

All Wonders in One Sight develops across six chronologically ordered chapters to show the development of the Nativity lyric in England. The first chapter, “Sacrament, Time, and Space in the Tudor and Stuart English Nativity Lyric,” serves as an introduction to the key literary historical and theological texts, arguments, and confessional developments. Chapters 2 through 6 engage one poet and his Nativity poem(s), beginning with Robert Southwell’s “The Burning Babe,” and moving through Donne’s “Nativitie,” Herbert’s “Starre,” Milton’s “Nativity Ode,” and several of Crashaw’s Nativity poems. A conclusion, “The Christ Child: Little Boy Lost” adds Francis Quarles’s, Robert Herrick’s, and Henry Vaughan’s contributions to the Nativity poem genre in order to demonstrate that the actual infant in the manger disappears from Nativity poems after Milton. Kenney acknowledges that Nativity poems associated with the Tribe of Ben will have to wait for further study.

Throughout *All Wonders*, Kenney propels the chapters forward with deft close readings and clarity in writing. Chapter 3, which focuses on John Donne’s poems to the Christ Child in *La Corona*, carefully tracks both apostrophe and mixed pronoun use to uncover Counter-Reformation devotions to Saint Joseph. According to Kenney, Donne presents here a lyric mode more focused on tranquility, tenderness, and *storge* (familial love) than on anxiety. In her chapter on Milton’s well-known “On the Morning of Christ’s Nativity,” Kenney concatenates Milton’s use of fate, his use of a muse as mediator, and the infant’s speechless smile (playing on the etymological connection between *fatum* and *infans*, the spoken word and speechlessness) to point to a major change in Nativity lyrics. With Milton, the eternal present and prolepsis give way to linear time, and the second person of the Trinity, while divine, is a child unaware of his fate to suffer and to die.

While the argument may not be broad in scope, *All Wonders* succeeds in its mission to open a conversation about a subgenre within seventeenth-century lyric poetry. Kenney’s focus allows her more ambitious claims regarding poets’ faith in an enfleshed Christ room to breathe without drifting into speculation. The book will be of interest to scholars in the fields of literature, theology, and religious history.

Elise Lonich Ryan, *University of Pittsburgh*
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Communal Justice in Shakespeare’s England: Drama, Law, and Emotion.

Penelope Geng,

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In *The Invention of Suspicion* (2007), Lorna Hutson convincingly identified the shaping role of participatory justice on early modern English literature. Through her reexamination of the concurrent centralization and professionalization of law,

Penelope Geng builds from this work in *Communal Justice in Shakespeare's England*, breaking new ground by bringing affect to bear. Adding to a growing body of scholarship that explores the lesser-acknowledged affective dimensions of the “love-triangle” of law, literature, and history—to borrow Bernadette Meyler’s phrase (*New Directions in Law and Literature*, 2017)—Geng turns to consider “the cultural value of fictions and fantasies of communal justice” (11).

For Geng, the preoccupation with collaborative legal practice that propels early modern English literature lies, as the book’s title suggests, in community as a practical unit, theoretical ideal, and affective body. In its claim that the power of early modern fictions of communal justice “lies in their romantic and idealistic depiction of what law could be” (11), this book propounds the reassuring utopian vision of modern humanist thought that “literature could save law from itself by reminding it of its lost humanity” (Julie Stone Peters, “Law, Literature, and the Vanishing Real,” *PMLA* 120.2 [2005]: 445). As so often elsewhere in law and literature studies, Geng credits drama with a unique ability to engage with law, here to act as a participatory community in which the audience engages in “embodied” rather than merely “imagined” (21) lay magistracy.

Showing the pervasiveness of the idea that “*God hath established an assize for judgement within our selves*” (Robert Abbot, *The Assize at Home* [1623], E8r), chapter 1, “From *Assize* to the *Assize at Home*,” convincingly connects the operations of lay magistracy and conscience. Chapter 2, “Judicature in Crisis: *Henry IV, Part 2*,” takes on the Platonic presumption that justice requires “emotional and physical distance” (50) to attain reasoned judgment. Using Shakespeare’s Chief Justice as her touchstone, Geng contends that his legal characterization at once engages “popular notions of magistracy” and contrarily suggests “a link between a judge’s capacity for fellow-feeling and his power to do justice” (56).

In chapter 3, “Neighbourliness and the Coroner’s Inquest in English Domestic Tragedies,” Geng compellingly considers domestic tragedy as “a moral-legal instrument” (93) that works on the conscience of its audience. Affect here becomes a legal remedy as, not unlike golden age crime fiction, the Miss Marple figures of early modern drama band together against community-threatening death and danger to justly prevail in the end. Likewise, chapter 4, “Repairing Community: Empathetic Witnessing in *King Lear*,” considers the reparative potential of theater to build community through “intersubjective witnessing” (117). Geng here shows, through an attentive reading of Edgar’s verge speech, the comfort to be found in description and vivid imagination (although we see these methods working to dangerously different ends in Shakespeare’s *Othello*).

Chapter 5, “Communal Shaming and the Limitations of Legal Forms: *Henry VI, Part 2* and *Macbeth*,” takes as its foundation the premise that drama is able to engage in “emotional labour” (124) that law cannot. Exploring dramatic depictions of penitents Eleanor Cobham and Jane Shore, Geng deftly shows how the taper of their penitential perambulations is taken up by Lady Macbeth. Reading the sleepwalking scene to great

effect, Geng convincingly contends that the remorse we discern therein is a mere fiction “whose existence depends on the imagination of the spectator” (141) or, we might say, witness. Connecting this affective witnessing to the communal need to feel “that the offender is sincerely sorry” (143), Geng exposes the workings of remorse as a legal fiction.

Building into the monograph’s postscript, *Communal Justice* achieves its payoff as Geng reaches forward to the later seventeenth century and beyond to emphasize the way law has historically obscured its own communal investments in its efforts to perpetuate a veneer of unquestionable and reasonable, rather than passionate, judgment. Sir Matthew Hale argues that judges are “a great advantage and light to laymen” (*History of the Common Law of England* [1713], 292). But, as our friendly neighborhood Spider-Man reminds us, with great power comes great responsibility, responsibility that Geng—building from a theoretical foundation in Sara Ahmed’s work on community and self-care—locates in our own critical pursuit of communal justice.

Rachel E. Holmes, *Wolfson College, University of Cambridge*
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Emotional Settings in Early Modern Pedagogical Culture: Hamlet, The Faerie Queene, and Arcadia. Judith Owens.

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Judith Owens explores poetic transformations in the emotional education of heroes—Sidney’s Musidorus, Spenser’s Arthur, and Shakespeare’s Hamlet—as they struggle beyond conventional forms of family ties and humanist schooling. These princes can make deep commitments to civic virtue and heroic action only by way of inward questing, often with hard pains of loss.

To reveal these emotional enfoldings, Owens relies on the method of close reading, artfully deployed, with special attention to the affective weight of rhetorical devices, diction, grammar, and syntax. Though this analysis is mostly formal, these readings enrich historical arguments on all sides of long-running debates about the effects of humanist schooling.

Owens shows how these princes in their immaturity are constrained by humanist idealizations of filial duty, and by commonplace maxims and oppositions. She finds plenty of evidence for critics who, with Grafton, Jardine, and others, fault humanist disciplines for preaching civic virtue while propagating tractable clerks.

Even so, in densely detailed readings with ample scholarly contexts, Owens finds fruitful instructional encounters in (among other places) an Arcadian garden, a castle’s inmost chamber, and on a rampart of Elsinore. In these settings, princes overstep the more rote forms of humanist schooling to learn the heroic—and more deeply humanist—