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Review of Richard Preiss and Deanne Williams, eds. *Childhood, Education and the Stage in Early Modern England*

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harness diverse rhetorical energies to depict new kinds of conflicts within the drama, which changed the way playgoers experienced theater" (62).

In chapters 3 and 4, Walker directs his inquiry of the offstage to the material environs of the period's amphitheatres and of plays in print. The depth and breadth of Walker's scholarship in chapter 3 alone is remarkable, drawing diversely on archaeology, acoustics, and geometry to inform its rhetoric of playhouse spaces. The material offstage, Walker argues, compels a rethinking of playgoing in terms of distraction, and of a competitive dynamic between the space of the stage and of much that was not-stage. Such a tension also obtains on the printed pages of plays, Walker argues in chapter 4, the book's demanding final chapter. Drawing on narratology and semiotics as part of scrutinizing the precise rhetoric of "didascalia" (144)—printed stage directions and speech headings in plays—Walker argues that we must see didascalia not as transparently superfluous, but as a textual formation of the offstage whose relationship to dramatic lines is mutually constitutive: "onstage and offstage spaces interpenetrate and summon one another into existence" (145).

This is an astute and thrillingly interdisciplinary study, drawing on woodcuts and engravings; geometry; poststructuralist, narrative, and textual history and theory; and incisive, original close readings of plays by Shakespeare, Marlowe, Kyd, Middleton, and Ford. Walker develops a provocative reassessment of the sites of critical interest in Renaissance drama, and he is deeply invested in this drama's interpretive challenge to its audiences—a challenge that originates in the visual, generic, interpretive, and epistemological perspective created by the offstage.

Heather C. Easterling, *Gonzaga University*

Childhood, Education and the Stage in Early Modern England. Richard Preiss and Deanne Williams, eds.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. xii + 296 pp. \$99.99.

Work on early modern childhoods entered a new phase over a decade ago with lively investigations into the diverse connections between childhood and early modern performance cultures. This area of scholarship has continued to flourish with publications on the educational, emotional, religious, and material worlds of early modern children. As Deanne Williams highlights in her introduction to *Childhood, Education and the Stage in Early Modern England*, "a picture has emerged of what it meant to be a child in early modern England—yet less so of what childhood meant in and to this culture, of the evolution of childhood as a category of identity, and of its place in larger discursive formations" (3). Preiss and Williams's wonderful edited collection brings together three major discourses—childhood, education, and theater—to demonstrate how these concepts "'grew up' together in the early modern period" (3) and

to provide a “new view of the literary and the social meaning of the young in early modern England” (4).

This collection successfully achieves this through twelve chapters in four sections: “Shakespearean Childhoods,” “Beyond the Boy Actor,” “Girls and Boys,” and “Afterlives.” Returning to common themes in recent scholarship, including Shakespeare’s child characters, the children’s playing companies, the sexual dynamics of Renaissance pedagogy and theater, and the emergence of children’s literature, each chapter carefully positions itself in relation to existing debates and usefully moves them forward. Chapters in section 1 by Seth Lerer, Joseph Campana, and Charlotte Scott explore the Renaissance schoolroom, the early modern “traffic in children” (39), and concepts of innocence to offer fascinating readings of Hamlet’s boyhood, the connections between children, liquidity, and information exchange in *Pericles*, and the idea of childhood as conditioned by “loss, grief and hindsight” (67) in *The Winter’s Tale* and *Richard III*. These chapters illuminate familiar themes (time, memory, education, exchange) in new ways, foregrounding the extent to which early modern childhood informed and was informed by larger discourses. The chapters in section 2 advance scholarship on the children’s playing companies. Bastian Kuhl’s evaluation of the Children of the Chapel’s reperformance of John Lyly’s *Love’s Metamorphosis* sheds new light on the extent to which the companies fashioned the players’ particular identities as children. Lucy Munro reveals how children’s performance manipulated adult assumptions about childhood in an excellent chapter that explores what it meant to “speak like a child” (81) in religious and educational discourses, in adult company plays, and in the plays of the children’s companies. Bart van Es also brings together the repertoires of the children’s and adult companies in an illuminating examination of the connections between Chapman’s *May Day* and Shakespeare’s *Othello*, which culminates in a reading of Desdemona becoming “ever more childlike” (115).

Section 3 interrogates the gendered and sexual dimensions of childhood through a fresh examination of the Ganymede myth in a chapter by Stephen Orgel and on discourses of chastity in Milton’s *Comus* in chapters by Deanne Williams and Douglas Trevor. Girls are prominent here, notably in Williams’s superb chapter that rereads the masque within a longer history of girls’ performance. The common theme in these chapters, and across the collection, is the liminal gendered, sexual, and aged status of children and how this functions in early modern literature as a site for interrogating a range of discourses. This is exemplified by Blaine Greteman’s excellent chapter, the first on “Afterlives,” on the imagery of childhood, particularly girlhood, in Andrew Marvell’s poetry. Reading Marvell’s poetry within the context of the emergence of children’s literature, Greteman insists, persuasively, that early modern childhood was political. Two final essays on the subsequent critical and theatrical reimaginings of early modern childhood—James Marino’s chapter on Freudian readings of *Macbeth* and Elizabeth Pentland’s analysis of the treatment of childhood and education in Tom Stoppard’s drama—confirm the ongoing importance of the connections between early modern

childhoods, education, and the stage. Preiss and Williams set out to produce a “volume of provocations” (11), and their collection is undoubtedly that. These new approaches to early modern childhood confirm early modern literature’s “abiding fascination with the nature of the child” (11). They also reveal the ongoing importance of this figure to critical and imaginative thinking about the period.

Edel Lamb, *Queen’s University Belfast*

Shakespeare, Adaptation, Psychoanalysis: Better than New. Matthew Biberman. London: Routledge, 2017. xiv + 146 pp. \$140.

The core argument of Matthew Biberman’s *Shakespeare, Adaptation, Psychoanalysis* is so vast that it needs to be quoted in full: “We will gain a better understanding of how contemporary conceptions of psychoanalytic cures . . . derive from the practices of literary adaptation that were worked out or codified during the decades that followed the restoration of the British monarchy in 1660. Careful study of these adaptations reveals key aesthetic strategies that were developed to dissolve the trauma that resulted from the regicide and the English civil war. It is this earlier program of symptom dissolution that has now lodged itself into modern Anglo-American culture as the notion of a therapeutically ‘centered self’ that Freud, and after him, Jacques Lacan, labored so mightily to overturn” (17–18). To say that Biberman presents a number of interpretive trajectories here would be an understatement.

To the extent that the primary trajectory focuses on the practice of literary adaptation in the Restoration, Biberman makes a good-faith effort to cover the topic. While the notion of Restoration adaptation is inexplicably limited to adaptations of Shakespeare’s plays (why no *Paradise Lost*?), the five main chapters offer with varying degrees of success accounts of how Restoration dramatists such as Tate, Dryden, Davenant, and Otway re-created Shakespeare for their own contemporary audiences. Biberman offers no theory of adaptation, and he never provides a full picture of the range of adaptive strategies employed. But overall he lays out a persuasive account of how different writers reworked Shakespeare to their own different ends. And, in a very basic sense, the study offers meaningful (if limited and fragmented) intellectual history in the guise of literary history.

That said, the other interpretive trajectories, which appear to be the conceptual center of the book in its declared interest in psychoanalysis, are simply ignored. For example, at the historical level there is no engagement with Restoration culture that might justify the claim that these theatrical adaptations even responded to (let alone attempted “to dissolve”) “the trauma that resulted from the regicide and the English civil war.” Nothing in the study suggests that the need to offer evidence for this major idea was even considered, despite the fact that many of the Shakespearean works under