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Apothecaries' Cornets: Books as Waste Paper in the Renaissance

Emily Butterworth

In the essay “Du démentir,” Montaigne reflects on the ignominious destiny of the material object that is his rather peculiar book: “j’empescheray peut-estre que quelque coin de beurre ne se fonde au marché” (“I will keep some pat of butter from melting in the marketplace”).¹ The image of Montaigne’s discarded book, dramatically figured as “I,” as waste paper for wrapping was evidently a classical literary commonplace—Montaigne excerpts similar passages from Martial and Catullus—and was deployed as both self-deprecation and insult in French sixteenth-century writing.² The book-as-waste-paper motif illustrates the shift from the intellectual to the material, from paper as vehicle for information to paper as waste matter, that is embodied at high speed today in the life cycle of the (admittedly increasingly obsolete) newspaper.³ At once a reminder of mortality, impermanence, and obsolescence, and the vehicle for transcendence, paper was the material embodiment of Renaissance commonplaces of literary immortality. One of the most inventive and prolix exploiters of this commonplace was the Pléiade poet Pierre de Ronsard; his immortal aspirations were expressed in material terms by his friend René Bellet in a prefatory sonnet to his 1572 epic *La Franciade*:

Quelle si docte main & quel papier si blanc,
Ronsard, dy moy de grace, eternise ta gloire ?
Quelle plume de Cigne, & quelle ancre si noire
De l’oublieuse mort te delivre si franc ?⁴

What learned hand and white paper, tell me, Ronsard, immortalize your glory?
 What swan's quill and what black ink deliver you so free from forgetful death?

Here it is emphatically the tools of the trade—the ink and the paper—that immortalize the poet's fame, rather than, say, his inspiration, his effort, or his talent. It is these material means of literary production that Anne Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass have argued were being occluded by some concerted poetic work in the early modern period; and it's precisely this material support that provides the basis of the fantasized and feared projection of death's oblivion in the waste-paper motif.⁵

In this article, I want to use the motif and its accompanying concerns of squandering, copiousness, and idleness as a way of thinking about the Renaissance book as a vulnerable material object, and how writers may have imagined, constructed, and conceived that object and its recycling. Critics have previously theorized the *text* as vulnerable, open to the contingencies of history, interpretation, and influence; I want to focus in this article on the vulnerability of the material *book*.⁶ The article responds, then, to the call for a book-centered bibliography promoted for years now by historians of the book such as Thomas Adams and Nicholas Barker, and joins a growing list of criticism focused on the material lives of books of which Leah Price's *How to Do Things with Books* is at the forefront.⁷ It is also influenced by the turn towards the object in recent work rethinking the relationship between early modern subjects and objects.⁸ Admittedly, Renaissance books were a particular kind of object, invested for both reader and writer with a human subjectivity, commonly conceived as children of the author's mind or as friends.⁹ The paper of Montaigne's book appears as a strange hybrid of subject and object, as his choice of pronoun reveals. This article argues that in examining Renaissance material and textual culture

together—the matter and the metaphor of waste paper—a nuanced understanding of the relationship between writers and their books can emerge.

Montaigne’s Intertexts: Catullus and Martial

Montaigne’s prediction appears in a chapter on bad faith in Book 2 of the *Essais*, bearing the traces of the twenty years he spent revising and expanding his book. The passage changed in all three major versions, in 1580 (marked here as “a”), 1588 (marked here as “b”), and the posthumous edition of 1595, the first to incorporate most of the marginal additions and corrections that Montaigne made on his own copy of the 1588 edition until his death in 1592 (known as the “Bordeaux Copy”).¹⁰

[a] Tout le commerce que j’ay en cecy avec le publiq, c’est que j’emprunte les
utils de son escripture, plus soudaine et plus aisée. En recompense, [c]
j’empescheray peut-estre que quelque coin de beurre ne se fonde au marché.

[a] *Ne toga cordyllis, ne penula desit olivis,*

[b] *Et laxas scombris saepe dabo tunicas.* (pp. 664-65)

All the contact I have with the public in this book is that I borrow their tools of printing, as being swifter and easier: in recompense, perhaps I shall keep some pat of butter from melting in the market place.

Lest tunny-fish and olives lack a robe.

To mackerel I’ll often give a loose shirt. (p. 612)¹¹

<insert Figure 1>

In the additions and erasures that he made on the Bordeaux Copy (Figure 1), Montaigne removes the explicit references to the press and the economy of printing that featured in the editions of 1580 and 1588. The deleted passage reads: “il m’a fallu ietter en moule cette image, pour m’exe[m]pter la peine d’en faire faire plusieurs extraits à la main” (“I have had to cast this image in a mould, so as to save myself the trouble of commissioning several copies by hand”), where the “image” is his self-portrait and the “moule” could be a printer’s forme.¹² Montaigne seems to strike a deal here with the new technology, assenting to the imposition of the “moule” onto the “main,” or the replacement of bodily by mechanical reproduction, for the advantage of increased, more convenient, circulation. In recompense for this service—explicitly in these earlier editions—Montaigne bequeaths to “le publicq” (the commonweal) the paper of his book for no more transcendent purpose than to wrap olives and mackerel.

The French reminder of the materiality of the page and its potential destiny as butter wrapper is a late addition (after 1588), echoing and now pre-empting the Latin quotations that figured in the earlier editions. By then, Montaigne was more certain of the reception of his book; and the “Bordeaux Copy” of the *Essais* on which he wrote these additions was Abel L’Angelier’s Paris quarto, in contrast to the octavo that Simon Millanges first printed for him in 1580. This handsome quarto edition was an object of desire, a token of the author’s prestige but also of his marketability; and perhaps it is easier to joke about your book’s impermanence when you are printed in quarto (although the expanse of page in the quarto also made it an attractive prospect for recyclers, as an English near-contemporary of Montaigne’s observed when he begged to be printed in smaller formats).¹³ The opening of “Du démentir” was from 1580 about the nugatory project “si sterile et si maigre” (p. 664a) (“so barren and so meagre,” p. 611) of the

Essais and Montaigne's presumption in printing it. At the beginning of the chapter (and again from 1580), Montaigne protests that he is not producing a public monument, but rather a document for quiet and friendly perusal, reinforcing his assertion with quotations from the satires of Horace and Persius on their choice to publish intimate pieces not destined for the chatter of the bathhouse or the Forum.¹⁴ This is, then, a satirical pose—the pose of a man detached from the expedience of daily life, and able to point up its absurdities—and an ironic one, much like the “débinage” that Jules Brody assigns to Montaigne in this essay. I will come back to these revisions, the textual context, and the paper they are printed on later. I would like first to look at the intertexts that Montaigne builds up and leaves in the posthumous edition: Martial and Catullus.

The Catullus quotation, “Et laxas scombris saepe dabo tunicas” (first included in 1588) is in the original directed at another writer's pages: Montaigne changes Catullus's third-person plural *dabunt tunicas* (“they will give a shirt”) to the first-person singular, *dabo*, transforming the quotation into another self-reflexive reference.¹⁵ In this short poem, Catullus dismisses the worthless, prolific pages of Volusius, fit only to provide mackerel with a wrapper; a dismissal made more pointed by the adjective *laxas*, which as well as “loose” means “more indulgent,” “reduced, cheap,” and “prolix, diffuse,” attaching with economy these connotations of flabbiness, copiousness and lack of value to the other poet's pages.¹⁶ Where Catullus offers this characteristically barbed jibe at a rival, in contrast to the work of the poem's dedicatee, his friend Cinna, Montaigne turns the quotation into another affirmation of his own book's impermanence and small value.

The first quotation (from the first edition of 1580) reproduces more explicitly Montaigne's tone. The first poem of Book 13 (known as the *Xenia*) of Martial's *Epigrams* is an

address to the reader (marked explicitly “Ad lectorem” in sixteenth-century editions), exemplifying Martial’s nonchalance that Michel Magnien has suggested inspired Montaigne in his own prefatory letter.¹⁷ Martial’s is a wry reminder that his poems are circumstantial and transient; written as careless trifles for the Saturnalia, perhaps to be cut out of the book and given as gifts to dinner guests, tomorrow they will be wrapping food in the market or providing a feast for worms.¹⁸

The complete epigram reads:

Ne toga cordylis et paenula desit olivis
aut inopem metuat sordida blatta famem,
perdite Niliacas, Musae, mea damna, papyros:
postulat ecce novos ebria bruma sales.
non mea magnanimo depugnat tessera talo,
senio nec nostrum cum cane quassat ebur:
haec mihi charta nuces, haec est mihi charta fritillus:
alea nec damnum nec facit ista lucrum.

That tunny-fry may not lack a gown and olives an overcoat, nor the uncleanly bookworm fear penurious hunger, waste some papyrus from the Nile, ye Muses—the loss is mine. See, tipsy midwinter calls for new jests. My dice do not contend with high-hearted knucklebones, nor do sice and ace shake my ivory. This paper is my nuts, this paper my dice box; such gambling brings neither loss nor gain.¹⁹

Martial likens his writing to gambling for low stakes—a frivolous, even childish activity that associates his epigrams with the carnival and guarantees their obsolescence: children played with nuts like knucklebones, and the proverb *nuces relinquere*, ‘to give up nuts,’ meant to abandon childish things.²⁰ The epigrams will be discarded like children’s toys once the Saturnalia (or even the dinner) is over. And yet the suggestion of gambling lends a sense of risk and jeopardy to the enterprise, even if it “brings neither loss nor gain.” While Martial insists on his frivolity, the vocabulary of waste (*perdo* means to lose, but also to squander, even to ruin) suggests a more anxious apprehension of wasted time, effort, and resources that is only partly assuaged with the comparison to dice and knucklebones as a more pernicious waste of time.

While, as Michel Magnien points out, there is surely some false modesty in both Martial’s and Montaigne’s claims to literary mortality, the book’s future as food wrapping returns insistently throughout the *Epigrams*.²¹ For Victoria Rimell, the theme illustrates Martial’s own awareness of his belated position in relation to Golden Age Augustan poetry; contemporary poetry is for Martial not just derivative and parasitic, but itself decaying and “fleshy,” in comparison to the “transcendent immortality” of the Augustan poet.²² Martial repeatedly emphasizes the material conditions of his literary production: the look and feel of the papyrus roll, with the decorated bosses at the end of the cylinder it was wrapped around; its languishing on a Roman bookseller’s stall, waiting for a patron; and its potential ultimate humiliation, wrapping cheap takeaway fish, or providing scrap paper for schoolboys to scribble on.²³ Because the poetry itself is described as sordid and nugatory, the boundary is blurred between material support (the decaying, recyclable papyrus) and poetry—or between the material, mortal book and the idealized, immortal text. The vulnerable materiality of the book thus infects the text: Martial’s poetry itself is soiled by the greasy chins of readers as they roll the papyrus back up.²⁴

The book's impermanence is the text's impermanence, reflecting furthermore the poet's physical and literary mortality; Martial suggests that the very acts of writing and publication make it difficult to separate the material book from immortal poetry, or material from textual culture.²⁵

Waste Paper and Wasted Time

Martial's ironic self-deprecation exemplified in the waste-paper motif was taken up in a range of sixteenth-century French texts, from poetry to polemic. Similarly, his emphasis on waste—wasted paper, wasted time, wasted inspiration—was a theme among young poets seeking to promote their skills in the tentative prefaces to their printed works.

In his book of juvenilia, printed in 1578 when he was twenty, a Brittany student, Jucquel Rougeart, dismisses his poetry as food for moths as well as waste-paper wrapping. The list of trades grateful for his prolific outpouring is long: bacon-cooks, apothecaries, spice merchants (or possibly those other sellers of powder, charlatans), butter sellers, book binders, haberdashers, and hatters are the “personnes infimes” (“lowly people”) who benefit from his poetry, rather than the “grands” (“nobles”), who disdain it; while articulating a class hierarchy between those who might read texts and those who merely use books, Rougeart claims only to be useful to the latter.²⁶ “Car le papier gasté de mes jeunes sotises / Leur servira de robe à plusieurs marchandises” (p. 263, ll. 161-62) (“For this paper spoiled with my youthful foolishness will provide them with a gown for many of their wares”): Martial's vocabulary of waste reappears in this exercise in imitation and self-promotion.²⁷ Rougeart's is a provocative adoption of the position of *versificateur*, the prolific but untalented poet excoriated by Ronsard precisely as providing only wrapping for spices.²⁸

This vocabulary of waste is evident in a more well-connected poet, Jean-Antoine de Baïf,

friend of Ronsard and member of the Pléiade, who in his *Passetems* of 1573, entreats his Muse: “Qu’on me gaste, qu’on m’vse / Mille & mille milliers / De rames de papiers” (“that you spoil and wear out for me thousands on thousands of reams of paper”), so that a variety of foodstuffs (spices, sausages, capers, plums) have new clothes.²⁹ Baïf’s insistence on the volume of his wasted paper echoes the Renaissance ambivalence towards *copia*, most famously theorized by Erasmus as both riches and waste.³⁰ Like Martial, Baïf draws a comparison between writing and gambling; but since gambling amounts to a denial of God, Baïf emphatically prefers wasting his time writing: “Et ne pêr que le tems / En ces doux passetems” (p. 206, ll. 51-52) (“and I only waste [literally “lose”] my time in this sweet pastime”). But there is a distinction, even an opposition, between wasting time and passing time, which Baïf elides here (while drawing attention to it with the rhyme), a distinction that literary fourth estate *nobles de robe* were working to establish. As Virginia Krause argues, the distinction was central to their efforts to establish themselves as more worthy nobles than the old-fashioned aristocracy, who wasted their time in gratuitous expenditure of resources and effort. If idleness could be valued as a kind of performative proof of social status, moralists, emblem writers, and poets like Baïf and Joachim du Bellay promoted literary work as a profitable and publicly useful noble activity over idleness as mere dissipation and waste.³¹

In the preface to *L’Olive* (1549–1550), Du Bellay makes explicit some of the preoccupations underlying the equivalence between wasted paper and wasted time. He justifies his writing in the same terms of pastime and wasting time as Baïf, while drawing a much stronger distinction: “. . . n’ayant où passer le temps, et ne voulant du tout le perdre” (“having no other way to pass the time, and not wanting to waste it”).³² Du Bellay dismisses the impact of recent attempts to reform French orthography, which he will not pursue: “pource que je ne fay

pas imprimer mes œuvres en intention qu'ilz servent de cornetz aux apothequaires, ou qu'on les employe à quelque aultre plus vil mestier" (p. 53) ("because I do not have my works printed to be used by apothecaries for cornets, or that they are put to some other more base use"). The waste-paper motif (especially in the hint towards the "plus vil mestier," of which more later) identifies literary waste and detaches it from Du Bellay's more productive endeavor. Abortive literary projects are waste products of excessively prolific and misguided literary energy, and waste paper a symptom of this surplus production.³³

Du Bellay's insistence that his works are not printed for base material use finds an ironic reversal in another poet and chronicler of French literary history, Jean Vauquelin de la Fresnaye. Adopting the role of amused father in his 1605 *Satyres françoises*, Vauquelin warns his book not to leave the safe haven of his desk in Caen to venture out into the world. He sees the book is chafing to detach itself from "tant de papiers" and to go to Paris to be printed and sold by a *libraire* near the Palais de justice.³⁴ The register shifts between literal and metaphorical destruction of the book, which is torn apart by mockery, abandoned by an offended reader, misinterpreted by an envious one, eaten by rats and moths, until finally:

Decousu tu seras en quelque coin, dolent
 De n'auoir creu ton père: enfin aux merceries,
 Aux pignes, aux miroirs, aux hains, aux drogueries,
 Aux couteaux, aux daguets, a cent petits fatras
 Qu'on transporte au Bresil, chetif tu seruiras
 D'enu'lope ou de cornets à mettre de l'epice,
 Du clou, de la muguette ou bien de la riglisse

Chez un apoticaire: ou dedans vn priué

Tu seras le secours du premier arriué. (pp. 184-85)

You will be unstitched in some corner, sorry not to have believed your father; and in the end you will serve as wretched wrapping for fripperies, combs, mirrors, hooks, medicines, knives, daggers, a hundred petty trifles that are shipped to Brazil; or you will become wrapping for an apothecary to put spice in—cloves, nutmeg, or even liquorice; or in a privy you will come to the aid of the first visitor.

Become pure merchandise itself, valued not as text but as paper, the book's pages participate in the traffic of merchandise across the world, in the nascent colonialism of the Americas and the itinerant trade of a peddler.³⁵ In warning his book of presumption and recklessness, Vauquelin reminds us of the material mechanics of the printing industry in a kind of miniature it-narrative, those stories of things popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that carried similar moral messages.³⁶

A material history of literature drifts in and out of Antoine du Verdier's preface to one of the first French national bibliographies, his 1585 *Bibliothèque*, as a kind of justification for his project of recuperation and preservation of notable sixteenth-century literary works. This emphasis on the material book works in odd counterpoint to his opening profession of faith, which erects knowledge as a kind of incorruptible possession that is not subject to fire, time, or insult: in Neil Kenny's terms, Du Verdier displays here characteristics of both the bibliomaniac and the chronicler of national literature.³⁷ At punctual moments in Du Verdier's history of

European writing, the material book suffers contingent disasters, including being recycled as apothecaries' cornets: in times of war, barbarianism, or royal neglect of the arts, those in search of financial profit are quick to sell their books to trades for use as wrapping (pp. v, xiv). Even those who hope to conserve their libraries only provide food for worms, a fate contrasted with the ideal destiny of books as transcendent texts, "la substance immortelle des sciences" (p. iv). Booksellers (*libraires*) emerge as the contemporary villains of the piece, uneducated louts commissioning poor-quality books by the thousand, motivated only by profit (p. xxvi). Printing technology is explicitly blamed for this excessive proliferation of worthless, waste paper ("livres de peu de fruit, petits livrets d'esbat avec mille corruptions" (p. xxvii) ("fruitless books, little frivolous pamphlets full of errors"): Du Verdier may be referring here to the pamphlets that constituted the print front of the French Wars of Religion, the waste products of a divided culture.³⁸ Indeed, the waste paper motif was often deployed in confessional polemic at this time to denigrate and dismiss an adversary's literary and rhetorical efforts.³⁹ Part of Du Verdier's project of national bibliography seems to be identifying what is worthy of preservation and what is worthless waste.⁴⁰

Book Curses

The same tension between immortal text and material book preoccupied the Poitiers humanist printer Guillaume Bouchet in relation to his own work, the *Serées*, or *Evenings* (first printed in 1584), a compilation of his wide-ranging reading of classical, medieval, and Renaissance philosophers, moralists, and miscellanists, often culled from commonplace books, and offered as an exercise for the reader's judgment.⁴¹ In the prefatory letter of Book 1 to his intended readers, the merchants of Poitiers, Bouchet lays his project down before them like fancy

goods on a trestle, “des meilleures estoffes qui fussent en ma boutique” (“the best wares that were in my shop”).⁴² As Hope Glidden has argued, Bouchet’s *Serées* combine a view of the book as merchandise, part of a capitalist economy of investment and distribution, with an atemporal image of humanist knowledge exchanged in an enclosed space, a distinction that maps onto that between material book and transcendent text.⁴³ Bouchet addresses his fellow merchants as one of their own, offering his word as bond and guarantee of the quality of his merchandise, drawing attention to the physical object that his readers have just bought, a tiny pocket-sized 16mo; an object for which they have paid money and so, to a certain extent, have appropriated.⁴⁴

His warning to plagiarists and pirates in his preface stays in this material register. He claims he had to print the first edition of the *Serées* himself because of its desultory nature, recalling Martial’s dismissal of his own *nugae*, also productions of winter evenings offered as pastimes and gifts.⁴⁵ Even so, Bouchet describes the effort to protect his intellectual property from unauthorized copies, printing his book using a unique, secret ink of his own devising, which, he claims, will safeguard it from the physical dangers that threaten the printed page: the gnawing of rats, mice, and moths; rot and worms; even fire.⁴⁶ The book appears as an everlasting material presence replacing the poetic immortality of its author. And yet, if the ink cannot prevent his book from aging, “as do all human things,” it will prevent the less edifying uses of discarded printed pages that he must have been familiar with as a printer and bookseller.

[S]i l’empescheray-ie qu’il ne serue des cornets aux apothicaires, merciers & beurriers: car tout ce qui sera empaqueté du papier mouillé de ceste eau, & imprimé de ceste ancre, se corrompra, & sera dangereux & pestifere à manger...

(p. xxv)

Then I will keep it from serving as cornets for apothecaries, haberdashers and butter sellers: for everything that is wrapped in paper soaked in this solution, and printed in this ink, will rot, and will be dangerous and deadly to eat.

Bouchet wants his book to retain the aura of the intellectual and the ideal text: to compel its users to focus on the content that it is a vehicle for, to make them readers, rather than more prosaic, potentially more violent, and certainly less respectful users.

Above all, his book should not be viewed as paper, as matter that could be recycled:

[...] voire mesmes ceux qui le feront servir à vn vsage encores plus vil, au lieu que les anciens, auant l'inuention du papier, vsoient d'esponges, en sentiroient vne grande dysenterie & excoriation és parties plus cachees, & possible la mort.
(p. xxvi)

Indeed those who employ it for an even more abject use, in the place where the ancients, before the invention of paper, used sponges, will experience a great dysentery and excoriation of their most hidden parts, and possibly death.

Bouchet's threat of dysentery is "Pantagrueline," as Hope Glidden remarks, ironic in its abject excess.⁴⁷ Indeed, this fantasized afterlife of the book as a scourge of the digestive system is a strangely satisfying materialization of the desire for control over the interpretation of the text that was common in Renaissance prefaces and particularly explicit in François Rabelais. The

Prologue to *Pantagruel*, for example, offers a series of threats in a similar register to incredulous readers: “le mau fin feu de ricqueracque, aussi menu que poil de vache, tout renforcé de vif argent, vous puisse entrer au fondement [. . .] en cas que vous ne croyez fermement tout ce que je vous racompteray en ceste presente chronicque” (“May the clap caught from your Fair, dense as any cow-hide’s hair, with quick-silver for cement penetrate your fundament [. . .] should you not firmly believe everything that I shall relate to you in this present *Chronicle*”).⁴⁸

While Rabelais is concerned with the intellectual reception and potential censorship of his work, here figured in the shaggy-dog boast that “all is true,” Bouchet shifts his attention explicitly to the material afterlife of his book, which appears to triumph over human frailty and even to survive, miraculously, the flames of any pyre it may be consigned to. Rabelais too riffs satirically on the magic power of the material printed page in an episode in the *Quart Livre* when the holy book of the Papimanes causes catastrophic damage: recycled as toilet paper, it lacerates the arse; as wrapping, it spoils the contents; it stains white linen black as coal, and horribly disfigures the faces of the mummers who use it in their masks.⁴⁹ For the Papimanes, the text is demeaned by the materiality of the book; Bouchet’s attitude is more complex, imagining the book as an immortal material object whose very materiality leaves it vulnerable to degradation. The underlying anxiety here seems not so much the assignation of literary mortality as the use of the book—as well as the text—once it is a free agent in the marketplace.

Recycling and Repurposing

These examples point to a lively motif that enabled writers to imagine the material afterlives of their book and to recognize both the technology behind its production and its independence once printed and disseminated. The motif was not limited to the sixteenth century

(Boileau, for example, satirizes a bore boasting of having “all Pelletier” rolled up in his privy), or to France.⁵⁰ Early modern English writers were also preoccupied with the material futures of their books. The journalist and polemicist Thomas Nashe puns repeatedly on the material page in his picaresque *Unfortunate Traveller*, at once celebrating and struggling with its existence as one part of a network involving printers, sellers, and readers, and potential destinies as a stopper for a mustard pot, a wrapper for slippers, or a spill to light a pipe.⁵¹ In his *Epigrams*, Ben Jonson instructs his bookseller to send his book to grocers for wrapping if it will not sell; he also promises his friends a supper where the only verses of his will be those transferred to the pie from the printed pages that lined the tin.⁵² Thomas Urquhart, the exuberant translator of Rabelais, describes how his manuscripts were scattered after the battle of Worcester and distributed for food wrapping, tobacco kindling, and “inferior employments and posterior uses.”⁵³ Later still, John Dryden in iconoclastic, Rabelaisian vein, makes sycophantic pamphlets “Martyrs of Pies, and Reliques of the Bum”; and in the “Epistle Dedicatory to Prince Posterity” of *The Tale of a Tub*, Jonathan Swift lists the unhappy places Posterity might go to find the literary productions of his peers: “to a *Jakes*, or an *Oven*; to the Windows of a *Bawdy-house*, or to a sordid *Lathorn*.”⁵⁴ Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century reviewers used the ephemerality of paper to indicate the worthlessness of the text, implicating the mortality of the author and, by extension, the reader, a mortality also suggested by Thomas Nashe’s unfortunate traveller, Jack Wilton, who asks his readers the royal pages to bend their knee when passing the stationer’s where their fellow page is “entombd.”⁵⁵

But the motif could equally be read as a parable of the resilience of paper and what happens to be printed on it, through accident and contingency. As Ronsard puts it—not unequivocally—at the end of his elegy to the felled trees of the forest of Gâtine, playing with

Aristotelian terms, “La matiere demeure, et la forme se perd” (“the matter remains and the form is lost”).⁵⁶ While printed and manuscript paper could shift quickly from the intellectual to the material realm—no longer read for the information it carried, repurposed as wrapper, wiper, or liner—the cycle was not necessarily irreversible. Indeed, waste paper switching back suddenly to the realm of the intelligible under an interested eye was—and remains—a popular device in romance and novels, from *Don Quixote* (parts of which are rescued by the narrator from a silk merchant’s) to *Tintin* (in *Prisoners of the Sun* the boy reporter finds out about the solar eclipse that will save him and his friends from an Inca human sacrifice in a discarded newspaper).⁵⁷ Even more self-consciously, Laurence Sterne’s “Rabelaisian Fragment” is found wrapped round a pat of butter.⁵⁸ Real discoveries were made in waste paper, through painstaking trawl or serendipitous find. Early humanists were drawn to the rubbish of religious houses for the lost manuscripts it could potentially have hidden. Vespasiano recounts how Poggio found six lost orations by Cicero amongst the waste paper of a religious house in Constance; and the sixteenth-century French humanist Jacques Gillot describes in a letter to Joseph Justus Scaliger how Pierre Pithou, who was, according to an eighteenth-century bibliographer, accustomed to rifle through the wrappings in artisans’ shops for precisely this purpose, found the manuscript letters or sermons of the French chancellor Michel de l’Hospital in a lace maker’s.⁵⁹

While the waste-paper motif itself was a literary affectation for many early modern writers, the practice of repurposing paper from books and manuscripts was widespread in the period. Cutting and pasting was a common destiny of early modern printed books, a continuation of medieval practices of compilation.⁶⁰ Indeed, Renaissance theorists and practitioners of commonplacing even recommended physically cutting up printed books in order to make indexing swifter and easier.⁶¹ Bouchet’s—and Montaigne’s—habit of including quotations in

their own published work found a material equivalence in these practices; behind the “pieces rapportées” of the *Sérées* and the *Essais* are the physical remnants of other books, material slips collected in trays, shelves, and bags, ready for re-use.⁶² If in France the Wars of Religion increased the production of ephemeral print and waste paper, in England the dissolution of the monasteries released quantities of paper and parchment onto the market and the iconoclasm of the Reformation recycled illuminated manuscripts into tailors’ patterns, book bindings, flyleaves, and sewing guards.⁶³ The sixteenth-century English antiquary John Bale describes with shame how new owners of books “reserued of those lybrarye bokes, some to serue theyr iakes some to scoure theyr candelstyckes, & some to rubbe their bootes. Some they solde to the grossers and sope sellers, & some they sent ouer see to y[e] bokebynders.”⁶⁴ If Bale suggests here that foreign bookbinders were astonished at the quantity of waste paper coming out of England, the example of the French Wars of Religion shows that ideological repurposing of printed and manuscript paper was not uncommon elsewhere in sixteenth-century Europe.

This repurposing happened in a spirit of reverence as well as destruction. Popular devotional prints were “cherished to destruction,” stuck on walls or travelling trunks, passed from hand to hand, and cut into smaller pieces.⁶⁵ Small, cheap hymnbooks produced for the Lutheran Reformation in Germany were “sung to pieces.”⁶⁶ As Sherman points out, the heavier the use, the more a book or print suffered; and for popular genres like devotional tracts and pious prints, the larger the print run, the smaller the chances of survival, or, to put it in other terms, the more popular the text, the less likely the book would survive.⁶⁷ As Adam Smyth has argued, the Renaissance book seen from this perspective—the practice of cutting, reordering, repurposing—seems less monumental, fixed, and authoritative, and more mobile, open to readers’ material interventions. When books were bought unbound and many purposely contained blank pages, the

reader was not confronted with a readymade, but rather a medium that could be reworked and rethought—indeed, that perhaps demanded precisely this kind of engagement from its most *suffisants lecteurs*.⁶⁸

This description of the printed book seems to contradict the dominant narrative of the early modern book, in which print appears as a fixing agent and stabilizer, an authoritative marker of authorial intention.⁶⁹ It also runs counter to an early modern narrative of “posthumous extension”—how an individual could survive physical death through the continuance of their written words—that Neil Kenny has uncovered in his recent work on the early modern tenses of death. While some examples exist of a work acquiring value and authority through physical contact with its author, in biographical accounts, dedicatory letters, and other paratextual material, writers and their posthumous executors tended to occlude the material object in order to focus attention on the intellectual and spiritual communication between living and dead.⁷⁰ In their work on the Renaissance fetish, Anne Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass argue that books were becoming “suprasensible” commodities in the early modern period, as writing was increasingly perceived as detached from the material circumstances of its production. They argue: “The book itself was becoming waste matter.”⁷¹ Arguably, the work the waste-paper motif is doing is ironic, suggesting the imperative of moving beyond the materiality of the printed page to the transcendent intellectual content it contains. My presentation of the motif, from the implied “fall” of paper from intelligible to material, and its potential resurgence, writes the story very much from this perspective, that of the subject using or reading the paper. But potentially another less hierarchical perspective is possible: from the point of view of the object, the journey from reading matter to wrapper and back again might look more like a changing set of relationships between different subjects and different objects.⁷² Indeed, the popularity of the

waste-paper motif suggests that early modern writers and readers, even if reluctant to commit themselves explicitly, were conscious of the material support of their bid for literary immortality and of the material affordances of books and paper. As James Kearney argues, the early modern book was conceived not just as a vehicle for text, but part of the material world of things; books were figured as flesh in images recalling the origin of parchment as animal skin.⁷³ Writers knew they needed paper: in the preface to his edition of Etienne de la Boétie's translation of Xenophon, Montaigne regrets his friend's tendency to commit his thoughts "sur le premier papier qui luy tomboit en main, sans autre soing de le co[n]seruer" ("onto the first bit of paper that came to hand, with no other effort to preserve it").⁷⁴ The example I started with—Montaigne's "Du démentir"—is notably explicit on the material support of the book and the displacement it operates on his sense of authorship.

Conclusion: Montaigne's Book

Ever since George Hoffmann's pioneering study, we know that Montaigne was personally and intimately involved in the production of his books, especially the first editions that Simon Millanges printed in Bordeaux. As was common in the period, Montaigne contributed to the cost of the printing, probably buying the paper himself from a local paper mill in Perigord. As Hoffmann points out, Montaigne frequently refers to paper when he refers to writing: the most celebrated being, perhaps, the statement of prolific intent, that he will keep writing "autant qu'il y aura d'ancre et de papier au monde" ("as long as there is ink and paper in the world").⁷⁵ The book as material object features regularly in the *Essais*, described as an object retaining a certain difference or otherness which its author no longer quite recognizes as his, moving out into the world into new hands.⁷⁶ The independent existence of the material book emerges as

Montaigne imagines his own being moved by women readers from the salon to the bedroom, or remarks on his careful preservation of an ancestor's book of hours.⁷⁷ Even the paradoxical declaration in "Du démentir" that the book itself is a "livre consubstantiel à son auteur" ("a book consubstantial with its author"), while creating a kind of shared subjectivity for Montaigne and his book, is expressed in terms of the book's agency: "Je n'ay pas plus faict mon livre que mon livre m'a faict" (p. 665c) ("I have no more made my book than my book has made me"; p. 612).⁷⁸ This shift to the perspective of the object is consistent throughout the *Essais*. In a chapter on paternal affection for their children, Montaigne argues that the workman would always love his work more than the work would love the workman, "si l'ouvrage avoit du sentiment" ("if the work had feeling").⁷⁹ Elsewhere, Montaigne suggests that the author loses all rights over his work once it is "hypothecqué au monde" ("De la vanité," III, 9, p. 963b) ("mortgaged to the world"; p. 894). The waste-paper motif figures the book as a thing out in the world, a consumable object that becomes, in Ronsard's words, "chose tienne."

The waste-paper motif evokes ideas about conjoined literary and physical mortality. Montaigne's equivalence between book and author makes his reflection on the recycling of his text a close relative to Hamlet's more explicit meditation on mortality, when he remarks that the dust that was once Alexander is now "stopping a bung hole," or "stop[ping] a beer barrel."⁸⁰ And yet, as Jonathan Gil Harris argues, Hamlet's image is an example of "untimely," atemporal, hybrid matter, which seems to exist in many time frames at once: Alexander's dust is at once dead and alive, in both the physical substance of the wine barrel and the imagination that conjures it.⁸¹ The waste-paper motif might also suggest a kind of continuity, almost an epicurean eternity of matter: the paper survives, turned to different purposes, and the writing that survives with it may (or may not) return to legibility given the right circumstances.⁸² Imagining the

material future of the printed page is a way of imagining the material fate to which the body is also subject; a way, then, of thinking about the equivalence between subject and object, and even their co-dependence. Montaigne imagines his book as “un corps solide qui puisse durer quelques années ou quelques jours apres moy” (“a solid body that may last a few years, or a few days, after me”).⁸³ In “Du démentir,” Montaigne’s “je” is a hybrid of man, text, and paper, the temporary and transient result of a network of relationships, between writer, printer, book, buyer, reader, and butter-seller.

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¹ Michel de Montaigne, “Du démentir,” *Essais*, ed. Pierre Villey and V.-L. Saulnier (Paris: PUF, 2004) II, 18, p. 664. Translations are by Donald Frame unless no page reference is given: Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Works* (New York: Everyman, 2003), “Of Giving the Lie,” p. 612. I’d like to thank Patrick French and Nicholas Harrison, as well as the two anonymous reviewers for *MLN*, for their invaluable comments on earlier drafts of this article.

² For a list of French examples, see Jucquel Rougeart, *Œuvres complètes (1578)*, ed. Catherine Magnien-Simonin (Geneva: Droz, 1988), p. 268 n. 32. I draw gratefully on many of Magnien-Simonin’s examples and add some of my own.

³ On paper’s transition from carrier of news to waste matter, see Steven Connor, *Paraphernalia: The Curious Lives of Magical Things* (London: Profile, 2011), “Newspaper,” pp. 119-30.

⁴ “Sonnet en faveur de Monsieur de Ronsard & de sa Franciade,” *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Paul Laumonier, 7 vols. 1914–1975. (Paris: Didier, 2015), vol. 5, p. 683 (ll. 1-4).

⁵ Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, “Fetishisms and Renaissances,” *Historicism, Psychoanalysis, and Early Modern Culture*, ed. Carla Mazzio and Douglas Trevor (New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 20-35.

⁶ See Thomas M. Greene, “Erasmus’s “Festina Lente”: Vulnerabilities of the Humanist Text,” *The Vulnerable Text: Essays on Renaissance Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 1-17; and John O’Brien, “Wounded Artifacts: Vulnerability and Montaigne’s *Essais*,” *MLN*, vol. 127, no. 4, 2012, pp. 712-31.

⁷ Thomas R. Adams and Nicholas Barker, “A New Model for the Study of the Book,” *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society: The Clark Lectures 1986–1987*, ed. Nicholas Barker (London: The British Library, 1993), pp. 5-43. Leah Price, *How to Do Things with Books in Victorian Britain* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2012).

⁸ See *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, ed. Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan and Peter Stallybrass (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994); *Early Modern Things: Objects and their Histories, 1500–1800*, ed. Paula Findlen (London: Routledge, 2013); Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000); *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings*, ed. Catherine Richardson and Tara Hamling (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).

⁹ Montaigne, “De l’affection des peres aux enfans,” *Essais* II, 8. On the motif of the child of the mind, see Wes Williams, *Monsters and their Meanings in Early Modern Culture: Mighty Magic* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011), pp. 141-50.

¹⁰ The Bordeaux Copy can be consulted online at the ARTFL Montaigne Project, alongside the Villey/Saulnier edition of the *Essais: The Montaigne Project*, www.lib.uchicago.edu/efts/ARTFL/projects/montaigne/ [viewed 19/07/2018].

¹¹ Horace is perhaps a silent intertext here: at the end of an *Epistle* to Augustus Caesar, he describes himself, with the same shift to first-person pronoun, being carried into the streets to wrap perfume and pepper, suggesting that the poet's fame is belittled by its association with the material page. Horace, *Satires, Epistles, Ars Poetica*, trans. H. R. Fairclough (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2005), 2.1.267-70 (pp. 418-19).

¹² This passage appeared in editions from 1580 through to 1588. See Michel de Montaigne, *Essais* (Bordeaux: Simon Millanges, 1580), pp. 573-74; *Essais* (Paris: Abel L'Angelier, 1588), 285^v. For a close reading of the development of the passage, see Jules Brody, "Montaigne "se débîne": "Du démentir" (II, 18)," *Nouvelles Lectures de Montaigne* (Paris: Champion, 1994), pp. 15-36.

¹³ Henry Fitzgeffrey, *Satyres*, 1617, G4^f; quoted in Heidi Brayman Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England: Print Gender, and Literacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005), p. 81.

¹⁴ "Du démentir," p. 664a; *Complete Works*, p. 611. Horace, *Satires*, 1.4.73-5 (pp. 54-55); Persius, *Satires*, in *Juvenal and Persius*, trans. Susanna Morton Braund (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2004), 5.19-21 (pp. 98-99).

¹⁵ Catullus 95, in *Catullus, Tibullus and Pervigilium Veneris*, trans. F. W. Cornish *et al.* (London: Heinemann, 1912), pp. 166-69.

¹⁶ Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1879), art. "laxus. »

¹⁷ Michel Magnien, “Légèreté, plaisir et désinvolture: Montaigne à l’école de Martial?” *Montaigne Studies*, no. 17, 2005, pp. 97-118. Magnien also points out that the longest quotation from Martial present in the *Essais*, in “De la praesumption” (II, 17), explicitly concerns the foolishness of the *essai*-writing project (p. 113).

¹⁸ On the *Xenia* as gifts, cut out and handed to departing guests, see Victoria Rimell, *Martial’s Rome: Empire and the Ideology of Epigram* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), p. 148. The social context of the *Xenia* was discussed in Renaissance commentaries of Martial by Domizio Calderini and Giorgio Merula; see, for example, *Marci Valerij Martialis Epigrammata Libri xiiii [...] [Venice: G. de Rusconibus, 1514], R^v*. On Martial’s fortunes in the Renaissance, see J. P. Sullivan, *Martial: The Unexpected Classic. A Literary and Historical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991).

¹⁹ Martial, *Epigrams*, trans. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993), 13.1, vol. 3, pp. 172-23.

²⁰ *A Latin Dictionary*, art. “nux.”

²¹ Magnien, “Légèreté,” p. 115; see also Brody, “Montaigne ‘se débine.’”

²² Rimell, *Martial’s Rome*, pp. 20-21.

²³ See 4.89 (where the poem is told to stop as it nears the painted bosses of the papyrus roll); 3.2 (where the book is encouraged to find a protector so that it doesn’t end up in a sooty kitchen wrapping fish or spices); and 4.86, where the book must please a particularly influential reader if it is not going to end up wrapping mackerel or being scribbled on by schoolboys; the term Martial uses for the wrapper, again in the register of clothing, is *tunica molesta*, the robe smeared in pitch in which criminals were sometimes burned, with connotations of humiliation and degradation. See Martial, *Epigrams*, p. 346 and notes.

²⁴ Martial, *Epigrams* 10.93 (see also 1.66); Rimell, *Martial's Rome*, p. 22.

²⁵ Roger Chartier similarly argues that publication “ne sépare pas la matérialité du texte de la textualité du livre »: *Inscrire et effacer: Culture écrite et littérature (XI^e-XVIII^e siècle)* (Paris: Gallimard / Seuil, 2005), p. 9.

²⁶ Jucquel Rougeart, “Elegie a Robert de Gaincru, Gentilhomme Vanetois,” *Œuvres complètes*, pp. 258-63 (p. 263, ll. 166-7).

²⁷ Randle Cotgrave has a long list of English equivalents for *gaster*, including “to wast,” “spoyle,” “corrupt,” “deprave,” and “consume”: *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues*, 1611 (Columbia: U of South Carolina P, 1950), art. “gaster.” On the semantics of the verb *gaster*, see Pauline Goul, “‘Et Voilà l’Ouvrage Gasté’: The Poetics of Plenitude and Scarcity in Rabelais’s *Gaster*,” *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, vol. 50, no. 3, 2014, pp. 332-40 (especially pp. 333-34).

²⁸ Ronsard, “Elégie à Jacques Grevin” (printed with Grevin’s *Théâtre*, 1561), in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Jean Céard, Daniel Menager, and Michel Simonin, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1993–94), vol. 2, pp. 1111-15 (p. 1113). This is the edition of reference, hereafter *OC*.

²⁹ Jan-Antoine de Baïf, *Euvres en rime*, ed. Ch. Marty-Laveaux, 5 vols (Geneva: Slatkine, [1965]), “A sa Muse,” vol. 4, pp. 205-06 (p. 205, ll. 6-8). On Baïf’s career of poetry, music, and propaganda, see Yvonne Roberts, *Jean-Antoine de Baïf and the Valois Court* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2000); Jean Vignes, *Jean-Antoine de Baïf* (Paris: Memini, 1999).

³⁰ Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979).

³¹ Virginia Krause, *Idle Pursuits: Literature and “Oisiveté” in the French Renaissance* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2003), especially Ch. 2, “Work and idleness in the fourth estate,” pp.

56-85. Montaigne echoes this preoccupation in “Du démentir” with the twice-repeated question, added after years of writing on his 1588 copy, “ay-je perdu mon temps . . . ?” (p. 665c) (“have I wasted my time . . . ?,” p. 612).

³² Joachim du Bellay, *L'Olive*, ed. E. Caldarini (Geneva: Droz, 1974), “Au Lecteur,” pp. 43-54 (p. 43). For a similar equation between futile literary projects and waste paper, see Pierre de Ronsard, “Preface sur la *Françiadé*, touchant le Poëme Heroïque” (1587), in *OC*, vol. 1, pp. 1161-80 (p. 1176).

³³ See James Simpson, “Bonjour Paresse: Literary Waste and Recycling in Book 4 of Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*,” *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. 151, 2006, pp. 257-84. I borrow the term “symptom” from Montaigne’s diagnosis: “L’escrivailerie semble estre quelque simptome d’un siecle desbordé” (“De la vanité,” III, 9, p. 946b).

³⁴ Jean Vauquelin de la Fresnaie, “A son livre,” *Satyres françoises, Diverses poésies*, ed. Julien Travers, 2 vols (Caen: Le Blanc-Hardel, 1869), vol. 1, pp. 182-90 (p. 182). For other dismayed warnings to the adventurous book, see Ronsard, “Elegie à son Livre,” *Le Second Livre des Amours* (1556), *OC*, vol. 1, pp. 167-72 (p. 167); and his model, Martial, *Epigrams*, 1.3. Vauquelin’s warning is more engaged with the mechanics of printing than either of the two earlier examples.

³⁵ Ronsard also uses a list of exotic spices to emphasise the limited, local, circumstantial value of the scruffy papers wrapping them: “Elegie à Jacques Grevin,” *OC*, vol. 2, p. 1113, ll. 73-74.

³⁶ Price, *How to Do Things with Books*, ch. 4 (pp. 107-35). For an early modern version of the it-narrative, see Grimmelshausen’s *Simplicius Simplicissimus* (1669), where a sheaf of paper left in a privy begs the narrator to spare it the ignominious end unworthy of its journey

from hemp seed through linen to paper. Johann Jakob Christoffel Von Grimmelshausen, *Simplicius Simplicissimus*, trans. Monte Adair (Lanham: UP of America, 1986), Book 6, chs 11-12. For material and social histories of paper, see the project *Paper Princes: Investigating the Role of Paper in Early Modern Diplomacy*, www.paperprinces.org/. This article benefited enormously from conversations with the Principal Investigator, Meg Williams. For the aesthetics and poetics of early modern paper, see Joshua Calhoun, “The Word Made Flax: Cheap Bibles, Textual Corruption, and the Poetics of Paper,” *PMLA*, vol. 126, no. 2, 2011, pp. 327-44.

³⁷ “Préface d’Antoine du Verdier, sur sa Bibliothèque,” *Les Bibliothèques françoises de La Croix du Maine et de Du Verdier [...]*, 6 vols (Graz: Akademische Druck Verlagsanstalt, 1969) [compilation edition of 1772-1773], vol. 3, pp. i-xli (p. ii). Kenny distinguishes bibliomania (that often fetishizes the book as material object) from histories of learning (that can fetishize the transcendent text): “Books in Space and Time: Bibliomania and Early Modern Histories of Learning and ‘Literature,’” *Modern Language Quarterly*, vol. 61, no. 2, June 2000, pp. 253-86 (p. 256).

³⁸ See André de Rivaudeau, *Aman: Tragédie sainte*, ed. Keith Cameron (Geneva: Droz, 1969), who condemns the partisans “Qui de mille cayers nous barbouillent les mains” (“who soil our hands with thousands of quires”) that end up as wrapping (p. 51, ll. 75-78).

³⁹ In the Protestant polemic against Ronsard, works such as his *Discours des misères de ce temps* were depicted on apothecaries’ shelves ready for use as “cornets.” See two pieces probably by Bernard de Montméja in *La Polémique protestante contre Ronsard*, ed. Jacques Pineaux, 2 vols (Paris: Marcel Didier, 1973): *Response aux calomnies* (1563), vol. 1, pp. 67-97 (p. 86, l. 448); and *Replique sur la response faite par Messire Pierre Ronsard* (1563), vol. 2, pp. 231-99 (pp. 298-99). The motif endured into the seventeenth century, in a variety of quarrels:

see, for example, *L'Anti-libelle, en vers burlesques* (Paris: Pierre du Pont, 1649), in which worthless pamphlets end up in the privy (“on s’en frotte les derrieres,” p. 5); and *Cent quatre vers contre ceux qui font passer leurs libelles diffamatoires sous le nom d’autrui, par Monsieur Scarron* (Paris: Toussaint Quinet, 1651), in which Scarron predicts his plagiarists’ pages will become “papiers déchirez sous les chaizes percées” (p. 5). Many thanks to Natalia Obukowicz for these references.

⁴⁰ On reading as this kind of discrimination, see Adam Smyth, *Material Texts in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2018), pp. 73-74.

⁴¹ Hope H. Glidden, “The Paradoxes of Print: Guillaume Bouchet as Scholar-Printer in the French Renaissance,” *French Forum*, vol. 4, no. 3, 1979, pp. 261-70. On the *Sérées*, see in particular André Janier, *Les “Sérées” (1584–1597–1598) du libraire-imprimeur Guillaume Bouchet (1514–1594)* (Paris: Champion, 2006) and Michel Jeanneret, *Des Mets et des mots: banquets et propos de table à la Renaissance* (Paris: Corti, 1987), pp. 175-80.

⁴² Guillaume Bouchet, “A Messieurs les marchands de la ville de Poitiers,” *Les Sérées*, ed. C.-E. Roybet (Geneva: Slatkine, 1969 [1873-1882]), p. iv.

⁴³ Hope H. Glidden, *The Storyteller as Humanist: The “Sérées” of Guillaume Bouchet* (Lexington: French Forum, 1981), p. 46.

⁴⁴ See also Ronsard: “Bref quand tu auras acheté mon livre, je ne te pourray empescher de le lire ny d’en dire ce qu’il te plaira comme estant chose tienne.” “Au Lecteur” (1572), *Franciade*, in *OC*, vol. 1, p. 1186. In a number of epigrams, Martial addresses a potential plagiarist, encouraging him to buy ownership of the text and not just of the book (see especially 1.29 and 1.66).

⁴⁵ See Rimell, *Martial's Rome*, p. 145. The *Serées*' epigram—*et nugae seria ducunt*, “these trifles lead to serious consequences”—is Horace, slightly modified, and adds a ponderous note to Martial's levity (Horace, *Arts poetica*, 5.451); see Neil Kenny, “‘Ce qui occasionna ceste serée fut...’: Les ‘causes’ du savoir dans *Les Serées* de Guillaume Bouchet,” in *Contes et discours bigarrés, Cahiers V. L. Saulnier 28* (Paris: Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne, 2011), pp. 103-16 (p. 107).

⁴⁶ Bouchet, “Discours de l'auteur sur son livre des Serees,” *Serées*, p. [xxiv].

⁴⁷ Glidden, *The Storyteller as Humanist*, p. 65. Incidentally, Gargantua is not impressed with the qualities of paper as an arse-wipe: “Tousjours laisse aux couillons esmorche / Qui son hord cul de papier torche.” *Gargantua*, in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Mireille Huchon (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), ch. 13, p. 39.

⁴⁸ Rabelais, “Prologue,” *Pantagruel*, p. 215; *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, trans. M. A. Screech (London: Penguin, 2006), p. 14.

⁴⁹ Rabelais, *Quart Livre*, ch. 53, pp. 658-62 (p. 659).

⁵⁰ Nicolas Boileau, *Satires, Epîtres, Art poétique*, ed. Jean-Pierre Collinet (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), *Satire 3*, ll. 127-28, p. 78; see also *Epître 1*, for his hope not to end up at a fancy grocer's wrapping cinnamon (l. 38, p. 169).

⁵¹ Thomas Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller or, the Life of Jacke Wilton* (London: T. Scarlet for C. Burby, 1594), [A3]^v. See Julian Yates, *Error, Misuse, Failure: Object Lessons from the English Renaissance* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003), pp. 108-09.

⁵² Ben Jonson, “To My Bookseller” and “Inviting a Friend to Supper,” *Epigrams*, in *The Complete Poems*, ed. George Parfitt (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), pp. 35 and 70. Thanks to Andrea Brady and Claire Bartram for these references.

⁵³ Sir Thomas Urquhart, *The Jewel*, ed. R.D.S. Jack and R.J. Lyall (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1983), p. 60.

⁵⁴ John Dryden, “Mac Flecknoe,” *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. H.T. Swedenberg, 20 vols (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956–1989), vol. 2 “Poems 1681-1684” (1972), pp. 54-60 (p. 56, l. 101). Jonathan Swift, *A Tale of a Tub With Other Early Works 1696–1707*, ed. Herbert Davis (Oxford: Blackwell, 1957), p. 21-22. Thanks to Tom Jones for these references.

⁵⁵ Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller*, [A4]^f; see Price, *How to Do Things with Books*, pp. 231-36.

⁵⁶ Ronsard, *OC*, vol. 2, p. 409.

⁵⁷ Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, trans. J.M. Cohen (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), Book 1, ch. 9, pp. 76-77. Hergé, *Prisoners of the Sun*, trans. Leslie Lonsdale-Cooper and Michael Turner, in *The Adventures of Tintin*, 8 vols (London: Egmont, 2011), vol. 5, pp. 181-83; thanks to Bharat Tandon for this reference.

⁵⁸ Laurence Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey and Other Writings* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), p. 85.

⁵⁹ Vespasiano da Bisticci, *The Vespasiano Memoirs: Lives of Illustrious Men of the XVth Century*, trans. William George and Emily Waters (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1997), p. 352. For Pithou, see the notes by Le Monnoye and Bouhier in *Les Bibliothèques françaises de La Croix du Maine et de Du Verdier*, vol. 2, p. 126, and I.D. MacFarlane, “La Poésie néo-latine et l’engagement à l’époque des guerres de religion,” in *Culture et politique en France à l’époque de l’humanisme et de la Renaissance*, ed. Franco Simone (Turin: Accademia delle Scienze, 1974), pp. 387-411 (p. 407 n.4).

⁶⁰ The critical literature on early modern book repurposing is growing. See Smyth, *Material Texts in Early Modern England*; his two articles, “Cutting and Authorship in Early Modern England,” *Authorship*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2013, www.authorship.ugent.be/article/view/790/798 [accessed 23 July 2018], and “‘Rend and Teare in Peeces’: Textual Fragmentation in Seventeenth-Century England,” *The Seventeenth Century*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2004, pp. 36-52; and the articles collected in *The Renaissance Collage*, ed. Juliet Fleming and Adam Smyth, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, vol. 45, no. 3, 2015.

⁶¹ See Ann M. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (Yale: Yale UP, 2010), pp. 213-29; the example she gives is Conrad Gessner, who recommended procuring two copies of the book (one for the recto and one for the verso); his close relationship with his printer Froschauer may have given him access to stock (pp. 96, 214).

⁶² Montaigne, “Du pedantisme,” I, 25, p. 139a.

⁶³ William H. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2008), p. 102. See Price, *How to Do Things with Books*, p. 233; and Christopher de Hamel, *Cutting Up Manuscripts for Pleasure and Profit* (Charlottesville: Book Arts Press, 1998).

⁶⁴ *The Laboryouse iourney [and] serche of Iohan Leylande, for Englands antiquitees [...], with declaracyons enlarged by Iohan Bale* (London: S. Mierdman for John Bale, [1549]), Bi^r.

⁶⁵ Sherman, *Used Books*, p. 6; see also Price, *How to Do Things with Books*, p. 233.

⁶⁶ Henrike Lähnemann, “Das Erfurter ‘Enchiridion’ in der Goslarer Marktkirchen-Bibliothek,” *Marktkirchen-Bibliothek Goslar: Beiträge zur Erforschung der*

reformationszeitlichen Sammlung, ed. Helmut Liersch (Regensburg: Schnell und Steiner, 2017), pp. 232-43 (p. 233).

⁶⁷ Sherman, *Used Books*, p. 5.

⁶⁸ Smyth, “Cutting and Authorship.” Montaigne, “Divers evenements de mesme conseil,” *Essais* I, 24, p. 127a.

⁶⁹ Smyth, ““Rend and Teare in Peece,”” p. 43.

⁷⁰ Neil Kenny, *Death and Tenses: Posthumous Presence in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford UP 2015), pp. 176-207 on posthumous written presence. The counter-example of material connection Kenny cites is occult philosophy (p. 178 n. 8).

⁷¹ Jones and Stallybrass, “Fetishisms and Renaissances,” pp. 29 and 31.

⁷² Although there isn’t space to explore it here, this is the perspective advocated by Bruno Latour in *Nous n’avons jamais été modernes* (Paris: La Découverte, 1991).

⁷³ James Kearney, *The Incarnate Text: Imagining the Book in Reformation England* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2009), pp. 3-8.

⁷⁴ *La Mesnagerie de Xenophon [...] traduit de Grec en François par feu M. Estienne de la Boetie [...] Discours sur la mort dudit Seigneur De la Boëtie, par M. de Montaigne* (Paris: Frederic Morel, 1572), 3^v. See Kenny, *Death and Tenses*, on Etienne Jodelle’s method of composition and failure to print his works during his lifetime as having an effect on his posthumous presence (pp. 199-200).

⁷⁵ George Hoffmann, *Montaigne’s Career* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), pp. 63-83 on Montaigne’s investment in production (p. 72 on references to paper); and Montaigne, “De la vanité,” *Essais*, III, 9, p. 945b; *Complete Works*, p. 876.

⁷⁶ In “De la praesumption,” Montaigne blames his poor memory for his surprise at what his book contains: “ma memoire desempare ce que j’escry comme ce que je ly” (II, 17, p. 653c), with his memory losing its grip (“desempare”) on the busily circulating book-object.

⁷⁷ Montaigne, “Sur des vers de Virgile,” *Essais* III, 5, p. 847b (on the book in the bedroom); “Du dementir,” II, 18, p. 664c (on his ancestors’ possessions).

⁷⁸ On what Montaigne and his contemporaries meant by “consubstantiel,” see Marjorie O’Rourke Boyle, “Montaigne’s Consubstantial Book,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 50, no. 3, 1997, pp. 723-49. At the beginning of “De la vanité,” just after he has promised to keep writing as long as there is ink and paper in the world, Montaigne describes his book explicitly as waste matter, another type of the consubstantiality: “des excremens d’un vieil esprit” (III, 9, p. 946b).

⁷⁹ “De l’affection des peres aux enfans,” *Essais*, II, 8, p. 386c; “Of the affection of fathers for their children,” *Complete Works*, p. 339.

⁸⁰ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (London: Arden, 2006), 5.1.193, 201 (pp. 423-24).

⁸¹ Jonathan Gil Harris, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2009), p. 12.

⁸² In his notes on Lucretius, Montaigne imagines his scattered atoms coming together again at some point in the future to create “alius [...] montanus” [another Montaigne]: M. A. Screech, *Montaigne’s Annotated Copy of Lucretius: A Transcription and Study of the Manuscript Notes and Pen-Marks* (Geneva: Droz, 1998), p. 134.

⁸³ “De la ressemblance des enfans aux peres,” *Essais* II, 37, p. 783a; “Of the resemblance of children to fathers,” *Complete Works*, pp. 722-23.