

**Postgraduate Student Conference 2014, Literature & Culture Colloquium
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“The Arch-Specter: Sovereignty, Logos, and Capital in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*.”

In *Specters of Marx*, Jacques Derrida contends that “the arch-specter is a father or else it is capital” (173). Turning to one of William Shakespeare’s most cryptic plays, *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, this paper reads Julius Caesar as the father of capital; that is, as a paradoxical embodiment of logos and capital. Julius Caesar appears simultaneously to be an absolute ruler—one that consolidates his sovereignty through various means, such as the control of labor production and the appropriation and mastery of performative language—as well as a self-made man, embodying the promise of capital and wealth for all males. Caesar’s sovereign attributes as logos, as the father of capital, and as an instigator of commodification, come together after his death, in a piece of paper: namely, his will. It is then that the death of Caesar appears to animate the inanimate body of money.