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Issues in Review

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Disability in Early Modern Theatre

Introduction

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The introduction to this selection of essays briefly outlines the recent flourishing of scholarship in disability studies and its perhaps rather belated entry into the field of early modern drama. It discusses the broader opportunities presented by synthesizing developments in disability theory with research on early modern theatre and argues for the vital importance of historical disability scholarship. While introducing some of the directions that disability scholarship on early modern theatre might take, this introduction argues that studying early modern disability offers innovative ways of imagining difference in bodies and minds both in the past and now.

In an influential essay first published in 1997, Douglas Baynton commented that 'disability is everywhere in history, once you begin looking for it, but conspicuously absent in the histories we write'.[1] Drawing parallels with gender studies and critical race studies, Baynton argued that disability needs to be centred as an historical category of analysis, whose impact cannot be limited to specialized studies that focus on disabled people and institutions, but must become part of wider understanding of every aspect of human society. The present collection of essays draws attention to some of the less obvious places disability appears in early modern theatre in the expectation that, once acknowledged, the pervasiveness

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and importance of disability as a category of analysis in the field cannot be disregarded.

In the two decades since Baynton's piece appeared, scholarship on disability in global history and in western European literature has expanded apace, building on foundations laid by scholars such as Lennard Davis, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, and David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder. Much of this scholarship concentrates on literary texts from the nineteenth century onwards and on prose narrative form (with the notable exception of Shakespeare's *Richard III* discussed below). The focus on modernity is understandable given that scholars regularly posit the nineteenth century as the period in which western taxonomies of normality became institutionalized.[2] These structures make possible the medical and social models of disability, the dominant modes of naming and conceptualizing disability in the present day.[3]

The impression, therefore, can be that scholars of the literature of earlier historical periods have been slow to take up Baynton's challenge, perhaps put off by Lennard Davis's assertion that disability was 'not an operative category before the eighteenth century'.[4] Although some may object that early modern scholars interested in issues such as monstrosity, disease, violence, and medicine have long been engaging in disability-adjacent scholarship, the explicit engagement with disability per se has been somewhat belated in relation to, say, Victorian studies or medieval studies. Indeed, in 2011 David Houston Wood reported encountering 'reluctance' amongst early modern scholars to engage with disability and suggested that they 'would do well to observe medieval scholarship's eager embrace of disability methodologies'.[5] This situation has now begun to change significantly, especially due to the pioneering work of Allison Hobgood and David Houston Wood, whose special issue of *Disability Studies Quarterly* focusing on 'Disabled Shakespeares' appeared a decade ago.[6] They followed this up with their edited collection, which directly challenged Davis's statement dismissing the premodern from the history of disability, stating categorically that '"Disability" was indeed an operational identity category in the English Renaissance'.[7]

Disability has now become one of the most exciting and lively areas of early modern scholarship. Monographs are beginning to emerge that focus on aspects of the topic such as fakery and charity, theatricality, and monstrosity using a specifically disability studies methodology.[8] In addition to further collections focusing on early modern disability, such as Sujata Iyengar's *Disability, Health, and Happiness in the Shakespearean Body,* volumes such as *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment* include multiple essays that engage with disability topics.[9] This work all comes in the broader context of burgeoning historical

research on disability such as the forthcoming *Cultural History of Disability in the Renaissance.*[10]

Now that disability is established as a topic of importance in early modern literature and drama, this selection of pieces aims to offer some indication of directions this work might go next. This introduction will outline some of the possibilities that disability theory might offer the study of early modern drama. I will begin by examining the reasons for the prominence of Shakespeare's depiction of Richard III in the discussion of premodern disability and its distorting effect on the field. Going beyond Richard, I will then illustrate some areas that the next phase of disability scholarship might address before briefly outlining the three aspects of this new work on which the essays collected here focus.

In his essay 'Of Deformity', Francis Bacon expresses deep suspicion of disabled individuals, saying that 'Whosoever hath any Thing fixed in his Person, that doth enduce Contempt, hath also a perpetuall Spurre in himselfe, to rescue and deliver himself from Scorne'.[11] Bacon is clearly working from a prior assumption of an aesthetic and functional ideal of human bodily and mental form. To deviate from this form is to meet with social disapproval. Bacon also suggests, however, that a compensatory heightened ability in one area makes up for the disabled individual's lack in another, resulting in a level of cunning that makes them 'good Spialls, and good Whisperers', that is, spies and intriguers.[12]

The idea of the uncannily hyper-able, clever, and vicious disabled figure immediately evokes Shakespeare's depiction of Richard III. In the case of Richard, his physical deformity is both the stigma and the stigmatizing force. In other words, his disability is both sign and signified as it both causes and represents his moral perfidy. Famously, he himself tells us that his physical deformities are the result of birth defects:

> I, that am curtailed of this fair proportion,
> Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
> Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time
> Into this breathing world, scarce half made up. (1.1.18–21)[13]

Richard himself thus directs us to understand his disability in terms of what is known as the medical model. In these terms, disability is seen as something that inheres in the body of the individual as a disease or lack which requires medical intervention or cure. If this is possible, the person can be fixed so they can live a full life, but without medical cure, the disabled individual must simply suffer. The representation of that suffering typically leads to one of two imaginative options: angelically serene fortitude, which is most notoriously characteristic of

nineteenth-century prose fiction, or bitter rage, which leads us back to Richard and his declaration that 'I am determined to prove a villain' (30).

Mitchell and Snyder suggest that Richard is seeking revenge, but that rather than targeting any particular enemy, he finds that it is the entire 'universe that spites him'.[14] In this sense, he seems to have more in common with characters like Iago or Don John from *Much Ado About Nothing,* who are simply inexplicably antipathetic, than with other characters who have disabilities. In fact, Shakespeare's corpus offers very few, if any, other characters with congenital physical disability. Richard is unusual, not typical. But although Richard is an outlier, because he matches certain tropes of disability that are recognizable today (particularly those that inhere in narrative prose, and particularly those that conform to the medical model of disability), he has been the preferred case study of early modern disability.[15]

Richard certainly conforms to the pattern outlined in Mitchell and Snyder's *Narrative Prosthesis,* whereby the exposure of deviance in a text is inevitably resolved by that deviance being eliminated — that is, by the disabled person being cured or killed.[16] But concentrating on Richard gives too simplified a picture of disability on the early modern stage. For instance, physical disability is explicitly present in *The Fair Maid of the Exchange,* which features a character called Cripple. (The play's full title reads *THE* Fayre Mayde of the Exchange: With The pleasaunt Humours of the *Cripple of Fanchurch.*[17]) Although he is usually just called Cripple, he is also referred to as the Drawer, a reference to his profession as a pattern-tracer. Parts of the plot and action revolve around characters coming to his shop to request, deliver, and collect cloth. Economically independent and in possession of mobility aids that mean his impairment is not disabling for the most part, Cripple is at the centre of the play's comic machinations, arranging the disguise plot that wins the hand of the fair maid of the title for the able-bodied hero, Frank. That Frank must disguise himself as Cripple to win the affections of Phillis adds to the complexities of the way that disability is implicated within the play's portrayal of homosocial circuits of loyalty and debt.[18]

Another lame figure who resists elimination is Ralph from *The Shoemaker's Holiday.* Ralph's war injury renders him unrecognizable to the wife he left behind, though not to his fellow shoemakers. His rehabilitation seems to centre around the idea that he can still work for a living — perhaps an indication of the way that disability was increasingly becoming subject to formalized assessment as a way of determining who should be eligible for charitable and parish support, as Lindsey Row-Heyveld has shown.[19] Ralph's reuniting with Jane at the end of the play

suggests that, even more than Cripple, he remains fully part of the social world he began in before going off to war.[20]

These examples show that bodily wounds, sensory impairments, and prostheses are potential areas for further study in early modern disability, extending the reach of topics such as aging, warfare, and violence to examine the ways that, when these experiences are represented on stage, they interact with notions of deformity, including how far they work to establish and maintain a norm or to destabilize it. They also raise questions to do with early modern staging practices and the relationship between actors' bodies and characterization. Ralph starts the play with two functioning legs but halfway through becomes lame. What precisely that might mean in the staging of the play is not necessarily clear. Although all literary practice engages with bodily identity and its limits in some way, drama foregrounds the body — or rather, a range of bodies — as the very medium through which it makes its claims. Disability theorizations of embodiment could enrich early modern scholars' explorations of casting practices, gender, and doubling. For instance, consider Tobin Siebers's formulation of what he calls 'complex embodiment', where he insists that the body and its representations are 'reciprocal' and 'mutually transformative'.[21]

While questions of performance and interpretation might seem to apply more readily to physical impairment, the representation of cognitive impairment is still also linked to the presence of the body on stage. For instance, there are many cases of madness on display in early drama to the extent that it becomes something of a cliché. The history of madness, even more so than of disability more generally, is one of shifting definitions and ontologies.[22] In terms of drama's representation of these ontologies, however, for madness to be legible, it must also be a collection of symptoms or physical actions that can be enacted on stage. The concept of the 'bodymind' has the potential to offer scholars a tool to bring out the complexities of bodies, cognition, and psychology in early modern drama. This term, as Margaret Price acknowledges, has roots in trauma theory and Buddhist philosophy, and presents a way to recognize the congruity (or even indivisibility) of mental and physical processes.[23]

Further scholarship on these lines may help elucidate the relationship between madness and other kinds of cognitive impairment in early modern drama. The range of meanings of the term 'fool' in different periods and contexts has been investigated thoroughly in the work of Irina Metzler.[24] The application of this scholarship to the term's usage in drama will be important in understanding the association between different kinds of marginality and intellectual disability; the difference between 'natural' and 'artificial' fools on stage; the hierarchy of relative

value of these different kinds of fooling and the kinds of behaviour that they are associated with.

One frequently seen performative element of different kinds of foolishness in early modern drama is speech. The misuse of terminology and vocabulary frequently denotes foolishness (see, for example, Balurdo in Marston's *Antonio's Revenge*), suggesting that such misunderstandings generate comic moments of superiority for audiences. Speech style also becomes a site of disability when considering stammering or muteness on stage. While we might expect that fluency is a requirement of successful staging of drama, play-texts clearly indicate that dysfluent speech was frequently represented on stage. Whether this speech is spluttering deployed temporarily to denote heightened emotion (as in the cases of Albano in Marston's *What You Will* and Redcap in *Look About You*) or stuttering as a specific trait that enables a character to be successfully impersonated, plays from this period present dysfluent speech as an impairment. As Carla Mazzio has pointed out, in the so-called 'age of eloquence', the inability to speak well, or to perform one's speech correctly, was a disabling position.[25] More work remains to be done on stammering on stage, its representation in textual form, and its relationship to the early modern understanding of the bodymind and the self. As Dolmage notes, the history of normativity 'is a history that has always been *about* rhetoric (who can speak) as it has always been rhetoric*al* (an invested series of arguments)'.[26] Who gets to speak on stage and how they speak is a nuanced reflection of the power structures of early modern culture.

This short survey of the range of disability on stage in early drama demonstrates the heterogeneity of the category of disability and of disability experience. What brings these differing issues together is that they all involve the interaction between the concrete reality of the bodymind and the ideas through which the bodymind is interpreted. As Siebers points out, 'the complex embodiment apparent in disability is an especially strong example to contemplate because the disabled body compels one to give concrete form to the theory of social construction and to take its metaphors literally'.[27] Disability studies insists on engaging with both the social and cultural construction of disability and its materiality simultaneously.[28]

In the broadest sense, disability can be understood, in the words of Mitchell and Snyder, as 'the master-trope of human disqualification'.[29] Alterations over time in what we might consider to be part of disability as a category show that current modes of understanding disability are not inevitable by revealing alternative modes of understanding, speaking of, and living in different kinds of bodies and minds. As Mitchell and Snyder suggest, historical disability studies 'provides

an important barometer by which to assess shifting values and norms imposed upon the body'.[30] Siebers reminds us that, although there is a huge range of variation in human populations and individuals, many types of variation 'simply do not count' in terms of identifying an individual or population as minoritized. Siebers goes on to note 'it is not the fact of physical difference that matters, then, but the representation attached to difference'.[31] If, as Dolmage points out, 'norms change, but the presence of a desired, central, and privileged position persists',[32] examining these categories in historically distant contexts can defamiliarize the assumptions with which we approach the stages of our own time.

Examining closely different kinds of disability in early modern drama is itself, then, an ongoing project which promises to reveal interesting facets of the way identity, power, and ideologies of normality operate in the period as well as insight into staging, acting, and theatregoing experiences. Early modern disability scholarship needs to go further than this, however, in terms of fully realizing the potential disability theory has to offer, by exploring the more fundamental question of how disability can operate as an aesthetic and a rhetoric in early modern drama.

Siebers defined a 'disability aesthetics' as one that

> refuses to recognize the representation of the healthy body — and its definition of harmony, integrity, and beauty — as the sole determination of the aesthetic. Rather, disability aesthetics embraces beauty that seems by traditional standard to be broken, and yet it is not less beautiful, but more so, as a result.[33]

Although Siebers's discussion here is explicitly about modern and postmodern art, we must at least consider how far there may be an alternative tradition of disability counter-narratives and counter-representation in the early modern period. This could include, for instance, how far the grotesque and the tragic can be recast as potentially resistant to the normative. Mitchell and Snyder invoke Bakhtin to note that although the grotesque is distinct from disability, 'the two share cultural co-ordinates'.[34] The theoretical models Rosemarie Garland-Thomson outlines in relation to freak shows could offer possibilities for understanding the range of human forms and desires on show in a play like *Bartholomew Fair,* for example.

In *Disability Theatre and Modern Drama,* Kirsty Johnston applies to modern drama the principles outlined by Siebers in relation to modern art.[35] While the disability theatre Johnston outlines is a contemporary political movement, its insights into bodily difference, as well as aspects of stagecraft, communication, and collective response to difference, can offer insight into hitherto hidden aspects of premodern stages. Further, contemporary stagings of early modern

plays can learn from the techniques and casting practices of modern disability theatre. In early modern texts, disability stands out as marked only when remarked upon. It shows up to us when a character is explicitly constructed as disabled. As Garland-Thomson notes, characterization is an 'illusion of reality' in which 'a few determining strokes' are deployed to create a sense of a character. Thus, disabilities invoked in this way are inevitably overdetermined, and, as Garland-Thomson comments, 'literary texts necessarily make disabled characters into freaks, stripped of normalizing contexts and engulfed by a single stigmatic trait'.[36] By contrast, then, practice as research can show us what happens when the actor's body contributes disability knowledge to characterization. Casting actors with disabilities in roles which are not explicitly disabled brings disability aesthetics into dialogue with the ideas and ideologies of the text.

Scholars of disability in modern drama sometimes assume a prior tradition of disability as inevitably metaphorical from which modern drama departs. For example, Carrie Sandahl suggests that

> from the use of blindness as barometer of truth in *Oedipus,* to physical deformity as sign of evil in *Richard III,* to disease as inherited moral sin in *A Doll's House,* to muteness as the effect of unspeakable violence in *Mother Courage,* to mobility impairment as existential prison in *Happy Days* and *Endgame,* to a limp as emotional impediment in *Glass Menagerie,* the disabilities of dramatic characters always signify beyond the conditions themselves.[37]

Sandahl argues for a different kind of drama that departs from a posited tradition of disability as cipher. Early modern scholars can contribute more detail and more nuance to this understanding of the ways disability signified in the past and challenge the assumption that past views of disability conformed to a singular tradition.

There are several important lines of inquiry here, including what can be discovered about the lives and experiences of performers who may have been disabled in addition to the ways in which bodily difference is represented on stage. Ann M. Fox urges critics of contemporary drama to go beyond cataloguing examples and evaluating how far they might be seen as regressive or progressive, and instead to focus on the question 'to what extent can a disability aesthetic be identified?'.[38] Scholars of early modern drama similarly have much work to do in excavating the examples of disability that can be found in the archive, and this will be important for discovering the full extent of the rich insight into different ways of inhabiting the world, and attitudes towards it that drama from the premodern period

can offer us. As Siebers notes, a preference for able-bodiedness 'appears as a conceptual horizon beyond which it is difficult to think'.[39] Premodern drama presents us with possibilities for imaginatively engaging with different conceptual horizons. Even if the examples in these texts do not provide positive models of engaging with disability, their difference from our own ideological positioning is itself a way to dislodge the seeming inevitability of our own assumptions.

As a category of analysis, disability helps further the critique of social hierarchies based on somatic difference and thus provides new ways to understand the underpinnings of many kinds of inequality. In addition to examining the portrayal of explicitly acknowledged difference on stage, disability studies can highlight the more pervasive use of language and imagery about disability. Disability metaphors, slurs, aspirations, discussions of bodies and minds, all give insight into disability rhetoric, a rhetoric that operates as 'a flexible form of stigma to be freely applied to any unknown, threatening or devalued group'.[40]

As Hobgood and Wood suggest, we need to 'cease gawking unilaterally at the extraordinary'.[41] The representation of disability on view in early modern drama offers a far greater range and complexity than early modern scholarship has hitherto recognized even if, or even especially if, its meanings are significantly different from our own. Some of these representations overlap with later ways of understanding this identity, and some of them do not. Rather than resolving the contradictions inherent in early modern portrayals of disability by holding them in tension with each other, we can see some of the ways that disability remains a contradictory and unstable identity category.

The pieces assembled for this collection develop these investigations further, breaking new ground in their exploration of original questions about early dramatic material. In her reading of *King Lear,* Lindsey Row-Heyveld develops the idea of 'disability knowledges', that is, insights that can only be gained through the somatic experiences that combine bodily pain, difference, or impairment with social stigmatization. Building on her earlier work on the early modern stage's obsession with faking disability and the implications of this for charity, Row-Heyveld shows that *Lear,* unusually, allows for the insights gained through Edgar's feigning of madness to be included in the range of experience that constitutes disability knowledge. Understanding disability as broadly as possible in this way demonstrates that the experiential learning of bodyminds is central to the play's staging of the human condition.

Row-Heyveld's work engages with the multiplicity of disability in *King Lear,* a multiplicity that allows for multivocality in its representation of disabled experience. She draws out the nuances of the varying responses of the Fool, Lear, Edgar,

and Gloucester to their situations to reveal a productive dissonance in the play's vocalizations of disability, pain, and meaning-making. Row-Heyveld integrates her reading of disabled knowledges with Jasbir A. Puar's notion of 'debility' in economically and socially marginalized populations in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Row-Heyveld thus elucidates connections between precarious populations in early and late capitalism, in particular the systems of justice that withhold support from the 'undeserving poor'. Her essay in this way makes crucial connections between early modern scholarship and current issues of vital concern.

Justin Shaw's essay synthesizes discourses of race and disability in an important contribution towards extending our understanding of intersectionality and the need to consider these categorizations together. His discussion of *Othello* explores the further implications of a central tenet of disability studies: the recognition that far from conforming to an ideal of independence, human beings are inevitably interdependent and require social networks to survive. Using the idea of the 'care web', Shaw posits *Othello*'s radically different understanding of how we care and why, a position exploited and debased by white supremacy in the play. Instead of focusing on Iago's corruption of networks of sociality and dependency, however, Shaw turns to Cassio to examine this character's complicity in the subverting of care. Othello's position as a minoritized and racialized subject who is also a disabled subject means that the moments in the play where his body and identity can be judged, categorized, and deemed abnormal function to uphold and reinforce racist and ableist norms.

Shaw's reading of ethical and unethical care in the play draws on theorizations of care by Eva Feder Kittay and Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha to consider its relationship to hierarchy and power. In Shaw's analysis, the opportunities for care presented in *Othello* become alibis that conceal anti-black and ableist practices. Shaw shows how, in this way, white racial power preserves itself through exploiting notions of care. Othello's situatedness in a care web (that includes Cassio as a 'friend') does not provide the protection and support that he expects. It instead offers a vector for the exploitation and disciplining that destroy him. Shaw reads Cassio's response to Othello's epileptic fit as a pivotal moment of distancing that objectifies Othello, preserving Cassio's comfort, whiteness, and social power. Instead of replicating Cassio's gesture of turning away, Shaw calls on us to attend to the interconnectedness of Othello and his care web (as represented by the handkerchief) on Othello's own terms.

Katherine Schaap Williams's essay presents a significant development in our understanding of disability rhetoric in early modern drama through her examination of the language of disability on stage in the period. Beyond the portrayal

of characters with specific impairments, disability figures saturate the language of early modern drama, constructing imagined monsters and abject bodyminds that, via a kind of negative projection, offer the bodies on stage an abject other against which to construct an implied norm. Williams analyzes examples from three Shakespeare plays which invoke counterfactual bodies on stage, whether in contrast to embodied characters or, in the case of *Much Ado About Nothing,* non-existent characters who are brought into being linguistically purely through miscomprehension. Without an embodied stage presence, these spectres of disability show how negative metaphors of disability can become so routine as to be invisible.

Williams points out how Constance's assertion of her son's claim to inheritance in *King John* relies upon her invocation of an alternative and repellant imagined version of him in order to emphasize, by contrast, how deserving he is. Williams draws out the similarity between the sheer quantity of references to bodily difference in Constance's speech and Adriana's description of Antipholus in *The Comedy of Errors.* These passages share a superfluity of terminology detached from any bodily referent. *Much Ado* extends this detachment in the creation of the non-existent character of 'Deformed' through Dogberry's imagined extrapolation from the watchmen's misunderstanding of an adjective as a noun. Williams's detailed and careful elucidation of the function performed by these non-characters makes explicit the ongoing negotiation between literal and metaphorical references to disability, and the need for early modern scholars to attend to both.

This collection offers a glimpse into some of the possible directions that disability studies can offer scholarship of early modern drama. The variety of bodyminds, impairments, and experiences on display on early modern stages means that there is no singular mode of understanding or presenting disability in the early modern period. These premodern representations of disability nevertheless constitute a foundational moment for the making of modern identities. They offer on the one hand a neglected pre-history of the medicalization and pathologization of whole categories of deviant bodies and minds, and on the other they offer opportunities for alternatives to abjection for our imagining (and staging) of historical experiences of disability, and new ways of thinking about aesthetics, knowledge, rhetoric, and power.

Notes

1 Douglas C. Baynton, 'Disability: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', *Disability Studies Quarterly* 17 (1997), 82. See also Catherine J. Kudlick, 'Disability History: Why We Need Another "Other"', *The American Historical Review* 108.3 (2003), 764, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/108.3.763.

2 Baynton, 'Disability', 83, suggests that 'normal' emerges in the late nineteenth century as a replacement for the premodern category of 'natural' as defined in opposition to 'monstrous'.

3 For a clear account of these two models, see Carol Thomas, 'Disability Theory: Key Ideas, Issues and Thinkers', in *Disability Studies Today,* ed. Colin Barnes, Mike Oliver and Len Barton (Cambridge, 2002), 38. See also Tom Shakespeare, *Disability Rights and Wrongs Revisited,* 2nd edn (London, 2014), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315887456.

4 Lennard J. Davis, *Bending Over Backwards: Disability, Dismodernism, and Other Difficult Positions* (London, 2002), 57.

5 David Houston Wood, 'Shakespeare and Disability Studies', *Literature Compass* 8.5 (2011), 280, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-4113.2011.00803.x.

6 The issue includes six pieces on topics ranging from Julius Caesar's epilepsy to alcoholism in *Othello.* See Allison Hobgood and David Houston Wood, 'Introduction: Disabled Shakespeares', *Disability Studies Quarterly* 29.4 (2009), n.p., http://dx.doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v29i4.991.

7 Allison Hobgood and David Houston Wood, *Recovering Disability in Early Modern England* (Columbus, 2013), 7.

8 Lindsey Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability in Early Modern English Drama* (Cham, 2018), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92135-8; Genevieve Love, *Early Modern Theatre and the Figure of Disability* (London, 2018), https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350017238; and Elizabeth B. Bearden, *Monstrous Kinds: Body, Space, and Narrative in Renaissance Representations of Disability* (Ann Arbor, 2019), https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.10014355.

9 Tobin Siebers, 'Shakespeare Differently Disabled', and Vin Nardizzi, 'Disability Figures in Shakespeare', in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment: Gender, Sexuality, and Race,* ed. Valerie Traub (Oxford, 2016), https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199663408.001.0001; Sujata Iyengar, ed., *Disability, Health, and Happiness in the Shakespearean Body* (New York, 2015), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315753119.

10 Susan Anderson and Liam D. Haydon, eds, *A Cultural History of Disability in the Renaissance,* 6 vols (London, 2019), 3; for single-volume long-view histories, see Roy

Hanes, Ivan Brown, and Nancy E. Hansen, eds, *The Routledge History of Disability* (Abingdon, 2017), https://doi.org/10.1201/9781315198781, and Michael Rembis, Catherine J. Kudlick, and Kim Nelsen, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of Disability History* (Oxford, 2018), https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190234959.001.0001.

11 Francis Bacon, *The Essayes or Counsels, Civill and Morall,* ed. Michael Kiernan (Oxford, 2000), 15.134.

12 Ibid.

13 All references to this play cite William Shakespeare, *Richard III,* ed. John Jowett (Oxford, 2000).

14 David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse* (Ann Arbor, 2000), 101, https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.11523.

15 See for example Ian Frederick Moulton, '"A Monster Great Deformed": The Unruly Masculinity of *Richard III*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 47.3 (1996), 251, https://doi.org/10.2307/2871377; Michael Torrey, '"The plain devil and dissembling looks": Ambivalent Physiognomy and Shakespeare's *Richard III*', *English Literary Renaissance* 30.2 (2000), 123, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6757.2000.tb01167.x; Katherine Schaap Williams, 'Enabling Richard: The Rhetoric of Disability in *Richard III', Disability Studies Quarterly* 29.4 (2009), https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v29i4.997; Robert McRuer, 'Richard III: Fuck the Disabled: The Prequel', in *Shakesqueer: A Queer Companion to the Complete Works of Shakespeare,* ed. Madhavi Menon (Durham NC, 2011), https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822393337-034; Katherine Schaap Williams, 'Performing Disability and Theorizing Deformity', *English Studies* 94.7 (2013), https://doi.org/10.1080/0013838x.2013.840125; David Houston Wood, '"Some tardy cripple": Timing Disability in *Richard III*', in *Richard III: A Critical Reader,* ed. Annaliese Connolly (London, 2013); Geoffrey A. Johns, 'A "Grievous Burthen": Richard III and the Legacy of Monstrous Birth', in *Disability, Health, and Happiness in the Shakespearean Body,* ed. Sujata Iyengar (London, 2015), 41, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315753119.

16 Mitchell and Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis,* 1.

17 Thomas Heywood, *The Fayre Mayde of the Exchange: With The pleasant Humours of the Cripple of Fanchurch* (London, 1607; STC: 13317).

18 See Katherine Schaap Williams, '"More Legs Than Nature Gave Thee": Performing the Cripple in *The Fair Maid of The Exchange*', *English Literary History* 82 (2015), 491, https://doi.org/10.1353/elh.2015.0019.

19 Row-Heyveld, *Dissembling Disability.*

20 Susan Anderson, 'Limping and Lameness on the Early Modern Stage' in *Performing Disability in Early Modern English Drama,* ed. Leslie Dunn (New York, forthcoming).

21 Tobin Siebers, *Disability Theory* (Ann Arbor, 2008), 25, https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.309723.
22 The recent emergence of mad studies as a discipline wrests some control of scholarly narratives surrounding madness from practitioners to survivors. On the intersection of mad studies and disability studies, see Elizabeth Donaldson, ed., *Literatures of Madness: Disability Studies and Mental Health* (Cham, 2018), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92666-7.
23 Margaret Price, 'The Bodymind Problem and the Possibilities of Pain', *Hypatia,* 30.1 (2015), 269, 280, https://doi.org/10.1111/hypa.12127. See also Eli Clare, *Brilliant Imperfections: Grappling with Cure* (Durham, 2017), xvi, https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822373520.
24 Irina Metzler, *Fools and Idiots? Intellectual Disability in the Middle Ages* (Manchester, 2016), https://doi.org/10.7765/9781784996802. See also David Wright, *Downs: The History of a Disability* (Oxford, 2011).
25 Carla Mazzio, *The Inarticulate Renaissance: Language Trouble in an Age of Eloquence* (Philadelphia, 2008), https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812293401.
26 Jay Timothy Dolmage, *Disability Rhetoric* (Syrcause, 2014), 30.
27 Siebers, *Disability Theory*, 30.
28 Dolmage, *Disability Rhetoric*, 8.
29 Mitchell and Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis*, 3.
30 Ibid., 51.
31 Siebers, *Disability Theory*, 17.
32 Dolmage, *Disability Rhetoric*, 21.
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