

However compelling *Queer Shakespeare* is as a collection—and the essays collected within it are, on the whole, compelling—there is a structuring irony to this volume. Because Stanivukovic insists Shakespeare “anticipates queer theory” (13), *Queer Shakespeare* reifies the desire for Shakespeare in early modern English studies rather than queering Shakespeare’s centrality to the field. This is not just a matter of Shakespeare’s encroachment upon all things early modern. The centrality of Shakespeare to queer theory in early modern studies poses a particular problem, for Shakespeare’s treatments of desire are, if not uniform, rather narrow. There is much to mine in Shakespeare’s oeuvre—this volume demonstrates that through and through—but one cannot help but feel that to queer Shakespeare would be to theorize queerness in early modern English literature without him.

There are glimmers of this possibility in the collection. Ian Frederick Moulton brings together Shakespeare’s sonnets and Becadelli’s *Hermaphroditus* (ca. 1425) to test the limits of queer literary historiography. Attending to what constitutes nature and the natural in *Macbeth*, Christine Varnado registers a queer ecology in excerpts incorporated from Middleton’s *The Witch* (1611). Closely rereading the early modern analogy between usury and sodomy, Eliza Greenstadt shows how the “strange insertions” of biblical text queer the comic plot of *The Merchant of Venice* (197). In his afterword, Vin Nardizzi muses on how the incorporation of Donne’s *Elegy 19* into Emma Rice’s 2016 Globe Theatre production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* reconfigures the erotic relations of an already queer adaptation of the play. All suggest that a queer Shakespeare relies on what is determinatively not Shakespeare.

There is no question that the essays collected in *Queer Shakespeare* demonstrate the degree to which Shakespeare remains vital to queer theory, and with their revitalizing readings, the scholars collected herein make a case for queer theory’s enduring vitality to Shakespeare studies. *Queer Shakespeare* is, in the end, a welcome addition to both, but more welcome if it were the last such addition for some time.

Jordan Windholz, *Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania*

Shakespeare’s Fathers and Daughters. Oliver Ford Davies.

The Arden Shakespeare. London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2017. viii + 214 pp. \$26.95.

Oliver Ford Davies is an actor of the stage and screen; an author of several works on Shakespeare and of *King Cromwell: A Play* (2005); and a historian and university lecturer. His gift for writing about dramatic characters and their dramatic effect on a play, its audience, and its actors is deeply ingrained in his artistic and academic credentials. In *Shakespeare’s Fathers and Daughters*, he studies the relationship between fathers and daughters through his many years of experience acting in Shakespeare’s plays but also within the frame of the

Renaissance period and the sources Shakespeare used. He locates Shakespeare's interest in this relationship in his education in the Roman dramatists Plautus, Seneca, Menander, and Terence. The relationship is central to a majority of the plays, he suggests, primarily because the potential for conflict between what he calls the *senex iratus* and *filia astuta* offers limitless opportunities for dramatic tension and resolution. While it covers ground known to specialists, as Davies points out, students and nonspecialists will find it a lively and charming discussion of Shakespeare's various and specific treatments of fathers and daughters.

The book is organized into seven chapters and an introduction, the first half of which covers "Early Plays," "Comedies," "Tragedies and Tragicomedies," and "Late Plays." The second half of the book looks more closely at the relationships, including Shakespeare's relationship with his own daughters, historical treatments of the role of father and daughter in the time period, and the relation of Shakespeare's plays to those of other playwrights of the period.

The book's strengths are in its second half, especially in the chapter on "Fathers and Daughters in Drama 1585–1620." The chapter on "Shakespeare and his Daughters" is speculative, as Davies admits, but covers legal records available from both daughters' marriages and Shakespeare's will. The chapter on "Fathers and Daughters in Contemporary Society" examines documents, such as those written by Robert Cleaver, William Whatley, Edmund Tilney, Juan Luis Vives, and Barnaby Rich, among many others who wrote extensively on the nature of women within religious and political discourses. While this material is familiar to historians and literary scholars interested in the *querelle des femmes*, the chapter offers an excellent overview of the period's fascination with and narratives about the nature of women.

But best of all, especially for those who know little about the drama of the period outside of Shakespeare, is Davies's chapter on the drama leading up to, during, and after Shakespeare's career. In addition, it is a useful reminder for those of us who are specialists of the many wonderful plays of the period. The influence on Shakespeare of earlier playwrights and his influence on those who came after are closely traced. Situating Shakespeare's work within a body of plays and a cohort of playwrights all writing during this exceptional time in the history of the English theater, Davies expands the frame in which Shakespeare's works ought to be seen and read. What comes through strongly and importantly is that he was one playwright among many; his work was not only influential to work that came after, but also indebted to work that came before his, and the many other playwrights of the time deserve more attention in classrooms and on stages than they often receive.

Shakespeare's Fathers and Daughters will be of interest to the many theater lovers who have enjoyed performances of Shakespeare's plays or Davies's earlier work, as well as to those who are drawn to studying the work and reception of Shakespearean drama. Davies is well versed in source study, performance history, and questions of attribution—all of which are at the center of many studies today—and he offers an energetic and

appealing study interested in the multiple and diverse representations of the complex relationships between fathers and daughters in the drama of the period.

Cristina León Alfar, *Hunter College, CUNY*

Hamlet and the Vision of Darkness. Rhodri Lewis.

Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017. xxii + 366 pp. \$39.95.

The court of Denmark under Claudius, Rhodri Lewis argues, is obsessively devoted to the hunt in all its brutal violence and deception. Images from art history, including Piero di Cosimo's late fifteenth-century painting, "A Hunting Scene," make the point visually. Hamlet is of course appalled by what he sees, and longs to be no part of it, but he too is enveloped in the grim culture of carnage. It infects his mind and intensifies his innate disposition to disengage himself from a universe that, as in *King Lear*, leaves a thoughtful person overwhelmed by feelings of powerlessness and alienation. Hamlet searches for humanist and Roman ideals of identity, both public and personal, that can suggest some meaning in his tortured existence, only to find himself compelled to dismantle those hopes as unavailing.

To get at this uncomfortable truth about Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Lewis insists that we must attempt to "reconstruct aspects of sixteenth-century life as he is likely to have encountered them." Those aspects include "the materials, language, ideas, beliefs, assumptions, orthodoxies, and constraints with which he worked, and which he transforms through the demands of his dramatic art" (7). That Lewis undertakes this tall order with extraordinary learning and critical insight is plentifully evident in the book's wide range of engagements with the text. The central image cluster of hunting, fowling, falconry, and fishing invites us to consider how the theatrical idea of acting manifests itself not so much in displays of human reason and verisimilitude as in actions calculated to mislead one's predators or one's prey. Hamlet attaches himself variously to the roles of the historian, the poet, and the philosopher, vainly seeking by these explorations to escape from the unwelcome and ill-suited role of the revenger. His philosophizing is part of a self-deceiving ruse from which he emerges as "confused, self-indulgent, and frequently heedless," failing to take responsibility for his actions, becoming at last "a victim, a symptom, and an agent" of the decay he so vehemently deplores (12).

The details of Lewis's astute close reading of *Hamlet* are unfailingly rewarding. The metaphors of hunting and entrapment in the play are everywhere to be found, in the image of the mousetrap, in the reverberations of meaning in the verb *unkennel*, in Laertes's talk of having become "a woodcock to mine own springe," in Hamlet's discourse of "slings and arrows," in Hamlet's playful appropriation of the call of the falconer to his hawk in "Hillo, ho, ho," and much more. Hamlet's attempts to make sense of the past ("Must I remember?") are echoed in Horatio's fervent hope that he can truly record "How these