

away “from conventional notions of heroism” (122) and “causes us to feel beyond ourselves for those outside the realm of our experience” (125), which is her definition of empathy. She compellingly connects this play with Sonnet 138. This superb book should find a wide readership.

Richard M. Waugaman, *Georgetown University School of Medicine*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2022.208

Shakespeare's Domestic Tragedies: Violence in the Early Modern Home.

Emma Whipday.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. xii + 262 pp. \$99.99.

The idea that there was a genre of play in Renaissance England called domestic tragedy, once so important to theater history and to the teaching of English literature, now seems quite old-fashioned. The very existence of such a genre has been argued to be the anachronistic imposition by much later scholars of their own ideas about the theater (and the domestic sphere). But in this new monograph, Emma Whipday makes a thorough and persuasive case both for the utility of this genre classification and for the centrality of the domestic sphere to English Renaissance thought in general.

Whipday begins her book by telling the story of Thomas Merry, a young man in Southwark who, in 1594, invited his neighbor to his house, killed him, and then chopped up his body. Merry enlisted his sister's help in disposing of the bits of the body. Six years later, a play called *The Tragedy of Thomas Merry* was performed at the Rose; the year after, the story formed one of the *Two Lamentable Tragedies*, a play that might or might not be the same as *The Tragedy of Thomas Merry*. This anecdote illustrates the extent to which so-called domestic tragedies were typically concerned with recent and local events and with people of middling (or lower) status. But Whipday goes on to point out that about five years after the *Two Lamentable Tragedies*, Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth*, and that part of the plot of *Macbeth* is clearly very close to the Southwark murder story.

The parallel is instructive: it illustrates that the separation between what we might think of high culture and low culture is difficult, if not impossible, to maintain when writing about Renaissance culture. As well, the parallel instructs us about what we will find. Whipday has here demonstrated her method throughout this fascinating and frequently illuminating book, in which she considers the full range of Renaissance prose culture—plays by Shakespeare's contemporaries, prose accounts, poems, legal texts, broadsides—in order to situate Shakespeare's famous texts (and she concentrates on the most famous of them) in relation to contemporary discourse about the home more generally.

Each chapter is focused on a concept associated with the domestic and on a play by Shakespeare: thus, chapter 1 is “home” and *The Taming of the Shrew*; chapter 2 is “household” and *Hamlet*; chapter 3 is “house” and *Othello*; chapter 4 is “neighborhood” and *Macbeth*; the afterword looks at “homelessness” and *King Lear*. My summary here reproduces the table of contents, but I want to point out that the decision to put Shakespeare’s name in the title and to present the chapters as looking at particular plays by Shakespeare gives a not entirely accurate presentation of the book’s contents. *Shakespeare’s Domestic Tragedies* looks at much else besides Shakespeare and never looks at Shakespeare in isolation. Each chapter considers numerous plays, with *Arden of Faversham* making particularly frequent—and always welcome—appearances.

There are certainly advantages to presenting a book as being about Shakespeare, but to me it seems to sell this book short. Whipday has written a critical discussion that is also a work of cultural history, with plays often no more privileged than broadsides or prose accounts. *Shakespeare’s Domestic Tragedies* is a remarkable work of synthesis, one that carefully considers the centrality of the idea of the domestic to all kinds of discourse in Renaissance England. I was particularly interested in and impressed by Whipday’s discussion of spatial boundaries and domestic architecture in chapter 3 and by her discussion of female agency in chapter 1.

One of the problems facing a scholar dealing with so many obscure texts is the necessity of providing a good deal of summary to help readers. Many scholars get bogged down in all the details, but Whipday has a pronounced talent for providing clear and concise summaries without straying from her argument. As a result, her book is a pleasure to read as well as being remarkably instructive. I predict that *Shakespeare’s Domestic Tragedies* will become a very influential book in Renaissance literary studies and in Renaissance social history.

Stephen Guy-Bray, *University of British Columbia*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2022.209

Time and Gender on the Shakespearean Stage. Sarah Lewis.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. xii + 276 pp. \$99.99.

We view ourselves through many lenses: gender, race, age, wealth, etc. But what about the lens of time? How did early modern understanding of temporality, intersecting with beliefs regarding gender, shape literature on the page and the stage? This highly readable text by Sarah Lewis seeks to answer these questions through analysis of early modern drama. The stage is the perfect setting to explore the early modern considerations of temporality because of the highly temporal nature of play-going and theater’s nebulous and complicated relationship to time. More generally, this book explores the push and pull between action and delay, personified through the figure of the revenger.