

**The Medialogy Continuum:
From Reality Bleeds to the Performance of the Self**

Barbara Simerka

In *Medialogies: Reading Reality in the Age of Inflationary*, David Castillo and William Egginton (C&E) explore the early modern and contemporary ages of “inflationary media,” in which rapid advances in media technology give rise to a new perception of the relationship between representation, the self, and social reality as saturated and pre-framed for prescribed modes of consumption (11). They highlight “theatrical reality bleeds”—the moments within self-reflexive drama that stage a drastic blurring of the line between appearance and reality, scripted and spontaneous action, and performed and authentic selves. The point of such blurring, also found in postmodern media, is to undermine completely the possibility of a stable epistemological ground. C&E develop Debord’s model of the “culture of the spectacle” to depict the courtier manual genre as similarly disruptive. This essay will develop these two points in order to propose a “medialogy continuum” as a prominent feature of the early modern and current moments. I will expand on *Medialogies*’s study of reality bleeds in Lope de Vega, Cervantes, and Gracián, and link them to our age of streaming media. While theater, film, and other visual narrative forms excavate the grounds of reality from one direction as they transgress the fourth wall in new and ever more radical ways, courtier handbooks and their postmodern counterparts lay siege from the opposite pole as they expose the performativity of social behavior. The inflationary media of the printing press, the corral stage, and Netflix alert cannot but resign consumers to an epistemological abyss: “Reality is not what we believe in; it’s what we all agree to pretend to believe in” (*Medialogies* 28).

Medialogies explores Lope de Vega’s *Lo fingido verdadero*, (Acting is Believing) as an example of the early modern reality bleed. The play depicts the death of a Roman theater company lead actor and manager, whose impersonation of a Christian martyr leads him to actual conversion and then the

**A Polemical Companion to *Medialogies*:
Reading Reality in the Age of Inflationary Media
Hispanic Issues On Line Debates 8 (2017)**

saintly death he had previously enacted for the delight of pagan audiences and emperors. The authors cite Maravall's model of the "culture of the spectacle" to characterize this play as a hegemonic affirmation of the Christian value system. As I interpret their comments, this reading minimizes the significance of previous moments of *mise en abîme* in the play—such as when the martyr's love object and rival decided to enact the plot of the play they were appearing in and ran off together (in the frame labeled as the actors' "real lives"); or when Lope de Vega stages the imperial audience as it reacts when various members of Ginesius's company rupture the fourth wall. In this analysis, St. Ginesius's conversion is viewed as an unproblematic, authentic moment that obliterates the earlier moments of epistemological vertigo. However, Ginesius describes his martyrdom using the same unstable and self-reflexive terms as his prior theatrical triumphs. In contemplating the afterlife, he refers to saints and biblical heroes—and even the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ—as future members of his new company. His final speech devotes several stanzas to imagining the roles in which he will cast them (Act III, lines 3000-3050). Even his dying words refer to heaven, not as a uniquely sacred space in which he will experience an entirely new mode of being, but merely and far less reverentially as the sequel to the drama he is now concluding (Act III, line 3121). This conclusion juxtaposes the horrifying visual elements of dying for one's faith that are typical of hagiographic drama with a verbal emphasis on Ginesius's self-conception as a theater professional above all else (Simerka "Acting"). This scene seems to confirm previous indications that every moment of an actor's life is a performance, and that acting always bleeds into being.

The authors juxtapose Lope de Vega's play, in which actors incarnate their roles off stage, with the Cervantine *entremés* (interlude) *El retablo de las maravillas* (The Stage of Wonders). Here, *Medialogies* begins to move toward the opposite pole of the reality bleed, in which real life is exposed as equally performative. C&E describe this piece as staging "what we must pretend to see' as a community of believers" (31). They assert that Cervantes lays bare the nature of in-group membership as a very specific kind of performance: "For as long as we perform the foundational beliefs of the community, as long as we are willing to embody the community's belief in its own exceptionalism, then we are all safe as spectators of the theater of marvels and participants in the new medialogy" (32). In Cervantes's reworking of the Emperor's New Clothes motif (previously circulated in *El Conde Lucanor* and other collections of *exempla*), the play frames the spectators as they give a public performance of being able to see the tableaux, which do not in fact exist, in order to affirm a specific aspect of early modern Spanish identity: religious purity. C&E assert, "the Cervantine insight involves recognizing that, at some essential level, the codes that sustain our social identity are theatrical in nature" (31). This insight is ubiquitous in postmodern film.

Medialogies references the parallels between Lope de Vega's *Lo fingido verdadero* and other early modern self-reflexive plays with cutting edge films of the 2000s, including *Vanilla Sky/Abre los ojos*, *Inception*, and *The Matrix* in order to affirm that baroque Spain's media-saturated culture could and did address epistemological quandaries, using the medialogy paradigm to enhance existing studies of the intersection of aesthetics and epistemology in early and postmodern cultures. In *Don Quixote: An Anatomy of Subversive Discourse*, James Parr was among the first to signal the links between Cervantes and postmodernism; Brownlee and Gumbrecht's anthology *Cultural Authority in Golden Age Spain* expanded those insights to include Góngora, Lope de Vega, Zayas, Quevedo, and the picaresque. Bruce Burningham's *Tilting Cervantes* addresses the homologies between early modern Spanish texts and postmodern film; although he uses different terminology, his chapters on *Fight Club* and *Toy Story* are particularly effective studies of the reality bleed phenomenon. Over the past decade and a half, Christopher Weimer and I co-authored a series of essays pointing to homologies between Cervantine reality bleed tactics and films including Charlie Kaufman's *Being John Malkovich* and *Adaptation*, Woody Allen's *The Purple Rose of Cairo* and *Melinda and Melinda*, and Marc Foster's *Stranger than Fiction* (Simerka and Weimer "Postmodernism;" "Subversive;" "Early;" "Duplicitous"). The film industry of the first decade of the twenty-first century was able to monetize an epistemological crisis in ways that parallel the corral stage's entrepreneurial strategies.

More recently, the terrain has shifted to the smaller screen, and a new form of media saturations is emerging through ever-evolving technologies of transmission and innovative content from cable networks and internet-based streaming providers. In this new media landscape, reality bleeds abound. The FX cable network has produced two series that demystify the most epistemologically porous form of television: the reality show *UnREAL* depicts the behind-the-scenes manipulations necessary to produce seemingly authentic yet compelling narratives on a dating competition/elimination show. In each season, a woman who is newly promoted to the role of assistant producer discovers that she must incite rivalry, despondence, and even violence among the female contestants in order to have footage deemed worthy of broadcasting. The sixth season of *American Horror Story: Roanoke* placed its supernatural events within the conceit that the characters are real people taking part in a paranormal documentary about having purchased a haunted house. These programs present a form of reality bleed similar to the one that C&E address in Almodóvar's films, when "the border between forced role enactment and free role play dissipates" (30).

These framed reality programs can be seen as part of the bridge that connects stage acting and "public representation" as enacted in Shekhar Kapur's film *Elizabeth*, and explained in early modern courtier handbooks, such as Baltasar Gracián's *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia* (Pocket Oracle and Art

of Prudence). Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* decodes such handbooks as he illuminates the rise of "an increased self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process" (1). Although this connection has largely escaped detection, Greenblatt's work can be seen as an adaptation of Erving Goffman's *The Performance of the Self in Everyday Life*, applying insights about postwar England to early modernity (Burke 31; Simerka, *Knowing Subjects* chapter 4). Goffman notes that performance, which he also refers to as "impression management," becomes particularly complex—and particularly necessary—at times of social flux, when one system of "formal ratification" of status is giving way to another (60, 208). Goffman emphasizes that in order for a performance to have an impact, social participants must be reframed as spectators: "the individual typically infuses his activity with signs which dramatically highlight and portray confirmatory facts that might otherwise remain unapparent or obscure" (30). The difficulty inherent in eliciting the desired audience reaction, granting an aspiring courtier access to in-group status, is a frequent theme in Gracian's *Oráculo*.

Goffman points out that there is often a disconnect between the effort and skill needed for an actual activity and the performance of the same: for some roles, it is necessary to make clear the hidden difficulties in order to gain recognition; for others, it is necessary to conceal the struggle (32–33). In addition, because so many signs of status and self can be manipulated, audiences pay special attention to behaviors that appear spontaneous, beyond performance (Goffman 58). The concept of *sprezzatura* (studied carelessness), as featured in Castiglione's *Cortegiano* (The Book of the Courtier), can be placed in this category. Because seemingly effortless grace is so difficult to perform, it is most often interpreted as natural rather than manipulated and therefore as authentic. Gracián likewise highlights this form of impression management, the ability to present one's achievements as easy and natural, as a primary attribute for court success ("el realce de los mismos realces" [127] [the zenith of all pinnacles]).¹ He observes, "todo lo natural fue siempre más grato que lo artificial . . . quanto mejor se haze una cosa se ha de desmentir la industria, porque *se vea* que se cae de su natural la perfección" (123) (what is natural is always more pleasing than artifice . . . The greater the effort made, the more it should be concealed, so that perfection seems to arise naturally). Gracián repeatedly emphasizes that the appearance of effortless grace is key to social mobility. Later, he highlights the contradiction that performance is absolutely necessary for success and yet is deprecated as dishonesty: "No ser tenido por hombre de artificio. Aunque no se puede ya vivir sin él . . . El mayor artificio sea encubrirlo, que se tiene por engaño" (Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes) (Avoid being recognized as devious, even though deceit is indispensable nowadays . . . The greatest art consists in masking artfulness).² In the early modern age of self-fashioning, performance is inescapable, and

yet it is those who appear not to employ artifice that tend to achieve the most glory to those who appear not to employ artifice. Gracián makes clear that *sprezzatura*, the act of concealing the reality bleed as it is performed, is the apogee of social graces.

Sprezzatura is as important for political staging today as it was half a millennium ago. While observing the first two weeks of Trump's term, a question at the center of the *Medialogies* paradigm inevitably comes to mind: does this president believe his own performance and view himself as an authentic agent of productive chaos, or is he aware of portraying an extreme version of the authentic "political maverick" persona in order to win support from his base? Social media indicates that progressive voters see a hypocritical celebrity huckster who far outshines Chirinos and Chanfalla or Maese Pedro; it remains to be seen how this program will play out with his supporters. Will his show be dramatically cancelled even though voters initially approved of four seasons? And, if it lasts a full term, will it be renewed?

In his first two weeks, Trump has managed to rival the most outrageous fictitious political villainy. The Netflix series *House of Cards* (*HOC*), an adaptation of both a BBC series and a novel trilogy by Michael Dobbs, offers viewers an unflinching perspective of an aspiring politician who both enacts and lays bare every tactic of impression management as he scales the ladder of power (van Zoonen and Wring 267). In the opening scene of the first episode, the antihero, Congressman Frank Underwood, is shown mingling with fellow politicians at a political celebration. He performs modesty while they portray ingratiation because he is about to be named Secretary of State by the newly elected President. Just a few moments into that first episode, a reality bleed erupts as Underwood speaks directly into the camera about his new boss and the nature of American politics:

Do I believe in him? That's beside the point. Any politician that gets 70 million votes has tapped into something larger than himself. Larger than even me, as much as I hate to admit it. And look at that winning smile, those trusting eyes. I latched onto him early on and made myself vital. After twenty-two years in congress, I can smell which way the wind is blowing. . . . My job is to clear the pipes and keep the sludge moving. But I won't have to be a plumber much longer. I've done my time. I backed the right man. Welcome to Washington. ("Chapter 1")

However, President Walker immediately notifies Underwood that he needs him in the House of Representatives to continue moving the sludge. This sets off a chain of conspiracies and plots, as Underwood schemes to ascend first to the

Vice Presidency and then the Oval Office. He takes great pains to maintain the persona of a man of complete loyalty and an utter lack of guile, so that his success appears accidental. Every episode of the first few seasons juxtaposes his performances of humble servility to the party cause with extended scenes of well-planned and even better-concealed chicanery. Most important, the program continues to provide brief scenes in which he speaks directly to his audience of binge viewers, providing a gloatingly irreverent demystification of his *sprezzatura* and impression management tactics. These scenes are much more blatant than the early modern manuals in their incitement of spectator admiration for and complicity with Machiavellian political showmanship; nonetheless, *HOC* helps us to recognize this dimension of reader response to the earlier texts. These media force us to acknowledge that early and postmodern consumers alike derive considerable pleasure from peeking behind the curtain to get a glimpse of how power is performed by the masters of impression management.

Another compelling contemporary analogue to the Lopean and Cervantine dramas and to Gracián's manual is the Netflix series *Orange Is the New Black* (*OITNB*). The initial episodes focus on Piper Chapman, based on Piper Kerman, a middle-class woman whose memoir of a year in prison inspired the show, though she insists that the character as portrayed in later seasons is purely fictional. Chapman's status is an anamorphic mirror to Don Quixote (Castillo 80–84). She functions initially as a real person who inscribes her life in the quasi-true genre of the memoir (undoubtedly aided by a publishing house "historiador"), who is then converted into a character in a visual narrative that incorporates many elements of the quasi-real documentary genre, at the same time that she is performing a public identity as a reformed criminal and judicial reform activist.

Each season of *OITNB* offer numerous episodes in which characters, both inmates and prison executives, perform a variety of roles and scams; the employees are shown to be hardly less criminal than those they incarcerate. In the most recent seasons, a hapless executive, whose sincere desire for just conditions conflicts with his lust for power, finds himself compromising with the privatization system that offers higher compensation in exchange for profitability. He creates a genuine higher education program in order to receive government funding. However, he acquiesces and accepts kudos from above when his program ends up being used in a more profitable way. He agrees to offer very different classes under the guise of vocational education, in order to get prisoners to perform manual labor for free that had previously been compensated. Like Gracián's and the picaresque novel's scrutiny of ostentatious public virtue masking feral competition within early modern social hierarchies, *OITNB* lays bare the entire penitentiary industrial system as a sham performance of justice and reformation.

One episode of *OITNB* that foregrounds the reality bleed even signals this

motif in its title, “Fake It ‘Til You Fake It Some More” (Season 3 Episode 5). It opens with brief flashbacks concerning the backstory of Marisol (Flaca), one of the peripheral inmates. She has been known mainly for her dramatic eye make-up, which marks her as a member of the Emo subculture (a descendant of 1990s Goth culture). The first memory depicts her mother as a *picara* (rogue) who sews copies of designer dresses and then adds labels obtained from used clothing stores. In the next sequence, Marisol takes the art of the scam to a whole new level, using clip art to create and sell fake blotter acid (a form of LSD). She perpetrates this fraud both to earn money and also to increase her popularity at school. Her plan is wildly successful; her peers welcome her into the Emo circle and affirm the high quality of her product. Like the characters in the *Retablo*, they pretend to have the expected experience, in this case psychedelic trips, which they describe in the most clichéd of terms:

- Willy said he saw green alien guys when he was tripping on your shit.
- They were leprechauns.
- Dude, aliens sounds so much cooler.
- But they had little hats.
- Aliens can’t have little hats because of their antennas or whatever.
- Do you think you could hook us up again? My boy Jason here wants to try it.

Marisol’s swindle enables her both to penetrate the Emo clique, which had formerly marginalized her, and to purchase the consumer goods that allow her to more effectively perform membership within this prestigious social category. She reveals the Emperor’s New Clothes stratagem to a trusted friend:

- Oh, my God. It’s totally working. People will believe what you tell ‘em.
- Until they don’t. Someone’s gonna come back pissed and ask for a refund, or punch you in the face or something.
- If they come back, I say, “Hold up. What happened when you took it?” And if they say, “Nothing,” I say, “What is nothing? Because some people say there was nothing when the universe was created, but, like isn’t empty space still something? Open your mind to the possibilities. Maybe you’re not doin’ it right. (Season 3, Episode 5)

Although Marisol is very clear about the fact that her cohorts are performing hallucinations for one another, she does not see her own activity as acting,

declaring, “I need to dress for my authentic self.” Her fake drug product aligns her with Cervantine (and picaresque) con artists, but her belief in the reality of the socially prescribed role she performs also ties her to the spectators. Marisol thus occupies both poles of the medialogy continuum.

The school authorities eventually discover Marisol’s scheme when one classmate enacts the most infamous LSD trip of the 1960s: like the daughter of an American TV show host, he pretends to hallucinate that he can fly and jumps from the school roof. Here, *OITNB* pushes the envelope concerning the perils of performance to a level far exceeding the *Cervantine* drama and approaching Lope de Vega’s martyr play. Two teens who value social acceptance above all else experience the tragic consequences of their performances: one boy dies and Marisol is sentenced to half a decade in prison. There, her identity performance opportunities are reduced to wearing make-up that none of her new peers validate and donning her kitchen aide apron “ironically.”

Throughout *Medialogies*, C&E allude to the connections between various manifestations of early and postmodern identity performance and Trump’s political spectacle. As I tap away at my laptop in February of 2017, it has proven almost impossible to conclude this essay, as each day reveals new fissures in the decaying bridge between mainstream and alt right epistemologies. We confront a Medialogy 2.1 that lays siege to both poles of the reality bleed continuum and challenges us to form new insights and tactics before we have adequately addressed the quandaries of the postmodern 2.0 operating system.

Not long before the election, Silicon Valley magnate Peter Thiel excavated the discrepancies between how mainstream media evaluated Trump’s veracity as compared to his supporters. Thiel chided the media for its misguided efforts to pin down definitive positions on key political issues, explaining that voters understood the difference between taking the candidates’ words literally versus seriously. Being elected to the highest office did not stabilize this casual approach to normative epistemology. New lies continue to pour forth from the Twitter account of @realDonaldTrump. The presidential spokespeople have defended those untruths with the notoriously Orwellian phrase “alternative truth” and have refuted the need for evidence if a statement reflects a “long held belief.” Even the Twitter handle is itself specious, because there is no “real” Trump; every tweet is a speech act devoted to maintaining the media persona he has constructed. However, as C&E point out in their final chapter, “what is certainly not enough is to double down on truth, as if the ills of today’s medialogy were an effect of relativism” (215). The critical framework of *Medialogies*, with its careful tracing of reality bleeds and saturation, gives us valuable tools for cultural analysis, mirroring the accomplishment pointed to in Cervantes’s own works “to depict himself, his contemporaries, us, in the act of being formed by that medialogy” (215). In their conclusion, C&E propose a new level of “reality literacy” that would allow us to escape the closed

loop of medialogies (225). The challenge that now lies before us is: how can we frame our knowledges about Cervantes and early modern Spanish culture in a way that will foster such a literacy in our current moment?

Medialogies itself alludes to, but does not develop in depth, connections between iconic Golden Age texts and recent film and other popular media that enable reality literacy. In particular, the importance of humor and satire in early modern and contemporary media demystification merits additional consideration. The brief study of Steven Colbert's books and his former television program *The Colbert Report* is highly suggestive, pointing out the power of "constant mockery" as a corrective to the "'I can make my own reality' attitude that has become pervasive among conservative media pundits, from Rush Limbaugh and Glenn Beck to Sean Hannity and Bill O'Reilly" (14, 60–63). Now that Jon Stewart and Steven Colbert have left Comedy Central, new voices of political satire are emerging. It is true that such mockery did not succeed in derailing conservative media giants, nor in preventing the electoral success of a candidate who appropriated and improved upon their tactics.

However, since the Republican convention, and especially since the inauguration, political humor is emerging as a powerful weapon. Twitter rants posted in the wee hours reveal that this administration recognizes and fears the power of ridicule. In particular, John Oliver and Saturday Night Live (SNL) have struck a nerve. SNL has achieved new relevance through sketches that feature a celebrity comedian lampooning the president as weak and ignorant, and by casting female comedians in drag to portray key (male) advisors. In its first episode of 2017, *Last Week Tonight* with John Oliver offered a segment entitled "Trump vs. Truth." Oliver targeted the closed loop of conservative media that Trump and his supporters consume, in which unsubstantiated stories are supported by references to other equally non-vetted sources. In order to escape this echo chamber, Oliver proposes a series of hilarious commercials to be shown during morning news shows. Oliver uses a laconic cowboy character (featured in current advertisements for catheters) to educate Trump about basic governance issues. Like the SNL episode in which Trump asks Siri to explain ISIS to him, these faux commercials have the potential to stimulate reality literacy because the viewer receives factual information and insights about the workings of media, but is constructed as part of the in-crowd. They are invited to identify with the cowboy and thus disdain Trump for lacking the most elemental knowledge. Confirming the power of these voices as a form of political journalism, traditional media sources such as *The New York Times* have begun to post clips from comedy shows on their websites. In order to circulate the insights and methodologies in *Medialogies* to a wider audience, comparative studies of literary satire and contemporary television humor could provide a valid (and entertaining) vehicle for a new level of pan-historic reality literacy.

Notes

1. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.
2. Full citation appears as follows: *No ser tenido por hombre de artificio*. Aunque no se puede ya vivir sin él. Antes prudente que astuto. Es agradable a todos la lisura en el trato, pero no a todos por su casa. La sinceridad no dé en el extremo de simplicidad, ni la sagacidad, de astucia. Sea antes venerado por sabio que temido por reflexo. Los sinceros son amados, pero engañados. El mayor artificio sea encubrirlo, que se tiene por engaño. Floreció en el siglo de oro la llaneza, en este de yerro la malicia. El crédito de hombre que sabe lo que ha de hazer es honroso y causa confianza, pero el de artificioso es sofisticado y engendra rezelo” (Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes) (Avoid being recognized as devious, even though deceit is indispensable nowadays. Be considered rather prudent than astute. Sincerity in behavior pleases all, though not all can show it in their own affairs. Sincerity should not degenerate into simplicity nor sagacity into cunning. Be rather respected as wise than feared as sly. The open-hearted are loved but deceived. The great art consists in disclosing what is thought to be deceit. In the golden age simplicity flourished, in these days of iron cunning. The greatest art consists in masking artfulness).

Works Cited

- Brownlee, Marina S., and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht. *Cultural Authority in Golden Age Spain*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995. Print.
- Burke, Peter. *The Fortunes of the Courtier: The European Reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996. Print.
- Burningham, Bruce R. *Tilting Cervantes: Baroque Reflections on Postmodern Culture*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2008. Print.
- Castiglione, Baldassarre. *The Book of the Courtier*. New York: AMS Press, 1967. Print.
- Castillo, David. *(A)Wry Views: Anamorphosis, Cervantes and the Early Picaresque*. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2001. Print.
- Castillo, David R., and William Egginton. *Medialogies: Reading Reality in the Age of Inflationary Media*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2017. Print.
- Debord, Guy. *The Society of Spectacle*. Kalamazoo: Red & Black, 2000. Print.
- Gracián, Baltazar. *Oraculo manual y arte de prudencia*. Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes. <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/>. Web.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980. Print.
- House of Cards*. Season One. A Netflix Original Series. Created by Beau Willimon. 2013.

Film.

- Oliver, John. "Trump vs. Truth." *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*. Episode 90. HBO. 2017. Film.
- "Fake It 'Til You Fake It Some More." *Orange Is the New Black*. Season Three. A Netflix Original Series. Created by Jenji Kohan. 2016. Film.
- Parr, James A. *Don Quixote: An Anatomy of Subversive Discourse*. Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 1988. Print.
- Saturday Night Live*. Season 42. Created by Lorne Michaels. NBC. 2016–2017. Film.
- Simerka, Barbara. "Acting and Believing: Cognition, Quarantine and Performance in *Lo fingido verdadero*." *Making Sense of the Senses in Comedia Studies (Essays in honor of Charles Ganelin)*. Eds. Bonnie Gasior and Yolanda Gamboa. Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, forthcoming 2017.
- _____. *Knowing Subjects: Cognitive Cultural Studies and Early Modern Spanish Literature*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue Studies in Romance Literatures. 2013. Print.
- _____. "Postmodern Subjectivity in *Don Quijote* and *Stranger than Fiction*." *Anuario de estudios cervantinos* 4 (2008): 281–97.
- _____. "Subversive Paratexts: *Don Quijote*, *Lost in La Mancha* (2003), and *Looking for Richard* (1996)." In *Critical Reflections: Essays on Golden Age Spanish Literature*. Eds. Barbara Simerka and Amy Williamsen. Bucknell UP, 2006. 67–83. Print.
- _____. "Early and Postmodern Self-Fashioning: *Don Quijote* and *Being John Malkovich*." *Anuario de estudios cervantinos* 2 (2005): 45–54. Print.
- _____. "Postmodern Narrative in *Abre los ojos* and *Vanilla Sky*." *American Drama* 14 (Summer 2005): 1–15. Print.
- _____. "Duplicitous Diegesis: *Don Quijote* and Charlie Kaufman's *Adaptation*." *Hispania* 88.1 (Spring 2005): 91–100. Print.
- Simerka, Barbara, and Christopher Weimer. "Postmodernism in *Don Quijote* and Contemporary Film." *Approaches to Teaching Don Quijote*. Eds. Lisa Vollendorf and James Parr. New York: Modern Language Association, 2014. 338–348. Print.
- Van Zoonen, Liesbet, and Dominic Wring. "Trends In Political Television Fiction In The UK: Themes, Characters And Narratives, 1965–2009." *Media, Culture and Society* 34 (2012): 263–279. Print.

Simerka, Barbara. "The Medialogy Continuum: From Reality Bleeds to the Performance of the Self." *A Polemical Companion to Medialogies: Reading Reality in the Age of Inflationary Media*. Eds. Bradley J. Nelson and Julio Baena. *Hispanic Issues On Line Debates* 8 (2017): 63–73. Web.
