

## **Press, Pen, Remembrance, and Impression: Samuel Johnson's Print and Shakespeare's Texts**

**Faith Acker**

For nearly three hundred years, our understanding of Shakespeare has been established not solely by print, but, specifically, by the eighteenth-century editors for whom printed texts of Shakespeare were the objects of great scholarly debate. This paper explores both the manuscript and oral transmission of Shakespeare's works during the seventeenth century, and the ways in which many of these unprinted texts—even as they are rife with 'errors' and lack the authority and stability of print—nevertheless meet many of the criteria Samuel Johnson later used to define print in his *Dictionary*. Even as the staged, spoken, and handwritten Shakespearean texts of the seventeenth century lacked the publicity and prominence of printed Shakespearean texts, they established many varied impressions of Shakespeare, and propagated that poet's words—occasionally with adaptations and emendations—as widely as did many printed editions of Shakespeare's works. Three brief case studies—a musical sonnet, a transcribed poem, and a staged play—develop my argument more specifically, examining the oral, manuscript, and theatrical versions of these texts as forms of printless *print* (by Johnson's definition). Even as Johnson's contemporaries used print to craft an ideal of Shakespeare, and as Tonson shaped and printed this ideal, they overlooked the impact of many transcribers, actors, musicians, and directors who had already facilitated and edited the transmission of Shakespeare in other media. Overall, the role of an editor (no matter his title) and the impression created by a Shakespearean text—whether in manuscript, print, or performance—are similar in many printed and unprinted genres. Where Shakespeare's texts were made more accessible by print in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the theatrical, oral, and personal versions of Shakespeare without print reached a wide and diverse audience during Shakespeare's lifetime, and continue to do so today.

## **"Prospero's (and Miranda's, and Caliban's) Books"**

**Sujata Iyengar**

This paper, part of a planned centerpiece chapter from my work-in-progress, "Shakespeare and the Art of the Book," will uncover the ways in which specific, material qualities of bookness in artist's books of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* anticipate, reinforce, or counter recent insights in literary criticism. Over the past thirty years, feminist and post-colonial scholars have identified counter-currents in Shakespeare's play centered in particular around the idealistic heroine, Miranda, the "airy sprite," Ariel, and the "salvage [savage] and deformed slave, Caliban"; more recently, ecocritical scholars have read the play in light of "deep ecology" and the relations among human beings, land, and water. These concerns emerge through the processes and products of specific book-makers' crafts in Sue Doggett's *The Tempest: A Sketchbook*, Mark McMurray's *The Tempest* (from the aptly named "Caliban Press"), Jan Kellett's *Storming Shakespeare* and even as early as Edmund Dulac's 1908 *livre d'artiste* of *The Tempest* for Hodder and Stoughton.

Sue Doggett's sketchbook foregrounds a feminist response to *The Tempest* both through the content that she chooses to include in her own annotations and through the form she uses.

The book mixes letter-press, hand-lettering, collage, dry-point and other techniques, but Doggett's own hand-lettering and –coloring emphasize the women's roles in Shakespeare's play, in early modern English culture, and in the history of criticism. Mark McMurray's volume wittily mixes letter-press with collage and stamps to bring Caliban's world in conjunction with Prospero's across the double-fold of the page. Jan Kellett's *Storming Shakespeare* invents a new structure, which she calls "triple dos-à-dos" because it has four plates and three text blocks, and uses different techniques to convey the varying relationships of Shakespearean plays with the elemental storms featured within them. My final chapter will place these books in dialogue with each other, with the history of aesthetic appropriations of *The Tempest*, and with Shakespeare's play, but this paper concentrates upon Doggett's and McMurray's books.

### **"In Glittering Characters": Props Displaying Handwriting in Shakespeare's *Pericles*** **Bernice Mittertreiner Neal, York University.**

*Pericles* offers repeated scenarios of characters reading, and reading aloud, not just letters but other kinds of objects that exhibit handwriting. These stage properties purport to identify and describe the character or nature of a particular dramatis persona; a riddle, a courtly device, a passport, and a monument all ask and answer "who is there?" for an onstage audience. I ask what kinds of literary genres and reading practices these props bring into play? What limits the props' efficacy in voicing character? And finally, what consequences follow reading and misreading props for onstage and offstage audiences? This paper argues that *Pericles'* inscripted props highlight metatheatrically the gap between actor and character to speak ambivalently about authors conjuring personhood out of written script.

Even the most apparently unambiguous writings that stage props present--a passport whose lines identify Thaisa's body or a monument whose "glittering characters" (4.3.44) herald Marina's goodness--are as enigmatic as objects designed generically to be "secret conceits" (Puttenham 191), such as King Antiochus's riddle or the knights' emblems and mottos. Cerimon's apostrophe upon receipt of Thaisa's passport--"Apollo, perfect me in the characters" (3.2.68)--calls out beyond the text. With its pun on *characters*, it sounds a self-reflexive plea on behalf of *Pericles'* playwright(s), who experiment with the means by which dramatic characters, birthed and bound by handwritten text, come to apparent life, or to apparent death, onstage. The play may finally posit Marina as an efficacious character born by an embodied performance that finds some measure of freedom in play within the limits of the script.

### **What Happened to Hamlet** **James J. Marino**

Textual studies of Shakespeare's plays have yet to fully account for actors' parts and the roles they played in theatrical revision. My paper attempts to speculatively reconstruct the actor's roll for the part of Hamlet and to compare the three versions of that roll implied by the First Quarto, Second Quarto, and Folio texts of the play.

A careful analysis of Hamlet's part (and the related part of Horatio) reveals a great deal about the fundamental construction of *Hamlet* as a play. More importantly, it quantifies the specific demands that learning any changes to the text would require of Richard Burbage and his scene partners. To what extent did the peculiar structure of part-based texts facilitate

the textual variations that we can observe in the three printed versions of the playbook? Which changes would a set of actors who had already memorized one set of cues find particularly difficult, or even impossible, to effect? How did Hamlet's part itself change? What happens to Hamlet?

For the sake of proper analysis I must bracket the previous hypotheses about the play's texts, treating various global narratives about their transmission as unproven. But I will test those traditional hypotheses against the evidence of the actor's parts when the parts themselves shed light on the traditional claims.

### **Manuscript notebooks and the uses of Shakespeare** **András Kiséry**

My paper will explore the 17th-c. uses and contexts of Shakespearean dramatic extracts, and argue that contrary to what the monumentalizing praise articulated in the Folio paratexts teaches us to expect, at this early point in the afterlife of Shakespeare, the social and cultural value of his lines was not necessarily a function of the literary value (in the modern sense) of the plays, nor was it reflective of the status of their author. While booksellers and publishers made repeated efforts at presenting Shakespeare and other dramatists as worthy of academic attention by imposing on them the humanistic framework of the commonplace tradition, Shakespeare's later cultural authority was created partly by the early recognition of his texts as valuable sources of phrases that helped his readers assert their social and conversational competence.

Early-17th c. notebooks, when they recorded materials derived from plays, tended to focus on sharp, sententious insights that were then collected alongside similar materials. These portable nuggets of wisdom include both Machiavellian political maxims and satirical aphorisms that convey cynical insights about love, sex, marriage and women. A study of some of these notebooks reveals that such formulations of cynical sexual knowingness and of political prudence are related to each other not only through their rhetoric of pointed aphoristic observation but also through their perceived usefulness as discursive tools in social self-promotion.

My paper will show how lines from Shakespeare's plays were extracted to fit this context, and suggest that the copying of extracts from Shakespeare's plays in the early 17th c. was neither the literary phenomenon that it would become later in the century, nor (in the case of snippets apparently commenting on matters of state) a form of serious political commentary, but rather, a cultural trend driven by a desire for accumulating social and conversational ammunition.