

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-80016-7 — The Culture of Playgoing in Shakespeare's England
A Collaborative Debate
Anthony B. Dawson , Paul Yachnin
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How was the experience of watching a play influenced by practices beyond the walls of the playhouse, and what were the broader social and historical implications of the culture of playgoing? This book sets out to answer such questions. Interested first in what happened within the playhouse itself, the authors focus on the person of the actor, on stage props, visual pleasure, and audience behavior. At the same time, their discussion moves outward to consider a range of cultural assumptions and practices – such as eucharistic controversy, prostitution, social mobility, iconoclasm, Renaissance optics, the formation of national memory, and the dissemination of news.

Since the two authors have very different perspectives on these issues, they have chosen a unique format: rather than submerging their opposition, they have highlighted it. Their attacks and counter-attacks, as they contest each other's views in paired chapters, result in a lively and illuminating debate.

Anthony B. Dawson is Professor of English at the University of British Columbia. His books include *Indirections: Shakespeare and the Art of Illusion* (1978), *Watching Shakespeare* (1988), and *Hamlet* (Shakespeare in Performance, 1995). He is editor of the forthcoming edition of *Troilus and Cressida* also to be published by Cambridge University Press.

Paul Yachnin is also Professor of English at the University of British Columbia. He is the author of *Stage-Wrights: Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, and the Making of Theatrical Value* (1996), editor of a forthcoming edition of *Richard II*, and a member of the editorial team of the forthcoming *Complete Works of Thomas Middleton*.

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To Claire, Maryth, Emma, Thomas, Matthew, and Jeremy

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