



**Contagious Performances of Heartbreak and Betrayal: a
Comparative Study of Early Modern Comedy and *Love Island***

Course name: English Literature MA

Exam number: B143203

Supervisor: Patricia Malone

Total Word Count: 10 000/10 000

Contents

Contagious Performances of Heartbreak and Betrayal: a Comparative Study of Early Modern Comedy and <i>Love Island</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Abstract.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
List of Images/ Illustrations.....	5
List of Abbreviations.....	6
Introduction	7
Chapter 1. The performance of heartbreak.....	11
Chapter 2. Performances of betrayal	26
Chapter 3. The social contexts of heartbreak and betrayal.....	33
Conclusion.....	45
Works Cited.....	47
Appendices	52

Abstract

This dissertation explores how 16th century comedy and dating reality television shows present the interpersonal and affective dynamics of heartbreak and betrayal. The investigation finds that audiences played an interactive and active role in responding to the language and performances of early modern comedies as well as reality television shows.

Additionally, I will be drawing on approaches from affect theory and a feminist lens to unpack gender coded performances in both early modern comedy and *Love Island*. I will be employing Judith Butler's theories on performativity and how gender is constructed in performances of heartbreak and betrayal.

Furthermore, I will use this feminist deconstruction of the gender binary to analyze the similarities and differences between portrayals of courtship in early modern theatre and reality television. Additionally, I will use the performance theory concept of contagious affect to evaluate how the presentations of heartbreak and betrayal onscreen and onstage, impacts audiences.

This dissertation concludes that audience appeal makes themes of interpersonal conflict timeless across literature and media. What's more, modern audiences are more likely to moralise characters through the lens of contemporary psychological discourse. This clear departure from the gatekeeping of early modern criticism makes for a fascinating investigation.

Acknowledgements

I'm incredibly grateful for the support of my family, my supervisor, my coursemate Amy and everyone else who looked through my work! It has been a lot of long nights typing away on my keyboard, attempting to make a little drop in the ocean of academic research in English Literature.

List of Figures

Fig. 1.....	16
Fig. 2.....	20
Fig. 3a.....	27
Fig. 3b.....	28
Fig. 4.....	34
Fig. 5.....	36
Fig. 6.....	40

List of Abbreviations

Primary Texts

LLL Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost*

TR Behn, *The Rover*

LI *Love Island UK*

Introduction

Dramatic performances of heartbreak and betrayal have endured from the early modern stage to our television screens today. This dissertation will explore performances of heartbreak and betrayal through literary analysis, and the extent to which emotional experiences communicated in media can provoke affected, emotional responses in audiences who react to both embodied, physical performances and the language used by performers (Buccola 529). Further, I will unpack how the presentation of sex and courtship in both early modern comedy and present-day reality television employ dramatic devices and contagious affect to deliver narratives that resonate and provoke audience responses. Notably, the hegemony of Formalism's focus on standalone textual analysis potentially undermines the layers that define performances and the role of spectatorship in theatre (Hickman and McIntyre 3). Performance's open-endedness suggests that literary play texts are impacted by phenomena beyond written language. For this reason, my approach will be dually attentive, combining strategic close reading while investigating the cultural significance of performances (Eagleton 8).

The media examined includes William Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, Aphra Behn's *The Rover*, and Season 7 of *Love Island UK* which will be abbreviated hereafter, excluding sub-headings. *LLL* opens with a king initiating an entertainingly futile quest with his courtiers to pursue scholarship and abstain from sexual and romantic passion for a year, a project ending with delayed marriages. Behn's *TR* is another courtship quest involving deception, debauchery and women employing disguise to perform their way towards romantic and sexual autonomy, even if they

fail. Additionally, *LI* is also preoccupied with the theme of love; the show offers hopeful singletons the prospect of partnership and prize money.

The investigation will unfold chapter by chapter, critically examining heartbreak and betrayal within each medium. Chapter 1 focuses on the ways that heartbreak is expressed through language and performance. Next, Chapter 2 similarly discusses the presentation betrayal. Lastly, Chapter 3 investigates audience judgement and the respective social contexts behind heartbreak and betrayal.

Furthermore, I draw on a Performance Studies approach to dramatic literature and media. Specifically, employing Judith Butler's argument that actions and aesthetics define the gender binary rather than fixed biological traits (25). To add, gendered social expectations arguably shape affect, the illustrations of emotions onstage and on our screens (Baldick). This essay will explore how gender intersects with the demonstrations of affect onstage and on-screen.

Matters of heartbreak and betrayal reveal profound impacts of perceived interpersonal conflicts on audiences. For instance, in *LI*'s seventh season, viewers filed over 20 000 Ofcom complaints about contestant Faye Winter's insult-filled outburst at her on-screen boyfriend, Teddy Soares (Welsh). Thus, artists and broadcasters are forced to grapple with present-day cultural landscape involving multi-cultural, international audiences with the ability to react and comment on media live within seconds of witnessing performances (Grizzard et al. 360). Notably, the phenomenon of audiences documenting their reactions to literature and media through acts like live-tweeting demonstrates the fast-paced nature of audience responses to art and popular culture today ("tweet", v.2.a). Maintaining an awareness of the profound legacy of New Criticism's focus on textual analysis, I will consider critical thought that views drama as living literature - literature in action (McIntyre and Hickman 3).

Present-day British reality television will link to the idea of living English literature by being a media form that captures human behaviour within carefully produced realities (Carpentier 192).

Extending Butler's idea of multifaceted articulation of gender beyond words means that design, staging, the approach of performers, production teams, all impact the ways literature and media are presented to audiences. Performance, therefore, is a medium that can revitalise a text, shaping the words towards distinct effects and meanings. In a way, this dissertation will negotiate the accessibility of public critique of art that technology enables the departure from a few didactic critics monopolising as cultural authority and influencing public perceptions of art (Bevington xvii).

However, though Judith Butler's ideas of performativity help unpack gender binaries, performance is not accessible to everyone in the same ways. For instance, people with marginalised identities like transgender, non-white and disabled people cannot mask the more visible elements of their identities, which impacts their affective performances. These plays show that even when marginalised folk like women employ masks and disguises, the necessity of such transgressions to access power exposes their subjugation. In some ways, social marginalisation can limit the liberating quality of transgressing identity categories due to deeply entrenched stereotypes and expectations tied to identity markers, especially those disabled, non-white and non-male.

Additionally, I would like to acknowledge my lived context, the substantial parts of me that cannot be perform away, contrary to Judith Butler's concept of flexible gender performativity (Quinxiao 1). Thus, the material facts attached to my race and ethnicity influence my critical perceptions of literature and media. To add, the 'Angry Black Woman' stereotype means that in everyday life, my gender performance is

partly influenced by how White supremacist perceptions of Black women aim to minimise any notions of dissent or dissatisfaction from people both non-white and female (Williamson 23). The limits of gender performance is no different in *LI*, where Black female contestants are labelled sassy when they express negative experiences or frustration with romantic rejection (Adegoke). Overall, by addressing the position from which I write, as a cultural consumer, I acknowledge the symbiotic ways contemporary reality informs performance as it did then, does presently, and will in the future (Case 6-7). Thus, I prioritise ethical argumentation and analysis rather than pursuing an idealistic idea of complete neutrality in my research.

Generally, I hope that this dissertation might lead to a greater understanding of the language of heartbreak and betrayal in English Literature, and what audience interactions in drama and television can reveal about gender norms in history and in the present, reactive age of social media. With an approach grounded in literary close reading, Performance Studies and Media Psychology, I hope to uncover how the effects of language and performance bring inanimate texts and contemporary audiences to life.

Chapter 1. The performance of heartbreak

This chapter will turn towards the performativity of heartbreak, examining language and social phenomena to make my case about gender norms and affect having profound impacts on the art of performance. On the Renaissance stage, Restoration stage and on-screen today, the conventions of the emotional disappointments in relationships are animated through language and performance. They are depicted explicitly in terms of how gender performativity and affect intersects with gender (Butler 25). Thus, I will explore how men and women react to the social scripts of heartbreak within these different performances.

Heartbreak in *Love's Labour's Lost*

In *LLL*, many female characters discuss how they work to induce labour from men to secure devotion and avoid heartbreak. Specifically, they toil with language, delivering their wit to break hearts and avoid experiencing heartbreak of their own. Written in unrhymed iambic pentameter, in blank verse, the play's treatment of heartbreak is engaging, with a structure that enables a playful yet strategic approach to communication. For instance, the Princess says, 'We are wise girls to mock our lovers so' (Shakespeare 5.2.58). Additionally, Rosaline muses, 'They are worse fools to purchase mocking so...I would make him fawn, and beg, and seek' (Shakespeare 5.2.59-72). The repetition of the idea of mocking in their dialogue reflects how intelligent rebuttals to the men's romantic efforts can ironically increase their romantic pursuits. Shakespeare's use of juxtaposition of the women viewing themselves as witty 'wise girls' contrasts with the men's characterisation as 'worse fools' (Shakespeare 5.2.59-72). These disyllabic phrases foreshadow the play's

ending, where the women's witty strategies thwart the romantic expectations of the men. Also, Shakespeare's use of the semantic field of manipulation in the women's dialogue creates dramatic irony. That is, the witty dialogue may have produced satisfaction or even laughs in the audience witnessing the men being skillfully manipulated. The superiority theory in comedy could explain this notion of contagious affect, arguing that humour can be derived from feeling wiser than a particular subject, reacting to performances of disappointment with pleasure (Critchley 2). In this way, the audience arguably derives humour in the men's obliviousness to how the women's strategic use of language and ability to outwit them in the 'civil war of wits' (Shakespeare 2.1.225). This play is interesting because it subverts expectations, especially among present-day audiences who may assume that men in the past solely determined sexual scripts. Here, women manipulate language and their appearances to realise favourable outcomes in their romantic lives. For instance, the women learn that the lords plan to come to them disguised as Russian suitors and plan to leave them 'deceived' by wearing retaliatory disguises (Shakespeare 5.2.126-157). Furthermore, the women disguise themselves by dressing as each other. Rosaline declares, 'Let's mock them still, as well known as disguised' (Shakespeare 5.2.301). In this sense, the women's performance of gender is shaped by an aim to exploit men's attraction to physicality. By manipulating their appearances, they can influence the men and deceive them before they are deceived. Additionally, the issue of perception for the men of the play was foreshadowed in the play's second act when Boyet engages in witty repartee with Longaville, who inquires about the women who have invaded their court. When Longaville asks, 'What is she in the white?', Boyet wittily replies, 'A woman sometimes, an you saw her in the light' (2.1.195-6). Boyet's clever, end-rhymed reply to Longaville's questioning reflects the

nebulous nature of gender identity as he resists revealing the specifics of her identity ,and condescendingly alludes to her gender identity instead, arguably a subtle nod to the conventions of boys temporarily appearing as women on Shakespeare's contemporary transvestite stage (Hermann 295).

Other than the formal context of the poetic language expressed in blank verse, music is also a means by which the issue of sexual, marital betrayal is foregrounded. Furthermore, the performance of songs becomes another means by which gender norms are articulated. The cuckoo song in the play's closing scene is festive but coloured by sexual insecurity. The lyrics of the song read:

‘And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
 Do paint the meadows with delight,
 The cuckoo then, on every tree,
 Mocks married men; for thus sings he:
 ‘Cuckoo!
 Cuckoo, cuckoo!’ O, word of fear,
 Unpleasing to a married ear.’ (Shakespeare 5.2.883-890).

While festive in its celebration of spring, birth, and nature, the song simultaneously addresses the idea of cuckoldry as a form of heartbreak. In the context of a festive Shakespearean comedy, Barber aptly suggests that the cuckoo song represents not only vitality but also ‘fear’, stemming from a cultural script of possessive male sexuality (135). Additionally, the pastoral imagery in the cuckoo song is a repeated motif in the festive tradition of romantic comedies (Rackin 29). Therefore, the song softens the rough edges of the theme of heartbreak with a playful tone. In a strange sense, the affect of cuckoldry manifests as an entertaining form of self-imposed anxiety whereby suspicion becomes a vital part of male identity, as though a woman's

infidelity can undo a man and lower his social status. In this sense, *LLL*'s treatment of infidelity suggests that performances of heartbreak can be mapped to broader social phenomena, including gender. Butler argues that gender is performative and applies her critique, and the performance of the festive cuckoo song demonstrates how the 'constructed identity' of men is partly linked to a concern for access to female sexuality as a measure of one's worth (Butler 192). That is, men's fear of cuckoldry not only exposes a fear of losing an assumed influence over his wife's sexuality as Barber suggests, but that another man has access to her, therefore injuring his public reputation (Barber 135). Cuckoldry is a form of heartbreak in its disruption of masculinity which demands anxious performances. Overall, the performance of heartbreak through the cuckoo song and disguise is an affirmation of heterosexual male anxieties and contemporary moral panic.

Heartbreak in *The Rover*

In *TR*, heartbreak spins out of control in an 'amorous quarrel', a performance of heartbreak that involves violence (Behn 5.1.318-19). This performance of heartbreak is an introspective investigation into how false assumptions underlying love can lead to heartbreak in female subjects. The heartbreak of the scorned Angellica Bianca is staged with her pointing a gun at Willmore, delivering a passionate speech about her disillusionment with him after his romantic deceit and manipulation had come to light. Angellica Bianca laments:

'Ah, thus! Twas thus! He talked, and I believed...

But now, to show my utmost of contempt,

I give thee life – which if thou would'st preserve,

Live where my eyes may never see thee more,

Live to undo someone, whose soul may prove

So bravely constant to revenge my love.' (Behn 5.1.339-347).

Turning to him, armed with a weapon while delivering this speech, her words are performative as they articulate the vengeful passion that drives her attempt at violence. This speech by Angellica is significant as it is her last speaking appearance in the play (Behn 5.1). In a sense, Angellica's last speaking appearance, the embodied performance, and the prop represent a transgressive way of performing femininity by physically challenging a man. The words 'Twas thus! He talked and I believed' indicates the regret that often defines the disappointment of heartbreak (Behn 5.1.339). By trusting his language, she became a figure embarrassed and feigned. In the characters' words, 'I'd not have sold my interest in his heart/For all the sword has won and lost in battle.' (Behn 5.1.341-2). Her social wit as a courtesan makes this heartbreak ironic, as she often interacts with men to obtain money, but by interacting with Willmore, she loses her financial privilege. Behn's use of the semantic field of war suggests that in the game of love, unwise vulnerability can lead to one becoming a loser and being subject to heartbreak.

Additionally, the language used by Behn's scorned courtesan suggests in a way that is still relevant today that the character's personal experience is linked to a societal normalisation of poor behaviour from men. Angellica comments that she cannot leave Willmore alive and is justified in attempting to kill him, not only for her 'private injuries' but also for women's 'public safety (Behn 5.1.304-5). The use of the word 'injuries' to describe Angellica's heartbreak reflects the affective dimension of her language as expressing deep sadness, anger, and regret. The female spurned lover often derives power and rage from being able to relate their experiences to a larger patriarchal, misogynistic culture. Further, a culture where men are often assumed to

be the active agents in love and sex, with access to many women while only reserving commitment and kind treatment to a few (Butler 55). As a courtesan, Angellica Bianca is a character written with a profound interiority. That is, her ability to experience heartbreak is highlighted by Behn, despite the social stigma of prostitutes that could limit a sense of subjectivity. Additionally, in the character Willmore's words, rakish men like him 'like cheerful birds, sing in all groves,/ And perch on every bough' (5.1.292-3). This metaphor relating Willmore's romantic flightiness to birds expresses his 'fickle' lack of conscientiousness in life and love (Bolam xxv). As my discussion of *LI* later will also suggest, romantic conventions in today's world still preserve some of the sexual inequalities discussed in early modern comedies. Ultimately, the disappointment of unfulfilled promises and misleading language is a source of heartbreak in *TR*.

However, there are also unconventional aspects to the heartbreak in *TR*. For example, Angellica Bianca is mocked for employing her agency and ability to enact her heartbroken revenge. Men mock her for a lack of wit. For instance, the character Antonio snatches the gun from her saying, 'Amongst the number of your slaves, was there not one worthy the honour to have fought your quarrel?' (Behn 5.1.314-315). In Robyn Bolam's words, 'Angellica Bianca moves beyond the traditional stereotype of a prostitute to become a complex version of the dangerous scorned mistress' (vii). Bolam's idea that Angellica moves beyond the stereotypical range of actions expected of her character is convincing, considering the ways male characters attempt to diffuse her efforts and underestimate the strength of her rage. Men get in her way and undermine her attempts in a way that suggests that they do not expect or tolerate women pursuing power and revenge when heartbroken.

Additionally, Angellica approaches Willmore masked under a vizard, she announces the violence she plans to commit. 'One thou hast injured, and who comes to kill thee for't.' (Behn 5.1.203). There is a carnivalesque quality to Angellica's entrance into the scene, as she enters in a disguise, unmasking herself before getting caught up in her threatening actions. The unconventionality of her violence is enabled through the text's setting in carnival time in Naples (Britannica). Furthermore, the debauchery and complicating of social hierarchies due to the Bahktinian upheaval of the carnivalesque setting foregrounds her actions (Lachmann et al. 127). In a dramatic spectacle, the stage directions order that Angellica is not only pointing the weapon at Willmore but pressing it directly to his chest. The confrontational display that accompanies this dialogue only heightens her language's performativity. Although Angellica Bianca acts as a sort of romantic heroine with agency alongside her emotion, she is still a less prominent character than Hellena or Florinda; her violence has a restorative justice undertone, as she demands an apology from Willmore, a 'penitence' (Behn 5.1.230). However, this apology is never really given, and he offers her a purse of gold to repay her 'charity' (Behn 5.1.278). In some ways, the heartbreak depicted here is like a failed interpersonal transaction, as his unfulfilled vows have left Angellica with an unfavourable, one-sided deal. Willmore avoids paying Angellica Bianca's high fee by promising her love. When she demands payment, Willmore says, 'Oh, why dost thou draw me from an awful worship/...I'll be devout/ And pay my vows forever at this shrine' (Behn 2.2.144-148). The stage directions accompanying this effusive language direct the performer to kneel and kiss Angellica's hand, and embodied performance misleadingly suggesting that his love for her will be his payment. He then proposes that their private company will be a space for him to 'renew his vows', a euphemism for sexual consummation (Behn 2.2.151).

Restoration comedy was often filled with the hint of sex, and references to sex. However, love and sex are conflated both described in transactional terms, characterising Angellica a captivating, heartbroken courtesan in being scorned and eventually takes revenge. Ultimately, Willmore convincing Angellica of his love was a witty form of trickery that left her vulnerable to heartbreak.

As Willmore and Angellica exit the scene, Moretta expresses her disapproval at Angellica Bianca's infatuation, 'Trophies, which from believing fops we win,/Are spoils to those who cozen us again' (Behn 2.2.161-2). Moretta's powerful words suggest that though prostitutes exploit the carnivalesque tool of manipulation, their fate is to be exploited through loving lousy, rakish enemies to their trade like Willmore (Behn 2.2.155). This fascinating quote uses half-rhyme and the semantic field of competition to suggest that in the game of heartbreak, even those seen as opportunistic may lose if love consumes them and takes over their wit. Notably, heartbreaking lapses in wit produce a strong emotional response in characters, which inevitably translates into the contagious affect between the play's actors and audiences.

Heartbreak in *Love Island*

Fig.1 Faye confronts Islanders in “Episode 51”

LI is a fascinating case study of how language relates to the performance of heartbreak. Language makes up a large part of the islanders' tools to place themselves in the social and romantic hierarchies on set. This emphasis on competitive communication connects to the social subversion and debauchery created by the Carnavalesque atmosphere of *TR* or the festivity of *LLL*. What is *LI* but a series of flirty chats by the daybeds? Or a compilation of sizzling confrontations by a firepit in a Mallorcan villa (see fig. 1). Language is so vital to the *LI* universe that it has its dedicated lexicon with phrases like ‘mugged off’ signifying the distress of heartbreak. Additionally, the charismatic, clown-like voiceover host Ian Sterling provides comic relief to the interpersonal chaos, acting as a ‘David Attenborough-type observer of the villa’s ecosystem than a wrathful God’ (Goldfine). In the second episode, when a new female contestant Chloe arrives, the women act out conventional ideas of female jealousy or possessiveness over men. The entrance of the new girl into the villa, a



‘bombshell’ invokes affective displayed cultural expectations of women’s insecurities that stem from a feeling of being replaceable or less desirable than a new, shiny, desirable female subject. Chloe’s voice note opens with a sultry vocal performance, saying ‘hey boys’ and inviting all the five men on a date with her, unabashedly playing the role of the temptress or seductive, attractive woman, a common motif in comedy (“Episode 2”). The show delivered on the conventions of jealousy as the women reacted with varying degrees of discomfort. As the women in the villa were a reluctant audience for the men’s excitement at Chloe’s invitation, this performance then triggered a jealous reaction from the girls that identified this new female subject as the problem, rather than chastising the men themselves for their actions. In this way, women’s fear of sexual heartbreak arguably stems from the idea that a man’s genuine love can transcend physical temptations, and if it cannot, then the relationship and love for them are void.

Also, while the episode involved declarations of love, Millie acknowledged Liam’s betrayal earlier on in the season, but this was minimised in the context of them ultimately ending up together at the show’s final. The performance of heartbreak in *LI* is bolstered by a general atmosphere that demands a gamified, hyper-competitive atmosphere of courtship and sexual prowess. For instance, the men created codes for ranking sexual milestones, usually using football as a metaphor with terms like ‘Hattrick’ to denote sexual acts (“Episode 22”). This competitive courtship revealed in the men’s language links to Butler’s ideas of the homosocial bonds that join men together and how those are often based around ‘heterosexual exchange and distribution of women’ (Butler 55). Additionally, the *LI* villa has a neon blue sign decorating the front of the bar that reads ‘Eat, Sleep, Crack On, Repeat’. In this sense, heartbreak becomes a public sign of defeat in the romantic game denoted by the set

design. This set design choice reveals the show's emphasis on dating and romance as a foundation for the daily behaviour of the characters. Additionally, it reinforces an idea where their approaches to relationships shown by producers come to signify their character to the audience, often with real-life consequences, impacting their image in media outlets ready to profit from the show's popularity. Additionally, Casa Amor is a show segment that ensures a heightened collective experience for the potential of hearts to be broken. Similar to the emphasis on the dynamics of same-sex spaces in *LLL*, the Casa Amor segment of *LI* provides an opportunity for contestants of the same sex to set standards about what behaviour is appropriate for their sex and the opposite sex. Applying Goffman's dramaturgical ideas about human behaviour to *LI*, the Islanders arguably do not have a 'backstage' in which they can be their true selves without scrutiny (Goffman 105). Goffman viewed theatre as a metaphor for the realities of everyday life, which makes his approach relevant to the peculiar theatricality of reality television. The nature of reality shows is such that the concept of front stage and backstage become blurred due to the surveillance of the camera lens. Furthermore, while the camera records most actions, the footage will eventually be refined towards simplistic character arcs, and potentially skewed storylines (Hautakangas 195). All islanders are shown getting ready in the morning and winding down at night and are even recorded with the lights out, often revealing moments of intimacy on camera. Therefore, moments of heartbreak on the show have no backstage, and disappointment occurs live as emotions unfold. For instance, black female contestant Kaz says, 'I must be a mug' after being upset after Toby initiated a conversation, saying he had no regrets about dumping her and causing her heartbreak ("Episode 23"). Faye and most of the girls rallied around Kaz, offering support after Toby justified dumping her as a stop on his life journey, an action he didn't regret.

Audiences behind their screens connected Kaz's heartbreak to larger trends about dark-skinned black womanhood and romantic rejection (Patronne). Toby is language and lack of wit prove insufficient as he approached her later saying, 'Kaz, I know you're busy as she files her nails, barely looking up at him. There is a comic quality to the optics of a man sheepishly approaching a woman, stumbling over his words, and ultimately being ignored as she hardly makes eye contact. His embarrassing performance here is ironic, although he easily occupies the comic role of a 'rakish', womanising character, who professes feelings one day and relinquishes them for another woman the next ("rake, v.4."). Unlike Behn's rakish Willmore, he wants the joy of acting self-interested without the impact of a damaged reputation, a moral contradiction that is entertaining. Delivering a reformed apology, Toby says, 'I'd never want to hurt you...I know I disrespected you and what you want...I'm shit at articulating my words' ("Episode 23"). Here Toby admits and takes responsibility through first-person pronouns to acknowledge that his poor communication exacerbated the existing betrayal. Since words decide the bonds made and broken on *LI*, actions, and conversations, a lack of wit or linguistic skill can be detrimental to contestants. Of course, how contestants come across is partly controlled by production choices, but conversational faux-pas can have profound effects. Toby says, 'That don't feel right, the fact that you're hurting because of me'. The failed apology creates a comic effect where he appears to be a very superficial man in his performative articulation of gender. Also, on *LI*, dumping decisions that decide who leaves and who remains on the show are usually made based on public votes or sometimes internal votes between islanders. Additionally, 'vulnerable islanders' can get 'dumped,' which presents feelings of betrayal as people reveal their loyalties regarding who they choose to couple up with (*Love Island UK*).



Fig. 2 the girls dissect the postcard in Episode 31

Additionally, the episodes end on cliffhangers to make you see who gets dumped, which is an incredible incentive to bring viewers back night after night ("cliffhanger, n."). The courtship atmosphere creates collective hypervigilance where contestants are both anxious about their relationship status and the status of others. Sometimes fellow contestants will help others to try and repair a negative social image. For instance, Aaron prepped Toby for his second apology to Kaz and gave him a pep talk (*Love Island UK*). In episode 24, Iain Stirling refers to the dumping as the islanders' 'worst nightmare' as staying on holds economic benefits and the validation of popularity. Couples react to other couples' relationships and can either soothe fellow contestants through heartbreak or exacerbate those negative emotions, consciously or otherwise.



Fig. 3 Hugo states his preference in women in Episode 9

Language can be make or break, either cementing or preventing heartbreak or exacerbating it. In this sense, the notion of heartbreak can be expanded to include other moments of social rejection. For instance, when the footballer contestant Toby loses a challenge in Episode 28, he works out furiously in a way that is so stereotypically 'macho' that he becomes an unnerving parody of himself. He performs his gender by not necessarily being able to channel anger into words but de-escalating by exerting his body physically (Butler). There was also a sense of rejection based on body modification identified by Sharon and Faye in episode 9 of *LI*. During a challenge, Faye condemned Hugo stating that girls who look 'fake' are unappealing to him (see Fig.3). Faye lamented, "My mum and dad, for example, didn't watch me cry every single day from the age of 13 to 18 because I was underdeveloped to then at eighteen buy their daughter a boob job for her eighteenth birthday. Faye's language appeals to the realm of personal experience and trauma to illustrate the source of her betrayal. Also, despite complaining extensively to the boys about the girls' reactions,

Hugo eventually apologises, saying, ‘First and foremost I’m very fucking sorry’ (“Episode 9”). His apology is eventually accepted and reveals how the threat of ostracism can drive apologies, even if the person does not believe that they have caused harm. The performative act of apologising for Hugo is arguably a way to restore an image of being a good guy, making the act not entirely subversive but potentially self-serving. Thus, performances of heartbreak in *LI* reflect the entertainment value of apologies, female jealousy and self-esteem issues.

Chapter 2. Performances of betrayal

This chapter will turn towards the ways that the performance of offense at wrongdoing occurs along gender lines. The performance of betrayal is often characterised by the unveiling of new, disruptive information, which can create an atmosphere of an unpleasant surprise. Infelicitous speech or dysfunctional speech does not necessarily have to be a part of betrayal. This analysis will highlight several occasions where actions that create affective states of feeling betrayed, or revenge actions that display affect that appears to be driven less by specific interpersonal issues, and more by insecurity about social status and power. Granted, a feeling of betrayal can be created due to a sense of an unfulfilled agreement or a broken bond. However, it often occurs in individualistic ways, where people react in response to more implicit or unspoken expectations about the ways that society should work, how they should be treated, who is entitled to offend them, and who deserves punishment and blame.

Betrayal in *Love's Labour's Lost*

Betrayal in *LLL* ranges from sexual jealousy as well as questions of loyalty, status, and social standing. In terms of sexual jealousy, this play clarifies that contemporary attitudes towards cuckoldry were powerful. In many ways, the discourse of cuckoldry was often separate from the behaviour and actions of women in marital relationships, as it was a set of masculine fears of losing status that were powerful irrespective of a wife's fidelity. Woudhuysen contends that the play is a 'dramatic investigation of the contractual nature of language' (18). As Woodhuysen further expresses, the play expresses the 'copiousness' of language and its 'slipperiness' (19). This idea of slippery, malleable language correlates with the idea of betrayal. Woudhousen's

arguments are convincing when analysing the theme of betrayal because if language's meaning can be distorted, so can obligations, values, and commitments. However, the women are also subject to male anxieties that anticipate and aim to curtail female betrayal. For instance, Hellena's vigilant, controlling brother Don Pedro's fixation on his sisters' choices reveals male anxieties of women betraying the norms he holds dear. Namely, he desires Hellena to pursue a chaste life as a nun, and for Florinda to marry his friend Don Antonio a man that he approves of. As Carol Thomas Neely argues, referencing the critic Alfar's work, women in Shakespeare's comedies are pressured to defend their 'chastity' with wit and must navigate male sexual anxiety (1061). However, the play is extremely concerned with the betrayal of expectations. Since the men underestimate the women and end up outwitted, they grapple with the omnipresent fear of cuckoldry as discussed earlier, but also with a lack of control, which threatens traditional views of masculinity in similar ways.

Furthermore, the play has a carnivalesque ending where women's betrayal of the men due to disguises gives them the upper hand and means the men need another year of labour to earn their love (Woudhuysen). However, the ending has a conventional tone in that the betrayal of trust leads to a separation of the men from the women as they embark upon continued labour after their failed abstinence. In Armado's words, 'The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo. You that way, we this way' (Shakespeare 5.2.918-19). Here, betrayal does not result in an effective display of anger or violence, as somehow the men in the universe accept the women's skillful, carnivalesque use of the ambiguity of language. Nevertheless, a comic atmosphere is produced by the men's realisations that they have been deceived. Largely they appear to receive the women's slippery wit as intellectual challenges rather than emotional injuries. As the critic Goldstein argues, *LLL* is a kind of sermon against spiritual and

intellectual pride and as a critique of Renaissance love theory, making it an apt site for performances of romantic disappointment and betrayal (346). He argues further that at the play's exposition 'Berowne and his friends are four rather self-satisfied young men...At the end, they are in an altogether more chastened and teachable mood' (198). This view is convincing to a large extent because the betrayal of their romantic expectations becomes a long-term means for personal growth and fulfilment rather than obstacles to happiness. For instance, Berowne comments 'Our wooing doth not end like an old play:/Jack hath not Jill. These ladies' courtesy, /Might well have made our sport a comedy.' (Shakespeare 5.2.862-864). Here Berowne makes a meta-textual reference to the conventions of comedy and how the betrayal of the women disrupts them. The genre of comedy is burdened with conventions of secure pairings, married or otherwise bonds at the play's ending. Still, this play alludes to future pairings, disrupting convention to a large extent. However, Shakespeare's genre-defying ending in this case is arguably unsurprising, when considering how dramatists sought variety to satisfy audiences. Therefore, the betrayal in this instance provides comic enjoyment for an all-knowing audience, while disrupting generic conventions about how romantic comedies must be structured in drama.

Betrayal in *The Rover*

Additionally, the issue of betrayal is explored in *TR* as characters intentionally mislead others to meet their goals. Here affect plays a key part in expressing the frustrations of the betrayed, who then question the sincerity of those they once trusted. This issue of betrayal is most clearly identifiable in the character of Blunt. Blunt is seduced by Lucetta, and believing she is in love with him, allows her into a private space with him, only to get robbed by her. Waking up astonished, Blunt's confusion

turns into a misogynistic rage where Lucetta's crimes against him get projected onto all women in general. Here we see how betrayal can result in the scorned subject turning to opportunistic violence and performing rage. He attempts to rape Florinda and feels justified in doing so simply because he is disgruntled from being deceived. Blunt climbs out of a sewer with a stained face and a vengeful spirit, projecting his experience of being scammed by Lucetta onto women as a social class: 'What a dog was I to believe in Woman...To fancy she could be enamoured with my person...I am a dull, believing, English country fop' (Behn 3.2.4-13). Blunt is a man scorned, reduced to ridicule by the dishonour of being successfully deceived by a woman (Pacheco 207). He interprets the betrayal as having occurred due to naivety and applies his experience of Lucetta as deceitful to all women, over simplistically suggesting that all women are innately deceitful. Pacheco argues that early modern culture 'measures manliness in large part by power over women, it encourages fear and loathing of women as potential agents of emasculation' (207). Blunt's character demonstrates how male anxieties of having their status challenged by women result in extreme misogynistic violence. Ironically, the comic justice of the play seems to suggest that cunning characters that betray others before they get betrayed can still end up on top. After all, though the character Willmore betrays Angellica Bianca, using her for financial gain, and yet the play ends with him finding a wife in Hellena.

By presenting an immoral form of masculinity Behn suggests that the competitive, self-interested, individualistic behaviour necessitated by honour-based masculinity creates relentless patterns of betrayal. Pacheco also writes that Willmore the libertine hero 'exhibits a sexuality imbued with the psychology of honour' as well as its violent outcomes (207). She argues further that Willmore's sexual exploits are 'at least in part a form of competitive self-assertion through which he affirms his masculine power. In

this struggle for dominance, women play second fiddle to their male competitors and the boundary separating friends from enemies is blurred.’ (207). The source material of the play also centred heavily affective performances of gender and masculine ambivalence. Behn’s adaptation of Killigrew indicates her interest in exposing the cracks that inevitably appear in the agonistic world of upper-class men.

Unsurprisingly, the theme of betrayal looms large when Behn’s adaptation of Killigrew’s play feature English royalist exiles living in Madrid amongst their political enemies (Pacheco 205). A thread running through the play that also catalyses performances of betrayal is the performance of masculinity based on an ‘entitled sexuality and desires to increase one’s status by usurping other men’s property’ (Pacheco 211). For instance, characters like Willmore have an innate predisposition to violate other men’s territorial claims on women, Blunt’s character reveals how real or imagined injuries to masculine self-image lead to performances of rage and violence (Pacheco 206). Somehow, there is a sense that an internal status can be recovered if violence is projected. Furthermore, the rape culture in which characters like Willmore participate in represents a ‘dichotomous definition of womanhood constructed by elite men to secure their interests, protecting their own women from the sexual predations of other men and relegating others to a world in which they are easy sexual prey’ (Pacheco 209). Generally, performances of betrayal in *TR* contain a subtext of male anxieties over social status, sexuality and control.

Betrayal in *Love Island*



Fig. 3a Chloe reacts to postcard arriving in villa in Episode 31

In *Love Island*, the suspicion of and the potential for betrayal is what appears to underpin a lot of the show's interpersonal conflict. The show is built around the notion that contestants are all aimed towards finding a heterosexual romantic partner and leaving the show with them. However, it is a hostile social environment as those outcomes are rare, thus making the contestants hypervigilant for signs of betrayal in partners and potential partners. In a sense, the produced reality is made to exacerbate and stage betrayal in a wide range of ways. In one sense the concept of betrayal is performed in terms of rumour, confrontation, or ostracism. The notion of betrayal in *LI* is often based on discussions, chats, and rumours. However, physical evidence is also a strong means via which the characters respond to the threat of betrayal. Physical evidence of betrayal was foregrounded most clearly with the jealousy-inducing Casa Amor postcard that contestant Chloe found and presented to the villa in a town crier fashion (see in Fig. 3a and 3b). The girls dissected the images, creating an entertaining affective display of romantic disappointment (see fig.2). The jester-like show narrator Iain Sterling pejoratively labelled the postcard a 'special delivery'

which brought a comic edge to the shock on the contestants' faces at seeing the debauchery of the men interacting with women in the separate villa (“Episode 31”).



Fig.3b Chloe presents postcard to villa in “Episode 31”

Beyond the Casa Amor postcard, *LI* producers invited contestants to view evidence of betrayal with producers orchestrating a movie night where secrets became exposed. This event mainly served to reinforce the women’s existing anxieties about what happened while the boys went to the separate villa with new girls. After seeing the footage, Chloe referred to the idea of the Casa Amor segment of the show being akin to the infidelity of a ‘lad’s holiday’ (Hill). This culturally resonant example of the debauchery on foreign soil links to the Carnavalesque libertinism of the male characters in *TR*, except having that affective display of hedonism and its consequences take place on reality television. Furthermore, the producer-orchestrated movie night was captivating on the level of the audience as it involved the viewer watching the contestants become an audience of their own in a heightened emotional context due to fear of rejection or embarrassment. Additionally, a form of homosocial betrayal occurred when Hugo questioned Toby’s character and relationship skills

during the recoupling in the episode.... Toby called Hugo's actions 'muggy', when Hugo gave a speech in front of everyone condemning his actions in a passive-aggressive manner. Further, Hugo called Toby's approach to relationships 'bullshit' and suggested he mistreated Chloe. Toby did not receive this shaming well, and saw it as a breaking of a sort of 'bro code' ("bro, n."). In this way, *LI* reveals how the material world and language combine to produce engaging performances of betrayal.

There are also performances of betrayal on the show that appear to have less physical evidence and concrete signs of disloyalty. These forms of betrayal appeared to be at least partly imagined or projected from contestants that seemed to have distrustful and insecure personalities. This notion of anticipated betrayal with little proof or intense reactions was most evident in the character Faye. Appearing furious about being voted in the least compatible couple with her partner Teddy, in a 'hurt' state, Faye interrupted a group of islanders and confronted them saying 'why aren't Teddy and I compatible?' ("Episode 51"). Her subsequent campaign of name-calling and finger-pointing denoted her frustration and revealed the loss of status she seemed to feel. In this way, the producer-shaped characterisation of Faye on the show and her performances of anger reveals that explosively affective reactions to betrayal are not limited to male characters. Therefore, *LI* performances reveal anxieties about social status to be a huge driver of performances of betrayal across centuries, connecting figures like early modern stock characters to modern reality stars.

Chapter 3. Audience judgements: heartbreak and betrayal in context

This chapter will address the role of social context in presenting interpersonal themes in Early Modern comedy and reality television. Specifically, how gender and wit impact performances of heartbreak and betrayal and the ways that the performances themselves reflect or deviate from contemporary norms. Wit is a concept vital to comedy, as comic drama is all about relating, relationships, breakdowns in communication and much more. Audiences and critics approaching *LI*, *LLL* and *TR* all seem inclined to analyse the performances in light of contemporary socio-political issues. For instance, audiences not only experience ‘comic catharsis’ from witnessing interpersonal conflict onscreen and onstage but their reactions themselves reveal norms about gender (Owens 234). Nevertheless, *LI*, *LLL* and *TR* all share an appreciation of ‘the danger of judging by appearances’ (Bolam xvi). In life, in love and language, things are not always as they seem and wit becomes a means of transgressing the boundaries of meaning, a form of trickery that can result in heartbreak and betrayal as intentions are easily disguised in appearance and language. Contextually, comedy was seen as a ‘low form’ by critics like Aristotle who saw the genre’s value in being potentially corrective in emphasising human weakness and folly (Hoy). Formalists like the New Critics assume that analysing audience responses to literature is a confusion of a text’s ‘objective’ qualities with subjective results (Baldick). However, in explaining the effects of such features and devices, the critic is inevitably subjective, suggesting that the pressure to appear subjective is ultimately futile. Moving from the theatrical performances of the past towards the present-day, reality television is also regarded as a low form, committing the generic sin of addressing ordinary people but worse so by depicting ordinary people doing stigmatised things like being promiscuous, heartbroken and betrayed.

Audience in *The Rover*

The social context foregrounding heartbreak and betrayal in *TR* is incredibly rich. Furthermore, the change from Shakespeare's era of all-male casts, Behn was a dramatist presiding over an era where women could finally appear onstage and deliver affective performances of heartbreak and betrayal (Bolam xxii). For instance, the issue of self-interested, hedonistic 'Libertinism' is addressed in terms of characterisation and content (Bolam xii). This idea is clear in the character Willmore who as I mentioned earlier did terrible things but ended up with a favourable romantic outcome, all because of wit. The play, therefore, suggest that the moral permissiveness and hedonism of the libertine causes heartbreak, as evident in the scorned Angellica ("libertinism, n."). What's more, there is a close relationship between wit and conflict in the play, as previously acknowledged (Bolam xv). In a sense, witty language's impact on conflict plays into the notion of transferrable affect as the language performed by actors expresses internal states and reflects their social standing. In *TR*, Hellena aims to find love or at least a romantic partner from the outset, a departure from the pressure on her to become a nun confined to a convent (Bolam xiii). Her wit and social skills enable her to escape her fate, eliding the watchful gaze of her brother and heading with sister Florinda to Naples for the debauchery of and 'madness' of Carnival, with masks and disguises secure her transgressive social aims (Bolam xix). Contextually, the fact that Behn wrote a sequel to *TR* reflects her 'attunement to the barometer of audience opinion' (Tomilson 328). Additionally, the staging was optimised for vibrant affective performances that could leave an impression on audiences. Restoration-era theatres like London's Duke theatre could seat up to 800 people, which means *TR* could have amassed vast audiences (Bolam xxi). The space was designed with special details to heighten

affective displays, including a proscenium stage with a balcony and painted background scenery (Bolam xxi). While plays like *LLL* show women successfully mobilising language and wit for personal gain, Behn's *TR*'s depiction of scorned women reveals doubts about 'whether language is the real key to power.' (Hughes 33). The limits of language in preventing heartbreak and betrayal are most evident in the failed violence of Angellica Bianca against Willmore, who loses because she breaks down her boundaries based on an untrustworthy man's word. Hughes argues that the context of Carnival being a man's world where they have more license to break and transgress boundaries, women are outmanoeuvred by men who take initiative for better or for worse. Hughes continues, 'The Rover [sic] is full of male violence, against women and against other men...She lacks the killer instinct, however, and cannot pull the trigger (Hughes 29-45). In terms of staging, 'Behn is interested not only in space but in boundaries between different kinds of space. The doors and balcony in the proscenium arch assume a recurrent symbolic importance...Men pass through doors, even batter them down, with ease, but boundaries present women with far more difficulty.' (Hughes 35). The notion of gender is not only explored in terms of affective performance but also in terms of how gender informs the concept of boundaries in stage design. The famous courtesan Angellica initially appears 'framed in her balcony: an object of desire, but inhabiting an enclosed, separate world whose illusions of power are destroyed when Willmore goes through her door and wins her love.' (Hughes 36) Additionally, boundaries for women are places of great danger: one may find a rapist on either side of the door and men, force doors with open with ease (Hughes 36). However, in adapting a Thomas Killigrew play by giving a woman a powerful speech, Behn adds depth to the scorned woman as a subject of heartbreak and betrayal (Bolam xiii). Generally, the

adventurous, transgressive tone of Behn's exploration of gender would have been communicated to audiences through design and embodied performances of the playtext.

Audience in *Love's Labour's Lost*

In the era when Shakespeare's *LLL* emerged, bawdy, affective performances of heartbreak and betrayal may have been stigmatised. Furthermore, Bevington contends that public theatre was viewed as 'a popular, even "low" form of amusement', as alluring and as dismissed as reality television often is today. Furthermore, critics accused the theater [sic] of distracting people from work...exciting them to lust and violence' (Bevington xvi). Furthermore, the perceived malleability of audiences and public opinion were vital in the Renaissance era, impacting the types of performances that were approved. Contextually, the Privy Council 'set up a system of censorship' to prevent criticism of prominent figures. Specifically, the 'Master of Revels' had to approve plays before they were performed, and a 1606 law that prevented actors from blaspheming or being inappropriate onstage (Bevington xvii). This control of language and performance arguably impacted affect to the extent that certain things modern audiences are used to today, would have been seen as too scandalous in previous centuries, meaning that genres like comedy often ended with conformist atmospheres that supported institutions like marriage for instance. However, by producing a playtext that elevated female wit, Shakespeare subtly challenged the offstage realities of women, where agency in romance and life was not always guaranteed. Although the witty comic characters were royal and privileged, the play undoubtedly allowed for subversive, affective displays where women were in control and strategic, and the men were almost excessively sentimental and gullible.

Audience in Love's Labour's Lost

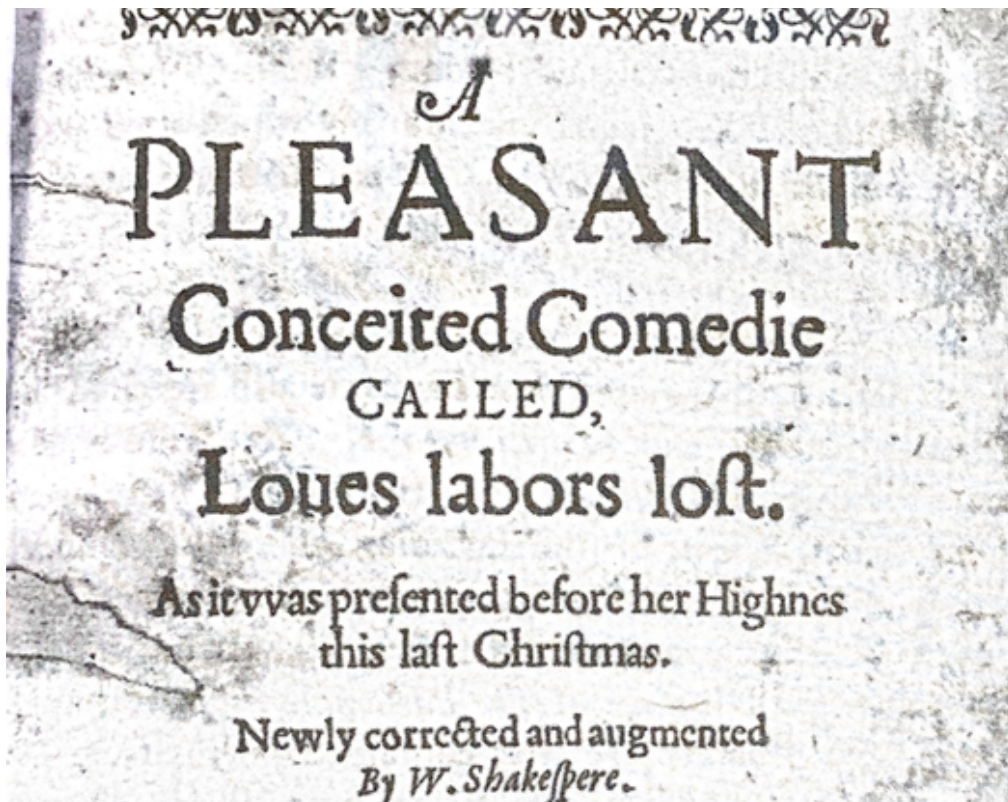


Fig. 4 Shakespeare's *LLL* First Quarto, scanned image (Woudhuysen 299)

In *LLL*, the men resolve to suppress love in favour of study. This intellectual background to Shakespeare's 'Conceited Comedie' is explored by Yates, who outlines how the play mocks the pretentiousness of learned men (see fig. 4). Additionally, the character Holofernes captures the play's preoccupation with language and the malleability of meaning with his 'pedantic affectation' (Yates 11). He is someone who insists on the standard pronunciation of words and appears to be a ridiculous figure for his insistent on being right in communication rather than being effective. In a sense, Holofernes suggests that in the social world, believing in rigid ideas about language can render you an ineffective communicator and at risk of social ostracism from being irritatingly pompous (Yates 11). Additionally, Yates points towards Shakespeare's use of Italian comic traditions, '*commedia dell' arte*' in the

satirical portrayals of characters and conversations about love. Audiences pleased by the ‘rustic’ bawdy clown Costard, a figure whose language connects with *LI* voiceover narrator Ian Sterling in terms of observational skill and wit (176).

Additionally, the social context of heartbreak was informed by misogyny as well as the transvestite stage. Furthermore, the ‘sexual double standard’ of the Renaissance era rendered male promiscuity justifiable but female promiscuity was not (Maus and Bevington xxxvi). Additionally, Renaissance playing companies like the King’s men were exclusively comprised of men, which meant that men performed female roles prior to women’s appearance on the stage during the Restoration (Rackin). This theatrical gender fluidity upset some critics who believed that actors ‘violated God’s biblical prohibitions against men dressing as women or women dressing as men’ (Maus and Bevington xliii). Fascinatingly, though Shakespeare’s play elevates the women’s wit and intelligence over men in the game of love, their capacity for deceit arguably plays into contemporary Renaissance ideas of women’s ‘unreliability’ ‘trickery’ and ‘opportunism’ (Maus and Bevington xxxvii). Therefore, the women’s successful wit could have possibly been viewed by contemporary audiences in a way that confirmed existing antifeminist tropes that outlined a female predisposition to deceit based on Eve’s deceit in the Biblical origin story of humanity (Brown 142). A 2015 performance of the play by the Royal Shakespeare Company emphasised the affective frivolity of the men reading out their overzealous love letters for the witty women on an ‘ornate rooftop’ (Collins 326). Additionally, the production marked the play’s ending with the women having the upper hand with a touch of stoicism as Navarre and his court ‘entered in military dress to the sound of marching drums, ready to leave for war. The revels over...enabled a deft shift in tone’ (Collins 327). In this way, the idea of romantic disappointment and heartbreak is foregrounded not only

in terms of language, as discussed earlier but also in terms of staging and sound. By centring women in the cause of heartbreak in the play, the empowerment Shakespeare affords female characters in terms of wit is potentially undermined by stereotypes.

In *LLL*, when the Princess gets news of her father's death, she is relatively stoic, but her language's emotional tone suggests that the weight of grief and similar emotions can dampen wit. She states, 'A heavy heart bears not a nimble tongue.' (Shakespeare 5.2.731). The affective dimension of this language is profound, as it speaks to the emotional pain that comes with the tragedy of death. Figurative language locates in the body, in the heart, and since the subject of her grief is her father, her statement proves that heartbreak can be a platonic phenomenon in the world of *LLL*. Additionally, the Princess proves herself as witty and adept in the language of courtship, as she is swayed more by actions than words to prevent disappointment. For instance, the Princess notes, 'If for my love – as there is no such cause -/ You will do aught, this shall you do for me:/Your oath I will not trust' (Shakespeare 5.2.786-8). The Princess's cynical tone reveals how her perception of love must be based on evidence, not simply words, to prevent unnecessary heartbreak.

Audience in LI

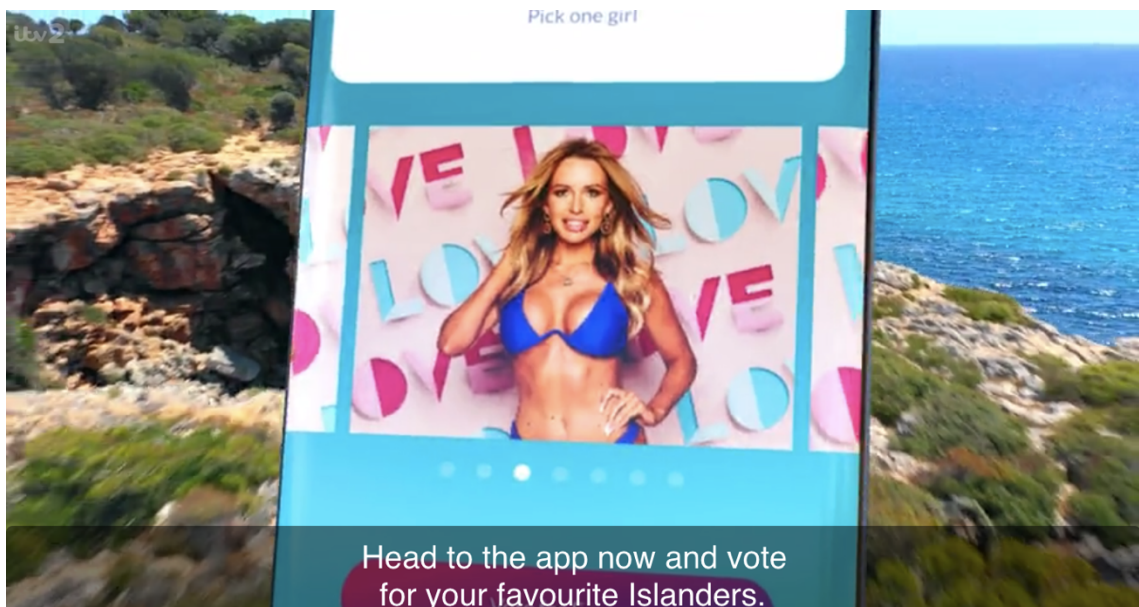


Fig. 5 call to action for LI viewers in Episode 39

In *LI*, the stars claim their mission is to find someone to ‘love’ or to find a partner. This romantic aim is something that connects it to the ‘monogamous desire of romantic comedy’ in Renaissance and Restoration theatre (Maus and Bevington xlv). However, as it is a reality show, this idea of pursuing love contains the subtext of heartbreak and betrayal as obstacles to romance and signs of failure in the game of love. In *LI*, the early introductions to day-one cast members set up perceptions and can create foreshadowing. For instance, in Liberty’s introduction, she states that she always goes for ‘players’ and wants to change (“Episode 1”). Liberty’s language choices and familiarity with heartbreak seemed like foreshadowing in retrospect to the viewer, considering how the season’s narrative arc presented her relationship with Jake as one-sided and unrequited. Generally, the social contexts of heartbreak and betrayal seem to contain similar themes of the dangers of vulnerability. Additionally, episodes end on suspense-fuelled cliffhangers to make you watch to see what happens next, who will be next to exit the villa heartbroken, failing in the game of love. Nico Carpentier argues that reality television audiences can be understood as possessing a transgressive ‘hybridity’ within which they are both spectators and participants (192). Also, *LI* reflects a convincing argument that ‘producers, fans and participants ...experience some control over the production and formation of the show...as audiences, and they all see themselves in the text/object position. This multi-positional engagement is trans-audiencehood’ (Hautakangas 194). This concept of trans-audiencehood emphasises three key actors in reality television, ‘the producers, the participants, and the audiences’ (Hautakangas 195). Furthermore, reality dating show producers respond to audience discourse about characters’ experiences of

heartbreak and betrayal to inform their editorial process. Therefore, contemporary ‘audience praxis’ regarding shows like *LI* reveals an increasingly fluid performance process in discourses of heartbreak and betrayal, as people use emotionally charged language and parasocial behaviour to the performers (Carpentier 192). For instance, Twitter users denounced Faye after viewing an explosive argument between the couple. One user tweeted, ‘What we just witnessed was violent. After Faye's first outburst, producers should have stepped in. If Teddy EVER spoke to Faye the way she spoke to him tonight, there would be a contender for OFCOM's most-complained about show’ (Grant). Using the *Big Brother* franchise as a case study, Hautakangas argues that reality television participants emphasize their authenticity and their first-hand subjective experience...stating that the “true course of events” cannot be reached via the mediated representations. The producers foreground the story...how everything “plays out” and how it is packaged by the means of production... audience participation and feedback inevitably define the format’s success or failure (197). This participation is evident in how *LI* audiences can vote to dump or keep participants (see fig. 5). Additionally, episodes that audiences perceive as boring television are often deemed production failure or weakness rather than the fault of participants (204). Additionally, the concept of ‘authenticity and “reality behind the scenes” is a negotiation that Islanders must confront (206). Many of them are hyper-fixated on an idea of being real or scared to seem like they are ‘playing a game’ (“Episode 9”). However, audience expectations of authenticity seems unrealistic considering the £50 000 reward at stake for contestants ending without heartbreak and being in the winning couple, or at least revenue from the fame of influencer marketing deals (206). Hautakangas continues by arguing that reality participants ‘express their sense of being in control...by emphasizing their first-hand experience.’ But audiences also

take part in the quest for authenticity, waiting for when the facade breaks down, whether related to the housemates' performance or the producers' actions. The producers, in their turn, foreground the power of the format as inevitably revealing the “true personalities” of the housemates and their psychological understanding and control of the situation (Hautakangas 206). Judith Butler’s idea of fluid gender performativity finds itself undermined in reality television, as its objectifying conventions represent how the ‘cinematic gaze splits [audiences] into male (voyeur) and female (exhibitionist)’ (Freedman 59). This division creates a bias where emotions are oversimplified along gender lines, and therefore, female heartbreak is more readily undressed and fetishized. For instance, unfavourable reactions to heartbreak can lead to being kicked off the show, as audiences vote (see fig. 7). Additionally, Affective Disposition Theory can help explain how audiences morally evaluate women’s reaction to heartbreak in harsh ways. According to Gizzard et. al, audiences’ positive feelings about characters ‘lead viewers to hope that good fortunes befall a character, whereas negative dispositions lead viewers to hope that misfortunes befall a character’ (339). Also, Grizzard contends that differences between characters, like some being more emotionally dysregulated or deceptive than others can help people slot into stock character roles like the villain on reality television (355). On *LI*, the backlash to Faye’s temper tantrum involving audiences labelling her abusive and reporting her to Ofcom is evidence of this phenomenon of audiences’ moral judgements (Welsh). This moral judgement also extends to *LI* characters like Jake who were labelled narcissistic based on the producers’ curation of the televised reality of how he related to Liberty, painting a picture of a detached, superficial boyfriend (Mia). Overall, understanding the gendered biases impacting how audiences evaluate interpersonal conflict between characters reflects how people make real-life social

judgments (Grizzard et al. 360). Overall, the idea of sex, exclusive or otherwise, as intimately tied to notions of betrayal and heartbreak has endured from theatre to reality television today.

Conclusion



Fig. 8 Millie receives £50 000 prize money

Investigating heartbreak and betrayal reveals how a Restoration comedy, a Renaissance Shakespearean comedy, and a 21st-century dating reality show all address how language and gender shapes the emotional, affective domain of interpersonal interactions. Further, the audience-pleasing nature of early modern comedies is evident in the proliferation of present-day adaptations of canonical English dramas like sleepover-inspired reworkings of *TR* (Bolam xxvi). Though *LI* Season 7 received low ratings compared to past seasons, according to ITV2, nevertheless it attracted over three million views as the channel's most popular show for 16-24-year-olds (Yossmann). Additionally, Shakespeare's *LLL* was designed for audience enjoyment, depicting how romantic expectations set up by language are not always fulfilled or understood. In Behn's *TR*, audiences enjoy the affective power of romantic deception in the play's action. In *LI*, audiences follow participants through convoluted, heartbreaking journeys where many leave without love or £50 000 prize money (see Fig. 8). Generally, this research asserts that contagious affect is not a one-

dimensional transfer of onscreen emotions to audiences, rather, it is a synthesis of a spectator's perspective on the 'actions' that define gender and interpersonal relationships (Butler 25). This multi-disciplinary analysis of interpersonal themes in sixteenth century dramatic literature and reality television, reveals that audience judgements regarding performances continue to react to contemporary views on love, sex and gender across the ages, whether subversive or conformist.

Works Cited

- Ahern, Stephen. *Affect Theory and Literary Critical Practice A Feel for the Text*, edited by Stephen Ahern. 1st ed. 2019., Springer International Publishing, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-97268-8>.
- Baldick, Chris. "affective." *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. : Oxford University Press, . *Oxford Reference*. Date Accessed 6 Apr. 2022
<<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780198715443.001.0001/acref-9780198715443-e-19>>.
- Barber, Cesar Lombardi, et al. *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy: A Study of Dramatic Form and Its Relation to Social Custom*. Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Carpentier, Nico. "A Short Introduction To Trans-Audience" *Trans-Reality Television the Transgression of Reality, Genre, Politics, and Audience*, edited by Sofie Van Bauwel and Nico Carpentier. Lexington Books, 2010.
- Behn, Aphra, and Robyn Bolam. *The Rover / Aphra Behn* , edited by Robyn Bolam. Revised edition., Methuen Drama, 2012.
- Bevis, Richard W. *English Drama : Restoration and the Eighteenth Century, 1660-1789 /* Richard W. Bevis. Longman, 1988.
- Brown, Katherine DeVane. "Antifeminism or Exegesis? Reinterpreting Eve's Wacgepoht in Genesis B." *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 115, no. 2, University of Illinois Press, 2016, pp. 141–66, <https://doi.org/10.5406/jenglgermphil.115.2.0141>.
- Buccola, Regina. "Theatres Of Contagion: Transmitting Early Modern To Contemporary Performance." *Theatre Journal*, vol. 72, no. 4, John Hopkins University Press, 2020, pp. 528–30, <https://doi.org/10.1353/tj.2020.0113>.
- Butler, Judith. "Prohibition, Psychoanalysis, and the Production of the Heterosexual Matrix." *Gender Trouble*, Routledge, 2006, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203824979-7>.

Collins, Eleanor. "Review of Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Love's Labour's Won* (directed by Christopher Luscombe for the Royal Shakespeare Company) at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-Upon-Avon, 19 February 2015." *Shakespeare* (London, England), vol. 12, no. 3, Routledge, 2016, pp. 326–28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450918.2016.1143867>.

Critchley, Simon. *On Humour*. Routledge, 2011.

Eagleton, Terry. *How to Read a Poem*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2007.

Freedman, Barbara. "Feminism, Psychoanalysis, Theatre" *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre*, edited by Sue-Ellen Case. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

Goldfine, Jael. "The Strange Magic of Iain Stirling's Narration on *Love Island UK*" 04 Aug 2021, <https://www.gq.com/story/iain-stirling-love-island>.

Goldstein, Neal L. "Love's Labour's Lost and the Renaissance Vision of Love." *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 3, 1974, pp. 335–50, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2868784>. Accessed 23 Apr. 2022.

Grant, Dionne. [@DionneGrant] "What we just witnessed was violent. After Faye's first outburst, producers should have stepped in. If Teddy EVER spoke to Faye the way she spoke to him tonight, there would be a contender for OFCOM's most-complained about show. Those who know, know. #LoveIsland" 6 Aug 2021.

<https://twitter.com/DionneGrant/status/1423755152381652998?s=20&t=IM-d5kENx02e9qbZukgj2w>.

Herrmann, Anne. "Travesty and Transgression: Transvestism in Shakespeare, Brecht, and Churchill" *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre*, edited by Sue-Ellen Case. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

Hughes, Derek, and Janet M. Todd. *The Cambridge Companion to Aphra Behn*, edited by

- Derek Hughes and Janet Todd. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Print.
- Lachmann, Renate, et al. "Bakhtin and Carnival: Culture as Counter-Culture." *Cultural Critique*, no. 11, 1988, pp. 115–52, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1354246>. Accessed 13 Apr. 2022.
- Leach, Robert. *Theatre Studies : the Basics* / Robert Leach. Routledge, 2008.
- "libertinism, n." *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, March 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/107893. Accessed 10 April 2022.
- Love Island*, created by Brent Baker et. al, season 7, ITV Studios, 2021.
- Matthew Grizzard, Nicholas L Matthews, C Joseph Francemone, Kaitlin Fitzgerald, Do Audiences Judge the Morality of Characters Relativistically? How Interdependence Affects Perceptions of Characters' Temporal Moral Descent, *Human Communication Research*, Volume 47, Issue 4, October 2021, Pages 338–363, <https://doi.org/10.1093/hcr/hqab011>.
- McCarthy, Anna. "Reality Television: a Neoliberal Theater of Suffering." *Social Text*, vol. 25, no. 4, Duke University Press, 2007, pp. 17–42, <https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-2007-010>.
- McIntyre, John D., and Miranda B. Hickman. *Rereading the New Criticism*, edited by Miranda B. Hickman and John D. McIntyre. Ohio State University Press, 2012.
- Mia. "Jake Is Literally One of the Most Manipulative, Narcissistic, People to Ever Be on Love Island. He Never Takes Accountability for What He's Done and Doesn't Even Have the Courage to Say Sorry. Liberty Deserves Better! #LoveIsland Pic.twitter.com/Ftvxoppzao." *Twitter*, Twitter, 13 Aug. 2021, https://twitter.com/miamulholland_x/status/1426278362885074946.
- Neely, Carol Thomas. "Women and Shakespeare's Cuckoldry Plays: Shifting Narratives of

- Martial Betrayal. Cristina León Alfar. *Women and Gender in the Early Modern World*. London: Routledge, 2017. Xii 244 Pp. \$165.” *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 74, no. 3, 2021, pp. 1061–1062., doi:10.1017/rqx.2021.189.
- Ouellette, Laurie. *A Companion to Reality Television* / Edited by Laurie Ouellette. 1st ed., Wiley-Blackwell, 2014.
- Owens, William M. "Catharsis of Comedy." *Comparative Drama*, vol. 31, no. 2, 1997, pp. 323-326. *ProQuest*, <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/catharsis-comedy/docview/211711609/se-2?accountid=10673>.
- Pacheco, Anita. “Aphra Behn, The Rover Part One”. *A Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, edited by Anita Pacheco, John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2002. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ed/detail.action?docID=350869>.
Created from ed on 2022-04-12 11:35:09.
- Patronne, Sola. [@SPatronne] “Kaz basically got picked last.... not surprised.” Jun 08 2021, <https://twitter.com/SPatronne/status/1409613265060122627?s=20&t=S36PJfrTyvjgbq1aZi0F5Q>.
- Porter, Janette, and Kay Standing. “Love Island and Relationship Education.” *Frontiers in Sociology*, vol. 4, Frontiers Media S.A, 2019, pp. 79–79, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2019.00079>.
- Shakespeare, William. *The Arden Shakespeare Love's Labour Lost*, edited by H. R. Woudhuysen. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1998.
- Sweney, Mark. “Love Island predicts record revenues, but brands tread carefully, but brands tread carefully after past tragedies” *Guardian*, 21 Jun 2021.

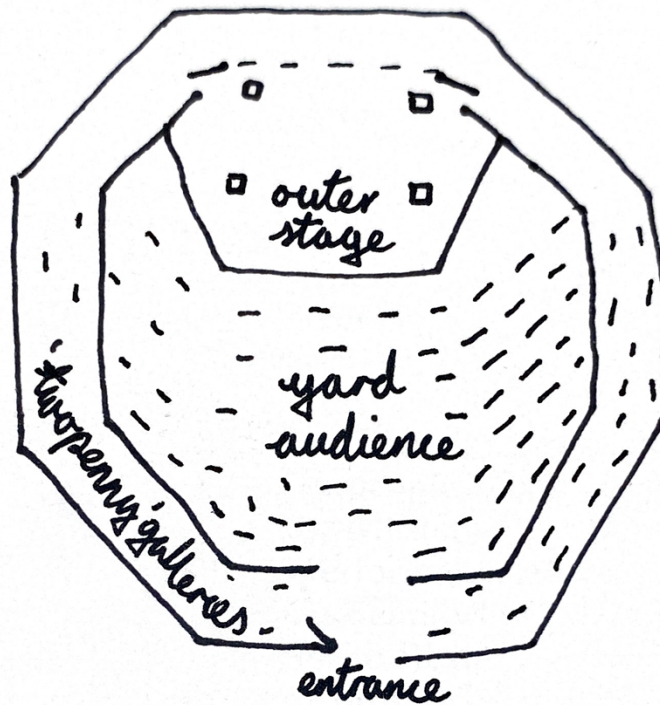
Welsh, Daniel. “Ofcom Reaches Decision After Faye's Love Island Outburst Breaks Show's Complaints Record” Huffington Post UK, 2021.

Williamson, Terrion L.. *Scandalize My Name : Black Feminist Practice and the Making of Black Social Life*, Temple University Press, 2016. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ed/detail.action?docID=5014993>.

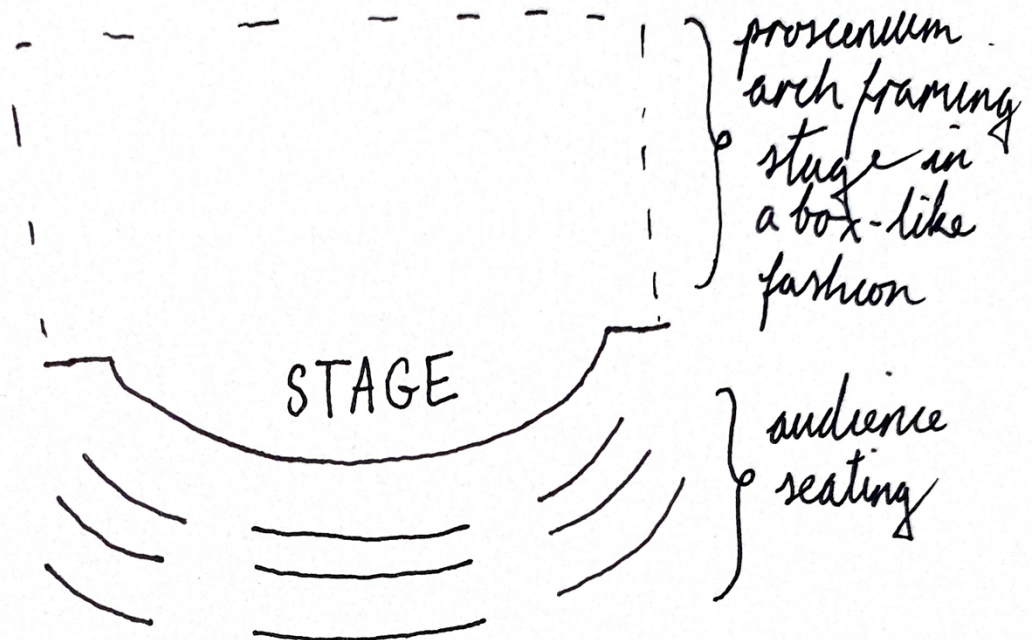
Yossman, K. J. “‘Love Island’ Season 7 Finale Boasts Record Viewers for ITV2”, Variety, 2021. <https://variety.com/2021/tv/news/love-island-season-7-audience-1235047629/>

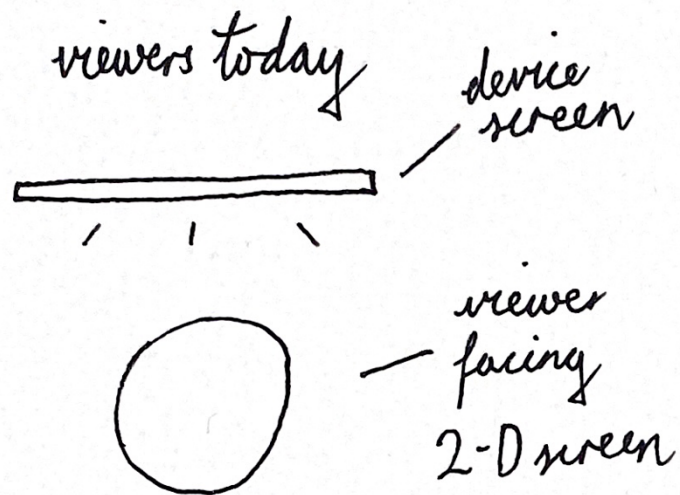
Appendices

These are supplementary sketches depicting changes in audience experience across the centuries.



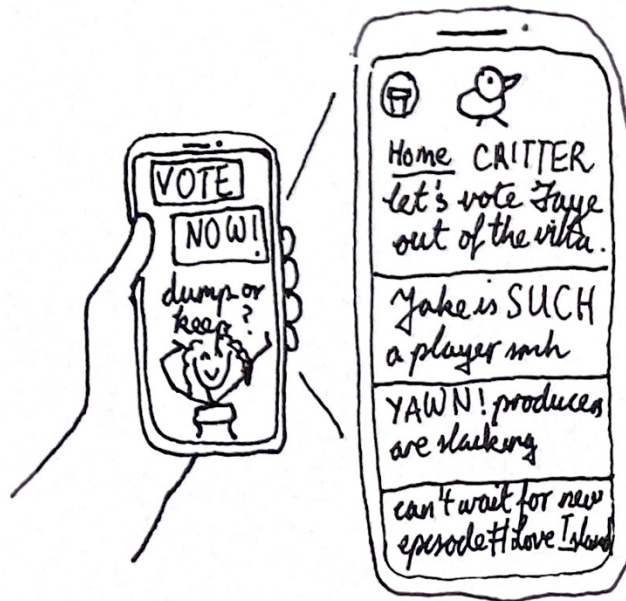
Renaissance-era theatre design (based on the Globe theatre)





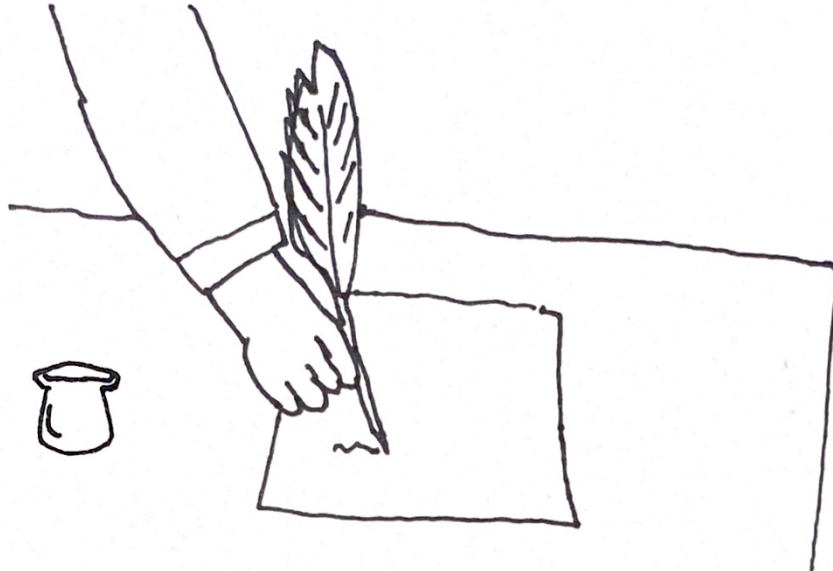
The virtual, screen-based audience of reality tv.

reality tv audiences



The democratised ease of reality tv criticism, though this ease leads to increased risk of bullying and harassment of onscreen participants.

early modern criticism



The technological limits of early modern theatre criticism.