

## CHAPTER 20

### Playwrighting: Authorship and Collaboration \*

Jeffrey Masten

They used not onely one boord, but one bedde, one booke (if so be it they thought not one to many)... all things went in comon betwene them, which all men accompted comendable.

JOHN LYLY, *Euphues* 1.199

SHAKESPEARE AND Fletcher; Fletcher and Beaumont; Fletcher and Massinger; Field and Massinger; Fletcher, Field, and Massinger; Greene and Lodge; Norton and Sackville; Marlowe and Nashe; Marlowe and Kyd?; Porter, Chettle, and Jonson; Wilson, Munday, Dekker, and Drayton; Dekker, Jonson, and Chettle; Chettle, Dekker, Haughton, and Day; Dekker and Webster; Munday, Drayton, Webster, Dekker, and Middleton; Jonson, Chapman, and Marston; Day, Rowley, and Wilkins; Dekker and Middleton; Middleton and Shakespeare?; Heywood and Rowley; Field and Daborne; Field, Daborne, and Massinger; Daborne and Tournneur; Middleton, Massinger, and Rowley; Middleton and Rowley; Rowley, Dekker, Ford, "8c"; Rowley, Dekker, Ford, and Webster; Rowley and Fletcher; Jonson and another; Dekker and Ford; Brome and Heywood; Kyd and Jonson; Chapman and Shirley; Hands A, B, C, D, S, and Tilney, the censor ...<sup>1</sup>

By beginning a discussion of authorship and collaboration in early English drama with this list, I mean to emphasize that much of the drama of this period was written by more than one person, produced through collective forms of making—even if most of the drama we now customarily read, stage, film, watch, and teach is associated with the singular figure of Shakespeare. Playwrights in early modern England did write alone (though we will need to return to what the term *alone* means in this culture), but more often they wrote with another playwright, or with several others, or revised or augmented scripts initially produced by others. G. E. Bentley, in his comprehensive study of commercial playwrighting in this period, notes that "nearly two thirds" of the plays mentioned in the theatrical manager Philip Henslowe's records "are the work of more than one man" and argues that "as

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Standing in the shadow of the  
Plebsian Authors, 1611-50, 1605

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theater, Neil Carson finds that “collaborated plays accounted for 60 per cent of the plays completed in the Fall-Winter 1598, and an astonishing 82 per cent in Spring-Summer 1598” (57). While I would emphasize the necessarily approximate nature of such figures, they nevertheless suggest that collaboration was the standard mode of operation within the early modern English theater, not a problem to be confronted only after considering singularly authored plays.

An essay like this might thus proceed to set out the facts of playwriting—which playwrights wrote which plays (together or separately) and, within collaborative plays, who wrote which scenes—and then initiate a discussion of this evidence, moving toward a cultural history of collaboration. Indeed, one might argue that my initial list begins to do precisely that. One of my contentions here, however, is that *as* (not simply *after*) we read the evidence of “playwriting” that survives, we must thoroughly reconceptualize our default notions of singular authorship, collaboration, intellectual property, originality, imitation, and even “the individual” in the modern sense (R. Williams, *Keywords*, 133–36; Stallybrass, “Shakespeare”)—in short, the making of lists that divide up intellectual property and its owners.<sup>2</sup> These ideas now typically inform and organize the study of literary history, but retaining them in the study of the early modern theater (and early modern culture more generally) risks *deforming* our analysis of this culture and its textual production.

In this essay I begin instead by presenting one of several *possible* avenues toward rethinking textual production in early English drama on more collective grounds; I then reread the conditions and conventions of authorship and collaboration within this context. Throughout, I attempt to demonstrate that the writing of scripts for the professional theater with which this essay is predominantly concerned cannot be separated from specific material discourses and practices of the culture that surrounds (and absorbs from) the theater, the complexly interrelated “physical” and “social” spaces with which this *New History* begins.<sup>3</sup>

### Conversation

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the word *conversation*, along with the related terms *converse* and *conversant*, had a much more complex aura of meanings than it has for us today. The oldest meaning of *conversation*, from the fourteenth century onward, is living in a place or dwelling among a group of people, as in the question that the *Oxford English Dictionary* locates in 1483, “where conuestest thou?”<sup>4</sup> or the 1611 Authorized Version’s use, “For our conuersation is in heauen” (Philippians 3:20, Holy Bible T3), a usage for which the 1881 Revised Standard Version tellingly substitutes “citizenship.” A related obsolete meaning of *conversation* is: “The action of consorting or having dealings with others; . . . commerce, intercourse, society, intimacy.” As Valentine says of his friend Protheus in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*: “from our Infancie / We haue conuert, and spent our howres together” (Through Line Numbering [TLN] 712–13).

Some other related meanings circulating in the seventeenth century were one’s “Circle of acquaintance, company, society” and “behaviour, mode or course of life.” Indeed, according to the period hard-word lists and translation dictionaries, these were the most prominent seventeenth-century meanings of the term: John Bullokar’s *English expostor* glosses “*Conuersant* [as] Using much in ones company” (E2<sup>v</sup>); John Minsheu’s *Guide into the Tongues* defines *converse* as “*accompanie, or associate much or often*” (95); and John Florio translates the Italian “*Conuersatione*” as “*conuersation, societie*” (World, 85). Add to this the related sense that is now the *only* meaning for *conversation*, beginning around 1580: “Interchange of thoughts and words; familiar discourse or talk”—what Tournemour called in 1609 “*Conversation* (the Commerce of minds).” One specialized meaning that persisted at least until the end of the sixteenth century is related, through the persuasive quality of familiar discourse: conversation as conversion, what Coverdale, translating the Acts of the Apostles in 1535, called “the Conuersacion of the Heythen.”

Thus far I have neglected an important resonance of this word, the meaning that the *OED* dates from the early sixteenth century as “sexual intercourse or intimacy.” This meaning remains in circulation until just after the emergence of the term *sexual intercourse*, which seems to take its place around 1800 (Fleming, 160). There are important differences between early modern *conversation* and modern *sexual intercourse* that I am not able to examine here, but consider these appearances of conversation-as-intercourse: Richard III’s condemnation of Lord Hastings’s “*Conversation with Shores Wife*”; a clearly sexualized 1649 discussion of “a conjugall conversation”; and, most succinctly, a 1646 usage that makes these two terms synonymous/exchangeable: “converse or copulation.”

Sexual conversation is often figured as illicit or explicitly condemned, at least when it refers to what we would now call heterosexual relations. In *Richard III*, Hastings’s severed head is displayed onstage as recompense for his “*conversation with Shore’s wife*.” Conversing with Palamon in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Arcite illustrates this problematic:

We are young and yet desire the waies of honour,  
That liberty and common Conversation  
The poyson of pure spirits; might like women  
Wooue us to wander from. (21)

The passage suggests that one kind of conversation—between kinsmen—must ostensibly be protected from other kinds of conversation: “common conversation,” conversation among/across social classes; and cross-gender conversation, associated with “liberty” and promiscuity. *Conversation*, in this and other instances, seems always potentially to register transgression; a 1656 sermon demonstrates this in its insistence on the condoned nature of the intercourse: “They may *lawfully* converse together as man and wife” (my emphasis). The problem for early modern

culture is the uneasiness (in both senses) of imagining the possibility of an equitable conversation between the heterosexuals—as well as the ostensible problem of effeminization through heterosexual practices (Orgel, “Nobody’s,” 14–15). In 1615, George Sandys writes of men “Enfeebled with the continual converse of women,” and Florio, translating Montaigne’s essay on friendship, outlines the misogynist ideology that I take to be widely held in the period:

the ordinary sufficiency of women, cannot answer [the] conference and communication [of male friendship] . . . nor seeme their mindes strong enough to endure the pulling of a knot so hard, so fast, and durable. (MONTAIGNE, 91)

In contrast to this pejorative portrayal of the impossibilities and dangers of cross-sex communication, the discourse of male friendship inscribes a model of the exchange of discourse and even identities based in a notion of equitableness. Defining *acquaintance*, Richard Brathwait writes of friends who are “in two bodies individually incorporated, and no lesse selfely than sociably united,” friends who “shew[] the consenting Consort of their minde” (Brathwait, frontispiece). Montaigne/Florio emphasizes this other, sanctioned mode of male conversation as well, and the text suggests a conversation that is both the exchange of ideas and homoerotic intercourse, if we keep in mind the promiscuous signification of the word *will* in seventeenth-century English as sexual organ and desire (Shakespeare, ed. Booth, 466):

[Friendship] is I wot not what kinde of quintessence of all this commixture, which having seized all my will, induced the same to plunge and loose it selfe in his, which likewise having seized all his will, brought it to loose and plunge it selfe in mine, with a mutuall greedinesse, and with a semblable concurrence. (MONTAIGNE, 93)

All these terms associated with the exchange of discourse and ideas are also insistently *spatial*. Etymologically, a semblable *concurrence* is a running together; to converse is to dwell or live together; *conversion*, “A turning from euill to good” (Bullokar, E2<sup>v</sup>); to converse is also to turn about, to reverse course and discourse (OED; W. Wall, *Imprint*, 33–34). Speaking of space, these terms situate our study of textual production at a complicated nexus of interrelated discourses: dwelling among; interchange between; commerce, society, intimacy; sexual intercourse; conversion.

### Shuffling

When I was first suspected for that Libell that concern’d the state, amongst those waste and idle papers (which I carde not for) & which unask I did deliver vp, were founde some fragmentes of a disputation touching that opinion affirmed by Marlowe to be his, and shuffled with some of myne (vnknown to me) by some occasion of our wrytinge in one chamber twoe yeares synce. (BROOKE, 104, editorial notations not reproduced)

These words, in one of the few texts we can closely associate with the playwright Thomas Kyd, are from his letter—somewhat frantic in tone, befitting someone who has recently been tortured by order of the Privy Council—written to Sir John Puckering, the Lord Keeper and a member of that council. Kyd’s words in this letter are usually read as evidence that he and Christopher Marlowe lived together during the time that both were writing plays for Lord Strange’s Men, among other companies; as Jonathan Goldberg somewhat chastely puts it, Kyd was Marlowe’s “fellow playwright and sometime roommate” (“Sodomy,” 78).

For the purposes of this essay, I do not want to efface the probability that Kyd and Marlowe lived together, but I do want to notice that the evidence emphasizes Marlowe and Kyd’s writing arrangements as much as their living or sleeping arrangements: their pages get “shuffled,” Kyd says, on “some occasion of our wrytinge in one chamber.” Kyd is at some pains to separate himself and his papers from Marlowe, but rather than discounting this evidence as the tattle-taling of a terrorized early modern subject (though it is certainly also that), I want to point out that implicit in Kyd’s letter, the story he circulates because it is believable to Queen Elizabeth’s secret service, is the story that the papers of playwrights get “shuffled” together. This is also the assumption of, for example, the title page to *The Spanish Tragedie*, the only play attributed to Kyd in the period; early seventeenth-century editions describe the play as

Newly corrected, amended, and enlarged with new Additions of the Painters part, and others, as it hath of late been diuers times acted. (1615 edition)

These may or may not be the “additions” to this play, also known as *Jeronimo*, for which Philip Henslowe recorded payment to Ben Jonson in 1601–1602:

vnto benigemy Johnson  
Lent<sup>v</sup> at the a poyntment of E. Alieyn  
& w<sup>m</sup> birde the 22 of June 1602  
in earneste of a Boocke called Richard } x<sup>li</sup>  
crookbacke & for new adicyons for  
Jeronymo the some of . . . . .  
(GREG, *Henslowe Papers*, 1:168, 149).

But for our present purposes (the shuffling of playwrights’ papers) it makes little difference—indeed, the question’s indecidability further illustrates the point.<sup>5</sup> As the manuscript of Sir Thomas More complexly suggests, early modern playwrights were far less interested in keeping their hands, pages, and conversation separate than are the twentieth-century critics who have studied them (McMillin, *Elizabethan*). This, indeed, has been the problematic of early modern English playwrighting for the twentieth century, for we are confronting material, as I argue in detail below, that largely resists categories of singular authorship, intellectual

property, and the individual that are central to later Anglo-American cultural, literary, and legal history.

In thinking about Marlowe and Kyd as playwrights writing together, we could start with the hands of the documents in question, since, unlike the manuscripts of most plays from this period, these manuscripts exist, and include: one signed letter from Kyd to Puckering, one apparently unsigned letter from Kyd to Puckering, and some pages of what Kyd calls “some fragments of a disputation touching that opinion affirmed by Marlowe to be his.” The “fragments” are in an entirely “different” hand, an italic hand, an observation that at first seems to support Kyd’s implication that they are Marlowe’s. But looking more closely, we can also notice that the hand of the disputation, the italic hand, is also the hand Kyd uses, in the signed letter, for emphasis (the word *Atheist*) and for Latin quotations, e.g., from Cicero on friendship (Brooke, 56). Keeping in mind that one signature is all that apparently [otherwise?] remains of Marlowe’s handwriting, and remembering too that Thomas Kyd, if he is the Thomas Kyd we think he is, was the son of a scrivener, is thought briefly to have followed his father into that trade (Edwards, xviii–xix), and could, as we see in his letter, write with multiple hands, we have a number of questions to ask: Whose hand is whose? Are the fragments, already a quotation from an earlier printed theological tract, also written out by Kyd for Marlowe? How do we read the ambiguity of Kyd’s syntax: “some fragments of a disputation touching that opinion affirmed by Marlowe to be his, and shuffled with some of myne”? Are the papers, or the opinion in them, or both “affirmed by Marlowe to be his”? How closely does Marlowe’s opinion touch the disputation? How closely do Marlowe’s opinions touch Kyd’s? What has been shuffled?

I do not favor bringing out the paleographical evidence as if it could answer these questions, or as if these are the right questions to be asking in the first place.<sup>6</sup> We should notice that these questions, which seem to be called up by the evidence itself and seem also to be very much like our own default questions about the authorship of collaborative Renaissance plays (who wrote which pages?), are actually questions formulated by the intervention of power into this collaborative chamber. In the words of the Privy Council order that eventuated in the arrest of Thomas Kyd, the civil authorities were ordered

to make search and apprehend every person . . . to be suspected [in this matter], and for that purpose to enter into all houses and places where any such may be remaining. And, upon their apprehension, to make like search in any the chambers, studies, chests, or other like places for all manner of writings or papers that may give you light for the discovery of the libellers. And after you shall have examined the persons, if you shall find them duly to be suspected, and they shall refuse to confess the truth, you shall by authority hereof put them to the torture in Bridewell. (BROOKE, 55)

Separating the authorship of the Kyd/Marlowe papers, though apparently Kyd’s idea at this juncture, is a strategy produced in reaction to the state and the state’s

regulation of an apparently extra-theatrical matter. It does not seem to have occurred to Kyd to mark with such precision the authorship of anything else he wrote. The same holds for Marlowe.

I want to think about Marlowe and Kyd’s relation (and thus the relations of early modern playwrights more generally) in terms that are both less anachronistic in resisting “solving” questions of “individual authorship” and less on the side of a certain mode of state power, by looking instead at the language of male friendship that pervades these documents. To be sure, Kyd’s discussion of friendship with Marlowe (usefully dead) is entirely in the negative. Though he discloses that they have shared one chamber and an unnamed patron for whose company they both wrote plays, he also refers to Marlowe distantly as “this Marlowe.” And Kyd’s repudiation of Marlowe, when it comes, could hardly be more emphatic:

That I shold loue or be familer frend, with one so irreligious, were verie rare, when Tullie saith *Digni sunt amicitia quibus in ipsis inest causa cur diligantur* which neither was in him, for person, qualities, or honestie, besides he was intemperate & of a cruel hart, the verie contraries to which, my greatest enemies will saie by me. (BROOKE, 104, emphasis added)

And yet: when we read this passage within the constellation of meanings that surround male-male friendship in this period, Kyd’s repudiation becomes more complicated. The quotation from Cicero’s “De Amicitia,” or dialogue on friendship — “they bee worthe of Friendship, in whom there is good cause why they should be loued,” reads a contemporary translation (T. Newton, E2) — is straightforward enough, implying that Kyd and Marlowe were never friends, because Marlowe was not worthy. But the quotation derives from a section of the dialogue on the ending of intimate male-male friendships that *have* existed: “There is also sometimes (as it were) a certain calamity or mishap in the departure from frendes” (Newton, E1).

Read in relation to Cicero’s dialogue, the letter denying friendship seems suddenly suffused with, haunted by, a dead friendship. “That I shold loue or be familer frend, with one so irreligious, were verie rare,” Kyd writes, and Cicero’s text uses the same word, *rare* (*rara*), in an exclamation directly following the line Kyd recites, to describe the “rare class” (*rara genus*) of friends worthy to be loved, and then again to amplify on this rarity: “It is a rare thing [*rara genus*] (for surely al excellent things are rare [*rara*]) and theris nothing harder, then to finde a thing which in euery respect in his kinde is throughlye perfect” (Newton, E2). “All excellent things are rare” declares the marginal gloss on this sentence in the contemporary translation, and in this context, Kyd’s rare love or familiar friendship with Marlowe begins to look not only rare (unusual) but also rare (valuable, excellent).

Read through the classical text that it prominently cites, Kyd’s letter is haunted by Marlowe in another sense as well, for Cicero’s dialogue, often called “Taelius

on Friendship," stages a conversation in which several interlocutors question Laelius on his feelings of grief upon the death of his close friend Scipio. Kyd, writing a few days after Marlowe's death, repudiating his acquaintance with "this Marlowe," quotes a classical dialogue on friendship in which the central figure speaks of his grief for the death of a close friend. Given Kyd's allusive writing practice elsewhere in the letters to Puckering, we might read the recourse to classical quotation as itself a marker for, inscription of, a kind of male relation in this context: Marlowe, Kyd writes, "wold report St John to be our saviour Christes Alexis I cover it with reverence and trembling that is that Christ did loue him with an extraordinary loue" (Brooke, 107). To cover it with reverence and trembling is to discover an allusion to Virgil's homoerotic eclogue; extraordinary love (*rara genum?*) is made to speak Latin, and Kyd's denial of love and friendship with Marlowe, written in Latin, begins to speak another language, that of male-male conversation. (What is covered by reference to Tullie?)<sup>7</sup>

Walter J. Ong argues that the learning of Latin itself functioned as a male puberty rite in English culture, separating the men from the boys and the women; the reading of Latin, particularly Cicero, was an everyday part of male education during the period. While at Cambridge, Marlowe and his fellow students attended "a rhetorick lecture, of some playt of Tully, for the space of an houre," every afternoon at three o'clock (Hardin, 388). Kyd's education at the Merchant Taylors' School was similar in method and content (Freeman, 6-10; Siemon, "Sporting"). Cicero is built into the structure of, and central to the rhetoric of, the everydayness of male relations in this era. These are some of the cultural meanings of Kyd's reference to Cicero, even as the letters to Puckering deny close acquaintance or conversation with Marlowe, they inscribe it, in terms that both Goldberg (*Sodomities*, 63-81) and Bruce Smith (81-93) have further identified as the homoerotic classical pastoral.<sup>8</sup> These are *conversation's* intersecting spaces: "Come live with me and be my love," Marlowe writes elsewhere, precipitating reply poems from other men, shuffled in numerous commonplace books and manuscripts, "And we will *all the pleasures* prove" (Marlowe, "Passionate," 2:537).<sup>9</sup>

The covering and uncovering of male relations in this case plays the line Alan Bray has identified between sodomy and male friendship in this period ("Homosexuality"), and the larger problem in these letters (including the related, more famous testimony of Richard Baines in the same case) is one of keeping separate the languages of male relations.<sup>10</sup> Baines too says Marlowe associated Christ and Saint John the Evangelist, though he does not "cover it with reverence and trembling," writing instead that Christ "used him as the sinners of Sodoma" (Brooke, 99). For Baines the problem is to remain outside Marlowe's discourse of male relations, even as he announces its persuasiveness; he testifies

that this Marlowe doth not only hould [these opinions] himself, but *almost into every Company he Cometh* he perswades men to Atheism . . . as J Richard Baines will justify

& approve . . . and *almost all men with whome he hath Conversed* any time will testify the same. (BROOKE, 99, my emphasis)

Marlowe's conversation is potentially *conversion*, the "Conuersacion [to] the Heythen"—and again can be read over into other modes of conversation: "If these delights *thy mind may move*: / Then live with mee, and be my love" (Marlowe, "Passionate," 2:537). Such conversation must be marked as both irresistible (and thus threatening to the state) and not fully successful (thus allowing Baines to testify as one not "perswade[d] . . . to Atheism").

Kyd's attempts, too, to separate himself from Marlowe's papers, person, and circle of conversation face the same problem: to disclose an intimate knowledge of Marlowe and at the same time to disavow acquaintance, intimacy, conversion:

For more assurance that I was not of that vile opinion [of atheism], Lett it but please your Lordship to enquire of such as he *conversd* withall, that is (*as I am geven to understand*) with Harriot, Warre, Royden, and some stationers in Pauls churchyard, . . . of whose consent *if I had lewen*, no question but I also shold haue been of their consort. (BROOKE, 105, my emphasis)

To link *consent* and *consort* so emphatically is dangerous ground for Kyd, who has already admitted consorting with Marlowe, and the closeness of Richard Brathwait's later phrase ("consenting Consort") serves as a reminder of the continuing strength of that linkage within the discourse of male friendship—even if, in Kyd, it appears here under negation ("as I am geven to understand . . . if I had been").<sup>11</sup>

Though I have dwelt on Kyd's remarks about Marlowe, I want to make it clear that I see them as representative of early modern dramatic collaborative and domestic practice only in the discourses they employ under negation—only in the disclosures they make that seemingly oppose their expressed intent of distance from, rather than proximity to, Marlowe. But place Marlowe and Kyd, writing in one chamber, next to Aubrey's recounting of another pair of playwrights living and writing near the theater:

There was a wonderfull consimilitie of phansey between [Francis Beaumont] and Mr. John Fletcher, which caused the dearness of friendship between them. . . . They lived together on the Banke side, not far from the Play-house, both batchelors; lay together . . . had one wench in the house between them, which they did so admire; the same clothes and cloake, &c., between them. (AUBREY, 1:95-96)

This passage sanctions what Kyd is eager in his circumstances to avoid (but discloses anyway): a portrayal of a collaborative male friendship that is reflexive and imitative. As I have argued elsewhere ("Dads," 303-4), Aubrey's account emphasizes the playwrights' doubly reflexive "consimilitie of phansey"; his description suggests the theatricality and perhaps indiscernibility of playwrights who wear the same clothes and cloak, not far from the playhouse.



In Aubrey's account we may thus see the interpenetration of modes of "living" and identity with modes of performance, acting, and writing. In his essay "Of Friendship," Francis Bacon writes, "where a Man cannot fitly play his owne Part: If he haue not a *Friend*, he may quit the Stage" (116), and it is worth recalling, through Bacon's metadramatic vocabulary, that a number of the dramatists cited above, among them Shakespeare, Jonson, Armin, and Rowley, were also active as actors, playing *as well as writing* others' parts. The wills of the players—documents that inscribe relations of fellow-ship among the "sharers" in the company and apprenticeship (itself a kind of pedagogy or convers[ati]on)—often produce such a shuffling and sharing of clothing, roles, and other properties:

Item I geve and bequeathe to my fellowe William Shakespeare a Thirty shillings peece in gould. . . . Item I giue vnto Samuel Gilborne my Late Apprentice the some of fortye shillings and my mouse Colloured velvet hose and a white Taffety dublet A blacke Taffety sute my purple Cloke sword and dagger And my base viall.  
(HONIGMANN AND BROCK, 73, editorial notations not reproduced)

Around the theaters in early modern England, this accumulating evidence suggests, there was a complicated culture of male relations that we have only begun to unearth and analyze—a culture characterized by co(i)mplicated identifications and by (simultaneously) collaborative living and writing arrangements.<sup>12</sup> And even funeral arrangements, for it seems Fletcher and his friend and collaborator Massinger were buried in the same grave. "Plays they did write together, were great friends," Aston Cokain, another playwright, says. "And now one Grave includes them at their ends" (186).<sup>13</sup> I am arguing, in short, that we cannot begin fully to understand the practice of playwrighting, collaborative or singular, until we see it as enmeshed in, located within, *conversant* with (in the earlier senses), other material practices and discourses: the language and everyday conduct of male-male relations (and not incidentally in the largely male theater, the exclusion of women from most of these relations); the languages and conduct of domestic relations, which included men living, working, and sleeping together (Bray, *Homosexuality* and "Homosexuality"; Goldberg, *Sodometries*, 79); and the languages and conduct of textual relations, the ways in which this culture produced texts.

### Evidence

Let's return to the list of playwrights with which I began. This gathering does not aspire to be comprehensive, or complete, or exhaustive, nor could it be—a result of the kinds of evidence we possess.<sup>14</sup> I do not mean that the evidence is lamentably incomplete; rather, it has seemed so for certain modern purposes. The kinds of evidence we have customarily desired for discussing the authorship of Renaissance plays (e.g., who wrote what lines of what play) may never have existed, because it may not have mattered to those who recorded the evidence we have, and/or because it did not matter in the same way, or with modern standards of "accuracy."

The list at the beginning of this essay, for example, is in part compiled from evidence recorded in the theatrical manager Henslowe's papers. Henslowe records payments made to playwrights for the completion of plays, advance payments for plays to be delivered later, installment payments for parts of plays, and payments made for revisions and augmentations of plays (Henslowe, *Diary*, ed. Greg; Bentley, *Dramatist*, 200–206; Carson, 54–66). These payments are registered alongside Henslowe's records on the purchase and circulation of other theatrical commodities: props, costumes, building materials. (This is not to mention the intercollation of records that seem to us to occupy the space of *household*, rather than *playhouse*, economics: personal loans and expenditures, Henslowe's memoranda to himself, recipes for medications, ways "[t]o know wher a thinge is y<sup>e</sup> Is stolen" [1:33], the recording of significant dates like the wedding of his stepdaughter, aphorisms [Carson, 5–13].) We learn from Henslowe that plays were sometimes parceled out for writing by acts, but we learn little about which playwrights wrote which acts and instead learn much more about the economy of the payment system: the value of particular kinds of contributions, the rate of payments for parts of plays, the value of revision and "additions," the frequency of revision, etc. Even from someone as concerned as Henslowe is with property—with accounts and things stolen—there is no accounting of *intellectual* property in our terms.

Henslowe's papers emphasize that the terms in which playwrighting was discussed were fundamentally economic; they concerned the attributed value of kinds of labor in/for the playhouse, and they remind us that playwrights were employees of acting companies who produced scripts that became the property not of the "authors" who produced them but of the companies that produced them onstage. The playwright Richard Brome's contracts with the Salisbury Court players—requiring that Brome write three plays a year, deal exclusively with this company, probably supply prologues, epilogues, and new scenes for revivals of older plays, and forgo printing "his" plays without the company's permission—illustrate this in detail, and Bentley's evidence suggests that other professional dramatists and companies observed these same strictures (*Dramatist*, 11–44).<sup>15</sup> Collaboration and authorship, then, from the perspective of Henslowe's papers and other theatrical records, are not about the precise attribution of intellectual property but about the allocation of labor, and (co)laborers.

The other main body of "evidence for authorship and collaboration is the ascription of plays to writers in print" typically on title pages of printed plays in quarto format. But this evidence, too, is not simply to be weighed within a modern paradigm of facticity or fiction. Early modern title pages of printed playtexts do not simply deploy authors' names as we now do; the appearance of playwrights' names on title pages must be seen as part of a network of figures that appear on play quartos and authorize a text, most notably the acting company and patron. Playwrights' names, when they do appear (and they do so much more regularly in the 1620–1640s than at the beginning of this period), function as a kind of printer's device, a selling point

for a playtext, like the recitation of memorable events of the play's plot ("the obtaining of *Portia* by the choyse of three chests"), the advertisement that the text is presented "[a]s it hath beene diuerse times acted" by a particular acting company ("the right Honorable my Lord Chamberlaines seruants"), performing at a particular theater ("at the Globe on the Banck-side"), or for a particularly noteworthy audience ("As it was presented before her Highnes this last Christmas"), or with a particular audience reaction ("with great applause").<sup>16</sup> Printed ascriptions of authorship are thus implicated in the economics of printing, the vendibility of certain printed features, including names, and often the posthumous fame of the playwright(s). Title pages suggest that, first, ascriptions of authorship were not essential data for inclusion in published plays (Mastern, "Beaumont," 337–39); second, the notion of complete, "accurate" authorial ascription was not one to which this period necessarily subscribed ("William Rowley, Thomas Dekker, Iohn Ford, &c." [*Witch of Edmonton*]); and third, there was no stigma attached to printing a play as either collaborative or singlehandedly produced.

The emergence of single-volume collections of plays in folios — particularly *The Workes of Beniamin Jonson* (1616) and *Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories & Tragedies* (1623) — might seem to deviate from the practice I have described, organized as they are around a particular playwright. If quarto playtexts highlight a network of figures associated with playmaking — actors, audiences, printers, sometimes (and increasingly) writers — this situation does begin to change contemporaneously with the publication of plays in the folio format. As a number of recent studies have shown, folio volumes rearranged and reconstituted this network of figures and began to organize plays around a central authorial figure. Studies by Stallybrass and White, Loewenstein, Timothy Murray, and others on the Jonson folio, and by Blayney, de Grazia, and Marcus on the Shakespeare folio, have suggested the immense amount of cultural work involved in converting texts written for the theater (with the writer[s] at the very least decentred, the initial but by no means the controlling producer[s] of meaning) into volumes that could organize texts under a singular authorial patronymic.<sup>17</sup> But while these folio collections do work in a new mode, it is likewise clear from these volumes that the construction of dramatic authorship in the early seventeenth century is no fait accompli in 1616 or 1623. Recent critical studies have emphasized the tentativeness of this new mode of organization — its reliance on earlier models of classicism and patronage (Jonson) and its continued dependence on the network of figures associated with the theater, patronage, and the publishing house (Shakespeare). The folio as a form continued to be a site of contestation, a complicated (de)construction site, well into the 1660s and 1670s, as the Beaumont and Fletcher folios (1647, 1679) and the Margaret Cavendish folios (1662, 1668) demonstrate (Mastern, "Dads").

To resist the notion that dramatic authorship becomes an accomplished fact with the publication of early seventeenth-century collections is to resist the common critical assumption that authorship is a desire in the minds of authors that pre-

exists its articulation; the appearance of "authorship" in the Jonson and Shakespeare folios of 1616 and 1623, respectively, is said to give voice to something always-already present — the presumptive human desire to possess what one has written. Authorship, in this paradigm, does not come into being so much as it is at long last given articulation; the term I have used, *emergence*, is not fully appropriate either, if it is taken to imply that authorship comes out from within some interior, anterior space. This may be the assumption of Loewenstein's description of Jonson's "bibliographic ego"; likewise, a careful sentence in Marcus's reading of the Shakespeare folio — "the construction of a transcendent, independent place for art was a project that empowered seventeenth-century authors and opened up a whole range of new possibilities for their lives and work" (*Puzzling*, 30) — holds within it the assumption that "Authors wanted to be recognized as individuals with their own identifying attributes" (29, my emphasis).

Recent work on these materials has, however, begun to argue that "seventeenth-century authors" did not exist independently of their construction in the textual materials we read and that, to the extent that there appears to have been a desire for authorship, that desire is itself related to the textual articulation of authorship elsewhere.<sup>18</sup> Second (and following from this), since early seventeenth-century dramatic folios did not simply voice already present desires, they also did not simply bring forth authorship in the apparently immutable and timeless form familiar to us today. Questions posed by the Beaumont and Fletcher folios — Are Beaumont and Fletcher collaborating playwrights? Are they a single "author"? Are they collaborating "authors"? — suggest that the viability of the author as the paradigm of textual production in drama was still very much open to question in 1647. Far from being an accomplished event ("the birth of the author"), authorship continued to be negotiated in relation to the collaboration that prevailed earlier in the century; conversely, collaboration was also rewritten in relation to the emerging regime of the author, and the urgency of knowing the lineage of plays and parts of plays — an urgency that has since prevailed in literary-historical treatments of these texts — was brought into being.

The term *lineage* is no accident, for — just as collaboration can be situated at the complicated intersection of homocentricism, male friendship/conversation, and domestic relations — authorship emerges inseparably from discourses and practices now viewed as distinct: reproductive, textual, political, dynastic. Rereading tropes of filiation and consanguinity in the preliminaries to the first Shakespeare folio, de Grazia writes that "the 1623 preliminaries work to assign the plays a common lineage: a common origin in a single parent and a shared history of production" (*Shakespeare*, 39). And it is worth recalling that, far from being a simple, ungendered, and unambiguous signifier for writer, as it now is, the word *author* continued in this period to inhabit a complex network of meanings, including: "person who originates or gives existence to anything"; "The Creator"; "He who authorizes or instigates; the prompter or mover"; and "One who begets; a father, an ancestor"

(*OED*; Gilbert and Gubar; Said; Grossman, 1–2). In addition to the modern meaning (“the composer or writer of a treatise or book”), *author* could also mean “the person on whose authority a statement is made; an authority, an informant.” The translators of the 1611 Authorized Version write to James I that they “offer [the book] to your MAJESTIE, not onely as to our King and Soueraigne, but as to the principal moouer and Author of the Worke” (Holy Bible, A2). *Author* had also at one time meant “one who has authority over others; a director, ruler, commander”—a meaning that resonates in the translators’ words as well.

All of these meanings—some of which are still residual in words like *authority*, *authorize*, and *authoritarian*—enter English at about the same time and continue to circulate during the early modern period. In this context, it is not possible to say, for example, that paternity was simply a “metaphor” for authorship (Gilbert and Gubar; Grossman, 239), for which is the tenor here and which the vehicle? This discursive fact, along with the male-male languages and practices associated with collaboration in and around the theaters, may begin to explain the almost entire absence of women writing drama in a period during which they wrote, sometimes prolifically, in other genres; notable exceptions are Elizabeth Cary’s probably unperformed, anonymously published *Tragedy of Mariam*, and Mary Wroth’s unpublished but possibly privately circulated and performed *Love’s Victory*.<sup>19</sup> Margaret Cavendish’s collections of plays, published much later in the seventeenth century, are indeed attempts to insert her work into a rhetoric of authorship that, as the nexus of meanings above suggests, made the participation of women seem oxymoronic (a female “creator”? “father”? “begetter”?), or revolutionary (a female “authority”? “commander”?).

The notion of the author is thus multiply contingent. First, the author is implicated in, evolving with and out of, a number of culturally resonant discourses (paternity and reproduction, patriarchal-absolutism, classical authority). And second, as Foucault suggested and as recent work has helped to document, the author is a historical development—an idea that gradually becomes attached to playtexts over the course of the seventeenth century, registered in the increasing appearance of the term in the playtexts’ printed apparatus in quartos and folios.

Another category of evidence that suggests authorship’s contingency is the emergence of booksellers’ catalogs of printed plays in the mid- and late seventeenth century. Edward Archer’s 1656 catalog advertises itself as

An Exact and perfect CATALOGUE of all the PLAYES that were ever printed; together, with all the Authors names; and what are Comedies, Histories, Interludes, Masks, Pastorels, Tragedies. (MASSINGER, *Old Law* [some copies], ar, CREG, *Bibliography*, 3:1328–38)

Running to sixteen pages and 622 titles, this catalog groups plays alphabetically by title and includes a column of letters noting genre and a column that sometimes attributes authorship. The catalog appended to *The Careless Shepherdess* (re-

printed in Creg, *Bibliography*, 3:1320–27) is a title list with less frequent notation of authorship.<sup>20</sup>

Many authorial identifications in the Archer list now seem to us to be “incorrect” (“Hieronimo, both parts . . . *Will. Shakespeare*”); some plays whose authorial attributions now seem noncontroversial are not identified with authors (*Doctor Faustus*, *Troilus and Cressida*); and, judged in relation to other evidence, collaborations are often simplified (the only collaborators identified as such are Beaumont and Fletcher). But, again, to read the evidence of these catalogs for the factual identification of authorship or authorial shares, as Creg does, is to mistake their function (“Authorship Attribution”).

Unlike the modern, author-organized *Short Title Catalogue*, the seventeenth-century catalogs are organized to facilitate locating plays by title (rather than by author); to the extent that they engage authorship, the catalogs seem not as interested in consistency with even the other available printed attributions as they are in producing an interest (in the literary and the economic senses) in plays associated with recognizable names. Playwrights’ names emerge into print as a way to create desire for volumes available for purchase in several London bookshops around 1656: “And all these Plaies you may either have at the Signe of the *Adam and Eve*, in Little Britain; or, at the *Ben Johnson’s Head* in Thredneedle-street, over against the Exchange” (*Old Law*, ar). That this catalog, one of the first to attempt the large-scale attribution of early English drama to authors, should be sold at the sign of a playwright’s head reminds us, first, that dramatic authorship emerges from the publishing house and only indirectly from the theater and, second, that authorship in its emergence is as much about marketing as about true attribution. To revise Foucault’s question: *Where is an Author?* In the bookshop.<sup>21</sup>

### Individuation

That the categories of evidence available to us (theatrical records, printed title pages, book lists) sometimes conflict, overlap, and/or do not fully agree suggests that there is a systemic ambivalence<sup>22</sup> about the division of authorship in early English drama, an ambivalence that many modern critics have sought to ignore—or, indeed, to reverse. The critical approach that has prevailed for much of this century has emphasized: the isolation of discrete authors writing alone;<sup>23</sup> the analysis of a developing, individuated style over the course of an authorial career, rather than the mutual inflections of style(s) among collaborators, or the existence/emergence of a (play)house style, what Aubrey might call a “consimilarity of phansey”; the organization of the dramatic canon into a series of authors’ “complete works,” rather than the less anachronistic canons that might be organized around acting companies or years of the repertory; the publication, performance, and teaching of, especially, Shakespeare, as separate from “his contemporaries.”

Traditionally, criticism has viewed collaboration as a subset or aberrant kind of authorship, the collusion of two otherwise individuated authors whom subsequent



readers could<sup>24</sup> discern and separate out by discovering the traces of individuality (including handwriting, spelling, word choice, imagery, and syntactic formations) left in the collaborative text. The study of collaboration has sought to reverse a collaborative process of textual production—to make collaborative playtexts conform to an authorial model by separating them into smaller units ostensibly identified with particular single playwrights.

The work of Cyrus Hoy, the most influential example of such studies, attempts to separate out the collaborators in the Beaumont and Fletcher canon on the grounds of “linguistic criteria”; there is, however, a recurrent conflict in Hoy’s project (and others that have followed it [Lake, *Canon*; MacD. P. Jackson; Hope]) between post-Enlightenment assumptions about authorship, textual property, and stylistic individuality, and the evidence of the texts under analysis. Hoy wishes “to distinguish any given dramatist’s share in a play of dual or doubtful authorship” by applying a “body of criteria that, derived from the unaided plays of the dramatist in question, will serve to identify his work in whatever context it may appear” (“Shares I,” 130). His studies thus begin by presuming singular authorship (“unaided plays”) and proceed to collaboration (tellingly glossed as “dual or doubtful”). Furthermore, his results assume that a writer’s use of *ye* for *you* and of contractions like *’em* for *them* is both individually distinct and remarkably constant “in whatever context.”

These assumptions are challenged by evidence Hoy himself adduces. Problematically, as Hoy realizes, “there is no play that can with any certainty be regarded as the unaided work of Beaumont” (“Shares I,” 130),<sup>25</sup> and he admits that “Beaumont’s linguistic practices are themselves so widely divergent as to make it all but impossible to predict what they will be from one play to another” (“Shares III,” 86). Beaumont’s presence will thus be ascertained as that which remains after Fletcher, Massinger, et al. have been subtracted. Further, because he finds *The Faithful Shepherdess*, though “undoubtedly Fletcher’s own,” linguistically at odds with his other unaided works, Hoy omits it from his tabulation of evidence establishing Fletcher’s “own” distinctive style (“Shares I,” 142).

Whatever the other problems of method and evidence, this deliberate omission seriously undermines Hoy’s project and alerts us to the theoretical issues inherent in using evidence of “linguistic preferences” and “language practices” in the pursuit of essential, stable identities (“Shares I,” 130). These terms, indeed, may expose a problem now more fully legible through the lens of sexuality theory: Is Fletcher’s style chosen or innate? an act or an essence? Are his practices preferred or (and?) performative?<sup>26</sup> Jonathan Hope’s recent attempts to detect writers by correlating syntactic variants with birth region and age within a rapidly changing circa 1600 linguistic environment likewise fail to account for the transformation(s) of a writer’s linguistic practices over time or in relation to particular social, generic, and/or collaborative circumstances, or for the performativity of linguistic practices, particularly as registered in drama. Like Hoy, Hope also omits *The Faithful Shepherdess* from his Fletcher sample (14, 75).

The results of Hoy and others are, furthermore, rendered problematic by the frequency of revision in these texts and the mediation of copyists, composers, and their “linguistic preferences” between Hoy’s hypothetical writers’ copy and the printed text he actually analyzes.<sup>27</sup> This is even to leave aside the broader nexus of collaboration in these plays that this essay has largely ignored by concentrating on playwrights—the participation of: composers of music; actors revising scripts in ways that may or may not have eventually registered in the texts we have (Loewenstein, 266; Masten, “Beaumont,” 344–45, 350; Jenkins, 62–63); acting company book-holders (Long, “Bookkeepers”) and copyists (Howard-Hill, *Ralph Crane*, J. A. Roberts; Shakespeare, *Tempest*, ed. Orgel, 56–61); audience desires in the context of the theater as a market enterprise (“Beaumont,” 339–40, 348–49). Additional questions about linguistic methods arise when we consider the complexities at the outset of collaborative writing itself, which may have included “prior agreement on outline, vetting of successive drafts by a partner, composition in concert, brief and possibly infrequent intervention, and even a mutual contagion of style as a result of close association” (Beaumont, *Knight*, ed. Zinner, 10).

The last item in Zinner’s series highlights the extent to which he remains in Hoy’s paradigm, in which one writer’s healthy individual style must be protected from infection by another’s. The presumed universality of individuated style depends on a network of legal and social technologies specific to a post-Renaissance capitalist culture (e.g., intellectual property, authorial copyright, individuated handwriting [Woodmansee; Goldberg, *Writing Matter*]). Furthermore, the collaborative project in the theater was predicated on *erasing* the perception of any differences that might have existed, for whatever reason,<sup>28</sup> between collaborated parts.

Moreover, writing in this theatrical context implicitly resists the notion of monolithic personal style that Hoy presumes: a playwright impersonates another (many others) in the process of writing a playtext and thus refracts the supposed singularity of the individual in language. At the same time, he often stages in language the *sense* of distinctive personae, putting “characteristic” words in another’s mouth. What Hoy says of Beaumont might well apply to *all* playwrights in this period:

His linguistic “preferences”—if they can be termed such—are, in a word, nothing if not eclectic. . . . it is this very protean character which makes it, in the end, quite impossible to establish for Beaumont a neat pattern of linguistic preferences that will serve as a guide to identifying his work. (“Shares III,” 87)

A more detailed critique of linguistic attribution studies might investigate the extent to which, for example, Hoy’s specific linguistic criteria (the pronominal forms *ye/you*) are, as the *OED* suggests, actually class-related differences—the extent to which they reflect not an individual’s linguistic preference but rather a subject inscribed in and constituted by specific, culturally variable, linguistic practices. (This is an issue of some complexity, for *ye* rather than *you* may announce the writer’s inscription in class-coded language and/or may be the writer’s ascrip-

tion of that language to characters within the text.) Or a further critique might consider the methods and evidence Hoy uses to produce a layered composition (Beaumont revising or revised by Fletcher; Massinger shuffling the papers of Beaumont and Fletcher) out of a two-dimensional printed document. I cite here some of the general problematics of Hoy's work because it has become the standard model for twentieth-century considerations of collaboration. While more recent work on collaborative texts has ostensibly made progressive improvements and sought new methods, it remains susceptible to many of the points raised above, and Hoy usefully illustrates the distinctly modern notions of individuality and authorial property underlying these considerations (Lake, *Canon*; MacD. P. Jackson). The individuating aims and, I would argue, the problems of stylistometric analysis are parallel to those of linguistic studies.

The individuation model of collaboration has had significant effects not only within attribution studies but, more widely, on the editing and publication of early English drama—especially in “complete works” volumes and series—and on syllabi, curricular requirements in literature and theater programs, and performance schedules. Even an edition like the forthcoming *Collected Works of Thomas Middleton*—which is especially inclusive of collaborative playtexts and attentive to the centrality of collaboration in the early modern theater and in Middleton's career—attempts to identify parts of plays with particular playwrights, using linguistic attribution. More seriously, *The Plays and Poems of Philip Massinger* is overwhelmingly given over to plays “of sole authorship,” including only two of Massinger's collaborations.<sup>29</sup> Complete works editions of Shakespeare routinely omit *The Two Noble Kinsmen*: only in its third generation has the Arden series included this play. A more extreme version of this methodology is the printing, in both the Riverside and the Oxford editions, of only the ostensibly Shakespearean passages of *Sir Thomas More*, the manuscript of which encodes the most evidence of collaboration and revision of any surviving play from the period (Wells and Taylor, 889–92). Collaborative texts thus are made to submit to an editorial apparatus founded on singular authorship, their “authorial problems” solved, before reading and interpretation are permitted to proceed. The effects of the individual model extend to the MLA citation procedure followed in this volume; the method of citing texts parenthetically by “author” only uncomfortably accommodates the materials that we are here studying and, at least for the uninitiated reader, gives a falsely concrete sense to an only emergent notion of authorship.<sup>30</sup>

### Authorship

I myself readinge mine owne woorkes, am sometime in that case, that I thincke *Cato* telleth the tale, and not myselfe.

—THOMAS NEWTON, translating Cicero, writing to his friend Atticus, in *The Booke of Friendship* (NEWTON A2<sup>v</sup>, A3)

To be sure your stile may passe for currant, as the richest alloy, imitate the best Authors as well in Oratory as History.

—HENRY PEACHAM, *The Compleat Gentleman* (44)

This essay has argued that we need to reconceive our sense of how collaboration functioned in the early English theater—as a mode of writing and as a discursive practice embedded in other discourses and practices of the period. This reconceptualization will have significant effects on texts that we customarily think of as having been written by one playwright, working “alone.” Our approach to writing “alone” in this period must be reconceived historically to account for a range of practices, including:

1. A pedagogical practice that emphasizes imitation over what we call originality (Quint; Greene); the copying and translating of classic models, methods, styles (Goldberg, *Writing Matter*; Pittenger); renaissance over naissiance.<sup>31</sup>
2. A rhetorical grammar that serves as a deep structuring device—a handbook for the reproduction and dissemination of style that is ideally not individuated (Parker, *Literary*; Trousdale, *Shakespeare*).
3. Practices of the hand writing that, as Goldberg argues, resist rather than dis-close (modern notions of) the individual, inscribing instead the indivisibility of master and pupil, king and secretary, the “manual” and the hand. Further, indivisibility at the level of the letter is not separable from other practices that I am separately enumerating: “[t]ranslation,” Goldberg remarks, in a way that is illuminated by our reading of Kyd writing Cicero, “extends well beyond the writing exercises that filled the notebooks of grammar school children, for the proprieties that mark the hand are also behavioral paradigms for structures of decorous and refined behavior” (*Writing Matter*, 42–43).
4. A corresponding notion of the “individual” subject that, within certain identifications of social class, gender, nationality, and race, emphasizes similarity and continuity over individuality in the modern sense (Whigham; R. Williams, *Keywords*; Stallybrass, “Shakespeare”).
5. An approach—in early modern culture generally and particularly in the theater—to the replication and dissemination of what we misleadingly call “source” material that cannot be accounted for within modern notions of intellectual property (T. Murray, 70; Goldberg, “Speculations”). I mean to describe here a writing practice that is agglutinative and appropriative in its approach both to texts outside the theater and to other play (see Mowat, “Theater,” in this volume). Our terms for these practices (*appropriation*, *borrowing*, *citation*, *parody*, *plagiarism*, etc.) all imply a modern regulation of intellectual property that was only emergent in a period that lacked, but did not see itself as lacking, authorial copyright.<sup>32</sup>
6. A tradition within the theater of ongoing revision, deletion, and “additions,” whether by the “original” playwright (loppolo; Utkowitz, “Well-sayd”; Taylor and

Warren) or by others. (In this sense, two *Lears* and, though the realization has been resisted, three *Hamlets* are the rule, not the exceptions, Henslowe's papers, however, suggest that we cannot restrict revision, as the cited critics have, to a singular playwright revising his own work.) The modern critical model of authorial development that dwells upon "date of composition" and first editions (to construct, say, the chronological arrangement of Shakespeare's plays in modern editions) obscures the extent to which a play revived and reprinted could exert a continuing influence on the "original" playwright himself, as well as other playwrights watching, acting in, or revising the play. Revision may furthermore figure a *complication* of the authorial self—rather than disclose its ongoing unity of intention (McMillin, *Elizabethan*, 153–59).

7. The effects of a collective writing practice even on plays written in isolation. To what extent does Beaumont before or after his death function within Fletcher's "individually" written plays? To what extent are the collaborations of Beaumont and Fletcher, or Shakespeare and Fletcher—in practice, content, style—transmitted into the work of Massinger? And to Field and Middleton and . . . ?

What might it mean, then, to write "alone" in such a context? Turning our normative paradigm on its head, we might hypothetically ask whether notions of aberrancy were attached to the 18 percent of the textual production produced *merely* single-handedly for the Rose theater in 1598 (Carson, 57); was it perverse to write "alone" in this context? Peacham's writing instructions are a kind of answer, a reminder, even as he invokes "Authors," of the distance of this culture's sense of style and individuated production from that of our own culture. Like currency (related etymologically to *discourse*), Peacham's gentlemanly style circulates, and is an alloying of genres and authors, a collaboration of what's "current" and what's past/passed.

### Extended Conversation

Not so common as commendable it is, to see young gentlemen choose the such friends with whom they may seeme bee'ng absent to be present, being a sunder to be conversant, bee'ng dead to be alive.

—LYLY, *Euphues*, 1:97

By way of a conclusion that is more prolegomena than solution, I want to return to Thomas Kyd, for a reconstrual of the dynamics of conversation, collaboration, and writing "alone" may have something to say about the other bits of evidence that survive about this playwright—his writing, sleeping, and living arrangements. The bits are scarce and fragmentary, but I want to suggest that they speak in the discourses we have been analyzing—and speak more resonantly than in a critical discourse that seeks to deliberate the facticity of Kyd's life and "settle" the authorship of his texts.

• The texts that we can associate with Kyd are collaborations (counting *The Spanish Tragedie* as such, as it was seen in the period) and translations, most re-

vantly, his translation of Garnier's tragedy *Cornelia* (published 1594). At his most heteroglossic, as in *The Spanish Tragedie*'s "play of Hieronimo in sundry languages. . . set down in English," Kyd is both collaborator and translator. Add to this Hieronimo's Latin speech at the end of act 2, citing an editor's gloss: "'A pastiche, in Kyd's singular fashion, of tags from classical poetry, and lines of his own composition'" (Boas). There are reminiscences of Lucretius, Virgil, and Ovid" (Edwards, 44). But what do *singular* and *fashion* mean in Kyd's shuffling context?

• Another example of Kyd as translator that converses in the discourses we have analyzed is a 1588 volume identified by the initials T.K. Kyd—with his waste and idle papers, his pages and fragments shuffled unbeknownst to him—would have the Privy Council think he was no great housekeeper, but evidence suggests he is the T.K. who translated Tasso's *Padre di Famiglia*, a book T.K. calls, in English, *The householders philosophie. Wherein is perfectly described, the true oeconomia of housekeeping*. Conversation: interchange of words or ideas, dwelling in a place. . . .

• *The Spanish Tragedie* had an afterlife not only in its continual revision, revival, and republication but also in *The Spanish Comedy*, also apparently known as *Don Horatio* and *The Comedy of Jeronimo*. This play was a sequel or prequel to the now more famous *Tragedie* (Henslowe, *Diary*, ed. Greg, 2:150), and Henslowe's records show that it was performed frequently in repertory with the *Tragedie* ("Jeronimo"), for example, on March 13–14, 1591; March 30–31, 1591; April 22 and 24, 1592; and May 21–22, 1592 (*Diary*, ed. Greg, 1:13–15).

Another related title, *The First Part of Jeronimo* (published 1605), may be the same play as the *Comedy*, or a revision of it. In either case, it registers the continuing popularity of "Kyd's" Jeronimo play(s)—whether or not Kyd participated in its composition at some point (Freeman, 176–77).

Add to this the circulation of *The Spanish Tragedie*, later subtitled *Hieronimo is mad againe*, in other plays through allusion, emulation, parody, etc. Hieronimo's act 3 lament for his dead son, for example—

Oh eies, no eies, but fountains fraught with teares,  
Oh life, no life, but lively fountne of death:

Oh world, no world but masse of publique wrongs. (1592 edn., E1<sup>v</sup>-E2<sup>r</sup>)—

is replayed tragically at the end of Middleton-Massinger-Rowley's *The Old Law* (1618?). The play's Cloten learns that, as a result of a law's repeal, he will lose a two-to-one bet (his "venter", i.e., venture) because he cannot have his old wife put to death and marry a new wife on the same day:

Oh Musick, no musick, but prove most dolefull Trumpets,  
Oh Bride no Bride, but thou maist prove a Strumpet,  
Oh venter, no venter, I have for one now none,  
Oh wife, thy life is sav'd when I hope t'had been gone. (K4<sup>v</sup>)

We might then say that Kyd's collaborations continue after his death, if we are willing to acknowledge that playwrighting is a continuum in this culture that includes diachronic collaboration—the writing of several playwrights on a playtext at different times (revision) and the manifold absorption and reconstitution of plays and bits of plays by playwrights writing later. Hieronimo is mad, again and again.

*The Old Law's Spanish Tragi-Comedy* may remind us once more of problematic questions that the individuation model of playwrighting asks but is hard-pressed to answer: Who shuffled these papers? Whose “linguistic practices” or “preferences” does the Clown’s speech register: those of Middleton? Massinger? Rowley? Kyd? (Marlowe?) A murderous/witty Clown, perhaps written in part by a playwright who also played clowns (Rowley), speaking in the voice of a mourning father who is both player and playwright, written by the two-handed son of a scrivener? What linguistic analysis will sort this out?

• Unlike Massinger and Fletcher, recorded in Cockayne’s poem as lying in a single grave, Kyd had a solitary burial (Freeman, 38). But he is figuratively interred with Marlowe in another poem that takes up the question of the burial of playwrights, together or apart—Jonson’s poem on the dead Shakespeare in the 1623 First Folio:

My Shakespeare, rise; I will not lodge thee by  
Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lye  
A little further, to make thee a roome:  
Thou art a Monument, without a tombe,

.....  
That I not mixe thee so, my braine excuses;  
I meane with great, but disproportion'd Muses:  
For, if I thought my iudgement were of yeeres,  
I should commit thee surely with thy peeres,  
And tell, how farre thou didst out lye out-shine,  
Or sporting Kid, or Marlowes mighty line. (JONSON, “To the Memory,” 9)

There is a hint here, in the appearance of “sports” (erotic slang in the period, not unrelated to the term’s more theatrical meanings [*OED*]) and the pun on *kid/got* (a figure of playfulness, wantonness, even lechery)<sup>33</sup> of another Kyd that we have not seen in his terrorized letters to the Privy Council. What has *this* Kyd written? “Sporting Kid” seems no allusion to *The Spanish Tragedie* or *Cornelia*, though perhaps to *The Spanish Comedy*; Jonson’s gloss must also be set alongside Dekker’s “industrious Kyd” (K<sub>4</sub>)—an evocation suggesting that Kyd’s shape may change more than we have yet reckoned, for “industrious” does not seem fully appropriate to Kyd’s currently slender canon.<sup>34</sup>

Unlike Cockayne’s burial poem, Jonson’s is a poem *against* mixing, *against* collaboration—a poem performing the separation of Shakespeare from his acting company and fellow playwrights, urging him toward a singular apotheosis. But

even Jonson (greatly invested in this process of singularization, whether in this folio or his own) does not keep Kyd and Marlowe separate. His “*sporting Kid*” is lodged with Marlowe; they are written together, if not writing together, conversing in one line.

Reading “Closure and Enclosure in Marlowe,” Marjorie Garber has analyzed a thematics and formal poetics of enclosure in Marlowe’s writing that she finds epitomized, for example, in familiar lines from *The Jew of Malta*:

And as their wealth increaseth, so inclose  
Infinite riches in a little room. (GARBER, 20)

If we follow Garber’s reading in seeing spatial homologies in the little room, the line, and Marlowe “working within the confines of the tiny Elizabethan stage” line, and Marlowe “working within the confines of the tiny Elizabethan stage” line, we can, by reading Kyd writing with Marlowe, see that the confines of the chamber, the collaborative stage, and Jonson’s line may enclose or disclose several playwrights, writing together. In a word, *conversation*. “[C]ome Gueston, / And share the kingdom with thy dearest friend,” reads some fragment of a letter Marlowe shuffled in a play (*The troublesome raigne*, A2). Or is the play shuffled into this letter, with which “it” begins? The little room, the collaborative early English playhouse, and the “economy of housekeeping” in these related houses, may enclose and include discourses and practices we are only beginning to reckon.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Thanks to Will Fisher, Jay Grossman, Karen Newman, Eric Wilson, and audiences at MLA 1994 and Brown University for comments and suggestions; to Eric Wilson and Marco Torres for research assistance; and to Johns Hopkins University Press for permission to reprint some words that they own in the section “Individuation” (Masten, “Beaumont”).

<sup>2</sup> This list is largely a redaction of Bentley’s chapter “Collaboration” (*Dramatist*, 197–234), gathering information from title pages, Henslowe’s papers, and the Stationers’ Company Register. On the list’s (non)comprehensiveness, see my section “Evidence” below. On Hand A et al., see McMillin, *Elizabethan*; on “Shakespeare and Middleton,” see Middleton, *Works*, ed. Taylor, on “Chapman and Shirley,” see Bentley, *Dramatist*, 224–25; on “Jonson and another,” see Orgel, “Text.” Orgel’s article, to which I am indebted, was the first to recognize the larger implications of Bentley’s work on playwrighting. I’m grateful to Jay Grossman for imagining the list.

<sup>3</sup> In the remainder of this essay I deliberately use *OED*’s nineteenth-century “nonce-word” *playwrighting* in order to gesture toward three overlapping senses: (1) toward the process of writing for the theater (playwriting); (2) toward the identity category of being or acting as a playwright (what Bentley calls “The Profession of Dramatist”); and (3) through the word *wright*, toward the sense that the process of writing and rewriting plays was a craft, and a labor (cf. *shipwright*, *carwright*).



3. This essay treats texts written for the professional theaters and does not engage theatrical writing (e.g., masques) produced in other locations.
4. Definitions and examples derive from the *OED*, unless noted.
5. Discussion has focused on whether the published additions are "characteristic" of Jonson. That additions/revisions might cohere more with the play under revision than they would disclose the "characteristic" hand of their writer is one of the present essay's corollaries. On Jonson and *The Spanish Tragedy*, see Siemon, 553 n. 2; Edwards, lxxi–lxxii.
6. My resistance to paleographic evidence as a conduit of (modern) identity is indebted to Goldberg, *Writing Matter*.
7. "The Romaine Tullie loued Octavius," says Mortimer Senior in his catalog of "mightiest kings" and "their minions," "[a]nd not kings onlie, but the wisest men." (Marlowe, *The troublesome raigne*, D1)—signaling what Tullie's name may have referenced for Marlowe, Kyd, and others in their culture, whatever the "actual" relation of Cicero and Octavius.
8. Smith distances Cicero's dialogue from homoeroticism (36, 40–41), but see Smith, 84, and Goldberg, "Sodomy," 79, for bedfellows reading "De Amicitia."
9. Bowers attempts to strip away the collaborative history of this text, eliminating "non-Marlovian," "spurious" stanzas, but on the poem as implicated in networks of circulation, imitation, and response, see Marotti, 167, and W. Wall, 189–90.
10. On Baines, see Goldberg, "Sodomy,"; Fisher.
11. The period meanings of *consent* and *consort* are closely related and overlap with meanings of *conversation* and *converse* discussed above (*OED*).
12. See Baldwin's attempt to map the residences of members of the King's Men (*Organization*, 148–61).
13. For a more detailed analysis of the burial, see Masten, introduction to *Textual Intercourse*.
14. The list does not represent all *available* evidence; I have, for example, emphasized the best-known playwrights, while also suggesting that playwrights now forgotten often collaborated with those now canonized.
15. See also Dekker's comment (attributed, within a dream narrative, to Nashe): "being demanded how Poets and Players agreed now, troth sayes hee, As Plishions and patients agree, for the patient loues his Doctor no longer then till hee get his health, and the Player loues a Poet, so long as the sicknesse lyes in the two-penie gallery when none will come into it" (Dekker, *A KNIGHTS Continuing*, L1).
16. Quotations are from the following Shakespeare title pages, respectively: *The most excellent Historie, The Tragoedy of Othello; A Most Pleasant and excellent conceited Comedie; The Late, And much admired Play; A Pleasant Conceited Comedie; The Two Noble Kinsmen*.
17. To group these studies is *not* to say that they agree, especially on the question of who organized the texts under an authorial rubric or how that idea came into being. On Jonson, see also Brady and Herendeen.
18. For example, Jonson, the figure around whom so much discussion of the emergence of dramatic authorship revolves, was not dependent on the commercial theaters after 1602 and did not function as an "attached or regular professional" (Bentley, *Dramatist*, 31–32).
19. This is not to say that these dramas were not influenced by, or influences upon, public-theater plays. On Cary, see Ferguson; on Wroth, see Lewalski, *Writing*, 296–307.
20. The "Kirkman" list of 1601 (reprinted in Greg, *Bibliography*, 31338 f.) places an author col-

umn first but continues to group the plays alphabetically by title; authorship is thus marked more prominently than in the earlier catalogs, but title is still the organizing principle.

21. The playwright's head sign arrives on the scene *after* the closing of the theaters. I appreciate Peter Blayney's assistance in attempting to trace (thus far unsuccessfully) Jonson's Head prior to 1655–1658 (Plover, 148).
22. Bentley writes: "a title-page statement . . . tended, as a number of examples show, to simplify the actual circumstances of composition" (*Dramatist*, 199). I argue that we cannot prioritize this evidence in this way, as if Henslowe's papers provide "actual circumstances," while printed ascriptions are mere representations. Both sets of evidence are mediated and provide no transparent access to "the actual."
23. E.g., the dust jacket of Hope's recent *The Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays*, which pictures Shakespeare, writing alone in a (nineteenth-century) study.
24. Or *must*: "Scholarly investigation of the *authorial problems* posed by collaborative drama is . . . a *necessary precondition* to critical and aesthetic considerations of such drama" (Hoy, "Critical," 4, my emphasis). Cf. McMullan, 149.
25. This uncertainty extends to the other playwrights of the period, and linguistic study often relies on external evidence to anchor its "unaided" samples, while aspiring to adjudicate the truth or falsehood of other evidence that comes from identical sources (e.g., title pages)—a selective practice that often relies upon and eventuates in the canon as already received.
26. On the performativity of sexuality and gender, see, for example, Judith Butler.
27. Hope acknowledges that "any expectation of textual integrity, or purity, in early Modern play-texts"—by which he apparently means an unmediated authorial transcript—"is misplaced" (4–5), but his study then largely ignores this issue.
28. McMullan's interpretation of this phrase as referring to *authorial* differences is apparently the central point of his critique of an earlier published version of this sentence (154).
29. The collection's rationale for inclusion is inconsistent: the canon seems to be defined by printed attributions to Massinger during or immediately after his lifetime, but one such play is excluded (*Old Law*); another collaboration is excluded because it has been previously edited (*Virgin Martyr*).
30. "[A]lphabetize entries in the list of works cited by the author's last name or, if the author's name is unknown, by the first word in the title," write *The MLA Style Manual's* collaborators (Achtart and Gibaldi, 102), suggesting that there is always an author, though some have not yet become known.
31. Rambuss's discussion of letter-writing and vocational manuals like Day's *The English Secretary* suggests that my numbered categories above must be seen as related and overlapping (30–48).
32. More "emergent" for son playwrights than for others, e.g., Jonson—with his manifold citations, marginal annotations, and early use of *plagiary* (and related words) to apply to texts. See Loewenstein.
33. Cf. "Leaping like wanton kids" (*FO* 1.6.144, Spenser, 81). Adjectivally, *kiddlyd* also meant "well-known; famous; notorious" (*OED*).
34. For a reading of "incongruities" in *The Spanish Tragedy* that also takes off from Jonson's naming and then traces conflicting figurations of style and *sprezzatura* in the play, see Siemon. Siemon's reading goes some way toward demonstrating the multi-valency of



Kyd's writing in *The Spanish Tragedy*, and shows in particular its possible relation to pedagogical practices at the Merchant Taylors' School; my point is to assert Kyd's polyvocality as not simply characteristic of Kyd but as implicated in the larger circles of collaborative playwriting. Cf. Greene's famous description of Shakespeare: "an absolute *Johannes fac totum*."

## CHAPTER 21

### The Publication of Playbooks

Peter W. M. Blayney

FOURSCORE AND several years ago, Alfred W. Pollard told a memorable tale. He had realized that while each of Shakespeare's plays printed in quarto presented its own unique textual problem, one group of them (which he dubbed *Bad Quartos*) preserved texts of a kind quite distinct from the remainder (which he therefore called *Good Quartos*). He had also noticed that while some of the plays were first published by the men who first registered them at Stationers' Hall, others were not, and some were not registered at all. Imagining that he could distinguish two different kinds of "irregularity" in the registers, and that the differences coincided with the different kinds of text, Pollard constructed a narrative to explain the phenomena. It was, in fact, rather more than a mere narrative. Rejecting the prevailing view that virtually all play quartos were surreptitious piracies that the players had been powerless to prevent, Pollard offered a stirring melodrama in which Good players, with occasional help from Good stationers, struggled against a few Bad stationers and usually won.

Most experts today recognize that the story owed far more to Pollard's vivid imagination than to any real evidence. It remains true that the five quartos he described as *Bad* resemble each other more closely than they resemble any of the fourteen he called *Good*.<sup>1</sup> It comparatively few of his notions of what constitutes "irregularity" in the Stationers' Registers have survived closer examination, and some of the scenarios he devised for individual plays—most notably *Hamlet*—are not even self-consistent, let alone plausible.

But no matter how flimsy the narrative has proved when subjected to scholarly scrutiny, as a story it has proved all too durable.<sup>2</sup> Like a folktale, it continues to surface in whole or in part in most introductory accounts of the relations between the early theater and the book trade. And so the old, unfounded myths persist: that act-