

THE ROARING GIRL

Analyzing Moll's Descriptors

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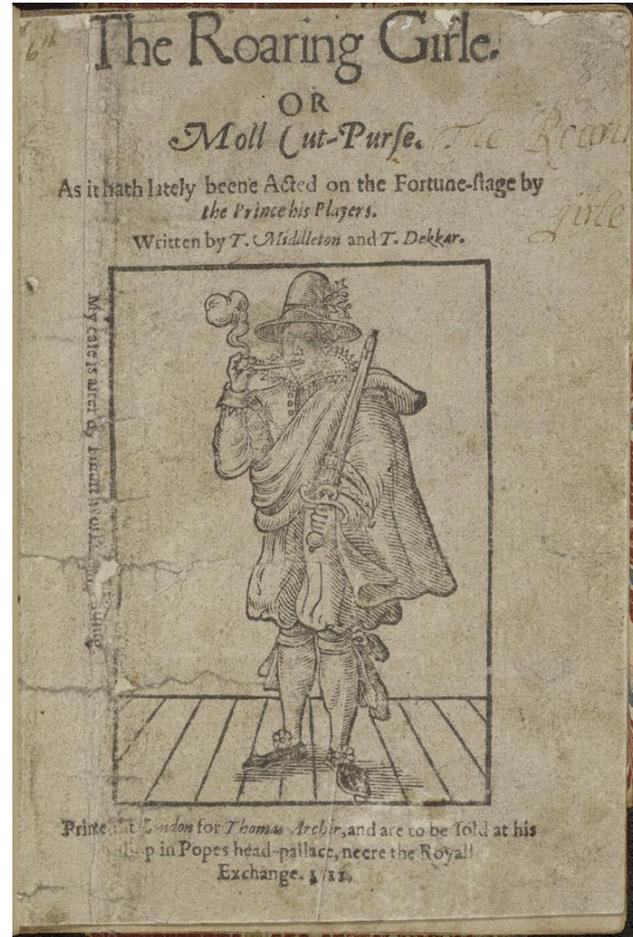
Opening the Digital Anthology of Early Modern English Drama
FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY, JUNE 2017

Research Questions

Are new words and phrases generated to describe female-to-male cross-dressing, or are old words and phrases adapted?

Objects: Dekker/Middleton's "The Roaring Girle," 1611

Audience: scholars of the early modern period; drama scholars; gender studies scholars



Descriptor Categories

- Supernatural references
- Positive connotations
- Negative connotations
- Bodily/sexual references
- Foreign references (particularly Dutch)
- Animal imagery



Tools Used

- XML
- EEBO-TCP Keywords in Context
- EEBO-TCP NGram Search
- CQPweb at Lancaster
- LUNA Digital Images at Folger
- Hamnet at Folger
- Voyant word correlations
- Voyant line graph features
- XPath
- Word Tree

XML Tagging with Descriptor Categories

The screenshot shows the XML Edit interface for the file 'EMED-Roaring-ana.xml'. The main editor displays XML code with a tree view on the left. The selected element is a word 'mermaid' with a lemma attribute. The bottom panel shows a search results list for the word 'Mermaid'.

```
TEI text body div sp ab w
29553 <corresp="SHC#A07524-053770" ana="#d" lemma="a">
29554
29555 >
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29557
29558
29559
29560 <corresp="SHC#A07524-053780" ana="#n1 #supernatural" lemma="mermaid">
29561
29562 </orig>
29563
29564
29565
29566
29567 " ana="#verse" corresp="#w0078200 #c0078210 #w0078220 #c0078230 #w0078240 #c0078250 #w0078260 #c
29568 <corresp="SHC#A07524-053790" ana="#vz" lemma="have">
29569
29570 ig>
29571
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Description - 3 items

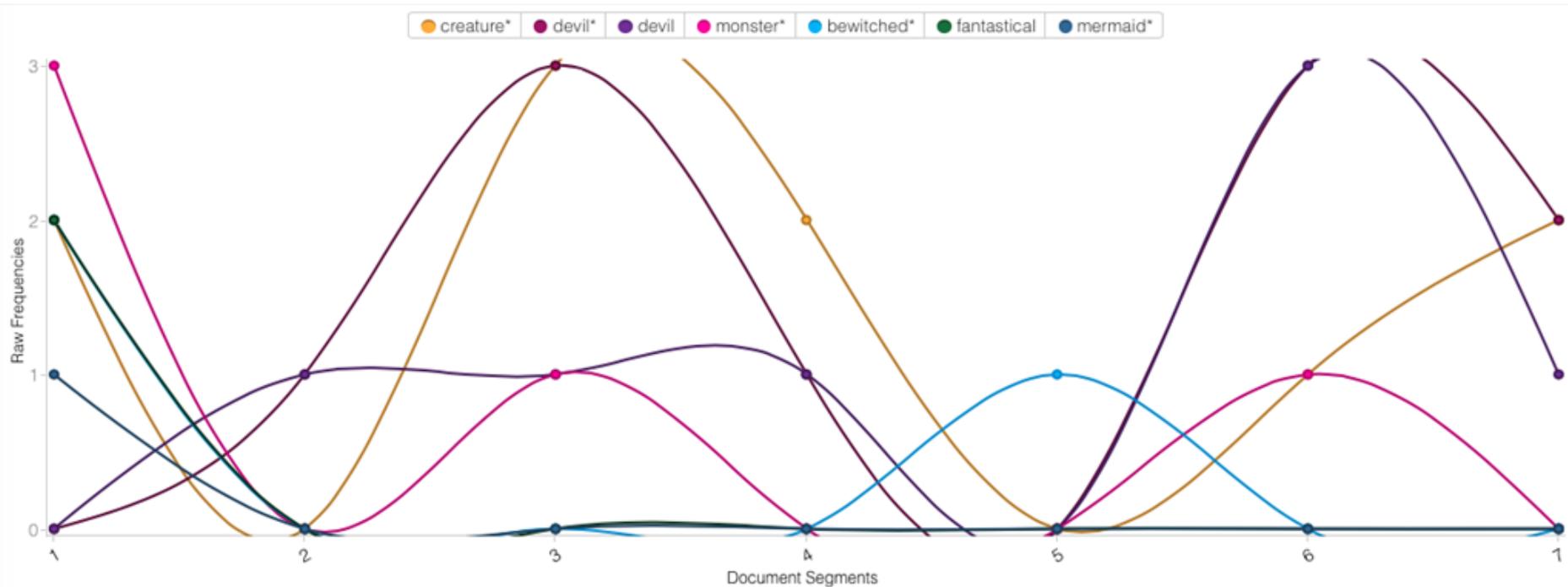
- /Users/NatalieBurke/Desktop/EMED-Roaring-ana.xml (3 items)
- ...fac="10-a-0350" corresp="SHC#A07524-053780" ana="#n1 #supernatural" lemma="mermaid">
- <orig resp="#TCP #SHC #EMED">Mermaid</orig>
- <reg resp="#SHC #EMED">Mermaid</reg>

Find all - EMED-Roaring-ana.xml

/Users/... U+0022 29560 : 105 Days left for evaluation: 27 27 new me...

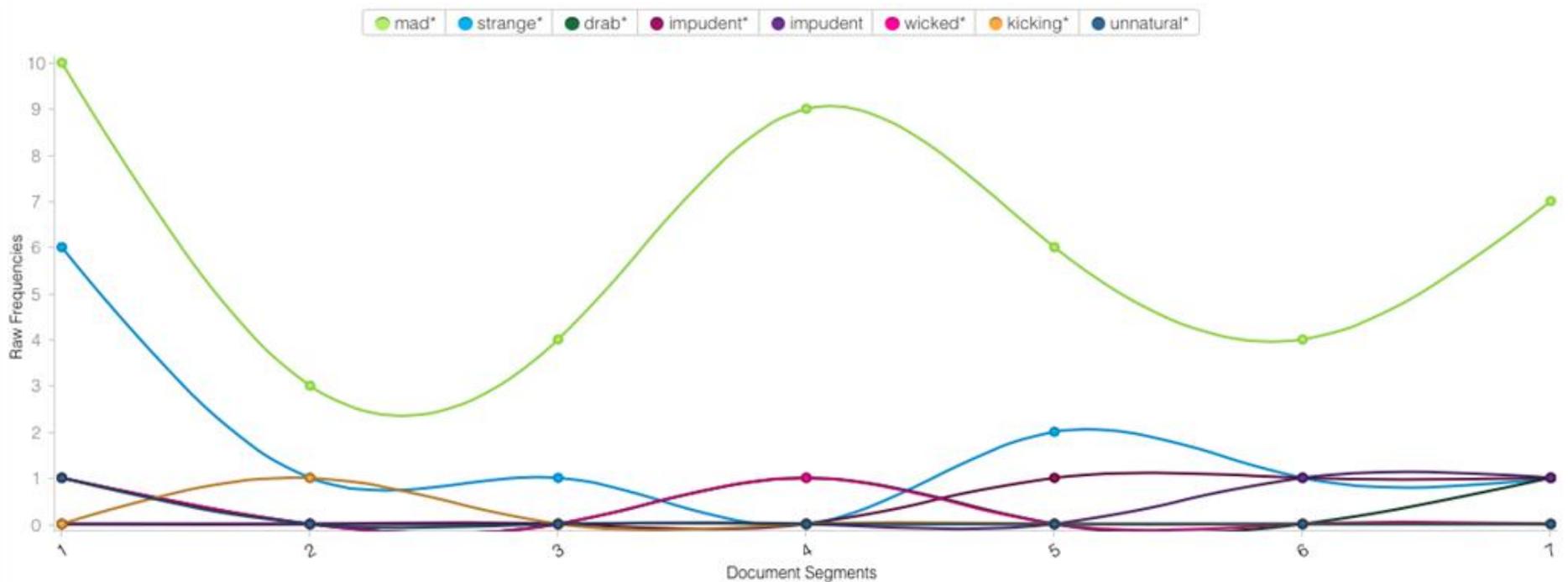
Supernatural References

Creature (including plural form), bewitched, monster, mermaid, fantastical, and devil (including plural form)



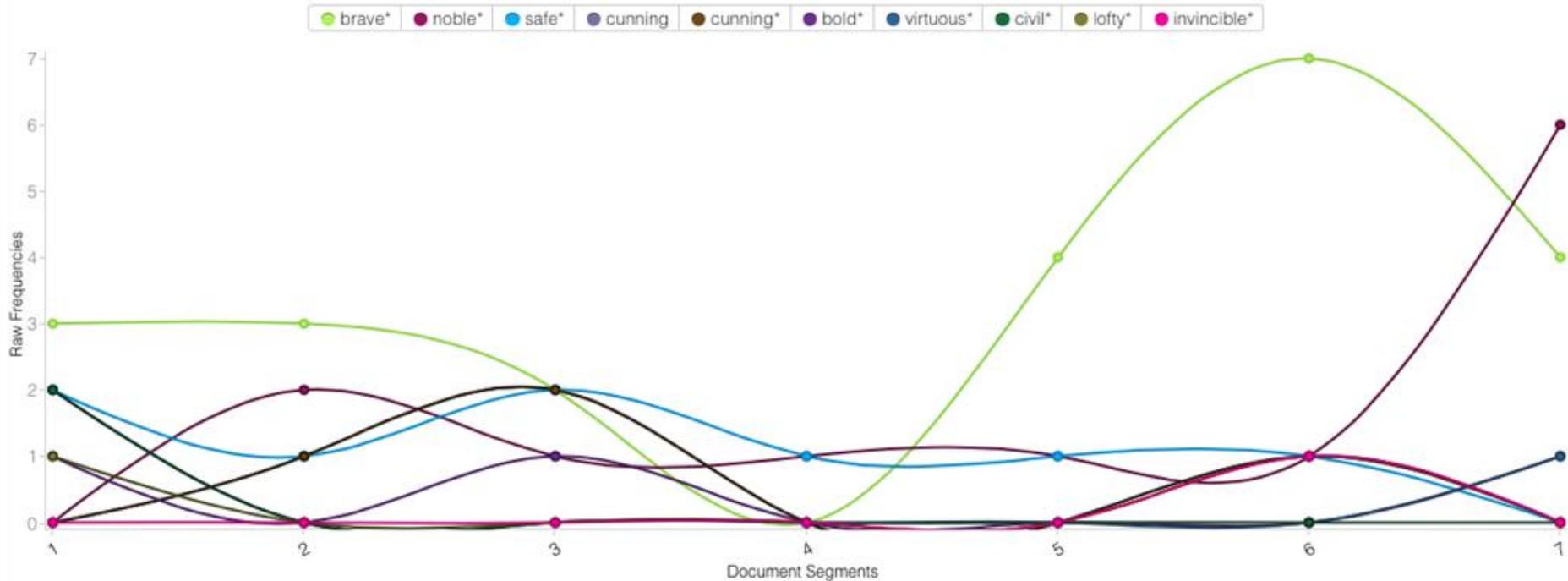
Negative Connotations

Kicking, strange, mad, wicked, unnatural, drab, impudent



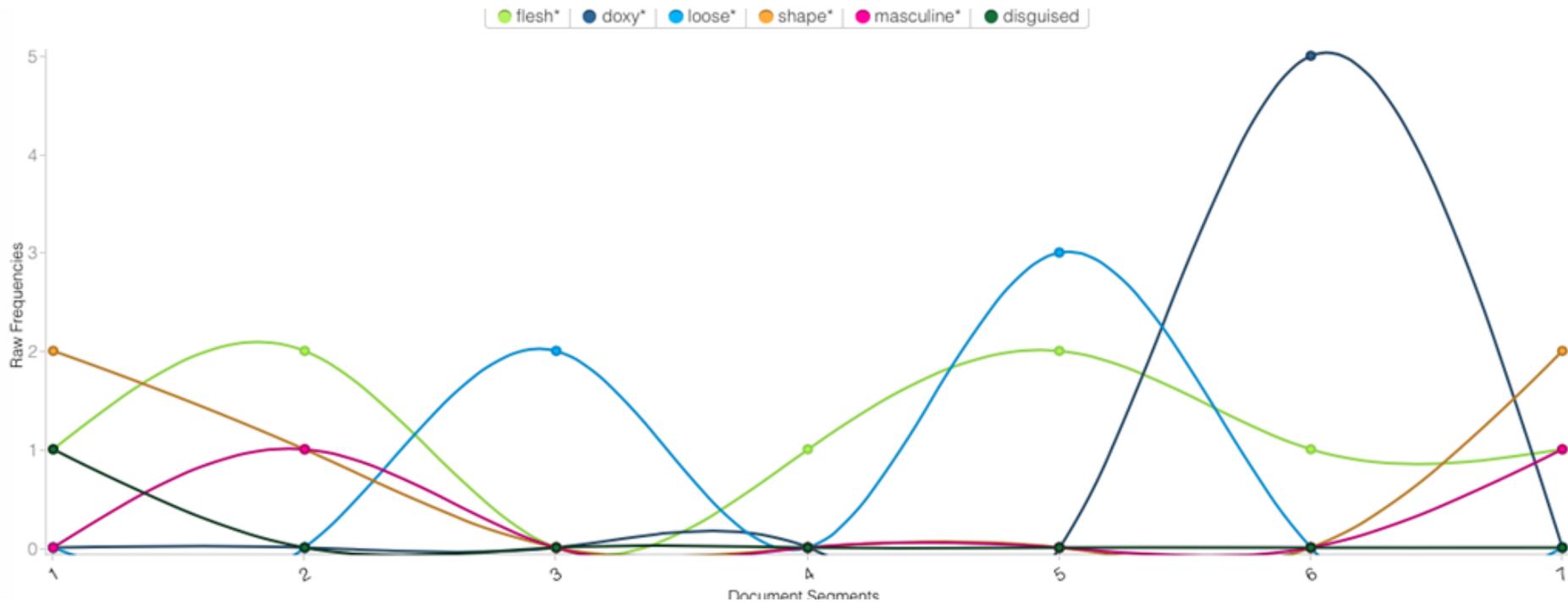
Positive Connotations

Safe, brave, invincible, virtuous, civil, noble, bold, lofty, cunning



Bodily/Sexual References

Shape, loose, flesh, masculine, doxy, disguised (past tense only)



Word Correlations to “Moll”

Creature/s (77%)

Eel (59%)

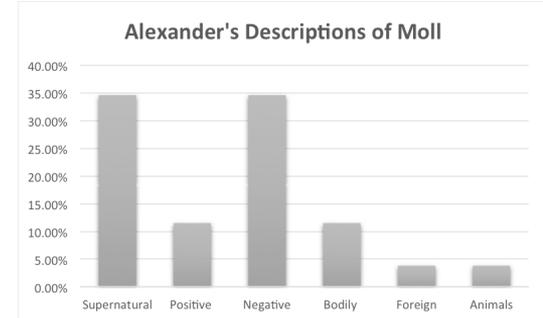
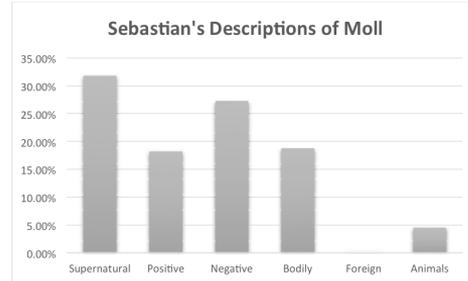
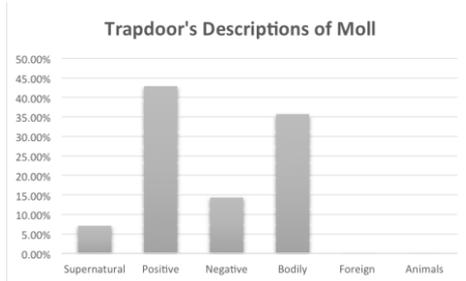
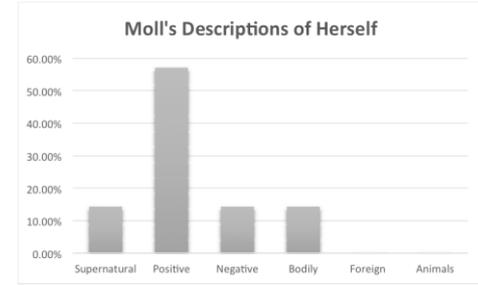
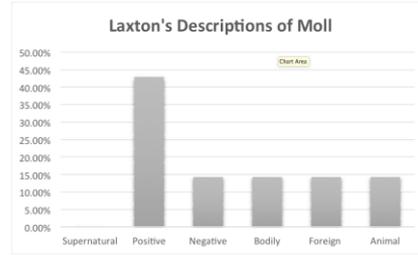
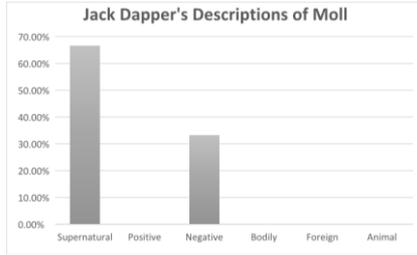
Flesh (51%)

Masculine (45%)

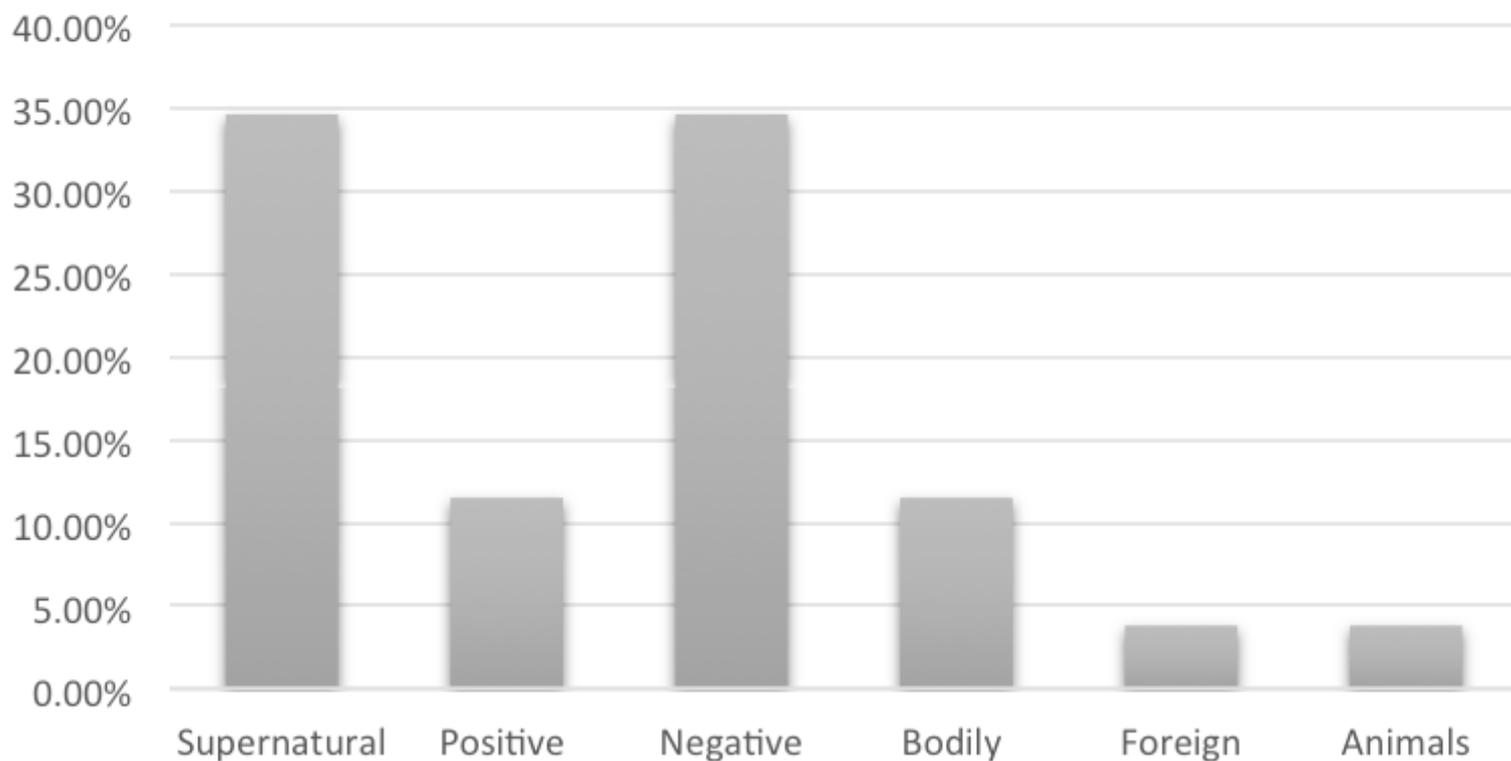
Correlations

Term 1	←	→	Term 2	Correlation
moll			moll*	0.99990517
fitted			moll*	0.8700959
heels			moll*	0.8577548
faith			moll*	0.84443516
disgrace			moll*	0.8379635
impossible			moll*	0.8379635
italian			moll*	0.8379635
limbs			moll*	0.8379635
creatures			moll*	0.76687866
going			moll*	0.7301715
fellow			moll*	0.7213278
fat			moll*	0.7155579
measure			moll*	0.71121275
goodman			moll*	0.7073007
hogsden			moll*	0.7073007
general			moll*	0.7073007
honor's			moll*	0.7073007
horses			moll*	0.7073007
hur			moll*	0.7073007
immovable			moll*	0.7073007
carry			moll*	0.7068089

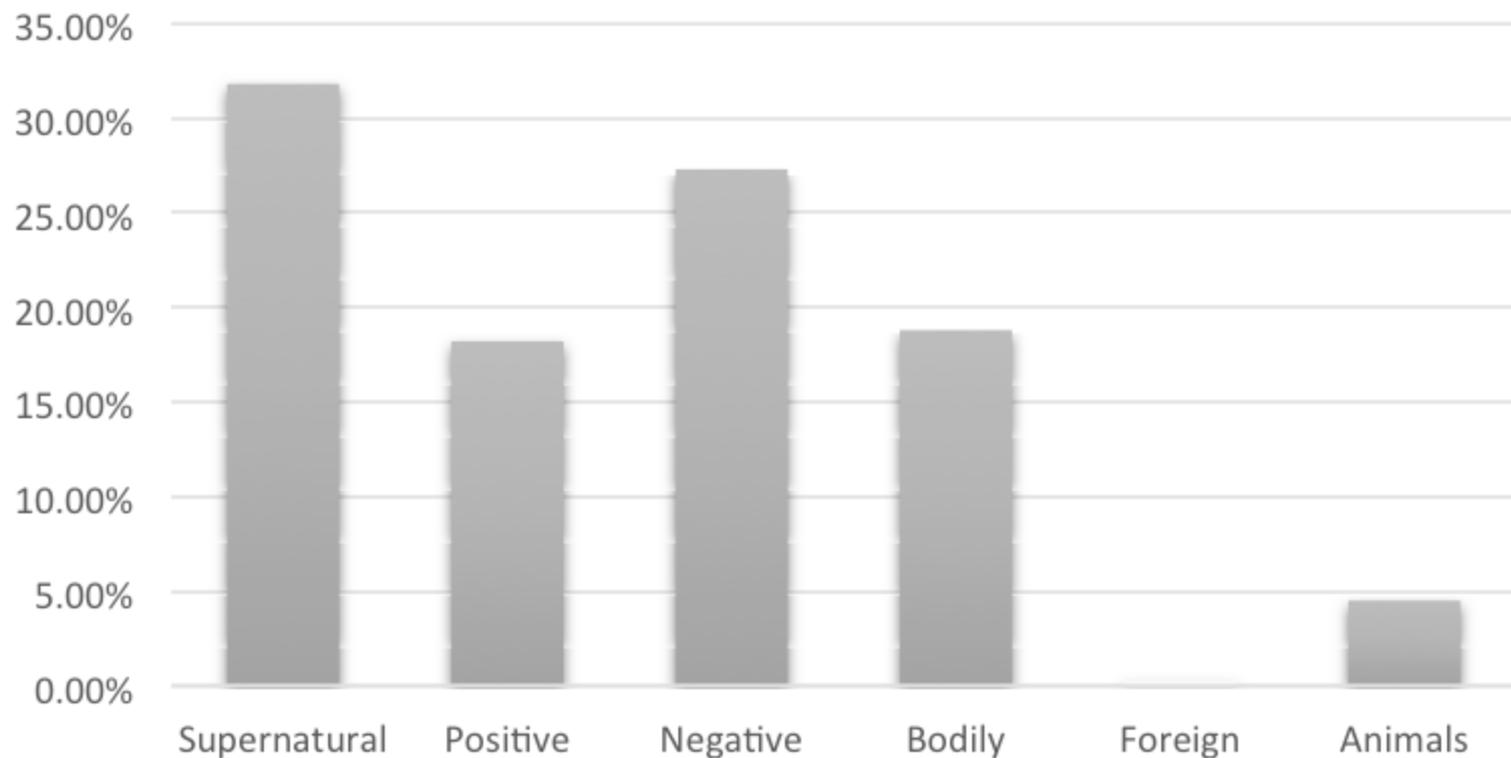
Descriptor Distribution



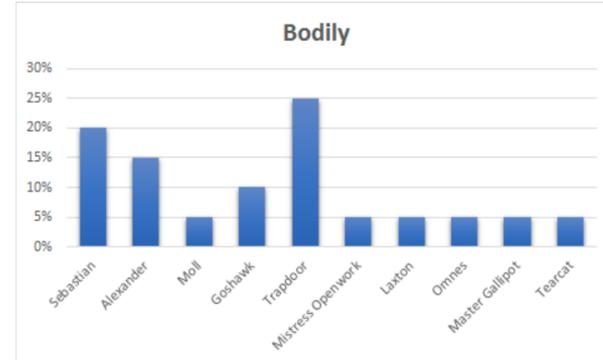
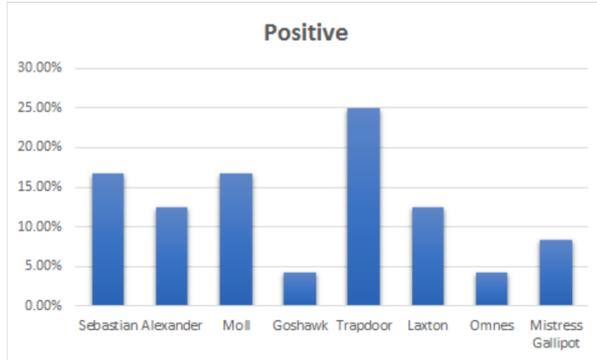
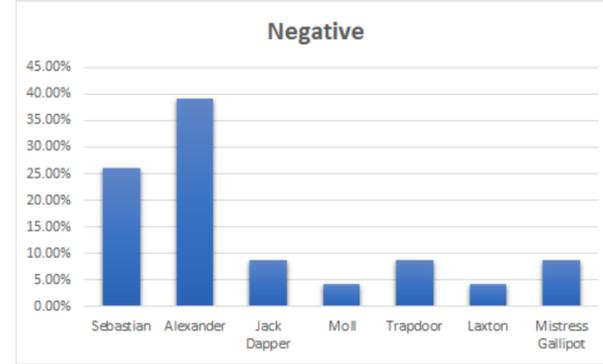
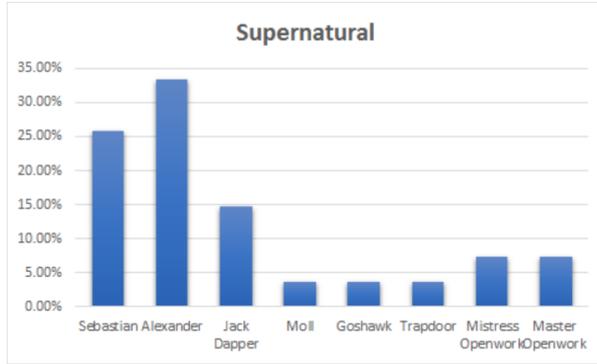
Alexander's Descriptions of Moll



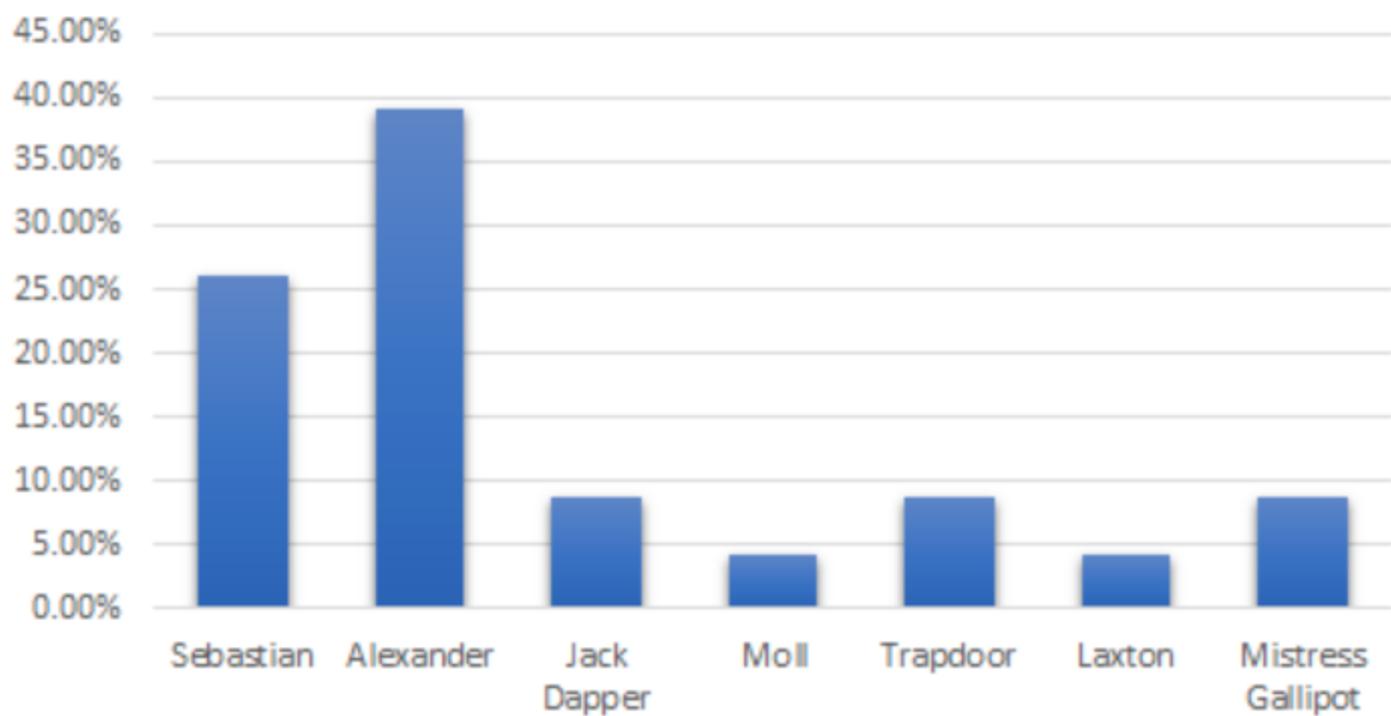
Sebastian's Descriptions of Moll



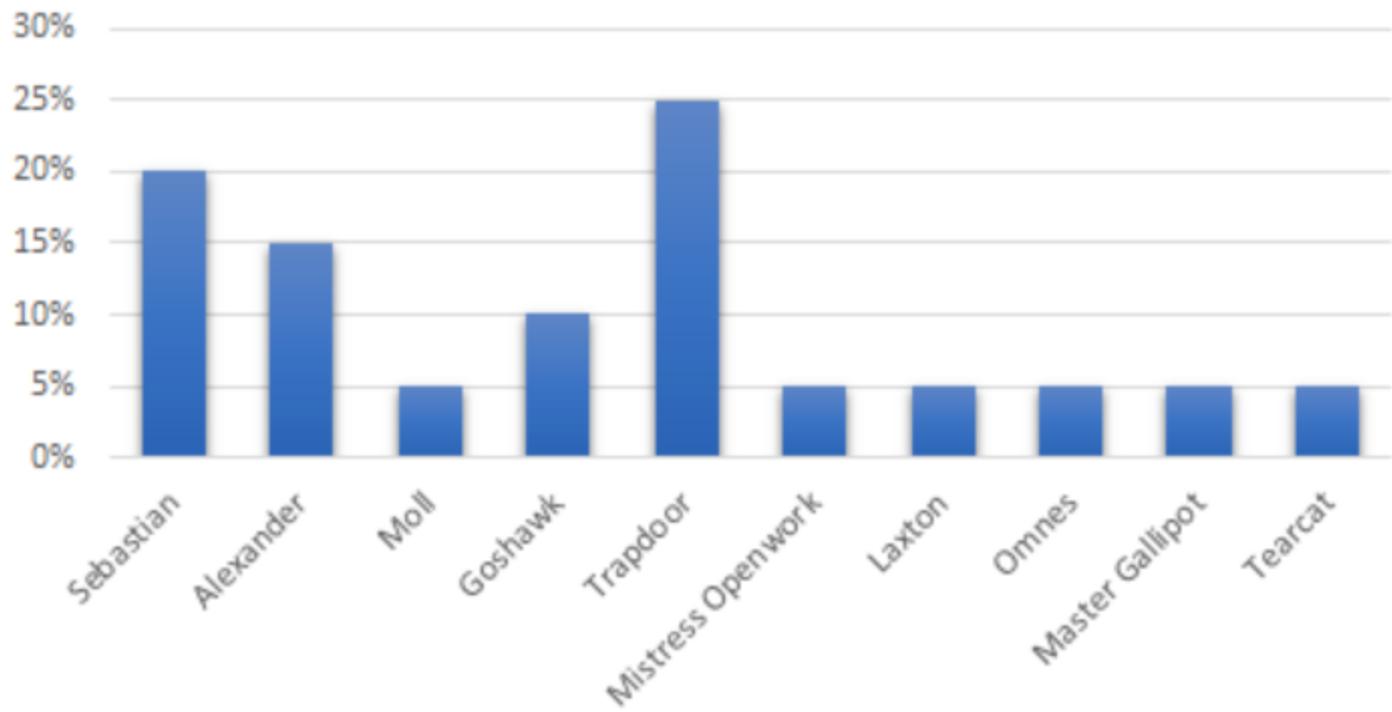
Categorical Distribution



Negative



Bodily



Data Interpretation

- We are able to categorize the terms used to describe Moll and her cross-dressing
- With these categories, we are able to discern whether or not various describing words were previously in use or were newly-created to encompass the cross-dressing
- We can learn where certain terms are used within the play, and if they are used in close proximity to other terms
- We can characterize the speech of certain characters based on the words they used to describe Moll

Future Research

- How can we compare Moll's language when she is dressed as a man versus as a woman? In other words, does Moll always speak the same way, or does her gender presentation affect her speech?
- How can we compare Moll to other female cross-dressers in early modern drama?
- Do other female cross-dressers experience these kinds of descriptors as well?
- Do visual representations of cross-dressing match these language descriptions?

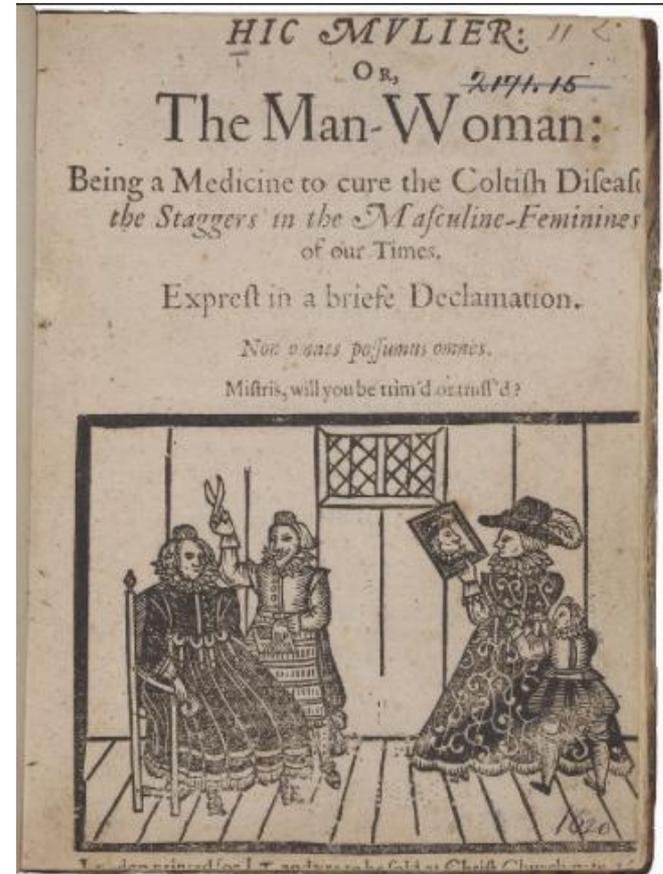


Photo courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library. Retrieved from LUNA.