Stern's collection also reminds us that, despite literary historians' many attempts to offer comprehensive accounts of printed playbooks, the meanings that plays could evoke for audiences and readers shifted throughout the early modern period. András Kiséry's chapter on the use of play extracts in conversation thoughtfully extends the current discussion of humanist commonplacing of play dialogue beyond the carefully punctuated products of the bookseller's stall and finds that aphorisms and sententious lines regularly circulated in recursive and surprising ways. In a metaphor that has gained an unfortunate new context during COVID-19, Kiséry's demonstration of the way dramatic *sententiae* worked as viral forms show that readers' commonplacing notes aren't just "preparatory work for written composition, but supporting material for oral performance" (160). Likewise, in her essay on "Typography *After* Performance," Claire M. L. Bourne shows how the multiple agents responsible for the creation of printed playbooks used typographic mechanisms for displaying "non-lexical business," offering an ingenious appraisal of the first quarto of *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598) that paradoxically reveals how Q1 is "at its most theatrical when it is at its most bookish" (199). The collection is derived from a symposium of the Folger Shakespeare Library, and its chapters so deftly refer to each other, that, like the theatrical documents they discuss, the whole may easily be seen as much more than the sum of its parts.

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The Italian Novella and Shakespeare's Comic Heroines. Melissa Emerson Walter. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019. xiv + 280 pp. $65.

Walter's book is a welcome addition to a growing body of critical works addressing the complex influence of the early modern novella on some of the more canonical theatrical works of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. While specific plot points are analyzed, the book is more broadly focused on the influence of Shakespeare's significant knowledge of Italianate novella conventions on his overall plot and character development. Using a feminist lens and novellesque plot devices, Walter argues in great detail for the overarching influence of these novellas and novella collections on several of Shakespeare's comedies, concentrating primarily on their influence on his female characters.

Looking closely at the common novellesque motif of containment, Walter details how characters in the novellas are confined, either literally or figuratively, by otherwise benign household items such as trunks or baskets, or less benign concepts of jealousy and chastity. She notes particularly how these items or concepts appear in the novellas as metaphors, not only of the female characters' limited freedoms as women, but also as fluid concepts that can be used and manipulated as forms of protest of, or escape from,

these limitations. Walter examines in detail how Shakespeare adapts this complex imagery in order to give his comedic heroines increasing powers of subversion and control. She further demonstrates how, by placing these objects on the early modern stage, Shakespeare is able to develop a multiplicity of meanings. The trunk, for example, would have been seen as containing personal items, and thus as representative of self; it evoked thoughts of the theatrical trunk in which costumes would have been stored; and it represented the transitory nature of the trunk as it traveled between various towns and theaters. Thus, these things that are designed to confine persons or objects also paradoxically represent freedom or the potential of freedom for Shakespeare's comedic heroines, in much the same way that the trunk represents the freedom of the traveling acting troupes. Walter investigates how Shakespeare repurposes these novellesque spatial metaphors in ways that are increasingly complex, intertextual, and protofeminist.

As a whole, the chapters suggest a nonlinear but progressive evolution of thought within Shakespeare regarding his comedic heroines, from the silent consent of Kate and Silvia in *Taming of the Shrew* and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, to the more open-ended conclusions of plays such as *Measure for Measure* and *Twelfth Night*, and finally to plays such as *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Cymbeline*, in which Shakespeare brings his female characters into a more solid position of narrative control. Walter demonstrates how the heroines' gradual assertion of this narrative control in the comedies is influenced not only by the metaphors of enclosure and escape within the novellas but also by the Italianate novella collections as a whole, in which female characters control and direct the conversations and novella storytelling of a mixed gender group of people as part of the larger frame narrative. These group conversations, which provide audience reactions and responses to the novella tales, share similarities with the ongoing conversation between the early modern theater and its audience, which was likely also made up of a mixed group of people, encompassing many different ages, incomes, genders, and social statuses; these similarities help to demonstrate how the characteristics of these framing conversations made them ideal texts for Shakespeare to draw inspiration from and engage with as he wrote his plays.

Walter's book, aimed at a scholarly audience who is no doubt familiar with Shakespeare and at least passingly familiar with the evolving discussion surrounding Shakespeare's sources, successfully moves beyond the source texts themselves into an intriguing and convincing argument for more in-depth research into Shakespeare's complex and relational reading and writing processes, which include not only a reliance on plot but an expansive understanding of Italianate novellesque plot devices. We are left with a view of Shakespeare as a significantly collaborative artist who is constantly interacting with and reworking the many works of fiction, whether oral, written, or translated, that existed prior to and during his tenure.

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