Juliet, I Prosume? or Shakespeare and the Social Network

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Abstract

Though it may come as little surprise that Juliet is a popular character on Facebook, it may surprise how popular she is: in late 2013, there were at least 3,500 of her populating the social media platform. This essay inquires into what is being said about Juliet on Facebook. How is she being represented? Are there patterns to be found? If so, what might those patterns suggest about whether scholarly understandings of the character are shared in the broader culture? Like the sheer number of Facebook Juliets, the answers to these questions are surprising. Although some Juliets on Facebook may be phoned-in, disengaged, or just plain silly, even their silliness reveals individual account holders who are engaged in some way with Shakespeare and reveals how those account holders have come to understand him and his works. Through a complex intersection of negotiation, resistance, and prosumption, we see not just reconfigurations of the character Juliet, but a reconfiguration of Juliet as what Leisha Jones calls the "digital collective subject" (2011, 448), as well as a reconfiguration of Juliet's relationship with the world. This process happens not through the actions of an individual (like Shakespeare) but through the actions of thousands of individuals operating independently of each other; at the same time, many of these individuals are remaking themselves and others as Juliet. Facebook Juliet participates in *Romeo and Juliet*'s already-long history of adaptation as well as in long-established debates over what constitutes the essential, authentic Shakespeare; she demonstrates new ways of thinking about the character Juliet, including ways in which individuals relate to authorities of various stripes and relate Juliet to themselves; she reveals the workings of a variety of aspects of our culture; and she models how to think about identity, identity construction, even reality itself in a social media world.

My bounty is as boundless as the sea, / My love as deep; the more I give to thee, / The more I have, for both are infinite. — Romeo and Juliet 2.2.134-35

Non so chi sono, non so cosa diventerò. — "Juliet"

In its role as a love story, *Romeo and Juliet* is foundational in Western culture, so easily eclipsing its own textual foundations in mythology and Western European and Classical literature that when I am giving public talks on the play, often before theatrical performances, many of the people I meet are surprised to learn that the text did not spring, Athena-like, from the head of its

creator, whole and entire.[1] Similarly, it is arguable that Juliet — as Shakespeare's most easily-recognized female lead — is foundational to our culture's understanding of girls, girls-becoming-women, of young women in love, and so on. As Jennifer Hulbert notes in "'Adolescence, Thy Name is Ophelia!': The Ophelia-ization of the Contemporary Teenage Girl" (2006), there are a variety of reasons for Juliet's centrality: "Juliet, as one half of Western drama's most glamorous couple, wins that title [most famous teenage girl] hands-down"; "too well adjusted to be an apt depiction of a girl who is too much put upon," she is "bold," a "strong . . . force," "a key inciter of the play's action. Her downfall is largely the fault of her own choices" and she "makes a conscious decision" to end her own life (2006, 202). In fact, aside from the romance and the (hot) male actors who often play Romeo in film versions, the popularity of Juliet among teenage girls might also be ascribed, at least in part, to this positive reading of her character. Juliet is a strong teenage girl who lives in a society that seeks to bend her to its conventions. She, however, defies both conventions and her parents (2006, 219 n. 9). Hulbert casts Juliet as a muscular resistor, defiant in the face of overwhelming authority, and in strong contrast to characters such as the "too much put upon," "pathetic" Ophelia (2006, 202).[2] While I find this to be both an attractive and accurate reading, Hulbert overlooks one of Juliet's key strengths. Juliet is a deliberate re-maker: she resists, but her resistance is not simply a reflex, a teenagery rejection of authority. Juliet rejects her family in favor of a new identity, exchanging, as it were, a "dearest cousin for a dearer lord" (*Romeo and Juliet* 3.2.66). Juliet is active, purposeful resistant agent who choses to refashion herself in a better model.

It was in this sense of Juliet as an active agent who is also a contested center and who is herself at the center of an interrelated set of contests (between church and state, between state and family, between families, between love and family, between lover and family, and so on), that I turned to social media, in particular Facebook, to see how the struggle over Juliet is being played out: What is being said about her? How is she being represented? Are there patterns to be found? If so, what might those patterns suggest about whether scholarly understandings of the character are shared in the broader culture? The implications of what I found surprised me. Through a complex intersection of negotiation, resistance, and prosumption, we see not just a variety of reconfigurations of the character Juliet, for instance, along the lines of what Leisha Jones has called the "digital collective subject" (2011, 448), but a reconfiguration of Juliet's relationship with the world. This reconfiguration is happening not through the actions of an individual artist (much as Shakespeare refashioned Juliet when he appropriated her) but by the actions of thousands of individuals operating independently of each other; at the same time, many of these individuals are remaking themselves and others (whom they have already used in their remaking of Juliet)

as Juliet. Facebook Juliet participates in *Romeo and Juliet*'s already-long history of adaptation, as well as in long-established debates over what constitutes the essential, authentic Shakespeare; she demonstrates new ways of thinking about the character Juliet, including ways in which individuals relate to authorities of various stripes, as well as relate Juliet to themselves; she reveals the workings of a variety of aspects of our culture; and she models how to think about identity, identity construction, even reality itself in a social media world.

Ok, first of all. There are a lot of Juliets on Facebook. A *lot*. In March 2013, my first "Search for people, places, and things" using the two keywords "Juliet" and "Capulet" revealed at least 117 of her. Of these, two were "Interest" pages (one for "Juliet Capulet," one for "Juliet capulet").[3] Otherwise, Juliet was a

> · "Fictional Character" (25 pages)
> · "Public Figure" (9 pages)
> · "Actor/Director" (7 pages)
> · "Community" or "Community Page" (67 pages)
> · "Artist" (2 pages)
> · "Writer" (1 page)
> · "Teacher" (1 page)
> · "Monarch" (1 page)

A mere two Juliet Capulets were actual people, or they were according to Facebook's conventions: you could "friend" them.[4] One had eight followers, 165 friends, and was very well travelled. The other "Worked at Montague Industrial," "Studied at the University of Verona," graduated from the Liceo Scientifico Girolamo Fracastoro (class of 1910), and, regarding relationships, commented that "It's complicated." She had two friends (Lena Pollich and Kelsey Sullivan) ("Juliet Capulet [1]" 2011). As interesting as the variety of "Juliet Capulet" accounts and pages were, matters became intriguing once I moved beyond that nomination. Broadening the search parameters, I found at least twenty-three Julie Capulets, twenty-five Julia Capulets, thirty-six Juliette Capulets, seven Julieta Capulets, and a Juliett Capulet. Unlike the prevalence of Pages for "Juliet Capulet," all but two of the "Juli* Capulet" hits were personal accounts: they could be friended.

In November and December of 2013, Facebook's upgraded search feature returned a substantively different set of results when performing the same two-keyword "Juliet Capulet" search. There were more Juliets. Many, many more. Now, results are divided into six categories — All Results, People, Pages, Groups, Apps, and Events — rather than one aggregate results page, and the hits on each page differ. Although Juliet Capulets who are People might appear in the "All

Results" set, their pages do not appear in the Pages results, for example. However, while there are visibly more Juliets, Facebook does not always make all of the Juliets visible. When typing in search terms, a prompt to "See more results for 'juliet capulet'" appears at the bottom of the pull-down menu that appears, but the results queue stops expanding at 100 hits. Although a "more results" icon appears at the bottom of the queue after the 100th hit and a progress bar activates when that icon is clicked, the queue not only refuses to expand but the more results icon also disappears, suggesting that there are only 100 Juliet Capulets to find. However, the "See more results" results are not so simple as returning 100 different people, pages, groups, apps and events from a single search. In the Juliet Capulet search, fifteen "People" do not appear in the "All Results" page, which makes sense: space must be made for Pages, groups, and the like. However, nine "People" appeared in the "All Results" results but not in the "People" results: the "actual" Juliet Capulet results, then, seemed to number 109, with possibly many more who did not make the cut. And who might not have made that cut? Juliets who aren't very active. Facebook's algorithm appears not to approve of them. Juliet Capulet (1) and Juliet Capulet (3) appeared in neither the All Results nor the People queues: though their accounts were still active (at least as of 15 December 2013), neither had updated her account since early 2011 (11 April and 17 March, respectively).

This discrepancy suggests that more Juliets await just offstage, which is, in fact, the case. Another option on the search feature's pull-down is "Find all people named 'juliet capulet'" (see figure 1). Click "Find all people," and Facebook reports that there are "More Than 1,000 People" with the words "Juliet" and "Capulet" in their names. Clicking at the bottom of the scroll bar on the right side of the browser window prompts Facebook to report that it is "Loading more results," and twenty minutes' worth of clicking at a rate of about one click every two seconds still doesn't get to the end of the list. An overview of these searches reveals 2,695 Juliet Capulets for a search *that is incomplete*. And unlike the March search, almost all of these Juliets can be friended: so far as Facebook is concerned, they are real people.[5]

Not only are the new search results more fulsome, but the two-keyword "Juliet Capulet" search is more specific since the upgrade. The algorithm performs a generally accurate keyword search when "Find[ing] all people": it usually returns pages with the words "Juliet" and "Capulet" in their names, including what Facebook describes as "alternate name[s]," "another name you're known by," such as a nickname, a title, a professional name, or maiden name ("What alternate" 2013; see also "How do I display" 2013). Alternate names appear in parentheses, such as Juliet Capulet (Alexis Sanders) ("Juliet Capulet [7]" 2010); Farzana Toro (Juliet Capulet) ("Farzana" 2013); and Parisa Juliet (Capulet) ("Parisa" 2013).[6] Similarly, hyphenates such as Juliet Capulet-Montague and

Juliet Castillejos-Castromayor Capulet-Montague appear ("Juliet Capulet-Montague" 2013; "Juliet Castillejos" 2013). As suggested above, the algorithm is not perfect: though it seems able to read macrons and international characters (or at least an l with stroke), as in Juliett Anne Capulet ("Juliet Anne Capulet" 2013), some results do not include both search terms, such as Ezgi C. Capulet (MertKültür) ("Ezgi" 2013). What does *not* appear in the November/December "Juliet Capulet" search are all of the Julia Capulets, Juliette Capulets, Julie Capulets, and Julie Caps, the Juliette Montagues and the single-name Juliets (which includes every person, Page, group, app and event with any possible variation on "Juliet" somewhere in his, her, or its name). Each of these variations needs to be searched for separately: "See[ing] more results" for each of them returns mostly chock-full queues (though there are only twenty Juliette Montagues), while "Find all people" searches for Julie Capulet and Julie Cap returned 380 and forty hits, respectively, before "End of results" finally appeared.[7]

Taken together, these searches indicate that there are easily more than 3,500 Juliets roaming Facebook, and that's just a partial survey of the personal accounts: the count does not include the Pages, groups, apps or events or those variations on her name I might not have considered yet (such as "Julieta Capulet," a variant I blundered into in late December, 2013 — I wasn't looking specifically for her — of whom there are sixty-eight). Because of the astonishing complexity of the site and the jaw-dropping number of pages it contains, to say nothing of those Pages, groups, or personal accounts that users or Facebook itself has deleted or of those that might be added after this has been written, it is difficult to say how many Facebook Juliets there were, are, or ever shall be. Given the company's self-reported 1.267 billion monthly active users (MAUs) ("Form 10-Q" 2014, 21), there could be a nearly bottomless well of Juliets on Facebook.

In Her Own Words

So what do all of these Juliets have to say for themselves? As one might expect, in November and December of 2013, Juliet's life has moved on from mid-March. Juliet (no period) now has only forty-nine likes, down from fifty-one: she is less popular. Juliet's career trajectory has changed from Artist to Author, and she continues actively to maintain her Page, as do many of the Juliets who hold personal accounts, adding friends, likes, and photos, posting status updates, and so on. Juliet Capulet [2] and Juliet Capulet [17] are gone altogether: pasting the URLs for their page into a browser takes me to my own Facebook Wall. If it were not for previous versions of this essay, I would not know about them, and as far as Facebook is concerned, neither ever existed. What happened is anybody's guess, and their ghostly presence here is an indication of social media's evanescence, as well as a suggestion of the challenges posed by social media

research in general: people, pages, feeds, and accounts are twenty-first century will-o'-the-wisps. This fugitive aspect of social media use is enhanced by the nature of Facebook itself, where accounts can be deactivated, deleted, disabled, or suspended, the distinctions being that while a deactivation (which is user-initiated) can be reversed at the user's request, a deletion (also performed at the user's request) is permanent, while suspension and disabling happen because Facebook thinks the user was bad: in its words, "We disable Facebook accounts that violate our terms" ("Disabled" 2013; see also "Deactivating" 2013). The distinction between disabling and suspension is somewhat opaque, though suspension seems to be a temporary measure for some malfeasance (see "Facebook Community Standards" 2013 and "Statement" 2013), while disabling is more permanent, Facebook's nuclear option, as it were.

And as for the Juliets who remain? As one might assume, Juliet has a home, with an address and everything. In fact, she has at least three: 123 Star-Crossed, Verona, Italy 37121 ("Juliet Capulet [2]" 2013); Verona street [*sic*] 88, Mansion 12, Verona, Italy 881249 ("Juliet Capulet [4]" 2013); and Via Cappello 23, 37121 Verona, Italy ("Juliet Capulet [5]" 2011).[8] She does not just live in Verona, though: she has cribs in College Station, Texas ("Juliet Capulet [8]" 2013), Halifax, Nova Scotia ("Juliet Capulet [9]" 2012), Paderborn, Germany ("Juliet Capulet [10]" 2013), Vinnitsa, Vinnyst'Ka Oblast,' Ukraine ("Juliet Capulet [11]" 2013), and Jakarta, Indonesia ("Juliet Capulet [12]" 2013), to name but a few. Juliet has gone global. Nothing new or surprising in that. What is surprising is how quickly the polynational Juliet asserted herself in the search results: the first twenty-two hits in the "Find all people named 'juliet capulet'" search represented Juliets from at least seven different countries (four specifically from the U.S., two from Canada, two from Italy, one each from Australia, Ireland, Germany, and Indonesia, with the remaining ten having no particular location indicated next to their thumbnails). As for her education, Juliet was home schooled ("Juliet Montague [3]" 2012), though it appears she also studied at Verona High School ("Juliet Capulet [13]" 2010), Lord Beaverbrook High ("Juliet Capulet [6]" 2010), Colegio William Shakespeare ("Juliet Capulet [14]" 2010), the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign ("Juliet Capulet-Montague" 2013), along with Soul Reaper Academy (in Reseda, California),[9] and The High School of Love ("Juliette Capulet" 2012).

So far as personal relationships go, her status seems to depend on when exactly in her life one encounters Juliet. No one ought to be surprised that she "Works at Loving Romeo at all times!"("Julie Capulet" 2013), nor that she says that her relationship with Romeo may be "complicated" ("Juliet Capulet [6]" 2010; see also "Juliet Cap [1]" 2012). And it also makes sense that she is married to Romeo Montague (or Montegue, or Mont Ague, or Rome Montague, or

Romeo TheMontague, or Romeao Montagué). At least fifteen of the Juliets indicate that they are widowed, suggesting that she took a moment between her husband's death and stabbing herself in the chest to update her profile (see "Juliet Montague [4]" 2012 or "Juliet Capulet [15] 2011). Some may be startled to find that she is "in an open relationship" (e.g., "Juliet Montague [2]" 2012 and "Juliet Capulet [11]" 2013).

And how does Juliet spend her days? Charmingly, she "Worked at Being the Best Daughter" ("Juliette Montague" 2013) and is "President at Making everyone happy" ("Juliet Capulet [2]" 2013), though her parents, Nurse and the Friar might dispute these assertions. When she isn't "Being a Princess" ("Juliett Capulet" 2010), she "Works at Peacemaker" ("Juliet Montague [3]" 2012), though she does have her moments: a "Former Lazy Teen at The insane asylum for the chronicly stupid," she doesn't read, and has this to say for herself: "I just sit around, and let my drunk nurse do everything" ("Juliet Montague [1]" 2011) and "dad has money dont need job" ("Juliet Cap Ulet" 2011). She listens to Pitbull ("Juliet Capulet [10]" 2013), Mozart ("Juliette Montague" 2013), Coldplay ("Juliet Anne Capulet 2013), Michael Bublé ("Juliet Cap [2]" 2011) and Pink ("Juliet Capulet [16]" 2011). Distressingly, she watches *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* ("Juliet Cap [3]" n.d.), though she gains some cred back because she plays in a band that sounds like "Alanis Morissette, Paramore, The Cardigans, NIDJI, [and] The London Suede" ("Juliet Capulet [12]" 2013; "Capulet" 2013). She does come across as rather self-involved, judging from the number of selfies — self portraits — she posts, she loves her new tattoo ("Juliet C" 2013) and is keen on others' body art, too ("Juliet" 2013). Go figure, her personal interests are

> Romeo
> Romeo
> Formal parties
> Romeo. ("Juliet Capulet [4]" 2013)

She is religious, or at least interested in religion; she both reads and likes the Bible ("Capulet Juliet [4]" 2014) and reads the Q'uran and likes Islam-centered Facebook Pages that post inspirational messages ("Juliet Montague [4]" 2012). She likes cuddling ("Julie Capulet" 2013). These descriptions and epithets indicate the variety of ways in which Juliet has moved into — or been moved into — popular culture: individual Juliets participate in a welter of relationship statuses, political commitments, and artistic media and genres. When taken together, Facebook Juliet demonstrates a thorough (though perhaps unaware) involvement in culturally up-to-date postmodern pastiche.

Temperamentally, Juliet is all over the map. As might be expected, she frets about having to wait around for her Romeo to show up (see "Juliette Montague" 2013 and "Juliet Capulet [16]" 2011) and is inclined to despair: "I shall never marry paris I rather be dead" ("Juliette Montague" 2013) and "Ugh fml [fuck my life]!! worried & scared & just don't know what to do anymore! :("("Juliet Capulet [9]" 2012). Although she has her low periods, she is proud of what she accomplished as the president of her college's chapter of ALPFA (Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting) ("Juliet Capulet-Montague" 2013), and she has her happy moments: "party time! Get your mask on!" ("Juliet Capulet [5]" 2011), and "Can't stop thinking about romeo as sweet as thy rose.!" and "Romeo im so Glad were married.! Art tho my beautiful and beloved husband!" ("Julie Capulet" 2013). Despite all of her difficulties — in addition to her romantic and familial challenges, she also reveals that she has leukemia and is out of her meds ("Juliet Montague [2]" 2012) — Juliet can even be light-hearted, describing herself as "*Sono solo tutte puttanate*" ("It is all just rubbish") and has an introspective side: "*Non so chi sono, non so cosa diventerò*" ("I do not know who I am, I do not know what I will become" ("Juliet" 2013) (trans. Maurizio Calbi (2014). She does get angry — "Totally po'd" ("Juliet Capulet [13]" 2010) — and can be surprisingly foul-mouthed: "Works at none of your fuckin' business, STALKERS" ("Julia Cap" 2013; see also "Juliet Capulet [4]" 2013).

Depending on how you look at it, Juliet's English can be taken on a scale ranging from vibrant to eye-wateringly bad. On occasion she does speak in her "native tongue," as in "O comfortable, friar! Where is my lord? I do remember well where I should be, And there I am. Where is my Romeo" ("Juliet Capulet [7]" 2010) and "My only love sprung from my only hate! Too early seen unknown, and known too late! Prodigious birth of love it is to me that I must love a loathed enemy" ("Juliet Capulet [9]" 2012), but I have only found one instance where she preserves her own verse form ("Juliet Capulet [17]" 2013). More often than not, she is colloquial, idiomatic, and slangy: "Drop me a t-bomb, chillin' in Verona" ("Juliet Capulet [6]" 2010); "Friar Lawrence has helped put an end to this ridiculous fantasy of County Paris and I. Haha fat chance. Soon enough my parents and Nurse will regret their decision in forcing me into this nightmare" ("Juliet Capulet [15]" 2011); "im in love with Romeo why is there all this hate" ("Juliet Capulet [3]" 2011); and "Rip tybalt, gunna miss u cuz! [heavy black heart emoji]" ("Juliet Capulet [9]" 2012). Sometimes, Juliet mixes things up, as is the case with Juliette Capulet: "Romeo I miss you if only we could be together . . . O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo . . . I shall never marry paris I rather be dead" (Juliette Capulet 2012) She can be funny: "Paris, ugh get lost #canyounot" ("Capulet Juliet [2]" 2013) and

IM MARRYING PARIS IN TWO DAYS?!?!

NOT HAPPENING MOM #IMWITHROMEO
#DUH ("Juliet Capulet [20]" 2014)

On occasion, she lapses into text-speak, as with "OMG IM FB FAMOSA LOLZ YALL" ("Juliet Montague [2]" 2012). Once, she goes all reflexive, glossing and interpreting her own utterances:

> "Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay,' And I will take thy word: yet if thou swear'st, Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo, If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully" Juliet/Act 2 Scene 2/ juliet is talking to romeo asking him if he loves her. this is important because without it they might have not pronounced their love that night. ("Juliet Capulet [18]" 2010)

Juliet is also multi-lingual: she knows Italian ("Juliet" 2013), Spanish ("Juliet C" 2013), Russian and Ukranian ("Juliet Capulet [11]" 2013), German ("Juliet Capulet [10]" 2013), Turkish ("Ezgi" 2013) and Arabic ("Juliet Montague [4]" 2012 and "Juliet Capulet [19]" 2013). Having facility in none of these languages myself, I cannot say whether she is any better in them that she is in her cradle tongue, if "cradle tongue" can even be applied to Facebook Juliet. For all of her linguistic prowess, and although she can be funny now and then, Juliet does not have much of a sense of humor overall. Even when her posts come across as superficial or inappropriately light in tone — "gunna miss u cuz! [heavy black heart emoji]" — they are grounded in pain. Despite their apparent frippery, posts such as these suggest an awareness of the playtext's own tonal and structural complexity, a tragedy written over a comic structure that celebrates language play while satirizing those, like Romeo, who celebrate language "improperly" by wallowing in linguistic excess.

As I indicated, a lot of Juliets, and the answer to what they have to say for themselves is, "a lot." With that comes a knotty problem: teasing out the ways in which individual Juliets signify while trying to discern an overall picture of how Juliet (and, by extension, Shakespeare) signifies on the platform as a whole. This is not made easier by the fact that some individuals, such as Juliet, say quite a few things, while others, like Juliet Montague [1], say comparatively little or even nothing at all, as with Juliet Capulet [8]. Taken as a group, however, the Facebook Juliet that gradually emerges from the normative pressures of the platform is pretty, polyracial, and youthful; generally but not exclusively heterosexual and not an especially active sexual agent; not very friendly — one might even call her isolated — and in her interpersonal relationships relatively though not entirely drama-free; and while seeming superficially to be a conformist, at least as far as Facebook is concerned, a playful experimenter with and subverter of identity.

Juliet: Young, Beautiful, and Polyracial

The most immediately apparent aspect of Facebook Juliet is that she's astonishingly good looking. A great many of her Profile pictures feature Claire Danes or Olivia Hussey, mostly in shots from Baz Luhrmann's 1996 *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* or Franco Zeffirelli's 1968 *Romeo and Juliet* respectively, but there are also a few from later in their lives (see figure 2): of these, the great majority of the Danes pictures are iconic shots of her gazing at Romeo through the fish tank or of her leaning on her balcony railing, adorned with an angel's wings; the Hussey pictures are more varied, but common among them are her own balcony shots and close-ups from the masked ball.[10] When Danes and Hussey exit the scene, other celebrities of various magnitudes take over: Juliet looks a lot like Lily Collins, Lady Gaga, Michelle Trachtenberg, Jamie Lynn Spears, Anne Hathaway, Emily Osment, Megan Fox, Blake Lively, Michelle Obama, Mallika Sherawat, Kate Winslett, Amanda Seyfried, Nelena, Carrie Underwood, Selena Gomez, Vanessa Hudgins, Melodie Gibeau, Marilyn Monroe, Aswariya Rai, Julia Allison, Jasmine Villegas, Molly C. Quinn, Elizabeth Mitchell, Emma Stone, Nina Dobrev, Emma Watson, Princess Diana, Hailee Steinfeld, Juliette Lewis, Angelina Jolie, Gwenyth Paltrow, Nina Dobrev, and Bar Refaeli (see figure 3). And this list only scratches the surface — there are many, many more out there. Many of the personal accounts that seem like they could be of real people feature Profile pictures taken from flattering angles, in decent, if not outright good light and with some digital manipulation in evidence, with the women demonstrating attractive behaviors, smiling, laughing, and the like — along with the occasional duck lips pose (see figure 4).[11] Some of the Juliets represent themselves with images from other media, ranging from traditional European portraiture to pinups, movie posters, manga, anime, and digital imagery (figure 5). While young, Juliet's no kid: late teens into the early twenties seems closer to the mean (given some older outliers and excepting Hussey and Danes). That fact notwithstanding, these images, be they of actual account holders, of celebrities, or imported from other media, make it apparent that Juliet's appearance is conceived of in accord with those notions of feminine beauty that are received and perpetuated through mass media (see figure 6). Classic markers of female beauty are abundant: bilaterally symmetrical faces; unblemished complexions; bright, clear, often large eyes; long, flowing hair; and slender, if not outright and even impossibly skinny physiques (though when Juliet has got it, she flaunts it). These images are almost always framed and lit to enhance the subject's face and/or body (and not just in the shots of professionally made-up actors and models who are experienced in holding their bodies and expressions so they are at their most attractive for a professional photographer and whose faces

often benefit from digital fiddling before the photographs are published). In general, Facebook Juliet endorses and fosters widespread notions of what is "pretty.[12]

Looking past all of the pulchritude, it becomes clear that while Juliet predominantly conceives of herself as white, she also thinks of herself as Black, Indian, Latina, Hispanic, or Indonesian — and again, this list just scratches the surface. In her analysis of the semiotics of race in a performance of *The Winter's Tale*, Ayanna Thompson argues that "the races, ethnicities, and colors of the actors were not semiotically relevant in the production . . . Their color . . . was not highlighted, questioned, or brought into the semiotic realm of the production; we, the audience, were not supposed to think about race and/or color in this production" (2008-2009; see also Thompson 2006, 7, 10-12, 16). Her comment is pertinent here: the "casting" of Juliet on Facebook seems colorblind, and the "audience" does not appear to have been asked to think about race and/or color. None of the individual Juliets that I have considered specifically comments on the race of her visual representation, and while the visual evidence of a "different" ethnicity is impossible to miss — and thus could be considered to be "highlighted," though this is a consideration that Margo Hendricks's essay "Gestures of Performance: Rethinking Race in Contemporary Shakespeare" challenges (2006, 201) — any interrogation of Juliet's race or the Facebook audience's assumptions about her race seems more implicit than explicit. More broadly, the variety of racial representations on Facebook supports the notion that Juliet is a trans-racial signifier: she matters in some way in a range of cultures. Put another way, I do not see evidence of what Lisa Nakamura describes as "*identity tourism*," in which online performances use "race and gender as amusing prostheses to be donned and shed without 'real life' consequences" (2002, 13-14; see also Thompson 2011, 147-48, 157, 158 and 160). Even more profoundly, I think, the polyracial Facebook Juliet illustrates how the character is being remade (over and over again) to suit the users' own assumptions and needs.[13]

Sexual Juliet

Juliet appears to be almost entirely heterosexual. So far, I have found only one page that overtly indicates that she is bi-sexual or lesbian: Juliet Rose Capulet-Halliwell has "liked" three LGBT Facebook groups and expresses desire for another woman: "Hey girl, guess what? If you don't make her yours, I'll take her." None of the remaining Juliets I have considered so far even seemed covert in the suggestion that they were lesbian, bi-sexual, transsexual, or questioning (though given the huge number of pages being dealt with here, it is possible that many LBTQ Juliets populate Facebook). This heteronormative representation is at odds with academic culture, where the queer or queer-influenced analysis of Shakespeare is well established, and with popular culture as well, where lesbian Juliets can be found on YouTube (marckerr92 2008, lilmissgiggles32 2013,

almagomezschool 2014), in indie/cult films (*Tromeo and Juliet* 1997), in international films (Rome & Juliet 2006), in hard-core pornography (*West Side* 2000), onstage (Philadelphia's Curio Theatre Company's fall 2013 production; see Piepenburg 2013), and in fan fiction (BrandiJenner 2014, Pattinson n.d.). It is also at odds with the way in which Juliet's race and nationality are busily being remade on Facebook: with regard to sexual identity, the site seems to exert conservative pressure, or perhaps it rewards heteronorming by pushing heterosexual Juliets further up in the algorithmically-driven results queue. Whatever her orientation, on the whole, Facebook Juliet demonstrates little erotic heat. Much of the time, the Juliets do little other than express desire for their Romeos in sweet but mild terms, such as "I [small + cute heart emoji] Romeo Montague xox" ("Juliet Capulet [2]" 2013) or "My husband Romeo has been banished for the killing of my cousin, and all i have is the memory of his sweet kiss and the ring he planted on my finger" ("Juliet Capulet [3]" 2011).

> Give me my Romeo, and when I shall die
> Take him and cut him out in little stars,
> And he will make the face of heaven so fine
> That all the world will be in love with night
> And pay no worship to the garish sun. (*Romeo and Julie*t 3.2.21-25; "Juliet Capulet [17]" 2013)

More often, she does so in modern argot: "I am madly in love with this dude that crashed my parents party. HE IS SOOOOO HOT!!!!" ("Juliet Montague [1]" 2011). Juliet Capulet [1] writes that she has learned to fall backwards, a stage beyond Nurse's promise that she will learn about that (*Romeo and Juliet* 1.3.43-44, 57-58); Juliet "likes it in Romeo's room" (Juliet Capulet [13]" 2010), but what exactly she likes is left up to the imagination; and she hilariously (though I think unintentionally) lets the world know that "I am no longer a maiden. My Romeo did come!" (Juliet Capulet [15] 2011). Very rarely, however, is she verbally explicit about her desires, though when she is, as is the case with Juliet Rose, she doesn't hold back, and Romeo's response is enthusiastic: "yeeeeeeeeeeeee:". Juliet Capulet [4] asks Romeo for anal sex; is Juliet expressing a little anarchic desire, revising herself by making explicit possibilities heretofore only implicit in her epithalamium (3.2.1-31)? Is she taking a swat at decorous conceptions of her character, which could be taken to include those in the Shakespeare playtext itself, where Juliet does speak of her desires but does not specify exactly what she desires to do (with? to?) Romeo . . . or what she wants him to do with/ to her? Has she been hacked? The request for anal sex does appear more than two years after the next most recent post and was posted via mobile device: maybe Juliet left her smartphone lying around and Mercutio got ahold of it — it certainly sounds like him. (If it is a hack, it may be

that the hacker her- or himself is expressing some resistance or rejection of the sexually decorous Juliet. Or maybe just trying to embarrass or humiliate the account holder. That, too, would not be unlike Mercutio.) While it is unclear to me whether Facebook Juliet is disinclined to sex or is being discrete, the overall representation of the character is at odds with scholarly (and some theatrical) understandings of a more active sexual agent,[14] though this conservative representation *does* generally align with how Juliet is conceived popularly (see Hendershott-Kraetzer 2012, 18-34). It may also be that Facebook itself exerts a normalizing pressure on how the character is represented, irrespective of however Facebook Juliet's creators may conceive of her.[15] (Given what I take to be the relatively high proportion of what appear to be school-generated Pages and accounts that I found, the sexual agency-suppressing activity of school, parents, and/or peer groups may also have a bearing on how the character is represented.)

Juliet does show her sexuality, rather than talk about it, though this is more rare than one might think, given the pressure exerted by Facebook itself for accounts and Pages to be as much visual as verbal, if not more so: In both of these instances — the only two I've yet found that visually depict Juliet's sexuality — Juliet tends to be dominant over Romeo. Reversing this pattern is an older one of Capulet Juliet [3]'s profile pics, visible in the photos portlet at the center left of figure 7: a close up of Romeo behind Juliet, kissing the nape of her neck, his hand either caressing or grasping her throat. That this visual has been supplanted by one of a partially naked Juliet kneeling above a partially naked, prone Romeo suggests that Juliet sees this image as a more accurate, more up to date or more desirable representation of herself. (In this, the account holder is more in line with scholarly understandings of the character; see for example Brown 1996, 334.) These two examples appear to be exceptions to the pattern, however: although the female body of Facebook Juliet is often on display (see figures 3-5 and the photos portlet in figure 8), her sexually active body is not. Curiously, whatever the particulars of her sexual agency may be, the ways in which Juliet codifies her relationship with Romeo conform to the circumscriptions set out by Facebook itself. For instance, "Married," "Widowed," "In a relationship," and "It's complicated" are all options in the pull-down menu Facebook offers when editing "Basic Info" in one's profile, as is "In an open relationship."[16] Others that are available but that I have not yet seen selected are "Single," "Engaged," "In a civil union," "In a domestic partnership," "Separated" and "Divorced." No relationship at all seems to be an option, too, a kind of relational null set.

Oh, What a Lonely Girl

Juliet does not have many friends (at least, she's not much friended or doesn't friend others very much). For example, Juliet (one name only) is a community with 51 likes, while Juliet. (the period is specific) has 18,701; Juliet Capulet [10] has 202 friends, while Juliet Montague [4] is lonely indeed, with only one. This may be an effect of the sheer number of accounts and Pages one encounters. Which would you friend? Who's the "real" Juliet? Profile pictures aren't any help because so many of them are exactly the same, and those that aren't are of celebrities, and those pictures that don't appear to be of celebrities, that look like they're of "real" people, are often of celebrities or models that haven't been recognized as such. Along with this is the strong sense I have that many of these accounts were created as school projects or even on a lark, after which a smattering of chums and FB pals created a remedial social network with friends or classmates before the project was abandoned. Ironically for a character who advises against "rash" and sudden actions (*Romeo and Juliet* 2.2.118), Juliet joins Facebook, engages in a flurry of activity, posting pictures, some likes and a cluster of status updates, and then never updates the account again. This activity usually happens over the course of one to three days in months right around the end of an academic term or semester (October-December and April-May are common months; see "Juliet Cap" [4]" 2013 and "Capulet Juliet [4]" 2013, for example. Ultimately, the reasons why many of the Juliets joined Facebook remain opaque. If any of the pages are, in fact, the result of school assignments, I am uncertain as to their educational benefit. In "Teaching Shakespeare with YouTube," Christy Desmet argues that that social media platform "is perfect for the kind of peer review that we want students to engage in as they write, create, and revise their work in different media" (2009, 65) and that it

> should [be] used[d] . . . in the classroom both to analyze primary Shakespearean texts . . . and to generate topics for creating and standards for evaluating students' productions. In this way, YouTube videos can become a locus for honing students' skills in critical reading and writing. (2009, 65-66)

This is an argument that Ayanna Thompson extends and complicates in *Passing Strange: Shakespeare, Race, and Contemporary America*: "If performance facilitates a deeper and more complex understanding of the Shakespearean text, what happens when a performance complicates the identity politics within the classroom?" (2011, 166). It is difficult to say whether honing critical skills or a discussion of identity politics is happening on or because of these Facebook pages. Granted, I am not friends with any of the Facebook Juliets, so there may be a wealth of critical interchange happening outside my line of sight, but then again, many of the Juliets seem to have set their privacy levels pretty low.[17] What is available to the un-Friended viewer suggests requirements

to identify passages that are important or essential to the character either in her own words or in those of other characters (see "Juliet Capulet" [7]" 2010); these may be coupled with requirements that the student summarize/paraphrase the lines or provide brief interpretive comments (see "Juliet Capulet [19]" 2013). There are also accounts and Pages that indicate a requirement to imaginatively enter the character's psychology ("Juliet Capulet [19]" 2013 or "Juliet" 2010, for instance), in a manner similar to that described by Eileen McBride and Kimberly Hall in "Facebook: Role Play in a Psychology Class" (2012, 315-17), though on a much more limited scale. Then, too, the Page creators and account holders may be using these projects to subvert popular, received notions of Juliet, such as by "dirtying up" an "innocent" character by having her ask for oral or anal sex, or they may critically engage their classwork after the fact without specific guidance or direction. They may be building accounts or Pages that satisfy some personal interest or need; Elliot T. Panek, Yioryos Nardis and Sara Konrath suggest that at least one such need is narcissistic (2013, 2008-10), a subject to which I return below. Or, as Sujata Iyengar and Christy Desmet suggest in their discussion of YouTube Ophelias, the character may be "comprehensible only to members of a specific, sometimes tiny, interpretive community for whom and among whom it was designed" (2012, 62).

Usually, Juliet's circle is restricted to her fellow Veronese, though sometimes other people appear, both real and from fictional sources (see figures 10-12). Whenever it can, Facebook will encourage the people who are visiting personal accounts' walls (people such as myself) to reach out and friend the individual with a cheerful "Do you know Juliet? To see what she shares with friends, send her a friend request." Facebook will do this no matter how open or closed Juliet is: personal accounts that appear open to the world (as is the case with "Julia Cap" and her turbulent home life) can be friended, as can accounts that are about as revealing as, well, a wall.

More revealing than the number of friends that Juliet has, however, is how she interacts with them. None of the Juliets I considered showed any posts on others' pages, even Romeo's. In her online life, as in her Veronese world, Juliet seems to live in an isolated little bubble. In one odd instance, Juliet posts a screenshot of a Facebook chat with Romeo, in which Romeo never engages with her. This is more Juliet the stalker rather than idealized youthful lover. In a similar vein, very few of her comments are liked, let alone commented on: this is exceptionally unusual for Facebook, where people will like and comment on all manner of things, especially emotive posts describing joy, fretfulness, pain, or worry. However, more often than not, Juliet's posts go almost unnoticed and unremarked. Figures 11 and 12 show two of the more spirited exchanges that I found: The first, between Juliet Capulet [1] and her friends is fairly representative of a Facebook interchange. Juliet launches comments in a variety of tones to the universe — loving and sincere,

as regards her nurse; sardonic, as regards her impending marriage; and fretful, regarding Paris — and she gets responses. One set of comments takes the form of a micro-debate about marrying at a young age, while another is a brief exchange about her friends' experiences with nurses. One of her friends even gets up into Juliet's grill, taking her to task for questioning Paris's suitability and for moaning and groaning about being married. In figure 12, the second set, from Juliet Capulet [16], we see Juliet and Romeo interacting directly, giving us a rare, for Facebook, inside look at Juliet's anxiety before her secret nuptials. Contrary to what one might expect, direct interactions between Juliet and her Romeo seem to be few and far between: she comments on him often and posts pictures of him, but the two do not often speak.

Thus, Juliet's posts tend to go unremarked. In addition, although she describes her own drama, she tends not to engage in drama. Obviously enough, she is frustrated with her family, the feud, and the complications to her romantic life. However, Juliet's self-destructive inclinations are not on display as much as I had expected, given her propensity to threaten self-harm (see *Romeo and Juliet* 3.5.243 and 4.1.52-59; see also 3.2.143-47 and 3.5.200-202). Only seven of the Facebook Juliets indicate suicidal thoughts: "Oh Romeo, have you left this world without me? nay, i shall joineth you . . . we shall part from this world together . . . — [crying face emoji] feeling Empty" ("Parisa Juliet [Capulet]" 2013); "I RATHER DIE THEN MARRY COUNTY PARIS HE IS NOT MY TRUE LOVE, NOT MY HUSBAND, ROMEO IS! I have no one but Romeo. My father, Mother and NURSE betrayed me. How could she do this. Friar Lawrence will help me or else . . " and "Life is empty without Romeo, there is no point for me to be left on earth. Oh happy dagger, this is thy sheath. There rust and let me die!"("Juliet Capulet [15]" 2011); "I shall never marry paris I rather be dead" ("Julia Capulet" 2012) — a comment, incidentally, that is liked by Romeo; "Oh Romeo why did you have to die? I shall kill myself too. YOLO (Yee Only liveth Once" ("Juliet Cap" [4] 2013); "IM done with all this crap. im just gonna kill myself. goodbye world" ("July Capulet" 2013); "RIP Romeo I will love you forever and I can not exist without you, I need to end my life" ("Juliet Capulet [20]" 2014); and a rather shocking status update in which Juliet wants to die by "shov[ing] poison down my vagina" while having anal sex with Romeo ("Juliet Capulet [4]" 2013). One Juliet memorializes herself but does not specify an intention to kill herself:

> R.I.P.
> Juliet Capulet(Montague)
> and her dear husband
> Romeo Montague ("Juliet Capulet [3]" 2011)

Those aside, Juliet's posts stress her confusion over loving a Montague, her love for Romeo, or her misery at not being able to be with him because of extrinsic circumstances. But no matter what she is directing to her friends, the majority of her comments seem lost in a void.

In a way, this paucity of reactions to Juliet's thoughts is of a piece with the Shakespearean playtext. Juliet, a lonely girl to begin with, becomes ever more isolated as the plot unrolls: she sets aside her family for her new husband, loses her cousin to that husband, then learns that her husband has been banished; her parents shun her, she is betrayed by, and then shuns, the Nurse, her one confidante; fearing betrayal by the Friar and possessed by a ghastly vision of lonely insanity in her family's tomb, she wakes in that tomb to find herself widowed, and thereafter is betrayed by the Friar, abandoned to commit her final self-destruction. So it should not be especially surprising that Juliet has few friends nor that her last, desperate declarations go unnoticed by the world. In fact, it should come as more of a surprise when Facebook Juliet reveals a wealth of friends and followers, a revelation of a part of Juliet's life beyond that revealed or even suggested by the Shakespearean source. None of the Juliets who articulate suicidal intentions appear to hover over the decision to kill herself; there is no discussion of the psychology of a would-be suicide; surprisingly, no one (other than the one Romeo) even makes note of her declaration, let alone tries to talk her out of it. None of the accounts have been turned into memorial walls, though according to Facebook itself, "we . . . set privacy so that only confirmed friends can see the profile or locate it in a search" (Kelly 2009). It could be argued that in the preponderance of accounts and Pages that do *not* demonstrate an explicit suicidal ideation or that even continue to update Juliets' timelines we are seeing Juliets who reject Juliet's final option; it may be that the Facebook Juliets are embracing Juliet as "a strong teenage girl who lives in a society that seeks to bend her to its conventions . . . [but] defies both conventions and her parents" (Hulbert 2006, 219), even to the extent of defying the parent text. However, both of these cases would be a difficult to make, attempts to fill an aporia with intentionality. Here, Facebook Juliet remains frustrating, troubling, indeterminate, though the ways in which her life is reconfigured online may help to clarify what we are seeing.

What a Change is Here

Facebook Juliet is not only reconfiguring aspects of the Shakespearean Juliet's personality: she is restructuring Juliet's entire life, such as by compressing her relationship with Romeo. For instance, Juliet Capulet [3] joined Facebook, met Romeo, and announced her own death all in one hurricane of a day, 17 March 2011 (although she was born on 2 May 1952, making her fifty-nine years old at the time). Other Juliets' lives are similarly compressed, but none as completely and none in the first person (yes, Juliet can be arch, referring to herself as "she"). At other times,

Facebook Juliet doesn't reflect all of the playtextual Juliet's life: plain Juliet joined Facebook on 21 April 2010, describes the highlights of her first playtextual day — noting that a brawl took place in the streets, talking with mom about some Paris guy, going to the party, meeting and talking with Romeo, and brooding afterwards about Romeo's identity — but then she recedes into a profound silence ("Juliet" 2010), leaving friends and Facebook stalkers alike to wonder what happened. Things were looking so promising, after all.

This last reveals another way in which Facebook Juliet reconfigures Shakespeare's Juliet: as indicated in the previous section, Juliet doesn't often seem to die. Rather, she just stops posting status updates on her timeline, sometimes around the point at which Romeo or she dies, but also sometimes *in medias res*, leaving her story tantalizingly incomplete. Yet, at other times, Juliet lives on, posting about herself living her life. Usually, her activity is low-key, an added friend or like. However, in at least one instance, Facebook Juliet aggressively resists the Shakespearean imperative. She writes, "it killed me inside . . . but I know what i did was for the best. . ." and "i needed to end it before it killed what we have . . . i owe alot to Romeo and will remember him always and forever" ("Capulet Juliet [3]" 2010), provocatively suggesting that she dumped Romeo, leaving him to his own devices, perhaps even to kill himself in grief over his loss. Whatever the truth of Romeo and Juliet's situation may be, this particular Juliet went on to graduate from high school and, for all we know, live happily ever after. In this, there is (as in so many of her sisters' lives) an evanescent quality: we can't know (at least from her Wall, or at least from *this* Wall) what happened to Juliet. And yet, this ephemerality vibrates in tension with the temporary permanence of the Wall itself: there it sits, testament to Juliet's existence . . . as long as the account holder or Facebook suffers it to live. And then, poof: this Juliet will be gone, almost for good, remaining only in traces of personal memories and second-party documentation.

This temporary permanence, in combination with the open-endedness of the character's life, seems to be one of the distinguishing features of Facebook Juliet, and perhaps of social media Shakespeare overall. Theatrical performance is similarly fleeting. Once an individual performance is over, it's gone, left only in memory and memorial reconstructions such as reviews, blog posts, critical analyses, and so on — part of what Barbara Hodgdon calls "a kind of present historicism" (1989) — or in recordings (which can only partially document a theatrical event). Film and television productions of Shakespeare, while more permanent in that they are most often recorded and (in theory) infinitely repeatable on playback, also possess an element of transience. A notable example of this transience is David Thacker's production of *Measure for Measure* for the BBC's *Performance* series. Airing in November 1994 on BBC2, the production has never been commercially available for purchase in the U.S. People remember having seen it, or remember

wishing they had seen it, but actual copies of the broadcast are tough to get: it seems to circulate primarily in grainy dubs, VHS recordings of on-air broadcasts, or even copies of copies. (This is in contrast to productions such as *The Hollow Crown*: although U.S. residents had to wait, more or less patiently, while friends and colleagues across the Atlantic teased about seeing the production when it aired in July 2012 — or gloated about owning a region 2 DVD, released in November 2012, some eleven months before the U.S. release — the eventual PBS broadcast and region 1 DVD release in fall 2013 ensured ready and repeatable access to the production, to say nothing of the wealth of interviews and clips available online.) For all of the vast technological and monetary resources at even the average critic's disposal, broadcasts can be missed, recordings can be damaged or deleted, and even if the recorded production is recoverable (or re-purchasable), the unique experience of the original viewing is irretrievable. Despite what the ads say, a Shakespeare production can't be "seen again for the first time." However, what makes social media incarnations like Capulet Juliet [3] qualitatively distinct from the Juliets in any of the theatrical, film, and TV productions of Romeo and Juliet is the social media Juliet's continuing existence. In the playhouse, cinema, and living room, Juliet is done. She is ended. On Facebook, she lives on.[18]

Perhaps even more profound than the restructuring of Juliet's life is the change Facebook Juliet has wrought upon Shakespeare's Juliet's language. In *Spectral Shakespeares*, Maurizio Calbi devotes extensive space to the consideration of Shakespeare's language "and the collateral effects — some would say damages" of a variety of twenty-first-century media adaptations on that language, including the possibility of "the marginalization of the Shakespearean word" (2013, 8). His study ranges across "loose adaptations" (7), translation into other languages and misquoting (10, 82, 90), the "accurate reproduction of Shakespeare's lines" in performance (102), and the absence of Shakespeare's language in Shakespeare performances (153). All of these categories apply to the Facebook Juliets' language(s), but it is on Calbi's notes on translation that I wish to focus: translation into another language "draws attention to translation, and the translation of Shakespeare in particular, as an unfinished process, a process that does not necessarily reach its aim or destination" (10; see also 82), nor "necessarily guarantee[s] a safe return back 'home' in terms of adequation or restitution of meaning" (90). Although writing here of translation, Calbi's comments can be usefully applied to other forms of linguistic adaptation, including summary, paraphrase, almost-right quotations, even extra-textual additions, all acts that the Facebook Juliets perform. Considering those actions that the Facebook Juliets perform with (on? to?) Shakespeare's language can help us (1) to see that these various speech acts might not be "casual" but might rather be

"strateg[ies]" (Calbi 2013, 154), and (2) to see what seems to be a reconfiguring of Juliet's entire relationship with the world.

Leisha Jones describes "twenty-first century networked girls" and their online activity as "a Jamesonian pastiche of narrative" (2011, 448). This certainly may apply to some of the Facebook Juliets; however, I am not certain that the matter is as uniform as Jones suggests. "Jamesonian" implies a negative critique about "complacent eclecticism" in which the subject "randomly and without principle but with gusto cannibalizes" source materials "and combines them in overstimulating ensembles" (Jameson 1991, 18 and 19). That may be true of some of the individual Facebook Juliet accounts and Pages, but it is hard to say whether posts such as Parisa Juliet's "Oh Romeo, have you left this world without me? nay, i shall joineth you . . . we shall part from this world together" are complacent, unreflective eclectic moosh or self-aware, reflexive gestures. Put another way, some critics may want to celebrate someone like Joss Whedon for knowing parodies:

> THOR
>
> You have no idea what you're dealing with.
>
> TONY STARK/IRON MAN
>
> (considering the woods around him and Thor's outfit)
>
> Uh, Shakespeare in the Park? Doth mother know you weareth her drapes? (*The Avengers* 2012)

Yet, it may be more difficult to consider the possibility that the (probably) female producers of Facebook Juliet are having similar fun with Shakespearean language, making deliberate, parodic, perhaps even "belligerent" (Calbi 2013, 156) or antagonistic moves to challenge or subvert the authority of their assignments, their teachers, the playtext, Shakespeare, "correctness," or even language itself.[19] (Further, such deliberate moves as reconceiving Juliet as Indian (see figure 8), to say nothing of the other racial and religious remakings we have seen, hardly seem random and without principle.)[20]

To my specific point, in the playtext, Juliet's utterances fall into three groups: those that are shared, those that she thinks are private but that are overheard, and those that are truly private. For example, a comment shared with her parents and nurse, as well as any eavesdropping servants (or any servants who chance to overhear what could be a very loud fight), would be "Good father, I beseech you on my knees, / Hear me with patience but to speak a word" (*Romeo and Juliet* 3.5.158-59); a private comment that is overhead is "Romeo, doff thy name, / And for thy name, which is no part of thee, / Take all myself" (2.2.47-49); and truly private comments can be found

in her soliloquies "Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds" (3.2.1-31), "Ancient damnation! O most wicked fiend! (3.5.236-43), and "I have a faint cold fear runs through my veins" (4.3.15-58). Speech acts such as these can, and do, shift on Facebook. Now, Juliet's public utterances, which were formerly shared with only a few people, have gone global: a comment formerly shared just with her mother and her nurse — "I'll look to like, if looking like move" — is now subject to public scrutiny ("Juliet Capulet [7]" 2010). (A related example of such "publicizing" can be found in *Such Tweet Sorrow*, the 2010 social-media performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. As part of that performance, Juliet posted a YouTube video in which she shows the "couple of places" where she had sex with Romeo, up against the wall of her bedroom and "a lot of times" in the bed ([94Juliet] 2010). The next stage in this process, I suppose, is for some Capulet servant to record an iPhone video of Juliet fighting with her parents and then post it on Tumblr or a Kim Kardashianesque "leaked" homemade sex tape of Romeo and Juliet's first night.) Similarly, Juliet's semi-private utterances have become public, shared, and not just with her family but with everyone. Her

> My only love sprung from my only hate,
> Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
> Prodigious birth of love it is to me
> That I must love a loathed enemy. (*Romeo and Juliet* 1.5.136-39)

previously only partially overheard by her nurse, is now overheard by everyone ("Juliet Capulet [9]"), as is her formerly entirely private "What if this mixture do not work at all? Shall I be married then tomorrow morning?" (*Romeo and Juliet* 4.3.21-22; see "Juliet Capulet [15]" 2011). And some formerly public declarations have almost certainly become private. See, for instance, figure 9, which documents the public face that Juliet Capulet [4] presents to the world. Who knows what she says there: it is unavailable to anyone not her friend, though perhaps within that account the audience(s) for her comments may be altered as well — things said only to mom, dad, and nurse may now be available to all of Juliet's network and not just her immediate family. While she remains Shakespeare's secluded teenager whose desperation is little noted by the world, she is also changed from a private individual who only speaks to five people (her father, mother, nurse, Romeo, and the Friar) to one who airs out her anxieties and delights in public: no longer cloistered in her parents' home, now Juliet is "always on" (boyd 2012, 71-72). Everything that she thinks, says, and does is on display 24/7/365. This has the immediate effect of expanding the reach of the Shakespearean playtext, but more profoundly, in this we are seeing new ways of "staging" Juliet as well as a displacement of the "original" character by the "staging" of a new, online Juliet.

A Digital Collective Juliet?

Questions of the negotiation and construction of identity online are common in studies of social media, along with studies of how one might usefully, if not properly, describe and assess users' online activity. Investigations range from "performances of an online self" (Westlake 2008, 32; see also Gershon 2011, 867; Iyengar and Desmet 2012; Jones 2011, 439; O'Neill 2011; Zhao *et al.* 2008) — including the ways in which users represent themselves differently not just for different audiences but also depending on which type of technological device they use to link to social media and to construct that identity (Matic 2011, 19 and 13-14; Livingstone 2008, 6-8; see also Gershon 2011, 867; Iyengar and Desmet 2012; Jones 2011, 439; O'Neill 2011; Zhao *et al.* 2008, 1820-21) — to the ways in which different representations of the self can be rewarding (Matic 2011, 19; see also boyd 2012, 73-74; McBride and Hall 2012, 13-14, as well as Gershon 2011, 888; Ito et al. 2010, 138-45) or troubling to assumptions about the nature of literary genres (McNeill 2012, 65). Other fields of inquiry center on the impact of social media on individuals' psychology, identity and values (Panek et al. 2013; Voolaid 2013, 77 and 93), on how online collaboration contributes to the construction of group identity (Hyde et al 2012, 59-60), and on how social media impacts an individual's socialization (Tufecki 2008, 547-50 and 556-57; Ito et al. 2010, *passim* but especially 79-115 and 149-94). With such a range of critical activity, it should come as no surprise that consensus is hard to find, though the general attitude of all of these critics is that we are seeing a new kind of "'person production'" going on, that the performance of the online self tends to but need not parallel the users' actual self, and that users tend to find some sort of "benefit from self-representation online" (Matic 2011, 19; see also boyd 2012, *passim*), though this latter is hardly unqualified (as Gershon 2011, Lovink 2011 and Panek et al. 2013 make clear).

With regard to Facebook Juliet, two things seem to be happening: Facebook users are performing Juliet online, in a manner not unlike that which an actor might employ, and as a result of all of this online activity, the unitary subject Juliet is undergoing a transformation to what Leisha Jones calls the "digital collective subject" (2011, 448). As noted above, Jones describes the ways in which "twenty-first century networked girls" "*enculture* and produce one another, actualizing one or any number of selves online" (2011, 441, 439) through their activity on social networking sites, calling the result of this activity "a Jamesonian pastiche of narrative — images, sound, film, statistics, advertisements, text grafts, and self-authored prose — functionally obliterating the boundaries of the self/text" (448). As Jones describes the process, "the digital collective subject arises from the simultaneity of pack production" (448). Unlike the "pack production" that a tail-end-boomer like myself might assume — a group of individuals working on producing something, like line workers assembling a car or a team of college employees collaboratively writing a North Central Association re-accreditation report — Jones provides an example of the "pack" as the

legion of *Twilight* fans that "explores, dissects and creates meaning around revered cultural objects, institutions, and events" (2011, 454), in particular, fangirls who extend Stephanie Myers' characters in ways that they find more satisfying than the textual traces that the characters' creator left them (457).

Having already voiced an objection to her characterization, I would now also extend it: in the case of Facebook Juliet, rather than the collective subject being produced by a single individual's activity across a variety of platforms — for example, the individual Juliet C "actualizes" herself through activity on both Facebook and Twitter (see "Juliet's Liszt" 2013) — the collective subject is being produced by a horde of individuals on a single site. In this sense, rather than a disaggregated thousand little Juliets, we find a hyperreal Juliet constituted by the horde's thousands of ideas of the character, a shared Juliet that — who? — is constantly changing, always in process, subtly evolving with each Like, Share, Friend acceptance, status update, account creation or Page deletion.

In an essay on fan culture and fans' interactions with George Lucas's *Star Wars* franchise, Henry' Jenkins broadly describes fan fiction, or fiction created by fans of an original work (here, *Star Wars*, but by extension any original, such as *Harry Potter*, *Twilight*, or *Romeo and Juliet*), as works in which the fans "remake it [the original] on their own terms" (2012, 203).[21] Fan fiction can take many forms (traditional print or online text, YouTube videos, professional films, musical mash-ups, and so on), but the features common to all forms of fan fiction are its approach and its tone: fan fiction "draw[s] out aspects of the emotional lives of the characters or otherwise get[s] inside their heads . . . explore[s] underdeveloped subtexts of the original . . . offer[s] original interpretations of the story, or suggest[s] plotlines that go beyond the work itself" (224); fan fiction is relationship-based, involving "closer identification with the characters, and hint[ing] at aspects of . . . relationship[s] that have not explicitly been represented" in the original work (225). Jenkins is explicit in noting that fan fiction "is almost entirely produced by women" (224). And here we see our Facebook Juliets. Although it is not always clear that these accounts and pages were made and are maintained by women, there are clear individual moves to "remake" the original, "draw out aspects of the emotional lives of the characters" and "get inside" Juliet's head, as well as to "suggest plotlines that go beyond the work itself." We see more of what Juliet thinks about her new relationship with Romeo, we are given direct access to her thinking about her mother's suggestion of Paris as a suitor, and we meet a Juliet who dumps Romeo and goes on to graduate from high school. Much of this activity is similar to what an actor might engage in while preparing for a performance: the actor playing Juliet would need to know not just when, where, how, and how often Juliet has sex with Romeo but also how Juliet feels about her first sexual encounter(s) after

the fact, for instance. On Facebook, what is different from such a traditional performance technique is that the audience is given access to this information, rather than just the actor and director. These online performances give us new access to the "background" of a character as well as access to new ideas about the character. And what is distinctive about the social media aspect of Facebook Juliet is that we also get a new way of conceiving of the character, not one "developed" by the individual, but one produced by the pack.

Pack production is an effect of the process called prosumption. As the Prosumer Studies Working Group at the University of Maryland puts it, "prosumption is the implosion of the spheres of production and consumption. This trend has become particularly important with social media, where users tend to be both the producers and consumers of content" ("about us" n.d.).[22] As David R. Zemmels notes, this "breakdown in the producer/consumer dialectic that had remained relatively consistent throughout the prior history of mass media" is particularly sharp in teens, where we are seeing "a fundamental shift in the basic relationship between media and youth" (2012, 10): "the very nature of the media consumer appears to be changing. Rather than a passive consumer of media, the user is actively engaging media. Key to this conception is recognizing that participants are also becoming active consumers of new media and distributing them in global networked publics" (17). Some examples of prosumption that the Prosumer Studies Working Group provides are

· The consumers of knowledge online can increasingly be the producers as is the case with Wikipedia or Google's Knol;

· On eBay and Craigslist, the consumers rather than retailers create the market; and on Amazon, the consumers produce the reviews;

· Linux, a free, collaboratively-built open-source operating system, and other open-source software applications are created and maintained by those who use them; Mozilla Firefox, Thunderbird, and Sunbird are open source internet browser, email client, and calendar applications, where, users contribute add-ons to modify the applications, which are often incorporated in later releases;

· Yelp!, FourSquare and others services where city guides are created by those that consume them;

· R is an open source statistical software package which evolves through user contributions;

· Allrecipes.com is one of many sites where the consumers are also the producers of the recipes;

· Many algorithms, most notably that of the Google search engine, are fed by the myriad data users create by their activities online. ("about us" n.d.; see also Ritzer and Jurgenson 2010, 18-19)

The prosumer, or producer/consumer, "ingests signs and also emits them as a single gesture" (Jones 2011, 450). In other words, the creators of these Juliet Pages and accounts are simultaneously consuming the idea of Shakespeare's Juliet and creating Juliet through their interactions with Facebook.[23] They do this individually and as a pack, independently collaborating on a shared project that they are probably unaware they are involved in. As odd as this idea of "independent collaboration" may seem, it is not unheard of in social media theory. Attempting to define collaboration in online environments in "What is Collaboration Anyway?," Adam Hyde et al. argue that "The intensity of these relationships . . . [sits] somewhere on a continuum from strong ties with shared intentionality to incidental production by strangers through shared interfaces or agents, sometimes unconscious byproducts of other online activity" (2012, 60). In this instance, Facebook Juliet is a result of what Hyde and his collaborators call "incidental production," though when people within individual Juliet accounts contribute to the production of that particular Juliet though likes, comments and friending, the collaboration becomes "strong . . . with shared intentionality" (60). However, when it comes to the cyber entity Facebook Juliet, the pack's participants seem neither to know nor care that they apparently are engaged in the energetic deconstruction of the idea of the social subject Juliet through their creation of a constellation of Juliets and the "digital collective subject" Juliet.

Laurie McNeill notes that Facebook's design "for ease of use" has the effect of "regularizing" identity, even of "promot[ing] particular homogenizing impulses" (2012, 70), and since one can certainly see "regularized" aspects of Facebook Juliet's identity, it is tempting to say that she is at least somewhat homogenized. This concept of homogenization is problematic, though. It is not accurate on two counts, at least in these circumstances: as a concept borrowed from cultural studies, because few of the Facebook Juliets are what Scott Lash and Celia Lury describe as "identical to any other" (2007, 3), and as a metaphor, because there is no one perfectly blended Juliet. However, the multiplicity of irreconcilable Juliets clearly challenges any notion of Juliet as a single, singular individual, despite definite elements of coherency in the multitude. Individually, Facebook Juliet is often frustratingly incomplete (much as is Shakespeare, the concept of "Shakespeare" existing as it does as fragments within the larger culture): a few pictures, a quote or three, maybe a couple of posts in slangy idiom. This incompletion is an essential aspect of Facebook itself, as Ilana Gershon explains: "Facebook . . . provides the conditions for presenting tantalizing, incomplete

information" (2011, 867; see also Matic 2011 19), "enough information [for users] to be curious, and keep searching, but not enough information to be satisfied" (Gershon 2011, 888). However, despite this aggravation (on the negative romantic effects of which, see Gershon 2011 *passim*, Facebook Juliet is also bafflingly overcomplete, overflowing with contradictory signs, an early twenty-first century digitized iteration of "My bounty is as boundless as the sea, / My love as deep; the more I give to thee, / The more I have, for both are infinite" (2.2.134-35). This sense of superfluity is also endemic to Facebook. Gershon notes users' frustration with their "feel[ing that] the site provides both too much information and not enough data" (2011, 867), though two important caveats apply here. Gershon is discussing the feelings of individuals who are monitoring their romantic partners' Facebook activity and worrying about possible infidelity, and this excess refers to single individuals' accounts, rather than thousands of pages devoted to documenting the life of an individual.

Pack production of the digital collective subject is not the only way in which identity is being reframed on Facebook. In addition to the horde's active creation of Facebook Juliet, there are multiple individuals who are using Juliet to produce themselves. There are eleven that I have looked at so far: Farzana Toro (Juliet Capulet); Ezgi C. Capulet (MertKültür Herseyim); Randhika Capulet; Parisa Juliet (Capulet); Juliet Rose Capulet-Halliwell; Juliet Castillos-Castromayor Capulet-Montague; Juliet Capulet [10], [11], and [19]; Juliet C; and Juliet Anne Capulet. Of these, two appear to be heavily fictionalized cyber personalities, Juliet Anne Capulet and Julie Rose Capulet-Halliwell. Juliet Rose's profile shots include images of Monique Gibeau, Ellen Page, Selena Gomez, and Lindsay Lohan, while Juliet Anne Capulet's stress Halee Steinfeld, with some Emmy Rossum thrown in. The URL for Juliet Anne's profile indicates that the account is held by a person named Skylar Perro, but a Facebook search for that name turns up only one active account with heavy privacy settings: unless I ask her to friend me (and she accepts), there's little to be seen there. Juliet Anne numbers among her friends Kim Capulet, Daniel Cullen, Harry James [Potter], and Hermione Granger, and she also appears to be heavily invested in the *Twilight* and *Vampire Diaries* franchises: her interest in *Romeo and Juliet* is relatively recent, possibly influenced by the 2013 film starring Halee Steinfeld and Douglas Booth. For her part, Juliet Rose is friends with Katniss LovesPeeta Everdeen (from the *Hunger Games* novels), Elliot Stabler (from TV's *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*), Richerd Castle [sic] (from TV's *Castle*), Nikki Carter (a prolific young-adult fiction author) and Kylie Williams (a beauty queen, reality TV star, and veterans' affairs advocate). Some of these accounts are similar to the various Juliets', tracking the in-universe lives of fictional characters, but others — including Juliet Rose's and a good many of her friends' — are people whose cyberselves are complex blends of real life events, fictionalized real life, and role play,

all of which are rendered with visuals and themes borrowed from across the web and throughout literature. Whereas the thematic relevances for Juliet Anne seem clear — young, doomed lovers — the significance of Juliet to Juliet Rose is much less so. There are no particularly Julietish posts on her timeline, and the sense I have from exploring her and her friends' timelines is that the names are part of an elaborate network of online role players whose members' play includes rapidly shifting names and identities, as evidenced by the following series of posts from Amy TimeSlut-Pond's newsfeed: "Another 30 day block? Seriously . . . is this a fucking joke!?!?!" (2013); "I guess its time for a new account. Who should I base my new dom on then? Anyone can offer an idea if they like"; and "Ok I'm abandoning this account add Hayley Williams if you want to dominate you, or Luna Pond if you want to dominate me!" As for the remaining Juliets, only one has an obvious connection with Shakespeare's Juliet: Parisa Juliet (Capulet). Regarding the others, there are no obvious connections to Juliet, no pictures, posts, quotes or likes, at least that I have found. Nor is there anything in their various accounts that suggests to me why these women would have chosen to self-identify with an isolated, temperamental and dead fictional teenager from a Renaissance tragedy, as none of them seems to be especially invested in sorrow, romance, tragedy, familial dysfunction, or disrupting the body politic with feuding. (That's not to say that they're not: Facebook feeds, as discussed above, only ever reveal the account holders's lives partially.) The point of identification could be with Juliet's youth, beauty, and innocence, or it could be with Juliet as a character who defies authority in favor of self-determination, but in point of fact much more research is needed in this area.

That research would include a third aspect of Facebook Juliet, alluded to multiple times already but not yet discussed: the use of famous (and some not-so-famous) individuals' faces and bodies to represent Juliet and sometimes the account holders themselves, including this phenomenon's prevalence in fan culture, perhaps along with precedent activities and practices such as collage and home-made magazines. Using the ubiquitous Claire Danes and Olivia Hussey makes sense, and I suspect that Halee Steinfeld will become more common in the future (through her film's lack of commercial success makes this a somewhat iffy proposition). I have already discussed the fact of the actors' and models' physical beauty; the issue to be raised here is another wrinkle in the identity question. Even as Juliet is being reconfigured by the various account builders, and even as some account holders are reconfiguring themselves as Juliet, many of the Facebook profiles surveyed here are reconfiguring others as Juliet, and they are doing so (I presume) without those individuals' knowledge or consent. In some cases, the use of celebrity is explicitly emblematic, as with "Juliet," who uses Michelle Trachtenberg for her profile picture because "This picture shows a woman with long dark hair and fair skin. She reminds me of an elegant lady in the elizabethan era."

In other cases, such as Juliet Capulet [19]'s profile shot of Princess Diana, the image is more laden with symbolism, here clearly of tragedy but also suggesting youth and divided families. Others' physiognomies are more cryptic — such Juliet Capulet [21]'s use of Julia Allison, a journalist who is about as well-known for being a self-promoting Internet presence as she is for her journalism — though the reasons behind most would seem to fall into one of the following three categories: (a) some affinity the account builder has for the celebrity, liking her style, her acting, her singing, her political commitments; (b) the account builder is making a political comment, configuring Juliet as Black or Jewish, for instance; or (c) convenience — I need a pretty girl for this dumb homework assignment — as seems to be the case with "July Capulet (Juliet)," whose profile pic shows up all over the web, on hairstyle and hair salon sites. All of this activity, the reconfiguring of Juliet, the remaking of the account holders using Juliet, and the remaking of others as Juliet — it's not just that Juliet looks like Megan Fox, but that Megan Fox has Julietish characteristics — certainly fits with the Jamesonian notion of pastiche, the cannibalizing of apparently unrelated images which gradually efface the referent (1991, 18), but this activity also supports the idea of identity as performance, fluid and almost infinitely reconfigurable. Not only can you be who you want to be, be all that you *can* be, but you can be who *others* want you to be, whether you like it or not.

We Shall Know Her by her Name, Shall We? Or, Juliet, I Prosume?

Ironically, all of this reconfiguration of identity flies in the face of pronouncements from on high by Facebook's founder Mark Zuckerberg and the company's Chief Operations Officer (COO) Sheryl Sandberg, who assert that individual people can only have one identity on Facebook, that on Facebook you have to be "'your authentic self'" (McNeill 2012, 68): in the words of the site itself, "Facebook requires everyone to provide their real names so you always know who you're connecting with. If you'd like your account to show another name you're known by, you can add an alternate name to your account," such as a nickname, a "title or professional name" or maiden name. But "Remember that your alternate name must comply with our Community Standards": it cannot "Contain hate speech or offensive language," "Target another individual or group," "Be used to represent any business, organization, group etc.," or "Be used to impersonate someone else" ("What alternate" 2013). Elsewhere on the site, Facebook asserts that it "is a community where people use their real identities. We require everyone to provide their real names, so you always know who you're connecting with. This helps keep our community safe" ("What names" 2013). In other words, "Pretending to be anything or anyone is not allowed" ("What names" 2013). This is a lovely fiction, belied by the fact that it is absurdly easy to create new selves and fake profiles on Facebook.[24] If

there is a real Juliet out there, she's been very busy indeed, hiving off accounts and Pages at an impressive clip, but since there isn't one, someone has been breaking the rules. Or more to the point, many someones have been breaking the rules. More profound problems erupt if Zuckerberg and Sandberg are right, if you cannot have two identities, or if one of your identities is inauthentic: since she has a personal account, does that mean that Juliet is authentic? More or less authentic than her Facebook creator(s)? (And if the self behind Juliet's Facebook page isn't Shakespeare, what does that mean for Shakespeare's authenticity?) If Juliet is authentic, then what does her authenticity suggest about her Facebook creator(s)? Are they then inauthentic, their identities supplanted by Juliet's? Shakespeare's Juliet, who puzzles over the notion of identity with her "O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?" (2.2.33), hardly knew what a can of worms she was going to open up (with the help of some Friends) four centuries later. These questions dovetail almost elegantly with those that have preoccupied Shakespeare performance studies for quite some time now, in particular the question of authenticity. While Calbi makes clear that "the essential and authentic 'Shakespeare' resides in the language of the plays" (2013, 143), he also indicates doubts about "the 'truth' of the 'original' playtext" (102) and of "Shakespeare" through those telling little scare quotes. Other critics such as Ayanna Thompson, Margaret Jane Kidnie, Wendy Wall, and W. B. Worthen have also interrogated notions of authenticity. Thompson engages in questions of authenticity in race and performance (2011, 11 and 147-67). Kidnie challenges the privileging of the printed text rather than the performance as the "real" Shakespeare (2005, 103-105). Wall investigates the two quartos of *Romeo and Juliet*, both of which "possess 'independent authority'" and wonders "What exactly is the text to which performances and films should be faithful or not?" (2005, 198). Worthen calls into focus "textual multiplicity and materiality" and pointing out how these "draw attention away from the notion of the perdurable work identical in all of its manifestations and toward a sense of writing changing and being changed by the circumstances of its use: in other words, of the fungibility of the text that's intrinsic to the history of (early and late) modern theatre" (2005, 217). Without knowing she was doing it, Facebook Juliet has entered into questions central to the study of Shakespeare in performance.

Debates over authenticity are by no means restricted to Shakespeare performance studies. In *Networks without a Cause*, Geert Lovink fulminates at length about the threats he sees in Facebook and what the site's structure suggests about how we have come to conceive of the self. He discounts as concerns "the time consumed by managing my nearly 2000 'friends,' or the privacy concerns" as reasons for leaving Facebook on an "action day" on 31 May 2010 (though neither of these is inconsiderable); rather, the worry he privileges is

the growing role of centralized internet services offered to us at no cost in exchange for collecting our data, profiles, music tastes, social behaviors, and opinions. It is not simply that we have something to hide. Let's hope we all do. What we need to defend is the very principle of decentralized, distributed networks. This principle is under attack by corporations such as Google and Facebook, as well as by national authorities who feel a need to control our communication and the data infrastructure at large. (2011, 31)

This is a real concern. Yet, however sinister Facebook's corporate machinations may be, what really bothers Lovink is that "Facebook in particular has spurred an identity crisis of yet unknown dimensions, circling around the question of who we are and how we should present ourselves online" (2011, 38). Largely unsupported by actual examples, Lovink argues that "we're not looking to externalize other possible selves but the True Self, deep inside" (38), a desire that he describes as "pathological" (40), in part because "there is no one, true Self that we must absolutely unveil" (43), and since "there is no one being . . . we should ask why we still need to perform a synthesis" of all of our selves (44). Though aspects of his argument are worth considering — "Social networking is not about affirming something as truth but more about making truth through endless clicking" (44), and we should not accept "the idea of the true self, advocated by Facebook as our one and only option" (49) — I am not convinced that his apocalyptic worry over identity is supported by what I see happening with Facebook Juliet. Certainly there is an abundance of self-disclosure in the Juliet pages, both of Juliet and of the individuals who are using Juliet to reconfigure themselves, but in these various performative acts I do not see much that I would describe as pathological, and I do see evidence of exactly what Lovink calls for as a corrective to whatever evils Facebook may be foisting upon the world: "anonymity . . . self-performance and creative play" (2011, 49). Facebook might not like it, but there are a lot of anonymous individuals out there, each one performing as Juliet. And there is abundant evidence of self-performance and creative play in those account holders who appropriate Juliet and celebrities as a means of reconfiguring or augmenting their cyber selves.

Lovink's worries, repeatedly made explicit, are implicitly shared by Gershon in her discussion of college students' Facebook-inspired romantic travails. Gershon describes the phenomenon as an expression of "a U.S. neoliberal perspective," which "demands selves that consciously bring a market rationality to their relations. Facebook is a medium that urges, but does not determine, the creation and display of these sorts of selves" by asking "its users to manage themselves as flexible collections of skills, usable traits, and tastes that need to be constantly maintained and enhanced." Gershon describes this as "a quintessential element of the neoliberal self, that people are 'a collection of assets that must be continually invested in, nurtured, managed, and developed'" (2011,

867). Although she never makes her disapproval explicit, it lingers around the margins of her essay. Because collegiate Facebook users have adopted the "neoliberal" bias of Facebook hook, line, and sinker, and because that neoliberal bias reduces the individual to "'a collection of assets'" rather than what Lovink calls the "True Self," and because adopting Facebook's bias has made them miserable, and since they were happier after leaving Facebook, then Facebook is at least misery-inducing, if not miserable altogether. Unfortunately, not all Facebook users see the matters of identity or happiness as being as clear as Lovink draws it and as Gershon suggests it to be. Igor Matic's study of Internet users finds that these "users tend to construct their online identity based on the technology being used (cell phone, personal computer, office or school computer/network) and with [sic] the social environment that surrounds the given online communication tool" (2011, 13-14); not only that, but "users do not represent themselves in accordance with their expectations from the Internet communication but in accordance with audience expectations" (19). Users develop content with their audiences in mind and with the specificities of the platform — "the social environment" — in mind and acknowledge "that they benefit from different self-representations online and that they have their own patterns of behavior that changes [*sic*] in accordance with the given communication exchange on the Internet" (19). Matic specifically references one user as an example: the latter "is well aware of the audience that visits the given gossip page online [that she likes] and that she reacts differently when she assumes the role of an anonymous commentator of the daily events" (2011, 19). In other words, "users actively define their self-representation and willingly choose which 'role' to play," knowing "that there is no need to reveal their identity every time they are online" (19). Margaret A. Berg, investigating adolescents' online text use in conversation, parallels Matic's findings: some social media users define the "physical being as separate from [the] cyberspace being" (2011, 490), and they see this, if not as a good thing, then certainly as a thing not as problematic as Gershon suggests or Lovink asserts. (Ayanna Thompson notes a possible benefit of fluid online identity: "not only is Generation M actively engaged in employing and keeping 'salient' racial discourses, but also this occurs more online than it does offline . . . the Internet may actually push racial discourses to the fore more than offline interactions do" [2011, 151].) The thousands of personal accounts and Pages that make up Facebook Juliet, along with the individuals who use Juliet and other celebrities to perform themselves, are engaged in a complex network of acts of negotiation and resistance not just with Shakespeare but with what culture traditionally suggests is the self — a single, unitary individual.

"Person production," Spencer E. Cahill argues, "clearly occurs through mediated, disembodied forms of interaction as well [as face-to-face interactions], and probably increasingly so" (quoted in Westlake 2008, 27). We perform and produce ourselves through direct interactions as well as

indirect ones . . . and there is nothing especially new about this process. Shakespeare "produced" himself through various forays into spelling his own name, through legal documents, and through his creative works; I produce and perform myself through annual Christmas letters to friends and family I may not have seen in person for years, as well as through scholarly writing, notes on student papers, Facebook status updates, Tweets, text messages with my wife, and face-to-face "discussions" with her about where to go to eat when we're both too lazy to cook on Friday night. Beyond this thought, even, is the possibility that "mass media [. . .] no longer just represent[s] reality, but constitut[es] it" (Zemmels 2012, 6), a possibility made specific by Gershon's exploration of the impact of Facebook on college students' romantic lives. If mass media — like Facebook — constitute reality, and if person production "occurs through mediated, disembodied forms of interaction" (2011), what does that mean for our fair Juliet?

It would be easy to write off Facebook Juliet as superficial, malodorous, as a debasement of SHAKESPEARE — too easy, in fact. While some individual Juliets on Facebook may be phoned-in, disengaged, or just plain silly, even their silliness reveals individual account holders who are engaged in some way with Shakespeare and reveals how those account holders have come to understand him and his works, even if that understanding is, in effect, "ugh get lost #canyounot." As a group, the account holders and Page makers reveal a desire to make Juliet proximate in their lives; they expose part of the turbulent workings of fan culture; and they participate in the struggles over the nature, role, and extent of social media in our lives today, to say nothing of struggles with and over Shakespeare, Shakespeare's playtexts, and Shakespeare's language that generations of casual readers and professional scholars alike have engaged in. Through their energetic reconfigurations — of Juliet, of Shakespeare, of themselves, of others — they likewise participate in *Romeo and Juliet*'s long history of remakings, extending here in the twenty-first century to perhaps the most significant reconfiguration of all, what it means to be an autonomous, authentic individual.

Whatever it is that Facebook Juliet is, she is certainly engaged in "'public living'" (Zemmels 2012, 16): she is more in the world now than perhaps she ever was. If "[i]n new media spaces, the construction of identity is now understood as overlapping and competing interpellations existing simultaneously at interconnected nodal points [. . .] where 'networked individuals' are constituted within 'networked publics'" (Zemmels 2012, 17; see also Matic 2011, 19), then through these intersecting processes of negotiation, resistance and prosumption, we may be seeing a new way to see Juliet, maybe even an altogether new Juliet aborning, right beneath our fingers, even as we "speak."

Appendix 1. Transcribed *Romeo and Juliet* Facebook page
assignment for Middle School Language Arts students

Romeo and Juliet
Facebook page

So, inspired by our love for social networking and Ophelia Joined the Group Maidens Who Don't Float by Sarah Schmelling, we are going to create a profile page for one of the main characters in Romeo and Juliet. Of course, I want you to use your knowledge of the characters and his/her traits, famous quotes, character development, etc. to complete the profile. Any information you cannot gather from the play, such as birthdays, you may complete using your own creativity. I will create a template and save it in my teacher share folder. Go to teacher share, open the template, save it on your z drive, and be creative!! I would also like to see a rough draft before we go to the computer lab. Rough draft is due: _____ and final draft is due: _____.

Profile

· Basic Information_____
· Networks:
· Birthday:
· Relationship Status:
· Personal Information
· Activities:
· Favorite Music:
· Favorite Movies:
· Interests:
· Favorite Quotations:
· Wall

Use this space to post things your character might say, or to post comments from other characters in the play. You must have at least 20 posts/comments on your wall. REMEMBER: IF SOME OF YOUR POSTS ARE QUOTES, YOU NEED OT USE QUOTATION MARKS AND PAGE NUMBERS! You must use appropriate language, but you are allowed to use slang and abbreviations appropriate for the assignment (and providing you provide a key for your uncool English teacher in case she needs it!) :)

Required Element	Points Possible	Points Earned
Name and basic Information [*sic*] is filled out and is accurate and creative.	10	
Personal Information seems to fit in with character and way that the character is developed and described throughout the play.	15	
Wall — has 20 posts from both your character and other important characters in the play	20	
Posts reflect your knowledge of the character and the play itself. They can be funny, but they MUST BE SCHOOL APPROPRIATE!	40	
You use at least 5 quotes or variations of quotes in your posts and explain them.	10	
Facebook page is creative, humorous, and most importantly, reflects your knowledge of the play!	5	
TOTAL	100	

Notes

1. For a detailed overview and analysis of *Romeo and Juliet*'s textual origins, see Levenson 2000, 1-15 and Lehmann 2010, 3-33; especially interesting is Lehmann's exploration of the historical origins of the Montague-Capulet feud (2010, 4-7).

2. On Ophelia as an object of identification for girls and women alike, see also Iyengar and Desmet 2012.

3. Interest pages are something of a mystery. Generally consisting of a "profile" picture, text lifted from Wikipedia (with a hyperlink, in case one feels moved to edit the entry), and an "About" frame with some idiosyncratic content, there is little one can do with an Interest page besides read and "Like" it. They appear to be rare (in this case, two pages as opposed to hundreds in other categories), and Facebook's help function is unhelpful as to their nature, function, or how they originate — as is, in fact, the Web as a whole. When queried, my students, who know Facebook much better than I, differ in their opinions: one thought it likely that Interest Pages originate with Facebook itself, after a certain number of people create pages on a certain topic; others hypothesized that Interest pages are a subset of Pages in general. My thanks to Ana Gonzales-Limon, Casey Lamp, and Eric Dawdy for taking the time to explore this vexing issue and then discuss it with me.

4. A community Page "is a Page is about an organization, celebrity or topic that it doesn't officially represent" ("What is a community Page?" 2014). On the one hand, "the community category helps identify Pages that are just for fun and not official, such as Pages for businesses, bands or public figures" ("Why does" 2014). The community label can be removed "[i]f you're the authentic representative of the Page you manage or if your Page is unrelated to the official Page we've [Facebook] linked it to" ("My Page" 2014), though Facebook does not seem much invested in confirming the authenticity of the representative. Although the ways in which it uses language at times makes it seem otherwise, Facebook sees a "Page" as different from a personal account. For instance, I have a personal account where people can "friend" me (or I them). If I were to become sufficiently popular (5,000 friends, according to one report [Zeldman 2011]), I could "migrate" or "convert" my account to a Page, which is designed to "help businesses, organizations and brands share their stories and connect with people" ("Pages Basics" n.d.). Or I could more simply create a page (rather, a Page) for my public self and keep my private self to myself. Whichever route I take, at that point, no one can friend me anymore. I can only be "Like[d]." Revealingly, community pages are "just for fun," while Pages are emphatically not. The distinction between personal accounts and Pages for public figures, et cetera, as well as the misuse of Pages and "fake accounts," is apparently a touchy subject for Facebook: on this, see Kayatta 2012. A "public figure," on the other hand, is harder to define than community or

community Page, if only because Facebook (and every other source I consulted) never actually defines the phrase. "Public figure" is a part of one of six options offered when creating a Page "to build a closer relationship with your audience and customers": "Local Business or Place," "Company, Organization or Institution," "Brand or Product," "Artist, Band or Public Figure," "Entertainment" and "Cause or Community." When asked to "choose a category" from a pull-down menu that becomes available when one clicks on the "Artist, Band or Public Figure" group, "Actor/Director," "Writer," "Artist," "Teacher" and "Monarch" are all listed as options, as are "Fictional Character" and "Public Figure" ("Create" n.d.). At the same time that I find it fascinating that Facebook considers "monarch" to be sufficiently in demand to make it one of twenty-four categories of public figure (or is willing to permit itself a small degree of whimsy on a site that otherwise tends to take itself very seriously), I admit to being disappointed that someone, somewhere did not designate Juliet Capulet as a monarch of his or her own volition.

5. These categories seem fluid in their relationships to each other. "Fictional Character," along with "Public Figure," "Actor/Director" and "Writer," are both distinct categories and sub-categories, as for instance of "Verona, Italy" or "London, United Kingdom." Similarly, a "Fictional Character" can be a community or a community Page, as can a "Public Figure." Verona, Italy can also be a community or community Page.

6. Those that cannot be friended can be either "Followed" or messaged. Both are functions of Facebook's privacy settings. For instance, I (or any user) can adjust these settings so that only "Friends of Friends" can attempt to friend me, rather than the public at large. In that instance, other users can "Follow" me: they still receive my posts in their news feed, but their posts never appear in my feed, nor can they post on my wall.

7. Oddly, alternate names that appear in the search results do not always appear on the actual pages: for instance, hits for Randhika Capulet (Juliet) and Marlina Ghani (Juliet Capulet) take me to pages titled only "Randhika Capulet" ("Randhika" 2013) and "Marlina Ghani" ("Marlina" 2013), respectively.

8. Via Capello, 23 is the address of *il Sogno di Giulietta*, a luxury *relais* in Verona, complete with Juliet's balcony and, in the evening, private access to her courtyard (see "*il Sogno di Giulietta*" 2008).

9. Soul Reaper is a reference to a race of beings in the manga series Bleach. To be a Soul Reaper, one must graduate from the Academy. As of December 18, 2013, there are 11 pages for Soul Reaper Academy on Facebook.

10. As an example of the prevalence of Danes and Hussey profile pictures, over half of the first 211 hits in the December 2013 "Find all people named 'juliet capulet'" search were of Clare Danes and Olivia Hussey (44 hits, or 20.8%, 67 hits, or 31.8%, respectively).

11. Determining whether a Profile picture is of a "real" person, as opposed to a celebrity of some sort, turns out to be a good test of the depth of one's pop-culture knowledge. Mine came out at about 60%: many of the individuals I did not recognize were Bollywood performers, Internet personalities, singers and models.

12. The notion of "pretty" is a complicated and contested one, obviously. For a semiotically loaded sample, see the website http://www.whatispretty.com (#Beyoncé 2014).

13. On the ways in which, and reasons for which, literary characters can be remade and refashioned, see Hulbert 2006, Iyengar and Desmet 2012, Jones 2011, and O'Neill 2011; see also Panek *et al.* 2013. On how social media sites can be used to remake and refashion the user (sometimes without the user's intention or appreciation), see for instance Birnbaum 2013, Gershon 2011, Jones 2011, McNeill 2012, and Thompson 2011, 145-76.

14. See, for example, Donaldson 1990, 145-88, and Burt 1990; Howard 1992, Smith 1992, and Traub 1992, 91-144; Goldberg 1994; Smith 1995 (esp. 63-64); Burt 1998, 29-75; Lehmann 2010 (especially 146-47, 153, 158-59 and 218-220); and Calbi 2013, 102-103. An important queer study of the Renaissance predates the oldest of these examples by almost a decade: see Alan Bray's *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* originally published in 1982.

15. On Juliet's sexuality, see Belsey 1997, 65-68; Jackson 2003, 18-19, 130-31, 142-44, 150-53, and 158-61; Levenson 2000, 17, 22. 26, 30; Loehlin 2002, 36, 48, 67, 71, 74-75; Roberts 1998, 48-53; and Weis 2012, 13-14.

16. In comparison, see Calbi 2013 for a discussion of the representation of Juliet's sexuality in the film *Sud Side Stori* (93) and in *Such Tweet Sorrow*, a 2010 multi-platform social media performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. See also 94Juliet's YouTube video "Juliet 1" (2010). See also such works of fan fiction as "Modern day Romeo and Juliet" (MindlessLove21 2014) and the sexually explicit "Sinful Deed" (Mi3staR 2010).

17. I was sort of sad when I found that this was a pre-set option, rather than something someone thought up on his or her own. (A bit of Facebook trivia: change your "Relationship Status" from "Married" to "In an Open Relationship" and the preposition automatically changes from "to" to "with." Helpful Facebook.)

18. A further step in this process would be to try to "friend" the Juliets to see what happens. On others' attempts to do this, see Iyengar and Desmet (2012, 64); for possible explanations as to the failure of these attempts, see boyd (2012, 75). On some of the ethical challenges facing online

social media researchers, see Thompson (2011, 148-49). See also Appendix 1. Transcribed *Romeo and Juliet* Facebook page assignment for Middle School Language Arts students 1, a sample Facebook Juliet project designed for Middle School Language Arts students (listed below this essay as a separate document).

19. Calbi offers a provocative reading of the way in which Shakespeare "lives on": "the status of Shakespeare [in the twenty-first century] is 'hauntological,' a furtive mode of inhabiting without *properly* residing that . . . blurs any clear-cut distinction 'between actual, effective presence and its other'" (2013, 4); in other words, it is a "ghost . . . that refuses to stay put" (100). His analysis ranges across "the increasingly digitized and globalized mediascape of the beginning of the twenty-first century" (2), including the impact of adaptation on our understandings of language, gender, race, culture, nationality, and identity and identification. On adaptations of *Romeo and Juliet*, see 81-98 and 137-62. Lehmann provides an extensive analysis of the "legac[ies]" (2010, 257) of *Romeo and Juliet* in popular culture, along with the ways in which the playtext itself functions as an afterlife of its own antecedent narratives (3-33). Hodgdon contains a wide-ranging discussion of "evoking the absent bodies of . . . *Romeo and Juliet* performance texts" (1989, 359), and Watson and Dickey explore the "cumulative culture of sexual aggression from which Juliet will have to extricate her love story" (2005, 127), in particular the "ancient specter of rape haunting this story" (154).

20. For a relevant counter-argument to Jameson's conception of postmodern pastiche, see Hutcheon 2002, 89-91.

21. On the agency of online Shakespeare producers, see Iyengar and Desmet 2012, 62, 70 and 72-74; and O'Neill 2011, *passim*.

22. Fans and fan culture are much studied but not always as specifically defined or described as one might wish. For a useful general overview of fans, see Markman and Overholt 2011, 67-69. For a seminal study in fan culture, see Jenkins 2013, an early iteration of which can be found in Jenkins 1998 (see esp. 87-90).

23. Axel Bruns defines this phenomenon as "produsage": "it highlights that within the communities which engage in the collaborative creation and extension of information and knowledge . . . the role of 'consumer' and even that of 'end user' have long disappeared, and the distinctions between producers and users of content have faded into comparative insignificance" (2008, 2). On the related but broader concept of participation and participatory culture, see Jenkins 2006, 3 and Jenkins 2012, 205.

24. Metaphors to be sure, but using words with the root "consume" in these contexts make me feel squirmy: the mercantile overtones are not pleasing, nor is the words' sense of

ingesting something. At their mildest, they imply a degree of disassociation, rather than a more participatory sense of theatre, films, books, even Facebook, where I cannot say I'd ever thought of myself as consuming my Friends before beginning this project.

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