

SAA 2016 seminar, “Reprints and Revivals”

SEMINAR LEADERS

Eoin Price (Swansea University):

eoin.price@swansea.ac.uk

Harry Newman (Royal Holloway, University of London): harry.newman@rhul.ac.uk

SUMMARY

Early modern drama studies tends to privilege first performances and publications, but reprints and revivals are essential to how we understand plays by Shakespeare and other dramatists as theatre historians and literary critics. Reprints and revivals might include new material, sometimes by new authors, which can vastly alter the way a play works, such as the painter scene in *The Spanish Tragedy*. The cultural climate of reprints and revivals might affect the way in which a play was received and understood. What might it have meant, for example, to see a performance of Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* in the 1620s, Marston’s *The Malcontent* in the 1630s, or even to read the 1655 edition of Beaumont and Fletcher’s *A King and No King* during the Interregnum? Revivals might involve a change of playhouse, theatre company, and repertory, and reprints a change of printing-house, publisher and printer, all of which were targeting new audiences and new readers. When Beaumont’s *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* was first performed at Blackfriars by the Children of the Queen’s Revels, it was reputed to be a failure. In the 1613 first quarto the publisher, Walter Burre, famously quipped that the audience failed to grasp its ‘priuy marke of Ironie’. However, when the play was next printed in 1635 by a different publisher, it bore the mark of an ostensibly successful revival by Queen Henrietta’s Men at the Phoenix on Drury Lane. What had changed?

This seminar will explore the ways in which playwrights, acting companies and stationers renewed plays in early modern England, inviting papers on reprints, revivals and/or the relationship between them. The seminar will address a variety of questions. How do printed paratexts (e.g. commendatory verses, prefatory epistles, dedications) and theatrical paratexts (e.g. inductions, prologues, epilogues) represent and conceptualise new publications and new performances? How do we know when a play is revived? Do reprints and revivals of certain plays coincide, and if so, how is this significant? How do revivals complicate our understanding of repertory? How is the relationship between first and later performances/publications influenced by cultural and social shifts?

TITLES AND ABSTRACTS

Politics of publication

Eric Griffin (Millsaps College), “Reprinting *The Spanish Tragedy* in 1623”

With good reason, 1623 is remembered by Shakespeareans as the Folio year. But also notable in 1623 were printings of Webster’s *Duchess of Malfi* and Kyd’s *Spanish Tragedy*, stage classics linked by their representation of Spanishness. Placed alongside such recent plays as *The Changeling*, *The Spanish Curate*, *Match Mee in London*, *The Maid in the Mill*, *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*, James Mabbe’s picaresque translation, *The Rogue*, and perhaps the 1622 quarto of *Othello*, these publications attest to the Hispanophilic and Hispanophobic orientations of late-Stuart England at the moment James I was vigorously pursuing his long sought Spanish Match.

Moving outward from *The Spanish Tragedy* into the tangled web of Jacobean dynastic maneuvering and opposition drama, this essay will consider how the significance

of Kyd's seminal revenge tragedy, a near-constant presence on the English Renaissance stage, might have changed down the years since its 1587-92 performance and printing. If the earliest *Spanish Tragedy* lacked the Hispanophobic coding characteristic of contemporary continental propaganda, by 1623 it appears to have accrued layers of anti-Spanish association. Does this phenomenon, coupled with the demonstrably Spanish cast of English theatrical culture of the early 1620s, tell us something important about the relationship between the developing dramatic canon and English national identity? Does it suggest questions about the relationships between the First Folio and this troubled historical moment that ought to be probed?

Anthony Brano (Georgian Court University), “Anti-Dutch Rhetoric and its Influence on the 1673/4 Printings of *Macbeth*”

This essay is concerned with the Restoration adaptations of *Macbeth* and the confluence of factors that led to their printings in 1673/4. Throughout the Caroline era and Interregnum, printed pamphlets and plays propagandized anti-Dutch rhetoric in an attempt to garner public approval for war. William Davenant, ever the shrewd businessman, saw an opportunity to revive theatre as an instructive instrument of propaganda and violent xenophobia, and in letters to the Protectorate in the 1650s, he outlined how depictions of England's enemies could instruct its citizenry. In the Restoration, Davenant's tactics would prove prescient as the printings of *Macbeth* coincided with those of other authors and playwrights who played on the fears of the English citizenry to increase readership and viewership. In a play that depicts the Civil Wars of Medieval Scotland, Restoration theatre repurposed the bitter hatred of a modern-day rival. The Third Anglo-Dutch War, which began in March 1672 and ended in February 1674, created a readership as well as a viewership for propaganda plays, and, as I shall explain, *Macbeth* fit right in. The concentration of anti-Dutch plays increases during these years, and the rhetoric casts Dutch people as violent, untrustworthy, and gluttonous. At the end of this essay, I will explore one passage in the 1674 *Macbeth* that points clearly to English xenophobia and hatred of the Netherlands.

Justin Kuhn (Ohio State University), “‘My peculiar end’: *Othello*, Private Interest, and Venetian Republicanism in Cromwellian England”

This essay considers the politics of Shakespearean reprints during the Interregnum, with particular attention to the 1655 edition of *Othello*. Scholars interested in Shakespeare's treatment of high politics have begun to highlight with increasing frequency the play's representation of Venice, which served as an exemplar of republicanism and political stability in early modern England. Less remarked upon in these studies, however, is the extent to which the play explores the tension between private self-interest and public virtue, an opposition that figures prominently in contemporary accounts of the republic's much-vaunted stability. I argue that Iago in particular embodies private self-interest, and what makes his villainy so damaging to the Venetian republic, and so unique among Shakespeare's antagonists, is that he convinces his victims to follow their own private interest at the expense of the common good, imperiling the political institutions and social order of the commonwealth. *Othello*'s depiction of what threatens the stability of a republic, moreover, emerges with greatest clarity during England's own brief experiment with republican governance in the 1650s, when the play was reprinted amidst concerns over the division and factionalism that would result from private interest. By proposing that *Othello* uniquely resonates with the political challenges of the 1650s, this paper more generally puts pressure on a longstanding critical narrative that Renaissance drama in Cromwellian England was understood to uphold the royalist politics of the deceased king's supporters.

The 1655 reprint of *Othello* suggests that printed drama in this period in fact offered a complex engagement with the fraught political circumstances of its time.

Texts and markets

Emma Depledge (University of Fribourg, Switzerland), “Restoration Quarto Reprints of *Hamlet*”

This paper will explore the relationship between Restoration quarto editions and contemporary theatre revivals of Shakespeare’s plays in the hope of gaining a more accurate view of his popularity in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. In particular, I will focus on the two quarto editions of *Hamlet* that bear the date 1676. The text has clearly been reset between the editions; one is not a mere reprint of the other. Both claim to have been ‘printed by Andr. Clark, for J. Martyn, and H. Herringman’, but one edition has a four-line imprint (S2950) and the other a five-line (S2951). These editions also contain the infamous note claiming that lines left out in performance are indicated ‘with this Mark “ (A2^r). Thus far, the existence of two ‘1676’ *Hamlets* has (understandably) caused some scholars to believe that Shakespeare’s play was relatively popular at the time, with two editions within twelve months suggesting that the first edition sold out. I am sceptical about this theory and, like W. W. Greg (and other scholars), believe that one of the ‘1676’ *Hamlet* quartos, like a number of other Restoration playbooks, was published later and furnished with a false date. I intend to use paper analysis, performance records, manuscript cast lists and prop bills to try to test Greg’s suspicions and (re)date the later of the two ‘1676’ *Hamlets* while addressing why stationers may have chosen to furnish playbooks with false dates.

Joshua McEvilla (Independent Scholar), “John Cragge’s *The Wits Interpreter*”

My paper for this session examines, re-evaluates, and re-assigns the authorship of one of the earliest and most celebrated seventeenth-century collections of English drolleries, *The Wits Interpreter*, *The English Parnassus*, by I. C., published by Nathaniel Brookes in 1655. Commonly thought to have been prepared by the noted journalist, translator, and professional writer John Cotgrave, *The Wits Interpreter*, as demonstrated here, was in fact prepared by a little-known Welsh minister, rector, and schoolmaster, John Cragge. Cragge’s hitherto-concealed hand in the volume exposes an important division of roles for the dramatic quotation books of 1655, for Cotgrave is the noted compiler of another drama-focused volume, *The English Treasury of Wit and Language*, published by Humphrey Moseley. Simultaneously, the focus on Cragge points to the diversity of backgrounds of men and women involved in the commonplacing of Shakespearian drama. As a distinguished man of the Church, Cragge can be viewed historically as a predecessor to the more celebrated religious commonplacers of the Restoration, men like William Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, who endorsed manuscript copying of drama for didactic and soul-enriching purposes.

Alan B. Farmer (Ohio State University), “Big Books: Reprints, Revivals, and the Shakespeare First Folio”

My paper comes out of a seeming contradiction. Big books of one hundred or more edition-sheets make up a small proportion of the early modern English book trade, composing a little over 3% of the speculative editions published from 1570 to 1640. Big books, however, were reprinted at a higher rate than books in general (34% vs. 20%), high enough that one might plausibly argue, as some scholars have, that early modern stationers ought to have invested in large volumes more often than the relatively short editions they overwhelmingly

chose to print. From this point of view, stationers should have brought more collections like the Jonson and Shakespeare folios rather than the hundreds and hundreds of quartos that they in fact published. In my essay, I plan to examine the market for big books in early modern England in order to begin to make sense of this apparent contradiction. What kinds of texts were typically printed in large volumes? Which stationers, and what kinds of stationers, had the resources to publish big books? How often were book books mainly collections of previously published material? In considering these questions, I ultimately hope to develop a better sense of the economic considerations behind the Jonson and Shakespeare folios, of the reprinting of plays in dramatic collections, and, more generally, of the reprinting of different types of books in the early modern English book trade.

Nostalgic revival

Marissa Nicosia (Pennsylvania State University, Abington College), “Printing as Revival: Making Playbooks in the 1650s”

Since D.F. McKenzie’s seminal analysis of the book trade in the 1640s, we have generally agreed that the print market in this decade was characterized by the proliferation of political newsbooks and pamphlets on the one hand, and the publication of significant collections of literature, like Milton’s poems and the Beaumont and Fletcher folio, on the other. Given this thriving political and literary scene, what are we to make of the strange turn in the 1650s to greater press censorship? Moreover, how does this turn change our assessment of the plays that were published while the theaters were closed and printing presses were also far more restricted than they had been previously? Despite the fact that many scholars have followed McKenzie’s lead to study the 1640s, while others have produced ample studies of the Restoration book market, we still know very little about the workings of the book trade in the 1650s. To attempt to answer these questions, in this paper I will analyze the output of Andrew Pennyucicke, the publisher of Robert Davenport’s William Hemings’s *The Fatal Contract: A French Tragedy* (1654), *King John and Matilda* (1655), John Ford and Thomas Dekker’s *The Sun’s-Darling: A Moral Masque* (1656), and Philip Massinger’s *City Madam* (1658), among other titles. According to the preliminaries of his playbooks, Pennyucicke was a boy actor who specialized in women’s roles for Queen Henrietta Maria’s company. After the theaters closed, he became a stationer. The imprint on his edition of Massinger’s *City Madam* includes these telling details: “Printed for Andrew Pennyucicke, one of the Actors, in the year 1658.” By examining these texts, I will show that for Pennyucicke the act of reprinting or preparing the first edition of plays from the Queen’s company was an act of revival in the absence of a public stage.

Heidi Craig (University of Toronto), “‘Playing the Old Play’: *A King and No King* and *The Scornful Lady*, 1647-1655”

My paper examines the rhetoric surrounding two illegal performances of Beaumont and Fletcher plays (*The Scornful Lady* and *A King and No King*) in 1647, as well as the plays’ presentation in 1650s reprints. The illicit revival of Beaumont and Fletcher in 1647 is often interpreted as a demonstration of royalist solidarity. Examining royalist and parliamentary newsbooks that refer to both to ongoing performances and the plays’ earlier iterations on the Caroline stage, I argue that the plays’ royalist symbolism was not linked to the plays’ *contents*, as one might expect, but rather to their Caroline *stage history*. Frequently revived and reprinted in the Caroline period, these “old plays” (to borrow a contemporary characterization of *A King and No King*) were potent symbols of pre-war culture, irrespective of their content. When *The Scornful Lady* and *A King and No King* were respectively reprinted in 1651 (Q6) and 1655 (Q5), the editions’ title page attributions refer

not to recent illegal performances, but rather to Caroline revivals by “his Majesties Servants” at Blackfriars. *The Scornful Lady*’s title page attribution deserves particular attention: the play is said to be “As it was Acted by the late Kings Majesties Servants” the grammatical fuzziness of “late” allowing it to apply to the executed Charles I as well as the disbanded King’s Servants. By invoking both Caroline performance and the regicide, *Scornful* flags up the disparity between Caroline past and the post-ban, post-regicide present: then there was king and theatre, now there is neither. In both 1647 revivals and 1650s reprints, Jacobean dramatists are transformed into objects of Caroline nostalgia.

Catherine Clifford (University of Texas at Arlington), “A Decade of Dramatic Revivals at the Caroline Court”

The induction of the Cockpit-in-Court at Whitehall Palace in 1630 seems to have ushered in a period of dramatic revivals at court. Whether or not we can trace a correlation between the new playing venue’s construction and an epoch for newly-revived Jacobean plays in the dozen or so years immediately preceding the closing of the theatres, a remarkable pattern of revival occurred at the Caroline court. A simple cross-reference shows curious similarities between plays performed during the years 1612 through the spring of 1614, and the 1630s, in particular the autumn of 1636 through January of 1639, when records of play titles begin proving more sparse than the previous decade (in spite of extant warrants for at least 24 unnamed plays from the King’s and Prince’s Men in 1639/40, and another sixteen unnamed plays in 1640/1). During these active years of spectatorship, Charles I saw revivals of a number of plays that he also watched as a child in 1612 and 1613 with one or both of his siblings and his sister’s fiancé, the Elector Palatine. This paper seeks to investigate the extrinsic connections between these two playing periods, focusing primarily on Charles I’s location at their centers. Rather than imposing a reductive biographical reading on the monarch and what appears at the outset to resemble a kind of nostalgia for his early formative years, I hope to show that the revivals of these plays in the 1630s represent, in part, a pattern of monarchical performativity related specifically to Charles I’s period of Personal Rule.

Writing and rewriting

Laurie Johnson (University of Southern Queensland), Jonson’s Two Prologues and Shakespeare’s Mended Epilogue: Censorship and Revival

Ben Jonson’s *Epicæne, or The silent woman* (1609) contains two prologues, each of which as Richard Dutton suggests in his introduction to the Revels Plays edition promotes a different idea of what the play sets out to achieve—the first prologue indicates that the play sets out to “content the people,” whereas the second shifts the focus to the play’s capacity to “profit and delight.” Dutton points out that the play is well-suited to both modes of engagement, making the two prologues an appropriate establishing device for the “double-sightedness” that runs throughout the play, wherein the wits win all of the set-piece battles but their victories are not as clear-cut when measured against the wider wars depicted between classes, sexes, and so on in the play. Yet this paper will explore the prospect that the second prologue to *Epicæne* was added in response to the threat of censorship. No stranger to the ire of the censor by the time Jonson fashioned his city comedy, the playwright may have nevertheless been puzzled by the objections Lady Arbella Stuart raised to a perceived allusion to the scandal in which she had been recently embroiled. The second prologue could represent Jonson’s response, advising its audience that any “crimes” they perceive in the play make “a libel” of the audience, not of the playwright. If, as Dutton suggests, the two prologues represent a unified frame for the play, it is worth asking if the

addition of the second prologue was occasioned also by amendments to the play between the first performances and any subsequent revival. The question will be considered here alongside the Epilogue to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which I will argue addresses itself to the audience in the theatre but also, perhaps more directly in the first instance, to the censor who would first vet the play before performance or publication.

Matthew Vadnais (Beloit College, Wisconsin), “Parted you in good terms?: Performance and Shakespeare’s Good Quartos”

When ought we consider the existence of variant play texts as evidence that a play was revived and performed according to scripts that closely resembled each of the play’s surviving printed texts? While this question has been of far more interest to scholars wrestling with Hamlet, the Henry VI plays, and Shakespeare’s “Bad” Quartos, such issues are equally important to questions regarding the texts lumped together as Shakespeare’s “Good” Quartos. Because the relative credibility of their earliest printings hasn’t been in dispute, differences among this set of quartos have widely been overlooked. The question of revision and theatrical revival, then, has largely been answered by explaining whatever differences exist between printed versions according to some sort of theatrical or thematic logic. In other words, critics have argued for revision (and by extension revival) by arguing that multiple versions of the play are distinct, ontological versions that ought to be considered equally authorial.

This short paper argues that by examining the kinds of differences the separate Shakespeare’s Good Quartos from their Folio cousins we can more accurately differentiate between variant texts that would not have required a full theatrical revival to be performed again from texts that would, according to historical methods of play production, only have been capable of being performed via the creation of new theatrical materials and subsequent memorization and rehearsal. In addition to disambiguating between types of Good Quartos, this study hopes to better understand questions of revision and revival in the context of historical theatrical business and performance practices.