

perceptions of different ethnicities. In chapter 8, “‘Racklers of Orthography’? Speaking Shakespeare in ‘English,’” Adele Lee suggests that decolonization of our listening ear is really needed, and actors with Asian accents should not be put in the situation where they oscillate between a desire to perform Shakespeare and stay rooted in their culture.

In chapter 9, “Alien Accents: Signifying the Shakespearean Other in Audio Performances,” Douglas M. Lanier contends that attention to accent in audio performance helps open our ears to new possibilities for performative expressivity and Shakespearean meaning, into which directors and scholars have only begun to probe. Carla Della Gatta concludes in the afterword that the collection affords “a comparative look at Shakespeare and accentism” across genres, time periods, languages, vocal methods, and locales, marking the outset of a field of inquiry that provides the stage and the culture with theoretical advancements (204).

The connotation of accent includes ethnicity, class, locale, nationality, and generational qualities, and the function of accentism is part of semiotic, linguistic, and power structures within the world of production or play. In the collection, each contributor illustrates their argument with specific examples and has substantially proved the relationship between Shakespeare and accentism. Most significantly, the contributors try to break with traditional criticism through methodological practices and reveal that Received Pronunciation is no longer the standard for Shakespearean performances. Rather, Original Pronunciation is a flourishing phenomenon which offers a variety of voices and sheds new light on the stage and screen.

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Shakespeare and Biography. Katherine Scheil and Graham Holderness.
Shakespeare & 8. New York: Berghahn Books, 2020. 142 pp. \$150.

Shakespeare and Biography is so much more than its title implies. It might more accurately be called *Shakespeare, Memory, and Historical Imagination*. Its contributors reckon with how we create history. Chapters—and one short play—examine answers that have been given to unanswerable questions: Why did Shakespeare leave his second-best bed to Anne Hathaway? Was Shakespeare Catholic? Was he bisexual? At the root—not only of the answers provided by a plethora of biographers, but of the questions themselves—are moments in contemporary culture. This volume offers examples of Shakespeare imagined and the research and interpretation that allow us to create a past in order to understand our present.

Despite the inclusion of Graham Holderness’s new edition of “Some Further Account” (1715) of the life of Shakespeare, a likely forgery of additions to the work of Nicholas Rowe, references to the documentary evidence of Shakespeare’s life are

few and far between in this volume. Indeed, although several authors allude to Shoenbaum's seminal *Shakespeare: A Documentary Life*, there is little discussion of the emphasis it placed on the evidence that underpins most biography. However, in the case of Shakespeare, this is perhaps for the best. After all, Shakespeare is as much a figment of the popular imagination as a historical figure. In his chapter on the work undertaken to create the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry for Shakespeare, the longest in that authoritative collection, Peter Holland explains his choice to spend more time on the afterlife of Shakespeare and Bardology than on the life itself. Of course, Holland and others discuss some of the key documents that shape our understanding of Shakespeare.

In her contribution, Katherine Scheil inspects the many interpretations of a single line in Shakespeare's will, his bequest of his second-best bed to Anne Hathaway. The ambiguity of the documents that witness Shakespeare's life seem to lead in two relatively opposing research directions, both of which *Shakespeare and Biography* consider: a researcher may either consider these documents in a vacuum, holding them up to modern culture and drawing interpretations consistent with their understanding, or they may undertake the considerably more difficult task of understanding the Renaissance more broadly by placing these documents in context. The bequest of a bed may be read on its own, or it might be compared to the literally hundreds of accounts of early modern marital economies laid bare in probate records housed at The National Archives to see where this admittedly mysterious gift stacks up against other instances of domestic indifference. *Shakespeare and Biography* provides a better sense of the former than the latter.

What the volume does brilliantly is provide us with a sense of the depth and scope of Shakespeare life-telling. From scholarly biography to bodice-ripping romance to poetry to film to theater. From forgery to interpretation and imagination. We are given new, and rather complicated, evidence for Shakespeare's familiarity with recusant culture in Sonja Fielitz's chapter, which focuses primarily on the architecture of Midlands counties, the proclivity of homes to include priest holes, and briefly relates this to Shakespeare's own thematic interest in deception. Likewise, Rowan Williams's "Shakeshafte" (a play included as the penultimate chapter of the volume) explores whether Shakespeare might, perhaps, have met Edmund Campion.

Through all of this, we move toward an understanding of the pressure biographers are under to fill out their subject's life, connecting gaps to satisfy their reader. We gain a sense of the difficulty of representing a man who left us with over 118,000 lines of drama and poetry, but no diary, no letters, and only six signatures. According to some accounts, Shakespeare is the most written-about person, with more biographies written about him by a factor of one hundred than anyone else in history. The overstudied nature of a man who is ultimately somewhat enigmatic gives us a sense of how he and his life have become emblematic of a popular understanding of the English Renaissance. Given the volume's emphasis on the often imaginative reaction

to Shakespeare—in every field from biography to poetry—it is surprising that it does not give more time to the anti-Stratfordian theories, many of which are as engaging and evidenced as more traditional biographical findings.

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Shakespeare and Costume in Practice. Bridget Escolme.

Shakespeare in Practice. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020. xii + 216 pp. €83.19.

This provocative study of how costume may be read as creating meaning on stage is densely packed with scholarly insight and interpretation from a wealth of related fields. So broad is Bridget Escolme's scope that one marvels at her meticulous control over such disparate materials as inform her engagement with discourses of gender, power, and color as they affect the design, textures, aesthetics, and function of costuming within the stage space and in relation to text. A close reading of all textual references to clothing, accompanied by their explication in terms of period cultural understanding and expectation, initiates each of the three chapters, focusing in turn on *Hamlet*, *Much Ado*, and *The Tempest*. What then follows is a review of production and performance history for each play over the intervening centuries, charting shifts of emphasis that palpably affected meaning.

Extant period images, descriptions, and artifacts (scrupulously handled) are deployed to explore how the first audiences potentially read the actors' attire. In *Hamlet*, costuming is shown to define political relations between characters and the degree to which Hamlet's difference in his inky black upheld a moral system that was genuinely subversive of Claudius's rule. The fact that Claudius's likely costume (particularly his Danish-style pludderhose, as determined by Escolme) would define him as a comic character brought a profound irony to the discovery that he is the Machiavellian shaper of the whole tragedy. Mourning black clothes here conveyed social implications within the dramaturgical structuring, but those intimations changed with time, especially with Irving, when the black was deliberately cultivated to offset the actor's face, turning the tragedy inward, to be less about self-assertion, as previously, than about self-discovery.

Much Ado is examined for its relating of luxury with gender politics, violence, and warfare, and for the increasing tendency of productions to soften the darkness of Hero's disrupted marriage and its troubling consequences in preference for varying depictions of country house nostalgia and settled content. This theme in Escolme's argument is supported by detailed consideration (including a brilliant analysis of Judi Dench's portrayal) of where Beatrice is placed visually on the play's social scale and how knowing and secure she is in that situation. Directors have similarly begun creatively exploring through costuming the role of Don John, now that bastardy is not viewed as socially