

dered sexuality" (254). Thus she produces a sophisticated reading that is queer but also gendered, alert to differences between the young man and the dark lady inscribed in the language but untethered from binary oppositions of homo/hetero, straight/gay. I found this interpretation enthralling, even though I simply could not follow its theoretical underpinning in a distinction between "sequence" and "syntax," which seemed extraneous to its interpretive yield. I would also ask: given Traub's prior claim that nonprivate, nonmissionary, nonprocreative sex acts were possibly "*what most people did*" [*sic*], is this fantasy of erotic commingling unquestionably queer?

Again and again, Traub urges all scholars of early modern sexuality to jump into the gaps in their knowledge of it, and work *there*. Confront the impasse, she says. She affirms "the obscurity of sex as a rich epistemological resource" (312). At the same time, she demonstrates the depth and intractability of those gaps. "How *does* one firik like a flounder?" she asks, and I respond, can we ever really find out? The value of this book for me resides less in the agenda it lays out for the future than in its rigorous, probing, comprehensive anatomy of the field as it exists. Traub seems to have read, and thought deeply, about every major and quite a few lesser contributions. Her book, I hope, will help all of us approach early modern sexuality with a greater respect for its rich complexity, and a keener consciousness of our "knowledge relations" to the field.

The One King Lear
By Sir Brian Vickers
Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard
University Press, 2016

Reviewer: Paul Werstine

In *The One King Lear*, Sir Brian Vickers sends his readers back to the late 1970s and the '80s, when a controversy raged over the claim that we have in the 1608 and 1623 printings "Shakespeare's

Two Versions of *King Lear*,” to quote the subtitle of *The Division of the Kingdoms*, edited in 1983 by Gary Taylor and Michael Warren. Most of the contributors to this 1983 book subscribed to the notion, widespread in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that Shakespeare’s play had been borne in its separate authorial versions from the dramatist’s desk to and through the play- and printing-houses as if on the wings of angels so that the versions now appear to us in print in essentially the forms in which he initially created them. To be more specific, *Division*, for the most part, offers interpretations of a number of carefully selected variant passages from the 1608 and 1623 printings in support of an argument that the 1608 gives us Shakespeare’s original *King Lear* and the 1623 his revision. However, most of the authors of *Division* misunderstood their acts of interpretation as demonstrations that Shakespeare had actually written two different plays. The ensuing controversy grew particularly nasty, as Vickers details in his chapter 8: Taylor attacked *ad hominem* all those who disputed *Division*’s claim and employed a rhetoric of violent political insurrection that characterized most of *Division*’s authors as revolutionaries (for championing an idea that was old when Queen Victoria was a little girl) and those who disagreed with them as reactionaries. I should acknowledge that I was *the* contributor to *Division* who then as now dissented from the revision hypothesis and earned thereby Taylor’s resentment. But all has now receded into a past that most Shakespeareans have forgotten, as may be instanced by what transpired in a 2006 seminar at the Shakespeare Association of America in Philadelphia that was titled “The Texts of *King Lear*,” in which only three of almost twenty participants made any reference to the two allegedly Shakespearean versions, and two of these three took issue with the revision hypothesis.

Vickers now resurrects the hypothesis only to re-inter it. Explicitly drawing inspiration from the late Madeleine Doran (initially herself an advocate of revision) and from Richard Knowles (staunchly and influentially opposed to revision), whose New Variorum edition of *King Lear*, soon to be published, was made available to him in manuscript, Vickers offers another interpretation of the two printings. As his book’s title suggests, for him each printing leaves out some of what Shakespeare wrote when he created the one and only *King Lear*, but the two printings supplement each other so that in their combination (derisively referred to as “conflation” in much of *Division*) we can essentially recover the play

Shakespeare wrote. The strength of Vickers's interpretation lies in his minute attention to the people in the play- and printing-houses who necessarily participated in the transmission of Shakespeare's play into performance and print and to the crafts they practised and the exigencies they faced—all those people who were effectively reduced to non-entities by subscribers to the revision hypothesis.

Vickers attends to the technologies of the printing trade in his interpretation of the 1608 quarto, the printer of which was studied so intensively by Peter W. M Blayney in his 1982 *The Texts of King Lear and their Origins: Nicholas Okes and the First Quarto*, on which Vickers generally relies. However, Vickers strikes out on his own when he postulates that the publisher Nathaniel Butter made an error at the very beginning when he had to calculate in advance just how much paper the play would occupy in print. The ten and half sheets, or eighty pages (the first and last leaves being left blank), he estimated to be needed for the play were too few, says Vickers, and Okes again and again confronted the problem of adjusting the text space required by Shakespeare's words to the print space available for them on the paper Butter supplied. Hence the tightly set appearance of much of the quarto and the necessary sacrifice of some of Shakespeare's words as "Nicholas Okes Compresses the Play" and then "Abridges It"—to quote from the titles of Vickers's third and fourth chapters. That is, Vickers interprets the printing of the quarto to some extent by analogy to Eleanor Prosser's lively, if somewhat fanciful, interpretation of the 1623 First Folio Compositor B's work early in *Henry IV, Part 2* after Isaac Jaggard had seriously miscalculated the number of pages he should set aside for the printing of the two *Henry IV* plays (*Shakespeare's Anonymous Editors: Scribe and Compositor in the Folio Text of 2 Henry IV* [Stanford, 1981]).

Turning to the Folio *King Lear*, Vickers works into his narration of its differences from the quarto the characters he calls Folio editors (chapter 6). While he might instead have featured a scribe preparing manuscript copy for Jaggard's compositors, we do have abundant evidence of an editorial function in the early modern printing house (see Sonia Massai, *Shakespeare and the Rise of the Editor* [Cambridge, 2007]). For Vickers, though, an even more important influence on the Folio *Lear* is its abridgment in the playhouse (chapter 7). He is right of course to associate the cuts from the Folio *Lear* with the playhouse insofar as almost all the plays in extant playhouse manuscripts have been marked for cutting. And

cuts from the Folio, like some of the cuts in those manuscripts, are notorious for their carelessness, a feature observed of Folio *Lear* first by Samuel Johnson. Some of the Folio cuts are bleeding cuts, their ragged edges producing non sequiturs. To characterize them as authorial revisions, as is done in *Division*, requires special pleading. All in all, Vickers offers a twentieth- and twenty-first-century interpretation of the two texts of *King Lear* by absorbing into his narrative of the play's transmission those agents on whom so much of the scholarship of those centuries has focused—publishers, printers, compositors, proofreaders, editors, and playhouse bookkeepers. These are the figures who are elided in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century story of Shakespeare's revision of *King Lear* that is recycled in *Division*.

It is to be regretted that Vickers's book, though, was served so badly by its press. Harvard has let stand in it a host of errors, two of which—first, the founder of the New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare, Horace Howard Furness, has become “Henry” (5) and, second, in discussion of 2.2 of *King Lear*, “Goneril's Steward greets Kent” has become “Cornwall's Steward greets Kent” (20)—can stand for many. These should have been caught by those who read the book for the press.