

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatry and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOT SHAKESPEARE

Burlesque has been a powerful and enduring weapon in the critique of 'legitimate' Shakespearean culture by a seemingly 'illegitimate' popular culture. This was true most of all in the nineteenth century. From *Hamlet Travestie* (1810) to *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern* (1891), Shakespeare burlesques were a vibrant, yet controversial, form of popular performance: vibrant because of their exuberant humour; controversial because they imperilled Shakespeare's iconic status. Richard Schoch, in the first study of nineteenth-century Shakespeare burlesques, explores the paradox that plays which are manifestly 'not Shakespeare' purport to be the most genuinely Shakespearean of all. Bringing together archival research, rare photographs and illustrations, close readings of burlesque scripts, and an awareness of theatrical, literary, and cultural contexts, Schoch changes the way we think about Shakespeare's theatrical legacy and nineteenth-century popular culture. His lively and wide-ranging book will appeal to scholars and students of Shakespeare in performance, theatre history, and Victorian studies.

RICHARD W. SCHOCH is Lecturer in Drama at Queen Mary, University of London. He is the recipient of fellowships from the Leverhulme Trust, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the American Society for Theatre Research, the Stanford Humanities Center, the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, and the Mrs Giles Whiting Foundation. He is the author of *Shakespeare's Victorian Stage: Performing History in the Theatre of Charles Kean* (Cambridge, 1998) and a finalist for the Barnard Hewitt Award (sponsored by the American Society for Theatre Research) for outstanding research in theatre history. He also operates out of Culture Factory, where his email address is ceo@culturefactory.net.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatriy and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOT SHAKESPEARE

Bardolatriy and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

RICHARD W. SCHOCH

School of English and Drama

Queen Mary, University of London



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatry and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.orgInformation on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521800150

© Richard W. Schoch 2002

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2002

This digitally printed first paperback version 2006

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library**Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Schoch, Richard W.

Not Shakespeare: bardolatry and burlesque in the nineteenth century / Richard W. Schoch.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 80015 3

1. Shakespeare, William, 1564–1616 – Parodies, imitations, etc. – History and criticism
2. Shakespeare, William, 1564–1616 – Adaptations – History and criticism.
3. Shakespeare, William, 1564–1616 – Appreciation – Great Britain.
4. Popular culture – Great Britain – History – 19th century.
5. English drama – 19th century – History and criticism.
6. Theatre – Great Britain – History – 19th century.
7. English drama (Comedy) – History and criticism.
8. Burlesques.
- I. Title.

PR2880.A1 S32 2002

822'.809 – dc21 2001037924

ISBN-13 978-0-521-80015-0 hardback

ISBN-10 0-521-80015-3 hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521-03152-3 paperback

ISBN-10 0-521-03152-4 paperback

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatry and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

To Joseph Lordi, star-bright

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatry and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

<i>List of illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	x
<i>Note on texts</i>	xiii
Introduction 'New Readings for Unconventional Tragedians'	i
1 'Vile beyond endurance': the language of burlesque	31
2 Shakespeare's surrogates	57
3 Shakespeare in Bohemia	107
4 Politics 'burlesquified'	151
<i>Bibliography</i>	188
<i>Index</i>	203

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatriy and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*List of illustrations*

1	Thomas Blanchard as Guildenstern in a provincial production of <i>Hamlet</i> , c. 1790.	page 2
2	'New Readings for Unconventional Tragedians', c. 1850s.	9
3	Henry Hall as burlesque King John in Gilbert Abbott à Beckett's <i>King John (with the Benefit of the Act)</i> , St James's Theatre, London, 1837.	32
4	'Hamlet; a <i>ballet d'action</i> in the court of Denmark, into which are introduced some strange figures and awful frights. For characters, see small bill of great William', c. 1850s.	35
5	Extract from the promptbook for Mrs F. B. Conway's production of John Poole's <i>Hamlet Travestie</i> , Park Theater, Brooklyn, 1870.	50
6	Edwin Booth as Hamlet, c. 1870.	61
7	George L. Fox as burlesque Hamlet in T. C. DeLeon's <i>Hamlet Travestie</i> , Olympic Theater, New York, 1870.	62
8	Playbill, Francis Talfourd's <i>Macbeth Somewhat Removed from the Text of Shakespeare</i> , Olympic Theatre, London, 1853.	64
9	Chorus of fairies from F. C. Burnand's <i>Ariel</i> , Gaiety Theatre, London, 1883.	72
10	Shakespeare begging from Tom Thumb, <i>Theatrical Journal</i> , October 1848.	76
11	'Shakspeare and the Pigmies', <i>Punch</i> , 30 January 1864.	77
12	'Shakspeare Packing up his Goods', <i>Man in the Moon</i> , 1847.	79
13	Illustration from J. Stirling Coyne's <i>This House to be Sold: (The Property of the Late William Shakspeare) Inquire Within</i> , 1847.	82
14	Playbill, <i>This House to be Sold</i> , Adelphi Theatre, London, 1847.	84
15	Playbill, <i>Malone's Travestie of Macbeth</i> , Strand Theatre, London, 1853.	88
16	Portrait of Frederick Robson, c. 1855.	96

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatriy and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

<i>List of illustrations</i>		ix
17	Robson as burlesque Shylock in Francis Talfourd's <i>Shylock; or, the Merchant of Venice Preserved</i> , Olympic Theatre, London, 1853.	97
18	Playbill, William Brough's <i>Perdita; or, the Royal Milkmaid</i> , Lyceum Theatre, London, 1856.	112
19	Hugo Vamp's 'Comic Dramatic Shakespearean Scenas', c. 1850s.	133
20	Portrait of Francis Talfourd, c. 1850s.	137
21	Playbill, <i>Shylock; or, the Merchant of Venice Preserved</i> , Olympic Theatre, London, 1853.	142
22	'A Winter's Tale for any Weather, In the form of a Pocket Opera', c. 1856.	144
23	Marie Wilton as burlesque Perdita, <i>Perdita</i> , Lyceum Theatre, London, 1856.	145
24	Finale, Robert and William Brough's <i>The Enchanted Isle</i> , Adelphi Theatre, London, 1848.	178

Illustrations 1–5, 8, 10–12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 21, and 22 are reproduced by kind permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library; illustrations 6 and 7 by kind permission of the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, the University of Texas at Austin; illustration 9 by kind permission of the Public Record Office, London; illustrations 13 and 19 by kind permission of The Harvard Theatre Collection, The Houghton Library; illustrations 16, 20, and 23 by courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London; and illustration 24 by kind permission of the Library of Congress.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatry and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

Most of this book was written at the Folger Shakespeare Library, where I had the privilege of spending the 2000–1 academic year as a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow. My chief thanks and gratitude go to the Folger and the NEH for the luxury of undisturbed time for thinking and writing. The staff of the Folger's Reading Room, under the leadership of Betsy Walsh, was unfailingly helpful. Georgianna Ziegler deserves particular thanks for guiding me through the Folger's collection of nineteenth-century theatrical ephemera. Valuable assistance was lent by Heather Wolfe in researching the provenance of an anonymous burlesque script. Carol Brobeck and Andy Tennant, with their characteristic good humour, untangled knotty administrative matters. Kathleen Lynch kindly asked me to speak at a colloquium organized by the Folger Institute Center for Shakespeare Studies, while the Folger docents honoured me with an invitation to deliver the 2000 Muriel Hoitsma Lecture. I am especially grateful to Richard Kuhta and Barbara Mowat for the many kindnesses they showed me throughout my fellowship year, demonstrating that venerable academic institutions can still be compassionate.

Research for this book has been funded by much appreciated grants from the American Society for Theatre Research, the Arts and Humanities Research Board (UK), the University of London's Central Research Fund, and the University of Texas at Austin. A Leverhulme Research Fellowship secured this book's timely completion. Bruce Smith graciously arranged for me to be appointed a Visiting Researcher at Georgetown University during my sabbatical year. The Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center generously awarded me a Mellon Fellowship. The two months I spent in Austin in 1999 proved crucial to the development of this project. I am indebted to Melissa Miller for curatorial guidance, Roger Lewis for an invitation to address the Faculty Seminar on British Studies, and Ben and Judy Lindfors for Texas-style hospitality. Over the past few years I have also conducted research at the Birmingham

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatry and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Acknowledgments*

xi

Shakespeare Library, the British Library, the Harvard Theatre Collection, the Library of Congress, the National Portrait Gallery (London), the Public Record Office, the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon, the Theatre Museum, and the University of London Library. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the expertise and generosity of the library and curatorial staff of these institutions. Within the School of English and Drama at Queen Mary, University of London, Paul Hamilton, Lisa Jardine, and Anne Janowitz provided unfailing support for this project during their respective tenures as Head of School, granting me valued research leave and release time. The continuing support and encouragement of my esteemed colleagues Maria Delgado and Paul Heritage have been invaluable.

Parts of this work originated as papers delivered to the American Society for Theatre Research, the Folger Institute Center for Shakespeare Studies, and the Shakespeare Association of America, and as lectures given at the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of London, and the University of Texas at Austin. On these and other occasions I have benefited from the questions, advice, and challenges of A. R. Braummuller, Jim Davis, Joseph Donohue, R. A. Foakes, Werner Habicht, Russell Jackson, Shannon Jackson, Jeff Masten, Laurie Osborne, Elizabeth Richmond-Garza, John Ripley, Stuart Sherman, and Ted Ziter. Stephen Orgel and Joseph Bristow asked just the right questions at just the right time. This work's principal arguments were first published in my essay "Chopkins, Late Shakespeare": The Bard and his Burlesques, 1810–1866', which appeared in *ELH* 67 (2000). I am grateful to Ronald Paulson, editor of *ELH*, for permission to draw upon parts of that article. This book has benefited from the care and guidance of two editors at Cambridge University Press: Victoria L. Cooper, who commissioned it, and Sarah Stanton, who saw it through to completion. My thanks to them both for their unwavering support. Leigh Mueller has been a scrupulous and efficient copy-editor. Thanks are due also to the two anonymous readers who offered valuable guidance at an early stage in the writing process. Their suggestions have been silently adopted. The author alone, however, bears responsibility for any errors or omissions.

My residency at the Folger was made even more agreeable by the companionship of James Daybell and Kirk Melnikoff. Alan Stewart was excellent company during the many memorable evenings we spent at Banana Café and Mr Henry's. He has also been a good friend. Cynthia Burns, a cherished friend of long standing, welcomed me back to Washington with far more warmth than I had any right to expect. During

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatry and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii

Acknowledgments

my many visits to Washington over the past decade, Steve Holman has been a generous host. In London, Bill Patterson has been a trusted and loyal friend. My greatest debt is to this book's dedicatee, whose influence has been incalculable.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-03152-3 - Not Shakespeare: Bardolatriy and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century

Richard W. Schoch

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Note on texts*

For the convenience of the reader, quotations from burlesque scripts are, in most instances, taken from nineteenth-century acting editions rather than from the manuscript originally submitted to the Lord Chamberlain's Office. The exceptions are those instances when a manuscript differs from its published version, as well as quotations from promptbooks and unpublished plays. The year of a burlesque's inaugural performance is provided the first time it is mentioned. All references to Shakespeare draw on *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works*, ed. Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson, and David Scott Kastan (Walton-upon-Thames, Surrey: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1998).