

# Shakespeare and Work

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## Abstract

This article examines recent critical approaches to Shakespeare and work. Although the word 'work' itself could signify a range of practices in Shakespeare's England, such definitional uncertainty has not been an obstacle to research. On the contrary, recent scholarship has demonstrated that the ambiguous nature of work offers a productive starting point for critical inquiry, as it encourages scholars to ask how Shakespeare's texts actively construct 'work' as a social, historical, and literary activity. Written and performed during a crucial period in the development of a capitalist labor economy in England, Shakespeare's plays were a vital part of the artisanal workplace that was the London public theater. As such, Shakespeare's works offer a particularly rich vantage point for investigating the cultural significance of labor in early modern England. This article examines a wide range of critical approaches to Shakespeare's working world and concludes by suggesting possible avenues for further research.

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In the final act of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as Theseus muses about his options for post-nuptial entertainment, Egeus (or Philostrate, in the quarto text) provides him with a description of the men who have been rehearsing the tragedy *Pyramus and Thisbe*. These players, we learn, are 'Hard-handed men that work in Athens here,/Which never labored in their minds till now' (5.1.72–73). Egeus' disparaging comments rely on a distinction between manual and intellectual labor that was intimately linked to ideologies of social status in medieval and early modern England. To be a gentleman, for instance, was by definition not to perform manual work (Rutter). But while Egeus' description highlights differentials of status, it simultaneously throws into question the very definition of 'work' itself. Bottom, Quince, and the other mechanicals work but they do not labor, or, to be more precise, they work 'in Athens' but do not labor 'in their minds'. The slippage between 'work' and 'labor' in this passage, which deploys both terms yet clearly signals that they are not synonymous, reveals a fundamental difficulty for both early modern commentators and modern scholars: what exactly constitutes 'work'?<sup>1</sup> Is it restricted to physical labor? Does acting count? What about women's labor, which was then (as now) often unpaid? The word 'work' certainly could signify a wide range of practices in Shakespeare's England, ranging from the generic ('something that is or was done' [OED 1.1. for 'work', n.]) to the surprisingly specific ('the operation of making a textile fabric' [OED 16 for 'work', n.]). But this semantic ambiguity also has larger implications for the study of work in Shakespeare more generally. As sociologists and historians have demonstrated, the 'enigmatic essence of work' ultimately means that 'the difference between work and non-work seldom lies within the actual activity itself and more generally inheres in the social context that supports the activity' (Grint 3, 11; Hall; Thomas, *Oxford*). Thus for Egeus, the 'hard-handed' mechanicals are workers precisely because they do not perform mental labor, an activity understood as *not* work according to Elizabethan cultural suppositions.<sup>2</sup>

As recent scholarship has demonstrated, however, the slipperiness of work as an analytical category need not be an obstacle to research. On the contrary, the ambiguous nature

of work offers a productive starting point for critical inquiry, as it encourages scholars to ask how Shakespeare's texts actively construct 'work' as a social, historical, and literary activity. A belief that labor is not only mutable but fundamentally historical (rather than unchanging or universally transparent) characterizes recent studies in the field, which build on the methodological frameworks supplied by Marxism, feminism, theater history, ethical studies, and post-colonialism, to name but a few of the most prominent. This scholarship shifts focus from the analysis of consumption, which has long dominated economic and materialist criticism in Shakespeare studies, to production. In doing so, it turns needed attention to the working men and women who labored to produce the material goods that were increasingly becoming part of daily life in early modern England and on the Shakespearean stage.

At the same time, however, the study of work in Shakespeare is, like its subject matter, fairly amorphous and difficult to pin down. Relatively few studies overall – and only two book-length studies at the time of this writing (Hunt, *Shakespeare's Labored*; Rutter) – take on the topic of labor in Shakespeare broadly and explicitly. Instead, there are numerous studies of what we might call subcategories of work (notably service, theatrical work, and the work of artisans), although even here there are difficulties, as not all studies of service, for instance, read such practices in terms of labor or even economics. In this essay, I do not aim to provide an exhaustive overview of the topic but rather offer a sense of the scope and focus of the most significant contributions to the field in recent years. In doing so, I limit my discussion primarily to books and essays in which work is a central category of analysis. But I also want to suggest that the problems involved in selecting, categorizing, and summarizing recent scholarship on work in Shakespeare are instructive, in that they reveal how definitional ambiguities have shaped the kinds of questions scholars have posed and at the same time leave open significant room for future research.

If the difficulties of defining and classifying 'work' in the period feature prominently and productively in recent scholarship, such challenges also raise a basic yet crucial question about the field: given that work itself is a slippery and at times vague category, why is the study of work in Shakespeare particularly important or useful? Why look to Shakespeare's plays and poems to investigate questions about labor (manual or otherwise)? What can scholars hope to gain from such inquiries? While there are of course many fruitful ways of answering these questions, I want to highlight two particular historical factors that render 'Shakespeare and work' an especially productive, even necessary, field of study. The first is related to periodization and the gradual development of capitalism. Marx in *Capital* identifies the 16th century as the key period of transition from feudalism to capitalism. Although 'work' itself is not exclusively a Marxist problematic, is it nevertheless true that Marx provides one of the most comprehensive and influential accounts of the history of wage labor as such. Marx's historical narrative, which associates early modern England with the extended struggle that marked the gradual emergence of a capitalist economy, thus invites further scrutiny of the ways in which Shakespeare's texts both anticipate and disrupt modern assumptions about capitalism and labor power (Marx; de Grazia).<sup>3</sup> Second, the material history of early modern drama as a genre is intimately related to questions of labor. As Walter Cohen has demonstrated, the early modern theater was a 'fundamentally artisanal historical form' (181). Theater companies were tied to a large network of commercial activity based primarily (although not exclusively) on a guild model, and many of the players themselves were free of livery companies (Bruster; Knutson; Kathman).<sup>4</sup> The economic institution that was the English professional theater was therefore a place of work in its own right as well as an ideological marketplace in

which debates about the nature of work and leisure could be staged. Shakespeare's plays, arguably the most important dramatic texts of the period, thus offer a particularly rich vantage point for investigating the cultural significance of labor in early modern England.

As early as the 1920s, scholars have looked to Shakespeare's plays as cultural evidence about early modern attitudes toward work. In Charles W. Camp's, *The Artisan in Elizabethan Literature*, for instance, we can see the impulse to ascertain Shakespeare's own views about craftsmen and apprentices. Camp's assessment is primarily a negative one. In his readings of a range of plays, including *Julius Caesar* and *Coriolanus*, he argues that Shakespeare treats artisans 'as members of a mob, rather than as individuals' and overall shows 'little admiration or sympathy for the laboring man *en masse*' (130). Although Camp's early treatment of the subject does not interrogate the 'dramatic tradition of the time' (130) that supposedly produced such negative representations or discuss in any detail the precise nature of the relationship between Shakespeare's plays and the culture in which they were produced, it does make the important claim that the study of work is a literary as well as a historical one. In his preface, Camp notes that '[t]hrough the subject of the merchant and craft guilds is a favorite one among historical writers, it has not attracted students of literature'. Camp's study in many ways inaugurates what we might call the 'literary turn' in scholarship on work in early modern England, though it would be many decades later before literary critics returned to the subject in a sustained manner, largely as the result of the burgeoning interest in cultural and historicist criticism beginning in the 1970s and 1980s.

Such recent scholarship attests to a renewed interest in working men and women in Shakespeare. Although these studies vary widely in topic and approach, there are some clearly distinguishable trends within the field; most notably, as I suggested before, there are several subcategories of work that have garnered particular scholarly interest and that I will briefly survey here. Given the historical relevance of Marx's narrative of capitalist development, it is worth noting at the outset the somewhat surprising fact that Marxist analyses do not dominate the field. Indeed, while Marxist methodology is clearly discernable – and occasionally pronounced – in many of the texts surveyed here, more common is a mixed methodological approach that incorporates aspects of materialist criticism but tends to eschew the formal label of 'Marxism'. Post-Marxist scholarship on work, however, shares a 'striking and productive self-consciousness about historical inquiry' (Howard and Shershow 9) with its more formal predecessor, so it may be more accurate to say that recent studies of work and Shakespeare have subsumed, rather than shunned, the insights of Marxist analysis.<sup>5</sup>

One subcategory of work that has received a significant amount of attention in recent years is that of service. As with work more generally, service is a category that defies easy definition or compartmentalization, which helps to explain the wide range of critical approaches to the topic. 'Service' in the period could encompass both specific forms of employment, such as domestic service, and a much broader range of social, political, and religious practices undertaken on behalf of other people or entities, resulting in what Elizabeth Rivlin has referred to as the 'ubiquity and fungibility of service roles in Elizabethan society' (108). Much recent scholarship on service, then, emphasizes the ideology of service in ethical or esthetic registers rather than materialist ones, treating service in terms of the complex social relationships it engendered rather than explicitly as work (Anderson; Evett, *Discourses*; Weil; Schalkwyk; Weinstock).<sup>6</sup> There are, however, compelling historical reasons for analyzing service relationships in the 16th and 17th centuries in terms of England's labor economy. As Michael Neill has argued, it was during this period that the notion of what it meant to be a 'servant' was progressively narrowed and

specialized until it came to refer almost exclusively to a form of domestic wage-labor, a potentially degrading occupation fundamentally distinct from other forms of 'service' ('*Putting History*' 46). In Shakespeare's England, the servant's role was thus being defined increasingly in terms of a circumscribed sphere of work.

Several recent studies take up this connection between service and England's proto-capitalist labor economy in detail. One of the first to do so was Mark Thornton Burnett's *Masters and Servants in English Renaissance Drama and Culture*, which considers plays such as *Twelfth Night*, *King Lear*, and *2 Henry VI* together with the drama of Shakespeare's contemporaries. Arguing that representations of service in the drama articulate anxieties about political stability and social order, Burnett locates these texts within contemporary debates about guild structure, apprenticeships, and the role of household servants. In a similar vein, Barbara Correll pairs *Twelfth Night* with Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* to discuss the figure of the steward, whose ambiguous position in aristocratic households such as Olivia's marks both a division of domestic labor and a gradual shift from a feudal to a market economy. Neill is also interested in the economic changes in the period that fed into Shakespeare's representation of servants in *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and, especially, *Othello* ('*Putting History*'; 'His Master's Ass'). The special section on 'Shakespeare and the Bonds of Service' that Neill edited for the *Shakespearean International Yearbook* in 2005 includes two essays that focus on the economic implications of household service for female characters in Shakespeare. Both essays use *Twelfth Night* as a key text: Neill argues that Viola's function in the play reveals the 'invidious position' of female servants who are often both financially and erotically subordinate to their masters ('A Woman's Service' 135), and Michelle Dowd demonstrates that for Viola and Maria, a 'formal displacement of the economic components of both service and marriage' is necessary to 'secure the play's comic ending' ('Labours of Love' 117).

Neill's and Dowd's approaches also reflect another general trend in the field of Shakespeare studies: an emphasis on women's work. Although much recent scholarship on working women looks to evidence from non-Shakespearean drama (due in part to the genres of domestic comedy and tragedy with which playwrights such as Thomas Heywood and Thomas Dekker engaged much more extensively than did Shakespeare), it is still true that women's labor is one subcategory of the field, like service, that has 'attracted considerable critical attention' from Shakespeareans (Rutter 9). Wendy Wall's important investigation of domesticity in early modern drama emphasizes that women's housework helped to shape emerging conceptions of national identity in the period. Looking more exclusively at Shakespeare's plays, Natasha Korda argues that in his depiction of women's housework, 'Shakespeare configures female subjectivity effects in relationship to objects of property' (*Shakespeare's Domestic* 11). Her more recent scholarship shifts focus to informal networks of working women associated with London's public theaters ('Labours Lost'). Expanding beyond her own earlier analysis of women's service, Dowd considers a range of female occupations in *Women's Work in Early Modern English Literature and Culture*, including wet-nursing, housework, and midwifery. Incorporating readings of plays including *Romeo and Juliet*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *Twelfth Night* into her study, she traces recurring narratives about women's work and argues that these narratives served an important social function, namely 'to construe and define the limits of female subjectivity within a shifting and contested labor market' (2). A focus on emerging capitalist labor markets together with an interest in the construction of the female subject also characterizes Fiona McNeill's study, *Poor Women in Shakespeare*. Although work *per se* is not a consistent focus throughout the book, McNeill does attend to women's work-songs in *Twelfth Night* and other evidence of working women at the

margins of early modern culture, arguing for the provisional nature of female identity at the bottom of the social scale.<sup>7</sup>

The scholarship of Korda ('Labours Lost') and McNeill emphasizes the labor of those lower-class women often excluded from traditional occupational categories or from discussions of the so-called 'all-male stage'. As such, they illustrate a trend in the field toward analyses of workers, most notably artisans and apprentices, at the lower end of the social order. Recent work in this subfield has turned especially to the histories and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to interrogate the artisanal discourses that Shakespeare – the 'artisan-playwright' in Theodore Leinwand's words ('I Believe' 11) – deploys in his plays. Indebted (as are other scholars working on Shakespeare and artisans) to Camp's path-breaking study, both Leinwand ('I Believe') and Annabel Patterson suggest that the figure of the artisan-weaver in *Dream* mediates the kinds of social pressures exemplified by the 1596 uprisings of artisans and apprentices. Laura Caroline Stevenson's study of Elizabethan popular literature similarly reads both *Dream* and *2 Henry VI* as guides to social attitudes about craftsmen in the period, although she shares Camp's view that these plays cast artisans in a negative light. Ronda Arab offers a more nuanced reading of the figure of the rebel-laborer in *2 Henry VI* that emphasizes cultural anxieties about the 'physical strength of lowborn bodies' (5).<sup>8</sup> In their analyses of manual laborers, these scholars tend to combine historicist, materialist, and feminist impulses in productive ways, emphasizing the tensions visible in dramatic depictions of workers who fall outside the bounds of traditional categories of social and gender identity.

England's gradual transition to a capitalist economy, combined with its growing international engagements, affected conceptions of work for those higher up on the social spectrum as well. In their focus on mercantile trades and other forms of commerce, several recent studies (and one much earlier one) emphasize how shifts in attitudes and practices related to investment, credit, and commodity exchange were complicating traditional concepts of labor. L. C. Knights' (1937) study, *Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson*, was one of the first to argue that economic developments such as the growth of capitalist finance and overseas trade directly influenced the drama of Shakespeare's time. More recently, Leinwand reads *The Merchant of Venice* – a key text in critical discussion of labor and global capitalism in the period – in terms of mercantile labor and England's increasing reliance on credit, and Mark Netzloff traces how the play compensates for the destabilizing effects associated with mercantile venturing (*Theatre, Finance; 'The Lead Casket'*).<sup>9</sup> In *Tragicomic Redemptions*, Valerie Forman considers *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale* and argues that tragicomic form enables playwrights such as Shakespeare to reconceptualize the economic losses brought about by new practices of capitalist investment and overseas trading. As this body of scholarship demonstrates, the new forms of work entailed by venture capitalism and overseas commerce existed uneasily alongside more traditional or tangible forms of work, as both critics and defenders of mercantile activity often emphasized that merchants reaped profits *without* laboring.

The problematic relationship between work and leisure, as I suggested earlier, was historically central to London's public theaters, and Shakespeare's interrogation of the theater as a site of work has been a prominent theme in recent scholarship. Critics have emphasized that Shakespeare's theater was itself a business organization and that acting, playwrighting, and managing theater companies were all activities that involved hard work (Bruster, *Drama*; Knutson; Ingram; Gieskes).<sup>10</sup> One of the most notable studies in this vein is Tom Rutter's *Work and Play on the Shakespearean Stage*, which traces the productive tension between the Elizabethan theater as 'both a place of work and a place for escape from work' (157) and particularly emphasizes the repertory system in which

the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries were performed. In part a response to Hunt's earlier study, which emphasizes religious injunctions to work and how they were incorporated into Shakespeare's plays but does not query or historicize 'work' itself as a category of analysis (*Shakespeare's Labored*), Rutter's book shifts attention to how the category of work (as opposed to play or leisure) was culturally constructed through theatrical institutions such as the playing companies that were confronting their own controversial professional status in the period. By attending both to scenes of labor and to the material conditions of playing that produced those dramatic representations, Rutter's study connects Shakespeare's professional theater to the world of work in valuable new ways.

Discussions of Shakespeare's theater as a space of labor almost invariably turn to *The Tempest* as a key text, although readings of the play as a representation of London – and the London theaters more specifically – are often at odds with readings that emphasize the enforced labor of Caliban and Ariel in a global context. Although traditional analyses of the play in terms of labor tend to posit Caliban's enslavement in moralistic terms or read the play in general as a Christian allegory for labor as 'spiritual cultivation' (Rockett 84; Bond; Hunt, '“Stir” and Work'), scholars have more recently queried the play's embeddedness within London's burgeoning theatrical market. Andrew Gurr, for instance, posits Prospero as a 'London citizen-employer' rather than a colonialist (202), whereas Douglas Bruster aims to revise post-colonialist readings of the play by focusing on the parallels between its dramatic elements (the ship in the opening scene; Miranda as an auditor and spectator) and the material practices of Shakespeare's theater ('Local *Tempest*'). Daniel Vitkus seeks to combine these 'Old World' and 'New World' approaches, arguing that the '“bonds” that held theatrical laborers in London operated similarly to the “bonds” that held colonial laborers ... in servitude abroad', both of which are figured in the play's power relations (420). Vitkus' interest in the global context of labor and servitude has been shared by several other critics of *The Tempest* in recent years. Edward M. Test locates the play within the New World context of Newfoundland Cod fishing, and Netzloff argues for a shift in focus in colonialist readings of the play to emphasize 'how these colonial contexts themselves emerged from and were interconnected to a labor environment in early modern England that was at an important stage of transition in the early seventeenth century' (*England's Internal Colonies* 105).<sup>11</sup>

These studies of Shakespeare in the context of global labor both suggest the current vibrancy of the field and point to directions for future research. Although such scholarship has helpfully broadened the category of work to include non-English paradigms and economies, there is still a strong need for research that moves beyond *The Tempest* to consider Shakespeare's drama within a larger network of global trade. How might the dynamics of colonial labor, for instance, inflect plays, such as *The Winter's Tale* or *Henry V*, that are not explicitly set in New World contexts yet depend implicitly on such practices as indenture and maritime labor in their dramatization of a range of 'English' commodities? Another area that deserves further study is the relationship between work and subjectivity in Shakespeare. How do assertions of vocation by Othello, Bottom, or Viola mediate between positive expressions of social credit and tropes of displacement and loss? To what degree might the practice of labor as an embodied act produce an understanding of subjectivity that is based as much in physicality and economics as in interiority or sexuality? While the desiring body has been pervasive in recent Shakespearean scholarship, the laboring body, as Jyotsna G. Singh has argued, remains relatively unexplored. This overdue line of inquiry could productively expand our understanding of subject formation in all its historical and discursive complexity by drawing attention to the

economic materiality of bodies and the possibilities for identity formation (both collective and individual) that work enabled in the period.

The study of work in Shakespeare's poetry is also a neglected aspect of the field, as virtually none of the scholarship surveyed considers Shakespeare's lyric or narrative poetry in any detail with regard to labor.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the lack of attention to the poems suggests that the field more generally has tended to gravitate toward the concrete and the readily recognizable – Bottom as weaver or Ariel as servant – rather than to the marginal or informal. Although this critical tendency is certainly understandable, both because work itself is an embodied act and because a focus on the tangible helps to give analytical specificity to a field that is, as we have seen, difficult to define, it also runs the risk of codifying certain activities (weaving, acting, service) as work while neglecting others that seem more ephemeral (piecework, women's pawnbroking, educational work). The concentration of scholarship on a few key plays – most notably *Dream*, *2 Henry VI*, and *The Tempest* – further demonstrates that despite the multiplicity of ways in which labor could be defined in the period, the field may in some ways be hindered by its inclination to privilege the usual suspects.

Although we can begin by looking elsewhere (to the poems and to the lesser-discussed plays), I would suggest that we also attempt to look *differently* as we continue our research in the field. By that I mean that scholars expand their analytic focus to consider not only plays or poems explicitly *about* labor (however that is defined) or individual scenes of labor or characters who labor, but also the ways in which Shakespeare's texts deploy what we might think of as the *language* of labor. John Archer's recent arguments about citizenship in Shakespeare's plays provide one useful model. Archer traces 'citizen language' rather than 'direct representation of citizens' throughout Shakespeare texts, emphasizing that '[w]hat was heard on stage is at least as important as what was seen' (20). Might we similarly be able to follow a language of work in Shakespeare? How might, for instance, examining imagery that depicts the cyclical work patterns characteristic of rural laborers – work that is almost never represented directly on Shakespeare's stage – transform our understanding of comic structure or the traditional notion of the greenworld? Would more careful analysis of speech patterns in Shakespeare's tragedies, plays that are not typically the subjects of studies about work, suggest an ethos of labor in these plays that would call into question critical assessments of tragedy's class valences or the subject positions it facilitates? The esthetic dimensions of work are certainly worthy of a critical attention that they have not yet received, in part because categories of work can shed new light on esthetics as well as the other way around. Considering such elements as metaphor, allusion, and definition – without, of course, neglecting the connection between such linguistic features and the material conditions that generated them – might enable us to produce a more comprehensive understanding of work in Shakespeare that is not limited solely to his use of plot or representational elements. In such a scholarly model, the definitional uncertainties intrinsic to the field become not so much problems to solve or difficulties to explain away but opportunities for a more wide-ranging exploration of labor as both a textual and material phenomenon. The gains that could emerge from such inquiries are many, including not only an invigorated practice of esthetic analysis, a fresh approach to the study of early modern subjectivity, and an expanded understanding of how colonial labor inflects a broader range of Shakespeare's texts, but also in more general terms a richer awareness of how theatrical production reflected and shaped emerging capitalist modes of production during this crucial period in England's social and economic history.

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*Short Biography*

Michelle M. Dowd is assistant professor of English at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. She is the author of *Women's Work in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Palgrave, 2009), which won the Sara A. Whaley Book Award from the National Women's Studies Association. She is also the co-editor (with Julie A. Eckerle) of *Genre and Women's Life Writing in Early Modern England* (Ashgate, 2007) and (with Thomas Festa) of *Early Modern Women on the Fall: An Anthology* (MRTS, forthcoming). Her essays on early modern drama and women's writing have appeared in journals such as *Shakespearean International Yearbook*, *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, and *English Literary Renaissance*.

*Notes*

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this essay, I will use the words 'work' and 'labor' interchangeably, as early modern writers frequently did.

<sup>2</sup> For further discussion of the ambiguous attitudes toward work in the early modern period and, in particular, the problem of whether work should be defined exclusively as manual (versus intellectual) labor, see Desan and Thomas, 'Work and Leisure'.

<sup>3</sup> See also Duplessis, who notes that in the early modern period in Europe 'the proportion of the population wholly dependent on wages for their livelihood increased substantially' (296).

<sup>4</sup> In 'Labours Lost', Korda cautions against an overly narrow understanding of the relationship between Shakespeare's theater and the market, arguing in particular that the notion of an 'all-male stage' based on an all-male guild structure is a fallacy that ignores 'the theatre's material ties to an entire matrix of commercial activity' that included working women (220).

<sup>5</sup> See also Howard and Shershow's important reminder that Marxism 'cannot be taken as a set of fixed doctrines and beliefs, nor as a simple methodological focus on the analytic category of "class" as opposed to race, gender, or ethnicity' (7).

<sup>6</sup> The first essay to treat the subject of service in Shakespeare (using the example of *King Lear*) was Barish and Waingrow. For a useful survey article on Shakespeare and service that outlines both materialist and non-materialist approaches to the topic, see Evett, 'The Year's Work'.

<sup>7</sup> Because studies of individual types of women's work, such as midwifery and needlework, are fairly numerous, I have focused in this brief review on Shakespearean scholarship that offers a broad approach to the topic of women and labor. However, some notable studies of specific women's occupations include: Bicks (on midwifery), Jones and Stallybrass (on needlework and spinning), and Paster (on wet-nursing).

<sup>8</sup> Discussions of lower-class and marginal laborers in the period often point out that these workers were frequently linked disparagingly to vagrants, beggars, and other 'non-workers'. For additional scholarship in this area, see Carroll; Dionne and Mentz; Fumerton; Woodbridge, *Vagrancy*.

<sup>9</sup> For additional studies of mercantilism in Shakespearean drama, see Woodbridge, *Money and the Age of Shakespeare*. Stevenson also discusses literary representations of merchants, although she does not do so in relation to Shakespeare's plays.

<sup>10</sup> Gieskes also discusses the professions of law and administration in his study, offering an extended reading of *King John* in terms of its representation of the Bastard as a self-chosen 'royal servant' and governmental administrator (72).

<sup>11</sup> Netzloff argues that '[t]he play's inability to give adequate representation to the role of laborers is replicated in many colonialist readings of *The Tempest*', including Greenblatt's highly influential reading of social relations in the play (*England's Internal Colonies* 110).

<sup>12</sup> One notable exception to this is Schalkwyk, who considers service in the sonnets. However, 'work' is not a primary analytical category for Schalkwyk, who is ultimately more interested in service as a 'form of social organization and personal experience' (3) than as a part of the early modern labor market.

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