

**2017 SAA Seminar: Forgotten Histories Abstracts
Leader: Marisa Cull, Randolph-Macon College 1**

Mark Bayer

Nobody's Business

Sometimes, histories were meant to be forgotten. This would seem to be the case with the anonymous *Nobody and Somebody: With the True Chronicle History of Elidure*, first staged at the Red Bull sometime around 1606. While this play might not qualify as a history in the modern sense of the term, it is loosely based on the exploits of the legendary King Elidure as recounted by Geoffrey of Monmouth, features the political intrigue common to this genre, and is set in a panoply of London locales that would be familiar to its audience.

It's no coincidence, I think, that this play was performed at the Red Bull, an often-neglected venue we usually associate with tradesmen and apprentices—the 'nobodies' of Jacobean England. The play, I argue, appeals specifically to this audience precisely because it inserts Nobody as a significant historical figure, one who eventually triumphs over Somebody. Part of Nobody's attraction is the fluidity with which he is able to move within different social settings, be they in country, city, or court. His ambiguous agential status also has important economic implications; like Robin Hood, he redistributes wealth to the needy, and he does so more efficiently than the official channels designed to relieve London's poor. Nobody, I claim, is emblematic of market efficiency at a time when commerce—both in the play and in the city—was curtailed by extensive monopoly power exercised over several key industries. In this way, Nobody gives voice to these largely forgotten Red Bull playgoers.

Meredith Beales

Forgetting History: The Missing Scene in *Henry IV, Part II*

In the Queen's Men play, *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, emotions peak when Prince Henry, having been thrown in jail by the Lord Chief Justice, repents at his father's deathbed and resolves to become a responsible, successful king. Prior to this scene, the audience witnesses Prince Henry's confrontation with the Lord Chief Justice; seeing the prince at the Lord Chief Justice's mercy earlier in the play makes poignant his subsequent reformation. But in Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part II*, the courtroom scene is missing. It is referred to by the characters, who suggest that (as in the earlier play), the Lord Chief Justice might regret his earlier sternness when at the mercy of a playboy king; but, the scene itself is not there. The choice Shakespeare's young king makes is between his old friends, led by Falstaff, and the Lord Chief Justice, but the latter embodies respectability rather than a specific incident, the most notorious in the young prince's life. What effect does this elimination have? The courtroom scene is replaced by Justice Shallow and Falstaff—two models with very different approaches to jurisprudence than that of the Lord Chief Justice. More than that, the removal of the scene has a historical, and historiographical, effect: it presumes that the audience could bring knowledge to Shakespeare's play of Prince Henry's youthful antics. This paper will explore the effects of the removal of the courtroom scene found in the Queen's Men play in Shakespeare's *Henriad*, and what that removal suggests about the status of historical knowledge (and history plays) in the late Elizabethan theatre.

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David Bergeron

Thomas Sampson Makes History from *Richard III*

It will seem strange to credit Thomas Sampson with “making” history, if we mean that he has gained some kind of renown. In fact, nothing, so far as I can determine, has been written about Sampson and his poem *Fortunes Fashion* (1613), his only published work. Michael Cox, *Oxford Chronology of English Literature* (2002), does not even list this poem in the works published in 1613. A quick survey of bibliographies finds no entry for Sampson. Renown he does not enjoy. Instead, I intend to focus on how he “makes” (fashions, constructs) history from the *Richard III* narrative. As we know from Shakespeare’s play, Queen Elizabeth disappears from the play at the end of 4.4. I will argue that Sampson sets out to complete her story, which he does by appropriation and expansion.

The publication of Q5 of *R3* in 1612 and Thomas Heywood’s *Edward the Fourth* (both parts) in 1613 may have prompted Sampson to write a poem about Elizabeth. The poem has 180 stanzas of 6 lines each, occupying 42 quarto pages. He begins with Edward’s reign, proceeds through the vicissitudes of that reign and Edward’s death, Elizabeth’s encounters with Richard, and her life after Richard’s death. Sampson frames the poem thus in an address to the reader: “You see her newly risen out of her grave, and in the extremity of her grieffe speaking as followeth” (A3v). We immediately hear her voice, as we do throughout the poem: “unhappie was that time, / Wherein I liv’d, and never tasted joys / That did not wither” (A4). At the end, Sampson enters the poem in his own voice: the queen vanished, “leaving to my memorie / Here to relate what she to me rehearst” (F3). Sampson makes history by restoring Elizabeth, who hath “in darke obscureness stood” (F3v). He does this in part by granting an afterlife to *R3*, refracting that play through his art.

Richard Brucher

Staging Vexatious History in *Hengist, King of Kent*

My title relates several issues regarding *Hengist, King of Kent; or the Mayor of Queenborough* (1616-1620?), Thomas Middleton’s version of the rise and fall of King Vortiger of Britain and the Saxon invasion, led by Hengist, in the fifth century. The paper reads *Hengist* as chronicle, rather than as tragedy or farce, and thus as an example of Stuart historiography. The play presents history as a sequence of opportunistic betrayals for power and status that prove to be bewildering vexations that undo witless aspirers. Hengist, who conceals more than he reveals, understands the history he is making; Vortiger does not. Performance matters because events and intentions must be interpreted by the characters enacting them and by audiences watching them. Middleton works variants on events in Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, invents anachronistic scenes, and puts archaic conventions (chorus, dumb show, type figures) in tension with modern devices (histrionics, psychological complexity, real politics). The paper looks at the long sequence of action from Hengist’s first victory over Vortiger’s enemies, through Vortiger’s seduction by Hengist’s daughter Roxena, and through Vortiger’s rape and vilification of his chaste wife Castiza. The sequence includes several moments of great historical consciousness that Middleton alters provocatively from Holinshed to explore power and subvert expectations. Along with the

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play's final scene, which both follows and travesties source materials, these events provide fruitful places for exploring Middleton's experiments in *Hengist* with forms and effects of early modern history plays.

Regina Buccola

Edward III As Opening Salvo to the Two Tetralogies, or What a Difference a Play Makes

In spring and summer 2016, Chicago Shakespeare Theater performed a two-part marathon through Shakespearean English history plays with *Tug of War*. In part 1, subtitled *Foreign Fire*, Artistic Director Barbara Gaines took the eccentric but illuminating course of juxtaposing the seldom-staged *Edward III* directly against a heavily cut version of the oft-staged *Henry V*, skipping entirely over *Richard II* and the two parts of *Henry IV*. The pairing emphasized the many similarities between the plots of the two plays, as well as the overt callbacks to the reign of Edward III in *Henry V*. The prominence of women as powerful political and military operatives in *Edward III* constituted a stronger set-up for the theater's ensuing marathon through the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III* than a traditional march through the two tetralogies. The success with which Gaines deployed *Edward III* as the foundation play in a two-part, six-play sequence suggests that the time has come to give this play its due among the English histories – onstage, in the classroom, and in scholarly analysis – regardless of the extent (or limit) of Shakespeare's hand within it. I will explore how doubling of parts (Karen Aldridge portrayed both the Countess of Salisbury and Margaret of Anjou, while Heidi Kettenring appeared as both Queen Philippa and Joan of Arc) worked in tandem with parallel plots on reverse trajectories to render women characters integral to the plays' war-centered action.¹

Ed Gieskes

‘When you see me, you (don’t) know me’: Tudor-focused History Plays

The first years of the seventeenth century saw the production of a series of plays about Tudor monarchs. W.S.'s *The True Chronicle History of the whole life and death of Thomas Lord Cromwell* (1600, Q1602, 1613), Thomas Dekker and John Webster's *Famous History of Sir Thomas Wyatt* (1602, Q1607 and 1612), Samuel Rowley's *When You See Me, You Know Me* (1604, Q1605 and 1613), Thomas Heywood's *The First Part of If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1604, Q1606, 1608, 1610, 1613), and *The Second Part of If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1605, Q1606, 1609) all stage aspects of the history of Tudor monarchs. Elizabeth I only appeared on stage after her death, but even before 1603 there appears to have been interest

¹ Both Jean Howard and Patricia Cahill also compare/contrast *Edward III* and *Henry V* with a biopolitical focus which will inform aspects of my performance studies-based argument. See Jean Howard, "Edward III and the Making of Shakespeare as Historical Dramatist," in *Women Making Shakespeare: Text, Reception and Performance*, edited by Gordon McMullan, Lena Cowen Orlin and Virginia Mason Vaughn for Arden Shakespeare (New York: Bloomsbury): CARLI ebooks, Roosevelt University Library; and Patricia A. Cahill, *Unto the Breach: Martial Formations, Historical Trauma, and the Early Modern Stage* (Oxford University Press, 2008), especially 130-136.

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in stage representation of this period of English history. This flurry of plays also belies arguments that interest in the “history play” was in decline and if they tend towards what we have come to call romance, that attests to writers’ responsive reactions to shifts in the dramatic field (and bears a suggestive resemblance to the tragic form of a good many of the historical plays of the 1590s). Focusing on the Cromwell play and perhaps one other, this essay will discuss how these plays respond to both generic and historical shifts and will attempt to address why they are largely forgotten, or, perhaps better, not considered to be “histories” in the same way Shakespeare’s plays are.

Helen Hull

Speaking Out In and About Thomas Lodge’s *The Wounds of Civil War*

Thomas Lodge’s *The Wounds of Civil War* provides an interesting locus for exploring the connections between the early modern history play, political theory, and political debate. Lodge’s play was presumably written in the latter half of the 1580s and was published in 1594. It stages episodes from the ancient Roman civil war ca. 88-78 BCE—what initially began as a contest for leadership of the Roman army turned to bloodshed and tyranny as the two opposing generals, Scilla and Marius, fought for control of Rome. It has been forgotten over the years because.... well, possibly because “‘monotonous’ is the word used most often to describe the verse of the play.”² [While he acknowledges that the play has some drawbacks, Charles Whitworth goes on to advocate for its value.] But despite its unexciting verse, the play engages with some very exciting concepts.

In representing the generals’ power struggles, the play also represents the institutions and mechanisms of government and power. It calls into question concepts of political power, authority, and institutions. The play also depicts debate amid all of the action—“monotonous” as it may be. I propose in my essay to examine how this play stages political debate, and to thus consider how it engages with the concept of political debate—what were the contemporary parameters for discussing or speaking about political matters? How does the play contest or establish those parameters? Who gets to speak up? What are the rewards or penalties for speaking out? And finally, what are the implications of staging political debate?

Mira Kafantaris

Encountering Foreign Queenship in Thomas of Woodstock

In the anonymous history play *Thomas of Woodstock* (dated ca. 1591-95; revived ca. 1611), Queen Anne of Bohemia (Anne O’Beam) is presented as the paragon of wifely duty and loyalty to the English crown as soon as she appears on stage. In direct contrast to her weak husband, King Richard II, Anne O’Beam effectively champions the plight of the common people and opposes rampant forces of misgovernment. While scholars have debated the question of the play’s authorship, some ascribing it to William Shakespeare while others to Samuel Rowley, few have examined *Thomas of Woodstock*’s important depiction of a loyal foreign queen, especially when we consider the conversation surrounding royal marriage at this historical juncture. This paper will address this gap and will focus in particular on the play’s revival ca. 1611 with the

² Charles W. Whitworth, “The Plays of Thomas Lodge,” *Cahiers Elisabethains* 4 (1973): 8.

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tensions inherent in King James I's dynastic marriage politics in mind. The importance of Anne O'Beam in *Thomas of Woodstock* becomes more apparent when we examine her alongside another play that presents a foreign queen in a favorable light: Shakespeare's and Fletcher's *Henry VIII* (1613). However, while the play insists on Queen Anne's loyal virtue, it does not afford her the complexity that Katherine of Aragon shows in *Henry VIII* (1613). This nuanced examination illuminates our understanding of the era's theories of cultural mixing and in turn, shows how the Jacobean theatre gave its audience a magnifying lens through which they saw the inner workings of Jacobean politics.

Joseph Mansky

Heywood's *Edward IV* and the Politics of Publication

This essay studies the politics of publication in Thomas Heywood's two-part history play *Edward IV*. Throughout the play, and particularly in the second part, characters repeatedly "publish" information in order to influence the course of the nation, presenting the English people with accounts of themselves and of others. These public appeals take place via oral performance, manuscript, and print—in the form of sermons, libels, proclamations, and letters. *Edward IV*, I argue, thus lays bare the workings of the early modern "public sphere," showing its socially heterogeneous audience how they might parse, and even participate in, the pitch making of an increasingly contentious political culture. At the same time, the play reflects on its own status as a published object, playfully staging the influence of theatrical representation on the common people's interpretation of royal power and, indeed, of English history. Heywood's play, then, does not only portray and critique the mechanisms of early modern "publicity," but also actively deploys them. To conclude, this essay will examine the politics of the play's own publication history. *Edward IV* was printed (without authorial attribution) at least six times from 1599 to 1626. The play is highly topical, engaging with controversial issues of the late 1590s such as benevolences, the royal prerogative, and the uncertain succession. But these issues grew only more urgent as the play was republished throughout the early seventeenth century. The play's popularity, then, suggests the continued appeal of its own theatrical representation of English history.

Alli Meyer

**Forgotten Chronicles: Christopher Marlowe's Isabella
and the History Writing of Grafton and Stow**

This paper revisits Marlowe's famously inconsistent characterization of queen consort Isabella in *Edward II*, which I argue is best understood in the context of his navigation of chronicle history precedents, through which his depiction of the Queen coheres as a consistent critique of women's access to political influence. The historiography about Isabella available to Marlowe form two distinctly different traditions of representation: Richard Grafton's *A Chronicle at Large* frequently depicts Isabella as a heroine whose motivations are rooted in the well-being of the commonwealth, while John Stow's historiography portrays her as a furious and angry queen driven by personal desires for vengeance. Marlowe, grappling with these two contradictory models, selects, omits, and synthesizes evidence from both precedents. He isolates

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the interior perspectives and sympathetic suffering of Grafton's queen from the political context which establishes her as a national savior in narrative history, and stages Isabella as a private victim driven by the gendered motives he gleans from the later chronicles of John Stow. Marlowe finally steps away from his historical intertexts altogether, promising a new conclusion that signals the restoration of justice to the nation through the exclusion and punishment of women. Attention to playwrights' engagements with such contradictory narrative precedents can usefully situate drama's depictions of royal women within the broader context of chronicle history's complicated—but often overlooked—accounts of female power.

Gaywyn Moore

The Forgotten History of Foreigners in *Thomas, Lord Cromwell*

The anonymous *Thomas, Lord Cromwell* (performance 1599-1602; first quarto 1602; second quarto 1613), performed by the Lord Chamberlain's men and later the King's Men and republished the same year a second publication of Rowley's *When You See Me, You Know Me* and Shakespeare and Fletcher's *King Henry VIII*, presents a Protestant hero-citizen who embodies loyalty to fellow citizens and the crown, and who ultimately perishes due to Henry VIII's corrupt councilors. The play also has a parallel, intersecting plot about an Italian hero-merchant who embodies loyalty to fellow humans and the crown, and who ultimately profits from his multiple acts of kindness. *Thomas Lord Cromwell* provides an example of a foreigner who helps English citizens and a critique of the play's primary marker of English identity: generosity. Excessive generosity, while laudable, also presents a problem; as a marker of Englishness, it makes England vulnerable to people from countries that do not share the same "free soul" of the English. And yet, the foreigners in the play seem to have a better grasp of generosity than the self-congratulating English. Ultimately, the history of Cromwell (and the history of King Henry VIII) is also the history of foreign generosity, a forgotten history within a forgotten history play.

Martin Moraw

Allegory, History, and Politics in Middleton's *A Game at Chess*

This essay considers the representation of history in Thomas Middleton's *A Game at Chess*. In contrast to history plays by Shakespeare and others, *A Game* does not dramatize an English past shaped by royal agency and providential design, but instead depicts a geopolitical present set in historical motion by collective ideological struggle. I argue that this shift from past to present, away from providential and toward secular history, from national to international politics, and from the individual to the collective is made possible by Middleton's turn to allegory. The play's allegorization of the recently failed Spanish Match transforms historical personages into living chess pieces and the stage itself into a chess board. In so doing, Middleton denaturalizes the historical process and brings into view the shaping force of structures over and against that of individual agents. My paper explores the aesthetic and political potential of the history play's allegorical turn. To this end, I focus in particular on the allegorical, theatrical, and political shaping of space in *A Game at Chess*. After showing how the remarkable title-page illustrations of *A Game*'s first quarto editions give visual expression to competing strategies of

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allegorization, I turn to the play itself to argue that Middleton's spatial allegory, and thus his representation of history, is animated by a recognizably modern political aesthetics.

Christal Seahorn

'Wars, / Wars, Wars to Plant the True Succeeding Prince': Just Cause Theory and the Rhetoric of Rightful Succession in *The Battle of Alcazar*

This article is part of a longer work that examines Burkean identification in William Shakespeare's *Henry V* (1599) and George Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar* (1594). This version focuses exclusively on Peele's *Alcazar*, arguing for a reading of the lesser-known play as a complex illustration of medieval/early modern Just Cause Theory. The article begins by briefly summarizing of the principles of Just Cause Theory that governed declarations of war (*jus ad bellum*) and conduct within war (*jus in bello*) as defined in sixteenth-century military handbooks. It then demonstrates how Peele's play denies obvious audience allegiance with the legal and theological justifications for war and problematizes rhetorical appeals to patriotic nationalism in ways that Shakespeare's drama does not. By emphasizing the grand heroism of non-Christian protagonists, Peele expands the concepts of just cause and rightful kingship from the supreme authority of Christian virtue to broader justifications of humanistic integrity and moral decision-making.³ Although *Alcazar* lacks the poetic sophistication of *Henry V*, it is nonetheless a more nuanced representation of Just Cause Theory. These nuances confound identification, making it more difficult for Peele's audience to participate in the final martial victory and forcing theatergoers to confront seemingly incongruous desires to side with a pagan "other" and reject national loyalty.

Christina M. Squitieri

The Pardon and Political Power in Thomas Heywood's *King Edward IV*

Despite its status as a history play, Thomas Heywood's *King Edward IV* dedicates a significant portion of the text to King Edward's mistress, the commoner Jane Shore. While Jane is often relegated to the margins of criticism as a tragic love interest whose decision to leave her husband for the king is representative of a "domestic history," her sociopolitical function, highlighted through her performance of a king's speech during the petitioning scenes, cannot be ignored. In *King Edward IV*, Jane Shore does not just act as an intercessor between ruler and petitioner, but gives and refuses pardons on her own accord; in Part 2 of the play, she performs the theatrical gallows pardon, a performance typically executed by the king as a show of his absolute power over the life and death of his subjects. Jane makes herself a part of Edward's sphere; her language—understood by others to be a guarantee that their rights will be wronged—is a language often only granted to kings; her use of it causes her to be read as a politically powerful character that transcends her place as a middle-class mistress. This "transformation"

³ Although not listed in the suggested texts for our Shakespeare Association of America bibliography because they focus on *Henry V* and not *Alcazar*, Theodor Meron's *Bloody Constraint: War and Chivalry in Shakespeare* (1998) and Paul Jorgensen's "Moral Guidance and Religious Encouragement for the Elizabethan Soldier" (1950) analyze the decrease of Christian dogma and the rise of secular morality as a characteristic evolution of Renaissance military rhetoric.

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from woman to political authority, I argue, is a permanent one: when Edward dies, Jane is exiled because Richard III “too much envies [her] prosperity” (2 E IV 18.94), men die to feed her and, like a king or a conqueror, it is Jane Shore—and not Edward—whose name is given to section of London to commemorate her life. As part of a larger project on the ways political speech acts legally and politically cause a character to be read as the role he performs, this paper will offer a new view of the history play as space where the performance of political power may be enough to make even a mistress into a figure of history.