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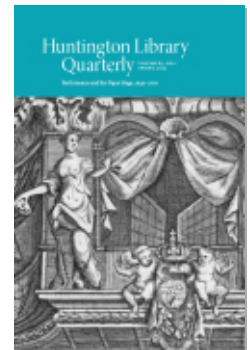
Introduction: Performance and the Paper Stage, 1640–1700

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INTRODUCTION

Performance and the Paper Stage, 1640–1700

Emma Depledge and Rachel Willie

THE SECOND HALF OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY was marked by attempts to limit access to the London theaters and by important developments in the trade in playbooks.¹ The public theaters were closed when civil war broke out in 1642, and they remained closed for eighteen years. The punishments for performing plays during the ban were severe; as ordinances for theater closure state, punitive measures included the confiscation of profits and costumes, public whipping, arrests, and fines for audience members.² The theaters were reopened shortly after the monarchy was restored in 1660, but only two playhouses were licensed for performance in London for most of the period 1660–1700, with their managers—William Davenant (Duke’s Company) and Thomas Killigrew (King’s Company)—to “suffer no rival companies.”³ This was further reduced to just one theater from 1682 to 1695, and admission prices radically increased in comparison to the Elizabethan and Jacobean outdoor playhouses.⁴ Thus, although *Restoration* is used frequently to describe the supposedly simultaneous return of the monarchy and the theaters, for

This introduction forms part of a special issue: “Performance and the Paper Stage, 1640–1700,” ed. Emma Depledge and Rachel Willie, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 85, no. 1 (2022). To read other essays in the issue, follow this link: <https://muse.jhu.edu/resolve/167>.

1. David Scott Kastan, “Performances and Playbooks: The Closing of the Theatres and the Politics of Drama,” in *Reading, Society, and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge, 2003), 167–84.

2. Ordinances for theater closure were passed in 1642, 1647, and 1648. The first ordinance followed a pattern familiar to playgoers from the measures put in place at times of plague and public reflection, but the final measure—*An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament, for the utter suppression and abolishing of all Stage-Playes and Interludes* (London, 1648)—was the most punitive.

3. See Edward A. Langhans, “The Theatre,” in *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre*, ed. Deborah C. Payne Fisk (Cambridge, 2000), 1–18 at 1.

4. On the actors’ rebellion and the subsequent theater monopoly, see Judith Milhous, *Thomas Betterton and the Management of Lincoln’s Inn Fields, 1695–1708* (Carbondale, Ill., 1979), esp. 51–150. Strolling players required a license to perform, and many theater practitioners were

many Londoners, the licensed theaters remained as inaccessible after 1660 as they had been during the ban on acting. As this special issue demonstrates, although state officials attempted to control when, where, and by whom theater could be produced and consumed, late seventeenth-century actors, managers, and audiences continuously sought out ways to defy the authorities and, in so doing, maintained a vibrant theatrical culture.

Theater historians used to portray 1642–59 as a period in which theater became limited, elitist, and inert, but work by scholars including Janet Clare, Dale B. J. Randall, Rachel Willie, and Susan Wiseman has demonstrated that these years were instead marked by theatrical innovation, particularly in print culture as a dramatic form.⁵ Davenant (1606–1668) sought to circumvent the ban on stage plays by developing innovative methods of theatrical performance and by persuading the authorities to allow him to perform “moral entertainments,” as exemplified by his *Siege of Rhodes* (1656), which contained recitative and other elements associated with the court masque and the development of English opera. An underground theater market also developed, in which new dramatic genres such as drolls, play ballads, play pamphlets, and dialogues, as well as the continued practice of dumb shows and dramatic commonplacing, helped to keep theatrical culture alive. These novel pieces were short and could be performed quickly to avoid detection by soldiers, or else they could be delivered privately without the need of professional actors or purpose-built performance venues.⁶ There is evidence to suggest that these dramatic forms continued to flourish after 1660. In the early 1680s, the London-based playwright Elkanah Settle decided it would be expedient to take “one Coish [coach] & severall others to act some playes or Drolls in the city of Yorke.”⁷ As this example shows, performances took place beyond the capital, in York and also in places such as Norwich and “Sturbridge Fair” in Cambridge.⁸ Thus, it is important to recognize that

left frustrated. George Jolly was the most vociferous objector, but he was eventually pacified with the role of running a nursery for actors to supply Killigrew and Davenant; see below.

5. Janet Clare, *Drama of the English Republic, 1649–60* (Manchester, U.K., 2002); Dale B. J. Randall, *Winter Fruit: English Drama 1642–1660* (Lexington, Ky., 1995); Susan Wiseman, *Drama and Politics in the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1998); and Rachel Willie, *Staging the Revolution: Drama, Reinvention and History, 1647–72* (Manchester, U.K., 2015).

6. As Emma Depledge has shown, these new genres helped to keep Shakespeare’s plots and characters alive during the middle of the century; plays like *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *Hamlet* were abbreviated into playlets known as drolls, and others such as *Much Ado About Nothing* were redacted into ballads to be sung during the ban on acting. They also had an important influence on licensed theatrical production when the playhouses were reopened at the Restoration. To take only the example of Shakespeare, one notes a link between the plays modified for surreptitious performance during the 1640s and 1650s and those selected for performance at the two licensed theaters in operation in the 1660s. See Emma Depledge, *Shakespeare’s Rise to Cultural Prominence: Politics, Print and Alteration, 1642–1700* (Cambridge, 2018).

7. *A Register of English Theatrical Documents, 1660–1737*, vol. 1, 1660–1714, ed. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume (Carbondale, Ill., 1991), 231.

8. *English Theatrical Documents*, ed. Milhous and Hume, 320, 212.

surreptitious performances took place during the midcentury ban on acting and that theater culture extended beyond the two patent theaters licensed to perform from the 1660s. Further, it is imperative to speak of theater histories in the plural to reflect the coexistence of state-sanctioned and underground theater culture as well as London and countrywide performances across the late seventeenth century.

Actors and the Ban on Acting

Prior to the ban on acting, in 1629, a French acting troupe performed at the Blackfriars playhouse. Their company followed Continental European practices and comprised female players, who met with a negative reception despite being admired at the English court.⁹ Evidently, English playgoers were not ready to experience women acting on the professional stage. Yet in 1656, Davenant obtained special permission to produce *The Siege of Rhodes* and cast Catherine Coleman to sing and act the part of Ianthe; it was first performed in the dining room of Davenant's home at Rutland House before transferring to the Cockpit theater in Drury Lane. Davenant was casting not only a female musician to sing a vocal line but also the first woman to act on the early modern public stage. Exiled royalists would have routinely seen women actors on the public playhouses in central Europe, and the London stage was thus reinvigorated and transformed by influences from overseas and innovations at home during the Protectorate.

Some actors responded to the ban by traveling to Continental Europe, and this arguably had positive consequences for English dramatic culture, particularly in terms of gender and genre. From 1644 to 1646, the actors Richard Baxter, Thomas Bedford, Walter Clun, William Hall, Charles Hart, Robert Shatterell, William Wintershall, and perhaps Nicholas Burt performed in Paris and at The Hague. Whether they operated as an acting company as such is open to debate, as is their ability to make a profit from the English-speaking exiled communities. By 1647, many of these actors were again performing in London, and Hart and Clun went on to act in the King's Company at the Restoration.¹⁰ However, the ordinances for theater closure passed in 1647 and 1648 meant that acting was not likely to be an especially profitable profession in England in these years, and occasional reports in newsbooks detail the raids that took place.¹¹

Whereas some English actors who were performing in Paris in 1646 returned to England, others continued to try their success abroad. George Jolly is reported as touring the Low Countries and Germany with his company, where he proved to be "one of the most capable and progressive of the actor managers."¹² Two treaties signed

9. Elizabeth Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama, 1660–1700* (Cambridge, 1992), 22–23.

10. *English Theatrical Documents*, ed. Milhous and Hume, esp. 489–91.

11. John Leslie Hotson offers a comprehensive overview of these reports in *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage* (Cambridge, Mass., 1928).

12. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 166.

in 1648 formed the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War that had ravaged this part of Europe. Leslie Hotson and Harry R. Hoppe have both suggested that the exigencies of war and its aftermath meant that these were not ideal countries for a foreign touring troop, but Jolly's adaptability, versatility, ruthlessness, and willingness to hire German actors was met with success.¹³ On December 24, 1660, Jolly was granted a license to perform drama in London; then on December 30, 1662, an agreement was drawn up between Jolly, Davenant, and Thomas Killigrew whereby Davenant and Killigrew rented from Jolly his London grant for four pounds a week. In January 1663, Jolly was granted a license for a strolling company to act beyond the environs of the city. Davenant and Killigrew used this opportunity to have Jolly's license to perform drama in London revoked and to fully establish their duopoly.¹⁴ Thus, Jolly, who negotiated the trials of war and overseas touring in the 1640s and 1650s, fell victim to Restoration courtier-actor managers on the London stage, which further highlights how limited the 1660 *restoration* of theatrical freedom was for the vast majority of theater professionals.

Not all illegal performances in England in the 1640s and 1650s took place underground. The following is an account of a raid that took place on January 1, 1649, when actors were found performing plays in established playhouses:

The Souldiers seized on the Players on their Stages at Drury-lane, and at Salisbury Court. They went also to the Fortune in Golden-lane, but they found none there, but John Pudding dancing on the Ropes, whom they tooke along with them . . . the Players at the Red Bull . . . had notice of it . . . and were all gone before they came. . . . But at Salisbury Court they were taken on the Stage the Play being almost ended . . . they were carried to White-Hall with their Players cloathes upon their backs. . . . Abraham had a black Satten gown on, and before he came into the durt, he was very neat in his white laced pumps. The people not expecting such a pageant looked and laughed at all the rest, and not knowing who he was, they asked, what had that Lady done?¹⁵

As Hotson notes, this account shows that all four playhouses were "in full career" during the ban, and it can be inferred that the actor Abraham Ivory continued to play women's parts at Salisbury Court.¹⁶ The soldiers found actors at the Cockpit in Drury

13. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 168–76; Harry R. Hoppe, "George Jolly at Bruges," *Review of English Studies* 5 (1954): 265–68.

14. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 177–94.

15. Richard Collings, *The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer, Sent Abroad to prevent misinformation*, no. 293 (Tuesday, January 2–Tuesday, January 9, 1649), sigs. Nnnnnnn1v–2r. This is also cited in Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 40–41, where he suggests the event has been misdated and ought to read January 1.

16. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, 40.

Lane and at Salisbury Court; at the Fortune, John Pudding was found performing the still-legal entertainment of rope dancing, and the actors fled from the Red Bull before they were caught. It is possible that the Fortune interspersed legal entertainments with drolls as a way to conceal their illicit dramatic performances or perhaps, by chance, plays were not scheduled to be performed that day. Although the performances were broken up, there seems to have been little attempt to conceal what the actors were doing; they brazenly acted at a time when performing plays was illegal. Seen in this context, Davenant's ability to mount sanctioned entertainments in the 1650s, when stage plays were illegal, may not be as incongruous as it at first appears.¹⁷

This raid was focused upon the commodities of performance rather than the bodies that performed. The performance at Salisbury Court had nearly ended, and so the actors were taken to Whitehall in their costumes, causing a spectacle for the people they passed en route. This procession transformed people going about their daily lives into spectators. In asserting order and prohibiting performance, the soldiers mounted another form of performance: the arrest of the actors is described as a pageant would be. In particular, we are told that the soldiers "tooke the Crown from his head who acted the King, and in sport would oftentimes put it on again." Such an action would have struck an ominous chord in January 1649. On January 20, 1649, Charles I was brought to trial in Westminster Hall. Ten days later he stepped out of an upper window of the Banqueting House at Whitehall and onto a scaffold, where he was executed for treason. In the context of the political climate of January 1649, the puerile joke of taking the crown off the head of the player king as he was marched toward Whitehall resonates with the political uncertainty of the times.

If actors were regularly and semipublicly flouting the ban on stage plays, then the authorities may have been more tolerant of enacted drama than the narratives developed in the 1640s, 1650s, and 1660s might lead us to believe (see Christopher Highley's foreword). While the Records of Early English Drama (REED) project has done significant work in drawing attention to the vibrancy of early theatrical culture in England and Wales before 1642, its period range indirectly endorses the moribund characterization of mid-seventeenth-century drama. By stopping in 1642, REED implicitly suggests that the outbreak of civil war marked a cessation of early English drama and that a modified dramatic culture emerged at the Restoration. As this special issue will illustrate, performances continued to take place in private houses and elsewhere, suggesting that theatrical culture continued to thrive in alternative sites of performance.

Politics, Print, and Performance

Theater censorship of the 1640s and 1650s did not extend to the publication of plays. In fact, the late seventeenth century witnessed a radical increase in the number of

17. For a detailed edition and discussion of Davenant's dramas of the 1650s, see Clare, *Drama of the English Republic*.

playbooks published,¹⁸ and stationers like Humphrey Moseley issued multiple plays in the same (octavo) format to encourage consumers to collect them; this allowed customers to bind their favorite plays together in *Sammelbände*. As mentioned above, some actors continued to attempt to earn a living through performing—be it illegally in London, in other parts of England and Wales, or in central Europe. Other actors turned their hand to new careers. As Marissa Nicosia has demonstrated, the performer Andrew Pennykuik became a printer, and when he did so, he made much of his credentials as an actor.¹⁹ The paper stage, by which we mean instances of the textual performance of drama, increased rapidly between 1640 and 1700.²⁰ As examples such as the 1676 quarto edition of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* demonstrate, the border between performance texts and the paper stage is permeable. The 1676 *Hamlet* featured a note informing consumers that what they were getting was both the version seen on stage and additional text that was “left out upon the Stage.” It is further stated that a “Mark” has been used to help them distinguish between the performance text and the passages “inserted according to the Original Copy.”²¹ Such printed texts also flirt with the idea of performance by using “features of page design to make characteristics of a performance-based genre legible to readers in a text-based medium,” which teases historians with their simultaneously readerly and dramatic nature.²² The practice of reading aloud also generated its own forms of performance and entertainment, meaning that the vitality of drama continued throughout this period, even as critics of the nonmonarchical governments attempted to align the playhouse to their cause.

During the Restoration, the gap between play premiere and publication decreased from around a year in the 1660s to less than a month by the late 1680s.²³ This was also a time when booksellers began listing playbooks as their own literary category,²⁴ and when buying playbooks became less expensive than going to the

18. See Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser, “Canons and Classics: Publishing Drama in Caroline England,” in *Localizing Caroline Drama: Politics and Economics of the Early Modern English Stage, 1625–1642*, ed. Alan B. Farmer and Adam Zucker (New York, 2006), 17–42; and Farmer and Lesser, “The Popularity of Playbooks Revisited,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 56 (2005): 1–32.

19. Marissa Nicosia, “Printing as Revival: Making Playbooks in the 1650s,” *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 111 (2017): 469–89.

20. For a definition of the paper stage, see Willie, *Staging the Revolution*, chap. 1.

21. William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark* (London, 1676), sig. (A)1v.

22. Claire M. L. Bourne, “Dramatic Typography and the Restoration Quartos of *Hamlet*,” in *Canonising Shakespeare: Stationers and the Book Trade, 1640–1740*, ed. Emma Depledge and Peter Kirwan (Cambridge, 2017), 153–70.

23. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, *The Publication of Plays in London, 1660–1800: Playwrights, Publishers and the Market* (London, 2015), 55.

24. See Adam G. Hooks, “Booksellers’ Catalogues and the Classification of Printed Drama in Seventeenth-Century England,” *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 4 (2008): 445–64. For more on changes between the Renaissance and post-1660 print and performance market, see Depledge and Kirwan’s introduction to *Canonising Shakespeare*.

London public theaters, in a direct reversal of the first half of the century. This pricing shift may have resulted in an increase in the number of people purchasing playbooks. It might also have encouraged those who could afford to go to the public theaters to attend revivals with printed playbooks in their hands.

Printed playbooks may also have furnished the theaters at this time, thus marking another reversal of the practices prior to 1642.²⁵ Few officially sanctioned new plays were produced between the closing of the theaters in 1642 and their official reopening in the 1660s. The licensed theaters were therefore forced to rely on pre-1642 plays—sometimes in adapted form—for their repertoire in the 1660s. Political parallels also seem to have encouraged playwrights and theater managers to alter or revive pre-1642 plays, thereby blurring boundaries between political and theatrical past and present. On November 5, 1664, a performance of Davenant's alteration of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* was mounted. This included spectacles associated with the restored theaters, such as a sinking cave, flying witches, and operatic elements.²⁶ The date upon which the adaptation was performed is significant, as it coincided with Gunpowder Plot Day, which was celebrated as a providential moment when the interests of England were protected by a congenial deity.²⁷ A play about the overthrow of a usurping tyrant, especially one where the parallels between (modified) Scottish history and recent history have been highlighted, may have been particularly pertinent viewing for commemorating the day on which an attempt to overthrow the king and Parliament was thwarted.²⁸

The argument printed with Davenant's altered *Macbeth*, which may have been issued separately to spectators attending its initial performances, arguably stresses the plot's topicality while attempting to shut down any ambiguities surrounding the play's political outlook. We are told that *Macbeth*

omitted no kind of Libidinous Cruelty for the space of 18 Years; for so long he Tyrannized over *Scotland*. But having then made up the Measure of his Iniquities, *Macduff* the Governor of *Fife*, associating to himself, some few Patriots (and being assisted with Ten Thousand *English*) equally hated by the Tyrant, and abhorring the Tyranny, met in *Birnam Wood*. . . . Marching early in the Morning towards *Dunsinan* Castle,

25. See James J. Marino, *Owning William Shakespeare: The King's Men and Their Intellectual Property* (Philadelphia, 2011), 410.

26. Pepys references seeing this production in his diary. See the entry for November 5, 1664, in *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, vol. 5, 1664, ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews (London, 1995), 314; and Hazelton Spencer, "D'Avenant's *Macbeth* and Shakespeare's," *PMLA* 40 (1925): 619–44.

27. J. C. D. Clark, *English Society 1660–1832: Religion, Ideology and Politics during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge, 2000), 88.

28. Michael Dobson notes how, in Davenant's version, Fleance echoes Charles II by spending his years of exile in France. See Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660–1769* (Oxford, 1992), 37.

which they took by *Scalado*. *Macbeth* escaping, was pursued by *Macduff*, who having overtaken him, urged him to the Combat; to whom the Tyrant, half in scorn, returned this Answer: That he did in Vain attempt to Kill him, it being his Destiny never to be Slain by any that was Born of Woman. Now then said *Macduff*, is thy fatal end drawing fast upon thee, for I was never Born of Woman, but violently Cut out of my Mothers Belly: Which words so daunted the cruel Tyrant, though otherways a Valiant man and of great Performances, that he was very easily slain; and *Malcolm Conner*, the true Heir, Seated in his Throne.²⁹

The parallels being established between the narrative of *Macbeth* and recent history are telling: the eighteen years between the outbreak of civil war and the restoration of the monarchy are implicitly alluded to through the period of Macbeth's reign. There are indirect references to Oliver Cromwell, who was presented as a cruel and libidinous tyrant in much anti-Cromwellian satire, but this is not to say that the play itself is straightforwardly royalist.³⁰ As Lois Potter has noted, far from pushing a royalist agenda, Davenant's *Macbeth* instead illustrates the ambiguous relationship many of the audience members had with the Commonwealth and Restoration regimes.³¹ Thus, documents of performance, such as this argument for *Macbeth*, not only present important (if ambiguous) glosses on the politics of drama in the mid-seventeenth century but also offer helpful insights into the mechanics of performance and the way that writers packaged their plays to make them palatable to the authorities.

Performance and the Paper Stage

The essays brought together in this special issue address the relationship between stage and page in the period 1640–1700. As Christopher Highley outlines in his foreword, early responses to the closing of the playhouse, such as *The Actors Remonstrance* (1643) and *The Muses Looking-Glasse* (1643), illustrate the political, cultural, and religious circumstances of theater closure and establish a way of considering the period as a point of slight performance in theater history. The narratives created at the time presented dour Puritan parliamentarians as opposing all modes of performance, and these views have had a lasting—and misleading—impact on perceptions of Puritan attitudes toward the theater and on theater history more generally. Yet, as Hotson, Judith Milhous, and Robert Hume have illustrated, English actors did

29. William Davenant, *Macbeth a Tragædy. With all the Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New songs. As it's now acted at the Dukes Theatre* (London, 1674), sig. A2r.

30. Laura Lunger Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell: Ceremony, Portrait, and Print, 1645–1661* (Cambridge, 2000).

31. Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writings: Royalist Literature, 1641–1660* (Cambridge, 1989), 206. See also Dobson, *Making of the National Poet*, 37.

continue to perform in England and at the exiled courts.³² Not all Puritans and parliamentarians were opposed to drama, and the oft-repeated narrative of all Puritans being antitheatricals needs further nuance.

Justin Kuhn examines two plays that were printed for the first time in 1657, as *Two New Playes*: Thomas Middleton's *More Dissemblers besides Women* and *Women Beware Women*. Kuhn highlights how Jacobean representations of women as disruptive forces in the body politic took on added significance in the 1650s. Critics such as Jean I. Marsden have observed how Shakespeare's female characters were rewritten during the Restoration; Kuhn instead demonstrates how—without modifying plot or characters—publisher Humphrey Moseley used the medium of print, of the paper stage alone, to reorient the politics of Middleton's plays.³³ Christopher Matusiak examines the theatrical patronage of Isabella Rich, first Countess of Holland (d. 1655), and the types of performances that may have taken place at Holland House in the 1650s. According to James Wright's *Historia Histrionica* (1699), stage players prohibited from acting in London "in Oliver's time" often gravitated toward aristocratic residences just beyond the city, particularly Holland House in Kensington. In 1621 Rich inherited the mansion (originally known as Cope Castle), which had been built by her father, Sir Walter Cope, a prominent Jacobean courtier with ties to Shakespeare and the King's Men. Glittering entertainments also took place at civic feasts, where ticketing systems regulated attendance, and processions from the church to the hall formed part of the ceremony. Newton Key examines the panoply and drama of London's feasting season in the Restoration to assess what these feasts and the entertainments performed as part of the ceremony reveal about corporate and group identity.

Imaginary feasting is also central to the relationship between politics, text, and song in ballads examined by Rachel Willie. Set to the tune "Cook Laurel," these ballads index Ben Jonson, creating a mnemonic connection between the rogues and vagabonds of Tudor and early Stuart folklore and parliamentarians as a way of celebrating the Restoration. Just as ballads were sung in various performance spaces, plays were performed not only in the fixed sites of the playhouse. Stephen Watkins considers plays "on the move." Paying particular attention to William Davenant and John Dryden, Watkins considers how the play moves from the playhouse to the printed page and back again, as textual and aural modes of performance inflect dramatic production. Claire Bowditch and Elaine Hobby examine Aphra Behn's adaptive

32. Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, esp. 1–66; Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, "New Light on English Acting Companies in 1646, 1648, and 1660," *Review of English Studies* 42 (1991): 487–509.

33. See Jean I. Marsden, "Rewritten Women: Shakespearean Heroines in the Restoration," in *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*, ed. Marsden (New York, 1991), 43–56; and Marsden, "Pathos and Passivity: D'Urfey's *The Injured Princess* and Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*," *Restoration: Studies in English Culture 1660–1700* 14 (1990): 71–81.

practices in *The Rover* (1677) and *Sir Patient Fancy* (1678), carefully highlighting the rich knowledge of earlier forms of theatrical practice that informs Behn's work.

The residues of past theatrical culture inform Heidi Craig's forensic discussion of the printed paratexts and actors' parts, where she argues that actor lists function both as marketing devices and as documents of theater history, which reveal how revivals, theatrical silence, and print format influenced contemporary interest in the theatrical past. Finally, Francis X. Connor returns to the publisher, bookseller, author, and collector of playbooks Francis Kirkham to assess his play catalogs and their impact on the stage and the history of drama.

One of the main aims of this special issue is to question received book and theater history by highlighting the myriad ways in which performance continued to flourish in spite of—and arguably to spite—limitations placed on drama's dual media of performance and print between 1640 and 1700. Recent scholarship has addressed the theatricality of ink and mid-seventeenth-century print and performance culture. This special issue analyzes the relationship between print and performance by examining performances that took place during the ban on acting imposed in London between 1642 and 1659 and by exploring evidence of theatrical culture beyond the expensive and elitist “restored” theaters of the post-1660 period.

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