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Recreation

Lowell Duckert[1]

> If you seek to create, love springs, fountains, precious stones, the high summits of mountains, the layers of the onion, the leaves of the artichoke, the look of the sea lion, germinal cells, children, all filled to bursting with information like blue supergiants.
>
> Michel Serres, *The Troubadour of Knowledge*

After the blood-smeared Brutus cries for "'peace, freedom, and liberty!'" (3.1.111) in front of the confused masses in William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* (1599), Antony takes the "pulpit."[2] He knows how to sway the crowd. Unfurling Caesar's will, he proclaims the citizens Caesar's heirs; better yet, "every several man" is to receive "seventy-five drachmas"

[1] I wish to thank the audiences at the 2012 International Congress on Medieval Studies (Kalamazoo) "Ecologies" roundtable and at the GW MEMSI symposium "Ecologies of the Inhuman" in April 2013 for their creative responses, as well as Jeffrey Jerome Cohen for his feedback.

[2] *The Norton Shakespeare*, eds. Stephen Greenblatt et al., 2nd edn. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008). All quotations from Shakespeare refer to this edition, by act, scene, and line numbers.

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(3.1.232). The crowd is outraged by the assassins' deed. But Antony saves the best stipulation for last. What infuriates the plebeians is something even more desirable than these perks, Caesar's *parks*:

> Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,
> His private arbours and new-planted orchards,
> On this side Tiber; he hath left them you,
> And to your heirs for ever, common pleasures,
> To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves.
> Here was a Caesar! when comes such another?
> (3.2.236–241)

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your garden shears. The word "recreate," it seems, can "lift up Olympus" (3.1.75). Or raise a mob. So what is in a word? "Recreation" and its variants are of Middle English origin via Old French and Latin: *recreare* means "to create anew or again, to restore, refresh, revive." Similarly, "re-creation" comes from *recreatio*, "the action or process of restoring," later to be the English formulation of the prefix *re-* ("again") + *creation* (c. 1400s). English verb forms like "recreate" followed shortly thereafter.[3] Although in common day usage we differentiate the two meanings through pronunciation, Shakespeare collapses both. "To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves" is to re-create "yourselves" abroad simultaneously.

Antony—I should say Shakespeare—knew his Latin. In his eulogy, "recreate" signals: (1) to be refreshed with "common pleasures" like "walk[ing] abroad" through "private arbours and new-planted orchards"; (2) the act of re-creation, to "re-create yourselves" by taking this walk; (3) the playwright's re-creation of Caesar's murder for the Globe Theatre in 1599. Indeed, the play dwells on the art of re-creation: "How many ages hence," Cassius wonders, "Shall this our lofty scene be acted over, / In states unborn and accents yet unknown!" (3.1.112–114). Shakespeare's business is in the public recreation known as theatre-going, an activity that re-creates plays "to your heirs forever" (4). Lastly, and this is Antony's strongest point, Caesar cannot be re-created: "When comes such another?" Recreation (and re-creation), in a word, *creates*. And the desire for it, the play cautions, can destroy. The citizens shout that they will "with brands fire all

[3] See the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) entries for *recreation, n.1* and *recreate, v.2* in particular.

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the traitors' houses" (3.2.244). Rome will burn. "Domestic fury and fierce civil strife," pledges Antony, "Shall cumber all the parts of Italy" (3.1.266-7). Poets and their "bad verses" will be torn apart (3.3.30). As will infants. Read in this context, recreation does not lead to restoration or replenishment, but to pieces aflame. "Cry 'havoc' and let slip the dogs of war" (3.1.276), "Revenge! About! Seek! Burn! Fire! Kill! Slay!" (3.2.196) shout the plebeians in unison. This is the course of recreation, the "walk" that Antony imagines in his holocaustic vision: "Mischief, thou art afoot. / Take thou what course thou wilt" (3.2.250). Recreation is all the rage—and it still is today. When the United States government shut down from October 1-17 2013, so did the National Park Service. Across the country, civilly disobedient citizens threatened to illegally trespass (and more).[4] *For recreation is a powerful word.*

ARBORS AND ORCHARDS: AN ESSAY ON NON/HUMAN CONDITIONS

In his ample essay, *Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition*, Robert Pogue Harrison argues that studying the "forces of cultivation" at work in man-made gardens encourages what he calls a "vocation of care."[5] Gardens show "the mark of Cura," "a signature of the human agency to which they owe their existence" (7). No one is better at exemplifying this mark, he believes, than the gardener (25). Care is loosely defined as "an expansive projection of the intrinsic ecstasy of life," while life is "an excess . . . the self-ecstasy of matter. Care in turn is a world-forming, ethically laden extension of . . . terra-forming forces" (33). In a way, Harrison's attention to enchantment (39) and "self-ecstasy" nearly aligns his study with the "vital materialism" of Jane Bennett.[6] Yet as one could surmise by the subtitle of his book, *Gardens* cultivates a humbler kind of anthropocentrism. Gardens "mark our

[4] Utah parks were particularly targeted: http://www.npr.org/blogs/the-two-way/2013/10/09/231086726/county-in-utah-threatens-take over-of-national-park-areas.

[5] Robert Pogue Harrison, *Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), xi.

[6] See Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010) and also her book *The Enchantment of Modern Life: Attachments, Crossings, and Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

separation from nature even as they draw us closer to it" (41). In the face of this alienation, the gardener must endlessly toil: it is only through the "gardener's activism—the painstaking, compensatory work of fostering the saving power of human culture" (161), that environmental destruction (by humans) may be curbed. "Without gardeners there would be no future," he baldly claims (37). Thus human agency is *less* distributed amongst arborous things and *more* of a salvific force. Herein lies the paradox, Harrison believes: as we both dread and chase after imaginary paradises, as desire desires more of itself, "our attempts to re-create Eden amount to an assault on creation" (165). Instead, we "need to make ourselves at home on an earth that does not necessarily make room for us" (48) and yet is "a garden we were called on to keep" (176). The human gardener, we might say, helps show us what condition our ecological condition is in. Go ahead: make yourself at home. Just remember: human happiness is something that "only caretaking [fulfills]" (166).

To Harrison's worthwhile attempt to cultivate a better commons—he is right to check the callous hand of human mastery—I wish to think beyond what I believe to be several self-restricting confines of his book: his admission of an unreachable natural order that still implies a sense of order;[7] the nonhuman dependence upon human care; the implied division of nature from culture; his limiting of (a) life to *animate* matter. At these moments we must ask ourselves: can we tell better narratives about co-habitation? Better yet: could Shakespeare? The early modern period has plenty of garden spaces ripe for investigation, as many critics have proven;[8] and yet, I fear that garden studies may just as easily replicate an ethos of human separation and salvation. By decentering the human gardener—by questioning the reality of a "center" itself—this essay attempts to formulate a different recreational ethic. "Garden" comes from the Old English word *geard* for "building, home, region" and is related etymologically to "orchard" through "yard."[9] Thus Caesar's (and

[7] Harrison maintains that "we must always remember that nature has its own order and that human gardens *do not* . . . bring order to nature; they give order to our relation with nature" (*Gardens*, 48).

[8] A good example is Rebecca Bushnell, *Green Desire: Imagining Early Modern English Gardens* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000). Thomas Hill's *The Gardener's Labyrinth* (1577) is a popular primary source.

[9] Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Vintage Books,

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Caesar's) orchard may help us think outside of "park" (which means "pen") and more in terms of the "household," the *eco-* of "ecology." Allow me a quick walk-through: (1) the play highlights the violence of political ambition set against environmental enmeshment, (2) a position that magnifies the historical struggles centered around the creation of London's first park, Moorefields, and that (3) unfortunately extends to the present-day in the outdoor sensation known as "Shakespeare in the Park." I argue that such struggles in the name of recreation may redefine, or "recompose,"[10] the human body, the civic park, and the theatrical playspace as nature-culture hybrid sites, as *more-than* spaces. These truly *creative* sites adumbrate an environmental ethics that would make room for as many beings as possible, one that offers alternatives to reinvigorated georgic modes (human stewardship) as our sole future. While stressing the costs of human agency is necessary, we should also make room for those nonhuman powers that constitute our pullulating world; in short, we must open our recreational ambits to healthy modes of survival, as I will show, and become more intimate. But maybe I am too idealistic, you claim, just as the would-be emperor uttered before his death: "He is a dreamer. Let us leave him. Pass!" (1.2.26). Leave me, ghost of Caesars past! Instead of passing up this opportunity, I will seize it—this is the motto of the conspirators, after all: "There is a tide in the affairs of" non/humans (4.2.270). Make room! Walk with me.

TO WALK ABROAD: ROMAN HOLIDAY?

"Is this a holiday?" Flavius asks the "idle creatures" in the play's second line (1.1.1–2). *Julius Caesar* opens with an interrogation of things walking abroad when they "ought not walk" (1.1.3). In a famous exchange the night before Caesar's death, Casca and Cicero perambulate in an elemental tempest: seas swell as high as the clouds, fire drips from above (1.3). Walking the streets with strangers who unnaturally walk—lions, "men all in fire" (1.3.25)—signal bad times to come for Casca: "they are portentous things / Unto the climate that they point upon" (1.3.28–32). Cicero emphasizes how meaning is *created* out of this chaos: "But men may construe things after their fashion, / Clean from the purpose of

1995), 534.

[10] See Bruno Latour, "An Attempt at a 'Compositionist Manifesto,'" *New Literary History* 41 (2010): 471–490.

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the things themselves" (1.3.34–95). Cassius replies with a sense of intentionality: when things change from "their ordinance, — / Their natures, and performèd faculties, / To monstrous quality," he warns, the heavens have made them "instruments of fear and warning / Unto some monstrous state" (1.3.66–71). As above, so below. Both Casca and Cassius depend on a kind of ordered chaos: there *is* meaning (Caesar's dictatorship) behind the madness for the first, while Cicero, master orator and symbol of rhetorical logic, asserts humans' ability to render even the most phantasmic phenomena into rational explanations. Yet the things themselves exert their disruptive force: "this disturbèd sky / Is not to walk in" (1.3.39–40). By this conversation, one would not think to recreate oneself in the play: overall, walks are coded dangerous and infectious, acts of vulnerability. Calpurnia bids Caesar not to walk on the Ides: "Think you to walk forth? / You shall not stir out of your house today" (2.2.8–9). Portia recognizes Brutus's sick garden state of mind: "And is it physical / To walk unbracèd and suck up the humours / Of the dank morning?" (2.1.260–262). "You have some sick offence within your mind" (2.1.267), she tells him. The ghost of Caesar walks abroad on the eve of battle. "Caesar, now be still" (5.5.50) are Brutus's last words, suicide his last option to still the restless walkers who torment him. Do not walk, the play appears to caution: there are too many natural (damp) and supernatural (undead) things in the world that ceaselessly stir and move out of their "ordinance."

We will have heard "walk" ten times before we get to Caesar's will; verily, we are set up for "wary walking" (2.1.15) by this point in the play. Antony's promise, then, would seem to falter. But to the unpredictable "walk" and "walks abroad" that threaten others, Caesar and his favorite take control in a ecopolitical way: via the "ambit" of "ambition." "Ambit" comes from the Latin *ambitus* ("circuit") from *ambire* ("go around") and thus could mean "precincts, environs" and the canvasing of votes that "ambition" connotes. Though not related etymologically, their *ambulations* have highly-restricted ambits. In regards to the pernicious outside world, they do not make room for it, preferring to keep stray things at a distance or contain them within inside/outside circuits. The conspirators recognize this policy: Caesar's body, Cassius believes, is out of bounds, encompassing everything, a "Colossus"; they "walk under his huge legs and peep about / To find ourselves dishonourable graves" (1.2.142, 136–139). The co-assassinators are literally "*under*lings" (1.2.142, my

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emphasis). For his attempts to enclose Rome itself (thereby making it a garden dictator state), Caesar deserves to die: "When could they say till now, that talk'd of Rome, / That her wide walls encompass'd but one man? / Now it is Rome indeed and room enough, / When there is in it but only one man" (1.2.155–158). By Cassius's definition, Rome feels the squeeze of a near-imperial ambit that they feel obligated to curtail. And we all know what Brutus thought about Caesar: he persuades the plebeians to think that "he was / ambitious" (3.1.25) before Antony takes his turn. His follow-up famously repeats "ambitious" seven times during his speech; the point cannot be missed: "he [Caesar] was ambitious" (3.2.83). But why should the mob care? Antony in fact turns ambition to his advantage by playing upon the plebeians' love of circuitous spaces that they wish to go around. Caesar *was* ambitious by forcing the landscape into a particular ambit—an enclosed garden space—for which they should be thankful. This Colossus labored every day for their holidays. Antony says to walk *this* way, and they follow.

Lost in this debate concerning Roman "walks" and censured over-steppers, however, is any room for the nonhuman; there is not "room enough" for "new planted orchards." In this anthropocentric political arena, any democracy of objects accedes to an empire of subjects.[11] Shakespeare accentuates the persistency of this *central* strategy, for it carries on after Caesar's death, re-arriving like a ghost in the figure of Antony. When Antony descends from the pulpit, he makes a "ring" around him (3.2.158); his new ambit puts him at the center of relations, and from the "hearse" bearing Caesar's body, no less: "Over thy wounds now do I prophesy" (3.2.159; 3.1.262). This soon-to-be-triumvir extends the Roman will of ambition to environ the disruptive environment. Anything out of order is met with aggression; when the "sweaty" populace with "stinking breath" comes too close (1.2.244–245), Anthony exclaims: "Nay, press not so upon me. Stand farre off" (3.2.161). All the plebeians obey: "Stand back! Room! Bear back!" (3.2.162). Even when the nonhuman gains expression, it is to echo a human voice for justice: "a tongue / In every wound of Caesar that should move / The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny" (3.2.219–221). One deals with wayward things that "walk abroad" by hacking them back, denying them their voice—by *pruning*,

[11] I borrow this phrase from Levi Bryant, *The Democracy of Objects* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press/MPublishing, 2011).

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in a word. "[T]his foul deed shall smell above the earth," Antony believes, but he is wrong (3.1.277). *Caesar* not only exposes the anthropocentricity of recreation, it also shows its potential damages: just as Rome must be sawed through civil war in order to re-create itself, the Tiber must be tamed and hewn for its citizens to recreate themselves. Staring at the corpse of Caesar, Antony conflates both acts of violence in a short phrase: "O pardon me," he cries, "thou bleeding piece of earth" (3.1.257). And in the name of Roman re-creation, the "earth" *will* bleed. Shakespeare magnifies the third position through Antony's lament. So I repeat Flavius's question: "Is this a holiday?" *This?* A too-human form of recreation overlooks the stuff *by* which we are encompassed, *with* which we "go around," and *of* which we are made: "thou . . . earth." Is it first war, then peaceful holiday, Antony? No: first war, then war. *For recreation is a powerful word.*

This Side Tiber, This Side Thames

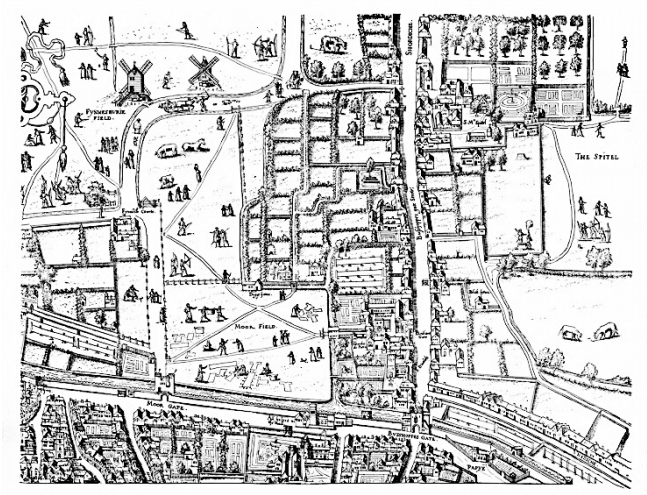

Figure 1: Map of London drawn by Anthonis van den Wyngerrade (1558) and engraved by Franciscus Hogenberg (1559). Moorgate and Moorfields are center-left. Note the strollers and washers within the park, and a lone figure (peeing?) on the left.

I have been arguing that *Caesar*'s parks matter, and suffer, through human ambitions. I now wish to illustrate how this

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recreational struggle in the play revealed—indeed intensified—early modern English green desires as well as disputes. As D.J. Hopkins argues, *Caesar* is a "*performance archive*" that manifests "the history of one of the major urban developments in London during this period: the emergence of the public theatre," thereby demonstrating the co-production of urban space.[12] "More than just a site in representation, early modern London was equally produced in performance" (48). As a Roman city once known as "Londinium" (founded c. 50 C.E.), its streets and stages displayed hybridizations of past and present, like James I's triumphal entry in 1604 (46–47). Since Hopkins is engaged primarily with conceptions of civic space, I wish to extend his argument about performative hybridity to nature-culture spaces in early modern England as well. I believe that the play was partly in response to, and led to a movement for, "common pleasures" in London. There are reasons why the play's "private arbours and new-planted orchards" were points of contention for audience members: Caesar's will discloses the lack (actually, nonexistence) of civic parks for London's own plebeians. Historian Keith Thomas notes that while public parks were not popular until after the Restoration, "in the early modern period planting for ornament and amenity gained momentum, particularly in the towns."[13] Trees in Londoners' gardens were common since the twelfth century. Flowers appealed to townsfolk and most Tudor homes had gardens of some sort where they could grow food. Norwich was once known as a budding "garden city," described as "'either a city in an orchard or an orchard in a city, so equally are houses and trees planted'" (205). Orchards like these could confuse distinctions between "natural" and "built" environments, city and country, and commoners increasingly found in these hybrid middles aesthetic rather than mere use value: "Trees . . . were now planted and cherished for amenity's sake alone" (204).

Yet the desire for pleasure planting had its aggressive side. In this brief ecomaterial history I am trying to trace, we

[12] D.J. Hopkins, "Performance and Urban Space in Shakespeare's Rome, or 'S.P.Q.L,'" in *Rematerializing Shakespeare: Authority and Representation on the Early Modern English Stage*, eds. Bryan Reynolds and William N. West (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 40.
[13] Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 204. The following historical information comes from Chapter 5 ("Trees and Flowers"), section ii ("Tree-Planting").

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can glimpse several possible reasons why English plebeians would rampage along the Thames for their greener spaces. Aristocratic planting was a large-scale operation: Elizabethans like Sir William Hatton were commended for planting groves (206), and such practices helped solidify class lines. Later domestic gardening would become less of an extension of nature-culture continuums and more of a magnification of the human logic of improvement ("cultivation").[14] Most controversial, perhaps, was the fact that environmental degradation often involved the displacement of lower social classes. As Thomas famously states:

> Disparking, enclosure of chases, encroachment on the commons, the lax administration of the royal forests and the steady reduction in their extent: all meant the clearing of woodland and the felling of trees. It was not on Tower Hill that the axe made its most important contribution to English history. (193)

Thus the recreational desire for parks sprung from such crises as the deforestation of local and national forests at the turn of the seventeenth century, the rapidly diminishing amount of ready wood as a consequence, and the increasing "'de-ruralization' of the towns." I will not go into too much detail here concerning historical enclosure regulations or royal and aristocratic hunting privileges in relation to Shakespeare's plays—this has been done intelligently elsewhere.[15] But I do want to speculate on what "private arbours" would have conjured in his audiences' minds. Probably "parks," royal forests protected by law; in Thomas's opinion, royal conservation still stands as a notable attempt to conserve a large part of England, its game, and the growing interests in deer parks. Even so, it is not too far-fetched to think that An-

[14] The Duke of Beaufort, for example, placed his house in the center of a star cut from the forest, demonstrating, in Thomas's estimation, "his power to manipulate the lives and environment of lesser mortals and emphasized the all local avenues of power converged upon him" (207).

[15] See, for example, Todd A. Borlik, *Ecocriticism and Early Modern English Literature: Green Pastures* (New York: Routledge, 2011), esp. Chapters 2 and 5; Vin Nardizzi, *Wooden Os: Shakespeare's Theatres and England's Trees* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013); and Robert N. Watson, *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), esp. Chapter 3.

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tony's mention could aggravate contemporary class struggles: "the domestic economy of the poor" clashed with the "recreation of a privileged few" who sought this game (200). Might Londoners have expressed their dissatisfaction with a different kind of "green imperialism"?[16] The seizure of Elizabethan royal forest and deer parks did not always precipitate a transfer to the people—which is what Caesar's imperialism (the will) had promised to do. Although spaces were susceptible to "disparking" (193) and given to cattle, it is not clear that the land would have been used specifically for economic gain; as previously mentioned, planting for aesthetic pleasure was fashionable. Nevertheless, cases of turning arable land into pleasure gardens for the sake of ornamentation sometimes involved the dislocation of villages and their inhabitants. What is clear in all of these conjectures, however, is that any conflict of the commons, with any amount of competing desires, must break from the narrow restrictions of *human* class. Richard Wilson argues in cultural materialist fashion that *Caesar* leaves "the scars of a material struggle,"[17] and, likewise, Hopkins's predominantly cultural reading is in a collection called *Rematerializing Shakespeare*. Yet as we have seen so far, the early modern English—playgoers and axemen—were leaving "scars" upon the "material" earth itself. It is time to rematerialize differently—ecomaterialize—not to repeat issues of class only,[18] but to circumvent nature/culture and environmental health/justice binaries at once. Into these variously verdant responses—socio-economic, political, and aesthetic—the wooden matter of trees take the early modern stage.

As a play known for its multitemporality—Rome's anachronistic clocks (2.1), for example—it should not be surprising that *Caesar* enfolds humans and nonhumans in addition to past and present. In his innovative book *Wooden Os*, Vin Nardizzi argues that early modern plays documented the ecocrisis of wood shortage—multiply defined as forest, gardens, parks, and timber—not only in theatrical representation, but through the exact substance of which props and theatres were made. Once actors enchanted the "dead

[16] Referring to Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism 1600-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
[17] Richard Wilson, *Julius Caesar* (London: Penguin, 1992), 40.
[18] See Nardizzi's *Wooden Os* (59–83) for a smart reading of class and environmental protest in the staging of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

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wood" (23) of the playhouse, its materiality challenged inside/outside binaries; audience members, he argues, were already inside the woods: "representations of living trees overlay the playhouse's exterior timbers, reminding viewers that theatres were (made from) trees . . . the theatres disappear behind and into the woods" (27). Props could point up these "darker shades of green" (28), but so could dramatic language. When characters refer to trees in deictic and gestic ways—"yon pine does stand" (4.13.1) from *Antony and Cleopatra*, which might have meant the wooden column of the theatre—they secure the material link between wood and stage, what Nardizzi calls an "evergreen fantasy of the first order . . . cultural reafforestation" (24). Caesar's orchards, then, could tap into this fantasy of "systematic replanting" (12) that was in response to the "rich array of eco-fantasies and nightmares about the shortage of wood and timber" (24). We should also keep in mind that *Caesar* was probably the first play staged at the newly opened wooden O, the Globe, in 1599—a point of material significance. The "this" of Antony's "this side Tiber" then, could draw attention to the disappearing trees along "this side" Thames, out- and inside the Globe, a theatre that marked a noticeable alteration to the Bankside landscape and that, according to contemporary drawings, still had (vulnerable) forest around it. Thus Shakespeare's reference to anything "new-planted" is not just a slavish following of his source, Plutarch.[19] The "darker" greenspace of dramatic production parallels the nightmare landscape that Antony imagines the mob enacting and the play-actor Antony indicates in greater "Londinium" at large and along river: the razed counterpoint to the evergreen fantasy of pleasures for all.

Antony's crowd-piquing tribute to Caesar in 3.2 is more than just a historical wink to the audience or a realization (perhaps foretelling) of their worst ecological nightmares. Less than a decade after the play was first performed, early

[19] From Plutarch's *Life of Marcus Brutus*: "For first of all, when Caesars testament was openly red amonge them, whereby it appeared that he bequeathed unto every Citizen of Rome, 75. Drachmas a man, and that he left his gardens and arbors unto the people, which he had on this side of the river of Tyber, in the place where now the temple of Fortune is built: the people then loved him, and were marvelous sory for him." Quoted in the Arden Shakespeare 3rd edition of *Julius Caesar*, ed. David Daniell (Walton-on-Thames: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 344.

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modern English citizens visited London's first civic park. Richard Johnson's *The pleasant walkes of Moore-fields* (1607) divulges Londoners' fervent and verdant desires for recreation, attempting to "set downe a fewe notes of ancient recordes" concerning a ten-acre plot of land called Moorfields near the Moorgate.[20] Opened during the reign of James I, Moorfields outlasted the Great Fire, surviving until a carpeting factory was built there in the mid-eighteenth century. Johnson provides a history of the park and descriptions of several key architectural sites around it, ending with an encomium to London. His opening language creates an interplay between the "ancient" records and the modern city, just like how the "ancient" times of Caesar's classical Rome and the "present-day" early modern city intersect onstage. Adding to this temporal breakdown, he writes his history as an interpolative dialogue between a "London Citizen" and a "Countrey Gentleman," in their exchange attempting an *inter*change between city and country. Taking his readers on a walking tour of pleasures, Johnson is as educational as he is obsequious. The knights and aldermen of London are the great improvers: "Those sweet and delightfull walks of More fields (right Worshipfull) as it seemes a Garden to this Citty and a pleasurable place of sweet ayres for Cittizens to walke in," he lauds, "now made most beautiful by your good worships appointment." Both fields and magisterial munificence are on display. "O you flattere[r]!" (5.1) —Antony knows this tactic the best.

Moorfields appears to be the ideal civic pleasure garden: for the people, by the people. Even "Sir *Leonard Hollyday* [Holiday?] then Lord Maior" plants the first tree. Once belonging to two daughters, the land had passed from private to public hands—just what the disgruntled plebeians demand in the play. But speaking more urgently to the historical debates about parks that inform *Caesar*, Moorfields actually arose from civil discontent. Johnson is careful to define the creation of the park as an act of duty; his two-man mob is not that rebellious, but the Citizen tells a story of others who were. Before the reign of Henry VIII, London residents "had so enclosed these fields, with hedges and ditches, that neyther the young men of this Citty might shoote, nor the ancient persons walke for pleasure in these fields." Some

[20] Richard Johnson, *The pleasant vvalkes of Moore-fields Being the guift of two sisters, now beautified, to the continuing fame of this worthy citty* (London: Henry Gosson, 1607).

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citizens were "arested for walking, saying, that no Londoner ought to go out of the Citie, but in the hye wayes." Here is an early modern day Flavius stopping citizens along the path, inquiring about their professions, interrupting their holidays. Walking is regulated. Is this an arbor day? Far from it: the citizens eventually take matters into their own hands six years into Henry VIII's reign, when

> a great number of the Citie, assembled themselues in a morning and a Turner in a Fooles coat, ran crying the rough the Citie, Shouels and spades, Shouels & spades, by which meanes followed so many people, that it was a wonder to behold, and within lesse than thrée houres all the hedges about the Citie were cast downe, the ditches filled vp, and euery thing made plaine, such was the quicknesse of these diligent workemen, after this the fields were neuer more hedged in.

Do not fence us in! the angry mob shouts. But the cry of "Shouels & spades" is not exactly an anthem of green peace, either; this is not quite the "fire!" of Antony's mob but it is a powerful example of citizens seizing their recreational rights nevertheless, ushering in an environmental policy of conservation (they need to use the land) rather than preservation, fulfilling a class-specific need: "for Cittizens to walke in to take the ayre, and for Merchants maides to dry clothes in, which want necessary gardens at their dwellings." Not everyone owns a garden, it seems, but the Citizen proudly relates this story of civic duty—recreational power to the people—and receives the appropriate awed response from his country interlocutor. "The Citizens," the Gentleman concurs, "euer carried gallant minds" and do so "to this day (I sée)."

But just as the play dramatizes the ecological impacts of civil war on the unwilling third participant "earth," there is more than a human struggle afoot "to this day." After Moorfields was bequeathed by the "two mayds," but before it became a park, it was "a wast and vnprofitable ground a long time." Like "this side Tiber," *this* side Thames must be domesticated. To reassure him that he is on firm ground, the Citizen boasts about their technological feats of drainage:[21] "Those be the worthy Aldermen and Common-counsell of

[21] For more on drainage's dramatic connections, see Todd A. Borlik, "Caliban and the Fen Demons of Lincolnshire: the Englishness of Shakespeare's *Tempest*," *Shakespeare* 9.1 (2013): 21–51.

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London, who seeing the disorder vsed in these fieldes, haue bestowed this cost, and as occasion requires intends further to beautifie the same." This "disturbèd" sty's disorder is met with the ambits of the honorable park planners. The intention is not as manipulative as Antony's, but the execution is still scarring; it requires a colonization of the moors and fields: This "making" of the beautiful was literally draining. Work had begun in the reign of Henry V,

> whereby these fields were made something more commodious, but not so pleasant and drye as now they are, for many times they stood still full of noisome waters, which afterward in the yeare 1527. was by the meanes of sir *Thomas Semor,* Mayor made dry, who repairing the sluces, conuayed the sayd waters ouer this Towne Ditch, into the course of *Wall-brooke*shoare, and so into the Thames, and by these degrées was this Fen or Moore at length made maine and hard ground.

Not only are the pleasures unprecedented, but so are the park and the amount of leveling labor required to build it, "a thing that neuer hath béen séene before to goe so néere London." Yet what the gentleman cannot "sée" fully is the fens' capacity for "bewildering order"—elemental philosopher David Macauley's phrase for "a kind of chaotic cosmos."[22] Disorder subtends order; the fens keep fighting back and must be necessarily tamed "by these degrées." Beautification proves to be a dirty, unpredictable, and full-time job. Soon after this lesson in landscape architecture, the Gentlemen asks where the water comes from; once the city was divided "by a faire brooke of swéete Water," but

> at length the same by a common consent of this Citty, was arched ouer with Brick, and paued with stone equall with the ground whence it passed thorough: and is now in most places builded vpon, that no man may deserue it, and therefore the trace thereof is hardly known to the common sort of people.

[22] David Macauley, *Elemental Philosophy: Earth, Air, Fire, and Water as Environmental Ideas* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 355. "Our living and evolving world in all its complex and confusing order thus cannot be contained or fully explained by any one account, whatever its pretense to comprehensiveness or objectivity" (355).

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These sewers must be cleaned out yearly we are told, for they always spew forth like Caesar's gaping wounds—"Which like a fountain with an hundred spouts / Did run pure blood" (2.2.77–78)—but not so anthropomorphic. The sewers of "Londinium" will "rise and mutiny" again and again (3.2.221). Thus the "antiquities" are never antique. They keep coming into the present to tell histories of environmental alteration.

And arguably, *degradation*: attempting to bury brooks without a trace shows how a specific kind of recreation disavows its own violence through domestication—according to Macauley, "a process that captures, interiorizes, and changes formerly unbridled fluids"[23] —a task applicable to "this side" of any river. Yet these "traces" of silenced riparian things can never disappear. As the Citizen looks upon each object of their tour, what he cannot "sée," but what he still feels, are the nonhuman voices that continue to speak to them. Though the Citizen feels emotion with these beings, he is careful to distinguish inside/outside boundaries. When the Gentleman asks about the stocks, for example, he is told that they are there "as a punishment for those that lay any filthy thing within these fields, or make water in the same to the annoyance of those that walke therein, which euill sauors in times past haue much corrupted mans sences, and supposed to be a great nourisher of diseases." The Citizen's reaction signifies a discomfort with the impure rather than a sympathy for it, or perhaps a recognition that *nothing* is pure. In order to uphold this fantasy of the incorruptible, the fields must be exclusive; vagabonds are not allowed.[24] The same in- and exclusivity applies to the Bridewell Prison nearby. The Citizen's reverie is so disturbed by the vices within, he asks to change the subject. The new topic could not be any *less* soothing: "That place I thinke néedlesse sir to speake of in these walkes, therefore I pray you shew the of the antiquitie of this Monasterie of Bedlem where these two charitable sisters were buried." If vice cannot even be muttered within the park's walls, here we are reminded of the prison for the mentally insane that walls in the park's undesirables. The Citizen

[23] Macauley, *Elemental Philosophy*, 257. See also Chapter 7 ("Domestication of the Elements"), esp. sections "Plumbing Philosophy" and "Watercraft and Landscape Aesthetics."

[24] Consider Feste's doleful song at the end of *Twelfth Night*: "But when I cam to man's estate, / With hey, ho, the wind and the rain, / 'Gainst knaves and thieves men shut their gate" (5.1.380–382).

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sees the park as a space invaded by those creatures who "walk abroad" where they are not supposed to. The common, in short, is not so common; its pleasures must be policed in order to be so. Or slowly forgotten. At one point the Gentleman asks what certain stones signify, and he is told that the spring is called *Annis Cla . . . e,* who matching her selfe with a riotous Courtier in the time of *Edward* the first, who vainely consumed all her wealth, and leauing her in much pouertie, there drowned she herself, being then but a shallow ditch or running water." The insane, the pissers, the desolate, and the destitute are at the gate—and they always get in. But such aberrations do not belong here. In order to preserve this boundary of inside/outside, common/wealth, they must either be covered up, drowned, or have the (Moor)gate shut upon them. Their fate is only made worse by the fact that Johnson presents his conversation in the guise of a crossing: a country-city "discourse" that would seem to personify the hybridity of nature-culture. Poor parks and recreation? No: enemies of pleasure at the gate are turned away: here is the true "tragedy of the commons."[25] *For recreation is a powerful world.*

TO YOUR HEIRS FOR EVER . . . EXCEPT COYOTES

Figure 2: A coyote in (?) Griffith Park, Los Angeles.

[25] Garrett Hardin's (infamous) term concerning population growth and resource management in his article "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science* 162.3859 (1968): 1243–1248.

Up to this point I have discussed the dramatic and civic history of London recreation and the stakes of constraining the ambits of things walking abroad. *Caesar* asks us to pay attention to the fine line between alteration and degradation, how the commons are constructed and who its members are. Though we have inherited Wilson's practice we do not have to perpetuate it. Though we are Caesar's (and *Caesar*'s) heirs, we may check our impulses to "recreate [our]selves" and pursue different recreational roles in future. I now wish to talk about recreation as a combination of performance (a play) and civic history (a park) through a popular recreation at the moment: outdoor festivals often heralded as "Shakespeare in the Park." Lawrence Buell has recently prophesized that environmental criticism is a "project in motion."[26] More to my interests here, drama gives this project a unique momentum: "Dramatic performance always requires and reproduces physical environments . . . . But in performance, environmentality is underscored and its residual potentialities multiplied" (48). Ecocriticism's progenitors knew this. In *The Comedy of Survival: Literary Ecology and a Play Ethic* (1974), arguably the first work of environmental criticism, Joseph Meeker opposes the anthropocentric and environmentally-destructive genre of tragedy to what he calls the "comic way . . . the path of reconciliation."[27] This way "connects us with other species through shared evolutionary history, and through present play that crosses species lines. Comedy is a contributor to survival, and a habit that promotes health" (11).

With *Hamlet* as *Survival*'s centerpiece, Meeker's study, coincidently, is also early modern. But how can Shakespearean festivals in the rough help us navigate the "way . . . the path"—or to use *Caesar*'s term, "walks"—today? Take the example of *Hamlet* in Los Angeles's Griffith Park. When the local Independent Shakespeare Company (ISC) staged the play in September of 2011, audiences were annoyed by the howls of coyotes. "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!" indeed (1.4.20). Once, during their free summer festival, a company member grew frustrated when soliciting donations: "Can someone shoot that coyote?"[28] This exclamation

[26] Lawrence Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), ix.
[27] Joseph Meeker, *The Comedy of Survival: Literary Ecology and a Play Ethic*, 3rd edn. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997), 14.
[28] Ian Lovett, "Baying at the Bard, Appropriate or Otherwise," in *The*

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is really a request to purify the playspace of its nonhuman actors. Boundaries between the "outside" (nature) and "inside" (high culture) are insurmountable, it seems, and not just because the company's stage sits in the natural amphitheater of the Old Zoo. *Hamlet*'s coyotes force us to see how emplacement has become an increasingly important topic to consider in our world where species *howl* and where the complex relationships between humans and nonhumans can just as easily be met with a gun rather than "reconciliation." Seven Griffith Park coyotes, in fact, were tracked and killed in 2009 after two biting incidents were reported (one involved nibbling a sleeping man's toe). A public outcry ensued.[29] The recreation known as "Shakespeare in the Park" brings environmentality center stage: be it a performance in- or outdoors, a territorialized park or "coyote territory."[30] Note how easily the comedy of survival is over: "Can someone shoot that coyote?"

Baying is not playing at the ISC, apparently; and by frightening off would-be patrons, neither is it paying. The request to shoot is similar to the Citizen's desire to shut. Though hundreds of years apart, Moorfields and Griffith Parks beg the question: why are some creatures let into the commons and others are not? Gloucester's rebuke of Regan in *King Lear* says as much: "If wolves had at thy gate howled that dern time, / Thou shouldst have said 'Good porter, turn the key.' / All cruels else subscribed" (3.7.64–66). Some (wolves) are met with compassion and others (coyotes, kings) with segregation. To be sure, Gloucester is responding to what he perceives as the fallen state of nature after Lear's banishment, and possibly privileges the shut-out human because the lupine is *not* usually let indoors (hence the power of his invective: how can a daughter consider that wolves and "all cruels else" are better than her father's reentry?). But he marks the *choice* nevertheless that we all have to open or close ourselves to recreational coexistence. Timothy Morton says as much: "The trouble with love is that it has a tinge of 'evil' about it. Out of the universe of things . . . I select you."[31]

New York Times, September 13, 2011: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/14/us/out-here-coyotes-provide-soundtrack-to-theater-in-griffith-park.html.

[29] Karin Klein, "The Coyotes of Griffith Park" in *Los Angeles Times*, September 22, 2009.

[30] Lovett, "Baying at the Bard."

[31] Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard

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The ISC "turn[s] the key" of closure in Griffith Park, believing, detrimentally to coyotes, in its nature/culture boundedness. Interestingly, the company just finished *As You Like It* in their 2013 season; caught in a lovers' cacophony at the end of the play, Rosalind begs, "Pray you, no more of this; 'tis like the howling of Irish / wolves against the moon" (5.3.101–102). How would audience members react to this derogatory line amidst the coyotes' baying? Or Lear's "Howl, howl, howl, howl!" in that play's denouement (5.3.256)? Rosalind could be speaking to human and nonhuman Angelenos in attendance, a doubly derogatory line directed against an ethnicity as well as a species at once.

The walk from Johnson to the ISC through the common recreational denominator of Shakespeare helps us rephrase Gloucester's tirade as a recreational thought experiment: how *are* we to address the non/human howls at our gates, from "this side Tiber," to the mad of "morish ground," to coyotes? The Friends of Griffith Park outline better alternatives in their Wildlife Management Plan, such as biodiversity surveys and environmental education for park goers.[32] And let us open up further; hearing the language of things that does not merely disrupt our performances but *are* performances proves that we are always performing with a greater cast of characters. I am reminded of Aldo Leopold's landmark essay "Thinking Like a Mountain" for that very reason: he attempts to decipher the "hidden meaning" of the wolf's howl-language.[33] To our attempts to decipher, however, I would add an attempt to *listen* while not necessarily translating these codes into stable meanings. And a yearning to do so, even if we know that this language will always be fuzzy. When Michel Serres hears "The Great Howling of Wolves" in *Biogea*, the howling is not just flora and fauna but *everything*. The gates of the world crash open: "We heard the world open, express itself, clamor, rumble, call, demand, invade, fear, be moved, forbid. I'm telling the story of the world beginning to tell it's [sic] story."[34] These are emotions that

University Press, 2010), 96.

[32] Visit Friends of Griffith Park here: http://www.friendsofgriffithpark.org/.

[33] "Those unable to decipher the hidden-meaning know nevertheless that it is there, for it is felt in all wolf country, and distinguishes that country from all other land": Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac: And Sketches Here and There* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949).

[34] Michel Serres, *Biogea*, trans. Randolph Burks (Minneapolis: Uni-

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stress motion, emotions that arrive from the motions of others, like vibrational sound waves: "Everything stirs, of course, everything evolves, everything changes and moves, but by trembling, with emotion . . . Everything speaks. How is it we don't yet have anything said or written in this universal language?" (199). We do: hail, *Caesar*. But is it enough? The transmission importantly requires a response, an ethical signal sent back. Why not make this our recreation? The common—by now which I mean to be non/human things—asks us to listen to its pleas. Never cry coyote? *Do*. A redefined "recreation" can lead to variegations of emotion—"common pleasures" that broadcast as broadly as possible. *For recreation is a powerful word*.

RECREATE YOURSELVES

To conclude, I want to meditate on the creatures of recreation and their lives at stake, the creations to come.[35] Antony's recreation of war compels me to create my own thought experiment. Todd Borlik has advocated for re-thinking dominion from the early modern, state-centered Republic of Nature.[36] And Brutus in the play, of course, proves that "public reasons" (as in, the Roman Republic) are worth fighting for. Some have argued for "compulsory recreation."[37] I recommend that we rethink the "public." What if we reconceived recreation as a doing—an action and a process, yes—but also as an environmental practice that creates creative coexistence, that makes happen, that brings human and nonhuman relationships into being, into "common pleas-

vocal, 2012), 116.

[35] I use the term "creature" deliberately. See Julia Reinhard Lupton, "Creature Caliban," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51.1 (2000): 1–23.

[36] If Shakespeare was in the middle of these historical debates over the privatization of land (enclosure) when he composed *As You Like It* (1598-1600), he certainly was still thinking of them when he wrote *Julius Caesar* (1599). See "Rethinking Dominion" in Borlik, *Green Pastures*, 181–188.

[37] Deploring the political involvement (or lack thereof) in creating park systems, John Muir wrote that "our crude civilization engenders a multitude of wants, and law-givers are ever at their wits' end devising. The hall and the theater and the church have been invented, and compulsory education. Why not add compulsory recreation?" *John of the Mountains: The Unpublished Journals of John Muir*, ed. Linnie Marsh Wolfe (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), 234.

ures," into the Common (the *oikos*)? A "making things public"?[38] The recreational ethics I am proposing asks what ecologies we create, and re-create, and with whom. Who is restored, refreshed, revived, and who is excluded from creation? Recreation is not an activity the autonomous human undertakes, or an enclosed place the human walks through, like an orchard. I suggest that we become more intimate with these beings, for we are always creating with them. There you are, "thou earth." So here is my holiday: when the call to recreate is not a call to arms, but a chance to recreate our shared selves, a call to create, and to love, again, and again, anew. *For recreation is a powerful word.*

[38] On "the search for the Common," see Latour, "Attempt at a 'Compositionist Manifesto'" (488). For the "public," see Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel, eds., *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 2005).