

the word *common* designates two axes—a “horizontal” one that “presents the common as universal,” as the shared property of all, and a “vertical” one that designates “what is low or base within a social hierarchy” and therefore reinforces social divisions (7)—Rhodes raises fascinating questions about the interplay between the elite and the popular and the exclusions that accompany the construction of a common literary culture. (He importantly points out, for example, that the first citations in the *OED* for the word *literature* establish it “as a category that excludes women and the common people” [75].)

If I have one quarrel with Rhodes’s work here, though, it is that *Common* declines the opportunity to put its important observations into conversation with current debates in the humanities beyond the field of early modern studies. In the past decade or so, since at least the publication of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s *Commonwealth* (2009), scholars working largely in political philosophy and economics (but also in literary and cultural theory) have revitalized the notion of the commons at a moment when the privatization amplified by neoliberalism continues an unrelenting assault on the notion of common property. Clearly our late capitalist moment, marked by increasing precarity and division of wealth, as well as the appropriation of populist energies for elitist, even tyrannical, state power, is but the latest chapter in an ongoing narrative that begins (in part) with the period Rhodes recounts. Perhaps it is asking too much of a scholar of the sixteenth century to engage with this body of work and concerns. But it is a shame that Rhodes, like so many working in early modern studies, makes the antiquarian gesture of quarantining the period from more contemporary issues. Despite these limitations, though, Rhodes’s study is smart, ambitious, and essential. It will undoubtedly reshape, for years to come, our conception of the sixteenth century in England.

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*Elizabethan Publishing and the Makings of Literary Culture.* Kirk Melnikoff. Studies in Book and Print Culture. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018. xiv + 292 pp. \$70.

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Upon being introduced to Kirk Melnikoff’s *Elizabethan Publishing and the Makings of Literary Culture*, one is immediately taken with the presentation of the book itself: both dust jacket and title are attractively displayed, the typeface positioned clearly on pages of agreeable weight, the binding firm yet flexible within the hand. Such an aesthetically pleasing book not only attests to its performance as a publication (albeit a modern one), but also speaks to the early modern practices it embodies and explores—the literary, cultural, and artistic significance of bookselling publishers, men and women of the middling sort whose endeavors, especially during the latter half of the

Elizabethan period, fostered the emergence of a native literary culture and contributed to an evolving national consciousness. Melnikoff offers an impressively detailed consideration of book-trade publishing in England after incorporation of the Stationers' Company in 1557, when publishers became the dominant force responsible for the production, circulation, and reissuing of printed material. Elizabethan literary culture, Melnikoff insists, cannot be duly appreciated without an understanding of the norms, habits, and idiosyncrasies of the bookselling publisher.

Melnikoff requires readers to have some familiarity with publishing practices in sixteenth-century London: those who may not be well acquainted with the ins and outs of the book trade during this period may at first be challenged by this rigorous study. Especially helpful, however, are Melnikoff's introduction and first chapter, which prepare readers for in-depth discussions of the careers, collaborations, and specializations of particular publishers, such as Thomas Hacket, Richard Smith, Nicholas Ling, and the partnership between John Flasket and Paul Linley. There is a wealth of material here that shifts discussion from canonical authors such as Shakespeare or Marlowe to accentuate the labors, risks, and interventions of bookselling publishers. Although there was no single term for a person involved in the financing, production, and distribution of texts, Melnikoff carefully distinguishes between the "printer publisher" and "bookseller publisher" (6) to highlight the transition from craft to commerce. Whether in collaboration with printers, other publishers, translators, collectors, or authors, London's booksellers were "the book market's front line" (16), advertisers of their own wares. In addition to multivolume works or specialization in vernacular genres, publishers incorporated paratextual materials to distinguish their editions—designing title pages, adding prefaces, dedicatory epistles, commendatory verse, woodcut illustrations, and later including tables of content, indexes, and errata, as essential marketing tools.

Notably, Melnikoff takes time to acknowledge scholars from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (e.g., Edward Arber, A. W. Pollard, W. W. Greg, and R. B. McKerrow), while identifying with more recent studies, such as by Peter Blayney and Zachery Lesser, which address the motives and conditions, the whys and the wheres, that propelled publishing activities and the many sustained relationships that enabled the Elizabethan book trade. While earlier scholars addressed the malfeasance of booksellers (piracy for profit), Melnikoff considers stationers as law-abiding, creative agents, everlasting readers who had their finger on the living pulse of society. Rather than focusing on plays, as do Blayney and Lesser, Melnikoff examines the publication of "travel narratives, lyric poetry, literary anthologies, and erotic verse" (12), including the rise of vernacular genres, to confirm that publishers such as Thomas Hacket, Richard Smith, et al., made significant contributions to evolving literary forms. Although profit was a motivating force, many stationers participated in larger ideological or moral imperatives. John Day, for example, used earnings from printing inexpensive titles to support projects like Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*. Nicholas Ling, who brought forth both editions of *Hamlet* Q1 and Q2, promoted themes of political

virtue, especially in Q1 through the words of Corambis/Polonius, whose advice, set off by editing commas, reveals republican leanings.

To conclude, Melnikoff's book is intelligent and impressively researched. While the study may initially appear dense to those unfamiliar with the field, it is well worth reading. One of its many contributions helps us affectively see the bustling activities and productions of early modern booksellers, whose critical responses as invested readers represent the earliest reception of England's literary culture in its commercial and historical moment. Melnikoff teaches readers about early modern book production and culture: personally, I learned a great deal.

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*Producing Early Modern London: A Comedy of Urban Space, 1598–1616.*

Kelly J. Stage.

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The drama of early modern London has been popular territory in recent years. Making space in this crowded marketplace is not easy, but this new work announces itself on the scene as an important study. Tackling a corpus of selected city comedies, the author makes the case that “London plays comment on London by staging its topography, by remaking the strategies of control over urban space that are a part of London life, and by exposing the reproduction of, and sometimes the questioning of, those strategies” (5–6). As the title suggests, Stage's study is indebted to the work of Henri Lefebvre, exploiting the tension in his theorization between the “representation of space” and the “space of representation”—glossable as the conceptualizations of planners, set against lived space of users and artists. In a nuanced critical introduction, Stage argues for the particular properties of the London stage, bringing together Lefebvre's suggestive comments on the Elizabethan stage scene as “third space,” Yi-Fi Tuan's reflections on space versus place, and Robert Weimann's reflections on the “double gaze.” It is in the moment of performance, Stage argues, that these concepts “make something meaningful in their practice of iteration: iterating the city, iterating the drama, iterating the usefulness of the place of the stage, and iterating its ability to expand and project beyond these boundaries” (29). The four chapters that follow seek to map these iterations onto a series of innovations in form.

This work begins with Haughton's *Englishman for My Money*, where Stage contrasts the use of iconic settings—the Royal Exchange, St. Paul's—with those street scenes that exploit the qualities of the stage to challenge the certitude of place. Where Haughton's drama places this disruption in the service of an ideological narrative of English spatial