

# Editorial

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This first issue of volume 12 has a varied assortment of stimulating articles and notes. David Kathman's essay on commercial playing in the 1540s revises the popular view of professional theatre as an Elizabethan phenomenon. Anne Lancashire's reassessment of Dekker's *The Magnificent Entertainment* resolves the problems of earlier scholars regarding its date of composition and circumstances of performance. Unusual and therefore very welcome in this issue is Jennifer Nevile's discussion of early modern dance and the dearth of records for steps and patterns in Stuart masques. Sarah Johnson re-examines Dekker, Ford, and Rowley's *The Witch of Edmonton* from the point of view of silence and what speech or lack of it implies for early modern women. We are doubly pleased to have this article because the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women selected the original short version as the winner of the 2008 award for the best graduate student paper presented at a conference in 2007. The conference paper, 'Disturbing Physicality: Mother Sawyer and her "Sweet Tom-boy" in *The Witch of Edmonton*', was presented at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference in Minneapolis, October 2007.

Two articles focus on the Caroline period. We are fortunate to be the journal approached to publish preliminary findings on the manuscript copy of *The Humorous Magistrate* (1637) discovered in the University of Calgary's library. Mary Polito and Jean-Sébastien Windle discuss the political and theatrical difficulties of this anonymous play at such a time in the pre-civil-war years, comparing the Canadian Osborne manuscript with the Arbury manuscript in the UK, and speculating on treatments of legal issues (earlier the purview of Jonson and Middleton) and certain resonances particularly evoking Jonson's late interest in pastoral settings, an interest shared with Shakespeare, and echoed by Brome in *A Jovial Crew* (1642). The coincidence of history and theatre also emerges in Christina Bosco Langert's essay about cross-dressing and skimmingtons, particularly the Lady Skimmingtons who protested enclosure. This article, too, has a Brome connection, in the enactment of a skimming-

ton ride with a Lord and Lady Skimmington in Heywood and Brome's *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634).

Our notes include two on *Doctor Faustus*: Joseph Candido considers the staging of time in 5.2, and Gabrielle Sugar evaluates the larger intellectual issues connected to the study of time in the Copernican universe, an issue connected importantly to the German university where Faustus was thought to have studied — but which German university? The argument hinges on whether we accept the A-text or the B-text location. The last note takes us forward again to the Caroline period, where readers comment in inscription and letters on *The Works of John Marston*, and thereby provide us with unusual access to the reader as audience.

We announce that *Early Theatre* will be offering three prizes on a biennial basis. The categories will include: (1) best article on a theatre history topic relying on REED-style records; (2) best article on the interpretation of a topic in early drama; and (3) best note on any topic.

Finally, with this issue we welcome John Craig, a Tudor historian with an interest in parishes and drama, as our newest member of the editorial board.

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