

include “verbal stimming”) as Caliban’s “gabble” (98). Loftis exposes the colonialist logic of this game, writing that HHM reenacts an “imperialist impulse . . . between the neurotypical colonizer and the colonized autistic child” (100).

Chapter 4, the final chapter, examines old age and cripp time through a close reading of *Still Dreaming* (2014), a documentary film directed by Hank Rogerson and Jilann Spitzmiller. The film tracks the efforts by two young Shakespeare directors to recruit the senior residents of the Lillian Booth Actors’ Home in a community performance of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (103). Some of the elderly actors have dementia and other memory impairments. Tensions arise, yet at the closing of the film, the participants comment on how they had “fun” and felt a stronger “sense of community” (117). In contrast to previous chapters’ use of multiple sources to shape nuanced readings, this chapter was limited by its tight focus on the film as its chief source of evidence. I wonder to what degree the filmmakers were able to shape and mold the testimony of the participants.

Throughout, Loftis acknowledges that “creating access is . . . not easy,” and that at times “some disability accommodations will naturally conflict with each other” (10). Yet Loftis encourages Shakespeareans to develop “the ability to anticipate the needs of someone with a disability without being told about those needs in advance” (74). I learned much from this book and I hope it will be read widely and discussed by readers of Shakespeare, critical disability studies, and theater.

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Shakespeare and Montaigne. Lars Engle, Patrick Gray, and William Hamlin, eds. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021. xxiv + 448 pp. £90.

Lars Engle, Patrick Gray, and William Hamlin have enlisted a formidable group of contributors to their massive volume on *Shakespeare and Montaigne*, and such a topic would seem to warrant it. It’s hard to imagine a more complex and consequential purely academic topic than this of how, as Engle puts it, “thinking about Shakespeare *reacting* to Montaigne can help us see Shakespeare *thinking, thinking about thinking*, and possibly even *thinking about the ways many of us think now*” (29). And indeed, deep and broad learning has been lavished on the collection, with worthy insights to be gleaned throughout and innumerable opportunities to think with both authors. Ultimately, the book is valuable and a success.

Its flaws are considerable, however, and in the Montaignian spirit of admitting a slanted view, I will assay them. Faced with nearly five hundred pages, including a preface, two introductions, and two afterwords, we don’t even reach chapter 1 until we’re eighty pages in. Nearly everything in *Shakespeare and Montaigne* could be shorter.

Engle's own offering, one of the best, tackling superbly the volume's *sine qua non*—*The Tempest's* engagement with Montaigne—quotes Engle's own quoting of Colin Burrow from introduction number two (310, 36). The redundancies aren't only in the book's wanton self-referencing, though; the dead horse of subjectivity is beaten many times, with post structuralist flourishes that feel thirty years old or more. It's a tad tedious—and, in these days of unreason, a tad frustrating—to read about the deconstructing of shadow and substance (101), the narrativizing of identity (108), or the “fundamentally anti-essentialist” character of selfhood (247) and its geopolitical significance. Easier to take but still excessive is the relentless methodological apologetics. Shakespeare and Montaigne are fruitfully set next to each other—we hardly need to defend flexibility about what constitutes a source or lay out models of intertextuality.

Ironically, many of the freshest, most thought-provoking readings appear in essays that, like Engle's, take *source* in a fairly strict sense. Grounding on the known correspondence between Florio's translation and *The Tempest* allows Engle to explore how Prospero and Gonzalo correspond to Montaigne himself and convey an ambivalent attitude toward him and his aloof perch. Alison Calhoun's riffs on the grim theme of flaying—a warning, for Montaigne in “Virtue” and “Experience” and for Shakespeare in *King Lear*, against the dire consequences of philosophical rigidity—benefit from precise references to ancient sources informing both writers; she observes, fascinatingly, of 4.6, “this scene in *Lear* could be a gloss of the Antigonian fragment, inspired by Shakespeare's reading of Diogenes Laertius or, more likely, Montaigne's borrowing of that fragment in his essay ‘Of Vertue’” (188). Singularly skilled in describing paradox, Peter Platt offers a rich interpretation of *All's Well* based on specific connections to “We Taste Nothing Purely.”

Farther reaching but similarly moored to specifics is Richard Hillman, who argues that reading Montaigne inflected Shakespeare's concept of genre and convinced him of the interpenetration of tragedy and comedy, a bold claim reinforced with a number of intriguing parallels, most impressively a “neglected analogue” between “Three Good Women” and *Winter's Tale* (272). Of course, more indirect comparisons are also illuminating, and two of the finest spotlight Falstaff: Anita Gilman Sherman calls attention to Falstaff's defusing of violence through personality, addressing the problem broached in “Physiognomy”; Gray's huge and magisterial discussion of historical patterns of appropriating Shakespeare and Montaigne centers on Falstaff to drive home how each writer eludes a pat mapping-on of values. We perpetually want to know, as Gray crisply formulates it, “whose side are Shakespeare and Montaigne on?” (358); and we need to be at least as skeptical of the romanticized Falstaff as we are of the devilish one.

These two essays epitomize two points that stand out from the collection as a whole. Sherman invites us to consider how Shakespeare encountered Montaigne with a scrutinizing, critical eye—one perhaps more charitable, as Hamlin contends, toward “the believing temperament” (210). And Gray admonishes us that we should strive

for a similar care and mindfulness in our own encounters with both of them, rather than assuming the Shakespeare and the Montaigne congenial to our own sensibilities.

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The Fetters of Rhyme: Liberty and Poetic Form in Early Modern England.

Rebecca M. Rush.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021. x + 284 pp. \$39.95.

Rebecca Rush's *The Fetters of Rhyme* is historical formalism in full flower. This beautifully nuanced study begins and ends with John Milton, specifically his rejection of rhyme in the 1668 preface to *Paradise Lost*. In choosing to write the poem in blank verse, Milton claimed to be recovering the "ancient liberty" of epic by heroically rescuing it "from the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming" (1). As an early modern politicizer of poetic form, Milton had a loud voice, but—and this is key for Rush's purposes—he did not have a lone voice. Rather, he was engaging in "a battle" over the moral, political, and cultural significance of rhyme "that had been raging since at least the sixteenth century" (1). The heart of the matter, as Rush makes clear, was rhyme's debatable status as formal limitation. Limitation can be construed positively, as unifying order and comfortable containment, or negatively, as forced confinement, fettering constraint. Reading across a careful curation of poetic practitioners and theorists from the 1590s to the 1670s, Rush explores the reasons for rhyme's shifting sociopolitical connotations: the political and personal histories that made one poet's fetters another poet's freedom.

Unsettling the sonnet's usual association with pining solitude and social withdrawal, the first chapter avers that in Spenser's sonnet sequence *Amoretti*, the sweet "bands" of rhyme signify social bonding, especially marriage. For Spenser, the artifice of rhyme reproduced the artificiality of the marriage bond, which reins in the natural disorderliness and violence of human passion, "[requiring] both parties to sacrifice life and liberty" (26) in order to attain a higher happiness in civil connection. Implicitly at least, Rush fashions Spenser into a pre-Hobbesian thinker for whom "the conjunction of two that forms the basis of the polity is not natural and established but artificial and hard won" (28). Spenser makes rhyme, like marriage, a necessary restraint whose captive bonds are preferable to the warlike state of nature.

In chapter 2, Rush sheds light on the English couplet's checkered past by turning to young John Donne as one of the satiric "couplet poets" (57), urbane wits who convened at the Inns of Court in the 1590s. Unlike the balance, moderation, and restraint marshaled by iambic pentameter couplets in the poetry of Dryden and Pope, the couplet form prior to 1600 had a "more risqué reputation" (57) that was "anything