

Part 3, “Ensuring the Journeys Continue,” offers reflections on how to sustain digital projects once they are complete, and whether digital scholars should also be programmers (Escobar Varela votes yes—at least somewhat). I found Chapter 8, “The Imperative of Open and Sustainable Data” particularly useful in its advice that scholars determine which components of a project should be saved and how, rather than trying to preserve a project across inevitable platform and software changes. Sharing data is critical “to allow others to verify our results, to enable other researchers to combine our data with their own datasets to ask new questions, and, equally important, for use in training courses” (170). Escobar Varela cautions, however, that “sharing without preservation is meaningless” (164). But what does it mean to preserve digital projects? Escobar Varela advises readers to identify “the data, the data models, and the visualizations and interfaces worth keeping for posterity” (174), while recognizing that the theorization of ephemerality in performance studies equips the field both to understand and to value the temporary nature of much digital inquiry. This chapter is vital reading for scholars, graduate advisors, and administrators who might find themselves in the position of overseeing, advocating for, or explaining digital projects and who thus need a concrete understanding of the challenges specific to digital scholarship.

With its impressive survey of scholarly projects, methods, and debates, *Theater as Data* is an important text for everyone working at the intersections of the digital humanities and theatre, dance, and performance studies.

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Games and Theatre in Shakespeare’s England

Edited by Tom Bishop, Gina Bloom, and Erika T. Lin. *Cultures of Play*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021; pp. 332. \$136 cloth, €108.99 e-book.

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In recent years, multiple edited collections have grown out of a surge of scholarly interest in medieval and early modern game cultures. *Games and Theatre in Shakespeare’s England* joins such volumes as *Games and Gaming in Medieval Literature* (ed. Serina Patterson, 2015) and *Playthings in Early Modernity: Party Games, Word Games, Mind Games* (ed. Allison Levy, 2017), but with a focus on the stage that makes its insights and concerns distinctive. As coeditor Gina Bloom argued in her earlier monograph, *Gaming the Stage* (2018), early modern theatrical audiences would have perceived an intimate link between stage plays and gaming and experienced the theatre as a participatory space where they did not simply *watch* a play but *engaged* in mutual play with the performers.

In the first chapter of *Games and Theatre in Shakespeare's England*, Stephen Purcell reminds us that both the Latin *ludus* and Middle English *game* carried a range of meanings that encompassed dramatic performance as well as games in the modern sense. Carefully teasing out the various meanings and connotations of “game” in this period, he suggests that many of them remained applicable to the stage even after it had ceased to be a direct synonym for “play.” Purcell pairs these observations with corroborative evidence from a surprising source: interviews with directors and actors from the early years of the modern-day Shakespeare's Globe. A running theme in these interviews is the idea that this archaeologically informed reconstruction of an early modern performance space lends itself to “gamelike performance [that] requires the active collaboration of audience members” (60).

Purcell's chapter introduces many of the themes his collaborators will explore, effectively setting up the first of the volume's three clusters of essays, which historicizes the connections between the stage and other forms of play, gaming, and sport from the late Middle Ages through the Caroline era. A second group of chapters offers a more in-depth exploration of the relationship between games and theatrical mimesis in specific plays, including *Troilus and Cressida* and *The Merchant of Venice*, while a third focuses primarily on digital gaming. This general plan accommodates widely varied topics and approaches, from David Kathman's meticulously researched analysis of attempts to regulate tennis and bowls in Tudor London (which, he argues, foreshadow later cultural anxieties about the stage), to Geoffrey Way's essay on appropriation and adaptation in modern-day video games inspired by Shakespeare's works. The contributors have taken pains to cite and respond to one another's work, which lends coherence to a volume that might otherwise seem overly eclectic.

Although there were a few cases where the connections between the playtext and the idea of “game”—or particular games—seemed tenuous, the best of these essays draw sophisticated connections between particular dramatic works and the history, nature, and uses of gaming. Katherine Steele Brokaw's analysis of dicing scenes in Tudor morality plays is a case in point, as she traces how these little-known texts reflect competing Catholic and Protestant concepts of salvation, as well as shifting social attitudes toward wealth and risk. Paul Menzer's essay on bowls is similarly detailed in its discussion of both text and context, though more playful in style. As both Brokaw and Menzer point out, actors whose characters play at dicing or bowls onstage are, in fact, playing at playing; “real” games of this type include a level of uncertainty that is incompatible with the scripted nature of a theatrical performance. Although it is simple enough to conceal the actual outcome of a die roll from the audience, staging a scene whose action depends on the visible and unpredictable motion of physical objects, and the real-life bowling skills of the actors, is far riskier. Nevertheless, a few plays from this period do take this risk, using bowls not merely as a metaphor but as a crucial plot element. Out of this tension “between the contingent and the determined” (167), Menzer spins a complex set of reflections on the nature of stage performance, time, and space.

Another standout essay from this collection, Rebecca Bushnell's “Videogames and *Hamlet*,” also takes gaming as a starting point to explore the relationships among chance, contingency, and choice. Whereas many of the essays in the digital gaming section have more to say about the ways game designers have appropriated and transformed Shakespeare than they do the text of the plays, Bushnell takes the

opposite approach, considering what we might notice about *Hamlet* if we reread the play after being immersed in a video game, with its branching narrative paths. We might, Bushnell suggests, approach it with heightened attention to the role of uncertainty and mischance, to the ways that choices shape a character's identity, to whether tragic endings are inevitable or chosen. "While a traditional view of *Hamlet* focuses on the outcome as Hamlet's assenting to his destiny to avenge his father's death and accept his own," she notes, "a focus on gaming. . . can make us look again at how Hamlet might be operating in a more open rather than closed world, defined by uncertainty rather than fatality" (236). *Hamlet* is, after all, a play whose most famous line turns on the word "or."

One of the great advantages of viewing the early modern stage in gaming terms is the framework that it provides for thinking about metatheatricality. This engaging and provocative essay collection opens by attempting to answer the question "What is a game?" but, by the time they finish, readers are also left with a range of new and surprising answers to the question "What is a play?"

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The Lines between the Lines: How Stage Directions Affect Embodiment

By Bess Rowen. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2021; pp. x + 247, 1 illustration. \$80 cloth, \$34.95 paper, \$34.95 e-book.

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In 2014, Alchemist Theatre in Milwaukee mounted a production of David Mamet's *Oleanna* in which they cast a male actor in the role of Carol, a female college student accusing her professor of sexual harassment. The theatre insisted that they had maintained the character's gender and instead pursued the idea of gender fluidity that they claimed to find in the text of the play itself. By approaching the script as an engagement with ideas rather than a strict set of instructions, the theatre found a way of performing the text that was transformative while still, in the theatre's eyes, honoring the play and the playwright. Bess Rowen explores and advocates for these kinds of possibility within playtexts in *The Lines between the Lines: How Stage Directions Affect Embodiment* by focusing on what she terms "affective stage directions" (4) and how they might open up space for new modes of engagement with and execution of scripts.

Describing herself as a connoisseur of "unusual stage directions," Rowen assembles a stunning but not overwhelming number of examples from a wide variety of plays (2). She uses these examples to constitute and illustrate the concepts central to her book. She defines affective stage directions as "stage directions written in a manner that aims to engage the actor affectively in the thoughts, feelings, and/or