



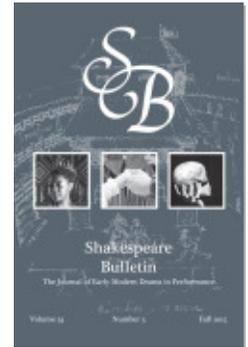
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Victoria Sparey

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Performing Puberty: Fertile Complexions in Shakespeare's Plays

VICTORIA SPAREY
University of Exeter

I would there were no age between ten and
three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the
rest; for there is nothing in the between but getting
wenches with child, wronging the ancients, stealing,
fighting— Hark you now! Would any but these boiled-
brains of nineteen and two-and-twenty hunt this
weather?

—William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, 3.3.58–64

The Old Shepherd's words in *The Winter's Tale*, which rehearse familiar ideas about youth, provide a pertinent starting point for an analysis of adolescence in early modern drama. Firstly, the shepherd describes behavioral characteristics that he suggests are typical of youth: begetting illegitimate children, disrespect for elders and authority, crime and violence. Such ideas fit with easily-performed traits of masculine "swaggering youth" that cross-dressed heroines regularly claim to adopt, in gestures to a stereotype that initially orientate the audience's understanding of age and gender appropriate to a theatrical disguise.¹ By including the sexual ruin of "wenches," moreover, the shepherd's speech acknowledges that adolescence threatens disorderly implications for young women. This regrettable "age" is undergone by both sexes. Secondly, as realized in the shepherd's derisory comment about "boiled brains," the erratic youths' behavior is understood to result from the humoral condition appropriate to age, which—within a life cycle that generally presented ageing as a process of cooling and drying out—framed youth as hot and dry, where adolescents became disassociated from the excessive moisture of childhood but still possessed the surplus heat that promoted such heat-fueled

acts as vengery, argument, and violence. Thirdly, as words spoken by a father, the shepherd provides a parental response to youth, which—when seen to include hazardous behavior—is figured as a difficult time for parents, who might desire that “no age” existed between childhood and adulthood at all.

In these ways, the shepherd promptly takes us to some well-known approaches to adolescence in early modern culture, where youth has similarly been characterized as a precarious age that must be endured until the stability of adulthood is achieved. Coppélia Kahn’s infamous analysis of “Coming of Age” in *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, has considered the extremes of adolescent actions to reveal “rites of passage, phallic violence and adolescent motherhood, typical for youth in Verona” (20). According to Kahn, early modern adolescence appears to have been shaped by its entanglement with the patriarchal familial bonds against which Romeo and Juliet must try to define themselves. Similarly, for Ursula Potter, parental anxieties regarding adolescence are seen to lead to restrictive checks upon girls’ behavior and the diagnosis of puberty as a disease. Potter, like Helen King, observes that female puberty posed particular concerns, where sexual maturation could lead to greensickness, a condition that might be relieved through sexual intercourse, but where the “cure” heightened parental concern for, and control of, their daughters’ sexual development.

Concerned parents and adolescence as a problem age are, therefore, familiar ideas within early modern studies. The material for constructing youth in negative terms is certainly available, as Kahn, Potter, and King have shown. But is early modern youth really to be understood as solely bound to bodily changes that threatened physical harm and the destruction of families? The short answer is: no, within early modern culture adolescence was as much about expected and desired change as it was about self-destructive behavior and destabilizing existing family bonds. As some notable interventions regarding perceptions of adolescence have begun to tease out, constructions of adolescence in terms of social and gender relations realize positive formulations alongside the more familiar negative ones cited above. Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos’s study of adolescence within the context of apprenticeships and other work-related relationships has situated youth beyond the structure of the family and helped highlight the considerable influence adolescent individuals had within early modern societies. Jennifer Higginbotham’s recent investigation into the discursive complexities surrounding girlhood, moreover, provides an important expansion of Ben-Amos’s positioning of age in relation to gender and class by adding the cultural prominence of “girls” to the early

modern picture (20–61). Both Higginbotham's and Deanne Williams's new books about girlhood stress that the transition between childhood and womanhood was a stage of life that underpinned articulations of subjectivities that were of cultural and personal interest within an early modern context. Katie Knowles's *Shakespeare's Boys* similarly suggests how representations of boyhood in Shakespeare's plays—from early modern through to modern incarnations—realize wide-ranging identities.

The shepherd's speech about youth, then, perhaps more fittingly provides a glimpse of the "age" the audience is invited to consider and even celebrate across the rest of the play. After all, the shepherd's words about "boiled brains," shortly followed by his youthful son's arrival, seem to express affection between father and son rather than serious concern. In a play that includes shipwrecks, accusations of adultery, and the abandonment of an infant, the shepherd's words and presence (as a more typically "comic" character) provide relief, aiding the oft-noted generic shift from tragedy to comedy in *The Winter's Tale* as the bear exits the stage, and attention is shifted from the anxieties of the older generation to the hopes of a younger one (Bristol). Although ostensibly a commentary on his son's youthful misdoings, the shepherd describes an "age" that suggests symmetry across the adolescent developments of girls and boys: the young men who "swagger" encounter "wenches" who will entertain them. This speech is, after all, interrupted by the shepherd's discovery of the infant Perdita, who is moments later (with the instantaneous passing of sixteen years) transformed into an adolescent who is firmly within the age-range that the shepherd berates. The figure of the shepherd, in a sense, remains unchanged despite the passing of time in that he continues to fulfill the role of the "father" of an adolescent. The shepherd helps begin to signal the play's turn to a preoccupation with this adolescent age, moving from a commentary about young men and wenches to a focus upon the infant who is to swiftly become the sixteen-year-old Perdita.

With the framing of adolescent characters like Perdita in mind, Jennifer Higginbotham's claim that "Shakespeare does not seem to have staged the transitional period between female infancy and womanhood—a period we might describe today as girlhood" (115), is unexpected, pointing to a gap in our understanding of how adolescence was understood in early modern culture and represented in plays.² Set alongside the growing number of studies about childhood and adolescence as socially-relational identities, our understanding of how early modern culture recognized the "age" of adolescence as a physical process remains insufficient. Scholarly interpretations that have considered pubescent bodies have, as this article

outlines, largely been skewed by misperceptions about early modern humoral theory. Such misperceptions will be shown to have especially influenced readings of dramatic representations of adolescence, where studies about the body of the “boy actor” have emphasized humoral constructions of gender in a way that results in a misrepresentation of the early modern humoral modeling of age. By recognizing how puberty was understood as a discernible physical process that was normalized and not only associated with bodily disorder, moreover, this article demonstrates how female and male puberty could be, and often was, staged in Shakespeare’s plays.

Pubescent youths like Perdita are, after all, commonly at the center of early modern comedy. This point should be unsurprising; we all know that comic lovers are usually adolescent youths. But scholarship regarding representations of youth in romantic comedies, especially those where cross-dressing characters are involved, tends ultimately to tell us a lot about constructions of gender identity and very little about age. The longer and fuller answer to understanding early modern constructions of adolescence therefore begins with considering from where our partial and obfuscating perception of youth comes.

The adolescent actor has been discussed within much compelling scholarship regarding gender identity and eroticism on the all-male early modern stage (Orgel; Howard; Stallybrass). Ideas that are expressed in Stephen Orgel’s influential *Impersonations* are representative of the emphasis scholars have placed upon connections between desire and gender when considering constructions of male youth: “eroticized boys appear to be a middle term between men and women” (63). Age is, here, primarily defined by its associations with gender ambiguity, which itself is erotically charged. Juliet Dusinberre similarly frames the boy actor’s body as “a blank page on which gender, as opposed to biological sexual identity, can be written” (2). Such approaches have been the source of important scholarship: a reading of *As You Like It* or *Twelfth Night*, for example, cannot (and should not) ignore the ambiguous genderings that are explored in relation to the plays’ cross-dressed heroines (Howard; Stallybrass). It is, however, an error to think that the humoral bodies of adolescent actors, and the cues to consider these real as well as the fictitious adolescent bodies of performed characters, have been properly understood.

Scholarship about boy actors of the 1990s unsurprisingly demonstrates the influence of Thomas Laqueur’s “one-sex” model, which suggested that male and female were differentiated through degrees of humoral heat in the early modern period. Within Laqueur’s model, after all, the adolescent male who has not achieved full manhood exists along a scale of humoral

heat that places him somewhere between the two points of orientation that are offered: the hot male and the cool female. Surprisingly challenges that have been made to the “one-sex” framing of early modern bodies have not been properly registered in our analysis of boy players, and this seems to be because gender continues to be privileged over age in approaches to early modern humoral philosophy.³ Gail Kern Paster’s expansion of Laqueur’s ideas into a model of gendered humoral fluidity within *The Body Embarrassed*, which has in turn sparked extensive scholarly debate, is a notable example of how our understanding of humoral theory has remained centered upon gender.⁴ King’s challenge to Laqueur (while largely focused on gender), however, provides an important scholarly intervention, arguing that a two-sex distinction between men and women exists within humoral theory itself, where women are not simply “cold men” (*Hippocrates’ Woman* 11). King has observed that the humoral properties of heat and moisture that differentiate women from men were thought to underscore fixed bodily manifestations that made the male and female far more distinct than Laqueur’s sliding scale of heat suggests. A woman’s moister and cooler body was thought to result in a physicality that was clearly distinct from that of the male, which included a woman’s experience of menstruation, a generative seed that was materially different from a man’s seed and body tissue that was not as dense as that of a man. Of note for the purposes of this article is that bodily distinctions between male and female in this two-sex *humoral* model result from the changes of puberty. Menstruation as the clearest foundation for the notion that female bodies are moister than male bodies particularly highlights how it is with puberty that the hot/cold and moist/dry humoral distinctions between the sexes may come into play.

What does this mean for interpreting the boy actor and performances of age on the early modern stage? Discussions regarding the fluidity of gender identity prior to adulthood realize a degree of legitimacy; “two sex” humoral distinctions seem bound to bodies that demonstrate signs of sexual maturity. Ideas about density of flesh also seem more relevant to bodies that have matured beyond the familiar “soft and tender” bodies usually attributed in less gender-specific terms to young children (Newton 34). However, the conflation of childhood and youth as ambiguously gendered “pre-adult” states disregards how the humoral changes of puberty were thought to work. Alterations in the adolescent body, during what Henry Cuffe termed the “*budding and blossoming*” age (118), were specific to males and females as the emergent signs of sexual maturity became registered upon the body. Changes were also gradual (menstruation, for

example, being the start and not the end of the female's bodily changes), and both male and female adolescents were understood to get hotter in order for "the extremities of their bodies [to become] hot" (Scipion Duplex 20) so that they could engage in generative sex, meaning that the hot/cold, male/female model comes under tension. Individuals who were younger than fourteen might be classified as less-clearly sexed in their humoral state, but—as this article demonstrates—it is a distortion of early modern understandings of the body to disregard how, after fourteen (and sometimes as early as nine), bodies were understood to be involved in a process of maturation that involved gradual humoral change, which was itself accordingly gendered, in its journey towards adulthood.

Theater studies silently continues to accept the femininity of the "boy" actor as a cultural given without fully appreciating how the bodily changes of puberty were understood. Even scholarship that, for example, has analyzed the breaking voice of the adolescent actor tends to frame these changes to the voice "about to break" as a source of anxiety and fascination, where a sudden shift from feminine to masculine is anticipated (Bloom). Early modern theatrical practices might be seen to work with or against ideas about pubescent bodies in interesting ways, depending on the character that was being performed and where, for example, a theatrical but not necessarily a wider cultural context would perceive a breaking voice as finally preventing adolescent masculine bodies from appearing feminine. But to assume that boy actors, who would have been adolescents for many of the years that they performed female roles, were culturally positioned as possessing an ungendered, child-like humoral condition is inaccurate.⁵ The idea that one "blank" or cool bodily state might be imagined to be exchanged for another theatrical female one too readily indulges the fantasy that early modern adolescence was "no age" at all.

It is only recently that cultural and medical historians have begun to identify the value of rigorously-researched, age-specific scholarship (Toulalan; Newton). The editors of *The Routledge History of Sex and the Body*, a book that endeavors to compile a representative volume of work in the field of body scholarship, observe how "more attention needs to be paid to age as a category of analysis" (Fisher and Toulalan11). Some exceptions—in addition to Higginbotham, Williams and Knowles highlighted above—should be identified when discussing the general critical blindside to age in early modern theater studies. Representations of childhood, where age features as a primary point of analysis, have, for example, been examined in *Shakespeare and Childhood* (Chedgzoy et al) and *Gender*

Constructions of Early Modern Childhood (Miller and Yavneh). Recent scholarship has also seen exciting work relating to children's companies (Lamb; Munro; Bly). Children's companies are, however, understandably framed as distinct from adult companies in such research. Edel Lamb, for example, has highlighted how children's companies drew upon a greater use of props (in number and emphasis) than adult companies (18–19), while attention has also been paid to the distinct repertory children's companies appear to have cultivated (Munro; Bly; Lamb). Lamb's study of children's companies highlights the fascinating implications of "disparity between the child and adult role" (21), and Lucy Munro likewise observes the "age-transvestism" (2) at work in performances by The Children of the Queen's Revels. By distinguishing itself from adult companies, such age-focused studies can, however, unintentionally reiterate the misleading idea that the adolescent actor's role in adult companies has been "intensely analysed" and so adequately covered, often solely citing scholars who have examined gender rather than age to demonstrate this (Lamb 12).

It is through a detailed consideration of what puberty meant within early modern culture that theater scholars can suggest how the signs of puberty were managed and used in performances of age and gender in early modern drama. As pressing as the gendering of characters is in dramatic plots, the importance of age-specific concerns need recognition both in their own right as a theatrical preoccupation, and also to understand more accurately how gender is shaped by age in an early modern context. The first section of this article therefore outlines how puberty was framed within the early modern life cycle as a whole, demonstrating where humoral logic has been too sweepingly applied in terms of gender (hot/masculine, cold/feminine) to miss nuances in understanding this particular stage of life. The section highlights commonly-noted signs of puberty within contemporary sources, paying particular attention to the acknowledged interplay between the individual's general "humoral complexion," changes to the individual's generative faculties, and the visible signs of these changes upon the individual's face. The article, therefore, argues that adolescence should be understood in relation to developing "fertile complexions" that were culturally recognized and exploited in theatrical representations.

The second section of the article turns to the theatrical staging of these fertile complexions in Shakespeare's plays. In its examination of early modern beards, the article develops Will Fisher's work regarding beards and beardlessness. Unlike Fisher, who focuses upon distinctions between having and not having a beard (prosthetic or real), the article highlights

that beards that are anticipated or in the process of growing feature in a more nuanced understanding of early modern constructions of age. Fisher has noted that age is a pressing component when considering early modern beards, but, because these observations are shaped as a reading of gender, beardlessness is again bound to womanhood and effeminate males, which, as the first section of this article shows, is not altogether accurate in relation to adolescence. Lamb's paraphrasing of Fisher, where "Beardlessness may thus be evoked or staged to indicate a youthful and less-than-masculine identity" (22), is indicative of how a stark contrast between having and not having a beard has shaped adolescent masculinity in terms of lack. Beardlessness will be shown not always to work in this way: awaited beards are often framed as promising vitality, and where the wait itself appears to be a source of titillation. This article will demonstrate how, in its allusions to developing beards, "fertile" blushes, and other signs of puberty, early modern performances asked their audiences to view the actor's body in a way that manufactured culturally-recognized signs of adolescence appropriate to character, doing so to draw selectively upon the real state of the "body beneath" a theatrical role.⁶

Puberty as stage of Life

Various models were used to map the early modern life cycle (Garber 1). Henry Cuffe's *The Different Ages of Man* (1607) makes use of several models, including Pythagorus's four ages, Aristotle's three ages, and the seven ages of many medieval theorists, without expressing consternation about differences between ideas. What binds the ways of structuring human life, for Cuffe, is the humoral logic that is used to understand particular stages. Cuffe's description of the life cycle makes use of the familiar overarching humoral model that framed ageing as the cooling and drying of the body, where infancy is "ful of moisture," youth "bringeth a farther degree of solidity," adulthood is "ever te[m]perate," and with old age "declineth our body unto colde and drinesse" (113). Left unexamined for its implications, however, this description of ageing, as being hot through cold, wet through dry, and centered about a humorally-balanced adulthood, threatens to flatten the significance Cuffe and other writers attributed to youth and the bodily changes of puberty.

As Cuffe explains, each stage of life was defined by distinct humoral alterations that took place within that age: "An age is a period and tearmes of mans life, wherein his natural complexion and temperature naturally and of its owne accord is evidently changed" (113). Humoral changes took time (usually seven years), with alterations being discernible in the

“evidently changed” ageing body. As Francis Bacon’s description of the life cycle in *Historie Naturall and Experimentall* (1638) suggests, physical signs of change were significant but gradually produced across each seven-year long “age”:⁷

The *Ladder of Mans Bodie*, is this [. . .]. To bee *Borne*; To *Sucke*; To be *Weaned*; To *Feed upon Pap*; To *Put forth Teeth*, the First time about the Second year of Age; To *Begin to goe*; To *Begin to speaks*; To *Put forth Teeth*, the Second time, about seven years of Age; To come to *Pubertie*, about twelve, or fourteene yeares of Age; To be *Able for Generation*, and the *Flowing of the Menstrua*; To have *Haires about the Legges*, and *Arme-holes*; To *Put forth a Beard*; And thus long, and sometimes later, to *Grow in Stature*; To come to *full years of Strength and Agility*. (369–70)

Puberty might begin at around twelve or fourteen, but achieving all the signs of “full years” (identified by Bacon as the ability to generate seed, produce body hair, grow to an appropriate height, and achieve physical strength) required time. The ability to have sex and produce generative materials of seed or menstrual blood were not, in themselves, enough to demonstrate an adult physicality. As the French physician Ambroise Paré observed, generative seed might be produced at fourteen but it would lack generative potency until the man was twenty one: “although the seed be genitable for the most part in the second seventh year, yet it is unfruitful until the third seventh year” (624).

The terminology used by Paré is representative of how puberty was discussed in early modern culture. Bodily changes were articulated using agricultural terms of ripening and fruitfulness. Changes associated with puberty centered upon the “ripening” body that responded to the developing humoral properties of the generative seed it produced. Adulthood was, in this humoral model, defined by “fruitful” properties of the seed being discernible. Marrying before these alterations had occurred prevented the production of fruit (offspring) from seed. Levinus Lemnius, in *Touchstone of Complexions*, warned against men “maryinge too soone, and ere they be fully rype,” because “they lacke manly strength & theyr seede [is] to cold and thinne” (43).⁸ As medical historian Sarah Toulalan has observed, “neither girls nor boys were yet hot enough to breed seed for conception; the increasing heat at puberty precipitated the ripening of the seed [. . .] a gradual process that took place over a period of time” (284). During adolescence, the ageing process was marked not by progressive cooling but by a gradual increase in generative heat in both sexes that was crucial in signifying the individual’s progression to adulthood.

In *Coming of Age in Shakespeare*, Majorie Garber's approach is, therefore, revealingly anachronistic in directing attention to apparently immediate transitions between ages rather than developments within ages themselves. Garber claims: "not the condition of being in any given stage, but rather the passage from one to the next [. . .] is the crucial and sometimes traumatic time for the individual" (6). According to Garber, physical and emotional maturation is sudden, being experienced on the threshold between ages. This was not the way early modern culture represented the changes that took place across the life cycle. Changes were significant but they were not immediate.⁹ Sara Read's recent consideration of menstruation in early modern England has demonstrated how young women matured gradually (where menarche, or "flowers," might precede fruitfulness typically by ten years). Read is mistaken, however, to suggest that the case was different for men: "a sudden affair as the production of seed proved that the boy was sexually mature" (39). Seed production was at the center of the bodily changes that took place for both sexes during puberty, and the appropriate heat and moisture of such seed usually only signaled full maturity several years after this initial production. Proof of the seed's efficacy depended upon other signs of bodily change that took place during adolescence.

On their fourteenth birthdays, it is clear that boys and girls were not abruptly deemed mature men and women, yet nor were these pubescent boys and girls indistinguishable from each other. Peter Chamberlain's list of physical alterations that took place during puberty differentiated between the bodies of the pubescent male and female: "About that time young men begin to grow hairy, to change their voice, and to have lustfull imaginations, maidens paps begin to swell, and they to think upon- $\&c$ " (69). Changes to voices, hair growth, and bodily development themselves depended upon the humoral qualities of the individual's generative seed. Some of these changes were less gender-specific than others. The experience of sexual desire in both young men and women was itself considered a sign of humoral excesses that originated from a body that no longer required such heat and moisture for simple body growth. Having been fully augmented (including the production of generative seed), the body had heat to spare, which, as *Aristotle's Masterpiece* observed, then influenced the mind to encourage sexual activity: "the Blood, which no longer taken to augment their bodies, abounding, incites their minds to Venery" (5-6). Other signs, however, were produced as the result of excesses in heat and moisture emitted from the developing seed that were appropriate to the sex of the maturing individual. For example, humidity emitting from

the seed of the male was thought to be subject to greater heat than in the female and would rise higher in the body to significantly alter vocal chords, while humidity in the female was associated with swelling breasts (Elam; Read 47–48).

Body hair was also considered the humoral outgrowth of the maturing body, a product of excess heat and moisture that abounded once generative seed was produced. Thomas Hill's *Contemplation of Mankind* (1571) observes the connection between the man's development of a beard and his seed:

The bearde in man (after the agreement of the auncient writers) beginneth to appeare in the neather jawe [. . .] through the heate and moisture, caried unto the same, from the forepart of the heade, drawne from the genitours. (145r–6v)

For an adolescent male, the growth of facial hair was regarded as a promising sign of developing manliness. As Will Greenwood observed in his description of apparently alluring traits in matters of love: "Hairinesse, saith *Aristotle*, is a signe of abundance of excrements" (87). The fuller the beard, the greater the indication of a man's generative strength. Although lacking a beard was associated with men who were "commonly cold and impotent" (Greenwood 87), such ideas are only selectively applicable to adolescent men who might be insulted in this manner. In *Henry IV, Part 2* Falstaff, for example, insults Prince Hal, "whose chin is not fledged" (1.2.13–14) by commenting on his beardlessness. The challenge to Hal's manliness, however, works by stressing that the beardless youth will remain so: "I will sooner have a beard in / the palm of my hand than he shall get one on his / cheek" (1.2.14–16). Falstaff claims that, even once Hal has reached full maturity, "a barber shall never earn sixpence" from the prince (1.2.19). Falstaff takes advantage of the bare chin of youth to infer its significance for indicating an individual's anticipated adult masculinity. Hal's beard growth is framed as already belated and so unpromising in terms of the way adolescent masculinity offered signs of the man a youth might become. By contrast, Coriolanus, is described as already exhibiting unmatched masculinity when he was sixteen and beardless: "with his Amazonian chin he drove/ The bristled lips before him" (2.2.87–88). For Will Fisher, Coriolanus is the exception to the rule regarding the early modern beard's connotations of adult manliness, because Fisher suggests that Coriolanus reveals himself to be a man (and an adult) through other means ("Renaissance Beard"). As a story about Coriolanus's youth, recalled by his supporter Cominius, this episode seems

more fittingly designed to stress that Coriolanus's promise was recognizable in adolescence in order to construct an image of the man Coriolanus now is, where the logical trajectory for masculine development sees this adolescent ripen into an even more intimidating adult: "The man I speak of cannot in the world / Be singly counterpoised" (2.282–83).

Young men, for whom generative heat was expected to accumulate, could anticipate timely beards that might be framed as part of a youth's promising masculine vitality. The gradual growth of the male's beard offered an outwardly traceable sign of a young man's developing fertility. Henry Cuffe's description of male puberty being when "our cheekes and other more hidden parts begin to be clothed with that mossie excrement of haire" suggests how any consideration of beard growth offered a means of mapping the development of "more hidden parts" (118). Cuffe observed that this "budding of hair" (114–15) was not a sudden revision of a young man's humoral make-up, but rather an anticipated change that was appropriate to the humoral temperament of a particular individual; the ageing process recorded "the variation of our originall constitution" (115) where beardless young men were understood in relation to the masculine selves they were expected to become in adulthood. So, while the development of a manly beard might sometimes have been approached with anxiety, most early modern writers assumed that the anticipated trajectory of maturation would be fulfilled by young men for whom "Tenderness of Age hinders conception only for a time" (Riverius 506).

As Fisher's work has shown, beards were particularly central to early modern constructions of adult masculinity. This largely seems due to the way in which a woman's maturation actively dissociated her from the humoral logic behind the growth of manly beards. Sexual maturation in women was understood to explain why women remained relatively hair-free, most notably on the face. As one medical text put it, "the matter and cause of the hayre of the bodies is expelled with their monthly tearmes, the which superfluitie remaineth in men" (*Problemes of Aristotle* A7r). Menstruation ("monthly tearmes") not only demonstrated the generative potential of the pubescent female, it also removed excess moisture from the body that produced beards in men. Within Daniel Sennert's seventeenth-century medical text, what initially appears as a rather blunt categorization, where "men have beards, Women have none" (2612), becomes more clearly tied to ideas about humorally-specific notions about beard growth in sexually mature men and women. In the man, excess heat and moisture from his seed rose to his face and produced a beard; the cooler (but still heated) heaviness of the humoral excess for

the young woman was, by comparison, evidenced through menstruation. Beardlessness here can certainly be deemed a “womanly” quality. The humoral logic, however, importantly distinguishes the pubescent male’s beardlessness from that of the woman: her beardlessness can signal a fully achieved feminine maturation while the male’s suggests awaited change and the retention of “superfluitie” that the woman’s body has expelled. So, while smooth faces are both womanish and boyish (and this can be taken advantage of by youths performing female parts in the theater), the elision of these kinds of beardlessness should be treated with caution. Fisher’s examination of the ways adult men could shave to perform younger roles, or where young boys might don prosthetic beards to assume adult guises, importantly seems to highlight that connections were made between adult and young males, who could manipulate performances of beardless/bearded age because their faces were understood within the context of the same gender framework. However, Fisher’s conclusion to his discussion of beards, where boys are said to have been treated as a different gender to men in early modern culture (“Renaissance Beard”), seems to underplay how far the bare chins of young men were understood to anticipate hair growth appropriate to adulthood, where masculine identities and gradual beard growth were mapped along a trajectory of age.

The female’s maturation was less outwardly visible than the seed/beard correlation made possible for the pubescent male. The female’s production of generative substance was, after all, demonstrated by the beard she *did not* have on her face. But, as early modern puns frequently remind us, the female who had reached puberty *did* produce a “beard,” albeit a beard located not on the face but on her genitals. The playful linguistic interchange of beards on the face and genitals is a long-standing one. Alison’s gleeful tricking of Absolon in Chaucer’s “The Miller’s Tale” sees Absolon kiss Alison’s bottom as it protrudes from her casement window. The jest orientates about Absolon’s confusion when he encounters Alison’s pubic beard; that “a woman hath no beerd” enables Absolon’s painful realization that he has been humiliated (line 551). While neither facial nor pubic beard were anticipated by Absolon in the scenario, only the latter can explain the “beard” he finds on Alison’s body. The seventeenth-century jest, “A Surprize,” similarly puns upon the distinction between womanly and manly “beards,” where the recognition of the womanly beard quickly becomes a prelude to sexual activity:

A Gentleman being newly trimmed, the Barber left only some hairs on his upper lipp, visiting a Gentelwoman; she innocently said *Sir, you have a beard above and none below; and you Says he Madam, have a beard below, and none above, Say you so, says she, then put one against t’other.* (51)

A sexual encounter, it seems, logically follows the recognition of sexual maturity in references to each party's "beard."

While such bawdy humor plays upon an appreciation for the type of beard that is and is not possessed by a woman, the linguistic connection between facial and genital beard also suggests that such body hair was understood in similar terms. Mark Johnston, who has similarly recognized connections between men's facial beards and women's pubic beards, suggests that the modeling of beards "above" and "below" help inscribe the inferiority of early modern women upon their bodies and the beards they produce. Within early modern culture, the female's pubic beard was, however, also a sign of sexual maturity, functioning in a manner not unlike the masculine facial beard. Menstrual bleeding may have diverted excess moisture away from the female's face, but the humoral excess that derived from the woman's seed was thought to stimulate hair growth around the woman's genitals, and so the woman's pubic beard was understood to appear after menstruation had begun. Early modern generative discourses thus observed a connection between the female's growth of pubic hair and the developing generative qualities of her body. *The Problemes of Aristotle* relates signs of the female's fecundity to her pubic hair: "women shew their ripnes by the hayre on their privie part" (A6r). While the man produced two beards—one of which appeared on the face and one that also surrounded his humorally moist genital—the woman produced a single "beard" on her genitals that was equally understood to demonstrate her sexual maturity, her "ripnes."

While puns about genital beards allude to a young woman's maturation, the physical signs cannot be easily viewed on the body. This is perhaps why Fisher does not consider women's pubic beards in his discussion of materialized signs of gender: this beard can usually only be imagined to have materialized (*Materializing Gender*). Within an all-male theater company, commonly-noted signs of female puberty such as developing breasts might be suggested through the use of corsetry and even padding, but breasts (like the woman's "beard") cannot be viewed in the same manner as facial hair. Puns upon women's beards, however, work in a manner that is telling in relation to staging pubescent femininity, because the act of looking at the woman's face (even for what is *not* there in the beard) allows for an imagined access to her genital maturity that corresponds to that available for the male. Moreover, the connection between facial complexion and the generative heat of the woman's seed is similarly observed in the framing of the pubescent woman's blush. A girl's increasing womanliness was often discussed in relation to reddened cheeks, where

the heating of generative seed and blood more generally, was thought to produce a blush if not a beard on a woman's face. As George Sandys observed, the "resort of blood to the face [. . . is] most apparent in those that are young; in regard of their greater heat, and tender complexions" (361). While people blush for various reasons and at various ages, blushing *at a certain age* was often used to shape an image of the sexual readiness associated with emergent adulthood.¹⁰ The agricultural terminology so often used by early modern writers demonstrates how red cheeks could signify fertility: "blushing ripeness" indicates fruitfulness (*Novembris monstrum* 100).¹¹

The reddened face, moreover, was eroticized because it drew attention to unseen parts of the body, where the blush—as with the man's beard—is produced by heated blood that can be traced back to the young woman's seed, which confirms her physical readiness for generative sex. The blush is often read as an anticipation of the sexual act in early modern texts. In *The Resoluer* (1635), for example, the "Vermillion blush" registers young lovers' anticipation of sexual intercourse. Heated passion (itself a symptom of puberty) is recognized in blushing youths who "in hope, or assurance to enjoy their loves [. . .] are red, and have the extremities of their bodies hot, the blood running and spreading over all the parts" (Scipion Dupleix 20). For Perdita, in *The Winter's Tale*, interaction with her suitor, Florizel, is enough to excite her blood. Blushing at Florizel's words, which are tantalizingly unheard by those who observe: "he tells her something / That makes her blood look on't" (4.4.159–60), the sixteen-year-old Perdita is characterised through the promising 'ripeness' associated with her body. The emergent beard and blush of puberty made the hidden changes of adolescence accessible and, consequently, theatrically performable.

Performing Puberty: Beards and Blushes

Within the central love plot of *As You Like It*, an awaited beard is used to assess the adolescent Orlando's readiness for romantic coupling with Rosalind. Upon hearing she has an admirer, Rosalind asks: "[is] his chin worth a beard?" (3.2.188). Possession of a manly character and an appropriate physicality for being a suitor includes an evaluation of Orlando's facial hair. In response to Rosalind's question, Celia informs us that Orlando—and so the presumably-trimmed Richard Burbage, who David Grote suggests originally played him (229)—"hath but a little beard" (3.2.189). Orlando, by the evidence of his beard, is said to need more time to flourish as a lover, a point that is reiterated when Orlando

enters the scene and attention is again drawn to his small beard. Rosalind (in her guise of Ganymede) assesses how far Orlando exhibits the signs of lovesickness, concluding that all signs (including a lean cheek and an unkempt appearance) are absent. Orlando most notably lacks the symptom of a “beard neglected,” something that Orlando is reminded “you have not [. . .] for your having in beard is a younger brother’s revenue” (3.2.376–78). Orlando’s pubescent state, where maturation has begun but not been fulfilled, is made evident in Rosalind’s querying how far Orlando’s lovesick desires have registered upon his appearance. Orlando’s ongoing maturation is, however, especially stressed through this scene’s emphasis upon his beard that is expected to grow.

For Rosalind, the promise of Orlando’s “chin” is enough to encourage her to await his sexual maturation: she will “stay the growth of his beard” (3.2.191). She has, after all, already deemed the youth a promising candidate for fathering her children (1.3.11). As Rosalind sets out to begin tutoring Orlando as her prospective husband, the representation of Orlando’s growing beard depicts puberty as an uncomplicated and temporary condition that leads to sexual maturation, simply with the passing of time. Orlando’s representation suggests promising “pre-adult” masculinity rather than feminine youth. He can, after all, win a wrestling match against the Duke’s champion in act one. And, while it is unlikely that Burbage would appear in later scenes donning a full beard to signal his achievement of sexual maturity, the promise of Orlando’s small beard seems realized (as expected) when other signs of adult masculinity are made evident. Orlando’s development from the “young and tender” “boy” of act one (1.1.110; 1.1.145) to the “man” who—in case we were in any doubt—can fight a lion by act five (5.2.106) is traced across a play that reminds its audience “from hour to hour we ripe and ripe” (2.7.26). Like Coriolanus, considered above, Orlando is identified according to the expected model of masculine maturation, where adolescent promise (and a small beard) helps the audience assess the “worth” of the man he becomes.

While *As You Like It* accommodates an uncomplicated model of puberty, following an expected trajectory of maturation for its characters, *Twelfth Night* offers a more complex staging of the signs of puberty, delighting—it seems—in the gradual nature of sexual maturation and pointedly deferring bodily changes for characters that were probably being experienced by actors playing the roles. Viola’s disguise as Cesario centers upon the absence of expected signs of puberty, including facial and pubic “beards.” In act three, Feste mocks Cesario’s lack of a beard, to which Cesario responds: “I am almost sick for one, though I would not have

it grow on *my* chin" (3.1.41–42). Although traditionally seen to indicate Viola's lovesickness for Duke Orsino (the supposed "beard" in question), this largely neglected exchange also highlights Cesario's lack of a beard, both on the face and upon the genitals (the pun, after all, invites us once again to consider beards that do not grow on the chin).¹²

While Cesario's beardlessness can seemingly suggest a physical immaturity that is applicable to the young male or female in this scene (Feste believes he is in conversation with a male youth who is awaiting the growth of his manly beard, and the audience is likely to detect the Viola character within the statement) this is not simply recourse back to the idea that beardlessness is equally womanly and boyish. Cesario's comment implies that genital hair would be preferable to facial hair, highlighting that there are different types of beards. Within the context of the play's gender confusions, Cesario's articulation of desire for a single beard, disassociated from the masculine facial beard, seems to privilege Viola and her anticipation of the menarche with its single womanly "beard." The scene's imagery appears to delight in the familiar bawdy distinction between manly and womanly beards only to stress the continued *absence* of such beards for Cesario/Viola. *Twelfth Night*, which has regularly been discussed for its references to ambiguously-gendered voice and genitalia (Callaghan; Elam; Stallybrass), has not generally been framed according to this fundamental point: the theatrical illusion of sameness between male and female youths continually defers the signs of emergent "ripeness." The gender ambiguity at work in the play should, therefore, be understood with this playful management of age signifiers in mind and should not be taken simply as a representative model of early modern puberty or its use in early modern drama.

While Orlando in *As You Like It* fulfills the masculine promise of his "chin" by the end of the play, in act five of *Twelfth Night*, Orsino is still wondering how puberty will alter Cesario: "what wilt thou be / When time hath sowed a grizzle on thy case?" (5.1.160–61). Thinking that his page has betrayed him by pursuing Olivia, Orsino's observation is initially akin to Rosalind's anticipation of Orlando's beard, which is expected to grow according to the indications of masculine selfhood already in evidence. Orsino considers how what Cesario is capable of in youth will be exaggerated in adulthood, when the youth has hair upon his "case" (genitals). But unlike Orlando's beard, which is already in the process of growing and likely to continue its promising course, Cesario/Viola has no beard (facial or pubic, it seems), just when the marital unions of the comedy are expected. If this were only about facial beards (and notably,

Orsino's comment is again shaped to specify genital hair), Viola's lack of body hair might easily be absorbed into that familiar (and, by now, problematic) model, where a cross-dressed sexually-mature woman is readily interchangeable with a beardless young male. But in the "recognition scene" that concludes *Twelfth Night*, a clear complication to the marriage unions is apparent. The marveling at "one face, one voice, one habit" (5.1.208) in response to the twins pointedly leaves the signs of sexual maturation of both beardless twins undetected.

While Sebastian is victorious in his duel with the foppish Andrew Aguecheek, his actions and bodily representation do not really tally with Robert Lublin's suggestion that Sebastian should be understood as "emerging from adolescence and ready to assume adult responsibilities" (26). We might remind ourselves that Sebastian is taken by surprise by Olivia's attentions and Aguecheek's challenge, where such actions only loosely resemble the actively-pursued activities of "heated" adolescence. Sebastian, who also volunteers the information that he is sexually inexperienced in this final scene (256), is a character who appears somewhat prematurely propelled into staging acts of masculine adolescence that his physical framing in the play otherwise undermines. In the play's final act, moreover, the age of the twins is suggested in a recent memory of the twins' thirteenth birthday (239). The inclusion of this numerical age situates the twins in the early developments of adolescence and corresponds with the play's insistence that neither twin's body records signs of "ripening." The "unripe" representation of the twins thus allows for different-sex twins to be mistaken for each other, but their shared "complexion" undermines the idea of a "fruitful" marriage between sexually mature adults in the conclusion to the comedy.

By leaving puberty pending, *Twelfth Night* decenters the marital resolution of comedy and draws attention to its theatrical illusions of age. While continued references to Viola's singing voice, in a play where Viola does not sing, may suggest revision of the play to accommodate a player's breaking voice, the play also offers a surprisingly spirited acknowledgement of bodily changes that are awaited but never realized for its characters. This management of the maturing actor's bodily changes goes beyond more typical theatrical strategy, where the cross-dressed female's masculine guise allows room for the actor's own acknowledged maturation. Portia's cross-dressing as a pubescent male in *The Merchant of Venice* sees the character draw upon "A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks, / Which I will practice" (3.4.77–80), including adopting a voice "between the change of man and boy" (3.4.69–70). Portia's speech

recognizes that a young female character and youthful male theatrical construct are not seamlessly merged, but require acts of performance (“raw tricks”) in the manipulation of voice and behavior that distinguish the two. Here, however, the real adolescent actor emerges in a fascinating but familiar way: his altering body is Portia’s theatrical fiction.¹³ Portia acknowledges the cultural acceptance of signs associated with the pubescent man, and puts them to use in a manner that works both to highlight and then conveniently submerge the precariously-placed pubescent changes of the male youth playing Portia.

The changing voice and body of the actor playing Viola are also highlighted throughout *Twelfth Night*. However, although fantasies about imagined beards are included in the play’s bawdy puns, the gender ambiguity within the play hinges upon constructing a sameness that indicates sexual immaturity for the male and female twins who share “one face, one voice, one habit” (a term for humoral disposition as well as clothing). The process of “ripening” is continually alluded to within the play, but the changes of puberty are ultimately represented as having barely begun for the twins. The celebration of its theatrical illusion of the twins’ sameness offers a fantasy of its own: bodies that do not exhibit the gendered changes of puberty. That such a fantasy can be performed in *Twelfth Night* is testament to the skills of acting companies to *make* “blank” the bodies of its actors, albeit temporarily and certainly not as the only response to puberty within early modern drama.

The performance of female puberty within all-male productions itself realize nuances within the relationship between real and theatrical bodies on the early modern stage. Cultural constructions of femininity in relation to newly glowing cheeks offered one means of representing puberty that worked in a similar manner to allusions to beard growth, but where the heated, hair-free cheek could be used to distinguish female from male maturation on stage. Helen King’s discussion of female puberty has considered the blush as a culturally-recognized sign of sexual maturation. King notes how writers expressed an eroticized fascination with the ripening body, being “barely able to resist charms of a pubescent girl, reddened cheeks and plump body signalling fertility” (*Disease* 90). As King has argued, the signs of the just “ripe” female body often rendered the female vulnerable to male attention. In *Measure for Measure*, Isabella’s virginity is identified by her “cheek-roses” (1.4.367); through her reddened face, the pubescent virgin is eroticized because her body advertises the development of womanly sexuality that male observers might seek to exploit. As Potter observes, Isabella’s “rosy cheeks give her sexual “ripeness”

away" (434). By associating Isabella with the bodily changes of puberty that signal the beginnings of her womanly distinction from girlishness, *Measure for Measure* stages the heated process of her maturation. This means that in act two, scene two, where Isabella confronts Angelo to plead for her brother's life, and Lucio twice chastises Isabella with the words: "You are too cold" (2.2.45, 58), Isabella is being encouraged to let her womanly "heat" show in order to manipulate Angelo. Pascale Aebischer's suggestion that "Lucio is urging Isabella to be hotter, he is urging her to behave more like a man" (11) thus seems to fall prey to the common misconception that heat is always associated with masculinity in early modern culture. The interaction more logically highlights the issue of Isabella's sexual maturation for the audience, rather than an ambiguous gendering of the character as masculine.

The sexual demands Angelo proposes to Isabella certainly orientate about his recognition of her sexual maturity as a woman, which he assumes comes with sexual appetites: "Be that you are; That is, a woman [. . .] as you are well expressed / By external warrants" (2.3.134–37). The audience is invited to recognize signs of womanhood expressed in the physical performance of Isabella's character, including more blushing, which might have been produced using cosmetics in a play that so regularly highlights Isabella's reddened face. Finding resistance to his proposition, Angelo tells Isabella to "Lay by all nicety and proxilous blushes/ That banish what they sue for" (3.4.161–62). Modest blushes do not help, they are superfluous to a virtuous cause and, because they spur on Angelo's desire rather than his mercy, they "banish what they sue for," acting as an "external warrant" of her sexual maturation.

We might recall here the disguised courtiers who observe Perdita's blush in *The Winter's Tale*. In what manner does recognition of the "external warrants" of Perdita's "ripeness" invite the attentions of men? At the shepherds' feast, all delight in the beauty of "the prettiest low-born lass" (4.4.155). If we bear in mind Higginbotham's analysis of the relationship between social status, gender and age within constructions of girlhood, the representation of a blushing Perdita poses questions about the way characters view her as both physically ripe *and* a lowly shepherd's daughter. Perdita, who the audience know is not really a shepherd's daughter, is never called "wench"—the term Higginbotham highlights as especially merging ideas about pubescent licentious desires and the sexual voraciousness associated with lowly birth (20–61)—but the shepherd's celebrations certainly include many who are identified as "wenches" (4.4.310). While observers repeatedly comment upon the young woman's exceptional

qualities, being "Too noble for this place" (4.4.158), the scene presents a provocative framing of Perdita's maturation when she both is and is not viewed in the context of being a low-born pubescent woman.

On the one hand, being perceived as a country wench might mean Perdita has scope to pursue pubescent desires that are fuelled by her heated blood. Like Juliet, Perdita seems to demonstrate that high-born pubescent girls can pursue a path that is forged through desire. Unlike Juliet, Perdita's understanding that she is of low birth may allow her freedoms to express her desires without "wronging the ancients" (*The Winter's Tale* 3.3.61) to the same degree that proves disastrous for Juliet. But, on the other hand, it is important to remember how Perdita's reddened face is available for all to see and interpret. The bodily changes of puberty were not necessarily a source of self-assertion; they could be a source of vulnerability, perhaps especially when social rank can be mistaken. That his surrogate daughter's blushing cheeks might appear inappropriate for the feast's public display is suggested in the shepherd's instructions: "Come, quench your blushes and present yourself" (4.4.67). The staging of puberty as a bodily as well as a social process realizes tensions within class-bound constructions of sexual desire if the nun, the princess or the country wench is seen to blush in this pubescent manner.¹⁴

Allusions to blushing faces in early modern drama often suggest that a blush of some sort would have been produced on stage. Being something that "can bee neither put on or restrained," the blush was usually identified as an involuntary action (Sandys 361). The blush was notoriously impossible to fake, but, we are reminded by observations about Richard Burbage, who could allegedly "look Pallid for fear" and then "Recall his Bloud" (Bancroft 44) on cue, that real faces were used in performances, and it would have been desirable to make use of reddened faces in particular scenes.¹⁵ As Aebischer has noted, silences within the final scene of *Measure for Measure* include "implicit stage directions" (5) but no words for the boy playing Isabella. Urged to "Give me your hand and say you will be mine" (5.1.485), the scene requests spoken lines from the actor that do not exist. Taking into account the cue-script culture and limited rehearsal times of early modern theater, Aebischer convincingly argues that a first performance would likely include the "actor's visible discomfort" (5). Such discomfort might well have encouraged a real blush or the actor's awkwardness might accentuate the implications of make-up used on the character. If so, such uncomfortable blushing has been seen before in the play, recalling scenes with Angelo in this final moment's physical construction of Isabella as the source of erotic desire and pity.

Act four, scene one of *Much Ado About Nothing* centers upon Hero's blushing face, as she is accused of sexual indiscretion. When Claudio identifies the blush in the scene, "Behold how like a maid she blushes" (32), the observation might begin as a comment about feminine virtue that does not necessarily demand any physical performance from the actor playing Hero. But Claudio's accusation of Hero becomes orientated about the blush he claims is upon her face: "Comes not this blood as modest evidence" (35). Although the audience know Claudio is wrong to revise his reading of maidenly modesty for one of sexual shame, where "She knows the heat of a luxurious bed / Her blush is guiltiness" (39–40), the audience is again directed to look for a blush. And there does appear to be one, even if characters debate its implications. The Friar has also "marked / a thousand blushing apparitions/ To start into her face" (4.1.156–8), defending Hero but similarly returning to the evidence of her reddened face. While cosmetics may have been used in this scene, the Friar's words suggest an altering redness. Perhaps for the actor playing Hero—who would have duly prepared his short responses to cue lines that suggest an aspect of accusation in this scene—the lengthy nature of speeches that repeatedly insist that his character blush could well have encouraged a timely reddening of the face.

The presence of real blushes onstage can, of course, only be hypothesized to suggest how far theater companies were able to manage real actors' bodies in order to produce the signs appropriate to the pubescent age and gender of characters. The centrality of blushing within verbal characterizations, however, itself highlights that audiences were directed to read actors' bodies in accordance with a performance of female puberty. Guilty or not, a female character's "blushing ripeness" underpinned a construction of age and gender.

Whether they were staging female or male puberty, it appears that companies were well-equipped to make use of pubescent bodies in performance. Beardlessness is a key example of how the same physical characteristic could be used to manufacture the womanly cheek that blushes, the youthful male's promising chin or the more familiar incarnation of emasculating lack. Early modern drama seems to have deftly drawn upon cultural understandings of puberty in order to selectively highlight, disguise, and re-signify the actor's real "body beneath" the theatrical role. The continued misinterpretation of humoral philosophy in relation to age and gender within early modern scholarship has, however, obscured a full appreciation of how adolescence influenced early modern performance. The skill of actors has been observed in studies that have begun to consider

how puberty might problematize representations of femininity at the end of an actor's career playing women's parts (Brown; McManus). To such investigations, however, should be added a proper comprehension of how femininity upon the early modern stage made use of adolescent male actors' bodies that were never readily "blank" in the first place.

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Notes

¹Rosalind's claim "We'll have a swashing and a martial outside" (1.3.120) in *As You Like It* and Portia's description of "fine bragging youth" (3.4.69) in *Merchant of Venice* display this construction of masculine youth.

²Deanne Williams has disproven Higginbotham's statement in her survey of sixty-eight references to expansive "girl" identities (including Perdita) in Shakespeare. Williams, like Higginbotham, however, focuses upon linguistic cues and socially-relational performances of girlhood.

³Michael Stolberg and Katherine Park have, for example, shown the existence of an anatomical "two-sex" model.

⁴Paster's work has been developed in various studies. See, for example, Gianna Pomata, Michael Schoenfeldt, and Lisa Wynne-Smith.

⁵Records suggest the typical age-range for beginning an apprenticeship was between twelve and fourteen. An actor might then perform female parts for around seven years (see Kathman).

⁶Allusions to "the body beneath" the boy actor's garb have regularly featured in scholarship. The phrase is taken from Stallybrass's work on the subject.

⁷A Latin edition of this text, *Historia Vitae & Mortis*, was printed in 1623.

⁸Humoral logic corresponds with the aristocratic practice of delaying consummation of marriages when the bride and groom were considered young (Laslett 96–99).

⁹The practice of breeching young boys, which seems to mark a sudden transition between ages, also requires careful consideration. Costume historians such as Anne Buck and Phyllis Cunningham have shown that boys could continue to wear coats even after breeching ceremonies (38, 52, 54, 71).

¹⁰The dramatized blush could frame a character in terms of age. Adriana, in *Comedy of Errors*, suggests she is no longer treated by her husband as being in the full bloom of youth: "homely age the alluring beauty took/ From my poor cheek" (2.1.87–88).

¹¹This anti-Catholic text compares womanly ripeness and wan cheeks in its characterization of Protestantism and Catholic Rome.

¹²Mark Johnston is, to my knowledge, one of the few scholars to identify the pun upon Viola's pubic hair in this exchange. For Johnston, Viola's words

recognize her beard's "subordination to the primacy of the male beard" (167). My own reading suggests the character's privileging of a pubic beard for its associations with age.

¹³Rosalind, who is "more than common tall" (1.3.113) in *As You Like It*, seems to extend the tall boy actor's time as female impersonator by incorporating his physicality in a similar cross-dressing strategy to that of Portia.

¹⁴Andrea Stevens's analysis of court masques suggests how far a reddened face might undermine ideas about a woman's orderly sexuality. According to Stevens, masquers might use blackface make up to conceal telling blushes. Being "blackened up, impregnable to the gaze, and chaste" (108) women, who would have no doubt have reddened with the exertions of dancing in a masque, could rest assured that the connotations of their heated blushes were avoided.

¹⁵We might look to modern performances for examples of how red faces are produced on stage. For example, The Globe's 2010 production of *Merry Wives of Windsor* (dir. Christopher Luscombe) included Andrew Havill's performance as Master Ford, where his breathless delivery of long speeches was accompanied by a very red face.

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