

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in Shakespeare on 23 Aug 2018, available online: <http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/17450918.2018.1504814>.

Passionate Uprisings in Shakespeare's *Lucrece*

Ann Kaegi

English, University of Hull, Hull, UK

ABSTRACT:

The phenomenon of passionate riot and its role in uprisings, fictional and historical, remains an analytical blind spot. Despite “the affective turn” in the humanities at the outset of the twenty-first century, scholarly studies have continued to focus on the social, political, economic and religious motives of participants in uprisings and on their methods of protest with little sense that these might include instances of *passionate* protest. To bring the phenomenon into focus, this article turns its attention to Shakespeare's *Lucrece*, one of several Shakespearean texts that provide compelling evidence in the imaginative literature of the period of a perception that grief could motivate and be used to provoke political protest and instigate political transformation.

Keywords: *Lucrece*, riot; uprising; passion; grief; tyranny

Passion is lacking in most studies of riots, uprisings and rebellions in early modern England. Despite “the affective turn” in the humanities at the outset of the twenty-first century, scholarly studies have continued to focus on the social, political, economic and religious motives of participants in uprisings and on their methods of protest with little sense that these might include instances of *passionate* protest.¹ As its full title suggests, *Gender and Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Destroying Order, Structuring Disorder* (2015) is a notable exception. In her introduction to this edited collection, Susan Broomhall argues that “It was understood that affective states had the potential to destroy order, creating undesirable disorder and instability that had both individual and communal consequences” (1). Considerably more research is needed to establish how widespread such an understanding was in medieval and early modern Europe and how it was manifest. Literary scholars have much to contribute to this wider investigation, for literary texts offer important insights into what part, if any, the affective states of those involved were thought to play in collective political protests.² But while there has been a sustained engagement with emotions studies by scholars of Renaissance literature over the past twenty years, the political dimension of affect has received only sporadic attention (Döring 24-69; Kahn et al.; Fox; Escolme; Kaegi).

This is due in no small part to the influence exerted by foundational studies which claimed that the early modern understanding of emotion was one of humoral determinism: the notion that individuals are passive, material entities that are subject to emotions that “flood the body not metaphorically but literally, as the humors course through the bloodstream” (Paster 14; cf. Paster, Rowe and Floyd-Wilson 1-20). That such a strict model of psychophysiological determinism has proven so influential is perhaps surprising, especially given Michael C. Schoenfeldt's effort to distance early modern “humoral psychology” from “incurably determinist” (2) models of Galenic physiology in his book, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* (1999), published five years before Gail Kern Paster's *Humoring the Body*:

Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage (2004). His version of “the new humoralism” (Strier 17) notes that Galenic medicine credited individuals with the potential to exercise a measure of autonomy by moderating the passions through bodily constraint. However, by focusing exclusively on a dietary and evacuatory “regime of self-discipline which,” he claims “an earlier culture imagined as *a necessary step* towards any prospect of liberation” (11, emphasis added), Schoenfeldt leaves the opposing phenomenon of passionate riot and its potential to catalyze wider political agitation unexplored and unexplained. Subsequent studies have significantly complicated the humoral paradigm and found greater evidence of personal and collective agency by identifying multiple influences, including literary and rhetorical ones (Steggle; Fox; Strier; Enterline; Cummings and Sierhuis), that contributed to the shaping of early modern emotions. However the phenomenon of passionate riot and its perceived role in uprisings, fictional and historical, merits more attention. To bring the phenomenon into focus, this article investigates a Renaissance poem in which liberation from tyranny is achieved via uprisings which arise out of passionate riot. It will argue that Shakespeare’s *Lucrece* is one of several Shakespearean texts that provide compelling evidence in the imaginative literature of the period of a perception that powerful passions such as grief could motivate and be used to provoke political protest and to instigate political transformation.

Passionate riot

In Shakespeare’s writings the word “riot” is used predominantly to denote instances of dissolute living or unruly feasting or revelry (OED *n.* 3) rather than a violent civil disorder or violent disturbance of the peace (OED *n.* 4a and 4b). “Riot” and its variants are used in one or other of the former senses in numerous plays, including *Timon of Athens* (2.2.3; 4.1.25-28; 4.3.256-258) and in references to Prince Hal in *King Henry IV, Parts One and Two* (1*HenryIV* 1.1.84; 2*HenryIV* 4.3.62, 263-64; 5.5.62) and *Henry V* (1.1.57); to King Richard by John of Gaunt in *Richard II* (2.1.33); and to Lear’s “riotous” knights by Gonoril and Regan in *King Lear* (*The History of King Lear* 3.6; 4.198, 235-38; 6.94; *The Tragedy of King Lear* 2.2.315). But in Shakespeare’s lifetime “riot” could also mean an “unbridled or uncontrollable emotion, passion, or desire” or “an outburst of such feelings” (OED *n.* 7), a meaning which survives to this day in references to “a riot of emotions” or a “riot of feelings”. *King John* provides a rare example of “riot” being employed in this sense by Shakespeare, when King Phillip of France asks the papal legate whether he would have him

Unswear faith sworn, and on the marriage-bed
Of smiling peace to march a bloody host,
And make a riot on the gentle brow
Of true sincerity? (*KJ*, 3.1.171-74)

Though this sense of the word is the one used least often by Shakespeare, the phenomenon of riotous passion features prominently in many of his poems and plays. It is with this passionate riot and its capacity to trigger political uprisings that this article is concerned, “rising” being a word used by Shakespeare and his contemporaries to refer to acts of rebellion or armed revolt (OED *n.* 5) and to an upsurge of passion (OED *n.* 2.d, *adj.* 3a), as in *King Lear*’s reference to his “rising heart” (*The Tragedy of King Lear* 2.2.285).

A noteworthy attribute of riot is the potential for one form of riot to prompt another. This trait is highlighted in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, where among the listed entertainments

available to Theseus to ease his boredom during the “torturing” (5.1.37) three-hour interval between “after-supper and bed-time” (5.1.34) is one depicting ““The riot of the tipsy bacchanals / Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage”” (5.1.48-49). This two-line description of one of the evening’s potential diversions encapsulates not only the close connection between different kinds of riot but also the violence which may result from the capability of one kind of riot to induce another – a dangerous potentiality on which the passionate young lovers in the wood have teetered. In this instance, the uncontrolled passion (“rage”) released by unruly feasting (“the riot of the tipsy bacchanals”) culminates in a grisly act of collective violence (the riotous “Tearing” to death of “the Thracian singer”, Orpheus) by the triply riotous celebrants. Or, to put it another way, the proffered entertainment shows how riotous revelling by emotionally riotous devotees of Bacchus can culminate in violent riot. Though the intoxicated group of revellers becomes highly unstable emotionally, they remain stable numerically, although it is of no comfort to Orpheus that the same group of revellers become his enraged killers. The opposite is true in *Lucrece*, a poem which depicts the phenomenon of passionate contagion as grief affects first one person (Lucrece), then a second (her maid), then several people (Lucrece’s husband, father and their companions) and eventually a populace (the people of Rome), highlighting an important attribute of passionate riot: the capacity of one person’s passionate state to affect others and potentially a multitude. The title of this article invokes a dual notion of “passionate uprising” to draw attention to the potential and, in certain volatile circumstances, propensity for one kind of riot to instigate another, and for one person’s rising passion to become a social affect capable of triggering a wider political rising, as grief does in Shakespeare’s *Lucrece*.³

For reasons outlined below and in a bid to encourage wider consideration of the politics of affect (and of affective politics), the following commentary is less concerned with how *Lucrece* is affected by grief than with how both she and Junius Brutus use grief to provoke and direct political risings in Shakespeare’s poem. However, *Lucrece* is by no means the only Shakespearean text in which grief becomes not only a riotous passion but also a politically disruptive affect. In *Richard III*, Buckingham is apprehensive that the sudden, extrajudicial execution of Lord Hastings on a spurious charge of treason may cause the citizens of London to “Misconster us in him, and wail his death” (3.5.59). Fearing a civil uprising, he offers to “play the orator” (3.5.93) at London’s Guildhall, confident that he can pacify the troubled citizens and persuade them to acclaim Richard “England’s royal king!” (3.7.22). Moments later a disconcerted Buckingham returns from the Guildhall to report that, far from voicing their enthusiastic support for Richard, “The citizens are mum, say not a word” (3.7.3). Buckingham’s fear that loud communal grief may mutate into a collective sense of grievance and prompt a civic revolt is unrealized in *Richard III*; by contrast, in *Hamlet*, no sooner does Claudius voice concern that “the people [are] muddled, / Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers / For good Polonius’ death” (4.5.79-81), than a messenger arrives to report that the “rabble”, led in “riotous head” by the grieving and vengeful Laertes, are openly crying ““Choose we! Laertes shall be king”” (4.5.99-104). The messenger’s warning comes too late for prevention, however, so swiftly do Laertes’ riotous followers break in on the king and queen, having overwhelmed Claudius’ bodyguards like an ocean “overpeering” its shore (4.5.97-100). While the two episodes sharply expose the unpopularity of a would-be and a reigning monarch respectively, neither the silent withholding of popular approbation nor the clamorous popular challenge to established authority alters who governs. On neither occasion does the public grief and alarm provoked by the sudden, violent death of a member of the ruling elite precipitate a change of ruler, much less a change from one form of government to another.

Politically transformative civil uprisings which develop out of scenes of public grief over the violent death of a prominent individual do feature, however, in two of Shakespeare's Roman texts: the narrative poem *Lucrece* (1594) and the Plutarchan Roman play *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* (1599). In *Julius Caesar*, the conspirators' stated aim of preventing a return to kingly rule by violently purging the Roman republic of the "spirit of Caesar" (2.1.167) is threatened by the plebeian riot stirred up by Mark Antony after Brutus recklessly permits him to bring Caesar's body to the marketplace and deliver a funeral oration from the public pulpit (3.1.229-33). As news of Caesar's murder spreads through Rome, the people "stare" in amazement, "cry out, and run, / As it were doomsday" (3.1.98-99), giving immediate, involuntary somatic expression to the emotional upset and mental confusion prompted by reports of his death. Unlike Brutus, Antony is mindful that "a mourning Rome ... [is] a dangerous Rome" (3.1.291): communal grief can be highly volatile. When an overconfident Brutus gives him the chance to address a large, emotionally febrile popular gathering in the marketplace, Antony deftly exploits the opportunity "to stir ... hearts and minds to mutiny and rage" (3.2.122-23). Brutus' fatal underestimation of the power and volatility of communal grief alters the course of Roman history in *Julius Caesar*. But the imaginative and emotional groundwork for that later scene of riotous passion is prepared in Shakespeare's *Lucrece*, when first Lucrece and subsequently Junius Brutus fashion grief into a potent instrument of political protest that proves capable of inducing an acute sense of grievance so contagious that it rapidly pervades the Roman populace and induces them to consent to "Tarquin's ever-lasting banishment", an act that the poem's Argument reminds readers precipitated far-reaching political change in Rome.⁴ To gain a clearer sense of how grief was understood to be capable of causing a political rising, we should therefore turn our attention to the earlier of these two Roman texts and examine how passionate uprisings in Shakespeare's *Lucrece* become a means of resisting tyranny and instigating regime change.

"yet let the traitor die"

We have grown accustomed to reflecting on how the passion for revenge destabilizes the mind and the wider political and social order in Renaissance revenge drama. Revenge and grief are closely allied passions, the former typically arising from the latter. Importantly, as we have glimpsed in the episodes from Shakespeare mentioned above, grief was perceived by early moderns to pose a similar danger both to the mind of the sufferer and to the wider order (Sullivan *Beyond Melancholy* 51-65). Extreme grief transforms Lucrece from an obedient political subject into a defiant instigator of tyrannicide in Shakespeare's narrative poem. At the outset of their encounter she addresses Tarquin as the presumptive heir to his father's kingly office (ll.605-6). Responding to Tarquin's admission that his lust is an "uncontrollèd tide" (l.645), she adopts a similar oceanic metaphor of "boundless flood" (l.653) but applies it conversely to urge the need for sovereigns to govern harmful passions or be stained by them (ll.652-58). Characterizing Tarquin as "a sea, a sovereign king" whose flood is "boundless" (ll.652-53), she urges him to be "a god, a king", the two being analogous, "For kings like gods should govern everything" (ll.601-2). As Colin Burrow notes, this maxim "is not simply absolutist" (n.602); its force is also moral: kings ought to govern their passions and rule, like God, in accordance with reason – something Tarquin singularly fails to do. The precepts that Lucrece cites in her efforts to deter Tarquin are commonplaces of sixteenth-century *principum specula* ("mirror for princes") writing, a genre to which she directly alludes when she reminds Tarquin that "*princes are the glass,*

the school, the book / Where subjects' eyes do learn, do read, do look" (ll.615-16 emphasis added).⁵ But as Barry Nass observes, "Lucrece's devout recapitulation of official Tudor precepts does not so much validate them as reveal how inadequate such discourse is to restrain the violence and lawlessness of her princely adversary" (301). Unable to deter Tarquin by reciting humanist maxims on princely conduct or by urging him to "Melt at [her] tears, and be compassionate" (l.594), Lucrece resorts to speaking treason (as defined by Elizabethan statute) once Tarquin rapes her. Elizabeth I's 1571 Treasons Act restored the prohibition against "treason by words", which had first been included in the Treasons Act of 1534 by Thomas Cromwell after Henry VIII's break with Rome only to be revoked in Edward VI's treason statute of 1547 (Lemon 5-10). According to Elizabethan statute, Lucrece first speaks treason when she directs malediction at Tarquin, a royal heir (ll.967-1001), and implores Time to "Teach me to curse him" (l.996), and again when she incites a group of Roman lords to kill the king's son. Yet, to Lucrece, it is Tarquin who is a "traitor" and the penalty for treason is death (ll.1686-87).

Lucrece's denunciation of Tarquin as a traitor deserving of death marks the mutation of her rising grief into a political passion. For Lucrece to condemn as a traitor a royal prince who has "tyrannize[d]" (l.676) a subject but has not threatened the king or his heirs, reveals a conception of sovereignty at odds with Tudor orthodoxy. Instead, her views on tyranny are closer to those of sixteenth-century resistance theorists (Skinner 2.189-348; Lee; Burgess 57-91), such as Thomas Starkey who describes tyranny as "the ground of al yl ... & ruyn of al cyvylyte" (120) or George Buchanan who characterizes tyrants as "the most deadly of enemies of God and man" (87). Whereas the state sponsored Elizabethan homily *Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion* (1571) asserts that "a rebel is worse then the worst prince, and rebellion worse then the worst government of the worst prince that hitherto hath been", Lucrece's stance resembles that of the Huguenot *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos* ("Defences [of Liberty] Against Tyrants") (1579) which denounces tyranny, not rebellion, as "the chief and ... summation of crimes" (Garnett 155). Although Lucrece characterizes sovereignty as "boundless" before Tarquin's assault, her conception of sovereignty becomes expressly contractual after he subjects her to his "enforcèd hate" (l.668), anticipating the political shift the people of Rome will shortly undergo when they consent to "Tarquin's everlasting banishment" (l.1855). For Lucrece, the authority of princes is framed by two overriding principles: first, that sovereign power (the "sword") is "lent" to princes to fight "iniquity" (ll.626-27) and, second, that princes must fulfil their "princely office" (l.628). The notion of "princely office" refers to the duties that princes owe their subjects in return for their subjects' obedience, their prime duty being to use the power "lent" to them to fight unrighteousness. Princely sovereignty is boundless so long as it is used lawfully to guard against injustice and not to provide "Authority for sin" (l.620). Buchanan similarly argues that the head of state is created by the people who "voluntarily" confer supreme power on him (27) in the expectation that the Ciceronian maxim, "Let the welfare of the people be the supreme law", will be kept "sacrosanct and inviolable" (57; cf. Garnett *Tyrannos* 68-76; 156). The king should therefore exercise "only such right as the people have granted him over them" (55). Lucrece similarly reasons that Tarquin's transgression is political as much as it is moral: he has exceeded his rights and violated his office.

Tarquin's gross violation of his princely office is manifest: he bluntly asserts his "will" is sovereign "'gainst law or duty"; he knows full well what "counsel" would advise, "But will is deaf" and his will has marked Lucrece for his "earth's delights" (ll.487-97). Rather than using his power to protect a virtuous Roman subject from injury, "he shakes aloft his Roman blade" to threaten "Harmless Lucretia" (l.505, 510). In response Lucrece pronounces

him a traitor – a political epithet that positions Tarquin as the rebel, not those who resist a prince’s tyranny. The *Vindiciae* similarly affirms that “a tyrant commits felony against the people...; that he is guilty of high treason ... and is a rebel” (156). Thus in Shakespeare’s version of the story, long before Junius Brutus rouses the people of Rome to oppose tyranny, Lucrece advocates Tarquin’s execution as a necessary and legitimate punitive measure, arguing proverbially that “sparing justice feeds iniquity” (1.1687). Tarquin’s passionate tyranny must be quelled and communal norms of justice enforced to prevent further abuses of power. There is an obvious correspondence between Lucrece’s concern with what sort of king Tarquin might become – “If in thy hope thou dar’st do such outrage, / What dar’st thou not when once thou art a king?” (ll.605-606) – and the misgivings Brutus expresses in *Julius Caesar* about Caesar’s ultimate political ambition: “He would be crowned. / How that might change his nature, there’s the question” (2.1.12-13). The key difference is that the expressly political discourse which frames Tarquin’s sexual assault on Lucrece establishes that his actions are tyrannical whereas Caesar is killed by the conspirators to “prevent” him from becoming a tyrant (*Julius Caesar*, 2.1.28).⁶ Having provoked Lucrece’s passionate outcry, the banishment of Tarquin (and of the Tarquins) in Shakespeare’s *Lucrece* results from the efforts of first Lucrece and later Junius Brutus to exploit the sympathetic response to grief to precipitate a wider political revolt against tyranny. The speediness of the passionate contagion they seek to stimulate is symptomatic of and key to their success.

“Even so quickly may one catch the plague?”

In Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, Olivia, who has steadfastly “abjured the sight / And company of men” (1.2.36-37) since her brother’s death, suddenly realizes that she is in love with a perfect stranger after a single testy encounter. “Even so quickly may one catch the plague?” she wonders (1.5.285). Speed is similarly a feature of passionate contagion in *Lucrece*. A sensation of speed is first imparted by the Argument, which provides an impressively succinct account of the civic uprising credited by Ovid with ending “kingly rule” (2.852; cf. Livy 41; Painter 7) in Rome: in the space of seventy-five words an elite conspiracy is hatched, a popular revolt provoked, monarchical rule dispatched and a consular republic established in the city-state. The Argument briefly reports that, having been summoned to Collatium by Lucrece, her husband, father and their respective companions, Junius Brutus and Publius Valerius, “finding Lucrece attired in mourning habit, demanded the cause of her sorrow” (32-33). It records that Lucrece first required them to swear an oath to revenge her; only then did she reveal the identity of her attacker “and whole manner of his dealing”, after which she “suddenly stabbed herself” (Argument):

Which done, with one consent they all vowed to root out the whole hated family of the Tarquins; and, bearing the dead body to Rome, Brutus acquainted the people with the doer and manner of the vile deed, with a bitter invective against the tyranny of the King. Wherewith the people were so moved that, with one consent and a general acclamation, the Tarquins were all exiled, and the state government changed from kings to consuls. (Argument)

In the Argument, Rome’s form of government changes in the space of two sentences. Apart from its brevity, what is striking about this terse account of the origins of the Roman republic is how swiftly grief precipitates far reaching political revolt, spreading rapidly from one person to several before it is deliberately provoked in the Roman populace by Brutus to win

their consent to end monarchical rule. The political conspiracy among Collatine, Lucretius, Brutus and Valerius is depicted as an instantaneous response to Lucrece's suicide. For their part, the Roman people are "so moved" by the sight of Lucrece's corpse and Brutus's account of the nature and perpetrator of "the vile deed" that prompted her suicide that, "with one consent and general acclamation", they promptly exile the Tarquins and alter their political order. No one demurs: the people are moved as one and, like the Roman lords, they are moved at pace.

By contrast, the passionate intensity and duration of Lucrece's complaints to Night, Opportunity and Time create an impression of prolonged suffering by someone "Frantic with grief" (l.762). For among the distinguishing traits of Shakespeare's *Lucrece* is the unusual scope it affords its eponymous heroine to elaborate on her sorrow and distress after Tarquin's pitiless assault. This trait sets Shakespeare's 1,855 line poem apart from the brief accounts offered by Ovid in *Fasti* (c.8 ADE) (172 lines), Geoffrey Chaucer in *The Legende of Good Women* (c.1385) (205 lines) and the three or so pages of prose that William Painter devotes to the tale in his *Palace of Pleasure* (1566). Although Livy recounts the legend at greater length in *Ab Urbe Condita* ("The History of Rome") (c.29-27 BCE), his version is nevertheless a fraction of the nearly fifteen thousand words that Shakespeare devotes to the subject in *Lucrece*.⁷ Lucrece's sustained complaint in Shakespeare's version also stands in marked contrast to the narrative compression which characterizes the poem once Collatine returns and Lucrece discloses to her husband and his companions the cause of her sorrow. The sudden contraction of the narrative from that point onwards emphasizes the rapidity with which Lucrece's personal grief transmutes into a more broadly political and increasingly public passion once she resolves to incite revenge to secure retributive justice (ll.1177-80, l.1683, ll.1692-94).

The poetic account of the immediate run-up to the civic revolt against tyranny is somewhat lengthier as it adds passages of direct speech, provides more contextual detail, devotes closer attention to Brutus's words and actions, and supplies the second oath of revenge which Brutus has Collatine and the others swear. However, once the Roman lords all duly pledge to "revenge the death of this true wife" (l.1841), the poem likewise races to its conclusion:

When they had sworn to this advisèd doom,
They did conclude to bear dead Lucrece thence,
To show her bleeding body thorough Rome,
And so to publish Tarquin's foul offence;
Which being done, with speedy diligence,
The Romans plausibly did give consent
To Tarquin's everlasting banishment. (ll.1849-55)

Sharply contrasting with the tempo of the poem up to this point, the sudden compression of time and political consequence at its close is extraordinary, with the tyrant's expulsion from Rome becoming, for some, an addendum to Lucrece's passionate story. To Ian Donaldson, it is as though "[t]he banishment of the Tarquins is mentioned ... almost as a narrative afterthought" (43). Or not mentioned at all, for in most modern editions a possessive apostrophe has been added so that the last line of the poem refers only to "Tarquin's everlasting banishment" whereas the Argument follows Livy in recounting that "the Tarquins were all exiled", not just the rapist Sextus Tarquinius. Katherine Duncan-Jones contends that "the final line ... has been misprinted by all modern editors. The early texts," she notes, "... have no possessive apostrophe in or after 'Tarquins', permitting the word to

be read either as singular or plural” (518). Anticipating that Brutus would be the spokesperson for republicanism, Donaldson finds “the entire political dimension of the story” to be “subdued” in Shakespeare’s *Lucrece* (43). But as detailed above, the reason that Brutus’s denunciation of tyranny lacks the force in *Lucrece* that it has in Ovid, Livy and Painter is not because Shakespeare suppresses the political dimension of Lucrece’s story or sets Lucrece’s passionate expression at odds with political action. Rather it is the result of Shakespeare’s transference of “the political significance of her violation to the victim herself” (Hadfield 140). In the absence of a possessive apostrophe, how far-reaching readers estimate the passionate uprising stirred up by Lucrece and spread by Brutus to be – and how they regard the civic mutiny – depends to an extent on whether the poem has stirred up passionate riot within the reader. Even if readers presume that it is Sextus who is banished at the end of the poem, the Argument has already made it clear that the entire Tarquin family was exiled (Argument) and tyranny extirpated, so the popular rising evidently broadened and intensified thereafter. Crucially, readers may have been moved to sympathise with the political outcomes of the uprising by *Lucrece*’s passionate contagion. Passionate riot is not only the poem’s subject but also its potential effect.

As noted above, a vital if neglected facet of the wider critical debate about consent in the story of Lucrece (Belsey; Arkin) is the speed with which political consent is granted, a tempo which is closely linked to the role grief plays in precipitating political resistance to tyranny. As previously mentioned, consent features prominently in the Argument’s account of the events which ended monarchical rule in Rome. The word “tyranny” is counterpoised by the word “consent”: the revengers “with one consent” vow to extirpate the Tarquins, and the people “with one consent” acclaim the Tarquins’ exile and the transformation of their government “from kings to consuls”. The contrast between these expressions of consent and the violence of Tarquin’s sexual assault on Lucrece is stark. However, both affirmations of unanimous consent are immediately preceded by an impassioned speech and a distressing spectacle: the former by Lucrece’s account of Tarquin’s sexual assault on her followed by her abrupt suicide and the latter by the public parading of Lucrece’s body and Brutus’ accompanying diatribe “against the tyranny of the King” (Argument), a combination which “so moved” the people (Argument) that they expelled the Tarquins and instituted republican rule. On both occasions political consent is precipitated by calculated acts of sympathetic solicitation designed to provoke a sudden upsurge of two powerful passions: compassion for Lucrece and outrage at Tarquin.

One of the questions both the Argument and poem thus raise is: is consent strictly voluntary when it is given so swiftly in such emotionally turbulent circumstances? The encounter between Lucrece and her maid sharpens the point. Summoned by Lucrece, the maid catches sight of Lucrece’s “fair cheeks over-washed with woe” and promptly begins to weep, despite her not knowing *why* Lucrece’s “face wore sorrow’s livery” (l.1222). The narrator remarks that the maid’s involuntary tears are “enforced by sympathy” (l.1229). But if sympathy can be “enforced” physiologically, how then are we to appraise expressions of consent that are precipitated by compassionate grief, particularly when (as we shall see) a speaker has sought to induce a state of passionate riot in their listeners precisely to move them to assent? Adherents to the theory of psychophysiological determinism might cite the maid’s involuntary tears in support; however, this neglects the control that Lucrece ultimately exercises over her sorrow and the control that both she and Brutus exercise over the passions of others. Yet the very fact that assent is solicited by Lucrece and Brutus in circumstances so volatile and using methods so passion-inducing makes the issue of political consent particularly vexed in *Lucrece*.

“To see sad sights moves more than hear them told” (l.1324)

Lucrece’s desire for violent revenge (l.1180) arises from and will be pursued by means of grief, but her pursuit of vengeance is also threatened by the self-consuming effect of intense sorrow. Having been violently subjected to Tarquin’s pitiless and “surfeit-taking” lust (l.698), Lucrece experiences a passionate tumult which threatens to overwhelm her. That Lucrece’s sense of loss is initially so ungovernable that, in her desperation, she tears at her own flesh (l.739), beats her breast (l.759) and becomes “Frantic with grief” (l.762) would seem to preclude her sorrow from ever becoming an effectual means of political protest. However the perceived unruliness of the major passions is key to understanding how Lucrece’s personal experience of profound sorrow could nevertheless result in a political rising in Rome. In the pre-Cartesian conception of the body, the mind is no less embodied than are the passions; it is therefore vulnerable to – and must be vigilant in guarding itself against – the threat of passionate insurrection from within. For Thomas Wright, it is the volatility of the passions that is hazardous. In general, the “Passions are meanes to help us”; however, when the “motions of Passions” become “inordinate” they cease to be helpful and instead “blinde reason, ... seduce the will, and ... are speciall causes of sinne” (2). Among the passions, grief was held to be particularly intractable. At its most extreme, it was thought to cause or hasten death (Sullivan “A Disease Unto Death”; and *Beyond Melancholy* 22-23). The French theologian Nicolas Coeffeteau (1574–1623) describes grief as “a violent Passion of the Soule” (319) as does Robert Burton who groups it together with revenge as among the inherently “violent passions” (1.2.3.3, p.129). In Burton’s view, only a “few discreet men ... can governe themselues” and curb such “inordinate passions”; most “are so far from repressing rebellious inclinations, that they giue all encouragement vnto them” (1.2.129-30) – Tarquin being an infamous example of the latter.

The task Lucrece faces is therefore particularly daunting: not only must she ensure that Collatine and the others remain favourably disposed towards her by removing all doubt that she refused consent to Tarquin, but she must also make intelligible a sorrow that “Sometime ... is dumb and hath no words; / Sometime ’tis mad and too much talk affords” (ll.1105-6) while being afflicted by that self-same passion. Finally, she must move a group of Roman lords to vow and execute swift vengeance on the son of their king – an act of outright rebellion (according to official Tudor doctrine). Lucrece’s desire for retribution is prompted by grief but excessive grief also threatens to disable the very men on whom the fulfilment of her revenge depends. Rather than prompting them to violent action, her grievous speech and sudden suicide incapacitate Collatine and Lucretius. Like the legendary Niobe who was turned to stone by her inordinate grief, the sudden upsurge of extreme sorrow stupefies the Roman lords who stand “Stone-still, astonished with this deadly deed” (ll.1730-31). Lucrece’s objective of moving her husband and his companions “to venge this wrong” (l.1691) is very nearly defeated by grief – that is until Brutus makes his timely intervention.

Being least grief-struck and long habituated to masking his true passions beneath “his folly’s show” (l.1810), Brutus is better able to constrain the debilitating effects of extreme woe and rouse Collatine and the others to redress a crime which disgraces “Rome herself” (1833). And what strategy does this man of “deep policy” (l.1815) pursue to oppose tyranny and uphold “their country rights in Rome” (l.1838)? One designed to provoke a passionate uprising against tyranny by publically displaying Lucrece’s “bleeding body thorough Rome” and publicizing “Tarquin’s foul offence” (ll.1851-52). However, in marked contrast to the violent riot instigated by Mark Antony in *Julius Caesar*, the civic rising in *Lucrece* is distinguished by its constraint. There is no intent on the part of its instigator to set loose

“Mischief” (*Julius Caesar* 3.2.253) and consequently no riotous tearing to pieces of a poet (*Julius Caesar* 3.3.28-35) or violent desire on the part of the Roman people to “Burn all!” (*Julius Caesar* 3.3.37), as there is in *Julius Caesar*. While there is clear evidence of passionate contagion in *Lucrece*, it notably results in the construction of an affective political community which has been moved to oppose tyranny, including the tyranny of the passions to which Tarquin had not so much succumbed as resolved, pitilessly, to enforce (l.352). And so by means of a political rising catalyzed by grief, Brutus wins the people’s consent to banish tyranny and in so doing embark on a course that the Argument records would change Rome’s government from a monarchy to a consular republic.

Nearly twenty years ago, Schoenfeldt identified an early modern notion of “liberty” which was dependent on regimens of bodily self-discipline and constraint. However literary texts of that time record other conceptions of liberty and other methods of exercising agency. In Shakespeare’s *Lucrece* her subjection to Tarquin’s tyranny causes Lucrece to experience a passionate riot within, yet she is not portrayed as a passive material entity through which passion merely flows but as a woman who resolves to transform her grief into a potent political affect. To that end Lucrece deliberately “hoards” the “life and feeling” of her anguish until her husband is present in the knowledge that “To see sad sights moves more than to hear them told” (ll.1317-18, 1324). Liberation from tyranny is ultimately achieved when Brutus emulates Lucrece by deliberately arousing feelings of grief and outrage in others and exploiting the sympathetic response to suffering – it is achieved by means of a carefully targeted passionate uprising. We find in Shakespeare’s poem evidence of how extreme grief could impede resistance to tyranny because of its capacity to overwhelm both body and mind. But we also find compelling evidence that grief was also thought to be capable of prompting politically enabling sympathy and collective resistance to tyranny.

NOTES

¹ See for example recent studies and edited collections by Wood; Walter; Kesselring; and Davis. Alison Wall notes in passing that, in the absence of a police force and a standing army, authority was exercised primarily via persuasion but does not comment further on the role that regulating the passions performed in fashioning obedient subjects.

² See, for example, Elizabeth Sauer’s account of the protest literature that accompanied risings and Maria Prendergast’s exploration of how railing plays and pamphlets became “parasitical conduits of—and heighteners of—anxious and angry emotions” by exploiting the “third spaces of theater and print” (5-6) in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

³ I draw here on Steven Mullaney’s notion of “social emotions”: how emotions were experienced “in the social and hence lived world of feeling, as opposed to the theoretical or polemical world of medical discourses” (22).

⁴ Cassius and Brutus both cite Junius Brutus’s revolt against the Tarquin kings as precedent for their actions in *Julius Caesar* (1.2.160-62 and 2.1.53-54).

⁵ Compare Guevara 1.10.13, 1.20.28, 1.35.51, 1.36.53, 3.1.2; and Erasmus 5, 17, 24.

⁶ On *Julius Caesar* and the contemporary tyrannicide debate see Robert S. Miola’s landmark article, “*Julius Caesar* and the Tyrannicide Debate”.

⁷ Livy’s account in Book 1, chapters 57-60 of *Ab Urbe Condita* amounts to about 1,000 words of Latin and just over 2,500 words in Philemon Holland’s English translation of *The Romane historie of T. Livy* (1600).

Works Cited

- Arkin, Samuel. "'That map which deep impression bears': Lucrece and the Anatomy of Shakespeare's Sympathy." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 64 (2013): 349-371. Print.
- Belsey, Catherine. "Tarquin Dispossessed: Expropriation and Consent in *The Rape of Lucrece*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 52.3 (2001): 315-335. Print.
- Broomhall, Susan ed. *Gender and Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Destroying Order, Structuring Disorder*. London: Routledge, 2015. Print.
- Buchanan, George. *A Dialogue on the Law of Kingship among the Scots. A Critical Edition and Translation of George Buchanan's "De Iure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus"*. Ed. Roger A. Mason and Martin S. Smith. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004. Print.
- Burgess, Glen. *British Political Thought, 1500-1600*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Print.
- Burrow, Colin, ed. *The Complete Sonnets and Poems*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002. Print.
- Burton, Robert. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. Oxford: Printed by John Lichfield and James Short for Henry Cripps, 1621. Print.
- Coeffeteau, Nicolas. *A Table of Humane Passions With their Causes and Effects*. Translated into English by Edward Grimston Sergiant at Armes. London : Printed by Nicholas Okes, 1621.
- Cummings, Brian, and Freya Sierhuis. *Passions and Subjectivity in Early Modern Culture*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013. Print.
- Davis, Michael T. ed. *Crowd Actions in Britain and France from the Middle Ages to the Modern World*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. Print.
- Donaldson, Ian. *The Rapes of Lucretia: A Myth and its Transformation*. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1982. Print.
- Döring, Tobias. *Performances of Mourning in Shakespearean Theatre and Early Modern Culture*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. Print.
- Duncan-Jones, Katherine. "Ravished and Revised: The 1616 *Lucrece*." *The Review of English Studies, New Series* 52.208 (2001): 516-523. Print.
- Enterline, Lynn. *Shakespeare's Schoolroom: Rhetoric, Discipline, Emotion*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2012. Print.
- Escombe, Bridget. *Emotional Excess on the Shakespearean Stage: Passion's Slaves*. London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2014. Print.
- Erasmus, Desiderius. *The Education of a Christian Prince*. Trans. Neil M. Cheshire and Michael J. Heath. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997. Print.
- Fox, Cora. Introduction. *Ovid and the Politics of Emotion in Elizabethan England*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. eBook.
- Garnett, George, ed. *Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos: or, Concerning the Legitimate Power of a Prince over the People, and of the People over a Prince*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994. Print.
- Guevara, Antonio de. *The Dial of Princes*. Trans. Thomas North. London, 1582. Print.
- Hadfield, Andrew. *Shakespeare and Republicanism*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005. Print.
- Jewel, John. *An Homily Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion*. London, 1571. U of Victoria, Internet Shakespeare Editions.
- Kaegi, Ann. "(S)wept from Power: Two Versions of Tyrannicide in Richard III." *The Renaissance of Emotion: Understanding Affect in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*. Ed. Richard Meek and Erin Sullivan. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2015. 200–220. Print.
- Kahn, Victoria, Neil Saccamano, and Daniela Coli, eds. *Politics and the Passions, 1500-1850*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2006. Print.
- Kesselring, Krista J. *The Northern Rebellion of 1569: Faith, Politics and Protest in Elizabethan England*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Print.
- Lee, Daniel. "Private Law Models for Public Law Concepts: The Roman Law Theory of Dominion in the Monarchomach Doctrine of Popular Sovereignty." *The Review of Politics* 70.3 (2008): 370–399. Print.
- Lemon, Rebecca. *Treason by Words: Literature, Law, and Rebellion in Shakespeare's England*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2006. Print.
-

-
- Livy, L., L. A. Florus, B. Marliani, and P. Holland. *The Romane historie written by T. Livius of Padua. Also, the Breviaries of L. Florus*. London: Printed by Adam Islip, 1600. Print.
- Miola, Robert S. "Julius Caesar and the Tyrannicide Debate." *Renaissance Quarterly* 38.2 (1985): 271-89. Print
- Mullaney, Steven. *The Reformation of Emotions in the Age of Shakespeare*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2015. eBook.
- Nass, Barry. "The Law and Politics of Treason in Shakespeare's 'Lucrece'." *Shakespeare Yearbook* 7 (1996): 291-311. Print.
- Ovid. *Ovid's Fasti*. Trans. James George Frazer. London: William Heinemann, 1931. Print.
- Painter, William. *The Palace of Pleasure*. 2nd ed. London: Printed by Henry Denham for Richard Tottell and William Jones, 1566. Print.
- Paster, Gail Kern. *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2004. Print.
- Paster, Gail Kern, Katherine Rowe, and Mary Floyd-Wilson, eds. *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2004. Print.
- Prendergast, Maria. *Railing, Reviling, and Invective in English Literary Culture, 1588–1617: The Anti-Poetics of Theater and Print*. London: Routledge, 2016. Print.
- Sauer, Elizabeth. "Riot and Rebellion." *The Ashgate Research Companion to Popular Culture in Early Modern England*. Ed. Andrew Hadfield, Matthew Dimmock, and Abigail Shinn. London: Routledge, 2012. 267-82. Print.
- Schoenfeldt, Michael C. *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999. Print.
- Skinner, Quentin. *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Vol. 2 The Age of Reformation*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1978. Part 3: 189-348. Print.
- Starkey, Thomas. *A Dialogue between Pole and Lupset*. Ed. T. F. Mayer. Camden Society. 4th series, vol. 37. London: Royal Historical Society, 1989. 1-143. Print.
- Steggle, Matthew. *Laughing and Weeping in Early Modern Theatres*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007. Print.
- Strier, Richard. *The Unrepentant Renaissance: From Petrarch to Shakespeare to Milton*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2011. Print.
- Sullivan, Erin. "A Disease Unto Death: Sadness in the Time of Shakespeare." *Emotions and Health, 1200-1700*. Ed. Elena Carrera. Leiden: Brill, 2013. 159-183. Print.
- . *Beyond Melancholy: Sadness and Selfhood in Renaissance England*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2016. eBook.
- Wall, Alison. *Power and Protest in England, 1525-1640*. London: Edward Arnold, 2000. Print.
- Walter, John. *Crowds and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2006. Print.
- Wood, Andy. *Riot, Rebellion and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. Print.
- Wright, Thomas. *The Passions of the Minde in Generall. Corrected, enlarged, and with sundry new discourses augmented. With a treatise thereto adioyning of the clymatericall yeare, occasioned by the death of Queene Elizabeth*. London: Printed by Valentine Simmes for Walter Burre, 1604. Print.

Total word count: approx. 8220 words (including the title, abstract, keywords, Notes, and Works Cited)