

**2019 Seminar Abstracts: London Incorporated: Theater and Institutional Life**  
**Christi Spain-Savage, Siena College**  
**Jordan Windholz, Shippensburg University**

**“The Fashion for Turk Plays:  
 Elizabethan Captivity Narratives and the Appeal of the ‘Scourge’”**

**Dr. Carla Baricz**  
**Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

The success of works like Christopher Marlowe’s *1 and 2 Tamburlaine* is often attributed to the precedent set by Marlowe’s style, to the charisma and “scenical strutting” of Edward Alleyn, to the visually powerful processional scenes of the Queen’s Men, and to the plays’ exotic settings. However, I argue that in fact what assured the success of such works – both of *Tamburlaine* and of later ‘Turk plays’ – is that they considered a threat discussed in churches across England, every Sunday, around the collection plate, as parishioners gathered alms on behalf of English sailors and merchants captured in the Mediterranean, as well as on behalf of foreign nationals who came to London and were given permission to raise the ransom payments. In these captivity narratives one finds an explanation not only for the misfortunes associated with imprisonment that such plays document but also for the “scourging” rhetoric that dominates works like *1 and 2 Tamburlaine*, a rhetoric that repudiates and inverts the more familiar language of God’s just punishment. In response to published sermons, eyewitness accounts, contemporary historians’ stern warnings, and such alms petitions, Turk plays like those of Marlowe provided a violent fantasy of revenge and redirected divine wrath.

**“Bethlehem Hospital and the Early Modern Stage:  
 Enforcing the Mad/Sane Binary through Panopticism”**

**Dr. Amanda Di Ponio**  
**Huron University College**

First managed by the Catholic Church of Bethlehem, then the Crown, and finally the City of London, Bethlehem – or Bethlem, or Bedlam as it was commonly referred to – Hospital was committed to the treatment of the ill, the poor, and the traveler from its inception in Bishopsgate Street in London in 1247. By the fifteenth century, however, it was already receiving ‘distracted’ persons and came to serve only this function by the mid-sixteenth century.

The madhouse plot was a popular feature of Jacobean drama, and Bedlamites are featured in Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton’s *Honest Whore Part I* (1604), Dekker and John Webster’s *Northward Ho* (1607), John Fletcher’s *The Pilgrim* (1614), Middleton and William Rowley’s *The Changeling* (1621), and Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi* (1623), with references to the hospital in William Shakespeare’s *King Lear* (1606), Ben Jonson’s *Epicoene, or The Silent Woman* (1609) and *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), and Philip Massinger’s *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (1625), to name but a few. The spectacle of the madhouse is often regarded as a Jacobean obsession, but there is still no definitive answer as to why or how this hospital became associated with the public theatres of London.

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This paper seeks to investigate how this relatively small, city-controlled hospital became associated with the public theatres of London, to examine Bedlam as a place of inspiration and of fascination for both playwright and audience of the early modern stage, and to assess to what extent the discourse between hospital and theatre transformed or influenced our understanding of madness.

**“Temper Your Tongue:  
 Retailing, Religion, and Manhood in Massinger’s *The Renegado* (c. 1624)”**

**Dr. Derrick Edwin Higginbotham**  
**University of Hawaii, Manoa**

In this paper, I will explore a gendered problem that retailing, whether wholesale or not, generates for the Englishmen who practice this trade: it requires a docile masculinity for economic success. John Browne’s *The Merchant’s Avizo* (1607), the first known English training manual for novice merchants, ends with a list of “Godly sentences” that the budding overseas merchant should heed when conducting business. One of these ethical maxims exhorts the merchant trainee to act courteously when conducting business, opting to be “lowly to all men,” regardless of how men might respond to him (56). Such advice exemplifies an institutional norm within business worlds in early seventeenth-century London. It is during this same time period that Massinger composes his tragicomedy *The Renegado*, which dramatizes the Venetian Vitelli’s search for his abducted sister, Paulina, in Tunis as well as his dangerous desire for the Muslim princess, Donusa, who encourages him to abandon his religion for love. I will examine the ways that this play responds to the lowliness and patience ascribed to successful male retailers in its portrayal of Vitelli since Vitelli arrives in Tunis disguised as merchant vending his goods in a local shop where he meets Donusa. While critics like Harris, Fuchs, Burton, Degenhardt, and Forman rightly situate this play and its concerns primarily within a globalized marketplace and the encounter with Islam in the Mediterranean basin, none attend to the linkages between merchants and the incommensurate qualities of humility, secrecy, and dishonesty. This assemblage of qualities shows that this play does not work to rescue trade from its critiques, so much as it admits that those critiques constitute its institutional norms.

**“Courtly Fashions and the Emergent Public Theaters:  
 The Legacy of Court Entertainment in the Second Blackfriars”**

**Dr. Jeanne McCarthy**  
**Georgia Gwinnett College**

In this paper, I will consider the impact of court patronage in the early history of the Blackfriars Theater property, particularly the way the court’s role in the production of court entertainments in the 1570s by the Children of the Royal Chapel at/by the First Blackfriars Theater shaped the performance practices of the later King’s Men and their use of the indoor space of the Second Blackfriars. As recent work on the excavations of The Curtain suggest, theatrical activity in the environs of London remained both directly and indirectly connected to the various royal courts.

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Moreover, in the Blackfriars precinct, as in other theater neighborhoods, networks of native and “Stranger” artisans gathered in areas within the vicinity of London near convenient roads and accessible waterways which eased the transport of materials and performers to the various royal households near the City. I argue that such well-established economic networks remained closely tied to a tradition of court entertaining even as they became more public and privately financed.

**“The London Militia on Stage”**

**Dr. Vimala C. Pasupathi**  
**Hofstra University**

This paper uses scenes with musters to trace connections among various institutions, the city of London, the theatre, the livery companies, and the militia. The last of these, a local system for national defense, very rarely receives attention in critical studies of dramatic literature. The larger study from which this paper derives argues that the drama provides significant evidence for understanding the militia’s impact on communities across England from the Elizabethan Settlement to the Stuart Restoration. This paper will look briefly at plays that offer insight into the role it played specifically in London. Thomas Heywood’s *1 Edward IV* (1594) and Francis Beaumont’s *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1607) are celebrations of urban exceptionalism that highlight the militia’s role in preserving the city and unifying its workers, providing a significant contrast to impressment scenarios in *2 Henry IV*, *The Lamentable Tragedy of Locrine*, and *The Shoemakers Holiday*.

**“Between Bridewell and Blackfriars”**

**Mr. Matthew Ritger**  
**Princeton University**

How did Shakespeare stage carceral space? This brief essay focuses on the architectural history of Bridewell palace, renovated as England’s first “house of correction” in the sixteenth century, as it relates especially to the material history of the stage next-door within Blackfriars, the former monastery.

**“Performing Madness in Hamlet Post-deinstitutionalisation and the Dialogue with Psychiatry”**

**Ms. Rachel Stewart**  
**University of Birmingham**

This paper will consider late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century major London and Royal Shakespeare Company stage productions of *Hamlet* and will explore the relationship between performances of Hamlet’s and Ophelia’s madness and the changing social perceptions and medical realities of mental illness in the UK. The aim of this paper is to highlight the growth of the relationship between psychiatry and theatre in recent years and to discover the effects of communication

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between these fields on approaches to Hamlet's and Ophelia's madness in theatrical convention and critical works, questioning if there is any direct connection or visible synergy between trends in performances of madness in *Hamlet* and changes in social understandings of mental illness. The main case study discussed in this paper will be the direct interaction between theatre and psychiatric institution which occurred when Ron Daniels took the cast of his 1989 production of *Hamlet* to Broadmoor, a high-security psychiatric hospital, for a performance and subsequent discussion and workshop with the patients.

**“Threats from Within:  
Prostitution, Whoredom, and the Permeable Domestic Space”**

**Dr. Cristine M. Varholy**  
**Hampden-Sydney College**

Bridewell's efforts to reform London's idle aimed to create boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors and acceptable and unacceptable people. The institution targeted socially and physically displaced persons, especially those presumed to exist outside of properly functioning households, such as the vagrant or the prostitute. Commercial prostitution, because it both threatens family structures and causes economic drain from individuals, households, and parishes, served as a particularly useful representative crime and target for Bridewell's efforts. However, the institution's initiatives to control prostitution led to the prosecution of a whole series of other behaviors, loosely grouped under the category of whoredom, and Bridewell's attempts to preserve household order from exterior threats often revealed that disorder could come from within the home. This essay considers the disjunction between Bridewell's documented aims and its recorded practices as both generating and reflecting anxieties about household order in early modern London, anxieties further represented in early modern drama in both comic and tragic plots depicting unruly family members.