculum. These were roundly condemned by many and resulted in some teachers, such as Liz Palmer, leaving the profession completely:

This intellectual snobbery would have made my job not only impossible, but also soul destroying. I cannot stand at the front of a classroom and make children chant the works of Keats – instilling in them the belief that the only voices worth hearing in our society are those of a dead, white, English, male establishment figure.¹

Palmer's derisive use of 'chant' suggests that she feels the changes meant much more of a focus on cultural heritage than personal growth; she also implicitly acknowledges the social changes in twenty-first century Britain, such that cultural heritage may need to be broadened and become more inclusive in order to reflect adequately the current world in which it exists. However, Michael Gove himself felt that these changes were important to ensure that his children could compete on a global stage:

I want my children, who are in primary school at the moment, to have the sort of curriculum that children in other countries have, which are doing better than our own [...]

Because, when my son and daughter graduate from school and then either go on to university or into the workplace, they're competing for college places and jobs with

¹ Liz Palmer, 'How Michael Gove's reforms drove me out of teaching', *Guardian*, Tuesday 5th August 2014, <<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/aug/05/how-gove-reforms-drove-me-out-teaching>> [accessed 9 June 2017].

folk from across the globe, and I want my children to receive an education as rigorous as any country's.²

There is perhaps a certain irony in Gove's intention to make British children *more* equipped for the global stage by creating perhaps the most 'British-based' and introspective curriculum seen for many years. Gove's reforms were defended by Jonathan Bate, as I will discuss later, and also unsurprisingly by *The Telegraph* which stated:

The response of the unions is predictably negative and reflects the paucity of ambition that has for too long dogged education in this country. In recent years, we have been falling behind our competitor nations. It is time to catch them up.³

It is significant that performance and eventual ability to compete for jobs, rather than the 'personal growth' of the child dominate in both of these viewpoints. This is in direct opposition to Liz Palmer, whose focus was on the children in front of her, and also the opinion of Tricia Kelleher, principal at the Stephen Perse Foundation independent school:

I also very rarely heard [Gove] talk about children. When he spoke about education, he talked about driving up standards, rigour and accountability. It's all about systems and structures. Children are sets of data, not individuals.⁴

Gove's conceptualisation of the curriculum is in direct opposition to that of those who are then called upon to teach it: his policies intended to use 'cultural heritage' in order to ensure 'adult needs' and perhaps – as will be discussed later – the financial viability and productivity of the individual. 'Personal growth' is apparently nowhere to be seen: Gove's approach militates against the possibility of active engagement in an interpretive community. His

² Michael Gove, quoted in 'Michael Gove: new curriculum will allow my children to compete with the very best', article by Peter Dominiczak, *Telegraph*, 8th July 2013, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10166020/Michael-Gove-new-curriculum-will-allow-my-children-to-compete-with-the-very-best.html>> [accessed 9 June 2017].

³ 'A curriculum that will help Britain catch up', Telegraph View, *Telegraph*, 8th July 2013, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/telegraph-view/10166729/A-curriculum-that-will-help-Britain-to-catch-up.html>> [accessed 9 June 2017]

⁴ Tricia Kelleher, principal at the Stephen Perse Foundation independent school, quoted in 'Michael Gove: "bogeyman" or "the greatest education secretary ever"?'', interviews by Louise Tickle and Rebecca Ratcliffe, *Guardian*, Tuesday 22nd July 2014, <<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/jul/22/michael-gove-legacy-education-secretary>> [accessed 6 June 2017]

approach could be seen as retrogressive when aligned with arguably one of the most progressive elements of the Cox Report: the 'cultural analysis' model. This model encouraged participation and intellectual engagement, focusing as it did on a 'critical understanding of the world and cultural environment in which they live'. The word 'critical' is significant, as the implication was of a dialectical engagement, rather than passive acceptance. This parallels much of my discussion so far of active, critical engagement: 'Interpretation is not the art of construing but the art of constructing. Interpreters do not decode poems; they make them', a view which may form an interesting counterbalance.⁵

The rather poignant irony is that, in the views of some of those involved in the process of curriculum change instigated by Michael Gove, the changes were intended to *permit* teachers to exercise – both themselves and with their charges – a form of 'cultural analysis' in their choices of texts and thus perhaps encourage 'personal growth'. In an article in *The Guardian* in May 2014, Jonathan Bate explained his thinking beyond the recommendations he had made to make such changes to the syllabus, suggesting:

teachers teach best when they teach what they are passionate about. So why not abandon the notion of set texts altogether, and let teachers tailor their choices to the particular circumstances of each class? ⁶

His concept was for a 'set range', rather than 'set texts'. Instead of a year-in-year-out diet of predictable texts, there should simply be a requirement of breadth: at least one Shakespeare play, at least one 19th-century novel, a selection of poetry, including a taste of the Romantics (who invented our modern idea of poetry as the true voice of feeling) and a novel or play from the rich diversity of English literature written in the century between 1914 and 2014. This would enable teachers to teach to their strengths and passions, and also to tailor their choices to the aptitude and likely interests of each class. He gave some examples of what he meant:

⁵ Fish, p.327.

⁶ Jonathan Bate, 'GCSE English literature row: Don't blame Gove, blame me', *Guardian*, Friday 30th May 2014, <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2014/may/30/gcse-literature-row-gove-blame-me-english-literature-syllabus>> [accessed 6 June 2017].

I saw a multi-ethnic inner-city academy school comparing Shakespeare's Othello and Zadie Smith's White Teeth in the light of questions of race, then using the poetry of John Clare as a way of exploring the profound connection between human society and the natural environment.

This would seem to fuse the cultural heritage, personal growth *and* cultural analysis models in an exciting process which has learners at its centre, such that the curriculum is tailored specifically for that class, and also strives to 'evolve' rather than remain static. No text is to be 'banned' from the curriculum, but neither is one text necessarily to be taught *ad infinitum*. Bate's view leads me to ask the question as to whether there is a middle ground to be attained between cultural heritage and personal growth: I feel that it is not necessarily all about the *text*, but the *way in which that text is approached and taught*. One of the advantages of the opening up of the educational landscape and also the debates about culture is that the text is not assumed to be paramount and the children as passive receptors of its greatness: the onus is now on engagement and enjoyment. However, that does not mean that the 'classics' of the past *cannot* be taught; rather, it means that teachers have to enable access to the texts. As Goodwyn explained:

It is notable that the best teachers have deep insights into what makes their subject difficult [...] and how to represent those difficulties in a meaningful way to students (and sometimes also to novice teachers).⁷

Students should not be denied the chance to study and to engage intellectually with the cultural heritage we have; neither should they be expected to receive it passively and admire it because they are told that they should. Rather, it is the responsibility of those teaching to use all the tools they have to encourage and enable access to that text, at whatever level is appropriate for those learners, so that the pupils can benefit from their cultural heritage and their personal growth can be encouraged as a result, often through cultural analysis. The key is knowing the texts and knowing the students. It sounds extremely simple on paper; however, it is the great – and enthralling – challenge in practice and requires intuition and constant evolvment in the practitioner. In fact, such an approach can lead to a powerful synthesis of all of the teaching modes as discussed by Cox so that the classroom becomes the

⁷ Goodwyn, p.72.

centre of involved, involving, and evolving discussion and questioning on the part of *both* teacher *and* students.

Indeed, consideration of questioning within a classroom environment provides an excellent microcosmic example of the different styles of approach. Writing about the importance of a dialogic pedagogy, Frank Hardman analysed data from classroom discussions to see what sort of questions are asked and answers expected. He stated:

Exploratory talk is seen as providing students with the opportunity to assume greater control over their own learning by initiating ideas and responses. In this way, they can contribute to the shaping of the verbal agenda and introduce alternative viewpoints which are open to negotiation and where the criteria of relevance are not imposed only by the teacher. Such a view of learning, therefore, questions the value of traditional whole-class, teacher-led recitation where knowledge is often presented by the teacher as closed, authoritative and immutable rather than as a reciprocal process in which ideas are discussed between student and teacher and student and student so as to take thinking forward and open it up to discussion and interpretation.⁸

Dialogic questioning may involve accepting more than one answer and asking for further elaboration from a student or staying with that student to ask them further questions which build into an extended dialogue; it may also involve *uptake* where teachers incorporate students' answers into shaping the next question and the shape of the discussion.⁹ He also discussed other previous research as follows:

when dialogic episodes did occur, teachers often opened up space in the classroom discourse by explicitly encouraging students to review one another's contributions. The teachers also encouraged more symmetric interaction by demonstrating reciprocal engagement with student responses through exclamations of interest often combined with statements relating the student's response to their own personal experience or opinion. Some of the teachers also demonstrated a more flexible approach to unpredicted student responses by turning the feedback move into another question by

⁸ Hardman, 'Promoting a dialogic pedagogy in English teaching', p.37.

⁹ Ibid. p.43.

asking for clarification. Some questions were authentic in the sense that they were asking about something genuinely unknown to the teacher, thereby ratifying the importance of the student's original response, while also creating an opportunity for the student to expand upon their original response.¹⁰

This approach mirrors the rise of the reader in the work of Stanley Fish, rather than the more critic-centric approach that we might associate with F.R. Leavis: the arena remains open for engagement, rather than being corralled and closed down by the authoritative 'teacher' figure. The questioning process is fluid and evolving, rather than brittle and contained. For reasons that will become clear in the later parts of my thesis, an analogy can be made here between the pupils' role and the suspicion created by public acts of speech by women in Early Modern drama, which were potentially threatening and suggestive of loose virtue. Whilst the pupil in the classroom and often the female in the play is theoretically at the centre of the performance – one thinks in particular of Webster's most well-known two plays, *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* – their participation can be surprisingly limited and strictly controlled by those who have greater power. Encouraging their involvement in the debate requires a level of confidence and flexibility in the teacher (and the Early Modern male!) which is not always the case. This very much depends on the subject knowledge of the teacher too and/or the willingness for them to have to move beyond their own comfort zone in terms of their understanding of the material: for example, in handling the questions which one cannot immediately answer because they posit the issue in a way in which one might not have thought about it before. To return to the concept of the intuitive practitioner, I feel that a teacher must not only be capable of being *in* the flow of the lesson *and also* 'disinterested' enough to see it as a whole and respond accordingly, but ideally to be working intuitively and flexibly at the level of the *material* too, which thus produces the sort of dialogic questioning Hardman describes, as the teacher's brain becomes one of the many in the room, rather than the detached arbiter. *The Intuitive Practitioner* only discusses the approach to the *teaching*, but I argue that the need for an active critical consciousness on the part of the teacher with regard to the *text* they are teaching is significant, particularly in a subject such as English, such that their own handling of the text continues to evolve. Rob Pope expressed this rather well in his book *Studying English Literature and Language: An Introduction and Companion*:

¹⁰ Ibid. pp.43-44.

In a full-blown postmodernist view, “English” is a compound of language/literature/culture/media (the terms merge or are no longer relevant) is everywhere hybrid and nowhere “pure”; and is consequently constantly reforming under the pressure of other languages/literatures/cultures/media [...] the main thing is to attempt to grasp English as a process as well as a series of products. It is a system which is interrelated and bound together over time and space and peoples by certain principles of coherence. But at the same time it is a system which is open, always in the making – never closed and never finally made. One *and* many.¹¹

Pope’s concept of the co-existence of the ‘One *and* many’ parallels Fish’s interpretive community, Hardman’s dialogic questioning, and also the flexibility of the intuitive practitioner in the classroom. This also provides some sort of answer to the question asked earlier about how the individual *and* the system can both receive primacy at once. Most importantly, the fluidity and constant evolving implied by dialogic questioning is also seen in this definition of ‘English’: it becomes *both* a ‘process’ *and* ‘a series of products’. The openness of the system is at once both intimidating and reassuring: nothing is closed and nothing is ‘finally’ defined. The same could be said of the genesis and production of this thesis: there is both a ‘process’ and a ‘product’, and both are valuable; indeed, ‘the reader’s response is not to the meaning; it is the meaning’.¹²

Literature and culture mean nothing if they become stagnant; the same can be said of teachers, classrooms, and pupils. The ability to rejuvenate, rework, and refresh are the hallmarks of a thriving educational system, classroom practitioner and their classes, and culture in the wider society as a whole. Literature and teachers should try to embrace these changes. The constant primacy of the personal growth model, the importance of dialogic questioning, and the openness in definitions are all suggestive of constant change and renewal – and the positive nature of that. To see this process of constant renewal as exciting, and to relish those shifts and that openness: that is the challenge facing the worlds of education, culture, and literature today. Stanley Fish’s approach to the importance of readers and their engagement with texts is crucial once again:

¹¹ Rob Pope, *Studying English Literature and Language: An Introduction and Companion* (London: Routledge, 1998, 3rd edn. published 2012), p.29.

¹² Fish, p.3.

[I]t is a method which processes its own user, who is also its only instrument. It is self-sharpening and what it sharpens is you. It does not organize materials, but transforms minds.¹³

Why would this habit of mind and thinking not be attractive to pupils in classrooms, to teachers working alongside them, to businesses looking to hire graduates, and to governments?

¹³ Fish, p.66.

CHAPTER FOUR

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS: THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE STUDY OF 'ENGLISH LITERATURE'

In the previous section, I explored how the functional and practical applications of the study of English language and literature sit a little uncomfortably alongside the potentially transformative power of texts taught so that criticism and active engagement are encouraged. I also looked at the views of some of the stakeholders in this process. I now wish to place this exploration of the current state of English literature into context by looking back at its history. How did studying English literature come about? What does it mean to study literature? Are the different potential valuations of literature specifically the domain of the late twentieth century or an older feature – something new or 'business' as usual? How has the subject been discussed critically and what might I be able to glean from this?

The argument over teaching English and literature falls into two camps: it is either a subject which has a practical purpose and can be examined, or it creates a meaning for life and is almost beyond evaluation. The shift from the 'man of letters' who read and wrote about literature as a pastime, and English as a subject to be studied developed almost by accident and as the 'shadow' of mathematical and scientific advancement: ironically, considering my earlier discussion about the apparent 'intrusion' of the economy, the study of English Literature has been linked with economics and 'outside' elements from its inception. It is worth acknowledging at this point that there are differences between a teacher of English in a school and in a university: whilst there is a continuum of practice, there are different points of access and processes of formation; much of my focus so far has obviously been on the former, but the exploration of the creation of university faculties of English Literature can tell us much about how the subject was perceived and this is where I will concentrate my attention in this section.

In *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848-1932*, Chris Baldick examined the beginnings of such study and found three main factors behind it:

[...] the specific needs of the British empire expressed in the regulations for admission to the India Civil Service; second, the various movements for adult

education including Mechanics Institutes, Working Men's Colleges, and extension lecturing; third [...] the specific provisions made for women's education.¹⁴

Literature and its study were seen as the 'human face' of technological advancement and it was felt that 'the provision of practical knowledge had to be supplemented by a humane, moralizing subject which could harmonize an otherwise anarchic profusion of "dry facts"'.¹⁵ It was to be the aesthetic drapery to hide the machinery of the Industrial Revolution. It also had an explicitly social purpose, that of strengthening and confirming the *status quo* of Victorian Britain. Those writing about literature in the Victorian period particularly share Matthew Arnold's sense of the civilising influence of Literature, especially upon those whose minds might otherwise end up 'with the narrowness which is too often the consequence of a life attached, from the earliest age, to the pursuits of lucre'.¹⁶ Literature was seen as a panacea, a necessary pacifier which was calming and politically positive: able to 'immobilize its consumers in a contemplative attitude disengaged from their own action and experience' and to show that class distinctions were unimportant, yet also remind both women and men of their set social duties and positions.¹⁷ An added bonus was that it did not require extensive drilling in language (unlike Classics), so self-study could therefore be encouraged. The reading and studying of literature became useful for social control and accepted social values; it had a moral purpose within society and could be disseminated to the deserving.

Alongside this fairly practical approach were quasi-messianic Victorian voices who offered literature to those around them as a way of 'truly' living, often using the language of religion in order to do this. Arnold Bennett, in a book published in 1909 entitled *Literary Taste: How to Form It*, attacked the prevailing opinion that 'Literary taste thus serves two purposes: as a certificate of correct culture and as a private pastime'.¹⁸ Instead, he claimed for literature a transcendent position:

¹⁴ Chris Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848-1932* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p.61.

¹⁵ Ibid. p.62.

¹⁶ Knox, Preface to *Elegant Extracts*, published in 1824, quoted in Chris Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848-1932*, p.59.

¹⁷ Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848-1932*, p.67.

¹⁸ Arnold Bennett, *Literary Taste: How to Form It. With Detailed Instructions for Collecting a Complete Library of English Literature* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, first published August 1909, fourth edition published August 1912), p.2.

Literature, instead of being an accessory, is the fundamental *sine qua non* of complete living [...] I do not think I am guilty of one in asserting that he who has not been "presented to the freedom" of literature has not wakened up out of his prenatal sleep. He is merely not born. He can't see; he can't hear; he can't feel, in any full sense. He can only eat his dinner.¹⁹

How does one become aware of this wondrous thing, literature? Evangelism. Bennett claimed that 'it is by the passionate few that the renown of genius is kept alive from one generation to another'.²⁰ He continued:

The passionate few only have their way by reason of the fact that they are genuinely interested in literature, that literature matters to them. They conquer by their obstinacy alone, by their eternal repetition of the same statements. Do you suppose they could prove to the man in the street that Shakespeare was a great artist? The said man would not even understand the terms they employed. But when he is told ten thousand times, and generation after generation, that Shakespeare was a great artist, the said man believes—not by reason, but by faith.²¹

The religious belief of the turn of the century is explicit here in Bennett's diction: literature takes on a quasi-divine role in its formation and guidance of the population. Bennett also drew a somewhat snobbish distinction between 'the passionate few' who kept the literature alive and those who should merely accept on trust what they are being told: culture and literature are to be accepted and not questioned, merely idolised.

As histories of criticism note, the ideas of Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde paralleled Bennett to a certain extent – although without the religious fervour – in their discussion of a more aesthetic and less 'useful' conception of art: 'it was the uselessness of art that made it useful: by raising itself above life, art thereby challenged us to live up to its higher standards of beauty and perfection.'²² Literature was thus considered as a higher calling and indeed its seeming uselessness – the cause of some discomfort in terms of its justification, as we have

¹⁹ Bennett, p.3.

²⁰ Ibid. p.20.

²¹ Ibid. p.21.

²² Baldick, *Criticism & Literary Theory 1890 to the Present* (London: Longman, 1996), p.26.

seen – becomes its greatest asset. This belief in a higher standard may have contributed to an early desire to achieve and maintain some sort of ‘purity’ of approach, where literature was not contaminated by other factors. However, the danger is that a literature – and indeed, a culture – which is not interrogated and actively engaged with is in danger of entropy. Baldick sums up this position as follows:

The critic’s most pressing duty is not, after all, analysis, but (in Sidney’s terms) the defence of poetry: that is, the protection of literary imagination and creativity from the interference and sheer intolerance of myopic moralists and censorious puritans.²³

Once again, the language of religion is noticeable, but here to expel any teaching of literature for merely moral purposes. However, as this thesis argues, protecting literature and culture from such engagement is to risk its becoming a museum piece, passed on as object rather than engaged with as active – cultural heritage or personal growth?

A brief discussion of one of the leading Victorian men of letters, Matthew Arnold, may prove instructive here. In his 1969 book *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters*, John Gross mentions almost by-the-by that ‘At no stage in his life was Arnold a full-time man of letters; he had a low opinion of literature as a profession...’.²⁴ I would argue that this was perhaps a saving grace for Arnold as critic because he did not believe in art for art’s sake. John Gross and Stefan Collini accentuate the importance for Arnold instead of social engagement: whilst he is more commonly acknowledged now as a critic of literature and culture, both Gross and Collini make clear that his focus was actually on society. Indeed, Arnold treats culture:

not just as something that we can acquire or possess, but as an active force in its own right. One indication of this is the frequency with which he uses the word with an active verb [...] He is talking [...] about an ideal of human life, a standard of excellence and fulness for the development of our capacities, aesthetic, intellectual and moral.²⁵

²³ Ibid. p.61.

²⁴ John Gross, *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters: English Literary Life Since 1800* (first published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson 1969, published in Pelican Books 1973, reissued with an introduction and afterword Harmondsworth: Penguin 1991), p.57.

²⁵ Stefan Collini, introduction to *Matthew Arnold: Culture and Anarchy and Other Writings*, edited by Stefan Collini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp.xx-xxi.

The significance of culture as an active force mirrors the thinking which encourages an active critical cultural consciousness, foreshadowing my later discussions of culture, cultural value, and recent developments in the twenty-first century. Culture is something open to all and indeed this democratic principle is the hallmark of his approach, such that:

“the best knowledge” should not be imprisoned in a form of expression that is specialized, technical, idiosyncratic, or private, but should rather be accessible, shareable, public – part, as we have since come to say, of a common culture. This idea of the capacity of culture to unify and heal the divisions in society has been one of Arnold’s most potent legacies.²⁶

Along with the openness of this approach is Arnold’s key term ‘disinterestedness’.²⁷ This of course came from his the desire ‘to see the object as in itself it really is’, an aim which he lamented was missing from English criticism at the time.²⁸ This focus on the moment of engagement between ‘critic’ and ‘object’ for me and the awareness of the importance of criticism is a direct parallel to the ideas of Stanley Fish and also the exploration of teaching strategies, as previously discussed: Arnold feels that criticism should follow ‘the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches’ as it must serve its own ends and not the ends of others.²⁹ This perhaps enables and indeed even encourages a liberation of culture and responses to culture. Arnold’s fairly democratic openness (for its time) is markedly at odds with the way in which more formal studies of the subject developed – or rather, tried to develop. Gross explains:

Resistance to the introduction of English was naturally strongest at Oxford and Cambridge. Everything about the subject was suspect: it was modern, it was enticing, it was bound to be the softest of soft options. Most of all, it was unnecessary. A self-respecting undergraduate simply picked up his native literature as he went along: he had

²⁶ Ibid. p.xxii

²⁷ Matthew Arnold, ‘The Function of Criticism at the Present Time’, *Lectures and Essays in Criticism*, edited by R.H. Super (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1962), p.270.

²⁸ Matthew Arnold, ‘On Translating Homer’, *On the Classical Tradition*, edited by R.H. Super (Michigan: University of Michigan Press 1960), pp.97-216, (p.140).

²⁹ Arnold, ‘The Function of Criticism at the Present Time’, p.270.

no more to be instructed in Milton and Fielding than he had to be taught the basic outlines of English history or the best-known parts of the Bible.³⁰

Early debates between philologists and others, such as John Churton Collins, made it clear that there was no established way in which to approach or teach this subject and indeed much of this debate centred around whether it should be taught at all.³¹ As Oxford and Cambridge dragged their heels, towards the end of the nineteenth century Churton Collins was one of the foremost voices calling for these two universities to teach English Literature, collecting together and publishing in the *Pall Mall Gazette* the views of leading men on the subject.³² However, when Oxford did eventually establish the Merton Professorship of English Language and Literature in 1885, Collins' application for the post was rejected in favour of the philologist Arthur Napier, whose specialism was Anglo-Saxon, leading some to surmise that Oxford was attempting to substitute philology for literature and causing Churton Collins to weigh into battle once more.³³ Rather ironically, considering Churton Collins's opposition to philology strangling literature by stealth, his own focus was another type of 'literary genetics', as Gross puts it, rather than literature itself – the influence of the classics on literature. Eventually, after applying for chairs at several universities, Churton Collins was appointed to the chair of English literature at the new University of Birmingham in 1904.³⁴ The latter provides a brief but engaging case study: there was much discussion over how a new university was to be established and of what it might consist.³⁵ However, their more enterprising and innovative approach is also noted by Gross in the University of Birmingham inviting a *writer* (G.K. Chesterton), rather than a 'critic', to apply for the Chair which eventually went to Churton Collins. Chesterton declined to apply.

As I have explained, much of the debate regarding English focused around the role of classics within the curriculum and the growing importance of science. Those who favoured science felt

³⁰ Gross, p.188.

³¹ Fred Hunter, entry on John Churton Collins, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxye.bham.ac.uk/view/article/32504>> [accessed 15 February 2016].

³² Fred Hunter, entry on John Churton Collins, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxye.bham.ac.uk/view/article/32504>> [accessed 31 May 2018].

³³ Alan Bacon (1980) 'Attempts to Introduce a School of English Literature at Oxford: the National Debate of 1886 and 1887', *History of Education*, 9:4, 303-313, DOI: 10.1080/0046760800090403, p.304.

³⁴ Fred Hunter, entry on John Churton Collins, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

³⁵ Eric Ives, Diane Drummond, Leonard Schwarz, *The First Civic University: Birmingham 1880-1980 An Introductory History*, (University of Birmingham Press, 2000).

that classics had failed as an instrument of education, partly because of its esoteric nature, and therefore English literature as the ‘poor man’s classics’ would be better; however, there were also those who felt that English literature might form a bulwark against the encroachment of science. It was felt that the most academic and those of the highest class should still study classics, rather than English literature.³⁶ The support of English by those who favoured science, unsurprisingly, did not work in its favour; in fact, this led to its being rebuffed by public schools and Oxbridge, because of the association with ‘working-class education, industrialism and manual labour’.³⁷

Even with the Merton Chair established and the foundation of the Oxford English School in 1894, it would take several decades for it to begin to establish itself fully. Furthermore, although examinations were already being set and taken in the study of English by this point, those setting the examinations were still rather uncertain what to test or how to test it. As Edward Augustus Freeman, the Regius Professor of History at Oxford 1884-1892, said:

[...] we do not want, we will not say frivolous subjects, but subjects which are merely light, elegant, interesting. As subjects for examination, we must have subjects in which it is possible to examine.³⁸

This is a perfectly reasonable point to make, if somewhat circular in thinking, and necessitates some discussion of what precisely might constitute the material which to be examined. What literature should be studied? The question is phrased quite deliberately, as the sense of ‘should’ and ‘should not’ has been a key element of conceptions of literature.

³⁶ Alan Bacon (1980) ‘Attempts to Introduce a School of English Literature at Oxford: the National Debate of 1886 and 1887’, p.303.

³⁷ Margaret Mathieson, quoted in *ibid.* p.303.

³⁸ Freeman, quoted in Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848-1932*, p.73.

CHAPTER FIVE

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS: THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF ‘LITERATURE’, OR, THE ROLE OF THE (UN)COMMON READER

It is appropriate at this point to work further towards a definition and exploration of a term which I have used frequently: ‘literature’. We have looked at the current state of studying literature, the history of such a study, but I now wish to narrow the focus to this particular term. In defining the word itself and in concomitant expectations of the term, we will see how the ‘reader’ and what is expected or encouraged of them are once again of great importance. It is not just what literature the reader reads, but *how the reader reads the term itself* which is of significance to my discussion, demonstrating the significance – implicit or acknowledged – of the ongoing critical consciousness in fusion with a text.

The Oxford English Dictionary has two definitions for ‘literature’ which would appear to contradict each other:

3.
 - a. The result or product of literary activity; written works considered collectively; a body of literary works produced in a particular country or period, or of a particular genre. Also: such a body of works as a subject of study or examination (freq. with modifying word specifying the language, period, etc., of literature studied).
 - b. Without defining word: written work valued for superior or lasting artistic merit³⁹

‘Literature’ is both ‘written works considered collectively’ – an extremely broad definition – and written work ‘valued for superior or lasting artistic merit’. A similar dichotomy between the all and the specific is, of course, present in the definitions of ‘culture’, as I will explore later. How to distinguish between the two definitions of ‘literature’ and, indeed, should such a distinction be made? Terry Eagleton, in his seminal *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (1983), would argue not:

³⁹ Oxford English Dictionary online [accessed 16 February 2016].

Some texts are born literary, some achieve literariness, and some have literariness thrust upon them. Breeding in this respect may count for a good deal more than birth. What matters may not be where you came from but how people treat you. If they decide that you are literature then it seems that you are, irrespective of what you thought you were.⁴⁰

Eagleton classes the concept as being based entirely on subjective views. However, he couches his discussion in primarily ‘literary’ terms, by paraphrasing Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* and also perhaps alluding to *Pygmalion*, as he certainly makes the same point as Eliza Doolittle makes to Colonel Pickering in Act V:

[...] the difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but how she’s treated. I shall always be a flower girl to Professor Higgins, because he always treats me as a flower girl, and always will; but I know I can be a lady to you, because you always treat me as a lady, and always will.⁴¹

Are there texts masquerading as duchesses which are actually flower girls and vice versa? Who can tell us whether this is the case, if judgements depend on the beholder? Is there a distinction to be made at all? What determines an object’s intrinsic value? Does such a concept exist at all or is ‘value’ a misleading term to use? Eagleton would argue – as does Eliza Doolittle, Kant in *The Critique of Judgement*, and Fish in *Is There a Text in This Class?* *The Authority of Interpretive Communities* – that the judgement in question is made by the subject and has nothing to do with the inherent qualities of the object, be that a work of ‘literature’, a ‘work of art’ or a young woman from Tottenham Court Road. So who is making these decisions? Here, the quotation from *Pygmalion* begins to seem doubly appropriate: those who ‘choose’ the list of texts taught and those writers included on any such list have often been dismissed as being white men of a certain class – essentially, a coterie of ‘Higginses’ or ‘Pickeringes’ – which is also Eagleton’s implication. To develop the allusion, the issue is perhaps often not so much that the decision is made as to whether a text is a ‘duchess’ or a ‘flower girl’, but that it is Higgins or Pickering who makes that decision.

⁴⁰ Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, first published 1983, second edition 1996), pp.7-8.

⁴¹ George Bernard Shaw, *Pygmalion*, in *The Works of Bernard Shaw*, Volume 14 (*Androcles and the Lion; Overruled; Pygmalion*) (London: Constable & Co Ltd, 1930), p.278.

Eagleton and Eliza would appear to be thinking along similar lines, as the former goes on to acknowledge the role of the reader/interpreter in ‘creating’ the text in front of them:

In this sense, one can think of literature less as some inherent quality or set of qualities displayed by certain kinds of writing [...] than as a number of ways in which people *relate themselves* to writing [...] There is no “essence” of literature whatsoever.⁴²

Shaw, in the speech of Eliza’s quoted earlier, makes the same point about the different ways in which Higgins and Pickering *relate themselves* to her, suggesting that it is nothing to do with any inherent qualities she may or may not possess. Eagleton throws the spotlight on to the ways in which readers interact with pieces of writing, thus inverting the hierarchy and debunking literature completely. However, as already noted, he does so by *using* literary allusions – perhaps even the “‘essence” of literature’ which he dismisses here – which require a certain amount of literary awareness in order to appreciate. Fish does something similar, stating that “‘while literature is still a category, it is an open category [...] definable [...] simply by what we decide to put into it. And the conclusion to that conclusion is that it is the reader who “makes” literature.’⁴³

There is of course an opposing view as, for example, expressed the decade before Eagleton by Frank Kermode in his 1975 book *The Classic*. Whilst under ten years apart, *The Classic* and *Literary Theory: An Introduction* approach the same issue in markedly different ways: as explored above, Eagleton’s book looks to interrogate and ultimately discard the term, which is perhaps not surprising from an representative of the post-Thatcher, late-twentieth century university world and a leading proponent of the rise of critical theory. Kermode’s book, as perhaps befits a foremost example of the mid-twentieth century university thinker and implying the Arnold/Leavis heritage, describes instead the lasting and unutterable ‘essence’ of literature:

⁴² Eagleton, p.8.

⁴³ Fish, p.11.

I think there is a substance that prevails, however powerful the agents of change; that *King Lear*, underlying a thousand dispositions, subsists in change, prevails, by being patient of interpretation.⁴⁴

He acknowledges in passing the importance of acts of interpretation but pays more attention to the ‘substance that prevails’ within a text, ‘patient of interpretation’ and therefore – one might also assume – resistant to it, suffering it. For this reason, Kermode does not really discuss the reader at all: he accepts the ‘classic’ as unchanging and, as we saw, ‘patient of interpretation’ – the reader is tolerated but must adapt themselves to the classic. Eagleton disagrees again, classing this as unnecessary and elitist, although, as we saw, he offers a freedom of interpretation to the reader which is actually false, relying as it does on an interplay of literary allusions and critical terminology which expect a ‘literary’ reader even as the concept of literature is debunked.

Both of these definitions posit a ‘reader’, but this reveals another flaw in their arguments. Can this ‘reader’ be ‘anyone’? I have already noted the literary allusions in Eagleton’s debunking of literature: such references could be seen to undermine the apparent utopia Eagleton’s approach and his comments on literary theory appear to offer:

Theory was a way of emancipating literary works from the stranglehold of a “civilized sensibility”, and throwing them open to a kind of analysis in which, in principle at least, anyone could participate.⁴⁵

The phrase ‘in principle at least’ is an important qualifier: it is not true that ‘anyone could participate’ thanks to theory breaking open the doors. If we remember Arnold’s intention for openness and accessibility for all, discussed previously, there is seemingly a surprising and rather wonderful irony in Matthew Arnold – the Victorian man of letters – advocating a greater democratic engagement than the iconoclastic Terry Eagleton: Arnold implies and Eagleton subtextually makes clear that there is a critical language and set of ideas which must be accessed before they can be understood; the former wishes to break through any such barriers whilst the latter *suggests* the smashing and crashing, but through the very terms he

⁴⁴ Frank Kermode, *The Classic* (Faber and Faber, 1975), p.134.

⁴⁵ Eagleton, p.viii.

desires to dismiss. A reader requires some concept of the terms involved and also the 'self-authorizing system', before they can even begin to try to 'negotiate entry into the system via language': even the description of the need to 'negotiate entry' implies a level of exclusivity, possible exclusion, and that not everyone can participate as simply as Eagleton suggested: his claim is simply not true.⁴⁶ The version of 'the reader' must thus needs narrow. Eagleton may state that 'Properly understood, literary theory is shaped by a democratic impulse rather than an elitist one; and to this extent, when it *does* lapse into the turgidly unreadable, it is being untrue to its own historical roots', but this is not the case.⁴⁷ Literary theory has its own language and interrelation of ideas such that it is very difficult to achieve the 'competence' of which Kermode talks, if only to understand the debate, let alone to engage with it. The 'democratic impulse' is also an uncomfortable one, as it is false: literary theory seems to be driven by esoteric motives rather than democratic ones and, in seeking to clear the thickets of theory, new theorists often only make the situation more confusing. It would seem that in order to combat theory, more theory is required.

In *The Classic*, Kermode achieves much the same alchemy with regard to the process of analysis, only with an even smoother elision: in his exploration of *Wuthering Heights*, he classes the experiment as 'a straightforward encounter between a competent modern reader (the notion of competence is, I think, essential [...]) and a classic text.'⁴⁸ Kermode does not stop to consider how he defines his key term of a 'competent modern reader', apart from considering himself to be one; this is a shame as, to an extent, the argument he bases on this 'competent modern reader' must therefore be flawed. Who is a 'competent modern reader'? The literal meaning of this phrase would surely suggest someone who can read the language with a 'competent' level of fluency; however, I doubt that this is Kermode's intended definition in this instance. What about a GCSE student? An A-level student? Undergraduate or postgraduate? At what point does one become 'competent' and able to appreciate *Wuthering Heights* in the way Kermode intends? This spectrum of competence is vital to my discussion and indeed to the creation of interpretive communities. Is Kermode being rather disingenuous in claiming that this label applies to him, when surely he would be classed by

⁴⁶ Joel B. Davis, *The Countess Of Pembroke's Arcadia And The Invention Of English Literature* (New York, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.6.

⁴⁷ Eagleton, p.viii.

⁴⁸ Kermode, p.118.

many as a *more than* competent modern reader? To give some context, Sir Frank Kermode ‘became something of a serial professor, holding several of the most prestigious chairs in [English Literature]’, including the King Edward VII chair of English literature at Cambridge, before taking up a post at Columbia University: therefore, ‘Kermode appreciates *Wuthering Heights* as classic’ is hardly a surprising headline.⁴⁹ Of perhaps more interest in determining a ‘classic’ might have been to define the cluster of terms and ideas in ‘competent modern reader’ and then to give the novel to one person, or several people, fitting that description. Kermode’s ‘unseen’ analysis is, of course, immediately of a different quality and quantity to what could be offered by any of the potential ‘readers’ listed above. Kermode gives primacy to The Text and its inherent greatness, but as part of a closed and circular system where his status and credentials assume the importance of the text; Eagleton places the focus on The Reader whose engagement with the text is what defines that text, as does Fish. However, Eagleton cannot escape the esoteric and complex nature of literary theory and how this obfuscates discussion; Fish refers to an ‘interpretive community’ where ‘members of the same community will necessarily agree because they will see (and by seeing, make) everything in relation to that community’s assumed purposes and goals’.⁵⁰ None of these are ‘common readers’ – nor is Fish’s ‘interpretive community’ a ‘common’ community – and therefore one must approach Eagleton’s iconoclasm with a certain scepticism. Eagleton goes on to invoke the concept of ‘value’. He acknowledges that:

Value-judgements would certainly seem to have a lot to do with what is judged literature and what isn’t – not necessarily in the sense that writing has to be “fine” to be literary, but that it has to be *of the kind* that is judged fine: it may be an inferior example of a generally valued mode [...] the suggestion that “literature” is a highly valued kind of writing is an illuminating one. But it has one fairly devastating consequence. It means that we can drop once and for all the illusion that the category “literature” is “objective”, in the sense of being eternally given and immutable. Anything can be literature, and anything which can be regarded as unalterably and unquestionably literature – Shakespeare, for example – can cease to be literature.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Frank Kermode, entry in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, written by Stefan Collini, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxye.bham.ac.uk/view/article/102921>> [accessed 15 February 2016].

⁵⁰ Fish, p.11.

⁵¹ Eagleton, p.9.

Literature, in the sense of a set of works of assured and unalterable value, distinguished by certain shared inherent properties, does not exist. When I use the words “literary” and “literature” from here on in this book, then, I place them under an invisible crossing-out mark, to indicate that these terms will not really do but that we have no better ones at the moment.⁵²

At the centre of the debate for both Eagleton and Kermode is the concept of literary value and the eye of the beholder. Why do we study what we do and who tells us that these texts are of value to us? Eagleton is keen to junk this term – along with ‘literature’ and ‘literary’ – but it is surely not quite as simple as that. Who, if anyone, does confer value upon a text? How do we judge the value of a text? This takes us towards the totemic concept of culture and its later twentieth-century descendant, cultural value. I now wish to focus on these terms more specifically, beginning with ‘culture’ and then moving on to the later term ‘cultural value’, in order to explore the ways in which such terms are defined and engaged with. By doing this, I hope to use Matthew Arnold’s concept of ‘disinterestedness’ to move to a position of scrutiny beyond the historical and intellectual paradigms explored thus far, and follow my own advice of inculcating and maintaining an active critical consciousness which looks to interpret and engage, rather than passively to receive.

⁵² Eagleton, p.9.

CHAPTER SIX

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS: CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF CULTURE AND CULTURAL VALUE

Culture and Cultural Value (1)

Few terms perhaps have as many associations and engender as much hostility – implicit or explicit – as ‘culture’: the word quickly accrues multiple associations and expectations. With this in mind, I think that it would first be useful to try to isolate the word ‘culture’ itself and consider it etymologically before moving on to explore its use in various contexts.

Raymond Williams, in his 1976 book *Keywords*, traced the etymological development of the word ‘culture’. It began as a word with quite a specific meaning: ‘a noun of *process* – the culture (cultivation) of crops or (rearing and breeding) of animals’.¹ The word also brought with it connotations of a metaphorical cultivation, one of the first usages of this sort being Sir Thomas More in ?1510.² Alongside this developed the sense of culture as meaning the ‘[r]efinement of mind, taste, and manners; artistic and intellectual development. Hence: the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively’, which dates from 1677.³ This was a logical development perhaps, as a word suggesting a physical refinement or improvement also came to imply something similar in intellectual terms. However, to complicate matters, during the nineteenth century an anthropological thread began, which defined culture as ‘The distinctive ideas, customs, social behaviour, products, or way of life of a particular nation, society, people, or period’.⁴ This newer definition suggested a snapshot of a society as it was rather than as it might desire to be: stasis rather than the progress implied by ‘refinement of mind, taste, and manners’. Therefore, it is possible to see how these two definitions could easily come to contradict each other: the anthropological definition implied the way of life of a specific group of people, whilst the ‘refinement’ definition suggested an improvement of that way of life, almost as a progression

¹ Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Fontana/Croom Helm, 1976), p.10.

² *OED*, accessed online 9 August 2018.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

towards something 'better'. The latter definition also suggests an implicit judgement of what constitutes refinement and who is qualified to speak on this.

Culture has therefore perhaps unsurprisingly always had an unsettled relationship with politics and class, which some have sought to soothe and, more often than not, often made things worse. Matthew Arnold's famous essay 'Culture and Anarchy' (1882) is a case in point. He wished to defend culture from those who sought to denigrate it as stifling and preventing social change. Arnold established that his essay came about as a defence of culture against the charge of being a stagnant, stifling, rarefied force against social change. He argued instead that culture is not about mere curiosity or vanity but instead that 'culture is, or ought to be, the study and pursuit of perfection'.⁵ He went on to claim that culture, when properly understood, brought about never-ending betterment of the self and the society as a whole, aiming for, in his famous phrase, 'sweetness and light'; he warned against both a desire for liberty and individualism pursued for its own sake, and also an 'idolatry of machinery', in parallel with my earlier discussion of the reawakened interest in the importance educationally of literature during the Victorian period.⁶ Gross sums up Arnold's approach as follows: 'one of his great virtues is to show, perhaps more forcibly than any previous English critic, that questions of taste are also questions of morality, symptoms of the values which men live by.'⁷ This was very much the case with Arnold himself, in his role as self-appointed social critic with a particular focus on education. In Arnold's view, 'the men of culture are the true apostles of equality', because culture sought to do away with social classes by making available to all the best ideas and thinking.⁸ Once again, with the concept of 'true apostles of equality', the language takes a religious turn, as we saw with Arnold Bennett's discussion of literature, quoted earlier. However, the paradox of this line of argument was that the essay implied that the best ideas and thinking should be determined by men such as Arnold himself, once again implying a class relationship where culture was concerned. Arnold's quasi-religious tone lent a messianic element to the essay, particularly in its vision of a better, more equal world for all men: the religious language prevents

⁵ Matthew Arnold, "'Culture and Anarchy' with 'Friendship's Garland' and Some Literary Essays", *The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold* Vol. 5, edited by R.H. Super (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1965), pp.85-229 (p.115).

⁶ Ibid. p.117.

⁷ Gross, p.58

⁸ Arnold, 'Culture and Anarchy', p.113.

opposition and instead implicitly suggests *increased* control. John Gross describes the ending of ‘Culture and Anarchy’ in the following way:

essentially a vision of the Kingdom of Heaven, of a paradise which is unlikely to be established on earth in any foreseeable secular future [...] Utopia is not only going to be a better world than the one we know today, it is also going to be much better policed. Such are the contradictions which can arise from too strenuous an attempt to translate religious concepts into political terms.⁹

Ironically, however, Arnold’s attempt to defend culture from the charge of entropy and social uselessness is in danger of pushing it towards precisely that role. It was therefore not surprising that Arnold’s defence of culture provoked yet more controversy. The resulting danger of ‘cultural pride’ results in an inadvertent threat to culture itself: ‘[i]nadvertently, by appearing to surround the idea of culture with a devotional hush, Arnold helped give it a bad name.’¹⁰ A similar religious turn to the diction is noticeable in Arnold’s description of his ‘alternative elite’, those who are to be distinguished by ‘urbanity, informed judgement, delicacy of perception, sweetness and light. They were intended, in other words, to constitute both a spiritual *and* a cultural aristocracy’.¹¹ The connections with class – note Arnold’s use of the word ‘aristocracy’ – were ironically strengthened once more. Raymond Williams acknowledged this in *Keywords*, noting how hostility to the word dated from the controversy surrounding Arnold’s views, gathering strength in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; ‘its association with class distinction produced the mime-word *culchah*’, as well as brief anti-German feeling during and after World War One.¹² Williams continues:

It is significant that virtually all the hostility (with the sole exception of the temporary anti-German association) has been connected with uses involving claims to superior knowledge...refinement (*culchah*) and distinctions between ‘high’ art (culture) and popular art and entertainment. It thus records a real social history and a very difficult and confused phase of social and cultural development.¹³

⁹ Gross, p.63.

¹⁰ Ibid. p.70.

¹¹ Ibid. pp.69-70.

¹² Williams, p.81.

¹³ Ibid. p.82.

How can one discriminate against – or be thought to do so – what is part of the lived life of people in a society, simply because it does not conform to standards set by another group within that society? There are parallels here with my previous discussion of literature. Williams does acknowledge this difficulty, with a group of definitions which sit uneasily alongside each other:

We can distinguish a range of meanings from (i) *a developed state of mind* – as in “a person of culture”, “a cultured person” to (ii) *the processes of this development* – as in “cultural interests”, “cultural activities” to (iii) *the means of these processes* – as in culture as “the arts” and “humane intellectual works”. In our own time (iii) is the most common general meaning, though all are current. It co-exists, often uneasily, with the anthropological and extended sociological use to indicate the “whole way of life” of a distinct people or other social group.¹⁴

At this point, I need to introduce cultural value, as during the course of the twentieth century ‘culture’ began to shift into ‘cultural value’ and I wish to discuss the two alongside each other in order to make sense of this move. One of the ways in which the debate about culture developed was that during the early 1990s scholars talked less about culture and began talking about cultural value, a phrase which perhaps simply made explicit the implicit value discussions with which culture had been associated for many decades already. There are obvious implications here of financial value, which I have mentioned briefly and will discuss in further detail later on. There is also a notable parallel here with much of my discussion so far about active interpretation rather than passive reception: the phrase implies that culture may need to *do* something, to have some sort of effect, such that it can be experienced and engaged with. Rather than culture being transferred from generation to generation as a noun, a ‘thing’, I argue that placing it as an adjective before the noun ‘value’ implies the importance of generational engagement with and evaluation of ‘culture’, rather than mere acceptance. It is the mirror image of Arnold’s depiction of culture in ‘Culture and Anarchy’: there, he saw culture as the active force (remember Collini’s acknowledging the verbs the noun ‘culture’ governed), whilst the phrase ‘cultural value’ places the interpretive role on to the person/community. An active ‘readership’ is thus required. This begins to draw together

¹⁴ Ibid. p.11.

various strands of this thesis: Protherough and Atkinson's description of the 'democratic openness' of an English classroom; the importance of the intuitive practitioner; Goodwyn, Lave and Wenger's discussion of the reflective practitioner as part of a 'community of practice'; Fish's 'interpretive community'; Cox and Dyson's personal growth model, rather than cultural heritage. There is also in that phrase an indication of the phenomenological approach I will discuss later, in which one becomes aware of one's experience of something and, to quote Arnold again, the significance of seeing 'the object as in itself it really is'. The importance of the phrase 'cultural value' is not necessarily the *product* of the evaluative (ascribing value) process, but rather *the process itself*: the phrase demands, enables, and foregrounds such discussion. The active reader, the active interpreter, the working critical consciousness is suggested in this phrase: the interest is also therefore not only in what the phrase *means* but that it is being *used*.

Such debate about the significance of culture and its place is perhaps unavoidable, as Steven Connor, one of the first academic critics to engage substantially with this topic, made clear:

[V]alue and evaluation are necessary as a kind of law of human nature and being, such that we cannot help but enter the play of value, even when we would wish to withdraw from or suspend it.¹⁵

Connor would argue, therefore, that evaluation and the need to evaluate are part of human nature. However, the term may also suggest a clear shift towards the need for culture to justify itself in either implicitly or explicitly monetary terms. Kate Rumbold, in giving a narrative of cultural value in her article 'From "Access" to "Creativity": Shakespeare Institutions, New Media, and the Language of Cultural Value' (2010), traces some of the social history of the phrase and its changing incarnations. I will discuss this in greater detail later on, but suffice to say for now that cultural value and the different ways in which it might be defined and measured had become part of government policy.

I now intend to discuss the way in which cultural value is understood today. In an attempt to break through the 'logjam' of binary oppositions involved in the term and explore some of the methodologies, in March 2016 the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)

¹⁵ Steven Connor, *Theory and Cultural Value* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p.8.

published ‘Understanding the value of arts & culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project’. This summarised the findings of a three-year project, headed by Professor Geoffrey Crossick and Dr Patrycja Kaszynska. A precise definition of its key phrase ‘cultural value’ is sidestepped – perhaps, as I have explained above, for good reason – but there is some exploration of the potential meanings of the term:

broadly speaking, cultural value is the worth attributed to activities involving these areas, and it embraces not just the classical and the canon, but also the informal, popular and commercial, and digital as well as physical forms of engagement.¹⁶

Rather than definitions and binaries, the report wishes to consider the different methodologies, which will be discussed later: to explore the process of valuing, rather than try to quantify and define that value itself. As I have argued above, they are interested to consider the process, rather than the product. Indeed, I would say that the report in this way puts into practice what Steven Connor hypothesised in the early 1990s: an attitude which aims ‘to favour the continuation or enabling of evaluative processes, as against the attempt to preserve, discover or derive particular values’ and thus open up the debate more widely, rather than seek to close it down.¹⁷ Connor felt that ‘it proves impossible to imagine a theory of value which does not propose either some absolute closure or some absolute openness, fixation or difference’ and preferred to keep the question open. Similarly, Crossick and Kaszynska seem to find a *via media* which avoids both of these stringent alternatives by focusing on the *process* of valuation rather than the end result.¹⁸ This approach chimes with my earlier discussions of teaching and learning, and the way in which the processes – rather than the product – are placed at the forefront, even when a product is then created.

Crossick and Kaszynska give a broad history of the concept of cultural value:

Cultural value is well-established in policy discourse as if it were unproblematic, whether or not the exact words are used. It has in reality meant different things to different people over the last 75 years. The debate in the UK might be divided into

¹⁶ Geoffrey Crossick & Patrycja Kaszynska, ‘Understanding the value of arts & culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project’, Arts and Humanities Research Council, www.ahrc.co.uk [accessed 11 April 2016], p.13.

¹⁷ Connor, p.16.

¹⁸ Ibid. p.17.

phases distinguished by shifting emphases. There was a period when national pride, education and the civilising effect of the arts were stressed in the aftermath of World War II and the retreat from empire. In due course there was a turn towards what we now call instrumental value. For many there was then a renewed emphasis on intrinsic value and a deliberate embrace of public value, and a brief affirmation of the importance of judgment and quality was finally followed by the current end of our story with a return to emphasising engagement and participation.¹⁹

They mention the formation of the Committee – later Council – for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) in the winter of 1939/40, which was ‘established by the UK government to foster national morale at a time when established cultural events and entertainment were severely disrupted’: art and culture were felt to contain and be capable of propagating a patriotic sense of morale which would bolster Britain at a difficult time.²⁰ Interestingly, the concept of ‘culture’ becomes an institution, which ‘formalises’ culture in a way which may then prove difficult: institutionalised culture must needs be an expression of culture for the few rather than the many and in order to *include* must also *exclude*. After the end of World War Two, CEMA became the Arts Council, with the following mandate:

To develop and improve the knowledge, understanding, and practice of the arts; to increase the accessibility of the arts to the public throughout Great Britain; to advise and cooperate with Departments of Government, local authorities, and other bodies on any matters concerned, whether directly or indirectly, with the foregoing objects.²¹

This guided not only the Arts Council itself, but also that of all institutions associated with the arts, including schools and universities, through which access to the arts may be channelled. It is interesting to note that the issue of ‘accessibility’ is raised here, but much of the language would still imply that culture is to be learnt and accessed, rather than engaged with and evaluated. Perhaps, as I have just noted, the creation of such a body with such a mandate *objectifies* a cultural heritage and may lead to the implicit discouragement of what we might consider as being active, critical engagement with that heritage.

¹⁹ Crossick & Kaszynska, pp.15-16.

²⁰ Ibid. p.16.

²¹ From the Royal Charter of 1967, quoted in Stefan Collini, *Common Reading: Critics, Historians, Publics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press first published 2008, paperback published 2009), p.278.

Even with the acknowledgement of accessibility and indeed of ‘culture’ itself, there was not at this point a drive towards participation and access for *all* or a sense of a cultural policy: indeed, Lord Goodman, Chairman of the Arts Council in the 1960s, remarked that ‘One of the most precious freedoms of the British is the freedom from culture’.²² This suggests to me two opposing interpretations: firstly, that culture must even be protected from itself or, at least, from institutionalised, state-licensed and insistent versions of itself; alternatively, this could be seen as still being a socially exclusive approach. I draw a parallel here with Gross’s discussion (quoted earlier) of Oxford and Cambridge’s snobbery over introducing English literature as a course, in the belief that undergraduates would naturally pick up their native literature: acknowledging ‘culture’, similarly to ‘teaching’ English literature, would be to identify and make available cultural literacy to a far wider social audience. One might ask that if it is possible to earmark what is termed ‘culture’ – such that others might learn about it, take it on, and possibly then even question it – then how do the ruling elite maintain their sense of elitism? Although a minister was appointed with special responsibility for the arts, this was a junior post which did not carry with it membership of the Cabinet until 1992; administration of the various areas of a potential cultural remit was still variegated and, in 1996, a senior official could still comment that ‘It is not part of our culture to think in terms of a cultural policy’.²³ Once again, this reminds me of the demurring over the introduction of the schools of English literature in Oxford and Cambridge and perhaps also the uncertainty regarding the role of English literature in the National Curriculum and beyond, as discussed earlier.

In terms of the ‘content’ of what might be considered ‘culture’ at this stage, there was also some tension which became a binary opposition between ‘high’ and ‘popular’ culture, between ‘the arts’ and ‘the whole way of life’ distinction noted by Raymond Williams in the definition previously quoted. Stefan Collini summarises the overall definition:

At first, the “culture” [politics] fostered largely corresponded to the traditional tastes of the cultivated elite; then, in the 1960s and 1970s, it attempted to do right by various forms of “popular” culture (a revealing category, particularly when contrasted with

²² Quoted in Stefan Collini, *Common Reading: Critics, Historians, Publics*, p.277.

²³ Ibid. p.279.

unpopular culture); finally, in the 1980s and 1990s, it fell in with the prevailing economism of public discourse, treating culture as one of the “leisure industries” that contributed to the GNP – or, as the Thatcher-appointed Arts Council Chairman William Rees-Mogg put it in 1985: “The arts are to British tourism what the sun is to Spain.”²⁴

Culture moved from being the preserve of the elite, to something defined by its difference from ‘popular’ culture, to something which could be marketed as a tourist attraction with apparently no indication of there being any nobler or higher motivations behind it. This was a major shift but the 1980s would take this further, as the decade when ‘value’ began to take on an explicitly financial implication: we have already noted this with regards to the approach towards educational policy. This was because of the Conservative government’s shift towards New Public Management: private managerial techniques – such as setting targets, monitoring outputs, and auditing performance – became the norm, focusing much more on cost, profit, and accountability.²⁵ Crossick and Kaszynska state:

In broad terms, then, there seems to have been limited policy interest in demonstrating the value or impacts of art participation prior to the 1980s. The New Public Management and New Labour’s commitment to mobilising public policy behind certain key social and economic objectives subsequently created a climate in which the cultural sector felt obliged to make its case for public funding in terms different from those of the cultural experience itself [...] If cultural activity produces no identifiable benefits then why should it be elevated above any other activity, let alone receive public subsidy?²⁶

It is clear that the need to justify public spending twisted – and continues to twist – the debate, as value here is explicitly monetary. This is also made clear in the AHRC report’s introduction, written by the organisation’s Interim Chief Executive, Andrew Thompson:

²⁴ Ibid. p.276.

²⁵ Crossick & Kaszynska, p.16.

²⁶ Ibid. p.18-19.

From the Prime Minister and the Chancellor down, there is widespread political recognition that the UK is a place where culture meets commerce. There is an acknowledgement that money spent on the creative industries is vital in supporting the cultural life of the nation (as well as creating real growth and jobs), and that the creative industries help to define us, affecting how the rest of the world views us, and encouraging people in other countries to engage with us.

At the same time, it is entirely appropriate that policymakers should be concerned that public money is spent effectively in support of the arts and culture: that it can be shown to make a real difference. Yet despite the big strides made by cultural organisations in the last decade or so, in making their case for investment, there has remained a sense that we are lacking robust methodologies for demonstrating the value of the arts and culture, and for showing exactly how public funding of them contributes to wider social and economic goals.

That is where the Cultural Value Project comes in. Now more than ever, we need rigorous ways of understanding and measuring that elusive thing we call ‘cultural value’. In an ‘age of austerity,’ making convincing arguments for public investment becomes all the more challenging. At the same time, the cultural and creative industries are growing fast in the UK, outpacing much of the rest of the economy. This means that we are looking at a coming decade of growing demand for research that generates historical, linguistic, intercultural and religious insight – the kind of insight that feeds a thriving UK cultural sector.²⁷

Thompson reminds the readers of the explicit economic pay-off of culture and its importance of culture to the UK economy; he also acknowledges the need to justify public spending on the arts and to be able to measure the impact that the arts have, tailoring his opening to suit a majority Conservative government whose watchword was ‘austerity’ and which aimed to eliminate the deficit in a much more ruthless way than the preceding Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government. Thompson’s financially focused introduction certainly chimes with the audit culture of the 1980s and the ‘public value’ theory years which followed, as well as the post-crash years after 2008. ‘Experience’ of culture was – and

²⁷ Ibid. p.4.

perhaps still is – no longer enough: there needed to be something which could be measured. Understandably, this began to cloud the issue of the value of the arts because it was difficult to quantify this in specific economic terms: where was this value located? How could it be measured and, if possible, marketed? Value in the object *and* value in action became important in order to justify money from the public purse. The latter was a particularly significant change.

To return to Kate Rumbold's article 'From "Access" and "Creativity": Shakespeare Institutions, New Media, and the Language of Cultural Value' in greater detail, she traced the movement from the Thatcherite Conservative government's "value for money" model, to Tony Blair's application of Mark H. Moore's 'public value theory' to cultural organisations and also to Shakespeare: 'public value theory maintains that the value of a public organization is determined by its shareholders – the public'.²⁸ She then noted the further development of the concept in Tessa Jowell – then Secretary of State – attempting in 2004 to assess the benefits of culture based on well-being.²⁹ It was no longer enough for the public merely to participate in culture: the concept of 'public value' insisted that the public's *valuation* of that culture has significance and that preferably culture should provide measurable benefits.³⁰ As Crossick and Kaszynska later argue, the dichotomy of intrinsic and instrumental value was thus dissolved.³¹ Rumbold explored the ways in which the idea of a 'value triangle' – offered by Holden and Hewison as a way of balancing instrumental, intrinsic and institutional value – was used by the Heritage Lottery fund, so that *all* types of value may be 'tested' within a particular institution or cultural objective.³² This model also apparently allows the best of all worlds, as it 'retains the compelling notion of intrinsic value while transferring it to the moment of encounter'.³³

²⁸ Kate Rumbold, 'From "Access" to "Creativity": Shakespeare Institutions, New Media, and the Language of Cultural Value', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Volume 61, Number 3, Fall 2010, pp. 313-336 (Article), pp.313-336, Rumbold, p.322.

²⁹ Ibid. pp.322-323.

³⁰ Ibid. p.322.

³¹ Crossick & Kaszynska, p.18.

³² Rumbold, p.323.

³³ Ibid. p.323.

The reason the AHRC report is so interesting is because it focuses on that moment, using qualitative (rather than quantitative) data and aiming to foreground the *experience* of arts and culture. This is paralleled in the academic sphere, where Connors in the course of his exploration of the development of literary theory over the course of the twentieth century states: ‘But the rise of literary and critical theory since the 1970s has brought about a decisive swing away from a concern with judgement and towards a concern with meaning and interpretation’.³⁴ The individual reader begins to take precedence over an institutionally determined value, in what he describes as ‘the exile of evaluation’.³⁵ The desire not to ascribe value – and thus, by extension, not to ‘devalue’ approaches, readers or texts – means that the concept of value itself is avoided, in favour of a constant evaluating process. This is perhaps why Crossick and Kaszynska, whilst acknowledging that no method should be used in isolation, put forward a phenomenological approach as their key methodology, placing the individual and their direct experience at the centre of the debate. This approach has frequently suffered from a lack of interest due to the difficulties of measuring individual experience: this is therefore a change not only in data-gathering, but in the philosophy of approach to the understanding of cultural value, where the ‘value’ takes place *outside or in conjunction with* the object under consideration, rather than being held by the object.

The phenomenological approach posits that the text or experience is no longer as central to the discussion, but rather the nexus at which a potential consumer (be it student and teacher, actor, reader, or audience) accesses and engages with – and possibly, in Fish’s terms, thus creates – that text or experience. Whilst this approach has received relatively little critical interest so far, I suggest that it can perhaps be seen implicitly in the directions taken by academic discourse over the past few decades. It is noticeable that in early modern studies, for example, the attention has shifted from the texts themselves to the responses of actors, readers, book purchasers, play companies, and audiences. In 2016, Emma Smith published *Shakespeare’s First Folio: Four Centuries of an Iconic Book*, including a survey of owners of copies of the First Folio and how they interacted with their copy, such as making marginal annotations. The behaviour of early modern readers can be traced not only through their annotations but also through the books they chose to buy. *The Elizabethan Top Ten: Defining Print Popularity in Early Modern England* (Emma Smith and Andy Kesson, 2013) used

³⁴ Connor, p.11.

³⁵ Ibid. p.12.

printing records to determine which books were most popular and thus implicitly seeks to construct a contemporary response – in this case, book sales – to published literature. Tiffany Stern's *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (2009) focused on the way in which actors and companies would have interpreted the material provided for them in a play-text. This current focus of critical interest forms a clear parallel with the phenomenological approach suggested in the Crossick and Kaszynska AHRC report. Whilst this symmetry does not appear to have been fully acknowledged at this time, early modern studies and studies of cultural value are working in parallel. There is a clear movement away from the text itself and into its effects and contexts instead: the process of evaluation and engagement is apparently in the ascendant in many aspects of critical study.

The Phenomenological Approach

It is worth exploring phenomenology in a little more detail at this point, as it relates directly to the active, critical engagement I am exploring throughout this thesis. Phenomenology is defined in Dermot Moran's book *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology* as 'the careful description of what appears to consciousness precisely in the manner of its appearing'.³⁶ One might define it as 'consciousness of consciousness', and the concomitant exploration of one's perceptions. Whilst Edmund Husserl is now somewhat forgotten, his influence on others, including Derrida, is significant; indeed, Moran quotes Jean-Luc Marion describing phenomenology in the twentieth century as taking on 'the very role of philosophy itself'.³⁷ Moran's interpretation of Husserl's work appears extremely relevant to this thesis:

His thought and writing [...] is fractured and sporadic. It encapsulates the very *experience* of philosophical thinking itself, probing, encountering uncertainties, difficulties and blockages [...] searching for 'solid ground', for 'clarity'. There is no last word, only evolving thought.³⁸

I contend that the same could be said of Stanley Fish's arguments concerning the reception of literature, my own discussion of teaching, and this thesis: everything is in flux or open to constant re-evaluation and discussion. Fish does not acknowledge Husserl's work and yet

³⁶ Dermot Moran, *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology* (Polity Press, 2005), p.1.

³⁷ Jean-Luc Marion, quoted in Moran, p.1.

³⁸ Moran, p.4.

there are several similarities: Fish describes a slowing down of the analytical process such that it can be examined, which is reminiscent of Husserl's belief that we can bring 'our consciousness to bear on consciousness itself, leading to a kind of "doubling" of the ego, with one side of it acting as a non-participating spectator towards the ongoing activity of natural, conscious life.'³⁹ One might even argue that Matthew Arnold's 'disinterestedness' is also perhaps an early example of this. Husserl's focus on the significance of external and internal horizons, and the ways in which these provide context for our perceptions of phenomena, would seem to parallel Fish's interpretive communities, in which the community provides the context within which utterances are analysed and constructed: Husserl recognised that 'the objective world is in fact always experienced as an intersubjective, public, communal world'.⁴⁰ The partial nature of perceptions in their construction of a predicated whole is also very similar to Fish's exploration of the gradual building of 'meaning' and interpretation, word by word in a sentence, as phenomenology suggests that the first perception is therefore seen as 'a phase of a possible total process'.⁴¹ The significance of process and product, the individual and the community, both receiving primacy is also conceived of in the phenomenological system:

[...] because the different partial perceptive presentations of one and the same material thing constitute a single noematic system, we can explain that the one-sidedness of each individual act is at the same time both experienced and overcome [...] the process of perception, noematically viewed, is a process of fulfilment'⁴²

Isolating experiences and perceptions, and considering one's response to them, is central to my argument across these varied spheres and writers. In all of these cases, conscious intentionality is crucial: 'the original function and importance of this method lies in its unveiling the implicit aspects contained in the actual states of our consciousness.'⁴³

Perhaps the strength of the phenomenological approach in the Crossick and Kaszynska AHRC report is that it does not require – and in fact, dismisses – any presuppositions,

³⁹ Ibid. p.8.

⁴⁰ Ibid. p.4.

⁴¹ Joseph J. Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology* (Purdue University Press, 1994), p.20.

⁴² Ibid. p.21.

⁴³ Ibid. p.22.

thereby permitting constant ‘at face’ engagement and re-evaluation, such that nothing is closed down or completed. Kockelmans explains this aspect of phenomenology as follows:

[Husserl’s] philosophy is a phenomenology precisely because it has as its starting point a field of primordial phenomena. Within this realm of original phenomena, Husserl permits neither induction nor deduction but only intuition on the basis of precise analysis and exact description [...] None of the other methods used by the other sciences can be of any value here. Whereas they have to presuppose something in addition to the actually given, in the field of primordial phenomena characteristic of phenomenology, presuppositions are simply inconceivable. In the field of original phenomena, the fundamental principle is that every primordial, giving intuition is a legitimate source of knowledge, that everything which presents itself to us primordially in “intuition” – in its bodily reality, so to speak – is to be taken simply as what it presents itself to be, but only within the limits in which it presents itself.⁴⁴

This feels very similar to Arnold’s phrase ‘to see the object as in itself it really is’. The interpreter/reader is of primary importance and it is their engagement with the phenomena in front of them which ‘creates’ the value. I will discuss later the significance of contextualising claims of value, including those made about Shakespeare; this aspect of Husserl’s philosophy can be applied again at that point.

Phenomenology had been applied to literature previously in the twentieth century, but not in precise terms. For example, in the 1960s, Georges Poulet considered the strange mental alchemy which happens when one reads a book, such that another consciousness almost exists within the reader:

I give [the work] not only existence, but awareness of existence [...] so long as it is animated by this vital inbreathing inspired by the act of reading, a work of literature becomes (at the expense of the reader whose own life it suspends) a sort of human

⁴⁴ Ibid. p.14.

being, that it is a mind conscious of itself and constituting itself in me as the subject of its own objects.⁴⁵

Poulet then goes further. As his discussion of various French critics and his own anecdote about his experience of a collection of Tintoretto paintings demonstrates, from his point of view the true subjective experience is one which transcends the object entirely:

I had suddenly the impression of having reached the common essence present in all the works of a great master, an essence which I was not able to perceive, except when emptying my mind of all the particular images created by the artist.⁴⁶

In fact, Poulet feels that in order to follow this trajectory and appreciate it fully, criticism must be able to ‘annihilate, or at least momentarily to forget, the objective elements of the work, and to elevate itself to the apprehension of a subjectivity without objectivity.’⁴⁷ However, whilst the concept of transcendentalism is certainly important to the phenomenological approach, I argue that Poulet has altered one of the claims of phenomenology, as Husserl would not necessarily claim that the object develops an independent existence of its own such that it becomes ‘a sort of human being [...] a mind conscious of itself’. Rather, for Husserl, the object, the world, all remain as creations within the individual ego: ‘[p]henomenology, then, considers every object in so far as it is an object-for-a-subject.’⁴⁸ The mind and its ongoing acts of interpretation remain at the absolute centre of the discussion. I argue that Fish would also take issue with Poulet’s approach, as the former wished to remove both ‘subjectivity’ and ‘objectivity’ from the analytical discussion, whereas Poulet’s focus is entirely on his own response, to the exclusion of the subject: he is no longer engaging with – and constructing – that subject, but beyond it. This foreshadows my later discussion about the contemporary creation of narratives with regard to literature, such that the object and access to that object is effaced.

⁴⁵ Georges Poulet, ‘Phenomenology of Reading’, *New Literary History*, Vol. 1, No. 1, New and Old History (Oct., 1969), Published by: The Johns Hopkins University Press (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/468372>), pp. 53-68, [accessed 9 August 2018], p.59.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p.68.

⁴⁷ Ibid. p.68.

⁴⁸ Moran, p.5.

Culture and Cultural Value (2)

To return to my discussion of culture and cultural value, one of the significant difficulties with phenomenology as an analytical approach therefore (or at least the way in which phenomenology is sometimes applied) is that it blurs the boundary between the institution and the experience: as we saw with Poulet's potentially misleading application of it to literature, the object or institution might actually be lost completely in the process. If the value is relocated to the individual visitor, it is then difficult for an institution to claim that it was the source of that experience, as Kate Rumbold explains:

If value, as current narratives suggest, is created anew in every cultural encounter, or even after the event in what visitors do with that experience, how do the organizations prove that they were the sources of that value?⁴⁹

This is not a problem unless the society requires quantifiable evidence of the 'worth' of a cultural institution or approach and, as we have seen, because since the 1980s our own society has asked to see such evidence in one form or another, this may be why the phenomenological methodology has received little attention. The added danger is the logical conclusion of this approach, driven as it is by an increasingly business- and customer-orientated world: does value then exist in that object or institution when there is no interaction with a consumer taking place? Is it possible to argue that the intrinsic value of an object or cultural experience (as with a marketing campaign or business strategy) *only exists* when it meets an audience? This echoes Poulet's comment about books:

Books are objects. On a table, on bookshelves, in store windows, they wait for someone to come and deliver them from their materiality, from their immobility.⁵⁰

To follow this line of reasoning through, is there even such a thing as intrinsic value at all, as we saw in my discussion of literature? In a sense, Rumbold suggests something of an 'emperor's new clothes' conspiracy: 'the mandate to provide access confers the *impression* of

⁴⁹ Rumbold, p.320.

⁵⁰ Poulet, p.53.

“intrinsic” value on the objects contained within the institution’ so that what creates value is the fact that these institutions seek to broadcast and enable access to something they hold or represent.⁵¹ The institutions in question thus find themselves in a difficult position: the residual effects of public value theory underline the importance of the individual in the evaluative process, so that the participant is actively involved in creating the value of that institution. However, does the dissemination of that value – as the institution is required to do in order to create that value – mean that value is or can no longer be ‘held’ by that particular institution? Rumbold traces the argument through to its logical conclusion, one which echoes Eagleton’s comments about literature quoted in the previous chapter:

For value has always resided not in things, but in the way we talk about them, in the qualities we ascribe to them.⁵²

This could be viewed as a positive shift, as Emily Linneman suggests in her Ph.D. thesis ‘The Cultural Value Of Shakespeare In Twenty-First-Century Publicly-Funded Theatre In England’ (2010). Linneman applies this line of thinking to Shakespeare specifically, reflecting a Shakespeare-centric approach in much of this discussion – something which the latter stages of this thesis will look to redress. She says:

Shakespeare’s value resides in his status as a free resource which is both freely available and open to interpretation. Free-resource Shakespeare is also flexible and can hold different cultural values together in the same literal and metaphorical space. Often, these different values will appear to be tensions, for example, tradition/innovation or culture/commerce. However, the use of free-resource Shakespeare within publicly-funded theatre allows these ‘tensions’ to be articulated as part of a debate. This debate opens up a dialectical space within the theatre where new cultural value can be created.⁵³

⁵¹ Rumbold, p.321.

⁵² Ibid. p.335.

⁵³ Emily Linneman, ‘The Cultural Value Of Shakespeare In Twenty-First-Century Publicly-Funded Theatre In England’, Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 2010, via <http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/1355/> [accessed 31 October 2016], pp.4-5.

Rather than seeking to maintain some sort of ownership of value and its creation, the institution – in Linneman’s example, the RSC’s Twitter-based production of *Romeo and Juliet* (2010), called *Such Tweet Sorrow* – makes the most of its new medium. Linneman argues that possible tensions can thus be redefined as negotiations, acknowledging the potential for the creation of new value. Perhaps such a move towards openness and accessibility is something which Matthew Arnold would have championed. The focus is on the processes, rather than the product, and the continued creativity and engagement which this enables.

This discussion has led us, perhaps inevitably, towards discussion of Shakespeare. He is the key example and his value the most frequently analysed. Rather refreshingly, Sarah Olive also considers some of the *practical* reasons behind the reason why Shakespeare has been the only compulsory author on the National Curriculum since 1989. She notes the wide variety of texts and genres, the relative stability of contextual and biographical material, and the use of both prose and poetry in his plays enabling the fulfilment of various requirements of the curriculum; she also makes the point that the existence of the ‘Shakespeare industry’ means that there are far more editions and teaching resources available for him than for other authors, and his works are also out of copyright, enabling them to be downloaded from the internet or performed free of charge which may appeal to schools operating on a tight budget.⁵⁴ However, there are also some more unsettling possibilities. Olive’s approach to the question considers the way in which Conservative policy advocates free market economics and yet protects Shakespeare from any kind of challenge or competition, coming to the conclusion that ‘the very act of making Shakespeare uniquely compulsory suggests a possibility that if left to consumers (students, parents) and producers (teachers, schools) Shakespeare might not be taught.’⁵⁵ ‘He’ has become institutionalised and objectified. She quotes Gary Taylor’s comment:

If Shakespeare were not so massively supported by corporate capital and government subsidy, if he were not forced upon schoolchildren, would he still loom so large in our culture? Or would he collapse to the status of Chaucer? A great writer admired by specialists, but paid little attention by the larger world.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Olive, p.87.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p.93.

⁵⁶ Gary Taylor, quoted in Olive, p.94.

Conservative educational policy in the 1980s included Shakespeare because of the intention to build a common ‘culture’ and also to offer the ‘best’, the gold standard of literature to pupils. Olive’s conclusion would be that he goes beyond that, transcending party politics and policy too.⁵⁷

Perhaps there can be no better indication of the preeminence of Shakespeare in British culture than his centrality in the Cultural Olympiad launched in association with the 2014 Olympics, and I wish to consider this briefly. The Cultural Olympiad has already received critical interest, particularly from Paul Prescott and Erin Sullivan in their book *Shakespeare on the Global Stage, Performance and Festivity in the Olympic Year* (2015). The concept of a Cultural Olympiad is a fascinating one in itself: Pierre de Coubertin in his conception of the modern Olympic Games wished for culture and sport to go hand in hand, fearing that otherwise ‘sport without culture might dwindle into mere displays of brute strength and raw speed...without an enlightened and deodorizing creative-intellectual component.’⁵⁸ This is reminiscent of the reasons I discussed earlier for studying literature: the aesthetically pleasing drapery to hide the machinery and industrialisation of the nineteenth century.

As Prescott points out, ‘[o]f the Cultural Olympiad’s seven major strands, only one featured a proper noun: The World Shakespeare Festival (WSF).’⁵⁹ However, one could argue that this is because Shakespeare no longer functions as a proper noun: the word is instead a collective noun (of sorts) holding together an array of ideas and descriptions now attributed to the man and his works. The WSF tended to refer to Shakespeare as ‘the world’s playwright’, a slogan reminiscent of HSBC’s tagline ‘The world’s local bank’: both phrases manage to convey worldwide reach and yet the potential for easy access by the individual to an individual, all packaged in the reassuring apparent solidity of a concrete noun. The possessive in this tagline is also intriguing: does the world *need* a playwright or has one been thrust upon it? Shakespeare is assumed to transcend nationality and difference, reminding us of a common humanity; he is seemingly no longer merely a writer of plays, but a vast, benevolent Big

⁵⁷ Olive, p.102.

⁵⁸ Paul Prescott, ‘Shakespeare and the Dream of Olympism’, *Shakespeare on the Global Stage: Performance and Festivity in the Olympic Year*, edited by Paul Prescott and Erin Sullivan (Bloomsbury, 2015), pp.1-37, (p.16).

⁵⁹ Ibid. p.3.

Brother figure offering joy and equality to all. Indeed, he appears to become a common language and a platform on which different people and nationalities can meet as equals:

[...] the ground for knowledge of self and other was Shakespeare. As prompt and platform for cross-cultural exchange, Shakespeare is a lingua franca, or – in more Olympian terms – his works offer a level playing field for all.⁶⁰

This global positioning of Shakespeare is either a true utopia of equality and cross-cultural exchange or a new British imperialism:

[...] it might equip global citizens with a level of self-knowledge and self-discipline, qualities that their own culture's literature doesn't quite foster to the same extent as that of the 'world's playwright'. A similar assumption underwrites cultural programming: that Shakespeare's works – and the festivals that produce them – are powerful catalysts for international exchange and understanding and therefore help to produce a more peaceful and civilized world.⁶¹

National and international reaction to Shakespeare is one of unquestioning fealty with a positive outcome: Shakespeare 'as a figure of British triumphalism [is] no longer feasible on a global scale, [so] Shakespeare as the representative of cultural equality and exchange predominated.'⁶² Having dominated the English curriculum, 'Shakespeare' is now broadening 'his' reach to the extent of becoming almost more like the United Nations than a man who wrote plays: has Bardolatry grown out of all proportion?

Kate Rumbold and Kate McLuskie consider some of this, exploring the relation of Shakespeare to the phenomenon of cultural value in their book *Cultural Value in Twenty-First Century England: The Case of Shakespeare* (2014). They are aware that Shakespeare holds an oddly privileged position:

⁶⁰ Prescott, 'Shakespeare and the Dream of Olympism', p.13.

⁶¹ Ibid. p.11.

⁶² Erin Sullivan, 'Olympic Shakespeare and the Idea of Legacy: Culture, Capital and the Global Future', *Shakespeare on the Global Stage: Performance and Festivity in the Olympic Year*, pp.283-321, (p.284).

This elusive, ideal, quintessential Shakespeare seems almost like value itself. It can be identified only by its effects; its material manifestations are always the result of contingent historical circumstances and its existence becomes a matter of belief. The value is thus unavailable for analysis, a value of last resort that authorises and sustains all of the actions undertaken in his name.⁶³

One may be reminded of Stanley Fish's essay 'How To Recognize a Poem When You See One', in which he noted how his students, given a list of names and told they were looking at a poem, approached the list accordingly:

[...] acts of recognition, rather than being triggered by formal characteristics, are their source. It is not that the presence of poetic qualities compels a certain kind of attention but that the paying of a certain kind of attention results in the emergence of poetic qualities. As soon as my students were aware that it was poetry they were seeing, they began to look with poetry-seeing eyes, that is, with eyes that saw everything in relation to the properties they knew poems to possess.⁶⁴

Do we respond similarly to Shakespeare? Do we have 'Shakespeare-seeing eyes', in the same way that Fish felt his students had 'poetry-seeing eyes'? This is in some ways a useful summation of some of the discussions of value in this thesis more widely: identifiable only by effects, difficult to define, and a circular, closed concept. The value and centrality of Shakespeare is essentially inviolable. However, in my view this is the problem: because that value now frequently goes unquestioned, it would seem that 'Shakespeare' has currently managed to escape the process of *evaluation*; 'he' has become a new 'culture' which is disseminated but not examined and engaged with.

McLuskie and Rumbold dispute some of those who have written about his value and the way in which this has been done, notably Jonathan Bate's 'Public Value in the Humanities', commissioned by the AHRC. Rumbold and McLuskie explore how, in his defence of Shakespeare, Bate quoted the discussion of value from *Troilus and Cressida* to suggest that

⁶³ Kate McLuskie and Kate Rumbold, *Cultural Value in Twenty-First Century England: The Case of Shakespeare* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), pp.52-53.

⁶⁴ Fish, p.326.

Shakespeare was not only the ‘spokesman for the fundamental priority of intrinsic over relative value’ but as ‘a defining voice whose statement about value could resolve division and silence intellectual dissent.’⁶⁵ The interplay between intrinsic and relative value Bate suggests harks back to my earlier discussion of his interventions in the National Curriculum and text choices. For me, Bate’s discussion of value is troubling, as it ‘closes’ the discussion, rather than allowing a constant play of evaluation and – to quote the Protherough and Atkinson phrase once more – ‘democratic openness’. However, by analysing not only this section but also speeches about value from other plays including *Hamlet*, Rumbold and McLuskie point out the fallacy of using the texts in this way and liberating speeches from context. As effect depends upon conflict, established social values must be called into question in the plays; additionally, the speakers are not our contemporaries and neither are they Shakespeare’s.⁶⁶ Instead, Rumbold and McLuskie conclude that:

The effect of the emotional and narrative role played by discussions of value in Shakespeare’s plays is to emphasise that value cannot be defined in the abstract but operates within particular social relations where it has a symbolic function that endorses the emotional effects of the play’s action.⁶⁷

Their argument is that value is only approachable within the context of an interpretive community, rather than ‘in the abstract’. Fish’s writings would also suggest that the *context* one is given controls or directs response; to apply a phenomenological approach again briefly, Husserl also emphasises the significance of context – internal and external horizons – in our comprehension of the world around us.⁶⁸

Rumbold and McLuskie then further this discussion to consider the conflict between emotional commitments and value calculations: in Shakespeare’s plays, this is resolved in favour of the emotional, and the dichotomy between narrative and calculation could prove useful in our discussion of the value of Shakespeare today.⁶⁹ This exploration of narrative as opposed to calculation and analysis is of significance to my discussion. Rumbold and

⁶⁵ McLuskie and Rumbold, pp.55-56.

⁶⁶ Ibid. p.57.

⁶⁷ Ibid. p.75.

⁶⁸ Kockelmans, p.22.

⁶⁹ McLuskie and Rumbold, pp.75-76.

McLuskie also note the importance of choice when it comes to discussing modern concepts of culture, which is perhaps yet another example of narrative and personal engagement. Their examples, such as the British Museum's collaboration with BBC Radio 4 on *A History of the World in 100 Objects* and their exploration of the access activities conducted using Raphael's painting *Madonna of the Pinks*, demonstrate that one shift in the definition of value is towards a transcendent concept of value suggesting a human experience with which we can all engage:

The British Museum project [*A History of the World in 100 Objects*] showed how the value of culture might be given transcendent, if not absolute, authority by virtue of its identification with the practices of particular people, whether those people were Assyrian kings or random individuals from the contemporary population. It suggests the ways that culture could be aligned with practices of both groups and individuals and depended less on the object or practice itself than on the shared respect and consideration that other groups might afford it.⁷⁰

There is no sense of intrinsic value in this approach to the object considered; context is also elided. Instead, we see an example of Georges Poulet's annihilation of 'the objective elements [...] a subjectivity without objectivity', in which one subject can connect with the 'heart' of a text or painting.⁷¹ The value in the object comes down to the narrative created around it, a narrative which – as discussed earlier – foregrounds social cohesion rather than social (or even national) difference, just as 'Shakespeare' is seen to do. This project also does something very similar to the way in which many interact with Shakespeare and his works: both foreground narrative and cohesion, rather than an *analysis* of the object. The object taken – and any value it may or may not hold – is liberated from its context and put upon a much bigger stage. The people who used the objects in the Museum's project, the characters in Shakespeare's plays, Shakespeare himself: they are all people just like us. The interpretive community is at once a single individual and an entire race: 'the world's playwright', indeed. However, does this then posit a product, rather than a process? The narrative appears to be the end-goal, rather than another potential evaluative approach to these texts and objects. Is this still *evaluating* or has it become unexamined *value*?

⁷⁰ McLuskie and Rumbold, pp.112-113.

⁷¹ Poulet, p.68.

There is another reason why Shakespeare has been the focus of so much of this discussion, which was hinted at in Olive's work quoted earlier: there is a much greater ease of access to his works as opposed to those of his contemporaries. It is much simpler to consider Shakespeare and his characters as people just like us, because we can 'get to them' much more easily. As Rumbold and McLuskie point out:

The pleasurable "engagement" with "Shakespeare" similarly depends upon its consumers' ignorance of the complex procedures of textual analysis, literary abstraction and expensive and sometimes under-valued artistic experimentation that have made their engagement possible.⁷²

Once again, as with the Museum project, the 'machinery' enabling these easy interactions is hidden in favour of aesthetic enjoyment; the focus is on the narrative, rather than analysis of an object. Acknowledging the academic work done in order to enable easy access for the consumer breaks the narrative.⁷³ Much of this work simply has not been done for other early modern playwrights, making access to and pleasurable experience of these writers much more difficult as we cannot easily access the narrative which is now held to be paramount. Pascale Aebischer in her 2017 book *Screening Early Modern Drama: Beyond Shakespeare*, noted that studies of early modern drama tend to accentuate the embedding of the plays within their various early modern contemporary contexts; only Shakespeare is approached in presentist ways in addition to contextualisation. However, Aebischer seeks to look at how contemporary Jacobean films 'quite consistently [...] insist precisely on the plays' intrinsic interest, their ability not just to bridge past and present, but to *be* part of present-day culture.⁷⁴ She goes on to note the way in which the freedom of evaluation still possible for early modern texts other than Shakespeare becomes a source of vitality:

Rather than simply build on the cultural capital attached to Shakespeare, contemporary Jacobean films pose uncomfortable questions about what literary heritage is, and, more importantly, what it is *to us* and how it may be *used* within the

⁷² McLuskie and Rumbold, p.78.

⁷³ Ibid. pp.25-26.

⁷⁴ Pascale Aebischer, *Screening Early Modern Drama: Beyond Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, first published 2013, paperback published 2017), p.8.

political and cultural arena. As a result, contemporary Jacobean films are less deferential towards their source texts than their Shakespearean equivalents [...] Instead of treating their source texts as literary treasures that must be preserved and brought to a wider audience intact in all their original glory, locked into a temperature-controlled display case, contemporary Jacobean films treat the early modern literary tradition like an attic that can be ransacked, whose contents are just as likely to be discarded as rescued and reassembled into new artworks.⁷⁵

This section has explored the developments and shifts in the term ‘culture’ and also ‘cultural value’, from the somewhat classist, elitist approach to something much more explicitly financial, but which at least raises the possibility for an *evaluative* process. As I have also discussed, there are two interlinked dangers here: Shakespeare’s having moved beyond evaluation and also the rise of the narrative approach. The construction of a narrative – people ‘just like us’ – neutralises any sort of critical engagement by creating an illusory sense of sameness where exploration of the difference encourages continued evaluation. What interests me here is the possibility for a critical consciousness which engages and reconstructs, but using both synchronic and diachronic approaches: rather than elide the machinery of access and make a smooth narrative the end goal, Aebischer would argue that contemporary films of early modern plays permit awareness of *both* difference *and* the positioning of these works in the here and now.

⁷⁵ Ibid. pp.8-9.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN ENGAGEMENT WITH JOHN WEBSTER: A CASE STUDY

It would now be helpful to consider a case study which marries many of the different types of value which I have been discussing, turning some of the theoretical exploration here into engaging with an actual example. As Shakespeare has received so much discussion and, indeed, has now passed beyond the veil of value, I am going to look at one of his contemporaries, John Webster. I am going to explore the types of valuation an Early Modern audience may have created as regards his work, and also the way in which a twenty-first century audience may engage with his plays: to do this, I am going to look at the theatres in which those plays were performed and what this may say about the works themselves. I will look at the Red Bull and also the modern-day Sam Wanamaker Theatre. These are also plays I have taught several times in the classroom, thus connecting this section of my thesis with its opening.

Webster at the Red Bull

What reasons were there for putting on specific plays and where was their ‘value’ located? What sort of evaluative processes might have been at work and how have these been explored in our own time? As previously discussed, it is clear that the audience for the first performance of *The White Devil* clearly did not value Webster’s play as he thought fit, as he claimed in the preface to the published text of *The White Devil* that a play could be poisoned by the ‘breath that comes from the incapable multitude.’¹ It also appears to hold true for the valuation of the theatre in which his play was first performed. The repertory and audience of the Red Bull were often considered with disdain during the seventeenth century and Rory Loughnane feels that critical comment still does not know quite how to approach the Red Bull – whether to deride or to defend it.² The nature and perhaps the intent of literary scholarship is to find or deny an intrinsic cultural ‘value’, the definition of which will vary

¹ John Webster, *The White Devil, The Works of John Webster* ed. Gunby, Carnegie, Hammond (Cambridge 1995, reprinted 2007), p.140.

² Rory Loughnane, ‘Reputation and the Red Bull Theatre, 1625-42’, *Yearbook of English Studies* (44) 2014, pp.29-50, p.50.

from critic to critic. However, it is perhaps easy to forget that the primary intention of the playhouses was to entertain in order to make money. Recent scholarship has attempted to rescue the theatre from earlier commentary, but this ongoing critical discussion could be seen as unnecessary when the theatre is considered solely from the perspective of profit. It is worth considering that the Red Bull continued ‘as a playhouse for fifty-five years, longer than any of its rivals, even housing plays often from 1642 to 1660 when playing was illegal’.³ This longevity is put into perspective when one considers that the Globe was turned into a hay barn in 1642 and then demolished in 1644. Therefore, it could be argued that we are applying cultural and literary expectations to this theatre which are inappropriate. Farmer and Lesser’s work on print popularity has given us a new lens through which to view early modern print culture – that of publishing and profitability – and the desire to print what would sell.⁴ In a competitive market, it would appear that the Red Bull put on plays which would draw a crowd and thus turn a profit, which was its primary purpose. Its longevity could well be testament to its success in this regard.

How did the Red Bull begin? It is perhaps surprising that, for a theatre which was regularly treated with a fair amount of snobbery, its founding was unusual because of its links with the court. Berry explains that ‘The excuse for undertaking to build the Red Bull was the willingness of a member of the royal family [Ulrik, Duke of Holstein, the Queen’s younger brother] to be the patron of the players that would use it. Nothing of the sort had happened before’.⁵ However, the ignominious departure of the Duke of Holstein foreshadowed the chequered reputation of the Red Bull. Marta Straznicky states that ‘With remarkable consistency throughout the early modern period, Red Bull playgoers are characterized as unlettered, ignorant, or possessed of a crass literary sensibility’.⁶ She goes on to explore both the potential readership and audience of the Red Bull output, quoting from *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* to give some sense of the contemporary stereotypes of the Red Bull audiences: ‘O ’tis Armellina: now if she have the wit to beginne, as I meane shee should, then

³ Herbert Berry, ‘Building playhouses, the accession of James I, and the Red Bull’, *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* (18) 2005, pp.61-74, p.70.

⁴ Farmer and Lesser, ‘What is Print Popularity? A Map of the Elizabethan Book Trade’, in *The Elizabethan Top Ten: Defining Print Popularity in Early Modern England*, edited by Andy Kesson and Emma Smith, JSTOR [accessed 17 January 2015].

⁵ Berry, pp.70-71.

⁶ Marta Straznicky, ‘The Red Bull Repertory in print, 1605-1660’, *Early Theatre* (9:2) 2006, pp.144-156, p.144.

will I confound her with complements drawne from the Plaies I see at the Fortune, and Red Bull, where I learne all the words I speake and vnderstand not'.⁷ She draws from this that 'the Red Bull audience represents the general vulgarity of the playgoing public, meaning specifically lack of wit, learning, or mental acuity'.⁸ Contemporary accounts of the Red Bull include James Wright's snobbish summation that the Red Bull was 'mostly frequented by citizens, and the meaner sort of people'⁹ and Edmund Gayton's snide comment about the actors being 'terrible teare-throats'.¹⁰ However, Astington concludes that much of what we would now consider as the reputation of the Red Bull is based on legends and little else: 'By the end of the career of the Elizabethan playhouse, disparagement of the large outdoor theatres had become a cultural fashion, without much discrimination about what actually went on within them' and that 'The Red Bull is a convenient and habitual low-water mark against which to measure the traditionally high tide of the Globe and the Blackfriars'.¹¹ This implicit snobbery is still found in critical discussion of the theatres: in her article 'Repertory and Riot', Eleanor Collins disengages the 1617 Shrove Tuesday riot from the Red Bull and Cockpit Theatres, after Charles J. Sisson had linked the disturbance to the transfer of Queen Anne's Men from the old Red Bull to the new Cockpit theatre.¹² Amongst the recent critical discussion, only Loughnane seems to take a longer view, and consider how the interpretations of the Red Bull, its audience and its repertory, may reflect more on the critic than the theatre itself. He feels that to some extent, 'the "reputation" of the Red Bull is a revealing litmus test for the ways in which scholars approach evidence and ascribe "value" to it'.¹³ Mark Bayer and Tanya Pollard both pick up on this class consciousness, Bayer writing that the history of the Red Bull has usually been written '[b]y those of a decidedly higher social status who were predisposed to look upon the venue and the audiences who frequented it with mocking

⁷ *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, quoted in Straznicki, p.148.

⁸ Ibid. p.148.

⁹ James Wright, *Historia Histrionica*, 1699 – quoted in Webster *The White Devil: a guide to the text and the play in performance*, Stephen Purcell (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.1.

¹⁰ Edmund Gayton, *Pleasant Notes Upon Don Quixote*, quoted in Tiffany Stern's lecture 'Shakespeare and Tragedy', given at Cheltenham College, 27.02.15

¹¹ John Astington, 'Playing the man: acting at the Red Bull and the Fortune', *Early Theatre* (9:2) 2006, pp.130-42, p.130.

¹² Eleanor Collins, 'Repertory and riot: the relocation of plays from the Red Bull to the Cockpit Theatre', *Early Theatre* (13:2) 2010, pp.132-149, pp.132-133.

¹³ Loughnane, p.50.

derision' and Pollard commenting that Webster's remarks about the failure of *The White Devil* smacked of 'cynicism and elitism'.^{14, 15}

As discussed previously, 'value' is key and perhaps too little attention has been paid to the commercial 'value' of the Red Bull, quite possibly because of the lack of evidence. Astington notes that 'Up to the time of the death of King James, and the virulent plague outbreak of the same year, 1625, there is every sign that the actors at the northern playhouses were in excellent professional health, and conducting a thriving and active business'.¹⁶ Loughnane traces the history of the theatre further, quoting Thomas Carew's dedicatory verse to William Davenant's *The Just Italian* in 1630, in which Carew scorns

...the men in crowded heapes that throng
To that adulterate stage, where not a tong
Of th'untun'd Kennell, can a line repeat
Of serious sense: but like lips, meet like meat

and laments how 'the true brood of Actors [...] behold their Benches bare, though they rehearse | the tearser Beaumonts or great Johnsons verse'.¹⁷ Whilst there is likely to be some hyperbole here, the suggestion is that the Red Bull attracted plenty of punters, 'in crowded heapes that throng' whilst the apparently worthier plays and playwrights were faced with 'Benches bare'. The types of theatre are also implied here: the 'crowded heapes' of the groundlings who 'throng' in the pit in front of the stage, as opposed to the 'Benches' of the indoor theatres, which charged higher prices and therefore attracted a different sort of spectator. However, according to Carew, even those who might afford a ticket to a play put on at an indoor theatre were not attending: were even these richer, more educated audience members being drawn to the low-brow spectacles at theatres such as the Red Bull?

¹⁴ Mark Bayer, 'The Red Bull Playhouse', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, ed.11 by Richard Dutton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 225–39 (p. 228), quoted in Loughnane, p.30.

¹⁵ Tanya Pollard, *Drugs and Theater in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 42, quoted in Loughnane, p.30.

¹⁶ Astington, p.137.

¹⁷ Thomas Carew, 'To my Friend M. D'Avenant, on his legitimate Poeme', in William Davenant *The Just Italian* (London, 1630), quoted in Loughnane, p.39.

The Red Bull continued to apply for licences for new plays right up until a few months before the closure of the theatres in 1642, suggesting a continuing commercial enterprise commissioning new works until the last moment.¹⁸ However, Loughnane concludes rather disconsolately:

[s]uch a paucity of evidence about day-to-day operations at the Red Bull encourages a critical engagement with the material that is “reputation” driven. Indeed, in the absence of further evidence, it is practically impossible to discuss the theatre in this period without making reference to the sneers, or without being drawn to the exciting details of the *Widow Waking* and *Whore New Vamp’d* scandals, or Herbert’s decision to set Kirke’s offensive play alight.¹⁹

Loughnane describes the Red Bull as a “popular” — with all the meaning that that word can subjectively connote — London theatre’.²⁰ However, the aim of the playhouse was to sell tickets and, if it was ‘popular’ by appealing to the ‘general public’, then the shareholders may well have been less interested in whether the theatre was also considered ‘coarse’.

In an engaging parallel with my earlier discussion of definitions of literature and value, the repertory of the Red Bull contained a fairly wide spectrum of plays. For example, two local incidents in 1624 – Nathaniel Tyndale’s murder of his mother and Tobias Audley’s tricking of and subsequent marriage to the wealthy widow Anne Elsdon – were turned into theatrical capital by Dekker, Webster, Ford and Rowley.²¹ Remarkably, ‘several witnesses testified that boy actors from the Red Bull took to the local streets to drum up business for the play [*Widow Waking*] by singing a ballad about the widow. Garfield testified that someone sang the ballad under Anne Elsdon’s window, having been sent there “by one Holland” — possibly Aaron Holland, one of the major shareholders of the Red Bull’.²² When marketing practices are this callous, the implication is that the shareholders were more interested in selling tickets than they were a lasting literary heritage. Therefore, although such events may

¹⁸ Loughnane, p.48.

¹⁹ Ibid. p.48.

²⁰ Ibid. p.50.

²¹ *Widow Waking* – discussed at greater length in Loughnane, pp.32-34.

²² Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 7 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941–68), vi, 238, quoted in Loughnane, p.34.

justify some of the sneers the theatre received, it is again to be considered whether we – and those at the time – are applying the wrong standards to the Red Bull. The writing of such a play and its pitiless marketing strategies suggest that Aaron Holland was interested above all in sales rather than quality, the ‘very enterprising’ rather than the ‘subtle’.²³ The theatre was also appealing to quite a specific local audience. As Loughnane explains,

...the fare at the Red Bull was successful because it showcased plays that appealed to audiences of a certain social class. Clerkenwell and its surrounding areas were certainly not among the wealthier parts of London at that time, and people from these areas possibly formed the basis of their audiences...we know that the Red Bull and Fortune drew sufficiently large audiences to stay in operation.²⁴

I would argue that if this sort of material did not attract the crowds, then it would not have been put on. It also makes Webster’s own snobbery towards the theatre in the printed text of *The White Devil* intriguing: after all, the play did receive its first performance at the Red Bull. However, this supercilious attitude towards the theatre may well be an artefact of the printed book and therefore tells us something about how he wished to position his published play-text, separating it from what was apparently a disappointing first performance.

Alongside this material spun from local gossip, the Red Bull may also have appealed to the more nostalgic theatre-goers. Whilst Astington dismisses the ‘legends’ which suggest the poor reputation of the Red Bull, he has little else to go on when discussing some of the theatre’s repertory:

The revival of older material, I’d suggest, established something of a speciality of the northern playhouses and their performers, and was part of their appeal: the Bull and the Fortune, by the 1630s, were where you went to see the good old plays, forty and fifty years old, from the age of the good old queen [...] The legends of the later days of the Bull and the Fortune [...] are of a certain amount of old-fashioned crowd pleasing.²⁵

²³ Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, quoted in Loughnane, p.34.

²⁴ Loughnane, p.49.

²⁵ Astington, p.130-131.

Astington also considers the performance style to be deliberate: '[t]he jibes about the terrible tear-throats at the northern playhouses miss the point; it wasn't that the actors didn't know better, but they were quite deliberately keeping alive a broader, showier, declamatory tradition'.²⁶ The contemporary Edmund Gayton snubs both this performance style and also the material: 'I have heard, that the Poets of the Fortune and the red Bull, had always a mouth-measure for their Actors (who were terrible teare-throats) and made their lines proportionable to their compasse, which were *sesquipedales*, a foot and a halfe'.²⁷ Here, Gayton not only mocks the way in which the actors speak the lines, but also the words which they are given to say, through giving an example of something suitably absurd in '*sesquipedales*'. However, Tiffany Stern comments on the 'table-book culture' and how the audience 'wanted to capture a word and take it home', meaning that the introduction of new words was part of the attraction of going to the theatre, as one could then use the words to impress in conversation.²⁸ Indeed, in 1653 Flecknoe was concerned that the closing of the theatres would harm the development of the language.²⁹ Straznicky concurs with this:

...it is striking how many of the jibes against the Red Bull audience involve the appropriation and re-circulation of dramatic language – playgoers are mocked for 'culling,' 'gathering,' or 'drawing' words from the stage plays and using them in inappropriate contexts outside the theatre. In one sense, this might be testimony of the kind of literary ignorance denounced by Webster; but it also reveals that, along with its famous spectacles, the language of the Red Bull plays was part of the theatre's 'brand' in the entertainment marketplace.³⁰

So, language and the 'famously spectacle-driven Red Bull repertory' were the selling points.³¹ The Red Bull was creating its own niche in the market, driven by the 'spectacle' one could enjoy during the performance and the verbal souvenirs one took home afterwards: it

²⁶ Astington, p.131.

²⁷ Edmund Gayton, *Pleasant Notes Upon Don Quixote*, quoted in Stern's lecture 'Shakespeare and Tragedy'. I have modernised (long -s, u/v, i/j) in this quotation and onwards.

²⁸ Stern, lecture on 'Shakespeare and Tragedy'.

²⁹ Flecknoe, included in Stern's lecture on 'Shakespeare and Tragedy'.

³⁰ Straznicky, p.151.

³¹ Ibid. p.144.

was creating and marketing its own cultural value. The gibes and snobbery at the theatre's expense – both contemporary and twentieth century – implicitly acknowledge this cultural value, even in disparaging it. The physical space was also used to great effect: Munro feels that 'amphitheatres such as the Red Bull were well suited to large-cast plays and were well-equipped for the production of special effects' and mentions Eva Griffith's theory that the Red Bull, being made of brick and not wood, would have been well suited to fireworks, as are required in Dekker's *If It Be Not Good the Devil Is In It*.³² This was clearly an advantage over the wooden Globe, which burnt down during a performance of *Henry VIII*. Whilst it is possible to deride both of these selling points, they were clearly effective otherwise they would have been abandoned: interestingly, financial value creates and maintains a particular cultural identity.

However, Straznicky raises an intriguing point which begins to take us beyond the strutting and 'teare-throats'. The 're-circulation of dramatic language' – a tool Webster himself uses – requires an audience who can spot and thus appreciate the resonance of such a chamber of echoes. Munro believes that "[s]pectacle is not necessarily unsophisticated in its use, and much Red Bull dramaturgy depends on an audience which is theatrically literate and able to 'read' spectacle correctly", suggesting a self-consciously theatrical approach in which plays used the currency of previous plays in creating their own effects.³³ The implication is of a 'theatrical dialogue', which is only worth creating if one believes that the audience can appreciate it: the audience are encouraged to evaluate and engage, creating an interpretive community which relies on having (to paraphrase Stanley Fish) 'theatre-seeing eyes' in order to appreciate fully what is happening on the stage.

Loughnane's argument runs on similar lines: his discussion of Kirke's *The Seven Champions of Christendom* leads him to conclude that whilst 'it relies on sensation and stage tricks...it is also written for a theatre audience apparently well-schooled in traditions of the stage. It demands that they recognize the conventions and tropes that are being employed and comically subverted.'³⁴ The same could be said of Webster's *The White Devil*, which requires an audience to understand the elaborate procedure involved in electing a new Pope and the

³² Lucy Munro, 'Governing the pen to the capacity of the stage: reading the Red Bull and Clerkenwell', *Early Theatre* (9:2) 2006, pp.99-113, p.102.

³³ Ibid. p.102.

³⁴ Loughnane, pp.46-47.

presentation before the audience of another ‘white devil’ in the play (Monticelso, clothed in white as Pope), appreciate the usage of dumb shows, and also perhaps note the textual allusions to Shakespeare. Cornelia’s grief over the body of her son Marcello is expressed in the lines ‘fetch a looking glasse, see if his breath will not staine it; or pull out some feathers from my pillow, and lay them to his lippes’, which are almost a direct quotation of Lear’s lines spoken over the dead Cordelia; her distraction following Marcello’s death manifests itself in ‘There’s Rosemarie for you, and Rue for you, / Hearts-ease for you’, echoing Ophelia in *Hamlet*.^{35, 36} Not only are the words echoed, but also the blocking: the implicit movements suggested in the lines themselves provide multi-sensory allusions as both the words and the staging recalls the earlier plays. The material draws on and almost ‘reconstructs’ previous ‘interpretive communities’ in order to enhance appreciation of that present moment. The audience, somewhat like Stanley Fish’s students looking at what he said was a poem, are being given markers they recognise and interpreting accordingly.

The play also engages directly with theatrical conventions, such as the established tropes of revenge tragedy, but subverts them: the ghost of Isabella does not impel Francisco to avenge her, as is usually the case, as he instead dismisses the apparition as ‘my melancholy’; Flamineo – mimicking Hamlet – becomes ‘a polliticke mad-man’ in order to fend off suspicion.³⁷ So whilst Webster’s ‘To the Reader’ suggests that he was disappointed by the audience he received, he must have originally thought that the Red Bull playgoers were capable of appreciating *The White Devil*, which tells us something about his impression of those who frequented that theatre. Some of the elements of *The White Devil* mean that it could have been strangely at home amongst the Red Bull’s repertory.

Whilst Webster’s ‘To the Reader’ seeks to acknowledge the play’s first performance if only to then distance the printed version from this apparent disaster, for the most part plays attributed to the Red Bull seem unaffected by literary snobbery:

The Red Bull quartos promote their status as stage plays and many of them preserve elements of performance that are superfluous to a strictly literary enjoyment: in *The*

³⁵ John Webster, *The White Devil, The Works of John Webster*, ed. Gunby, Carnegie, Hammond, p.225.

³⁶ Ibid. p.240.

³⁷ Ibid. p.201 and p.192.

Golden Age [...] the dumb shows and stage directions are unusually detailed and reader-oriented [...] It is likely, then, that the Red Bull quartos are intended to serve as replicas of the stage play rather than displacements of it [...] ³⁸

Straznicky classes *The White Devil* as an ‘anti-theatrical publication’ and this may be due to Webster’s ‘To the Reader’, where he disowns the ‘uncapable multitude’ who came to watch the play and hopes instead for more enlightened readers. However, her interpretation and Webster’s own ‘realigning’ of his published text are ironic, as the performed play relies heavily on stage performance and effects – dumb shows, processions, and barriers – and the published play is full of detailed stage directions and mention of specific props.³⁹ For example, Lodovico and Gasparo appear to the dying Bracciano with ‘*a Crucifix and hallowed candle*’ and Lodovico’s line ‘*Domine Brachiane, solebas in bello tutus esse tuo clypeo, nunc hunc clypeum hosti tuo opponas infernali*’ is to be spoken ‘*By the Crucifix*’.⁴⁰ However, the stage directions go beyond explaining the visual spectacles and also specifying props: Webster is as keen to direct (the word is chosen deliberately) his audience or reader as one might argue the directors of twenty-first century live broadcasts are, to ensure that the conception of the text is fully realised and understood. Smaller moments are also indicated, such as when Vittoria ‘*throwes her selfe upon a bed*’ or ‘*The conspirators here imbrace*’.⁴¹ Perhaps the most surprising of these is when the poisoned Bracciano is brought on, where the stage direction instructs that ‘*These speches are severall kinds of distractions and in the action should appeare so*’.⁴² The ‘spectacle’ of the play is thus being reproduced on the page as fully as possible and the reader’s experience of the play, even in reading it, is shaped by this extrinsic material. The Red Bull was therefore producing quite an individual sort of repertory.

The number of plays attributed to the Red Bull on publication suggests that there was a market for this material and that it held a sort of value across several different media. Indeed, its cultural niche was clearly a source of financial value on the bookstall. Whilst Webster aimed to separate his printed text from its first performance, many others were published to

³⁸ Straznicky, p.151.

³⁹ Webster, *The White Devil, The Works of John Webster*, p.140.

⁴⁰ Webster, *The White Devil*, A Scholar Press Facsimile, 1970.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

capitalise on precisely that theatrical connection: Straznicky discusses the situation in the first half of the century, where twelve plays in seventeen editions were published as Red Bull productions between 1605 and the Restoration. She considers this to be a deliberate choice in the marketing of those particular plays:

Taken as a whole, the plays printed as Red Bull productions represent what was and still is taken as characteristic of this repertory: historical and mythological plays conceived on a grand imaginative canvas, dramas of national and civic heroism, and the non-satirical brand of citizen comedy. This general congruence between the Red Bull repertory in print and performance suggests that publishers (rather than dramatists, actors, or theatrical entrepreneurs) are largely responsible for the construction of an identifiable repertory: their decision to use this particular theatrical attribution for plays they deem to be of interest to readers as Red Bull productions in effect consolidated a group of plays that would otherwise not be strictly identifiable with the Red Bull.⁴³

It would appear that publishers chose to use the Red Bull ‘stage brand’ in order to create a ‘page brand’: they clearly felt that there was a market for this sort of material if linked with the types of drama one would have expected to have seen at the Red Bull. Loughnane’s conclusion on the publications in the mid seventeenth century is similar, saying that ‘the name of the Red Bull is included on the title pages of...reprinted plays for marketing purposes; that is, the sellers thought such a note would make the plays *more* attractive to buyers’.⁴⁴

It is notable that recent critical scholarship on the Red Bull has worked to salvage its reputation and evaluate it afresh, suggesting that there is more to the theatre than illiterate audiences and sensational, poor-quality material. Several scholars have provided clear evidence of the more sophisticated elements of the Red Bull’s audience and repertory: Astington debunks the legends, Straznicky considers the published material, and Loughnane discusses the stagecraft of some of the repertory. However, much of this critical discussion could be seen to miss the point. Scholars are looking for a cultural and literary currency for

⁴³ Straznicky, p.146.

⁴⁴ Loughnane, p.48.

the Red Bull which would enable it to be considered alongside the Globe and Blackfriars, rather than dismissed; is this the sort of ‘value’ for which we should actually be looking? With shareholders waiting for dividends and a highly competitive theatrical market, surely profit is highly significant and this should be acknowledged, rather than ignored. In terms of the evaluation of the theatre and its repertory, my discussion has also shown that the works offered by the Red Bull had their own theatrical language which was often highly sophisticated, despite the sneers levelled at the theatre. Competing concepts of value, both contemporary and present day, provide fruitful areas for discussion.

Webster at the Sam Wanamaker Theatre

So how might this look with regard to a modern theatre and valuation of Webster’s works? Are similar sorts of evaluative processes and critical consciousnesses in play? I am going to look at a production of *The Duchess of Malfi*, directed by Dominic Dromgoole, at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse in 2014. This took place in a ‘fake authentic’ Early Modern performance space. Nearing its opening, the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse was described as follows:

The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse affords Shakespeare’s Globe new opportunities to present plays throughout the year, to expand the repertoire of work it presents, to investigate indoor theatre practice and to stage Jacobean plays in their intended atmosphere. It has a capacity of 340 people, with two tiers of galleried seating and a pit seating area. The theatre is predominantly lit by pure beeswax candles. The building has been designed using painstaking research into the materials, methods and decorative aesthetics of Jacobean architecture and interiors. It is an archetype, rather than a replica of a specific Jacobean indoor theatre.⁴⁵

The Duchess of Malfi for the Sam Wanamaker theatre was chosen as the best play to showcase the new space. One fact stands out for me here: the choice of play was not necessarily because of its inherent ‘value’ as a play, but because it offered something in terms of its potential effects, such as an opportunity to show off a new Jacobean performing space.

⁴⁵ Press release on the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, from ‘The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse Press Pack’, January 2014, <<http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/about-us/press/releases>> [accessed 26 July 2016].

Peter Kirwan's article about *The Duchess of Malfi* discusses this choice and how it 'demonstrated the mouthwatering potential' of the new space.⁴⁶ It becomes an advertising campaign for the new theatre and also therefore a justification of the cost (value for money!):

With its calls for visual displays, carefully controlled lighting effects, music and echoes, elaborate processions and concealed figures, Webster's none-more-Jacobean tragedy seemingly aimed to justify the time and expense put into recreating the kind of space for which the play was written.⁴⁷

The importance of the space is suggested in Kesson's response acknowledging that that is the intention of this particular piece of drama. There is therefore no such thing as a direct relationship between suppliers and consumers: knowledge and management are required to enable this link, to justify to consumers why this is important and to begin to shape their response to what they see, so as to evade or insist on a positive answer to the question 'why bother?'. Mark Lawson tackles this same issue:

[T]he larger question is whether authentic performance reveals anything new about the plays [...] On the basis of *The Duchess of Malfi*, the main discovery is the influence of the lighting on the writing [...] What this exposes is just how spookily underlit the night sequences would have been, which makes sense of some scenes, which modern directors have found hard to stage, in which it is necessary for characters to misinterpret who or what they have seen.⁴⁸

This is of particular significance in IV.i, where Ferdinand requests to meet the Duchess in darkness and gives her a dead man's hand instead of his own. The Duchess kisses it in good faith and it is only when she calls for lights that she – and the audience – realise what has happened. Andrew Marr's introduction to the broadcast not only explained the significance of

⁴⁶ Peter Kirwan, 'The Duchess of Malfi performed by the Shakespeare's Globe (Sam Wanamaker Playhouse)' (review), *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Volume 32, Number 2, Summer 2014, published by Johns Hopkins University Press, pp.294-297, p.297.

⁴⁷ Ibid. p.294.

⁴⁸ Mark Lawson, 'Globe's Sam Wanamaker Playhouse casts new light on Jacobean staging', review of *The Duchess of Malfi*, *Guardian*, Monday 20th January 2014 <<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/jan/20/globe-sam-wanamaker-playhouse-light-jacobean-staging>> [accessed 16 April 2016].

the candlelight, but prepared viewers for the moment when the television screen would go entirely black:

So for just over a minute, as the Duchess tries to work out what is going on, the stage, and therefore your screen, will go dark [...] So do not adjust your set. The final part of *The Duchess of Malfi* is about to begin.⁴⁹

As Kesson notes, the desire to give a ‘faithful’ production resulted in actually appearing to deny the basic demands of television – that there should be a picture on the screen. This moment divided critics of the live performance, with Michael Billington in the *Guardian* claiming that ‘the bizarre scene [...] gains credibility since it is played in total darkness’ whilst Peter Kirwan felt that ‘[t]he total blackout for the delivery of the severed hand, in particular, seemed to prioritize showing what the space could achieve rather than considering how the effect of a severed hand might be negated if the audience could not see it.’^{50, 51}

Perhaps surprisingly, the opening season at the Sam Wanamaker Theatre did not include any Shakespeare at all: *The Duchess of Malfi* was followed by a production of Francis Beaumont’s *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* and then later on in the year by the Globe Young Players performing John Marston’s *The Malcontent*. All of these are plays where much less of the ‘machinery’ enabling easy interaction between playgoer and playwright has not been constructed as it has been for Shakespeare. In addition, Andy Kesson’s article about the collaboration between the BBC and the Sam Wanamaker Theatre for the broadcast of *The Duchess of Malfi* explains some of the unwitting ironies of this production:

The BBC was therefore trying to capture a performance at a venue that was itself an attempt to reconstruct a previous theatrical space or a previous idea of theatrical space...the BBC were also televising and advertising the Globe’s new auditorium, the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse...The BBC was hosting Shakespeare hosting Webster.⁵²

⁴⁹ Andrew Marr, quoted in Kesson, p.611.

⁵⁰ Michael Billington, review of *The Duchess of Malfi*, *The Guardian*, Thursday 16th January 2014, <<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/jan/16/the-duchess-of-malfi-review>> [accessed 6 August 2018].

⁵¹ Kirwan, p.295.

⁵² Andy Kesson, “‘Trying television by candlelight’: Shakespeare’s Globe’s *The Duchess of Malfi* on BBC4”, *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Volume 33, Number 4, Winter 2015, published by Johns Hopkins University Press, pp.609-621, (p.610).

Rather appropriately for Webster – a playwright who constantly uses spectators, commentators, and dumb shows to foreground both the performative elements of his texts but also the ways in which the scene being played out can be interpreted – the BBC and the Sam Wanamaker Globe added a few more frames of their own. There is an added irony in that a production which aims to be as ‘realistic’ as possible in terms of recreating a theatrical experience from 400 years ago was used to launch not only a brand new theatre, but also the new BBC Arts Online project which the BBC called the “‘greatest commitment to arts for a generation’” and which is yet another way to enable ‘access’.⁵³ Once again proving Rumbold and McLuskie’s point about complex value-chains, it is noticeable that whenever greater access is mooted, there are always *more* intermediary stages, rather than fewer: more machinery is required, but not openly displayed. No doubt because of the lesser known status of Webster, the BBC Arts at the Globe project offered an interview with Gemma Arterton about her role, archive footage of Helen Mirren and others playing the Duchess, and the television documentary *The Mysterious Mr Webster*, amongst other ways to ‘access’ the central production offered. The documentary title acknowledged Webster’s current cultural status: we actually know only a little bit more biographical information about Shakespeare than we do about Webster, but the ‘Mysterious’ in the title related to his position in our literary heritage. Using Rumbold and McLuskie’s idea about narrative and calculation, one can see here the way in which a narrative is implicitly created: the calculated approach was hidden behind the suggestion of personal engagement and also the hint that this is trickier with Webster – perhaps forestalling any possible comments about this! – with a number of intermediate stages and elements in order to make that connection apparently easy and transparent. This exemplifies the complex value-chain managing the connection between content and consumers, as described by Rumbold and McLuskie when looking at the managed public engagement with Raphael’s painting *Madonna in the Pinks*, briefly mentioned earlier:

The symbiotic relations between art objects and culture, imagined and hoped for in the aspirations of twentieth-century cultural analysts, had been managed by the knowledge-based interventions of twenty-first-century cultural managers working, in

⁵³ BBC, quoted in Kesson, p.609.

good faith, to sustain some coherence between the complex market for art objects from the past and the larger society.⁵⁴

In an intriguing reversal, whilst contemporary Red Bull audiences may have derided what they felt was the popular, ‘low culture’ fare at that theatre, the Sam Wanamaker has sought to do something quite different: it aims to provide access such that potential audience members are not put off by something which they may see as esoteric. Financial value continues to be significant, with the publicity material and opening season looking to demonstrate ‘value for money’ in this big project. Relationships between theatres and audiences continue to be defined by all sorts of expectations and evaluations – on both sides – extraneous to the plays produced.

In this section, I have considered how different conceptions of value may be applied to Webster, both by his own contemporaries and by our society today. I now want to look forward into the different opportunities available for the critical consciousness in the twenty-first century.

⁵⁴ McLuskie and Rumbold, p.99.

CHAPTER EIGHT

NEW SITES FOR CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: (RE)CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF THE MOMENT OF EXPERIENCE IN THEATRE REVIEWING AND LIVE BROADCAST PERFORMANCES

In this final section, I am interested to consider both the present and future in terms of new sites for the critical consciousness in the twenty-first century, exploring how new developments in digital media are providing exciting opportunities for a continuing evaluation of text and culture. Having begun with the classroom as a site of cultural production, I intend to finish there; however, I have ranged over others – such as universities, government policies, and theatres – and now wish to discuss how the internet and the screen are becoming possibly the most significant sites of cultural production in the early twenty-first century.

Theatre Reviewing

I first wish to consider theatre reviewing. Theatre reviewing is perhaps the most obvious phenomenological approach to texts, as it is an individual exploring their response to the phenomenon of the theatrical moment. However, it is particularly suitable for this project because of the shifts in how reviews can now be constantly revisited in online repositories, as I will explain later on: the evaluative moment is both one and many.

Rather appropriately, considering my discussion so far, the focus in a review is shifted slightly from the production itself to the interpretation of and engagement with that production by the reviewer: the value is in the moment of experience. Reviews are also, of course, explicitly linked with value and valuations. There is not only the explicit financial value of a production – what a theatre thinks will sell tickets and therefore make the production financially viable, and how they then choose to advertise or ‘place’ the production to encourage those sales – but also the way in which the production is talked about by reviewers. Reviewers may also refer to past productions, in a nod to cultural heritage, and may display their own cultural credentials in their understanding the possible intention behind a particular conceptualisation or staging of a play. It is worth mentioning here that

programmes and posters may also seek to ‘place’ the audience member and encourage them to access these elements of the production; there is of course much more explicit guiding of the audience as interpretive community than there was of early modern audiences. Perhaps the most unusual aspect of the theatrical review – although it goes unremarked – is the way in which a single person’s engagement with a single performance is caught and held: the moment of experience is saved, rather than being lost. However, there is an additional important change here with the existence of videoed performances, which I will also discuss later: the ephemeral has become permanent. In 2018, I can access any number of performances – through different types of reviews, through recordings – which have long since taken place. In the preface to the published *The White Devil*, which will be discussed at greater length later on, John Webster does something quite similar: not only does he oversee the publishing of a potentially transient play text, but he also refers to and dismisses the first performance of the play as unsuccessful for several reasons. Ironically, this desire to excise this performance from public memory by mentioning it to dismiss it has immortalised that disastrous first performance for all future readers!

It is fascinating that theatrical reviewing and critical discussion of the early modern theatre seem to have worked at a distance for quite some time. In the Foreword to *A Year of Shakespeare: Re-living the World Shakespeare Festival*, a book all about reviewing and containing reviews of all of the plays performed as part of the Globe to Globe series in 2014, Stanley Wells acknowledges that:

It is only during the past half century or so that Shakespeare scholars and critics have come to acknowledge the relevance to their work of theatrical performance.¹

It is also important to note that it is Stanley Wells, a leading Shakespeare scholar, accepting the potential significance of reviews. So what is the worth and potential impact of theatrical reviews and their purpose, particularly the difference between academic and newspaper reviews? In *The Year of Shakespeare*, Paul Prescott points out that in Shakespeare’s own day, ‘everyone was a critic’ as well as a source of free advertising if they had liked what they had seen; written reviews began to appear in the mid-eighteenth century, as theatre became both

¹ Stanley Wells, Foreword, *A Year of Shakespeare: Re-living the World Shakespeare Festival*, edited by Paul Edmondson, Paul Prescott and Erin Sullivan (London: Bloomsbury Arden, 2013).

socially acceptable for discussion and also a rich source of controversy.² However, these responses to a performance still remained somewhat at a distance from discussion of a printed text of a play. There has been another shift to reach today's concepts of a theatre critic and theatre reviewing. A panel discussion in 2010 – chaired by Stanley Wells and including Michael Coveney, Andrew Dickson, Carol Rutter, Janet Suzman and Tim Supple – focused on the differing interpretations of critics, reviews, and their aims. Tim Supple, a director and one of the panellists, defined a critic in the following way:

the theatre critic is a specific, professional, creative, artistic animal and has to combine aspects of the academic critic, like Jan Kott, Stanley Wells, Peter Holland, Jonathan Bate and the practical critic, who can talk about the art of theatre. Like a director, they're a kind of hybrid... So I asked myself, what do I think that we generally think critics are for, what do they do? And it seems to me that there are two functions we expect from them: to inform an audience about a performance, either to invite them to see it or suggest they don't see it, or to tell the audience what the show was like, if it's on for a short run. I think critics are there to respond to what's on stage and therefore to form a dialogue with artists which is part of the on-going evolution of theatre.³

In commenting on the individual product, the critic is therefore part of the overall process: (s)he creates, qualifies or denies value, passing judgement on the value of the production and also perhaps the play itself in terms of its theatrical value. Another answer to Tim Supple's question 'what do they do?' might be that the critic may align the production they witness with not only previous productions of that play they have seen, but also other examples of that director's or actor's work, the play's role within a particular theatrical season, or perhaps also implicitly against their own sense of the play. Supple also suggests that reviews are part of an 'on-going evolution' – in the terms of this thesis, something akin to an ongoing evaluative process – of the theatre itself. Carol Rutter, a Shakespearean and performance critic, felt that:

² Paul Prescott, 'Nightwatch Constables and Domineering Pedants: the past, present and future of Shakespearean theatre reviewing', *A Year of Shakespeare*, pp.13-14.

³ Stanley Wells (2010) 'Reviewing Shakespearean Theatre: The State of the Art – A panel discussion with Michael Coveney, Andrew Dickson, Carol Rutter, Janet Suzman and Tim Supple', *Shakespeare*, 6:3, 305-323, DOI: 10.1080/17450918.2010.497854, p.310.

Richard Eyre talks about the theatre as an event: when you're there you're there, and if you weren't there it's gone, it's past, it's vanished, if you weren't there you missed it, you will never be able to recover that performance. It seems to me that what the reviewer is doing is standing on the cusp of that memory and is helping us, perhaps at the level of really high-grade gossip, to avoid the loss of that performance. So for me the reviewer who is doing the best of the reviewing job is somehow capturing what the actor is doing, to contextualize what the actor was doing in terms of the whole performance, and that means what the lighting director was doing, what the director was doing, what the costumes were doing, but also to see that in some way illuminating Shakespeare and saying something about where Shakespeare is at the present moment.⁴

Capturing the theatre as an event and exploring one's response to this is an application of a phenomenological evaluative approach. Both speakers also feel that reviews are to preserve a production and give some sense of it to those who have not seen or could not see it. However, as the panellists discuss elsewhere, there is a difference between the shorter reviews filed immediately for newspapers and the academic reviews. In *The Year of Shakespeare*, Prescott explains how academic reviewing is a much more recent phenomenon: these reviews are often longer, have gone through more drafts and the reviewer has often had the luxury of seeing the production more than once. In Prescott's words, 'it might be argued that the academic review was conceived as an antidote to the journalistic notice.'⁵ Academic reviews consider themselves to be almost an historical document which considers the play at greater length than someone providing a snapshot of several hundred words for a newspaper: the moment of experience reflected on and reworked at much greater length. There is also a similarity between both types of review, as both are written for people who are probably unlikely to see the production itself. Michael Coveney said about this that 'I think my approach would really be to write what's before you, and write for people who aren't necessarily going to see the production'.⁶ This is because:

⁴ Ibid. p.306.

⁵ Prescott, 'Nightwatch Constables and Domineering Pedants: the past, present and future of Shakespearean theatre reviewing', *A Year of Shakespeare*, p.15.

⁶ Stanley Wells (2010) 'Reviewing Shakespearean Theatre: The State of the Art – A panel discussion with Michael Coveney, Andrew Dickson, Carol Rutter, Janet Suzman and Tim Supple', p.306.

Ninety five per cent of those who read newspaper reviews can't go to the theatre production either, either geographically or because tickets are no longer available, or because they are disinclined to. The relationship between the review and the possibility of the experience has always been disjointed.⁷

This is a particularly interesting point, as it would suggest that, for many, the moment of experience is not something which *they themselves* experience: they cannot get to the theatre, the tickets are sold out etc. In considering my narrative of cultural value, evaluation, and the importance of the moment of engagement, has that moment narrowed to the point at which too few have access to it? Can theatres claim they are a source of cultural value if so few can access this value? If we are merely experiencing that moment at one remove, is this a new version of the dissemination of culture from those fortunate enough to experience and respond, to those who cannot?

However, the rise of digital media has now enabled a shift in the potential purpose of reviews. As Paul Prescott argues, the need to preserve for posterity is not as important as it once was:

One of the most compelling arguments for the way in which academic theatre criticism used to be practised was that the review represented the best opportunity to save the ephemeral performance from oblivion. The comprehensive, quasi-objective review was the academic's gift to posterity. But theatre companies are now generating an exponentially increasing amount of archivable materials by themselves.⁸

In Prescott's view, this may liberate the theatre reviewer; online projects in which he is involved, such as www.yearofshakespeare.com and www.reviewingshakespeare.com, are intended to do just that by creating an archive of reviews online, all of which could be written at the time and then returned to at a later date, thus enabling an ongoing discussion about theatre which does not need to merely commemorate details of various productions. An online interpretive community can therefore engage in a constant process of evaluation,

⁷ Ibid. p.322.

⁸ Prescott, 'Nightwatch Constables and Domineering Pedants: the past, present and future of Shakespearean theatre reviewing', p.29.

discussion, and reworking. Prescott feels that it is time for a change in the aims and production of theatrical reviews, so that the reviewers can not only enjoy the way in which ‘Shakespeare’s texts now serve as pre-texts for limitless acts of invention’ but can similarly revel in ‘limitless acts of invention’ with their reviewing.⁹ Process, not product, becomes key. In this desire for licence, rather than limitation, he echoes a 2010 article by Jeremy Lopez which aims to liberate reviewers from rigorous expectations about what they ‘should’ write about. The reviews are frequently couched in what Lopez calls the ‘imperfect present’ where critics are wary of historicising their work and reading contextual applications into the productions, attempting instead to create a timeless record of a timeless production. Lopez argues that it is time to dispense with this chariness:

But to record what seems timeless in a given production is to imagine a reader outside of history rather than a reader for whom – as must be the case if theatre reviews are to be considered an archive – the reviewer’s present is itself historical, perhaps distantly and unfamiliarly so. To record more vividly the pressures of a reviewer’s contemporary experience upon his or her experience of a production might be to communicate to a future reader the ways in which the construction and interpretation of Shakespearean staging and meaning arise out of a dialectical relation between the immediate, vanishing present and the once-contemporary past.¹⁰

The reviewer is encouraged to document his own experience of a performance, rather than seeking to produce something subjectively neutral: it is the importance of context once again. One may be reminded of Rumbold and McLuskie’s discussion of the difficulty of defining value:

[V]alue cannot be defined in the abstract but operates within particular social relations where it has a symbolic function that endorses the emotional effects of the play’s action.¹¹

⁹ Prescott, ‘Nightwatch Constables and Domineering Pedants: the past, present and future of Shakespearean theatre reviewing’, p.30.

¹⁰ Jeremy Lopez (2010) Academic theatre reviewing and the imperfect present, *Shakespeare*, 6:3, 350-356, DOI: 10.1080/17450918.2010.497858, p.355.

¹¹ McLuskie and Rumbold, p.75.

The review can be liberated to be part of its historical moment, thus enabling contextualisation as part of the evaluative response, but can also be returned to and re-engaged with at a later date. The academic and the journalistic notices are no longer working at a distance from each other. There is a new evaluative freedom possible in this for theatre reviewing in the twenty-first century.

Live Broadcasts

The second of my two examples is the relatively new genre of filmed and broadcast live performance. The reason I wish to consider this is because the possibility for increased access – and therefore evaluative consideration – of productions. Live broadcasts also provide notably different ways of ‘seeing’ and evaluating a particular performance.

The first National Theatre Live broadcast took place in June 2009, allowing 50,000 people to see a production of *Phèdre*.¹² There is understandably much debate in the media about whether such screenings may contribute to the end of live theatre, as potential audiences may choose to watch a live screening (or an encore screening) from the National Theatre or the Royal Opera House, rather than go to a live performance.¹³

For the purpose of this thesis, however, I am interested in these broadcasts as a way of experiencing a performance and, as Erin Sullivan puts it in a 2017 article on the subject, ‘the new ways of seeing that are being created for audiences as a result’.¹⁴ Productions are certainly made much more accessible, as more people can watch the play than there are seats in the theatre and do not have to travel to the theatre itself to watch the play, but rather only as far as their local cinema. It can enable far more people to enjoy a particular production: ‘[t]he largest single broadcast to date is *Hamlet* with Benedict Cumberbatch, which has been

¹² ‘National Theatre Live: everything you need to know’, *Telegraph*, <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/theatre/national-theatre-live/everything-you-need-to-know/>> [accessed 29 May 2018].

¹³ ‘Live screenings have changed theatre – but they must not upstage it’, *Guardian*, <<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2015/dec/03/live-screenings-theatre>> [accessed 29 May 2018]; ‘NT Live screenings ‘do not harm theatres’, *BBC News* <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-28001305>> [accessed 29 May 2018].

¹⁴ Erin Sullivan, “‘The form of things unknown’: Shakespeare and the Rise of the Live Broadcast”, *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Volume 35, Number 4, Winter 2017, pp.627-662, p.628.

seen by more than 550,000 people worldwide.’¹⁵ This would certainly fulfil the stated aims of those involved: David Sabel, the head of digital media at the National Theatre and producer of works for its NT Live, said of live broadcasts that they are ‘never a replacement of the live experience, but even with tours, there are only so many people who can see the show. Our main mission is to bring the shows to more UK taxpayers.’¹⁶ It is worth noting that several different types of value come into play in this statement! A 2016 article about the National Theatre Live broadcasts in *The Daily Telegraph* gave some more answers to questions about this new medium:

National Theatre Live does not try to replicate the live theatre experience but rather creates something quite different. With close-ups and camera movement, it is a cinematic take on the theatre experience. The broadcasts retain that wonderful, magical feeling of witnessing a live performance. There is also a real sense of event, with so many people around the world connected and sharing in the experience... Performances are filmed live and broadcast simultaneously across the UK and Europe... The biggest challenge is to successfully capture the nuances of theatre on camera in a way that is dynamic and honours the integrity of the stage production. What began as an experiment now combines the immediacy of live theatre with the dramatic language of film.¹⁷

This also raises interesting questions about the nature of the ‘event’ with which we are presented. How does one experience an event if not actually physically ‘there’, especially something like a theatrical performance? In addition, the importance of the ‘live’ is accentuated. However, Pascale Aebischer, in her book *Screening Early Modern Drama: Beyond Shakespeare* (2017), makes clear the paradox of digital media and ‘live’ theatre:

Economic factors contribute to the ever-increasing pressure exerted by the digital media on the live even as, in a paradox that underpins the phenomenon, the *impression* of liveness – the trace the live presses onto its mediation and/or the

¹⁵ ‘National Theatre Live: everything you need to know’.

¹⁶ David Sabel, quoted in ‘Live opera in cinemas? No way, says ENO’, Nick Clark, *Independent*, <<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/news/live-opera-in-cinemas-no-way-says-eno-7729177.html>> [accessed 29 May 2018].

¹⁷ ‘National Theatre Live: everything you need to know’.

viewer's apprehension of this trace – remains central to the marketing of performances and justifies their existence...the online archive of performances of early modern drama relies quite fundamentally on the immediacy, interaction and serendipity that define theatrical liveness.¹⁸

The digital version stands in uneasy juxtaposition with the live performance it purports to represent: academic writing is now beginning to explore this new trend. The form is an interesting hybrid of film and theatre, as Richard Hornby explains:

the shoot itself is done with a live theatre audience[...] The cameras even pan around the audience prior to the start of the show, which gives the broadcast audience a feeling of sharing an experience with them, rather than one of eavesdropping on somebody else's event.¹⁹

There are aspects of the theatre and of the cinema and, speaking from experience of attending several live broadcasts, being part of an audience (in the cinema) watching an audience (in the theatre) is quite a bizarre experience. There is complexity regarding what 'sort' of performance both the audiences are watching: is it cinematic or theatrical? Whilst it may try to be both, this may be quite complicated in practice, as Lynnette Porter, writing about the National Theatre Live broadcast of Danny Boyle's *Frankenstein*, explains:

Film can capture the nuance of a minute shift in expression, the smallest of movements, or the most quietly whispered words. Theatrical gestures and stage movement are much larger and more obvious. NT Live would thus seem to harm the level of performance, either for the audience in the same room with the actors or the audience watching in a cinema thousands of miles away, because the actors cannot adequately play to the theater audience and a single camera at the same time.²⁰

¹⁸ Aebischer, pp.145-146.

¹⁹ Richard Hornby, 'National Theatre Live', *The Hudson Review*, Vol. 64, No. 1, The Spanish Issue (SPRING 2011), pp. 196-202, <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41300639>> [accessed 29 May 2018].

²⁰ Lynnette Porter, 'It's Alive! But What Kind of Creature is National Theatre Live's "Frankenstein"?' *Studies in Popular Culture*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (SPRING 2013), pp. 1-21, <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23416333>> [accessed 29 May 2018], p.7.

So are the two performances (theatrical and cinematic) actually *different* experiences, even though they are ostensibly the *same* performance? Our sense of context (theatre or cinema) would prepare us to expect one type of performance, but how can the same performance fulfil what may be quite different expectations?

This is also the case for something beyond the ‘size’ of the acting. What can and cannot be seen differs for the live theatre audience and those watching the broadcast. The multiple cameras enable the cinematic audience to have a very different experience for a number of reasons: the chosen camera shot at any one time restricts their view to that one image, preventing an audience member from allowing their eyes to rove over the stage and appreciate moments ‘elsewhere’ in the action. Firstly, space and dimension. Erin Sullivan explores the significance of this in terms of how a live performance has to establish its own ‘context’ in terms of its spatial dimensions. The section before the performance begins, where we ‘see’ the empty stage and the audience, are part of a mental preparation for an ‘absent/present’ audience in the cinema who must be able to appreciate the dimensions of the stage and the set as a whole:

One of the first challenges facing every broadcasting team is how to establish a sense of place at a distance. In-house audiences typically produce this knowledge for themselves by travelling to the theater venue and taking in its spatial dynamics before the show, but most remote audiences need this information to be created for them. As a result, broadcasters frequently include extra material before the start of a transmission that helps contextualize the theatrical space and establish a sense of location.²¹

However, Sullivan also quotes Ann Martinez’s discussion of the potentially exciting possibilities of *not* having this sense of spatial understanding, as it allows ‘a more intense form of spectatorship that is not bound by the fixities of geography...The camera’s zoning of the stage paradoxically allows for a de-zoning of the auditorium: audiences are released from hierarchical seating plans and instead allowed to experience “the feeling of floating over the stage, in the space of the stage, and through the scene itself.”’²² Thus a new way of seeing

²¹ Sullivan, ““The form of things unknown”: Shakespeare and the Rise of the Live Broadcast’, p.634.

²² Ibid. p.645.

and experiencing the performance becomes possible, as one is not bound to one seat but can be ‘de-zoned’.

There is, however, an important caveat to this de-zoning: the spectator is dependent on what they are ‘guided’ to look at. Whilst one may be spatially free, one is visually bound in a way which is not the case of experiencing a performance in the theatre. What is one *missing* which is happening beyond the directed gaze of the camera? In a way, live broadcasts perhaps become more akin to *reading* a play, rather than watching it: one’s attention cannot help but be focused in on the interaction taking place at that moment, rather than its contextualisation on a stage. Sullivan notes this:

While these closer views allow audiences thrilling access to the details of an actor’s face, so often taken as the locus of cognitive and emotional life, they also downplay the importance of the rest of the body as a site of expression, as well as the wider choreography between multiple bodies within a playing space.²³

Interestingly, both Richard Hornby and Erin Sullivan draw parallels with televised sport, in which an understanding of both space and small pockets of activity are crucial: cutting quickly and seamlessly between the two permits an awareness of the pitch as a whole, but also the minute detail.

Camera shots and angles also ‘place’ the audience member more subtly but pervasively throughout the performance. Sullivan’s article explores several of these across various performances, where camera shots create a sense of intimacy or a sense of space. She discusses an example from the opening of *Othello*, where the camera shots in the opening sequence meant that:

the viewer becomes a tacit member of the conversation depicted, with the visual frame of reference approximating someone’s natural field of vision were they part of the discussion. It is an intimate, inclusive, and people-centric point of view, offering

²³ Ibid. p.647.

free access to the nuances of facial expressions and other markers of psychological inwardness.²⁴

This is for me a particularly intriguing choice for this opening dialogue in *Othello*, as the intimacy suggested by the camera angles is belied by the nature of this essentially ‘private’ discourse between Roderigo and Iago which is not meant for ‘our’ ears, or indeed anyone else’s; one should also bear in mind the deceptive nature of Iago himself. Our apparently easy access to ‘nuances of facial expressions and other markers of psychological inwardness’ may serve to create a false sense of familiarity with these characters. The cinematic spectator thus has a very different experience of this opening than someone sitting in the theatre. The direction of the cinematic broadcast therefore potentially has a far-reaching impact on the cinematic audience member’s conception of what they are seeing because, in a way, *they* are not seeing it: they are seeing what they are directed to see. Sullivan also makes an interesting parallel with film director Steve McQueen’s style, where his choice of longer takes and ‘the more stationary wide-shot...[means] that the audience must...project themselves into the scene, rather than expecting a more centripetal kind of camerawork to build them into it.’²⁵ The audience member has to work harder in order to make sense of what they see, because their reality is not constructed, and then constantly deconstructed and reconstructed, for them. In a sense, McQueen is borrowing this technique from theatre, where the audience member is – or could be – watching with precisely this level of interpretive activity, whilst live broadcasts are borrowing cutting and compositional techniques from film and television.

Individual performances can also be constructed, appreciated or understood in a different way. Sullivan gives the example of Hugh Quarshie’s performance in the title role of *Othello* (Royal Shakespeare Company, June 2015):

it was important both to [Quarshie] and his director that this Othello was not presented as a gullible dupe manipulated by passion, but rather as a hardened and intimidating military general who always had his wits about him. This interpretation of Othello’s character was reflected in subtle performance choices that didn’t always

²⁴ Ibid. p.637.

²⁵ Ibid. p.646.

read within the large space of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, but that signaled very clearly within the filming of the broadcast.²⁶

However, one might wonder whether, if such characterisation choices were not easily accessible to a theatre audience, how successful this was as a *theatrical* production. Aspects of concept and direction can also be accentuated in the filming. The camera ensures that we do not miss what the director wants us to see, no matter how tiny the detail, such as this example from the National Theatre's production of *Hamlet* with Benedict Cumberbatch in the title role:

Turner's depiction of a particularly supportive and mutual relationship between Hamlet and Ophelia is case in point: in addition to suggesting that Ophelia (played by Sian Brooke) was possibly in on Hamlet's act, this production had her attempt to write a note to Hamlet during the nunnery scene that warned him that they were being watched. The camera took care to pause over this moment, emphasizing for remote viewers a brief action that could have easily been missed by audiences in an auditorium the size of the Barbican's.²⁷

Whilst this is undeniably helpful in understanding the director's concept of the play and these relationships, he is directing not only his actors here but also the audience. One might argue that such shots allow a more 'complete' understanding of concept and interpretation, but equally that that understanding or experience is not that of the *spectator*, but rather that of the controlling gaze of the camera and its director. Can a cinematic spectator come away with a 'true' phenomenological experience of such a performance, when their experience has been entirely constructed and mediated for them? Lynnette Porter similarly explains how certain effects in the *Frankenstein* production – such as the lighting bulbs or the bell, or the revolving and sinking stage – would have appeared very differently to the cinematic audience. Indeed, the cinematic audience are sometimes privy to moments which their theatrical counterparts cannot see. Porter gives an example from the *Frankenstein* broadcast:

²⁶ Ibid. p.653.

²⁷ Ibid. p.652.

NT Live audiences understood that the entire circular stage was moving because the camera cut to an overhead shot, so that they could look down onto the stage from directly over it, a view not granted to any audience member in the Olivier. This establishing shot made cinema audiences aware of the parameters of the stage, but the effect was more jarring than it would be for an audience seated at or above stage level, who could see the organic movement of the stage throughout a scene. The set design, visual effects, and stage movement, when viewed piecemeal through a camera lens, created a very different atmosphere and sense of proportion for audiences watching on a large screen instead of from within the Olivier theater.²⁸

This again changes one's impressions of the performance. In addition, moments which work in one medium may well fall flat in another. Sullivan quotes the following admiring comment from one spectator:

"The advantage is you can really see the actors, the expressions on their faces, acting even with their eyelids ... which you would never see if you went to the National," one spectator commented in the Arts Council's survey of broadcast audiences (qtd. in "From Live-to-Digital" 60).²⁹

Whilst Sullivan's article discusses how such close focus can create feelings of immersion, there can be unintended consequences of such close focus on the actors and moments of bathos can result: in the National Theatre's 2014 production of *King Lear* with Simon Russell Beale, the camera focus on the 'dead' Lear made it very possible for the cinema audience – myself included – to see Beale's breathing 'dead' body at close quarters. Ironically, immersion is thus prevented as we can see the actor acting. Sullivan's article, in discussing the differences between experiencing Gloucester's mock-suicide in the same production for a cinematic or a theatrical audience, quoted Jan Kott to summarise the effect the theatre audience might have felt on seeing Gloucester's 'suicide': 'Death is only a performance, a parable, a symbol'. However, the cinematic audience, on seeing Lear's death in the example I have just given – a death which is of course intended of course to be more pathetic than Gloucester's mock-suicide – may well have felt Kott's phrase to be more apt at that point.

²⁸ Porter, p.6.

²⁹ Sullivan, "'The form of things unknown': Shakespeare and the Rise of the Live Broadcast", pp.637-638.

The conceptualisation and screening of the broadcast are also important, although the technicalities and direction of the live broadcast have, until recently, gone unacknowledged.³⁰ Sullivan quotes John Wyver:

This myth of non-mediation also accounts for the near-invisibility of screen authorship for live cinema broadcasts. The broadcast directors, for example, who are responsible for presentations from the South Bank or Stratford are rarely recognized in critical discussions of this form, and the differing approaches of key figures such as Robin Lough and Tim Van Someren have yet to receive any critical attention. It is almost as if the image sequences, which are considered and scripted and rehearsed responses to a host of factors, appear on screen courtesy of some kind of outside broadcast fairy.³¹

There is an apt parallel here with my earlier discussion of access being Shakespeare being simply much easier, quoting Rumbold and McLuskie:

The pleasurable “engagement” with “Shakespeare” similarly depends upon its consumers’ ignorance of the complex procedures of textual analysis, literary abstraction and expensive and sometimes under-valued artistic experimentation that have made their engagement possible.³²

In both cases, what Wyver calls ‘the myth of non-mediation’ is perpetuated and does not intrude upon the audience’s experience of that text. This is not only the case for not actively acknowledging those who enable and direct the broadcast, but even in the advice given to actors by their directors such as Nicholas Hytner in saying that he encouraged actors not to think about the broadcast and therefore not alter their performances accordingly.³³ To further complicate matters, the technicians are willing to maintain this complicity, preferring to work invisibly and in ‘quiet transparency’.³⁴ However, this is potentially unhelpful as it is a *myth* of

³⁰ Ibid. p.630.

³¹ John Wyver, “‘All the Trimmings?’: The Transfer of Theatre to Television in Adaptations of Shakespeare Stagings”, *Adaptation*, Volume 7, Issue 2, 1 August 2014, Pages 104–120, <<https://doi-org.ezproxye.bham.ac.uk/10.1093/adaptation/apu020>>, accessed 29.05.18.

³² McLuskie and Rumbold, p.78.

³³ Sullivan, “‘The form of things unknown’: Shakespeare and the Rise of the Live Broadcast”, p.631.

³⁴ Ibid. p.632.

non-mediation: there is actually a great deal of ‘framing’ and guiding being done as the audience access that particular performance. Such mediation should be recognised, as the cinematic experience and the theatrical experience are not the same. Whilst any audience member would acknowledge this in a vague sense, I do not think they realise just *how* different the two forms can be.

Whilst Sullivan’s article concludes by saying that ‘broadcasts offer audiences artful, varied, engrossing, and affective ways of seeing theater—and, indeed, of “being there.”’³⁵ I dispute this, as one is not ‘there’ but instead witnessing a very different experience. One might draw a brief but illustrative contrast with productions of Shakespeare made specifically for television, such as Richard Eyre’s recent production of *King Lear* for the BBC starring Anthony Hopkins (May 2018). Reviews of this, as ever, varied. Writing for the *Independent*, Holly Williams felt confused by the production, saying ‘while it feels like this might be something that’d actually work on the Olivier stage at the National theatre, it’s not always quite clear why it’s on the box’.³⁶ One could say that this reading of the production rather answers itself, in trying to place the production within a different spatial context to that which is offered and thus failing to appreciate its actual context. However, the *Guardian* review gave it four stars and made the following salient point:

Shakespeare on television – a box it wasn’t designed for and doesn’t necessarily fit – isn’t always successful. It only works if it’s not just a play on the telly, but something in its own right, too, with its own identity. This one achieves that, with pace and modernity.³⁷

As with live cinematic broadcasts, a genre has to develop its own identity, ways of seeing and ways of producing an experience for its viewers. It should be viewed as radically different from its live theatrical counterpart, for all the reasons given above, and thus its own ‘way of seeing’ can be properly and fully explored in its own right.

³⁵ Ibid. p.655.

³⁶ Holly Williams, ‘King Lear review: Anthony Hopkins stars in a murky adaptation’, *Independent*, <<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/reviews/king-lear-review-bbc-amazon-anthony-hopkins-andrew-scott-emma-thompson-shakespeare-a8373481.html>> [accessed 1 June 2018].

³⁷ Sam Wollaston, ‘King Lear review – Anthony Hopkins is shouty, vulnerable and absolutely mesmerising’, *Guardian*, Monday 28th May 2018, <<https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2018/may/28/bbc-king-lear-review-anthony-hopkins>> [accessed 1 June 2018].

The live broadcast form becomes even more complicated due to the possibility of the ‘live’ broadcast then being replayed: Lynnette Porter describes it as how ‘Frankenstein the play has subsequently morphed into *Frankenstein-the-broadcast-recording-of-a-live-performance* and *Frankenstein-the-replay-of-a-recording*.’³⁸ There is also the potential for editing. In writing about the National Theatre Live broadcasts, Richard Hornby explains:

There is no post-production editing of these broadcasts; the edit is carried out live [...] The goal is always to retain the immediacy of live theatrical performance, the edge of danger that gives live performance its special electricity. The broadcasts are simply neutral, with any flubs the same that you would have seen if you had been there in person’³⁹

However, this is not always the case and may indeed be a fallacy for encore screenings: Lynnette Porter noted that ‘Before the 2012 NT Live encore screenings, *Frankenstein's* recordings went through yet another transformation; they were made more film-like’.⁴⁰ Flaws were removed and certain camera shots substituted for others. This added level of scrutiny in terms of which performance is ‘saved’ – and indeed, one might argue that this performance was therefore not an actual performance at all, but rather a hybrid of several – is perhaps understandable when one considers that filmed performances also permits the audience a level of analysis not possible with a live performance.

Finally, the live broadcast also prevents what is, for me, one of the most instructive elements of the theatrical experience: watching the audience watching the play. The moment of experience where play and audience – or teacher and pupils – connect is fascinating. Eavesdropping (and sometimes commenting on) others is, of course, central to John Webster’s works, with one of the most remarkable examples of this being Cornelia watching Flamineo and Zanche watching Bracciano and Vittoria in 1.2 of *The White Devil*; the audience is, of course, potentially watching not only the central encounter between Bracciano and Vittoria, but any combination of the other frames as well. The audience can be considered as secondary to the action on stage but, in my experience, they are central to the

³⁸ Porter, p.2.

³⁹ Hornby, p.198.

⁴⁰ Porter, p.8.

creation of the theatrical experience before them: one is reminded again of Webster's dismissive comments about the audience for the first performance of *The White Devil*, where he clearly thought they had a great impact on his play. 'Reading' the audience's reaction to a play is part of my experience of it and this is completely different if one is in a cinema, rather than a theatre. Cinematic audiences behave quite differently: Porter comments on how audience behaviour differs in cinemas as opposed to theatres and certainly at the live broadcasts I have attended, there is far more likely to be food and drink consumed, attention spans waning, and not necessarily applause at the end.⁴¹ The atmosphere is very different between watching a live broadcast in the cinema and watching the play in the theatre: something is lost in transmission. Interestingly, Sullivan's article does not consider the impact of the audience, other than her own perceptions of *the play* as an audience member. This may be an avenue for further consideration: if more 'theatre-goers' are increasingly likely to see the production via a cinema (because of cost, ease, availability of tickets etc), there is increased access to the production but to a very different way of experiencing that production.

⁴¹ Porter, p.10.

CONCLUSION: OR, THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF CONCLUDING

As I stated in the Introduction to this thesis, the significance of a critical cultural consciousness is paramount; it is also important that the response to texts and sites of cultural production is continuously evolving. This therefore – paradoxically perhaps for a conclusion – must needs militate against the possibility of a conclusion at all: there is no ‘ending’, but instead constantly evolving evaluation. This is the case for all of the examples I have considered during the course of this piece.

It is worth reflecting briefly on one final area for discussion, as raised by Pascale Aebischer in her book *Screening Early Modern Drama: Beyond Shakespeare*, and that is the importance of online platforms as perhaps a materialisation of much of my mostly theoretical discussion throughout this thesis. She notes that online viewing platforms, of which YouTube is her primary example, break down not only historicisation of the material, bringing it very much into the *now*, but also any sort of hierarchy:

On the internet, the archive is a living canon of plays and performances that contest the discourse of oblivion, neglect and historicisation that always threaten to relegate early modern drama and its performance to the past. In the online world, these plays are no longer relegated to the lower rungs of a hierarchy always dominated by Shakespeare.¹

The viewer ‘creates’ their own experience. Even the contextualisation of the clips is forever fluid, thanks to the side-bar which offers all sorts of potential juxtapositions for the clip one watches. The distinction Aebischer draws between the ‘live’ performance and the ‘living’ performance is perhaps the most apt conclusion for this project too:

The gerund of “living” indicates continuation; it also signifies the ability of whatever lives to grow old, be affected by its environment, develop, grow, procreate and die. The live, as Phelan stipulated, may be predicated on its own disappearance: the “living” shares that ontology but is subject to change across time and contexts. Instead of thinking of the digitised performances of early modern drama as immovable exact replicas that freeze and preserve what remains of a play’s performance history, I suggest we think of them as

¹ Aebischer, p.185.

subject to change as they are remediated, recontextualised, re-edited, organised, commented on, deleted. Much of the fascination of online and digital material lies precisely in its instability, its ability to evolve and grow in response to changing environments and pressures, and the threat of its sudden disappearance.

That final sentence could be applied to much of the material I have discussed here and perhaps we should be more open to the concept of that material's 'instability', in terms of interpretation but also its evolution or even disappearance; sites of cultural production will inevitably shift and change, and perhaps may fade completely: I am reminded of V.iii in *The Duchess of Malfi*, in which a set of ruins provide an echo which catches Antonio's words and repeats them.

The theories and ideas I have posited here will need to be reconsidered, even as I am still writing them. New material is being and will be published regarding 'live' broadcasts: for example, *Shakespeare and the 'Live' Theatre Broadcast Experience* (edited by Pascale Aebischer, Susanne Greenhalgh and Laurie Osborne) has been published this year but sadly not in time for this thesis. New films and live broadcasts are entering and will continue to enter the public sphere.

It seems oddly appropriate that I should be concluding this thesis just before the beginning of another academic year and returning to the classroom. In completing this project, I have come to realise the significance of fluidity and flux, not only in the classroom but beyond. In looking to engage with and explore the cultural heritage of my subject and its development over the course of the past century, I have come to understand more fully the different conceptions of value and the inherent difficulties which come with this term. I have explored plays historically, theatrically, 'financially', and also in some cases their screen existence as live broadcast or recorded performances. I have briefly noted the new sense of hierarchy and juxtaposition which is likely to provide new frames of reference and constructions of value. This has made me more acutely aware of the existence of a text on page, stage, and screen, but also its existence in the cultural memory: how *do* we respond to texts and how far are these learnt prejudices and responses? How far do we permit *actual* critical engagement with these texts and writers within a classroom, through our questioning and our teaching? The existence of the subject on a timetable and the presence of children in my classroom does not in itself prove the validity and value of English literature: this must be explored and evaluated

every time, rather than passively assumed. Shakespeare has of course been the primary example of a writer who has seemingly escaped the play of valuation and therefore is, to my mind, in limbo and in danger of entropy, especially when contrasted with Aebischer's discussion of other early modern plays. Indeed, the study of English literature itself is perhaps also in danger of not being evaluated and thus valued: as I have shown, much discussion of *why* the subject should be studied and *what* should be studied sometimes side-steps an evaluative discussion in favour of defensive statements. Perhaps we need to re-evaluate – and keep re-evaluating – literature: what it means, what it is worth, and what it might do.

Alongside finishing this thesis, I have been preparing my texts for the year ahead: I have taught most of them already but I am returning to them, rereading, looking at critical perspectives, and working up new lines of approach. I am aware that when my thinking meets that of a class, other ideas will be forged which will be at once theirs, mine, and ours. These ideas will then mutate further, be evaluated, shift, change, stand or fall. Within a good classroom, very little, if anything, is static or left unquestioned and this is how it should be. Each new interpretive classroom community – built, shifting, changing, developing, *living*, and eventually dissolving – provides another opportunity for (re)-evaluation of all I have discussed. And so the new academic year begins.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aebischer, Pascale, *Screening Early Modern Drama: Beyond Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, first published 2013, paperback published 2017).

AHRC website, Professor Andrew Thompson,
<<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/about/visionstrategygovernance/governancestructure/seniormanagementteam/professorandrewthompson/>> [accessed 2 June 2018].

Arnold, Matthew, 'Culture and Anarchy', '*Culture and Anarchy*' with '*Friendship's Garland*' and *Some Literary Essays*, ed. by R.H. Super (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1965) pp.85-229.

Arnold, Matthew, *Matthew Arnold: Culture and Anarchy and Other Writings*, ed. by Stefan Collini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

Arnold, Matthew, 'On Translating Homer', *On the Classical Tradition*, ed. by R.H. Super (Michigan: University of Michigan Press 1960), pp.97-216.

Astington, John, 'Playing the man: acting at the Red Bull and the Fortune', *Early Theatre* (9:2) 2006, pp.130-42.

Atkinson, Terry, 'Learning to teach: intuitive skills and reasoned objectivity', in *The Intuitive Practitioner: On the value of not always knowing what one is doing*, ed. by Terry Atkinson and Guy Claxton, (Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000), pp.69-83.

Bacon, Alan, (1980) 'Attempts to Introduce a School of English Literature at Oxford: the National Debate of 1886 and 1887', *History of Education*, 9:4, 303-313, DOI: 10.1080/0046760800090403 [accessed 30.05.18].

Baldick, Chris, *Criticism & Literary Theory 1890 to the Present* (London: Longman, 1996).

Baldick, Chris, *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848-1932* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983).

Bate, Jonathan, 'GCSE English literature row: Don't blame Gove, blame me', *The Guardian*, first published Friday 30th May 2014,

<<https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2014/may/30/gcse-literature-row-gove-blame-me-english-literature-syllabus>> [accessed 6 June 2017].

BBC News, 'NT Live screenings 'do not harm theatres'',

<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-28001305>> [accessed 29 May 2018].

Bennett, Arnold, *Literary Taste: How to Form It. With Detailed Instructions for Collecting a Complete Library of English Literature* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, first published August 1909, fourth edition published August 1912).

Bernard Shaw, George, *Pygmalion, The Works of Bernard Shaw*, Volume 14 (*Androcles and the Lion; Overruled; Pygmalion*) (London: Constable & Co Ltd, 1930).

Berry, Herbert, 'Building playhouses, the accession of James I, and the Red Bull', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* (18) 2005, pp.61-74.

Billington, Michael, review of *The Duchess of Malfi*, *The Guardian*, Thursday 16th January 2014, <<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/jan/16/the-duchess-of-malfi-review>> [accessed 6 August 2018].

Brown, Laurinda and Alf Coles, 'Complex decision making in the classroom: the teacher as an intuitive practitioner', in *The Intuitive Practitioner: On the value of not always knowing what one is doing*, ed. by Terry Atkinson and Guy Claxton, (Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000), pp.165-181.

CBI website, <<http://www.cbi.org.uk/about/about-us/>> [accessed 5 January 2017].

Clark, Nick 'Live opera in cinemas? No way, says ENO',

<<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/news/live-opera-in-cinemas-no-way-says-eno-7729177.html>> [accessed 29 May 2018].

Collini, Stefan, *Common Reading: Critics, Historians, Publics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press first published 2008, paperback published 2009).

Collini, Stefan, *Matthew Arnold: A Critical Portrait* (Oxford: Clarendon, first published 1988, reissued 2008).

Collins, Eleanor, 'Repertory and riot: the relocation of plays from the Red Bull to the Cockpit Theatre', *Early Theatre* (13:2) 2010, pp.132-149.

Connor, Steven, *Theory and Cultural Value* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992).

'Comment', C.B. Cox and A.E. Dyson, *Critical Survey*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Fight for Education: A Black Paper (WINTER 1969), pp. 1, 3-6, published by: Berghahn Books accessed on JSTOR <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41553758>> [accessed 2 August 2017].

'The Cox Report' (1989) *English for ages 5 to 16*
<<http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/cox1989/cox89.html>> .

Crossick, Geoffrey, and Kaszynska, Patrycja, 'Understanding the value of arts & culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project', Arts and Humanities Research Council, online at www.ahrc.co.uk [accessed 11 April 2016].

Daily Telegraph, 'National Theatre Live: everything you need to know',
<<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/theatre/national-theatre-live/everything-you-need-to-know/>>
[accessed 29 May 2018].

Daily Telegraph, *Telegraph View*, 'A curriculum that will help Britain catch up', 8th July 2013, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/telegraph-view/10166729/A-curriculum-that-will-help-Britain-to-catch-up.html>> [accessed 9 June 2017].

Davis, Joel B., *The Countesse Of Pembrokes Arcadia And The Invention Of English Literature*, (New York, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

Department for Education, *The national curriculum in England: Key Stages 3 and 4 framework document*, December 2014,
<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/381754/SEC_ONDARY_national_curriculum.pdf> [accessed 22 October 2015].

Dominiczak, Peter, 'Michael Gove: new curriculum will allow my children to compete with the very best', 8th July 2013, *Daily Telegraph*,
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10166020/Michael-Gove-new-curriculum-will-allow-my-children-to-compete-with-the-very-best.html> [accessed 9 June 2017].

Eagleton, Terry, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, first published 1983, second edition 1996).

Farmer and Lesser, 'What is Print Popularity? A Map of the Elizabethan Book Trade', in *The Elizabethan Top Ten: Defining Print Popularity in Early Modern England*, edited by Andy Kesson and Emma Smith, JSTOR [accessed 17 January 2015].

Fish, Stanley, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1980).

Goodywn, Andrew, *The Expert Teacher of English* (London: Routledge, 2011).

Guardian, 'Live screenings have changed theatre – but they must not upstage it',
<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2015/dec/03/live-screenings-theatre>,
[accessed 29 May 2018].

Gross, John, *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters: English Literary Life Since 1800* (first published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson 1969, published in Pelican Books 1973, reissued with an introduction and afterword Harmondsworth: Penguin 1991).

Guillory, John, *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

Helm, Toby, 'Master teachers' set to be new classroom elite', *The Guardian*, Saturday 5th July 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/jul/05/master-teachers-labour-education-tristram-hunt> [accessed 31 May 2017].

Hardman, Frank, 'Promoting a dialogic pedagogy in English teaching', in *Debates in English Teaching*, edited by Jon Davison, Caroline Daly and John Moss (London: Routledge, 2011), pp.36-47.

Hornby, Richard, 'National Theatre Live', *The Hudson Review*, Vol. 64, No. 1, The Spanish Issue (SPRING 2011), pp. 196-202, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41300639>, [accessed 29 May 2018].

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) Integrated Inspection Report of Roedean School, March 2016, via the Roedean website (<http://www.roedean.co.uk/ISI-Reports>) [accessed 31 May 2017].

Inspiring Growth CBI/Pearson Education And Skills Survey 2015,
<http://www.cbi.org.uk/index.cfm/_api/render/file/?method=inline&fileID=92095A98-3A90-4FBD-9AF891997B103F50> [accessed 5 January 2017].

Ives, Eric, Diane Drummond, Leonard Schwarz, *The First Civic University: Birmingham 1880-1980 An Introductory History* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham University Press, 2000).

John, Peter, 'Awareness and intuition: how student teachers read their own lessons', in *The Intuitive Practitioner: On the value of not always knowing what one is doing*, ed. by Terry Atkinson and Guy Claxton, (Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000), pp.84-106.

Kelleher, Tricia, principal at the Stephen Perse Foundation independent school and Russel Tarr; quoted in 'Michael Gove: "bogeyman" or "the greatest education secretary ever"?'', interviews by Louise Tickle and Rebecca Ratcliffe, *Guardian*, Tuesday 22nd July 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/jul/22/michael-gove-legacy-education-secretary> [accessed 6 June 2017].

Kockelmans, Joseph J., *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology* (West Lafayette, Ind. : Purdue University Press, 1994).

Kermode, Frank, *The Classic* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975).

Kesson, Andy, “‘Trying television by candlelight’: Shakespeare’s Globe’s *The Duchess of Malfi* on BBC4”, *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Volume 33, Number 4, Winter 2015, pp.609-621, published by Johns Hopkins University Press [accessed 16 April 2016].

Kirwan, Peter, ‘*The Duchess of Malfi* performed by the Shakespeare’s Globe (Sam Wanamaker Playhouse)’ (review), *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Volume 32, Number 2, Summer 2014, published by Johns Hopkins University Press, pp.294-297.

Lave, Jean, and Wenger, Etienne, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Lawson, Mark, ‘Globe’s Sam Wanamaker Playhouse casts new light on Jacobean staging’, review of *The Duchess of Malfi*, *Guardian*, Monday 20th January 2014, <<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/jan/20/globe-sam-wanamaker-playhouse-light-jacobean-staging>> [accessed 16 April 2016].

Linneman, Emily, ‘The Cultural Value Of Shakespeare In Twenty-First-Century Publicly-Funded Theatre In England’, Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 2010, via <<http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/1355/>> [accessed 31 October 2016].

Lopez, Jeremy (2010) ‘Academic theatre reviewing and the imperfect present’, *Shakespeare*, 6:3, 350-356, DOI: 10.1080/17450918.2010.497858.

Loughnane, Rory, ‘Reputation and the Red Bull Theatre, 1625-42’, *Yearbook of English Studies* (44) 2014, pp.29-50.

Moran, Dermot, *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2005).

Morgan, Nicky, speech made on 10th November 2014 at the launch of Your Life campaign, <<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/nicky-morgan-speaks-at-launch-of-your-life-campaign>> [accessed 15th February 2016].

Munro, Lucy, 'Governing the pen to the capacity of the stage: reading the Red Bull and Clerkenwell', *Early Theatre* (9:2) 2006, pp.99-113.

Olive, Sarah, 'Shakespeare Valued: Policy, Pedagogy And Practice In English Education, 1989-2009', January 2011, University of Birmingham Research Archive e-theses repository.

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

- John Churton Collins, entry written by Fred Hunter, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxye.bham.ac.uk/view/article/32504>> [accessed 15 February 2016].
- Brian Cox, entry written by Lindsay Paterson, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/99827>>, [accessed 2 August 2017].

Oxford English Dictionary, accessed online.

Palmer, Liz, 'How Michael Gove's reforms drove me out of teaching', article in *Guardian*, Tuesday 5th August 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/aug/05/how-gove-reforms-drove-me-out-teaching> [accessed 9 June 2017].

Pope, Rob, *Studying English Literature and Language: An Introduction and Companion* (London: Routledge, 1998, 3rd edn. published 2012).

Porter, Lynnette, 'It's Alive! But What Kind of Creature is National Theatre Live's "Frankenstein"?' , *Studies in Popular Culture*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (SPRING 2013), pp. 1-21, <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23416333>> [accessed 29 May 2018].

Poulet, Georges, 'Phenomenology of Reading', *New Literary History*, Vol. 1, No. 1, *New and Old History* (Oct., 1969), pp. 53-68 Published by: The Johns Hopkins University Press <http://www.jstor.org/stable/468372> [accessed 9 August 2018].

Prescott, Paul, 'Shakespeare and the Dream of Olympism', *Shakespeare on the Global Stage: Performance and Festivity in the Olympic Year*, ed. by Paul Prescott and Erin Sullivan, (London: Bloomsbury Arden, 2015), pp.1-37.

Protherough, Robert, and Atkinson, Judith, *The Making of English Teachers* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991).

QAA English 2007, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, <<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Subject-benchmark-statement-English.pdf>> [accessed 27 October 2016].

QAA English 2014: Draft Guidance, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, <<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-consultation-English.pdf>> [accessed 27 October 2016].

Rumbold, Kate, 'From "Access" to "Creativity": Shakespeare Institutions, New Media, and the Language of Cultural Value', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Volume 61, Number 3, Fall 2010, pp. 313-336.

Rumbold, Kate, and McLuskie, Kathleen, *Cultural Value in Twenty-First Century England: The Case of Shakespeare* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014).

Press release on the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, from 'The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse Press Pack', January 2014, <http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/about-us/press/releases> [accessed 26 July 2016].

Spencer, Charles, review of *The Duchess of Malfi*, *The Daily Telegraph*, 16th January 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/theatre-reviews/10577000/The-Duchess-of-Malfi-Sam-Wanamaker-Playhouse-review.html> [accessed 16 April 2016].

Stern, Tiffany, lecture on 'Shakespeare and Tragedy', given at Cheltenham College, 27.02.15.

Straznicky, Marta, 'The Red Bull Repertory in print, 1605-1660', *Early Theatre* (9:2) 2006, pp.144-156.

Sullivan, Erin, "'The form of things unknown': Shakespeare and the Rise of the Live Broadcast', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Volume 35, Number 4, Winter 2017, pp.627-662.

Webster, John, *The White Devil*, The Works of John Webster ed. Gunby, Carnegie, Hammond (Cambridge 1995, reprinted 2007).

Webster, John, *The White Divil*, A Scolar Press Facsimile, 1970.

Wells, Stanley, Foreword, *A Year of Shakespeare: Re-living the World Shakespeare Festival*, edited by Paul Edmondson, Paul Prescott and Erin Sullivan, (London: Bloomsbury Arden, first published 2013 and reprinted 2013).

Wells, Stanley, 'Reviewing Shakespearean Theatre: The State of the Art – A panel discussion with Michael Coveney, Andrew Dickson, Carol Rutter, Janet Suzman and Tim Supple', *Shakespeare*, 6:3, 305-323, 2010 DOI: 10.1080/17450918.2010.497854 .

Williams, Holly, 'King Lear review: Anthony Hopkins stars in a murky adaptation', *Independent*, <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/reviews/king-lear-review-bbc-amazon-anthony-hopkins-andrew-scott-emma-thompson-shakespeare-a8373481.html>, [accessed 1 June 2018].

Williams, Raymond, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, (London: Fontana; London: Croom Helm, 1976).

Wollaston, Sam, 'King Lear review – Anthony Hopkins is shouty, vulnerable and absolutely mesmerising', *Guardian*, Monday 28th May 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2018/may/28/bbc-king-lear-review-anthony-hopkins> [accessed 1 June 2018].

Wyver, John, "'All the Trimmings?': The Transfer of Theatre to Television in Adaptations of Shakespeare Stagings', *Adaptation*, Volume 7, Issue 2, 1 August 2014, Pages 104–120, <https://doi-org.ezproxye.bham.ac.uk/10.1093/adaptation/apu020> [accessed 29 May 2018].

<https://www.yourlife.org.uk/> [accessed 2 August 2017].