rhetoric is still very much part of how we pursue personal goals and construct social identities.

Helen Hackett, *University College London*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.540

Playing and Playgoing in Early Modern England: Actor, Audience and Performance. Simon Smith and Emma Whipday, eds.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. 350 pp. $99.99.

This is a challenging, thought-provoking anthology of twelve essays gathered into three sections: "Players," "Playgoing," "Playhouses." The motivation is to interrogate concepts about the reception of early modern drama that, through replication, have become critical and historical staples, now rarely questioned. Rather than focus on a belief in hearing as the prime (in some cases the only) source of communication of drama, all twelve essayists deploy myriad ideas culled from recent developments in sensory, topographical, and performance studies to resituate theatergoing as a complex, bodily, and emotional experience, where ears are no longer privileged in ascertaining the nature of audience response.

To this end, movement, particularly of the feet, is examined in relation to emotion. Another contribution explores youth cultures in relation to apprentices on and off stage, and to the law student audiences who attended Ram Alley so frequently that they helped shape the characters and action of Barry's comedy. Also discussed is the impact of blenching and blushing onstage, posturing and narration by other actors, and the power structures between observer and observed. The issue of whether Black characters deployed stereotypical gesturing is questioned from ethical perspectives as potentially racist. Yet another contribution traces the complexity of playgoers' responses and the scheduling practices of theater managements in the short and long term, suggesting that these call into question traditional assumptions of spectators' sense of chronology and lines of influence. Questioning whether *theater* and *playhouse* should be seen as synonymous terms is provocative and inclusive.

Three essays are especially noteworthy. Jeremy Lopez studies Jonson, Webster, and Dekker's reactions to the failure of particular plays and argues for a culture focused on the expectation of failure among dramatists. He meticulously analyzes the final scene of *A Winter's Tale* as an allegory of such creative failure, where Paulina's hopes of reconciliation and revival are frustrated (chiefly by Leontes and herself) and defined subversively as types of sentimental nostalgia: an analysis that effectively demolishes decades of literary criticism.

Simon Smith uses the terms of Sharpham's epilogue to *Cupid's Whirligig* to frame a discussion about the relation of pleasure and judgment in theatrical contexts. His is a

neatly discriminating account of an intricate relationship, but it is somewhat marred by his reliance on Sharpham's term *censure* as synonymous with *judgment*, when that term has undergone a considerable shift in meaning toward the wholly pejorative since Sharpham's usage in 1607. This is unfortunate, when the whole drift of his argument is to determine the degree to which pleasure and judgment are closely allied at their best.

A surprising inclusion is an essay by the director Stephen Purcell, determining the value of practice as research, which he has discovered over numerous productions that work with and in conditions similar to the early modern theater—notably, he discusses direct audience-address and shared lighting states for cast and spectators. This allows a potential for conversations between stage and auditorium that engages with many of the more theoretical approaches elsewhere in the book. Helen Hackett contributes an exploration of the growth in popularity of choric injunctions to "imagine" what cannot be staged, but she does not properly explore how a disparate audience might be brought to share that communal activity. Purcell fills that gap, but is always precise in stressing that his company is not aiming at a "'recovery' of early modern practice" (226).

While theater studies is referred to elsewhere, it is not as actively embraced as a means to approach a testing of ideas as the editors' introduction leads one to expect. Interdisciplinary perspectives are a considerable strength throughout the anthology, but one is left wondering why, for example, the study of feet and walking is not related to the well-known practice of Cicely Berry, or to the work of Peter Brook with Moshe Feldenkrais and their concern to promote acting with the whole body. There is, also, Robert Lepage's *Coriolanus* (1993, visiting Nottingham Playhouse), which focused whole scenes on isolated body parts of the characters, research-as-practice of a physicality that expressively offset the play's rhetoric and cerebration. All this is past history, but it has impacted theater studies where Renaissance theater is taught. Interdisciplinary connections focusing on performance in studies like this would be apt and timely.

Richard Allen Cave, *Royal Holloway, University of London*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2024.30

Vital Strife: Sleep, Insomnia, and the Early Modern Ethics of Care.
Benjamin Parris.
Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2022. 298 pp. $64.95.

Everyone needs a good night's sleep, but the body's need for rest can be at odds with the social need for ever-wakeful vigilance. Benjamin Parris's *Vital Strife* takes as its starting point Stoic metaphysics and Seneca's Hercules surrendering to sleep, and weaves a narrative that unites a variety of primarily canonical early modern texts into the web of the dreamworld. This web is impressively intricate, drawing richly from a variety of classical, early modern, and contemporary sources, including Stoic metaphysics,