It has been a truism for a very long time among critics of early modern English historical drama that the “history play” as a genre “died” at some point in the first decade of the 17th century. This talk will interrogate the critical notion about the genre’s death through the cluster of "Henry VIII" plays that emerged between 1600-1613, and suggest that the history play may have "survived" in a mutated form resembling the one typical of the Lord Admiral’s Men's authorial syndicate of the late 1590s.

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Image: Unknown artist, “Portrait of King Henry VIII” oil on panel, perhaps early 17th century, based on a work of circa 1542 (Montacute House)