

**Shakespeare for Women?  
Margaret Cavendish and Judith Drake  
on Seventeenth-century Theatre,  
Pleasure and Education**

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Many female political writers who attempted to promote feminist causes in seventeenth-century England were famously pious. Accordingly, they tended to regard theatre and other vernacular entertainments as vulgar or rarely expressed interest in them. *Womens Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed of by the Scriptures*, a pamphlet written by Quaker leader Margaret Fell and published in 1666, defends women's right to preach in public, but never mentions actresses' on-stage speeches, which were authorised in 1662.<sup>1</sup> Another Quaker leader, George Fox, whom Fell would marry in 1669, opposed theatre, and it is possible that Quaker antitheatricalism also influenced her.<sup>2</sup> Bathsua Makin, a scholar who taught several noblewomen, including Princess Elizabeth, the daughter of Charles I, derides play-going as an idle pastime in a 1673 pamphlet promoting women's education: "Persons of higher quality, for want of this Education, have nothing to employ themselves in, but are forced to Cards, Dice, Playes, and

frothy Romances, meerly to drive away the time.”<sup>3</sup> Despite this antitheatrical tendency, Makin uses a *theatrum mundi* metaphor to describe God’s creation: “But the Earth, the Theater on which we act, abideth forever.”<sup>4</sup> This expression illustrates how deeply theatre was embedded in the culture of intellectual women in seventeenth-century England.

Mary Astell, famously dubbed the “first English feminist,” never hid her dislike for theatre.<sup>5</sup> Ruth Perry states that Astell “did not enjoy drama in an age when most educated people thought at least some plays or playwrights worthy of serious attention”; indeed, she alludes to only one play, George Villiers’s *The Rehearsal*, in her works.<sup>6</sup> Although Astell also makes a vague reference to Thomas Wright’s *The Female Virtuoso*’s in *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*, it is highly unlikely that she knew theatre well.<sup>7</sup> Without mentioning the titles of plays in her works, she repeatedly criticises theatre in general as an example of the narrow range of female education. She sees little value in popular entertainments, asking “how can she possibly detect the fallacy, who has no better Notion of either than what she derives from Plays and Romances?”<sup>8</sup> These entertainments symbolise male oppression of women’s education: “They allow us Poetry, Plays, and Romances, to Divert us and themselves.”<sup>9</sup> Astell highlights their harmful effects on women.

There is a sort of Learning indeed which is worse than the greatest Ignorance: A Woman may study Plays and Romances all her days, and be a great deal more knowing but never a jot wiser. Such a knowledge as this serves only to instruct and put her forward in the practice of the greatest Follies. (*A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*, Part I, 81)

For Astell, popular fiction, including dramatic works, provides women with false knowledge and fails to help them achieve wisdom. According to her, if women seek to improve themselves by “real Wisdom,” they will never “pursue those Follies,” but instead recognise the difference

between “*true Love* and that *brutish Passion* which pretends to ape it.”<sup>10</sup> Astell’s view appears to be influenced by the antitheatricalism, or fear of the power of imitation “to forge a false identity between external image and internal reality.”<sup>11</sup> Despite this generally negative attitude towards drama, like Makin’s metaphor of theatre, Astell makes references to drama, demonstrating the infiltration of theatre culture into the seventeenth-century English society of intellectuals, including those with antitheatrical tendencies.<sup>12</sup>

Countering this trend, however, some female writers, prominently Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, and Judith Drake, attempted to defend theatre in the educational context. They emphasised the value of English theatre, particularly the works of William Shakespeare, as educational material providing people, especially women, with pleasure. Pleasure has been a significant concept in thinking about the relationship between literature and readers and has been explored by critics, including Roland Barthes, but it has often been overlooked in the discussion of canonisation.<sup>13</sup> As Frank Kermode points out, “pleasure and the canon may seem uneasy bedfellows” in literary studies.<sup>14</sup> This paper discusses how Cavendish and Drake’s critical approaches treated theatre as an important source of pleasure and an essential element of Englishwomen’s learning, focusing on their patriotic intent to canonise seventeenth-century English playwrights’ works, as exemplified by Shakespeare.

### **Margaret Cavendish’s Promotion of Pleasure for the Commonwealth**

Margaret Cavendish was herself a playwright, as well as a philosopher, critic and novelist. Possessing abundant knowledge of English drama, she wrote Letter 123 in *Sociable Letters*, or the earliest extant substantial review of Shakespeare’s plays.<sup>15</sup> Katherine M. Romack links Cavendish’s praise of Shakespeare to her anti-feminist tendencies, while

other scholars interpret her critical analyses as much more feminist.<sup>16</sup> This section focusing on pleasure, politics and education discusses Cavendish's critical review of Shakespeare in relation to her other works.

Cavendish has a complicated relationship to feminism and antifeminism. In her early work *The Worlds Olio* (1655), she repeatedly makes misogynist comments mixing insecure, anxious politeness and acrimonious, even desperate laments, declaring that "there is great difference betwixt the Masculine Brain and the Feminine, the Masculine Strength and the Feminine."<sup>17</sup> However, as Miriam Wallraven suggests, such a sentiment "not only conflicts sharply with Cavendish's own life, aims and self-representation, but most notably with her other texts."<sup>18</sup> Her fictional works, such as *The Blazing World*, are argued to deeply explore the political and philosophical issues surrounding gender in a uniquely feminist manner.<sup>19</sup> Perhaps James Fitzmaurice's comment on anti-feminism in Introduction to *Sociable Letters* most accurately describes her seemingly contradictory attitude: "Cavendish rarely makes a point without some sort of irony involved."<sup>20</sup> She has a distinctly wry sense of humour, which sometimes baffles readers.

Cavendish's attitude toward pleasure is far more clear-cut: it is one of her major concerns in writing. In *Sociable Letters*, she defines herself as a pleasure-seeker with "a Love to Peace, Ease, and Pleasure, all which you Enjoy."<sup>21</sup> She places little value on "Constraint," regarding pleasure and love as goals in everyday life following the philosophy of Epicureanism.<sup>22</sup> This is clearly shown in her closet drama *The Convent of Pleasure*, a play about women's search for genuine pleasure. Lady Happy decides to "live incloister'd with all the delights and pleasures that are allowable and lawful" against those who "bar themselves from all other worldly Pleasures," but ultimately, she discovers the necessity of the pleasure of love.<sup>23</sup>

Literary activities stand as significant sources of pleasure in Cavendish's critical theory. In the first dedication to her

*Plays* in 1662, she declares the importance of pleasure, or delight, in reading:

To Those that do delight in Scenes and wit,  
 I dedicate my Book, for those I writ;  
 Next to my own Delight, for I did take  
 Much pleasure and delight these Played to make[.]<sup>24</sup>

She advocates not only the readers' pleasure but also the author's pleasure. Pleasure is her foremost motivation for writing, and she does not shy away from asserting her own right to pleasure or from defining herself as a provider of pleasure for readers. Royalist and anti-Puritan playwrights in the Restoration, such as Aphra Behn and George Etherege, often regarded pleasure as a feature of cavalier culture.<sup>25</sup> Writing closet drams, Cavendish was no professional playwright, but her pleasure-loving literary aesthetics was part of the theatre culture in this era.

Cavendish considers pleasure and educational quality to be two of the most important criteria for evaluating literary works. According to *Sociable Letters*, a poem is worth reading when it is "Pleasant" or "Profitable."<sup>26</sup> Pleasure or delight in reading derives from "Probabilities," the touch of "Truth" presented vividly and naturally as "not beyond the Power of Men, nor Unusual to their Practice."<sup>27</sup> Profit from reading depends on the educational quality of the work, whether it can provide readers with the "Actions" to be "Practised" or "Imitated."<sup>28</sup> In another letter, Cavendish equates "Profit" and "Pleasure" with "any Probability to Increase your Knowledge, or to Inrich your Understanding."<sup>29</sup> In *Sociable Letters*, Cavendish emphasises the readers' profit from gaining knowledge and their pleasure of activating their own imaginations through reading.

Cavendish's promotion of pleasure is inseparable from her political dedication to the benefit of the commonwealth.<sup>30</sup> In *The Worlds Olio*, influenced by Thomas Hobbes, she defines her commonwealth, or Britain, as an entity of people of various social backgrounds ranging from "Nobility" to "Labourers"

under “The Contracts betwixt the King and people.”<sup>31</sup> In this commonwealth, “People shall have set times of Recreation, to ease them from their Labours, and to refresh their Spirits.”<sup>32</sup> In Letter 169 of *Sociable Letters*, Cavendish compares the art of war with the art of poetry and associates the poet’s work with nationalism, or the defence of the commonwealth. Soldiers, who provide security through their courage, and writers, who provide recreation through their poems and plays to “Grace their Triumphs” and to “Please their Eyes and Ears,” are important components of the commonwealth. These two classes of professionals are ill-treated, “although a Commonwealth neither have Pleasure nor Security without them.”<sup>33</sup> She even argues that “all Natural Poets shall be honored with Title, esteemed with Respect, or enriched for the Civilizing of a Nation . . . by Soft Numbers, and pleasing Phansies.”<sup>34</sup> In this context, Cavendish champions English as a language that provides pleasure to the nation. Although it is inappropriate to “condemn another Language,” she maintains that “our natural English Tongue was significant enough without the help of other Languages.”<sup>35</sup>

*The Blazing World* connects pleasure and education in a patriotic promotion of vernacular poetry and theatre. The leading character, the Duchess, tells the Emperor that she “shall endeavour to order your Majesties Theatre, to present such Playes as my Wit is capable to make” in order to fill the need for “such a Theater as may make wise Men.”<sup>36</sup> Theatre must provide both pleasure and education for the public. The fictional Duchess’ determination “to establish a new national theatre” in the *Blazing World*, an imagined utopian realm, can be interpreted as Cavendish’s “focused critique of England’s (to be deplored) lack of quality imagination.”<sup>37</sup> *The Blazing World* also condemns the “Artificial Rules” adopted by contemporary dramatists: “the natural Humours, Actions and Fortunes of Mankind, are not done by the Rules of Art.”<sup>38</sup> The “Rules of Art” satirically refers to the rules of three unities, which were imported from France and became

popular in Restoration England, and caricatures the French influence on English drama.<sup>39</sup> The patriotic promotion of drama in *The Blazing World* was influenced by the Anglo-Dutch war of the mid-1660s, and the descriptions of the female monarch in the text reflect “Cavendish’s imperial dreams concerning England’s future role as world leader.”<sup>40</sup> In the state of Cavendish’s ideal commonwealth, citizens enjoy vernacular poetry and drama with abundant pleasure and high educational quality. Unlike other female writers in this period, Cavendish strongly believed in the educational value and pleasure of English drama for the nation.

Cavendish’s praise of Shakespeare should be analysed in conjunction with her political vision of the commonwealth. Letter 123 of *Sociable Letters* marks an attempt to canonise Shakespeare, defending him against those who give little credit to his plays because of the playwright’s coarse humour. The letter praises Shakespeare’s natural wit “to Express to the Life all Sorts of Persons, of what Quality, Profession, Degree, Breeding, or Birth soever” and “to Express the Divers, and Different Humours, or Natures, or Several Passions in Mankind.”<sup>41</sup> Cavendish asserts that “a fluent Wit” enabled him to write plays “by Natures light,” implying that nature requires the art of wit to be properly represented in poetry.<sup>42</sup> As Michael Dobson points out, Restoration playgoers in the 1660s commonly ascribed art to Ben Jonson, nature to Shakespeare and wit to John Fletcher, enshrining these three as “the Triumvirate of wit.”<sup>43</sup> Shakespeare was famous for his “Nature,” whereas Cavendish closely linked nature with wit in appreciating the playwright, who never relied upon the “Rules of Art.”

Cavendish’s efforts to canonise Shakespeare came as part of her project to promote pleasure for the benefit of the commonwealth. As a commonwealth under a king, Britain needed a “Natural Poet” to evoke national pleasure, and according to Cavendish, Shakespeare’s widely acclaimed ability as “a Natural Orator, as well as a Natural Poet” made

him a leading candidate for the national poet.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, her imagined commonwealth was composed of various kinds of people ranging from royals to peasants, and Shakespeare was exceedingly skilled at portraying “all Sorts of Persons” or any given member of the commonwealth.<sup>45</sup> In addition to many “Clowns, Fools, Watchmen, and the like,” he could describe women of every social background, from the Queen of Egypt to poor female commoners in London:

One would think that he had been Metamorphosed from a Man to a Woman, for who could Describe Cleopatra Better than he hath done, and many other Females of his Creating as Nan Page, Mrs. Page, Mrs. Ford, the Doctors Maid, Bettrice, Mrs Quickly, Doll Tearsheet, and others, too many to Relate?<sup>46</sup>

The metaphor of metamorphosis connotes two modes of representation. Shakespeare could represent, or portray, any kind of women in his plays, and he could also represent, or symbolically become, every woman in the commonwealth. In Cavendish’s argument, Shakespeare possessed three advantages: he was a “Natural Poet” unaffected by artificial pedantry or French influence, his generous wit enabled him to represent all types of people and nature in his plays, and he created theatrical masterpieces in English, the most important vernacular language in Cavendish’s imagined commonwealth.

For Cavendish, nominating Shakespeare as the national poet also helped justify her status as a woman writer. As scholars point out, her praise of Shakespeare stemmed in part from her literary strategy of refuting the criticism that her gender caused her want of learning. As she wrote in *Sociable Letters*, her early education was not sophisticated enough for a woman with a passion for learning as she “never went to School, but only Learn’d to Read and Write at Home, Taught by an Antient Decayed Gentlewoman.”<sup>47</sup> By praising Shakespeare, she circuitously compared herself to him because both lacked



knowledge of Latin, Greek and military science but actively wrote in English.<sup>48</sup> In Cavendish's argument, though, such a lack of knowledge did not greatly matter as English should be used in the commonwealth. This commonwealth that she imagined, whose national poet was Shakespeare, recognized poets who entertained others with writings in English and whose ranks could include women writers such as herself. In addition, Shakespeare's historical status as a slightly old-fashioned Elizabethan dramatist also contributed to her appraisal of him as the national poet. Cavendish tended to idealise the reign of Elizabeth I as a model for the reign of Charles II, and as suggested by *The Blazing World*, a utopian novel featuring a female monarch, she had nostalgic feelings for the Elizabethan era.<sup>49</sup> Shakespeare, a dramatist who wrote vernacular plays under a powerful female monarch, could easily be incorporated into her patriotic and self-serving pro-woman arguments.

Cavendish's promotion of vernacular theatre and Shakespeare was, in a sense, pro-women, because she tried to defend women writers including herself. It does not necessarily mean that she aimed to defend women in general. As Lisa T. Sarasohn states, "Cavendish certainly was not a feminist if feminism is taken to mean the empowering of all women."<sup>50</sup> Cavendish recognised herself as a uniquely and proudly ambitious female writer during the Restoration, when it was rare for women, especially aristocratic women, to publish their own writings on natural philosophy and literary criticism. Her literary strategy only worked for exceptionally talented women, such as herself, Elizabeth I, and her favourite historical female character, Cleopatra, whom she defended as a "Great Person her self, and born to have Power."<sup>51</sup> Aphra Behn, the first professional female playwright in the English commercial theatre, adopted a similar strategy. Behn claimed Shakespeare, who lacked "Learning," as her predecessor in the dedication to "Good, Sweet, Honey, Sugar-candied Reader" in *The Dutch Lover*, a play published in 1673.<sup>52</sup> As Stephen

Orgel argues, Behn suggested that “since the uneducated Shakespeare wrote better plays than the learned Jonson, and since the only intellectual advantage men have over women derives from their education, women ought to be as good playwrights as Shakespeare.”<sup>53</sup> Both Cavendish and Behn attempted to defend their lack of education by associating themselves with Shakespeare; however, their vindication was applicable only to intellectually active female writers such as themselves, not to all women. Unlike other female writers with pro-women attitudes in the Restoration era, Cavendish highly appreciated the pleasurable and educational value of vernacular theatre but did not discuss it within a wider feminist context. This would be done by Judith Drake, around thirty years after Cavendish published her works.

### Judith Drake on Drama and Education

I mean the many excellent Authors of our own Country, whose Works it were endless to recount. Where is Love, Honour and Bravery, more lively represented, than in our Tragedies? Who has given us nobler or juster Pictures of Nature, than Mr. *Shakespear*? Where is there a tenderer Passion, than in the Maid's Tragedy? Whose Grief is more awful and commanding, than Mr. *Otway's*? Whose Descriptions more beautiful, or Thoughts more gallant, than Mr. *Dryden's*? When I see any of their Plays acted, my Passions move by their Direction; my Indignation, my Compassion, my Grief, are all at their Beck. Nor is our Comedy at all inferior to our Tragedy; for, not to mention those already nam'd for the other Part of the Stage, who are all excellent in this too, Sir *George Etherege* and Sir *Charles Sedley*, for near Raillery and Gallantry, are without Rivals; Mr. *Wycherley* for strong Wit, pointed Satyr, sound and useful Observations, is beyond Imitation; Mr. *Congreve*, for sprightly genteel, easy Wit, falls short of no Man. These are the Masters of the Stage.<sup>54</sup>

As the preceding quotation clearly demonstrates, Judith Drake's *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*, a feminist pamphlet written as a letter from one woman to another and first published in 1696, contains a considerable number of theatrical references, including a panegyric of Shakespeare. Although Drake's work has recently attracted scholars' interest, her references to drama have rarely been studied thoroughly and have been given only passing mention.<sup>55</sup> This section explores how Drake incorporated her theatrical interests into feminist arguments about women's education and discusses her use of seventeenth-century drama, including Shakespeare.

Little is known about Drake's life, and *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex* was ascribed to her only recently. Astell was long considered to have written it, and there has been much confusion about the author's identity since scholars began to cast doubt upon Astell's authorship. In 2001, Hannah Smith identified Judith Drake, wife of a doctor and political writer James Drake, as the author, although Judith's birth name and birth date are still unknown.<sup>56</sup> The couple may have married before Judith wrote *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex* as its front matter contains James's commendatory verse and letter to the author. After James died on 2 March 1707, Judith edited and posthumously published his work *Anthropologia Nova, or, A New System of Anatomy*.<sup>57</sup> It is also known that after her husband's death, she practised medicine and defended herself against the accusation of unauthorised medical practice in 1723.<sup>58</sup> Nothing is known about her educational background, but like other British women writers in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, such as Astell, Drake read John Locke, Thomas Hobbes and René Descartes.<sup>59</sup>

A prominent characteristic of Drake's writing is her intensive use of theatrical imagery with a sense of pleasure. She frequently compares her work to a stage performance with no negative connotations, treating readers as pleasure-

seeking theatregoers. She commences and ends *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex* by using expressions which remind readers of theatre. In her dedication to Princess (later Queen) Anne, she employs words related to the theatre to praise her patron: “Madam, Tho’ the World may condemn my Performance, it must applaud my Choice in this Address.” Such addresses to literary patrons were relatively common in Restoration England.<sup>60</sup> In concert with this address at the beginning of this essay, she concludes with an apology for her poor performance: “Which if I have in any measure satisfied, I have my Ambition, and shall bee nothing further, than that my ready Obedience may excuse the mean Performance of.”<sup>61</sup> This essay has a structure similar to seventeenth-century English plays, whose prologues and epilogues often humbly beg for the audience’s favour.<sup>62</sup>

After this dedication, strong theatrical imagery, especially that involving puppet shows, continues throughout the preface, suggesting that Drake had familiarity with popular entertainments and targeted readers with some knowledge in this field: “Prefaces, to most Books, are like Prolocutors to Puppet-Shews; they come first to tell you what Figures are to be presented, and what Tricke they are to play.” Drake also mentions “*Smithfield at Bartholomew-Tide*,” where readers can enjoy “*S. George’s*, *Bateman’s*, *John Dorie’s*, *Punchinello’s*, and the *Creation of the World*.”<sup>63</sup> As Jonson writes in his play *Bartholomew Fair*, Bartholomew Tide was famous for puppet shows. The names mentioned were popular subject matters in puppet shows. “*S. George’s*” refers to St. George plays.<sup>64</sup> “*Bateman’s*” means *Bateman*, or *the Unhappy Marriage*, a puppet show perhaps based on William Sampson’s *The Vow Breaker* or the old ballad “A Warning for Maidens, or Young Bateman” and performed around September 1694 at the latest.<sup>65</sup> “*John Dorie*” likely is a show based on the popular ballad “*John Dory*” (The Child Ballads Index 284).<sup>66</sup> *Punchinello*, a prototype of “*Punch*,” and stock character in Italian puppet shows, became popular in England after the

1660s.<sup>67</sup> The “Creation of the World” also became common subject matter of puppet shows.<sup>68</sup> By sprinkling this preface with puppet-show titles popular in the latter half of the seventeenth century, Drake acts as a puppeteer determined to please the audience and speak a prologue to win their attention.<sup>69</sup>

Throughout the essay, Drake compares everyday life to the stage and understands social behaviours as role playing. One striking example of her theatrical knowledge is her satire “beaux,” or “fops,” oft-used terms to refer to excessively fashion-obsessed men. Drake criticises those who act poorly due to vanity and declares that “the first Rank of these is the *Beau*,” saying that “so prevalent are our Vanity, and this apish Humour of imitation, that we persuade ourselves that we may practise with Applause, whatever we see another succeed in.”<sup>70</sup> This criticism of vanity indicates Drake’s familiarity with the satires of fop characters, caricatured for their theatricality in various types of literary works and frequently staged as stock characters on the Restoration stage.<sup>71</sup> The most famous examples of fops on the Restoration stage were Sir Foppling Flutter in George Etherege’s *The Man of Mode* (1676) and Sir Novelty Fashion in Colley Cibber’s *Love’s Last Shift* (1696) and John Vanburgh’s *The Relapse* (1696). Restoration drama distinguished between genuinely sophisticated men and fops or beaux. In *The Relapse*, Berinthia ascribes intelligence, decency, health, love for his lover and care for reputation to the former and states that fops have none of these attributes.<sup>72</sup> Drake also makes a distinction between “Wits” and “Buffoons,” which recalls Berinthia’s.<sup>73</sup> Under the influence of Restoration comedy, she argues that people should carry out their appropriate roles in society, following “the Intent of our Nature.”<sup>74</sup>

As Drake ends her analysis of vain people including beaux and moves on to newsmongers, she relies on the traditional “all the world’s a stage” metaphor solely to assert that she has already written enough about vain people in this essay,

comparing her writing to a stage play and the targets of her satire to theatrical characters: “Not to call the *Beau* or *Poetaster* on the *Stage* again, whose whole Lives are one continued Scene of Folly and Impertinence.”<sup>75</sup> Drake’s metaphor of life as a scene of folly likely reminded her contemporary readers of the humanist concept of the *theatrum mundi*, exemplified by Erasmus’ *The Praise of Folly*, which was widely read in the latter half of the seventeenth century.<sup>76</sup> White Kennet’s 1683 English translation of *The Praise of Folly*, entitled *Witt against Wisdom*, states that “the whole proceedings of the world are nothing but one continued Scene of Folly, all the Actors being equally fools, and mad-men.”<sup>77</sup> Drake’s expression is very similar to the English version of Erasmus. However, differing slightly from Kennet’s translation of Erasmus, who describes all people as fools, Drake chooses to mock foppish people in particular. She applies the Erasmian *theatrum mundi* concept to the context of the theatrical conventions of Restoration comedy caricaturing fops’ comical behavior.

Another explanation of vanity by Drake not only attests to her understanding of general theatrical conventions in the seventeenth century, but also hints at her knowledge of Shakespeare’s plays. She does not mention the titles of specific plays, but her analysis of vanity seems to echo *Hamlet*, a tragedy frequently performed during the Restoration:<sup>78</sup>

The other is mean-spirited and fearful, and seeks, by false Fire, to counterfeit a Heat that may pass for genuine, to conceal the Frost in his Blood, and, like an ill Actor, over-does his Part for want of understanding it. . . . Nature is our best Guide, and has fitted every Man for some things more particularly than others. (*An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*, 58–59)

Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance—that you o’erstep not the modesty of nature. For anything so o’erdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as ’twere the mirror up to Nature[.] (*Hamlet*, 3. 2. 17–19)<sup>79</sup>

Drake praises Shakespeare's plays as exemplars of "our Tragedies," especially his "Pictures of Nature."<sup>80</sup> In the preceding quotation, she offers the example of "an ill Actor" who overdoes his role to support her argument that people should perform their appropriate roles according to "Nature." Her language suggests that she knew Hamlet's criticism of "anything so overdone" and his focus on the importance of "Nature," which was often cited as a useful lesson for players by the beginning of the eighteenth century.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, her reference to "False fire," I suspect, indicates that she read *Hamlet* in folios or saw the performance based on them. Hamlet describes Claudius as "frighted with false fire" in the scene of the play-within-a-play appearing soon after the "mirror up to Nature" speech in the folio texts, although many published Restoration texts were based on quarto versions which lack the line about "false fire" (with the exception of the first quarto).<sup>82</sup> Considering the popularity of *Hamlet* in the late seventeenth century, Drake likely considered it to be among "our Tragedies" by Shakespeare, and her targeted readers understood this.<sup>83</sup>

Drake's intensive use of drama stemmed not only from her personal interest in the genre but also her patriotic purposes in the promotion of women's education. She argued for the importance of English education and often associated English language and literature with "sense." She was critical of xenophilia, especially beaux obsessed with French fashion: "His [a beau's] Improvements are a nice Skill in the Mode, and a high Contempt of his own Country, and of Sense."<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, a man who neglects education "has such a Fear of Pedantry always before his Eyes, he thinks it a Scandal to his good Breeding and Gentility, to talk Sense, or write true *English*."<sup>85</sup> Drake believed that English-speaking people did not need to learn other languages, such as Greek, Latin and French, as part of a humanistic education for English was a suitable language for "talking sense" in every aspect of life:

Now I can't see the Necessity of any other Tongue beside our own, to enable us to talk plausibly or judiciously upon any of these Topicks [such as Love, Honour, Gallantry, Morality, News, and Raillery]. Nay, I am very confident, that 'tis possible for an ingenious Person to make a very considerable Progress in most Parts of Learning, by the help of English only. (*An Essay in .Defence of the Female Sex*, 36–37)

According to Drake, English-speaking people had sufficient vocabulary and sophisticated rhetoric to discuss complex “Topicks,” and if those who could read only English sought to understand non-English culture, they could access “Translations for the Use of the Unlearned.”<sup>86</sup>

Drake's emphasis on English education was closely linked to promotion of women's education, the main subject matter of *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*. She argued that women had more skill in English than men, who spent too much time studying Latin and Greek. Her emphasis on the vernacular language was similar to that of Cavendish and Behn, but Drake attached great importance to the pedagogical context. For her, women's ability to use English proved that when properly taught, women were not inferior to men:

I have often thought, that the not teaching Women *Latin* and *Greek*, was an Advantage to them, if it were rightly consider'd, and might be improv'd to a great Height. For Girls, after they can read and write, (if they be of any Fashion) are taught such things as take not up their whole Time; and not being suffer'd to run about at liberty as Boys, are furnish'd, among other Toys, with Books, such as *Romances*, *Novels*, *Plays* and *Poems*; which though they read carelessly only for Diversion, yet, unawares to them, give 'em very early a considerable Command both of Words and Sense. (*An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*, 51)

It is notable that Drake recommended “*Romances*, *Novels*, *Plays*, and *Poems*” for young women as other feminist writers



often condemned such popular fiction. Drake credited these popular entertainments as important sources of both pleasure and education for women. Seemingly, they only provided women with “Diversion,” but in fact, they could improve their “Words and Sense” through pleasure. Some Restoration male writers who had little interest in women’s education, such as Richard Flecknoe, Charles Gildon, John Dryden, and John Dennis, also emphasized the value of English language and literature partly to counter French influence. However, as Jean I. Marsden summarises, they were “often fuelled by nationalism” and contrasted “the ‘servile’ nature of the French with the more ‘manly’ British.”<sup>87</sup> In contrast, Drake did not praise the presumed “manliness” of English Restoration drama but, rather, relied on the presumed “femininity” of English.

As discussed in the previous section, vernacular English was sometimes associated with the talents of women, who were excluded from formal higher education but actively wrote in English or translated non-English works.<sup>88</sup> For example, Wentworth Dillon, fourth Earl of Roscommon, panegyricised Katherine Philips as a female poet “Whose Eloquence from such a Theme deters / All Tongues but English, and all Pens but Hers” in the prologue of the first performance of her translation of *Pompey* in Dublin.<sup>89</sup> He regarded Philips’s achievement in English poetry as a success for all the “Ladies,” writing, “By the just Fates your Sex is doubly blest, / You Conquer’d Caesar, and you praise him best.” Dillon’s prologue elevates English above French, the original language of the play (and perhaps the local Irish language, too) and regards mastery of English as the national language as a skill shared by all the women in Britain, not limited to Philips. Drake, with some help from her husband, also ascribed mastery of English to women and attempted to impress her readers with the image of women as skilled users of the vernacular. She praises “the deservedly celebrated Mrs. *Philips*” and the “Incomparable Mrs. *Behn*.”<sup>90</sup> Her husband James also refers to “the fam’d Orinda’s praise” in his

dedicatory poem to *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*.<sup>91</sup> Shakespeare, who lacked formal education but was skilled in vernacular English, served as a suitable example for Drake's feminist pamphlet.

Drake praised plays, novels, poems and other critical works written in English as fruits of the development of the English language. Through drama and other popular fiction in English, women's linguistic skills are linked to Englishness. The first quotation in this section reveals Drake's efforts to form a canon of English drama as she makes a reading (or watching) list of canonical playwrights for female learners. She states that English tragedies inspire sense, and those by Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher (the authors of *The Maid's Tragedy*), Thomas Otway and Dryden describe "Love, Honour and Bravery" most skilfully and evoke "my Passions," or "my Indignation, my Compassion, my Grief."<sup>92</sup> As for comedies, she recommends George Etherege, Charles Sedley, William Wycherley and William Congreve.<sup>93</sup> After cataloguing these names, Drake states that "there are others, who, though of an inferior Class, yet deserve Commendation."<sup>94</sup> She thus indicates her awareness of the significance of establishing evaluative standards and distinguishing between first- and second-class dramatic works in the canonisation of English drama.

*An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex* is unique in its strong support for popular entertainment. Unlike other feminist writers who believed that English vernacular fiction, especially drama, adversely affected women, Drake considered these works to give women an educational advantage over men. More overtly feminist than Cavendish's thinking, Drake argued that good command of English was open to all women. In her argument, women were already well educated as they studied English effortlessly and pleasantly through reading fiction instead of wasting their time on Greek and Latin. To Drake, women did not have to be ashamed of their lack of knowledge of the classics.

## Conclusion

Margaret Cavendish and Judith Drake can both be regarded as pioneering female writers who argued for the pleasure and educational value of theatre in defence of women. Their focus on pleasure separated them from other “serious” female writers, who did not approve the entertaining quality of popular fiction. In contrast, both of these women saw theatre as a source of pleasure and education for the nation. Cavendish envisioned a national theatre under a female monarch, and Drake advocated theatre as an educational resource for women. They both praised Shakespeare, partly as it was relatively easy to align him, a poet with little formal education but mastery of English, with women.

It is also notable that both Cavendish and Drake closely connected their defence of drama to patriotism. Appreciating English drama, exemplified by Shakespeare, meant appreciating the vernacular entertainment created in their “own” language. Although not mainstream in the seventeenth century, such patriotic, pro-women claims became more popular in the eighteenth century. The Shakespeare Ladies Club, which actively requested performances of Shakespeare in London around 1736–38, also regarded his plays as valuable educational material for the nation.<sup>95</sup> Elizabeth Boyd, an Irish writer and a member of the club, praised Shakespeare in an attached prologue to her play *Don Sancho: Or, the Students Whim, a Ballad Opera of Two Acts, with Minerva’s Triumph* in 1739.<sup>96</sup> Emphasizing “*Englands Pride*,” she likens Shakespeare to a “Soul-Soothing Shade, rouz’d by a Woman’s Pen / To Check the impious Rage of lawless Men.”<sup>97</sup> Boyd “feminises” Shakespeare by ascribing “Soul-Soothing” tenderness, a purportedly “female” virtue, and suggesting that he is the favourite dramatist of women more temperate and morally well balanced than men. Mary Cowper, another member of the club and the daughter of William Cowper, MP, also wrote the poem “On the Revival

of Shakespear's Plays by the Ladies in 1738."<sup>98</sup> She is more favourably inclined towards pleasure seeking, asking her readers to "See happy *Britain* raise her drooping *Head* / Supported by the *Fair Ones* friendly *Aid*," as the revival of Shakespeare brings them "a real, solid *Pleasure*."<sup>99</sup> These women's works connect intensive, triumphant pleasure to the feeling of patriotism. This historical process suggests the complex union of patriotism and English feminism.

Cavendish and Drake foresaw another complex union of patriotism with defence of English theatre. In early 2017, playwright David Hare criticised the European influence on English theatre, saying "all that directorial stuff that we've managed to keep over there on the continent is now coming over and beginning to infect our theatre."<sup>100</sup> Hare's comment sparked a heated criticism and discussion among playgoers.<sup>101</sup> Such patriotic defence of English theatre, as shown in this paper, can be traced to the seventeenth century. In analysing Margaret Cavendish and Judith Drake, it is possible to find clues to understand both current and historical debates on English theatre.

\* The research presented in this paper is funded by The Fukuhara Memorial Fund for the Studies of English and American Literature. This paper is partly based on the presentation titled "Feminism and the Canonization of Drama in Seventeenth-Century England: Judith Drake's 'An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex'" given on 3 March 2012 at the 14th Annual Women's History Conference: Women, The Arts and Activism at Sarah Lawrence College, the other presentation titled "Promoting Pleasure for the Commonwealth: Margaret Cavendish's Introduction to Shakespeare" given on 4 September 2014 at the Gender, History and Society Conference at the University of Winchester, my PhD thesis "The Role of Women in the Canonisation of Shakespeare: From Elizabethan Theatre to the Shakespeare Jubilee" (unpublished PhD thesis, King's College London, 2013), and part of the Japanese monograph *Shakespeare geki wo tanoshinda josei tachi: Kinsei no kangeki to dokusho* [*Women Who Enjoyed Shakespeare: Early Modern Playgoing and Reading*] (Tokyo: Hakusuisha, 2018).

## Notes

1. Margaret Fell, *Womens Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed of by the Scriptures* (London: Pythia Press, 1989).
2. George Fox, *The Works of George Fox* (Philadelphia: Gould, 1831), 1:413 and 2:107.
3. Bathsua Makin, *An Assay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1980), 26.
4. Makin, 7.
5. Mary Astell, *The First English Feminist: Reflections upon Marriage and Other Writings*, ed. and intr. Bridget Hill (Aldershot: Gower, 1986).
6. Ruth Perry, *The Celebrated Mary Astell: An Early English Feminist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 73.
7. Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*, ed. Patricia Springborg (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2002), Part I, 78.
8. Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*, Part I, 64.
9. Mary Astell, *The Christian Religion, as Profess'd by a Daughter of the Church of England* (London, 1705), 292.
10. Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*, Part I, 74–75.
11. Anthony B. Dawson, “Props, Pleasure, and Idolatry,” in *The Culture of Playgoing in Shakespeare’s England: A Collaborative Debate*, ed. Anthony B. Dawson and Paul Yachnin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 131–58, 133.
12. Springborg argues that Astell recalls the lyrics “Where the bee sucks, there suck I” (5.1.88) from Ariel’s song in *The Tempest* when she writes: “Indeed this Living *Ex Tempore* which most of us are guilty of, our making no Reflections, our Gay Volatile Humour which transports us in an Instant from one thing to another, e’re we have with the Industrious Bee suck’d those Sweets it wou’d afford us, frequently renders his gracious Bounty ineffectual” (*A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*, Part II, 175). Astell’s writing is similar to the lyrics, but I cannot conclude that she knew *The Tempest* itself. Robert Johnson’s “Where the Bee sucks” was a popular song reprinted in John Wilson’s *Cheerfull Ayres or Ballads* (Oxford, 1660) and perhaps sung independently of the context of the play. It is possible that Astell did not see or read the play but still heard the song. Quotations from *The Tempest* refer to William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, The Arden Shakespeare 3rd Series, rev. ed. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan (London: Bloomsbury, 2011).
13. Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard Miller (London: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1976) [*Le Plaisir du Texts* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1973)].

14. Frank Kermode, *Pleasure and Change: The Aesthetics of Canon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 20.

15. Margaret Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, ed. James Fitzmaurice (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2004), Letter 123, 176–78.

16. Katherine Romack, “Margaret Cavendish, Shakespeare Critic,” in *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. Dymphna Callaghan (Malden: Blackwell, 2000), 21–41. Mihoko Suzuki voices a different view on the relationship between Shakespeare and Cavendish in “Gender, the Political Subject, and Dramatic Authorship: Margaret Cavendish’s Loves Adventures and the Shakespearean Example,” in *Cavendish and Shakespeare, Interconnections*, ed. Katherine Romack and James Fitzmaurice (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 103–20, 104.

17. Margaret Cavendish, *The Worlds Olio Written by the Right Honorable, the Lady Margaret Newcastle* (London, 1655), “The Preface to the Reader,” A4r.

18. Miriam Wallraven, *A Writing Halfway Between Theory and Fiction: Mediating Feminism from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century* (Königshausen & Neumann, 2007), 234.

19. Rosemary Kegl, “‘This World I Have Made’: Margaret Cavendish, Feminism and The Blazing World,” in *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture: Emerging Subjects*, ed. Valerie Traub, M. Lindsay Kaplan, and Dymphna Callaghan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 119–41, 120.

20. James Fitzmaurice, “Introduction,” in *Sociable Letters*, Margaret Cavendish, ed. James Fitzmaurice, xi–xxii, xiii.

21. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 29, 80.

22. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 29, 80. See also Lisa T. Sarasohn, *The Natural Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish: Reason and Fancy during the Scientific Revolution* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 179 and 239.

23. Margaret Cavendish, *The Convent of Pleasure, in The Convent of Pleasure and Other Plays*, Margaret Cavendish, ed. Anne Shaver (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999), I.2.

24. Cavendish, *The Convent of Pleasure and Other Plays*, Appendix A, 253.

25. Richard Lewis Braverman, *Plots and Counterplots: Sexual Politics and the Body Politic in English Literature, 1660–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 82; and Robert Markley, “The Politics of Masculine Sexuality and Feminine Desire in Behn’s Tory Comedies,” in *Cultural Readings of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century English Theater*, ed. J. Douglas Canfield and Deborah C. Payne (Athens, Ga: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 114–40, 127–30.

26. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 127, 183.

27. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 127, 183. The “probability” of literature was a significant critical criterion for the eighteenth-century novel, and some later critics, such as Charlotte Lennox, did not regard Shakespeare’s plays as probable. For this point, see also Jesse Molesworth, *Chance and the Eighteenth-Century Novel: Realism, Probability, Magic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 17–54.

28. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 127, 183.

29. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 131, 189.

30. For Cavendish’s nationalistic writings, see also Cecile M. Jagodzinski, *Privacy and Print: Reading and Writing in Seventeenth-century England* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1999), 102; Shannon Miller, “‘Thou art a Monument, without a Tombe’: Affiliation and Memorialization in Margaret Cavendish’s *Playes* and *Plays, Never before Printed*,” in Romack and Fitzmaurice, 7–28, 3; and Vimala C. Pasupathi, “Old Playwrights, Old Soldiers, New Martial Subjects: The Cavendishes and the Drama of Soldierly,” in Romack and Fitzmaurice, 121–46, 131.

31. Cavendish, *The Worlds Olio*, 205–06. For Hobbes’s influence on Cavendish, see Sarah Hutton, “In Dialogue with Thomas Hobbes: Margaret Cavendish’s Natural Philosophy,” *Women’s Writing* 4 no. 3 (1997): 421–32, 422; and Sarasohn, 100–25.

32. Cavendish, *The Worlds Olio*, 209.

33. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 169, 233.

34. Cavendish, *The Worlds Olio*, 212.

35. Cavendish, *The Worlds Olio*, 212 and 115.

36. Margaret Cavendish, *The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing World* (hereafter *The Blazing World*), ed. Sara Mendelson (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2016), 160.

37. Brandie R. Siegfried, “Anecdotal and Cabalistic Forms in Margaret Cavendish’s *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy*,” in *Authorial Conquests: Essays on Genre in the Writings of Margaret Cavendish*, ed. Line Cottagnies and Nancy Weitz (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2003), 59–79, 77.

38. Cavendish, *The Blazing World*, 159–60.

39. According to Jean I. Marsden, “Tragedy and Varieties in Serious Drama,” in *A Companion to Restoration Drama*, ed. Susan J. Owen (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 228–42, 229, the three unities were referred to as the “Rules” during the Restoration.

40. Claire Jowitt, “Imperial Dreams? Margaret Cavendish and the Cult of Elizabeth,” *Women’s Writing* 4, no. 3 (1997): 383–99, 393.

41. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 123, 177.

42. Cavendish, “A General Prologue to all my Playes,” in *The Convent of Pleasure and Other Plays*, Appendix A, 265.

43. Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660–1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 30.

44. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 123, 178.

45. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 123, 177.

46. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 123, 177. Cleopatra seems to have been Cavendish's favorite female character. See Kitamura Sae, "The Good, the Bad and the Beautiful: Women Writers' Difficult Relationships with the 'Bad Woman' Character in Antony and Cleopatra," *Lilith Rising: Perspectives on Evil and the Feminine*, ed. Cathleen Allyn Conway (Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2016), 29–42.

47. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters*, Letter 175, 241.

48. Rhonda R. Powers, 'Margaret Cavendish and Shakespeare's Ophelia: Female Role-playing and Self-fashioned Identity', *In-between Essays & Studies in Literary Criticism* 9, no. 1–2 (2000): 108–15, 109; and Paspathi, 135.

49. Jowitt, p. 393; and Brandie R. Siegfried, "Bonum Theatrale: The Matter of Elizabeth I in Francis Bacon's *Of Tribute* and Margaret Cavendish's *Brazing World*," in *Resurrecting Elizabeth I in Seventeenth-century England*, ed. Elizabeth Hageman and Katherine Conway (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007), 185–204, 196–97.

50. Sarasohn, 191.

51. Cavendish, *The Worlds Olio*, 132.

52. Aphra Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, in *The Works of Aphra Behn*, Aphra Behn, ed. Janet Todd, Vol. 5 (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1996), 162.

53. Stephen Orgel, "The Renaissance Artist as Plagiarist," *English Literary History* 48, no. 3 (1981): 476–95, 483.

54. Judith Drake, *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*, in *The Pioneers: Early Feminists*, ed. Marie Mulvey Roberts and Tamae Mizuta, (London: Routledge, 1993), 42–43. The quotations from Drake are drawn from this edition. This book was first published in 1696, but the edition referred to here is the facsimile version of the fourth edition published in 1721.

55. Gary Taylor devotes a few lines to Drake but does not discuss other references to drama in her work in *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London: Vintage, 1989), 92. Sasha Roberts treats Drake similarly in *Reading Shakespeare's Poems in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 56. In "The Ladies: Female Patronage of Restoration Drama, 1660–1700 (Book Review)", *Review of English Studies* 41, no.164 (1990): 573–74, Derek Hughes suggests that David Roberts should have used Drake's



*An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex* in his monograph *The Ladies: Female Patronage of Restoration Drama, 1660–1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). Springborg, editor of Mary Astell's *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*, occasionally mentions Drake's interest in drama in the introduction and footnotes.

56. Hannah Smith, "English 'Feminist' Writings and Judith Drake's 'An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex' (1696)," *The Historical Journal* 44, no. 3 (2001): 727–47. A. H. Upham first cast doubt upon Astell's authorship in "English Femmes Savantes at the End of the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of English and German Philology* 12, no. 2 (1913): 262–76, 273–74. Florence Smith later ascribed the work to James Drake's 'sister' Judith in *Mary Astell* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1916), 173–82. For the confusion about Judith's identity, see also John Harrison and Peter Laslett, *The Library of John Locke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 197), 76; Hill, 59, n56; Perry, 490, n25; and Robert W. Uphaus and Gretchen M. Foster, ed., *The Other Eighteenth Century: English Women of Letters, 1660–1800* (East Lansing: Colleagues Press, 1991), 23. More recently, EEBO ascribed *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex* to Astell as of 10 October 2017. Johanna Devereaux, in "'Affecting the Shade': Attribution, Authorship, and Anonymity in *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, 27, no. 1 (2008), 17–37, discusses co-authorship and collaboration by Judith and James Drake and others around them and acknowledges Judith's hand in *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*. However, Devereaux's focus on James's contribution is problematic for two reasons. First, as Joanna Russ points out in *How to Suppress Women's Writing* (London: Women's Press, 1984), "she wrote it, but she had help" (book cover) has been a common refrain to depreciate women's writing talent—especially that of married women with educated husbands. Devereaux seems oblivious to the possibility of repeating this rhetoric. In particular, the Preface to *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex* complains that some readers will attempt to attribute the work to a male author: "THERE are some Men (I hear) who will not allow this Piece to be written by a Woman . . . I see no Reason why our Sex should be robb'd of the Honour of it" (ix–x). The author decries the suppression analysed by Russ; therefore, to put great stress on James's help undermines the message of this Preface. Second, Devereaux overemphasises the collaborative nature of authorship in the Restoration, given that such collaboration in writing is also not uncommon in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Devereaux states that "manuscript circulation and the concurrent process of revision, correction, and addition by a number of authors and readers mean that to ascribe a text to a single author can be an anachronistic impulse" (33). However, "manuscript circulation" with "revision, correction, and addition" also

happens frequently in academic and fiction publishing today, especially since the emergence of the Internet. The situation surrounding literary collaboration in the Restoration period is less different from the twenty-first century than Devereaux argues. For the co-authorship on the Internet, Joe Moxley and Ryan Meehan, "Collaboration, Literacy, Authorship: Using Social Networking Tools to Engage the Wisdom of Teachers," *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, 12.1 (2007), [http://kairos.technorhethoric.net/12.1/binder.html?praxis/moxley\\_meehan/index.html](http://kairos.technorhethoric.net/12.1/binder.html?praxis/moxley_meehan/index.html) [accessed 9 October 2017].

57. Bridget Hill, "Drake, James (bap. 1666, d. 1707)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., 2011, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8026>, [accessed 9 Oct 2017]

58. BL Sloane MS 4047, British Library, ff. 38–39.

59. Erica Harth, "Cartesian Women," in *Feminist Interpretations of René Descartes*, Susan Bordo (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 213–31, 241; Gordon Schochet, "Models of Politics and Place of Women in Locke's Political Thought," in *Feminist Interpretations of John Locke*, ed. Nancy J. Hirschmann and Kirstie Morna McClure (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 131–54, 145; and Astrid Wilkens, "'Reason's Feminist Disciples': Cartesianism and Seventeenth-century English Women," (PhD diss, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, 2008), 59.

60. For example, John Savage writes in his dedication to Thomas Coke in the 1695 translation of Carlo Moscheni's *Brutes Turn'd Criticks, or Mankind Moraliz'd by Beasts*: "but even those that shall despise my Labour, and condemn my Performance, 'twill approve my choice in you."

61. Drake, 136.

62. For women and prologues and epilogues in early modern English plays, see Richard Levin, "Women in the Renaissance Theater Audience," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40, no. 2 (1989): 165–74.

63. Drake, The Preface.

64. See also a puppeteer Peter Charlton's explanation of the play in "For England and Saint George!," *English Dance & Song* 62, no. 1 (2000): 2–3.

65. See Ethel Seaton's transcription of the *Diary of Thura in Literary Relations of England and Scandinavia in the Seventeenth Century* (1935; New York: Blom, 1972), 339, and Alfred Harbage, S. Schoenbaum, and Sylvia Stoler Wagonheim, *Annals of English Drama, 975-1700: An Analytical Record of All Plays, Extant or Lost, Chronologically Arranged and Indexed by Authors, Titles, Dramatic Companies & c.*, 3rd ed (London: Routledge, 1989), 198.

66. Francis James Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, vol. 5 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1882-98), 131.

67. Samuel Pepys twice saw Italian puppet shows, at Covent Garden in May 1662 and then Punchinello at Moorefields on 22 August 1666. See Scott Cutler Shershow, *Puppets and "Popular" Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 113–14.

68. See Geoge Speaight, *The History of the English Puppet Theater*, 2nd ed (London: Robert Hale, 1990), 64 and 325; and Margaret Rogerson, "English Puppets and the Survival of Religious Theater," *Theater Notebook*, 52, no. 2 (1998): 91–111, 91. A song entitled "Bartholomew Fair," which includes a reference to "World's Creation," was printed in Philip Jenkins' anthology of popular poems, *Wit and Drollery Jovial Poems: Corrected and Amended with New Additions* (London, 1682), 304, and in an appendix to John Playford's *The Musical Companion* with Henry Purcell's music in *An Additional Sheet to the Book Entituled, The Musical Companion* (London, 1673), 4.

69. William Makepeace Thackeray read *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex* before writing *Vanity Fair* in 1848 and *The History of Henry Esmond* in 1852. As well, it is said that he was interested in Drake's imagery of puppetry. See Michael M. Clarke, *Thackeray and Women* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1995), 121–26, and Joseph Grego, *Thackerayana: Notes and Anecdotes* (first published in 1901. New York, Haskell House, 1971), 197–206.

70. Drake, 59–60.

71. Andrew P. Williams, "The Centre of Attention: Theatricality and the Restoration Fop," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 4, no. 3 (1999): 5.1–22, 8.

72. John Vanburgh, *The Relapse*, II. i. 35–36 in *The Relapse and Other Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). See also Robert B. Heilman, "Some Fops and Some Versions of Foppery," *English Literary History* 49, no. 2 (1982): 363–95, 377–78.

73. Drake, 59.

74. Drake, 59.

75. Drake, 77.

76. Gregory D. Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus: The Erasmian Legacy and Religious Change in Early Modern England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 234.

77. Desiderius Erasmus, *Witt against Wisdom, or, a Panegyrick upon Folly Penn'd in Latin by Desiderius Erasmus*, trans. White Kennet (Oxford: 1683), 32–33.

78. For the performance history of *Hamlet* in the Restoration, see Barbara A. Murray, *Restoration Shakespeare: Viewing the Voice* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2001), 63–67.

79. Quotations from *Hamlet* refer to William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, The Arden Shakespeare 3rd Series, ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006).

80. Drake, 42.

81. For example, see Charles Gildon, *The Life of Mr. Thomas Betterton* (London, 1710), 82 and Richard Steele's article on 29 June 1709 in *The Tatler or Lucubrations of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq.*, vol. 1 (London, 1709): 255. For the reception of Hamlet's stage directions, see James Hirsh, "Hamlet's Stage Directions to Players," in *Stage Directions in Hamlet: New Essays and New Directions*, ed. Hardin L. Aasand (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2003), 47–73.

82. Compare the First Folio, 3.2.257 with the First Quarto, 9.174 in *Hamlet: The Texts of 1603 and 1623*, The Arden Shakespeare 3rd Series, ed. Ann Thompson, and Neil Taylor (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2007), a supplementary volume of the Arden *Hamlet*. See also Thompson and Taylor's main volume of the Arden *Hamlet*, Appendix 2.

83. *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex* contains another possible reference to Shakespeare. Analyzing a bully, Drake states that "he fawns, like a Spaniel, most upon those that beat him" (56). This line is similar to Helena's speech in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: "The more you beat me, I will fawn on you. / Use me but as your spaniel" (2.1.204–05). However, the metaphor of the spaniel was far too popular to say that Drake specifically refers to Shakespeare's play. The metaphor was almost proverbial in the late sixteenth century, and other playwrights, including John Lyly and Thomas Dekker, also used it. Quotations from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* refer to William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, The Arden Shakespeare 3rd Series, ed. Sukanta Chaudhuri (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2017). See Chaudhuri's footnote to the Arden edition, 163.

84. Drake, 61.

85. Drake, 31.

86. Drake, 37.

87. Jean I. Marsden, "Tragedy and Varieties in Serious Drama," in *A Companion to Restoration Drama*, ed. Susan J. Owen (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 228–42, 230.

88. Russ, 122–32.

89. *Pompey: A Tragedy*, Prologue, in Katherine Philips, *The Collected Works of Katherine Philips, the Matchless Orinda*, ed. Germaine Greer and R. Little (Stump Cross: Stump Cross Books, 1993), vol. 3.

90. Drake, 50.

91. Drake, xii.

92. Drake, 42–43.

93. Drake, 42–43.

94. Drake, 43.

95. For the Shakespeare Ladies Club, see Emmet L. Avery, "The Shakespeare Ladies Club," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 7, no.2 (1956): 153–58;

and Fiona Jane Ritchie, “The Influence of the Female Audience on the Shakespeare Revival of 1736–1738: The Case of the Shakespeare Ladies Club,” in *Shakespeare and the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Peter Sabor and Paul Yachnin (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 57–69, 61.

96. For Elizabeth Boyd, see D. J. O’Donoghue, *The Poets of Ireland* (Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1912), 33; and Rolf Loeber, Magda Loeber, and Anne Mullin Burnham, *A Guide to Irish Fiction, 1650-1900* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2006), 169.

97. Elizabeth Boyd, *Don Sancho: Or, the Students Whim, a Ballad Opera of Two Acts, with Minerva’s Triumph* (London, 1739), Prologue

98. BL Add MS 28101, British Library, 93v and 94v.

99. BL Add MS 28101 93v. For the transcription, I follow Dobson, 150.

100. Jeffrey Sweet, *What Playwrights Talk About When They Talk About Writing* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 69.

101. For the debate precipitated by Hare, see Dalya Alberge, “David Hare: Classic British Drama Is ‘Being Infected’ by Radical European Staging,” *Guardian*, 29 January 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2017/jan/29/david-hare-classic-british-drama-infected-radical-european-staging> [accessed 9 October 2017] and Lyn Gardner, “Why David Hare Is Wrong about the State of British Theater,” *Guardian*, 20 January 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theaterblog/2017/jan/30/david-hare-state-of-british-theater-europe>, [accessed 9 October 2017].