

Veering Toward an Evolutionary Realignment of Freud's *Hamlet*

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King. Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame.
Hamlet (1.2.19–20)¹

Just as all neurotic symptoms, and, for that matter, dreams, are capable of being 'over-interpreted' and indeed need to be, if they are to be fully understood," reasons Sigmund Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), "so all genuinely creative writings are the product of more than a single motive and more than a single impulse in the poet's mind."² Yet, while psychoanalysis enables the literary critic to investigate the stimuli behind creativity, "the grandest and most overwhelming creations of art," as Freud concludes in "The Moses of Michelangelo" (1914), "are still unsolved riddles to our understanding. We admire them, we feel overawed by them, but," he maintains, "we are unable to say what they represent to us."³ Michelangelo's *Moses* exemplifies this mystery in sculpture, while "another of these inscrutable and wonderful works of art," William "Shakespeare's masterpiece," *Hamlet*, does so in literature.⁴

The truly artistic process remains a psychoanalytical enigma. In accordance with Freudian precepts, a functioning member of society allows the "reality principle" to repress the "pleasure principle," but artists must temporarily abjure repression. This renunciation affords them the freedom to shape their fantasies into substantive expressions. Their masterpieces arise from the interplay of "displacement, condensation and overdetermination," which is common to the imaginative faculty during dreams, as Freud had posited in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, but these particular confluences become the creatively successful sublimation of personal neuroses.⁵ In short, great artists are a class of fascinating but annoying patients

whom psychoanalysts cannot cure, the reality-pleasure conundrum defining the Freudian essence of their artistic sensitivity.

In bringing impulses into the creative process that less sensitive minds repress, artists rework the traces of primal behavior. Freud draws on Charles Darwin's *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871), William Robertson Smith's *The Religion of the Semites* (1889), Ernst Haeckel's *General Morphology of Organisms* (1866), James George Frazer's *Totemism and Exogamy* (1910), and the Lamarckian hypothesis to substantiate this proposal. Although there is "no place for the beginnings of totemism in Darwin's primal horde," as Freud acknowledges in *Totem and Taboo* (1913), "there is a violent and jealous father who keeps all the females for himself and drives away his sons as they grow up."⁶ The Darwinian "conjecture that men originally lived in hordes, each under the domination of a single powerful, violent and jealous male," therefore combined with Smith's idea of "the totem male," as Freud recalls in "An Autobiographical Study" (1925), to produce a "vision" of social emergence.⁷

This exclusive harem, which comprised daughters as well as mothers, was a matter of both biological immanence and familial incest. Academics have paid little attention to this stage in social evolution, according to Freud in *Totem and Taboo*, but when Darwin's theory comes under "psychoanalytic translation," the significance of the exasperated sons uniting to make "an end of the patriarchal horde" becomes apparent.⁸ "Cannibal savages as they were," contends Freud, "they devoured their victim as well as killing him. The violent primal father had doubtless been the feared and envied model of each one of the company of brothers," he continues, "and in the act of devouring him they accomplished their identification with him."⁹ The sons had won access to their father's females—their aunts, nieces, mothers, and sisters—but remorse for the murder made itself felt; as a result, "the dead father became stronger than the living one." Henceforth, the "sons themselves, in accordance with the psychological procedure so familiar to us in psycho-analysis under the name of 'deferred obedience,'" proscribed what their father, the Father, had previously prevented. They forbade patricide and "renounced its fruits by resigning their claim to the women who had now been set free." Thus, summarizes Freud, filial guilt underlies "the two fundamental taboos of totemism," patricide and incest.¹⁰

Freud employs Haeckel's biogenetic law, the supposition that individual human development (ontogeny) recapitulates the evolutionary history of the species (phylogeny), to refine his argument: the human subject maturing from animalist tendencies in childhood to civilized behavior as an adult. "The earliest sexual excitations of youthful human beings," states Freud, "are invariably of an incestuous character."¹¹ While maturation works to repress these stimuli, however, the adult subject retains their vestiges. Indeed, the unconscious retains "these ancient wishes," as Freud wrote James S. H. Bransom in 1934, "in all their force."¹² Hence, "the view which explains the horror of incest as an innate instinct," asserts Freud in *Totem and Taboo*, "must be abandoned."¹³ His insistence echoes Frazer's declaration in *Totemism and Exogamy*. "The law only forbids men to do what their instincts incline them to do; what nature itself prohibits and punishes, it would be superfluous for

the law to prohibit and punish. Accordingly,” infers Frazer, “we may always safely assume that crimes forbidden by law are crimes which many men have a natural propensity to commit.”¹⁴ An aversion to incest fostered the emergence of conscience, a crucial development in the formation and stabilization of human societies, with the negotiation of ambivalent feelings towards one’s parents an essential part of individual maturation.

There are, then, as David H. Spain maintains, two major elements to Freud’s theory: “(1) a primal-crime effect—the establishment in the species of guilt and various taboos in response to the primal parricide, effects which Freud thought were passed on by Lamarckian inheritance; and (2) a psychosexual-development effect—the establishment in individuals of a ‘horror’ of incest by means of castration anxiety and the internalization of parental values” during psychological maturation.¹⁵ Freud’s proviso in using “Darwin’s primal horde” hypothesis therefore agrees with his ontogenic rejection of Darwinism. Exogamy, the custom of promoting sexual relations between individuals of different families, clans, or social units, has evolved from a historic origin to counter the animalist potential, which a phylogenetic chain of causation maintains at a vestigial level, toward the practice of incest. *Homo sapiens* are at once animals and above consideration as animals. The preeminent aspect to this simultaneity is a cultural one, but the species pays a price in achieving it: the repression of incestuous impulses creates certain neuroses. That repressed efferents potentialize the psychological turmoil of adulthood, insists Freud in *Totem and Taboo*, “can scarcely be over-estimated,” as his recourse to literature in *The Interpretation of Dreams* had already demonstrated.¹⁶

Freud’s treatise on dream-work identifies “Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*” alongside “the legend of King Oedipus and Sophocles’ drama which bears his name” as prescient expressions of humankind’s bifurcated response to incest.¹⁷ What is more, boasts Freud, the “profound and universal power” of these plays “can only be understood” if psychoanalysis has “universal validity.”¹⁸ Sophocles’ tragedy depends on an oracular decree twice spoken. Laius, King of Thebes, informed that the child expected of his wife Jocasta will grow up to be his murderer, abandons his newborn son to an unattended death. An alien court adopts the rescued child as a prince. In due course, Oedipus too asks the oracle about his birth, and hears that he will murder his father and marry his mother. Events confirm these terrible predictions. “The lesson which, it is said, the deeply moved spectator should learn from the tragedy,” notes Freud, “is submission to the divine will and realization of his own impotence.” Numerous playwrights since Sophocles’ time have tried to emulate *Oedipus Rex* by presenting the same message in a contemporary formulation; yet, “spectators have looked on unmoved.” Critics and dramatists have simply missed the point. “If *Oedipus Rex* moves a modern audience no less than it did the contemporary Greek one,” believes Freud, “the explanation can only be that its effect does not lie in the contrast between destiny and human will,” but on “the particular nature of the material.” That essence is psychological. “King Oedipus, who slew his father Laius and married his mother Jocasta, merely shows us the fulfillment of our own childhood wishes.”¹⁹ A son must symbolically kill his father because the older man

impedes his unconscious designs toward his own mother. To become an accepted member of society, therefore, a son must traverse the dilemma arising from his incestuous impulses. Freud names this maturational stage the “Oedipus complex” after Sophocles’ archetypal delineation. Daughters must negotiate a similar period of psychological development, but with complementary objects: hostility toward the mother accompanies an unconscious desire for the father. The Swiss psychologist Karl Jung later named this oedipal version the “Electra complex.”

“*Hamlet*,” as Freud confirms in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, “has its roots in the same soil as ‘Oedipus Rex,’” but, as Freud’s disquisition in “Dostoevsky and Parricide” (1928) makes plain, “in the English play the presentation is more indirect.”²⁰ Prince Hamlet “does not commit the crime himself; it is carried out by someone else, for whom it is not parricide. The forbidden motive of sexual rivalry for the woman does not need, therefore, to be disguised. Moreover,” adds Freud, “we see the hero’s Oedipus complex, as it were, in a reflected light, by learning the effect upon him of the other’s crime.”²¹ Prince Hamlet “ought to avenge the crime, but finds himself, strangely enough, incapable of doing so. We know that it is his sense of guilt that is paralysing him; but, in a manner entirely in keeping with neurotic processes, the sense of guilt is displaced on to the perception of his inadequacy for fulfilling his task.”²² Claudius’ murder of his brother, King Hamlet, and his subsequent marriage to his brother’s widow, Queen Gertrude, prefigure young Hamlet’s unconscious wishes. “Thus,” states Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, “the loathing which could drive the prince [him] on to revenge is replaced in him by self-reproaches, by scruples of conscience, which remind him that he himself is literally no better than the sinner whom he is to punish.”²³ Prince Hamlet’s tergiversations arise from that “nucleus of the neuroses,” as Freud had described it in his *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (1916–1917), the Oedipus complex.²⁴ *Hamlet* hereby illustrates, as Freud wrote Bransom, “how sensitive” the playwright was to that particular dilemma.²⁵

Prince Hamlet’s guilt, argues Freud in “Dostoevsky and Parricide,” is “a super-individual one.”²⁶ The young man despises others as much as he despises himself. “Use every man after his desert,” as the prince contends, “and who should ‘scape whipping?” (2.2.528). Freud does not assume, however, that normal child development produces incestuous desires; rather, he supposes that abnormal maturation precedes such adult impulses. Although these vestigial characteristics remain latent in the psychological substrata of mature and well-adjusted individuals, the creative mind behind *Hamlet* had privileged access to them. Holding the censorial aspect of his psyche in abeyance, and with his psychical integrity open to the whims of the unconscious, the dramatist penned his drama, a tour *de force*, which literary historian J. Thomas Looney ranks, in agreement with Freud, as “the greatest play” attributed to Shakespeare.²⁷ The psychological struggle that produced this magnificent work exhibits the artistic sensibility of genius, but for Looney, only one “so sensitively constituted” as Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, a man whose “impressionability is testified by his quickness to detect a slight and his readiness to resent it,” could have created such a masterpiece.²⁸

This authorial hypothesis does not posit a conscious sublimation of personal

experiences on the part of Oxford; rather, de Vere's oeuvre, of which *Hamlet* is symptomatic, carries a psychological palimpsest created by the displacement, condensation, and overdetermination of his dream-like creative faculty. If so, biographical inquiry should help to penetrate these layers. Freud, as his "Address Delivered in the Goethe House at Frankfurt" (1930) attests, held reservations as to this methodological resort. "Even the best and fullest of biographies," he opines, "could not answer the two questions which alone seem worth knowing about. It would not throw any light on the riddle of the miraculous gift that makes an artist, and it could not help us to comprehend any better the value and the effect of his works." Even so, in the case of a great artist, he concedes, "there is no doubt that such a biography does satisfy a powerful need in us," the desire to psychoanalytically track the maturation of creative genius.²⁹

Freud's initial views on Shakespeare's authorship appeared in his own autobiographical study. "*Hamlet*," he muses, "had been admired for three hundred years without its meaning being discovered or its author's motives guessed. It could scarcely be a chance," Freud reasons, "that this neurotic creation of the poet should have come to grief, like his numberless fellows in the real world, over the Oedipus complex."³⁰ King Hamlet, as his son declaims, "was a man. Take him for all in all, / I shall not look upon his like again" (1.2.187-88). Such a progenitor, avers Looney, ensures that "*Hamlet* has father-worship as its prime motive."³¹ "For Hamlet was faced," as Freud's autobiographical vignette maintains, "with the task of taking vengeance on another for the two deeds which are the subject of the Oedipus desires; and before that task his arm was paralysed by his own obscure sense of guilt." Significantly, adds Freud, "Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet* very soon after his father's death."³² This observation, however, which supports the Stratfordian rather than Oxfordian premise, and which is in contradistinction to Looney's stance (of which Freud was then unaware), was discounted by Freud five years later.

He aired his revised thoughts on the issue during his address in the Goethe House. "It is undeniably painful to all of us that even now we do not know who was the author of the Comedies, Tragedies and Sonnets of Shakespeare," laments Freud; "whether it was in fact the untutored son of the provincial citizen of Stratford, who attained a modest position as an actor in London, or whether it was, rather, the nobly-born and highly cultivated, passionately wayward, to some extent *déclassé* aristocrat Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, hereditary Lord Great Chamberlain of England."³³ Freud pursued his detective work in his 1934 letter to Bransom. "I have already taken the liberty of hinting to you my belief in the identity of Shakespeare with Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. Let us see," he proposes, "if this assumption contributes anything to the understanding of the tragedy." *King Lear* is the play in question, Bransom conjecturing that the king is an autobiographical expression of the playwright, and Freud finding in his correspondent's favor. Firstly, notes Freud, "Oxford had three grown-up daughters (other children had died young, including the only son): Elizabeth, born 1575, Bridget 1584 and Susan 1587."³⁴ Secondly, Lear's madness reflects Oxford's rejection of the manifest content of his own psyche. When incestuous desires "came

too near to his consciousness,” he transferred them onto the king in a sublimely overdetermined form: madness.³⁵ “Shakespeare” was Edward de Vere’s nom de plume and Looney’s book, which Freud had now read, confirmed this judgment; in consequence, the 1935 edition of “An Autobiographical Study” would retrospectively deny his Stratfordian claim. “This is a construction which I should like explicitly to withdraw,” states Freud in a footnoted addendum to his original statement. “I no longer believe that William Shakespeare the actor from Stratford was the author of the works which have so long been attributed to him. Since the publication of J. T. Looney’s volume ‘*Shakespeare Identified*,’ he explains, “I am almost convinced that in fact Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, is concealed behind this pseudonym.”³⁶

Biographical evidence certainly implicates childhood trauma as a possible neurotic stimulant for Edward de Vere. The Sixteenth Earl of Oxford, John de Vere, loomed large in Edward’s early life. John was “greatly honoured in his county and highly respected, especially by his tenantry,” records Looney. “He was also a keen sportsman, being evidently noted as such.” To a young son, adjudges Looney, “a father of this kind is an ideal.”³⁷ When Edward was twelve years old, and on the verge of mounting an oedipal challenge to this beloved but formidable presence, however, John de Vere died unexpectedly. “The loss of such a father, with the complete upsetting of his young life that it immediately involved,” thinks Looney, “must have been a great grief.”³⁸ More lastingly in psychological terms, the Earl’s demise left Edward’s desire to overcome the supreme male imago permanently frustrated.

Edward’s mother, Countess Margery de Vere (née Golding), exacerbated his despair by soon remarrying. “Countess Margery,” reports Alan H. Nelson, “took as her second husband the Gentleman Pensioner Charles Tyrrell.”³⁹ “Although references to the event appear in histories of Essex, no date is given,” observes Looney, “thus strengthening our suspicion that not much prominence was given to the marriage at the time: the date especially being kept in the background.”⁴⁰ William Farina agrees with Looney concerning the embarrassing speed of this union. “When de Vere was 12 years old,” he states, “his father died suddenly and his mother hastily remarried.” Psychological circumstances then worsened for Edward when “both his mother and stepfather died a few years later.”⁴¹ In effect, and as a counterpart to John de Vere’s absence, death also indefinitely withheld the ultimate female imago from him.

Historical details supported Freud’s oedipal claim with respect to de Vere, and although James Strachey advised Freud to remove the “Looney” addendum to “An Autobiographical Study,” Freud remained in favor of the Oxfordian hypothesis.⁴² Other prominent figures backed Looney, too. “Professor Frederick Tabor Cooper of Columbia University,” as Richard F. Whalen chronicles, “welcome[d] the book,” while “the novelist John Galsworthy called Looney’s book the best detective story he had ever read. He recommended it to his friends and supplied them with copies.”⁴³ Fifty years later, Looney’s monograph continued to attract followers, with Craig Huston championing Looney’s proposition that *Hamlet* is a piece of authorial self-revelation. “The play is autobiographical,” insists Huston, “and it is obvious from a study of Oxford’s life that Hamlet is Oxford himself.”⁴⁴

Thus, one paradigm shift, from the Stratfordian to the Oxfordian, finds substantiation from another, the shift from the Cartesian to the Freudian. This comparison might seem hyperbolic, but William McFee's introduction to the second edition of Looney's work uses a related analogy. "*Shakespeare*" *Identified*, declares McFee, is "destined to occupy, in modern Shakespearean controversy, the place Darwin's great work occupies in Evolutionary theory. It may be superseded, but all modern discussion of the authorship of the plays and poems stems from it, and owes the author an inestimable debt."⁴⁵ Notwithstanding Freud's recourse to Darwinian conjecture, the Freudian model lacks evolutionary rigor: Darwin, unlike Freud, was certain about the dangers of inbreeding, and addressing this deficiency affects the Stratfordian-Oxfordian debate, (ironically) bringing Freud's near conviction closer to certainty.

"It seems possible that men during primeval times may have been more excited by strange females than by those with whom they habitually lived," muses Darwin in *The Descent of Man*. "If any such feeling formerly existed in man," he continues, "this would have led to a preference for marriages beyond the nearest kin, and might have been strengthened by the offspring of such marriages surviving in greater numbers."⁴⁶ An aversion toward inbreeding is a consequence of evolution; as a corollary, human exogamy has promoted the taboo against incest as cultural safeguard. That the genealogy of *Homo sapiens* lacks a hereditary bottleneck points to this conclusion. "We may, therefore, reject the belief," asserts Darwin, "that the abhorrence of incest is due to our possessing a special God-implemented conscience."⁴⁷ Twentieth-century advances in evolutionary science confirm Darwin's opinion. Tolerance of incest by any mammalian species, as comparative ethologist Norbert Bischof testifies, is a "die-hard fable."⁴⁸

Unfortunately, Freud not only interchanged the terms inbreeding and incest in an injudicious manner, but also underestimated the robustness of Darwin's exogamic hypothesis. In contrast, anthropologist Edward Westermarck both understood that inbreeding denotes incest, while incest need not signify inbreeding, and appreciated the evolutionary soundness of exogamy. Contemporaneous with Freud's conjectures, but firmly built on Darwinian principles, Westermarck's *The History of Human Marriage* (successive editions, 1891–1925) is an extended disquisition on incest avoidance that recognizes the maladaptive dangers of inbreeding. For Westermarck, the aversion to sexual intimacy between cohabiting relatives (whatever the mammalian species) is innate, with an increased incidence of deleterious traits, a reduction of physiological vigor, and a notable increase in premature mortality evincing the undesirability of inbreeding. The incest taboo, which identifies propinquity with respect to the family, clan, or social unit, arises from a biological foundation, supplementing an innate avoidance of inbreeding.

Freud did consider Westermarck's argument. "Domestication of animals," he concedes in *Totem and Taboo*, "might have enabled men to observe the effects of inbreeding upon racial characters," but Frazer's *Totemism and Exogamy*, which he was more inclined to believe, found against the idea.⁴⁹ "It cannot have been that primitive savages forbade incest because they perceived it to be injurious to the

offspring,” reasons Frazer; “for down to our own time the opinions of scientific men have differed on the question of whether the closest inbreeding, in other words, the highest degree of incest, is injurious or not to the progeny.”⁵⁰ Freud therefore discounts this notion too. “Even to-day,” he maintains, “the detrimental results of inbreeding are not established with certainty and cannot easily be demonstrated in man”; rather, pets and livestock evince the high incidence of incest among animals.⁵¹ Westermarckian psychologist Mark T. Erickson reinforces Bischof’s dismissal of this supposition. “Observations of mating in animals,” he insists, “show incest to be rare.”⁵² Both Frazer and Freud overlook the possibility that domestication perverts the kindred dynamics of mammals, Westermarck’s emphasis on the importance of healthy child-parent bonding remaining “a good first approximation” to the evolution of incest avoidance.⁵³

Westermarckians accept that the interdiction on incest, as a form of biosocial safeguard, supports an inherent aversion to inbreeding. Inbred progeny might not survive pregnancy or might die in adolescence. The simultaneity of the human condition—that *Homo sapiens* are both animals and beyond the animal sphere—does not challenge this conclusion. Cultural proscription does not disprove biological proscription; coevolution has simply provided a twofold security system against inbreeding. Certainly, as anthropology shows, different cultures have alternative practices with regard to the same interdiction, but these differences do not undermine the evolutionary basis of that proscription. “Incest taboos,” emphasizes geneticist Richard Dawkins, “testify to the great kinship-consciousness of man.”⁵⁴

That virtually all cultures raise children in close proximity to family members commends the scope of Westermarck’s hypothesis. Salubrious child-parent bonding is a historical and geographical standard. “It has been argued in the past few decades that there was no concept of ‘childhood’ in premodern Europe,” adduces John Boswell in *The Kindness of Strangers* (1988).⁵⁵ Familial bonds and affective ties in such societies might not conform to those envisaged by Westermarck. “These theories, however, do not fit the evidence,” continues Boswell.⁵⁶ “It is clear,” he avows, “that there was no general absence of tender feeling for children as special beings among any premodern European peoples. Everywhere in Western culture, from religious literature to secular poetry,” he maintains, “parental love is invoked as the ultimate standard of selfless and untiring devotion, central metaphors of theology and ethics presuppose this love as a universal point of reference, and language must devise special terms to characterize persons wanting in this ‘natural’ affection.”⁵⁷

Child psychologist John Bowlby’s notion of attachment helps to bring Westermarck’s approach to this feeling up to scientific date. “To say of a child that he is attached to, or has an attachment to, someone,” explains Bowlby, “means that he is strongly disposed to seek proximity to and contact with a specific figure and to do so in certain situations, notably when he is frightened, tired, or ill.”⁵⁸ This disposition is a process of physiological and psychological maturation that transient events leave unaffected. “Attachment behavior,” argues Bowlby, is somewhat different. This term “refers to any of the various forms of behaviour that a child commonly engages in to attain and/or maintain a desired proximity.”⁵⁹ The presence

of this trait is “dependent on the conditions obtaining at the time.” Thus, Bowlby’s attachment theory covers “both attachment behaviour, with its episodic appearance and disappearance, and also the enduring attachments that children and older individuals make to particular figures.”⁶⁰ On the one hand, social rather than sexual factors condition the adult contribution to a wholesome child-parent relationship. On the other hand, ontogeny activates infantile attachment and mature sexuality independently, these two behaviors being isolated phases in an emotional lifetime rather than different manifestations of a single libidinal force. Attachment guarantees that the robust bequests of outbreeding to the gene pool override the rare legacies of maladaptive inbreeding. The impress of phylogeny ensures the universal nature of Bowlby’s hypothesis. Child-parent attachment ameliorated predation as the main source of mortality in primeval man, but even in postmodern milieus, the majority of parents protect their children until they are environmentally competent.

Evolutionary scientists employ Sewall Wright’s “coefficient of relationship/relatedness,” which is alternatively known as the “index of relationship/relatedness,” or r , to measure the evolutionarily endowed support provided to relational bonds. To calculate r for two people, A and B, one must first identify their most recent common antecedents. For example, in the case of A and B being siblings, their closest shared ancestors are their parents. Common grandparents take these roles for first cousins; half-siblings share only one immediate antecedent. The next step in the formulation is to count the generational distance between A and B via their most recent common ancestors. In the case of siblings with shared parents, there is a single step up the family tree from A to A’s parents and a second step down to B, so the genealogical gap equals 2. For first cousins, there are two generational steps up to A’s common grandparents and two steps down to B, giving a genealogical distance of 4. Children with only one shared parent have a single step up from A to that ancestor followed by a single step down to B, providing a generational gap of 2. Having counted this distance for each common antecedent, one must next calculate that ancestor’s contribution to A and B’s relatedness. Each step in genealogical distance corresponds to a diminution in relationship by a factor of $1/2$. If the generational gap is 2, as is the case for siblings with shared parents, then each closest common ancestor contributes $(1/2)^2$, or $1/4$, to the coefficient of relatedness: fully related brothers and sisters therefore have an index equal to $1/2$; the coefficient of relationship between first cousins is $1/8$ because each shared ancestor contributes a ratio of $(1/2)^4$; for siblings with one common parent, r is $1/4$.⁶¹

A sliding scale measures relatedness. No evolutionary foundation to bonding exists when the coefficient of relatedness is less than $1/64$, but significant support occurs when the index is greater than or equal to $1/9$. These approximations help to classify two distinct forms of social attraction. “Sexual behavior typically occurs between distantly related or unrelated individuals,” notes Erickson. Conversely, “attachment bonding in early life and, later on, sexual avoidance and preferential altruism occur almost exclusively between immediate kin.” Westermarck’s concept of incest avoidance and Bowlby’s attachment theory describe separate features of a single, encompassing phenomenon, which Erickson terms “familial bonding.”⁶²

Dependable family bonds develop in a childhood environment that provides physical nourishment, emotional support, and responsible care. Hence, the explanation of personal development offered by familial bonding and the Oedipus complex stress different aspects of individual maturation: the evolutionary perspective emphasizes that discriminatory nurture *schoools against* abhorrent sexual practice, whereas the Freudian viewpoint emphasizes that ideological apparatuses of the state, and especially the home, *repress* any tendency toward incest.

Erickson's paradigm grades the likelihood of incest between individuals according to the strength of the intervening familial bond. Incestuous practice is least likely when this link is secure. If familial relations are either unavailable or unresponsive, however, then the probable result of a child's maturation is at once a diminished sensitivity and a sexual ambivalence toward family members. Another level of relational degradation occurs when a newborn child is separated from immediate kin to be reunited with them in adulthood. Incest is therefore most probable between relations with no familial bond. Erickson defers to Donald Webster Cory's *Violation of the Taboo* (1963), a seminal enumeration of incest in literature, to support his thesis in an echo of Freud's recourse to *Oedipus Rex* and *Hamlet*.⁶³ "The typical story line in poems, novels, and plays in which incest is a theme," concludes Erickson, "is one of separation in infancy with later incestuous reunion." This two-stage process is the archetype that *Oedipus Rex* so acutely portrays, Sophocles' drama illustrating how "early separation undermines natural incest avoidance," his play remaining a vital theatrical experience because it hinges on the universality of familial bonding, not incest.⁶⁴

Inbreeding is rare and laws against incest, as Boswell states, "reflect degree of disapproval more than frequency of occurrence."⁶⁵ Freud was correct, there is an incest taboo, but he was wrong concerning the related aversion-inducing mechanism. "Freud," explains Spain, "mistakenly considered Westermarck's theory a mere tautology."⁶⁶ *Totem and Taboo* exemplifies this error. To explain the horror of incest "by the existence of an instinctive dislike of sexual intercourse with blood relatives," argues Freud, "—that is to say, by an appeal to the fact that there *is* a horror of incest—is clearly unsatisfactory."⁶⁷ Conversely, adds Spain, Westermarck "did not credit Freud's distinction between unconscious and conscious impulses. For whatever reason, he was unable to appreciate that Freud did not believe that the outcome of normal child development was a desire to mate or have sex with family members but held precisely the opposite view."⁶⁸ This intellectual disparity forms the essence of the ongoing Freudian-Westermarckian debate. Affording adequate attention not only to the ontogeny of the Oedipus complex, but also to the aversion-inducing mechanism behind the incest taboo, as promulgated by Westermarck and updated by Erickson, brings these two viewpoints into closer alignment.

This methodological move helps to substantiate Oxfordian claims concerning *Hamlet*. As a boy, Edward de Vere experienced two distinctive phases of familial bonding, with a foster family taking over the role of his biological parents when his father died. This process witnessed the disarticulation of the asymmetric parental affiliation that informed the earliest years of Earl Edward's life. The affective tie

between Edward and his father, as the aforementioned quotes from Looney, Nelson, and Farina evince, was strong: Edward's reverence for his father finding an analogy in the prime motive behind Prince Hamlet's behavior. On his mother's side, however, and if Margery de Vere's attitude toward Edward after his father's death is a reliable indicator of her nurturing attitude, then his familial abandonment to become a ward of court hints at circumstances conducive to an unhealthy desire for mother-love. We may speculate that Edward wished for a stronger bond with Margery than she was ready to provide. Edward's sheltering under royal auspices therefore promised to heal and redress the broken and asymmetrical familial bonds that characterized son-parent relationships at Hedingham.

After the death of his father in 1562, Edward became a member of William Cecil's London household. Despite his status as a commoner, Cecil was not only Master of the Court of Wards and Liveries, but also an influential adviser to Queen Elizabeth. The Cecils' acceptance of Edward de Vere into their family might seem to exemplify the kindness of strangers, but this was not the case. "Oxford was legally a royal ward," documents Daphne Pearson, "his wardship was not sold, and it appears that he had to buy it himself on his majority." The queen's relationship with Cecil "was such that no transaction was necessary if Cecil expressed an interest in what was practical, if not recorded, guardianship of such a young nobleman as Oxford."⁶⁹ Hence, as Boswell contends, the expediency of court wardship was less altruistic than the general tenor of fostering in earlier times. The "increasing social significance" afforded to "lineage and birth" meant "the much idealized, almost transcendent relationship of *alumnus* with foster parent, so admired in the ancient world, had only pale counterparts in medieval [and post-medieval] Europe."⁷⁰

Indeed, evidence suggests that although Edward de Vere's foster parents displayed a symmetric attitude toward him, this evenhandedness was not a matter of nurture and healthy sustenance. On the side of the paternal imago, William Cecil did not form strong bonds with his own (let alone anybody else's) children. "As a guardian," states Bronson Feldman, "the political polymath Cecil exhibited no less care for the orphan Earl of Oxford than he showed for his own son."⁷¹ None of Cecil's "children" received affection from their father. Cecil's confession about his son Robert, which Conyers Read cites, exemplifies this coldness. "I never showed any fatherly fancy to him," admitted Cecil, "but in teaching and correcting."⁷² A post-Armada letter—one of those missives that, as William Plumer Fowler avows, "offer strong and convincing corroboration of J. Thomas Looney's well-documented conclusion that Oxford, rather than the scantily-educated Stratford theater-worker William Shaksper [*sic*], was the true author of the imposing Shakespearean literary output"—indicates Edward's sly acknowledgment of this parental reluctance.⁷³ "I find mine honorable good Lord," Edward wrote Cecil on September 8, 1590, that you "deal more fatherly than friendly with me, for which I do acknowledge and ever will myself in most especial wise bound."⁷⁴ Cecil was less than friendly, and rather authoritarian, in his guardianship of Edward.

Cecil's inability to forge close ties with either natural or fostered children resulted from his own formative genealogical disappointment. "At the Field of the

Cloth of Gold,” as Alan Gordon Smith chronicles, “there was in attendance on King Henry VIII of England a young squire named Richard Cecil, a humble page of the household, whose solitary claim to distinction is that on the 13th of the following September he became the father of his illustrious son.” William, embittered by his father’s low social rank, associated himself with his paternal grandfather. “Feeling presently that his own [genealogy] lacked something in distinction,” notes Smith, “he was tempted to engraft it from his grandfather, David Cecil, upon the enviable antiquity of the Herefordshire Sitsilts.”⁷⁵ Identification with these revered antecedents enabled William to dismiss his paternal epigone. In William’s mind, he was anterior to his father’s generation; in effect, he reduced his own father Richard to a genealogical interloper.

Abandonment of filial ties therefore characterized William Cecil’s indifference to familial bonds as a father. What was worse for Edward de Vere, Cecil’s familial aloofness repeated Edward’s loss of a paternal imago against whom to resolve his Oedipus complex, a symbolic reiteration that Feldman’s evidence supports. For, when grown (rather than matured) into manhood, de Vere “confided his military aspirations to Cecil and pleaded with him to gain the queen’s goodwill to his going overseas in order to learn the skills of battle in a foreign field of blood.” Cecil, in a rebuff that continued to arrest de Vere’s psychological development, “did not take his aspiration seriously; he kept the young man at his books.”⁷⁶ Other father figures, including Thomas Radcliff, Earl of Sussex, somewhat filled the paternal void, but the main familial bond on Oxford’s spear-side remained unquestionably weak.

On the side of the maternal imago, Lady Mildred Cecil was a woman begrudging in her love, toward whom Edward took a dislike. The young de Vere was supposed to have “quarrelled with the other members of the household,” reports Looney, but with William Cecil’s lack of bonding, and with “the fact that when Oxford entered the house Anne Cecil was a child five years old, Robert Cecil was still unborn and Thomas Cecil had already left home, it is not easy to see who there would be to quarrel with except the irascible Lady Cecil.”⁷⁷ In consequence, Edward’s desire for a maternal bond alighted on Queen Elizabeth. “He enjoyed an easy familiarity with the Queen,” documents Looney. “He seems in his early life to have had a real affection for her and she for him; and, later on, as he developed into manhood, received attentions of such a nature from the Queen, now middle-aged, as to cause his irate mother-in-law to take her royal mistress to task about it. An entry appears in the Calendered State Papers stating that it was affirmed by one party that ‘the Queen wooed the Earl of Oxford but he would not fall in.’”⁷⁸ De Vere’s mother-love would remain unrequited because Margery’s remarriage strained the already fragile familial bond between them and, by the time of her death, he was too old to find its adequate replacement.

Put succinctly, and as Looney argues about de Vere’s wardship under the Cecils, the boy was “subjected to corrupting influences” and “true domestic influences were lost to him.”⁷⁹ Erickson’s predictive scale forecasts the result of such unhealthy familial bonding: incest was somewhat likely to occur between Edward de Vere and a member of his guardian’s household. That Anne Cecil, who was five years old when

her parents took in the twelve-year-old Oxford, became his “incestuous” mate is of little evolutionary surprise. Their union in December 1571 not only suited Lord Burghley—the queen had raised Cecil to the Peerage ten months earlier—but also revealed his motives for being Master of the Court of Wards and Liveries. Cecil might “not have the right of guardianship” over de Vere, stresses Pearson, but “he had custody of the body.” Moreover, “Cecil would appear to have had a guardian’s right of marriage,” and this proprietorship “was not entirely what it seemed.”⁸⁰ Cecil’s childhood stigma with regard to his own lineage was again at issue. “For one of the very few hobbies of William Cecil’s maturity,” observes Smith, “was to be a passionate interest in genealogies.”⁸¹ Hence, Anne’s marriage was, as John Waterfield avers, “very much a part of Burghley’s strategy for expanding his power base.”⁸²

Although the index of relationship between Edward de Vere and Anne confirmed that the danger of inbreeding was negligible, their shared environment as children, a common home life that should have formed a notable sibling bond between them, meant their marriage bordered on the incest taboo. This implicit dubiousness may even have subconsciously triggered the subsequent animosity (rather than irascibility) of Edward’s mother-in-law toward him. “Lady Burghley,” notes Farina, “was known to have been highly critical of her son-in-law, especially for his neglect of her daughter.” This indifference echoed both William’s emotional neglect of de Vere and Edward’s desire to escape Mildred’s presence. That “de Vere’s mother-in-law” came to have “no use for him,” as Farina attests, was inevitable in the wake of such impaired bonding.⁸³

Steps toward the resolution of the Freudian-Westermarckian debate indicate that the Cecils’ perverse altruism toward de Vere conflated with Edward’s unresolved Oedipus complex. What is more, as an expression of psychological displacement, distillation, and overdetermination, *Hamlet* testifies to this complex dynamic. De Vere’s marriage to Anne Cecil condensed a sense of incestuousness with one of outbreeding. The play transfers this condition onto the similar case of Claudius’ union with Gertrude and simultaneously overdetermines this displacement with the prince and stepfather’s coefficient of relationship. Rather than an insignificant index of relatedness, as usually holds between stepsons and stepfathers, a factor of $\frac{1}{4}$ intervenes between nephew-stepson and uncle-stepfather, an unusual closeness that conjures up the specter of inbreeding. The scheming and manipulative Claudius—Jason P. Rosenblatt likens him to his namesake, the Roman Emperor Claudius—heightens perceptions of this perversion with his first words to Hamlet.⁸⁴ “But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son” (1.2.64), expresses the desire to push their coefficient of relatedness from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$. Hamlet, attuned to his uncle’s duplicity, answers in an aside that echoes de Vere’s September 8, 1590, letter to Cecil, “a little more than kin, and less than kind!” (1.2.65).⁸⁵

Being closer than kin, or natural family, intimates the dangers of inbreeding and although Hamlet’s existence “freed Gertrude from the obligation to marry Claudius,” as Rosenblatt states, “she has not chosen freedom.”⁸⁶ The queen herself believes, however, that the source of her son’s distraction is “no other but the main, / His father’s death and our o’erhasty marriage” (2.2.56–57). Hence, despite

Gertrude's impulsive union with Claudius refiguring Margery de Vere's hastiness in remarrying, the graver charge of incest is surely the playwright's transference of a personal sense of guilt. He well knew that his marriage to Anne Cecil tested the propinquity of familial bonds and, while Gertrude's act "is a censurable indiscretion perhaps but no mortal sin," as Baldwin Maxwell argues, Edward de Vere judged himself more harshly; as a corollary, an evolutionarily inflected reading of *Hamlet* must abandon the charge of incest against Gertrude.⁸⁷

Ernest Jones, Freud's acolyte and first biographer, makes this accusation against the queen in "The Oedipus Complex as an Explanation of Hamlet's Mystery" (1910), a study that he later reprised and extended in *Hamlet and Oedipus* (1949). Had Claudius' relationship with Gertrude "not counted as incestuous," argues Jones, "then Queen Elizabeth would have had no right to the throne; she would have been a bastard, Katherine [*sic*] of Aragon being still alive at her birth."⁸⁸ Jones appeals to F. J. Furnivall to justify this interpretation of the play. Gertrude's "disgraceful adultery and incest, and treason to his noble father's memory, Hamlet has felt in his inmost soul. Compared to their ingrain die," maintains Furnivall, "Claudius' murder of his father—notwithstanding all his protestations—is only a skin-deep stain."⁸⁹ The evolutionary realignment of Freudian theory discounts this finding. Hamlet's supplication, "go not to my uncle's bed" (3.4.160), may avail nothing of his mother, but even his repetition of this demand need not damn Gertrude. "The aspect of incest in the plea, if it exists at all," agrees Lowell L. Manfull, "is mitigated by the fact that Hamlet is being motivated not so much by an immoral passion as by a wholly natural desire associated with the role of son." Prince Hamlet simply wishes "to restore his mother to the position of unquestioned virtue which once she held."⁹⁰

This desire may be of no great matter to Claudius, but his marriage to Gertrude is unsettled from the start. "Above the fact that a crime has been committed within the domestic scene," notes Manfull, "a criminal act has been perpetrated against the state."⁹¹ The ghost of King Hamlet repeatedly complains, "the whole ear of Denmark / Is by a forgèd process of my death / Rankly abused" (1.5. 36–38). While a Freudian-Westermarckian perspective understands Claudius' behavior as self-interest in advance of kin-selected altruism, however, Rosenblatt prefers to blame individual selfishness in defiance of cultural decency. "The solitary human organism born at a particular time and place is the biological base for Claudius' [his] position."⁹² Notwithstanding this partial disagreement, both readings resound to the tenor of selfishness, and Claudius' murder of his brother arises from an atypical distortion of self-interest.

Hamlet hereby presents Claudius as the victimizing victim of a perverse familial bonding environment: the monarchal biotope. "Our state to be disjoint and out of frame" (1.2.20) is Claudius' avowed perspective on the House of Denmark. This distorted environment must have been especially to the fore during his formative years. As a boy, Claudius was "the spare" to his brother, "the heir"—the paradoxical extraneous necessity of a royal genealogy, which would have informed a certain spiritual separation from his parents during childhood. When Gertrude's son survived into adulthood, the needlessness of Claudius' position must have

taken precedence in his mind. Worse, a close biological relationship never gives absolute grounds for royal altruism, because monarchies are particularly subject to maladaptive evolution. Desire for the crown is a form of intraspecific competition that severely impairs bonding; as a result, the covariation of Wright's index posits the possibility of significant intrafamilial aggression, with threat perception proportional to the value of r . The index of relatedness between full brothers ($1/2$) is enough to abet Claudius' actions. "We have good reason to consider intra-specific [*sic*] aggression the greatest of all dangers," warns ethologist Konrad Lorenz.⁹³ With his murder of King Hamlet, usurpation of the throne, and acquisition of the dead king's wife in an instance of widow-inheritance, Claudius reduces Lorenz's intraspecific set to a familial one.

Royal families must fight hard to survive and Oxford understood the monarchical biotope from the inside. Under normal social conditions, the danger of excessive population density is obviated by mutual repulsion, as Lorenz explains, with interpersonal spacing regulated "in much the same manner as electrical charges are regularly distributed all over the surface of a spherical conductor." But in small, isolated groups, there is not enough room to provide each member with adequate individual space, and what ethologists now call "polar disease," or "expedition cholera," becomes a pressing danger. Small groups who are completely dependent on one another are predisposed to this type of antagonism. "Intraspecific competition," as Lorenz stresses, "is the 'root of all evil' in a more direct sense than aggression can ever be." That is why there is so much pageantry and ceremony in and about monarchies. The process of phylogenetic ritualization promotes an autonomous instinct that diverts aggression along harmless channels. Culturally conventionalized behavior patterns should unite the individuals within a royal group, suppress intragroup fighting, and set that collective apart from other groups.

Edward de Vere understood pageantry not as a spectator, but as a participant, and his formal inauguration into this aspect of the nobility's environment came with his father's death. Feldman records how the Sixteenth Earl of Oxford was buried "with pomp of heraldry and much mortuary ritual."⁹⁴ Edward immediately succeeded him as Lord Great Chamberlain, an office that, as Looney states, "had been hereditary in his family for centuries." This position concerned "state functions and the royal person, near whom this official was placed on such great occasions as coronations and royal funerals."⁹⁵ Farina reiterates this point. De Vere, as Lord Great Chamberlain, "was entitled and obligated to play various ceremonial roles at court, with emphasis on pomp and display."⁹⁶ This experience must have influenced his creative writing because these ceremonial duties would have honed "valuable skills for the accomplished stage dramatist that he was noted to have been." Furthermore, "de Vere's successful career as an athlete would have provided him invaluable experience in the arts of Elizabethan pageantry and showmanship. His three tournament victories in 1571 and 1581 (twice), along with his unanswered Palermo challenge in Sicily," states Farina, "established his reputation as a master of the tilt. To accomplish this, de Vere would had to have been a crowd pleaser, comfortable with the rituals of heraldry and providing lavish costuming, along with dramatic visual spectacle."⁹⁷

Thus, Oxford's marriage to Anne Cecil, as Looney relates, "was celebrated with great pomp," and in Queen Elizabeth's presence.⁹⁸

Pageantry aids royal families to skew their subjects' perception of biological innateness. This deception is a hegemonic necessity because the human blueprint is consistent across the species. Evolution is conservative and natural selection works by varying the relative sizes and, to some extent in some species, the numbers of parts in a bodily structure, rather than by altering the blueprint. The human blueprint, which casts all humans equal, does not favor the blueblooded. An evolutionary viewpoint therefore provokes a disagreement with Feldman concerning Edward de Vere himself. "All men are created unequal, he thought," states Feldman, "and are destined by celestial law to govern or to serve."⁹⁹ Feldman's declaration is surely mistaken. Oxford was certainly a member of the nobility and acutely aware of the need for ceremony and pageantry to set that group apart, but he also fantasized of escaping from that environment. "The irksomeness to him of court life," argues Looney, "seems to have manifested itself quite early in manhood." Discerning the monarchy's lack of vigorous stock, individuals sourced from beyond the confines of nobility, "he made several efforts to escape from it."¹⁰⁰ Hence, an evolutionarily inflected reading of de Vere further disagrees with Feldman when he contends that to Oxford's "way of thinking, gentility signified virtue, and virtue meant venerable stock, an old holiness of blood." De Vere did hold social differences "dear," as Feldman declares, but dear to Oxford in this context meant a costly demand.¹⁰¹

Genetic faults and problems in ontogeny occasionally lead to unexpected biological occurrences, but such events are rare. Paradoxically, the monarchical tendency toward inbreeding leaves blue blood more susceptible to undesirable outcomes beyond the standard blueprint. That the restrictive monarchical biotope is biologically unhealthy further undermines the unstable familial bonds of royalty. Maladaptive evolution, as promulgated by inbreeding, lies at the heart of this threat. Oxford, as the descendant of a restricted social group, was aware of the danger. "The de Veres," chronicles Frederic Chancellor, "were the representative family of the nobility in Essex."¹⁰² They traced their descent, as Looney notes, "in a direct line from the Norman Conquest," and boasted "five and a half centuries" of unbroken male lineage.¹⁰³ In short, "without being actually a prince of royal blood he was so near to it," states Looney, "as to be regarded in that light."¹⁰⁴ Pertaining to the higher aristocracy meant that Oxford understood the nobility's domination "by the feudal ideals of *noblesse oblige*."¹⁰⁵

The 1579 tennis-court dispute between Edward de Vere and Philip Sidney indicated Edward's position in the monarchical pecking order. "There is a great difference in degree between the Earls and private gentlemen," Queen Elizabeth rebuked Sidney, "and Princes are bound to support the nobility and to insist on their being treated with proper respect."¹⁰⁶ "Edward de Vere's pride in his ancient ancestry," as Looney observes of Oxford's contemporaries, "is commented on by more than one writer," but Oxford also appreciated the exogamic safeguard against hereditary maladaptation.¹⁰⁷ Paradoxically, de Vere's appreciation of this benefit found solid expression in his betrothal to Anne Cecil, who belonged "to the newly

emerging middle class.”¹⁰⁸ Oxford was biologically satisfied with his choice of bride, but Queen Elizabeth’s marriage consent was “almost as great a concession ... as was that of Denmark’s King and Queen to the marriage of Hamlet with the daughter of Polonius” because the middle class were “held in contempt by the few remaining representatives of the ancient aristocracy.”¹⁰⁹ To offset her concession, the queen symbolically ensured that children from the de Vere-Cecil union would be of the royal biotope: as previously observed, she raised Anne’s father to the peerage. Even so, as Looney reports, this promotion did not still the tongue of every lord. “We have it reported by a contemporary, Lady Lord St. John,” he notes, “that, ‘the Erle of Oxenforde hath Oxford gotten himself a wyffe, or, at *leste a wyffe hath caught him*.’”¹¹⁰

Such considerations go unrecognized by Freud. This is unfortunate for his interpretation of *Hamlet* because a monarchy comprises individuals of a pseudospecies for whom exogamy plays an ambiguous role in survival. On the one hand, outbreeding guards against poor evolutionary adaptations. On the other hand, formally ratified exogamic relations dilute the distinctiveness of an intraspecific group that wishes to remain an inherently isolated group. This paradox contributes in no small part to Prince Hamlet’s dilemma. For, despite coefficients of relationship buttressed against internecine fractiousness by the ceremonies of monarchy, the results of maladaptive evolution can prove overwhelming. Under this sort of pressure, as Oxford delineates, a mind can disintegrate. Conflation ironically symptomizes this distress for Hamlet when he interprets Claudius’ murderous actions as the killing of two people. “Father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is / one flesh; and so, my mother” (4.3.49–51). King Hamlet’s union with Gertrude, believes their son, was a bond so strong as to unite them in a single being. “Where a Freudian, Oedipal view of incest presumes Hamlet’s envy of his father,” insists Rosenblatt, “a Scriptural view of the incest prohibition might posit instead a relationship of concord between father and son, both of whom require from Gertrude the loyalty that would confirm their existence.”¹¹¹ A literary hermeneutic attuned to Erickson’s updated Westermarckian paradigm confirms Rosenblatt’s assertion.

Although the coefficient of relationship between uncle and nephew is less than that between siblings with shared parents, a value of $1/4$ remains significant in kindred terms. From Claudius’ view of familial bonding, one that rates intraspecific competition in aggressive terms, Prince Hamlet is a threat even before King Hamlet’s murder provokes the possibility of revenge. Claudius must remove this danger. His attempt to do so through the agency of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern signifies this elimination topographically with the prince’s journey to England implying his permanent removal by death. The failure of this scheme keeps Hamlet’s threat alive in Claudius’ calculations and Claudius is too paranoid to realize that two asymmetries in response to their relatedness play in his favor.

Ritualized behavior that diminishes heterogenerational antagonism from the perspective of the younger participant constitutes one of these inequalities. Social conditioning intends members of a generation to be respectful, submissive, and appeasing to their forebears. People who know their place tend to defer to those above them. If aggressive feelings do arise in a submissive individual of this type,

then they tend to be canalized toward a third party. Ethologist Nikolaas Tinbergen calls this form of behavior a redirected activity. Provocative stimuli both elicit a response and emit other reactions that deflect the direct discharge of aggression. Hamlet's soliloquies testify to his ratiocinative character and such a man is more likely to express violence through redirection. This expedient prevents the injurious effects of aggressive behavior on either the subject (Hamlet) or the stimulating object (Claudius). As Tinbergen's thesis predicts, and as Oxford shows, however, this redirected aggression is not without a target.

Hamlet's canalization transmutes into and terminates in his disproportionate love for Ophelia. His feelings cannot disregard their origin but hide that wellspring beneath a cloak of excess. Laertes is awake to these symptoms. He at once understands the strength of Hamlet's passion and something of its unhealthy genesis. "Perhaps he loves you now, / And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch / The virtue of his will," he tells Ophelia. "But you must fear, / His greatest weighed, his will is not his own. / For he himself is subject to his birth" (1.3.14-18). Ophelia is an appealingly static and stoic target for Hamlet's redirected emotions. Her demure character recalls Lorenz's thoughts on withholding emotion. If the subject must act "so as not to betray inner tension," and is "longing to do something but prevented by strong opposing motives from doing it," then an internal conflict has arisen.¹¹² The realignment of Hamlet's passion from Claudius to Ophelia results in her own realignment of that confusing imposition. Redirection of redirected aggression, as if engendering an inward and autotelic process, is the possible cause of her suicide.

Age difference also lies at the heart of the second asymmetry of relatedness that plays in Claudius' favor over the prince. In both relational directions, to reiterate Claudius, "Our state" remains "disjoint and out of frame" (1.2.20). An only son, Prince Hamlet's childhood was not dogged by the extraneous necessity that must have attended Claudius' upbringing, and an evolutionary reading explains this imbalance through cost-benefit analysis. The amount lost or gained by certain actions factorizes the coefficient of relatedness. In all probability, Claudius will predecease his nephew, whereas a violent altercation between the two men exposes Hamlet to serious danger. Patience will afford the prince the crown, but impatience will severely compromise his life.

Despite both of these asymmetries, however, Claudius understands inaction toward his nephew as the chance for princely revenge. Paranoid, but logical, Claudius desires the prompt and permanent removal of his nephew. Denmark's laws of succession and marriage may break with natural heredity, yet Hamlet's lineage, his very body, proclaims his right to the crown. Oxford was intensely aware of this conundrum. His own body, as a manifestation of his genealogy, proclaimed his rightful inheritance of Castle Hedingham on John de Vere's demise, but "owing to his being in his minority at the time," as Looney reports, "the latter's nomination of him as one of the executors of his will was inoperative." De Vere's uncle, Arthur Golding, became his tutor and "receiver of his property."¹¹³

Oxford's complement to Hamlet's situation in *King John* reiterates the playwright's anger at this state of affairs. The biological immanence of Philip the

bastard, argues Alison Findlay, “proclaims his identity as Coeur de Lion’s son and makes a mockery of the law expounded by King John.” *Hamlet* delineates a similar reason for disdain. In either case, the law of kingship “relies on a type of justice which ignores immediate evidence.”¹¹⁴ The word of law confounds an illegitimate body in *King John*; in *Hamlet*, the semi-legitimate body of the dead king’s brother confronts and contradicts the legitimate body of the dead king’s son. Prince Hamlet’s index of relationship to the monarch can be nothing other than $\frac{1}{2}$ and the coefficient he shares with Claudius, $\frac{1}{4}$, is shy of this value. “Hamlet, the only child of the reigning house,” notes Simon Augustine Blackmore, “was the recognized heir apparent, and in an absolute monarchy like the Denmark of his day, became ipso facto king on the death of his father.”¹¹⁵ While biological evidence backs Hamlet’s right to the throne, Claudius must rely on hidebound words.

Even so, the caprices inherent in familial and contextual certainty afflict the situations of Hamlet and Claudius respectively. Although kindred bonding is proportional to the index of relatedness, explains Dawkins, “the distinction between family and non-family is not hard and fast, but a matter of mathematical probability.”¹¹⁶ The possibility of ambiguity increases when a conditioning effect on Wright’s coefficient of relationship is considered; expressed briefly, biological relatedness is sometimes less important than a best estimate of interpersonal affinity. Notwithstanding the cultural aid afforded to kinship recognition among humans, relational certainty remains important in familial behavior. On the prince’s side, paternity is far more questionable than maternity. On his uncle’s side, language operates through *différance* rather than presence. “The law,” as H el ene Cixous adjudges, “is absolute, verbal, invisible, negative, it is a symbolic *coup de force* and its force is its invisibility, its non-existence, its force of denial, its ‘not.’”¹¹⁷ However, while Cixous posits bodily presence as facing the law, a substantiality “which is, is, is,” Findlay comes nearer the point with her insistence of the parallel case in *King John*: “while the bastard’s evidence is physically present and obvious to all in the court, the word remains detached, relying on a lack of evidence—the same kind of paternal ‘absence’ found in human reproduction.”¹¹⁸

Biology and culture never confer surety of status because each context lacks completeness. Such reasoning helps to elucidate Hamlet’s contradictory axiom in which “the body is with the King, but the King is not with the body” (4.2.27). Direct genetic lineage and *de facto* kingship fracture Hamlet’s rights of inheritance. What is more, as Findlay emphasizes, fragmentation of royal legitimacy “is magnified in the disintegration of absolute values in their world.” “Bastardy,” then, “is a powerful metaphor for such decay in *King John*,” as Findlay believes, but *Hamlet* goes further, proffering the more disturbing correlate of close kin *separated* by their coefficient of relationship.¹¹⁹ Hamlet’s aside in response to his uncle’s opening address, his Oxfordian jibe at Claudius for being “a little more than kin, and less than kind!” (1.2.65), expresses this obfuscation of familial identities. As Manfull argues, Hamlet determines “to remain the son of the dead king.”¹²⁰ No wonder, when asked by Claudius, “How is it that the clouds still hang on you?” (1.2.66), he replies in punning fashion, “Not so, my lord. I am too much in the sun” (1.2.67).

Hamlet's fractured rights of inheritance reveal cultural ratification of the kingly soma as an increasingly important prerequisite for the lineal sustenance of royal families. Some monarchies rely on ideological state apparatuses to maintain their social preeminence, others prefer repressive state apparatuses, but most employ a combination of the two systems. King Claudius rules via such a structural mix. In his uncle, Hamlet faces an almost overwhelmingly powerful opponent, a man who deserves Hamlet's respect as an older relative, a man whose apparently lawful accession the well-established ranks of Danish society seemingly support, a man who controls the Danish army, palace guards, and civil militia. This antagonist's cultural, ideological, and hierarchical preeminence admirably demonstrate the coevolutionary fostering of degenerate behavior. Kingship in the Royal House of Denmark has perverted monarchical kinship. "The whole play," as Feldman correctly asserts, "is the product of 'Shakespeare's' angry meditations on the rottenness which he had detected in royalty."¹²¹

The tragic predicament of perverted monarchical kinship, rather than the repression of incestuous desires of which Freud writes, impels the prince's moral regression. Young Hamlet recognizes and accepts manmade laws, but must eventually violate those very edicts. This vital inner tension helps to set Oxford's drama above its Danish antecedent. The twelfth-century chronicle of Horwendill, Feng, and Amleth in the Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus's *Historiae Danicae* is more akin to a primitive morality play in which vengeance is a mandatory response to heinous crimes against the family—considerations of law and legal justice are of little matter. By Oxford's time, "the conviction that retaliation for murder was solely the prerogative of the state and its legal institutions," as Anne Barton emphasizes, "clashed with an irrational but powerful feeling that private individuals cannot be blamed for taking vengeance into their own hands, for ensuring that the punishment truly answers the crime."¹²² Elizabethan England was establishing the primacy of written statutes and Oxford's play anticipates the furtherance of this state of affairs. Judiciousness undoubtedly contributes to Hamlet's prorogation of revenge. As potential head of state, the prince must set an example in lawful conduct, as King Hamlet had done. Horatio's testimony concerning the death of the King of Norway expresses this prerogative.¹²³ King Hamlet

Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a sealed compact
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror;
Against the which a moiety competent
Was gagèd by our King; which had returned
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher, as, by the same covenant
And carriage of the article designed,
His fell to Hamlet (1.1.86–95).

Young Fortinbras acts immediately to avenge his father's death. Claudius recognizes the danger posed and knows that appeals to international agreements will not sway his determination:

He hath not failed to pester us with message
 Importing the surrender of those lands
 Lost by his father, with all bands of law,
 To our most valiant brother
 (1.2.22–25).

Where international relations are involved, fewer worries niggle at Fortinbras's resolve, which stands in sharp contrast to Hamlet's tergiversations. Only physical distance holds back the act of revenge. No such problem faces Laertes, who vows to requite Polonius's death at the hands of Prince Hamlet. "To this point I stand," swears Laertes, "That both the worlds I give to negligence, / Let come what comes, only I'll be revenged / Most thoroughly for my father" (4.5.135–38). Nor does genealogical relatedness impede Laertes's desire for action.

In comparison, the evolutionarily engendered trap that retains Hamlet is a multifaceted web, with his clouded perspective on kindred certainty being another source of prevarication. Patience, as cost-benefit analysis has already shown, should afford Hamlet the crown, whereas impatience will severely endanger his prospects, but this calculation must also include the likelihood of future procreation. "To save the life of a relative who is soon going to die of old age," avers Dawkins, "has less of an impact on the gene pool of the future than to save the life of an equally close relative who has the bulk of his life ahead of him."¹²⁴ If Hamlet had directed his murderous thoughts primarily toward his mother, then the prospect of new kin would not be a consideration. Men, however, do not go through the menopause, and Claudius presumably remains able to sire children. Their relatedness to Hamlet would evince an index of relationship equal to $1/4$, which is less than the $1/2$ pertaining to any future children Hamlet might have, but more than the 0 of no progeny. Royal lineage is a matter of generations and the odds on a direct descendant from Prince Hamlet lengthen considerably with Ophelia's death.

Hence, the prince's consideration of relatedness must take into account the likelihood of future reproduction appertaining to his uncle. This cost-benefit analysis is complicated and an evolutionarily inclined criticism surmises that the intuitive consideration and reconsideration of this reckoning contribute to Hamlet's hesitancy. "There is no end to the progressive refinement of the calculation that could be achieved in the best of all possible worlds," admits Dawkins. "But real life is not lived in the best of all possible worlds. We cannot expect real animals to take every last detail into account in coming to an optimum decision. We shall have to discover," he concedes, "by observation and experiment in the wild, how closely real animals actually come to achieving an ideal cost-benefit analysis."¹²⁵ Oxford's insight presents Hamlet's febrile attempt to balance his biological cost-benefit calculation with the cultural expectations and pressures of his particular situation. Innate strategies

dominate the actions of non-human animals, but Hamlet does not have this license. He has fallen foul of the monarchal biotope into which he was born. “The time is out of joint,” he declares of the rotten state of Denmark, “O, cursèd spite, / That ever I was born to set it right!” (1.5.188–89). Hamlet’s ontology describes a snare between the biological man, whom Freud underestimates, the man beset with unconscious psychological demands, whom Westermarck underestimates, and the conscientiously lawful prince he must be.

Edward de Vere suffered a similar bind. “Three of the noblemen most hostile to the Cecils and the Cecil faction in Elizabeth’s court, had all been royal wards, having had the great Lord Burleigh as their guardian,” notes Looney: “Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford; Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton; and Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. These noblemen,” continues Looney, “apparently considered it no great blessing to have had the paternal attentions of the great minister, and cherished no particular affection for the family.” As far as Edward de Vere “is concerned,” states Looney bluntly, “whatever disaster may have come into his life, we are confident, had its beginning in the death of his father, the severance of his home ties, and the combined influences of Elizabeth’s court and Burleigh’s household, from which he was anxious to escape.”¹²⁶

Feldman takes this line of reasoning a stage further. Whatever analogies the critic sets up between the Cecils and the characters in *Hamlet*—Anne Cecil as Ophelia, Thomas or Robert Cecil as Polonius, and William Cecil as Claudius, for example—“the dramatist got a deep sadistic satisfaction from imaging the extinction, in blood, of the Cecil family.”¹²⁷ If Hamlet were Edward de Vere—both figures characterized by their growth rather than maturation into manhood—then the prince’s behavior expresses an extraordinary degree of repression. This regression stoked Oxford’s sensibilities into the sublime transference of his neuroses onto paper. De Vere was of the nobility, and of ancient noble lineage, but he longed to partake happily of the exogamic rather than the monarchic. “In his early forties,” reports Looney, “Oxford, a widower for three years, married his second wife, Elizabeth Trentham, the daughter of a landowner and one of the queen’s maids of honor.” Oxford’s remarriage repeated the evolutionary tactic of his first union. Marriage to Anne Cecil had produced three daughters. “A son, Henry, who became the Eighteenth Earl of Oxford,” notes Looney, “was the only child of his second marriage.”¹²⁸ With these bequests, Oxford offered exogamic stock to the aristocracy, and thus succeeded where monarchies by necessity usually fail.

Endnotes

- ¹ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. T. J. B. Spencer (London: Penguin, 1996).
- ² Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, in *SE* 4, 266.
- ³ Sigmund Freud, "The Moses of Michelangelo," in *SE* 13, 211–36, quotation on 211.
- ⁴ Freud, "Moses," 213.
- ⁵ Freud, *Interpretation*, in *SE* 4, 308.
- ⁶ Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, in *SE* 13, 141.
- ⁷ Sigmund Freud, "An Autobiographical Study," in *SE* 20, 7–70, quotation on 67, 68.
- ⁸ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 141.
- ⁹ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 141–42.
- ¹⁰ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 143.
- ¹¹ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 124.
- ¹² Sigmund Freud, "Freud's Letter to James S. H. Bransom of 25 March 1934," *Sigmund Freud: Life and Work*, by Ernest Jones, vol. 3 (London: Hogarth Press, 1953–57), Appendix A, 478–88, quotation on 487.
- ¹³ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 124.
- ¹⁴ James George Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, 4 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1910), 4:97.
- ¹⁵ David H. Spain, "The Westermarck-Freud Incest-Theory Debate: An Evaluation and Reformulation," *Current Anthropology* 28, no. 5 (December, 1987): 623–45, quotation on 625. Jean Baptiste Lamarck argued that organisms could transmit characteristics acquired during their lifetime to their offspring.
- ¹⁶ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 124.
- ¹⁷ Freud, *Interpretation*, in *SE* 4, 264, 261.
- ¹⁸ Freud, *Interpretation*, in *SE* 4, 261.
- ¹⁹ Freud, *Interpretation*, in *SE* 4, 262.
- ²⁰ Freud, *Interpretation*, in *SE* 4, 264. Sigmund Freud, "Dostoevsky and Parricide," in *SE* 21, 177–96, quotation on 188.
- ²¹ Freud, "Dostoevsky and Parricide," 188–89.
- ²² Freud, "Dostoevsky and Parricide," 189.
- ²³ Freud, *Interpretation*, in *SE* 4, 263.
- ²⁴ Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, in *SE* 16, 337.
- ²⁵ Freud, "Freud's Letter to James S. H. Bransom of 25 March 1934," 487.
- ²⁶ Freud, "Dostoevsky and Parricide," 189.
- ²⁷ J. Thomas Looney, "Shakespeare" Identified in Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford,

- Introduction William McFee, 2nd edition (New York: Duell, Sloane and Pearce, 1948), 232.
- ²⁸ Looney, "Shakespeare," 232, 144.
- ²⁹ Sigmund Freud, "Address Delivered in the Goethe House at Frankfurt," in *SE* 21, 208–12, quotation on 211.
- ³⁰ Freud, "An Autobiographical Study," 63.
- ³¹ Looney, "Shakespeare," 232.
- ³² Freud, "An Autobiographical Study," 63.
- ³³ Freud, "Address Delivered in the Goethe House," 211.
- ³⁴ Freud, "Freud's Letter to James S. H. Bransom of 25 March 1934," 487.
- ³⁵ Freud, "Freud's Letter to James S. H. Bransom of 25 March 1934," 488.
- ³⁶ Freud, "An Autobiographical Study," 63–4 n.1.
- ³⁷ Looney, "Shakespeare," 231.
- ³⁸ Looney, "Shakespeare," 231–32.
- ³⁹ Alan H. Nelson, *Monstrous Adversary: The Life of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford* (Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 2003), 41.
- ⁴⁰ Looney, "Shakespeare," 234.
- ⁴¹ William Farina, *De Vere as Shakespeare: An Oxfordian Reading of the Canon* (Jefferson, CA: McFarland, 2006), 199.
- ⁴² Strachey worried that Looney's name left those who quoted him open to ridicule. Looney, of course, pronounced his name *Lohny*.
- ⁴³ Richard F. Whalen, *Shakespeare—Who Was He?: The Oxford Challenge to the Bard of Avon* (Westport, CN: Praeger, 1994), 69.
- ⁴⁴ Craig Huston, *The Shakespeare Authorship Question. Evidence for Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford* (Philadelphia: Dorrance, 1971), 55.
- ⁴⁵ William McFee, introduction to "Shakespeare" Identified in *Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford*, by J. Thomas Looney, 2nd edition (New York: Duell, Sloane and Pearce, 1948), xix. "Of course Looney's work is not flawless, especially from the perspective of eighty-five years of progress in literary and historical methodology," as Roger Stritmatter observes. "But the intellectual historian need not be distracted by the incidental failures to which even pioneering works are sometimes susceptible, nor confused by a prevailing academic culture in which the traditional virtue of plausibility has been declared irrelevant; instead she will ponder the sobering implications of McFee's comparison of Looney's book to Darwin's." Roger Stritmatter, "What's in a Name? Everything, Apparently...", *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature* 60, no. 2 (2006): 37–49, quotation on 41.
- ⁴⁶ Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1896), 2:104.
- ⁴⁷ Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 2:115.
- ⁴⁸ Norbert Bischof, "Comparative Ethology of Incest Avoidance," in *Biosocial Anthropology*, ed. Robin Fox (London: Malaby, 1975), 37–67, quotation on 55.
- ⁴⁹ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 124.

- ⁵⁰ Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, 4: 154.
- ⁵¹ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 124.
- ⁵² Mark T. Erickson, "Rethinking Oedipus: An Evolutionary Perspective of Incest Avoidance," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 150, no. 3 (1993): 411–16, quotation on 411.
- ⁵³ Erickson, "Rethinking Oedipus," 412.
- ⁵⁴ Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999), 99.
- ⁵⁵ John Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers: The Abandonment of Children in Western Europe from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 36.
- ⁵⁶ Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers*, 37.
- ⁵⁷ Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers*, 37–38.
- ⁵⁸ John Bowlby, *Attachment* (New York: Basic Books, 1982), 371–72.
- ⁵⁹ Bowlby, *Attachment*, 371.
- ⁶⁰ Bowlby, *Attachment*, 372.
- ⁶¹ To be scientifically pedantic, and using the example of a parent and its child, r is approximately $1/2$ because of the complexities involved in sex cell formation. This nuance is tacitly assumed throughout the remainder of this article.
- ⁶² Erickson, "Rethinking Oedipus," 413.
- ⁶³ Donald Webster Cory was the pen name of Edward Sagarin.
- ⁶⁴ Erickson, "Rethinking Oedipus," 414.
- ⁶⁵ Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers*, 55 n.4.
- ⁶⁶ Spain, "The Westermarck-Freud Incest-Theory Debate," 625.
- ⁶⁷ Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 122 (emphasis in original).
- ⁶⁸ Spain, "The Westermarck-Freud Incest-Theory Debate," 625.
- ⁶⁹ Daphne Pearson, *Edward de Vere (1550–1604): The Crisis and Consequences of Wardship* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005), 20.
- ⁷⁰ Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers*, 431.
- ⁷¹ Bronson Feldman, *Hamlet Himself* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2010), 22.
- ⁷² Cecil quoted by Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1955), 212.
- ⁷³ William Plumer Fowler, *Shakespeare Revealed in Oxford's Letters: The Pre-Armada Letters, 1563–1585, and the Post-Armada Letters, 1590–1603, of Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford* (Portsmouth, NH: P. E. Randall, 1986), 363.
- ⁷⁴ Edward de Vere, "London Letter of September 8, 1590," *Shakespeare Revealed in Oxford's Letters*, 379.
- ⁷⁵ Alan Gordon Smith, *William Cecil, the Power Behind Elizabeth* (London: Kegan Paul, 1934), 4.
- ⁷⁶ Feldman, *Hamlet Himself*, 24.
- ⁷⁷ Looney, "Shakespeare," 244–45.
- ⁷⁸ Looney, "Shakespeare," 246.
- ⁷⁹ Looney, "Shakespeare," 235.
- ⁸⁰ Pearson, *Edward de Vere*, 20.
- ⁸¹ Smith, *William Cecil*, 4.

- ⁸² John Waterfield, *The Heart of his Mystery: Shakespeare and the Catholic Faith in England under Elizabeth and James* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse.com, 2009), 139.
- ⁸³ Farina, *De Vere*, 91, 176.
- ⁸⁴ Jason P. Rosenblatt, "Aspects of the Incest Problem in *Hamlet*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (Summer 1978): 349–64, quotation on 354.
- ⁸⁵ Intriguingly, as Fowler observes of de Vere's letter, "Oxford's superlative phrase 'in most especial wise' is arrestingly duplicated in *Hamlet* (IV.7.98) when Hamlet's uncle, King Claudius, to induce Laertes to engage in a weighted duel with Hamlet, tells Laertes of the high report accorded him by the outstanding Norman swordsman Lamond: 'He made confession of you; / And gave you such a masterly report / For art and exercise in your defence, / And for your rapier *most especially*' (IV.7.98)." Fowler, *Shakespeare Revealed*, 390.
- ⁸⁶ Rosenblatt, "Aspects of the Incest Problem," 362.
- ⁸⁷ Baldwin Maxwell, "Hamlet's Mother," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 15:2 (Spring 1964): 235–46, quotation on 240.
- ⁸⁸ Ernest Jones, *Hamlet and Oedipus* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1949), 61:1.
- ⁸⁹ F. J. Furnivall, introduction to *The Leopold Shakspeare: The Poet's Works, in Chronological Order, from the Text of Professor Delius, with The Two Noble Kinsmen and Edward III, by William Shakespeare* (London: Cassell, Petter & Galpin, 1877), 72.
- ⁹⁰ Lowell L. Manfull, "The Histrionic Hamlet," *Educational Theatre Journal* 16, no. 2 (May 1964): 103–13, quotation on 109.
- ⁹¹ Manfull, "The Histrionic Hamlet," 107.
- ⁹² Rosenblatt, "Aspects of the Incest Problem," 355.
- ⁹³ Konrad Lorenz, *On Aggression*, trans. Marjorie Latzke (London: Methuen, 1976), 21–22.
- ⁹⁴ Feldman, *Hamlet Himself*, 10.
- ⁹⁵ Looney, "Shakespeare," 229.
- ⁹⁶ Farina, *De Vere*, 123.
- ⁹⁷ Farina, *De Vere*, 113.
- ⁹⁸ Looney, "Shakespeare," 253.
- ⁹⁹ Feldman, *Hamlet Himself*, 134.
- ¹⁰⁰ Looney, "Shakespeare," 146.
- ¹⁰¹ Feldman, *Hamlet Himself*, 135.
- ¹⁰² Frederic Chancellor, *The Ancient Sepulchral Monuments of Essex* (London, Printed for the Author: 1890), 161.
- ¹⁰³ Looney, "Shakespeare," 146.
- ¹⁰⁴ Looney, "Shakespeare," 246.
- ¹⁰⁵ Looney, "Shakespeare," 233.
- ¹⁰⁶ Queen Elizabeth, *The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. Frederick Chamberlin (London: John Lane, 1923), 158.
- ¹⁰⁷ Looney, "Shakespeare," 222.
- ¹⁰⁸ Looney, "Shakespeare," 254.
- ¹⁰⁹ Looney, "Shakespeare," 257, 254.

- ¹¹⁰ Looney, "Shakespeare," 254 (emphasis in original).
- ¹¹¹ Rosenblatt, "Aspects of the Incest Problem," 362.
- ¹¹² Lorenz, *On Aggression*, 61.
- ¹¹³ Looney, "Shakespeare," 234, 236.
- ¹¹⁴ Alison Findlay, *Illegitimate Power: Bastards in Renaissance Drama* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 25.
- ¹¹⁵ Simon Augustine Blackmore, *The Riddles of Hamlet and the Newest Answers* (Boston, MA: Stratford Company, 1917), 44.
- ¹¹⁶ Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, 94.
- ¹¹⁷ Hélène Cixous, "Extreme Fidelity," in *Writing Difference: Readings from the Seminar of Hélène Cixous*, ed. Susan Sellers, trans. Ann Liddle and Susan Sellers (Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press), 9–36, quotation on 16.
- ¹¹⁸ Cixous, "Extreme Fidelity," 16. Findlay, *Illegitimate Power*, 25.
- ¹¹⁹ Findlay, *Illegitimate Power*, 26.
- ¹²⁰ Manfull, "The Histrionic Hamlet," 106.
- ¹²¹ Feldman, *Hamlet Himself*, 135.
- ¹²² Anne Barton, introduction to *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare, ed. T. J. B. Spencer (London: Penguin, 1996), 12.
- ¹²³ The coefficient of relationship between Oxford and his first cousins Sir Horace and Sir Francis Vere ($r = \frac{1}{4}$) informs the characters of Horatio and Francisco. "These brothers," agrees Feldman, "always acted as upholders of Oxford's [his] house." Feldman, *Hamlet Himself*, 60.
- ¹²⁴ Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, 95.
- ¹²⁵ Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, 98.
- ¹²⁶ Looney, "Shakespeare," 245.
- ¹²⁷ Feldman, *Hamlet Himself*, 13.
- ¹²⁸ Looney, "Shakespeare," 78.