consistency. In short, the particular qualities of closet drama or, equally, an author's sense of theatricalism – a major interest of current scholarship on these plays – emerge more clearly if the original stage directions are retained.

The concerns raised here about incomplete collations and regularized stage directions are meant to inform specialists in search of something like a definitive edition. Purkiss makes no claim to providing such texts, nor can she, considering the aims and format of the present series. While scholars of closet drama and textual history will want to continue consulting the original versions, all other readers will find this a reliable and sophisticated edition.

MARTA STRAZNICKY

John Southworth. *Fools and Jesters at the English Court*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 1998. Pp viii, 216. Illus.

John Southworth's study attempts to correct distorted popular images of the English court fool deriving 'from folklore, emblematic art … and more recent stage traditions' (vii). Instead of gathering evidence about fools from fictional sources such as jestbooks, Southworth compiles 'facts' about actual, 'professional fools' who 'practised their particular skills at the English court', operating from the assumption that 'the smallest facts are inherently more interesting than large but unsupported generalities' (vii). Southworth's book is indeed filled with fascinating information about medieval and early modern court fools, and its copious illustrations provide a rich and useful visual sense of the fool's evolution throughout this period. Academics should be aware that the book is designed for a general readership; there is little archival work, some of the evidence is anecdotal, and interpretation of that evidence is sometimes lacking altogether. With this intended audience in mind, the book can be enjoyed by scholars seeking an introduction to the topic, by readers interested in the history of material culture, and perhaps particularly by theatrical professionals concerned with the tradition of the fool.

Given Southworth's own background as an actor, director, and historian of early entertainments, the book's strength on theatrical matters is perhaps no surprise. The arguments made about costuming in the penultimate chapter are among the most compelling. There, Southworth shows how English court fools have been incoherently costumed in modern productions, owing partly to confusion about the meaning of the word 'motley'. Common cultural assumptions about fools' costumes have failed to consider sartorial distinctions

between the appropriate dress for 'natural' or innocent fools on the one hand, and 'artificial', or clever fools on the other. Southworth demonstrates (contra Leslie Hotson in *Shakespeare's Motley*) that innocents were dressed in long, homespun material made out of the drab material known as motley, while only clever fools dressed in that motley that consisted of differently coloured pieces of cloth sewn together. Further, most clever fools did not wear distinguishing dress, but were outfitted in the latest fashion and so indistinguishable from the other domestic courtiers with whom they were classed; for these fools, motley may simply have referred to the colourfulness of their au courant attire. According to Southworth, there is no mention in English records of the 'eared or belled hoods … the coxcombs, baubles or marottes … so frequently pictured in continental illustrations of fools' (169). Shakespeare's work demonstrates that the playwright was aware of the distinction between the dress of different types of fools – understandably given the proximity of 'his fool consultant and performer', Robert Armin (173).

In these arguments about costuming Southworth's extraordinary attention to factual detail is harnessed to a larger claim, but much of the rest of the book lacks such an analytical framework. The book begins with a general overview of 'the curious double-act of king and fool, master and servant, substance and shadow' (3), then provides accounts of natural and artificial fools – an opposition to which a third category, dwarf, is added. Clever fools are described in chapters focused on the subcategories of 'Warrior Fools', 'Norman Buffoons', 'Minstrel Fools', and '"Jugler" and Jester'; 'innocents' are given two chapters covering the medieval and Tudor periods, in addition to more specific studies of Will Somers and Jane, Queen Mary I's natural. Though intriguing, the nature of the evidence Southworth uses here is at times suspect. Despite the introduction's intention to use only factual information, Southworth sometimes relies on literary accounts of fools in, for example, Celtic myth. Use of this evidence may not be problematic to scholars wary of the epistemological distinction between literary and historical texts, but it does seem to contradict Southworth's claim to be 'separating fact from various kinds of fiction' (vii). Since here and throughout the book almost all primary sources are cited from secondary ones, it is hard not to wonder how the story of the fool would shift with a fuller investigation of relevant archival material.

These evidentiary difficulties are somewhat alleviated as the book's focus moves into the sixteenth century. Later chapters develop the argument that in the sixteenth century, fools were gradually disassociated from personal relationships to monarchs, a transition that can be viewed either as 'enfranchise-

ment from the remaining restraints of royal and magnate patronage as more remunerative opportunities opened up to them, or as a forced accommodation to changing tastes and conditions' (121). Though the argument for professionalization is surely true over the long haul, this portion of the book includes claims that may surprise scholars of Elizabethan theatre. Richard Tarlton, for example, is promoted to the status of Elizabeth's 'court fool'; in fact, he could more accurately be described as an actor with a court preferment on the side than as a court fool who moonlighted with the Queen's Men. Subsequent chapters on early Stuart fools and innocents, including Archibald Armstrong and Queen Henrietta Maria's dwarf, Jeffrey Hudson, nicely substantiate one of the book's subsidiary claims: that the nature of court fooling was closely tied to the character and political needs of the ruling monarch. These last are among the book's most satisfying chapters because they include a wealth of detailed evidence about the relationship between fools and their royal patrons, put to good interpretive use by the author. Southworth's earlier accounts of the medieval and Tudor period now serve to show how these Jacobean and Caroline fools simultaneously participated in, and deviated from, a long tradition of court foolery. Throughout the book, but particularly in these final chapters, Southworth makes the potential for further study clear: subsequent work might delve deeper into the political uses of the fool, for example, or consider what changes in the fool's role indicate about the changing nature of monarchy, or explore how the royal sponsor's gender might affect the fooling relationship. Southworth has already provided a beautifully illustrated overview of the topic that lays out territory for such future work.

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