Her work, too, compels important questions about today's gaming and theater industries, particularly digital gaming and immersive theater. Can a video game successfully operate as a theatrical medium? How might theater producers invoke gaming today, as they did in early modern London? Will a renewed partnership usher in a new wave of theatrical gaming? What do the respective futures of gaming and theater look like whether we are producers, players, or spectators?

Tara Bradway, *St. John's University*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2021.289

The Shapes of Fancy: Reading for Queer Desire in Early Modern Literature.
Christine Varnado.
Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020. 330 pp. $30.

It is perhaps too easy to say that Christine Varnado, in her thoughtful book *The Shapes of Fancy: Reading for Queer Desire in Early Modern Literature*, seeks to queer our understanding of queer; however, that is precisely what she does. Moving away from a definition of queer that relies primarily on gender, sexual identity, or an understanding of who is doing what to whom, Varnado's interest is in returning to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's understanding of the term. Here it resumes its adverbial meaning as a "dramatic motion, rather than a category label" (2); queer texts, therefore, are those that adopt strange shapes or structures or construct desire that goes awry in either expected or unexpected ways. Her approach, heavily influenced by psychoanalytically informed theory, allows her to both revisit canonical queer texts like Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* in order to shine new light on their structure and rediscover underexamined works, like Richard Brome's *The Antipodes*, that display queer characteristics. While some of her readings are more successful than others, her project, as a whole, provocatively expands thinking about how we read and how we choose to understand and define particular desires.

Varnado divides her book into four chapters, each examining a different form of queer fancy: serving as a willing go-between; exhibiting a promiscuous appetite; being persecuted and projecting sexual suspicion; and longing for lost love objects. The first two chapters focus solely on dramas—Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher's *Philaster*, *or Love Lies a-Bleeding*, Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker's *The Roaring Girl*, *Twelfth Night*, and Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*—while the last two bring nonfictional texts into the conversation: *Newes from Scotland*, Jean de Lery's *Histoire d'un voyage faict en la terre du Bresil*, Thomas Herriot's *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, and John White's "The True Pictures and Fashions of the People in That Part of America Now Called Virginia." She defends the move to include witchcraft narratives and travel literature, as well as the departure from English writings, but such a defense seems unnecessary. The concerns raised by the nonfiction texts intersect with the fictional ones in suggestive

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2021.290 Published online by Cambridge University Press

ways; the excessive desires unearthed through the cross-examination of witches takes us back to an earlier claim that *Bartholomew Fair* is a play about what it looks like to want too much, for example. Important, too, in including these last two chapters with their turn to violence is that they work to belie the idea that queer desire is necessarily liberatory and demonstrate how queer power dynamics can be both aggressive and erotic.

One of the strongest readings arises from her consideration of the erotic triangle in *Philaster*, a play with a sparse scholarly trail. While we are accustomed to plays in which a woman's cross-dressing allows her to gain access to a male beloved, here we have a character, female Euphrasia-male Bellario, who complicates the expected formula. The androgynous Bellario serves as a go-between for a master and mistress who are blocked in love, but theirs is not the typical intermediary role. While the play is similar to Jonson's *Epicoene* in that the audience does not discover that Bellario is cross-dressed until the play's end, it deviates from much early modern drama as Bellario has no desire to pair off with either member of the couple. Unlike *The Roaring Girl*'s Moll, Bellario wants to remain in "proximity and service" (59) to both of them. What is queer in this reading, according to Varnado, is not the direction in which desire flows—be it male to female, female to female, or male to male—but the existence of instrumentality as the focus of erotic desire. The very shape of a relationship is, thus, reconfigured.

Chapter 3's examination of the way witches are constructed out of paranoia in a series of collaborative and erotic acts allows for a revised approach to a well-worn topic; at times, though, the sharpness of the individual readings get lost amid Varnado's repeated desire to call such textual examinations queer. It is understandable that she wishes to return to her thesis; however, the argument does not need repetition to speak to either its imaginative scope or its critical usefulness.

Mara I. Amster, *Randolph College*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2021.290

The Restoration Transposed: Poetry, Place and History (1660–1700).
Gillian Wright.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. xii + 266 pp. $99.

Restoration literature has so often been treated by the academy as the redheaded stepchild of the long eighteenth century that Gillian Wright's new study focusing on English and Irish poetry from 1660 to 1700 is especially welcome and timely. It is also welcome for another reason. Wright redirects our attention from the London-centric drama and satires of the period to other places in which literature was produced and disseminated, notably Dublin and the coterie of writers that flourished there around Katherine Philips in the early 1660s, and to the still-undervalued influence Spenser had on Restoration writers. Scholars of drama know the formidable influence Jonson

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2021.290 Published online by Cambridge University Press