

THE ROUTLEDGE ANTHOLOGY OF RESTORATION AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DRAMA

EDITED BY KRISTINA STRAUB, MISTY G. ANDERSON
AND DANIEL O'QUINN



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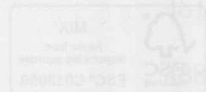
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The Routledge Anthology of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Drama

Edited by Kristina Straub

The Routledge Anthology of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Drama brings together the work of key playwrights—including many important women writers for the stage—from 1660 to 1800, divided into three main sections:

- Restoring the Theatre: 1660–1700
- Managing Entertainment: 1700–1760
- Entertainment in an Age of Revolutions: 1760–1800

Each of the 20 plays featured is accompanied by an extraordinary wealth of print and online supplementary materials, including primary critical sources, commentaries, illustrations, and reviews of productions.

Taking in the spectrum of this period's dramatic landscape—from Restoration tragedies and comedies to ballad operas and popular forms of stage spectacle—*The Routledge Anthology of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Drama* is an essential resource for students and teachers alike.

Kristina Straub is Professor of English at Carnegie Mellon University.

Misty Anderson is Professor of English and Adjunct Professor of Theatre at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Daniel O'Quinn is Professor in the School of English and Theatre Studies at the University of Guelph.



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A Note on the Texts

Performing Drama, Performing Culture

In most cases, the editors have worked from first editions of plays, correcting them against at least one later edition. Sheridan's *School For Scandal*, which was not published in a version authorized by Sheridan during his lifetime, is the exception to that rule. Daniel O'Quinn created his edition from the Crewe manuscript, a presentation copy made by Sheridan for his mistress, Frances Anne Crewe. The editors are grateful to Georgetown University Library for providing us with a copy of this manuscript. We have retained original spellings and punctuation except when textual clarity was compromised. We have modernized capitalization except in instances when capitalization carries nuance in the original. We hope that students will notice how these practices in language usage change over the course of the volume, from 1660–1800. Original stage directions have been adhered to as closely as possible. In a few instances we have moved a direction in the text to clarify its relationship to a speech, and have occasionally added a dash to indicate when a directed speech begins after an aside. Our general goal was to deliver as strong a sense as we can of Restoration and eighteenth-century readers' experiences with these texts.

ICONS

The following icons are used throughout the book to indicate what type of content is being presented:



Playscript



Image



Article (newspaper piece or review)



Commentary



Document (official court or government papers)



Essay (book chapter extract or journal article)



Lyrics



Poem

Introduction

Performing Drama, Performing Culture

THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE for audiences from 1660 into the nineteenth century defined their culture even more than Shakespearean drama now defines the Elizabethan age for modern readers. Shakespeare's plays are performed constantly today in theatres (including a reconstructed version of his Globe), movie houses and a wide variety of digital entertainment platforms, and read with varying degrees of duty and delight in classrooms throughout the English-speaking world. But many students in modern theatre and literature departments have little experience with reading—let alone seeing—the plays that were such an important cultural force in this long, formative period in the history of European modernity. The Long Eighteenth is the super-sized century in which gender, class, sexuality, race and so many social institutions and practices—empirical science, the nation-state, and a capitalist economy, to name a few—began to take on recognizably modern forms. This book presents new and old students of this period not just with the texts of these plays, but with resources for understanding their performative contexts and impact: the experiences that London audiences brought with them into the theatre, the experiences that they had while there, and the two-way flow between theatrical and cultural politics.

London theatres grew, beginning with their re-opening after the Commonwealth period in 1660, into hot connective points in the relays of information, politics, and the tangled web of thoughts and feelings we call culture that shaped modernity. As the century went on, theatres were part of a growing public culture that thrived in the newly opened urban leisure spaces of London. Parks and buildings dedicated to the consumption of music, art, and the social pleasures of seeing and being seen opened and flourished. Coffee houses served a wide social range of male clientele with newspapers and pamphlets as well as coffee and chocolate. Shopping became a pastime as well as a necessity for men and women who could afford to examine printed goods at pamphlet shops, silks, lace, and brocades at the milliner's, and jewelry and snuff boxes at the toy shops of London. Summers brought fairs that featured theatrical entertainment as well as tumblers, boxers, rope dancers, animal acts, and puppet shows for a broad audience. As the century went on, entertainment grew into the money-making business it is today, and London's theatres were central to that growth.

The plays in this volume were performed in professional theatres centered in London and Dublin,¹ but also in provincial theatres across Britain and its colonial holdings in North America and the Caribbean. The resort of Bath, especially, was an increasingly vibrant theatrical town in the second half of the century. Outside the brick and mortar theatres, strolling acting troupes set up shop in barns and taverns, despite their questionable legal status as “rogues and vagabonds”—people without the legal protection of belonging to a permanent household.² During times such as the summer months when the urban theatres were closed—which they were less and less often as the London entertainment business grew—actors, along with other entertainers, performed at the traditional festive and mercantile fairs such as Southwark and Bartholomew. Despite a cultural and religious heritage that resisted theatre, plays were performed in the American colonies almost as soon as there were towns to support audiences for them, and British Caribbean and Indian colonies also had their theatres.³ Theatrical performance grew with the imperial and colonial nation-state of Britain and was part of the process by which people came to know themselves as Britons.

The availability of cheap print editions of most plays almost as soon as they were performed in a London or Dublin theatre added to the range and extent of theatricality as a part of British social life. As scholars such as Benedict Anderson have argued,⁴ reading practices supported a modern sense of national identity and patriotism. Plays—as texts to be read as well as performed—joined newspapers, novels, sermons, and other relatively inexpensive print genres in the process by which Britons read themselves into a sense of belonging to a nation. In the case of plays, especially, we have reason to believe that this reading was not always silent and individual, but often oral, social, and performative. Amateur theatricals were a part of household and even neighborhood leisure-time amusements, as evidenced in the personal letters and diaries of writers such as Frances Burney and Jane Austen. Some wealthy aristocrats even built elaborate permanent theatres as part of their estates in which well-born amateurs tried out their theatrical chops, sometimes with the assistance of a professional or two supplementing their regular income from commercial theatre. Theatricality permeated British literate culture and even reached those who could not read as many servants and lower-status artisans benefited from cheap tickets, accompanying their employers to the theatre, or invitations to fill out the audience at amateur events.

In London and Dublin, especially, theatres were hubs for the performance of British sociability as well as plays. “Sociability,” however, does not always reference harmonious or even civil interactions. Theatres brought together people from diverse social and economic backgrounds in ephemeral but important moments of what Victor Turner has called “communitas,” the sense of belonging to a cohesive group that is engendered, however temporarily, by the shared purpose and enjoyment of a performance.⁵ But it was also the site of disagreements—between audiences, playwrights, actors, and theatre managers in all possible combinations—over politics, personalities, and what should or should not be performed on a public stage. Three factors contributed to the ongoing social drama that was British theatre in the long eighteenth century: the mixed and

contentious status of theatrical professionals as representatives of the stage, the diversity of theatre audiences, and the wild variety of entertainment genres that grew out of the on-going task of appealing to that diversity.

PERFORMERS

Theatrical professionals were, at the opening of the theatres in 1660, a mixed lot. Initially, the managers who were commissioned by the Crown to run the licensed theatres in London were indisputably gentlemen, men of birth and fairly high social standing, if not wealth. The ranks of the performers, however, drew from different walks of life men and women who sought the excitement and income of a career on the boards. English actors had never claimed a particularly high social status, whatever their recognition as artists. The forces of anti-theatricality that succeeded in nearly shutting down the stage in the seventeenth century had amplified already existing accusations of immorality and bad social and sexual behavior. To make matters more difficult for the managers, the hiatus in public theatrical performance, beginning with the onset of the English Civil War and only ending in 1660, meant that a new generation of performers had to be trained, and a new generation of theatre-goers had to be enticed into the pleasures of theatre-going. Even Londoners who did not hold with the anti-theatrical biases of the Commonwealth were no longer in the habit of going to the theatre, as in Shakespeare's London. At this moment, actresses first stepped on the stages of the English public theatres. When Charles II decreed, upon his re-opening of the theatres in 1660, that women could play female characters for the first time in English theatrical history, there was no existent pipeline of women performers waiting to take advantage of the expanding opportunities created by the exploding popularity of this novelty. The first actresses were working and servant-class women who often plied the trade of prostitute as well as thespian. The shady reputations of these early actresses did not improve the already questionable social status of the players as a whole.

When, after the Actors' Rebellion of 1695, actors moved into management (see Part 1 "Restoring the Theatre: 1660–1700"), even the gentlemanly status of the manager was drawn into question. The social and moral role of the theatres was clearly read as powerful; the vehemence with which it is critiqued by anti-theatrical polemicists attests as much to its cultural importance as the celebratory prose of its defenders. But the low social status of the theatrical professional, the taint of questionable sexual morality, and a socially precarious lifestyle that often lent itself to alcoholism and casual violence did not inspire strong confidence in the moral character of this institution's personnel. This is not to say, however, that all actors were drunken, brawling louts, and that actresses were all whores. Thomas Betterton, who took over the management of the Theatre Royal in 1695, was well respected as a man as well as an artist, and was one of the first of many actors buried in Westminster Abbey. Colley Cibber, his successor as actor/manager, went on to become poet laureate of England. Early actresses worked hard to achieve a high level of professionalism and could even make a fair living on the stage, although never

a salary commensurate with their male peers.⁶ But even Betterton was taunted for his alleged promiscuity, and Cibber was the butt of many jokes that questioned his social and sexual status. The point is that if the theatre was to become an important force for the state and for state-sanctioned ideology—and it did—it had to struggle continuously to establish its credibility as a voice for British culture. It is important to note, however, that by the 1790s, the statesman Edmund Burke recognized the moral influence of the theatre as potentially more powerful than the most devoutly heard sermon: “Indeed the theatre is a better school of moral sentiments than churches, where the feelings of humanity are thus outraged.”⁷

As Burke’s somewhat reluctant testimony suggests, this struggle was fought and at least partially won over the course of the long eighteenth century. The actor and theatre manager David Garrick, who acted at and managed the Theatre Royal at Drury Lane between 1747 and 1776, was instrumental in establishing the gentlemanly status of the actor, as was Thomas Sheridan in Dublin. The latter famously faced down poorly behaved upper-class male audience members on the grounds of his own gentle status, a cultural performance that was reported and discussed throughout the British Isles. Garrick hobnobbed with not only a wide range of artists and literary figures, but many of the socially high-ranking aristocracy. He did much to reform the behavior of the players and to turn the playhouses into places where some degree of refinement was, at least, desirable if not always displayed, and acting into a career that demanded professionalism and a more stable way of living. By mid century, actresses such as Frances Abbingdon entered into London circles of feminine sociability for acting and looking like ladies off as well as on the stage. (Abbingdon was well known for her fashion sense and well-born ladies sought her styling advice.) By the last decades of the century, Sarah Siddons, the greatest tragic actress of her day and like many actresses, a working mother, proudly and strategically claimed the moral and social high ground of maternal and wifely duty. While actresses still carried questionable sexual reputations (as they sometimes do today), they joined with men to embrace the higher status of this professionalism.

Another modern development in which actors and actresses were deeply implicated is the phenomenon of celebrity. David Garrick and Frances Abbingdon were two of a significant handful of actors who were as celebrated for their personalities off the stage as they were for their most famous theatrical roles. As theatre historian and performance theorist Joseph Roach has argued, the Restoration period saw the emergence of “It,” an ineffable quality of personal appeal that commands not only interest but “public intimacy,” the desire to know and feel close to the famous person.⁸ The fascination of “It” contributed to the formation of a public culture of fandom: celebrity performers drew audiences into the theatres, but they also created the demand for actors’ faces reproduced in print and visual texts, as well as porcelain figurines, snuffboxes, cups, pitchers, bowls, and a variety of objects that allowed fans to bring their celebrities home.

The celebrity of performers is an important part of a larger social process, namely the role of the theatre in the making of an increasingly modern culture and nation. What kind of institution was the theatre and what was its relation to the state and the body

politic? The big London theatres were licensed by the state, and were, beginning with Charles II, a venue for the display of political as well as aesthetic performances. The presence of British royalty at the theatre was as much a part of what audiences came to see as the performances on the stage, and was noted dutifully in the newspapers after performances, as were the plays as the century went on. From their opening in 1660, however, the theatres were also a commercial enterprise needing to attract audiences. As such, they were part of the emergent capitalist culture that would be theorized in 1776 by Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, both a description of and a rationale for market capitalism. Operating on the cusp between state authority and a market economy, theatres were subject to government control and the demands of a diverse audience. In the decade spanning the 1720s and 1730s, for example, audiences delighted in the political satires of the playwright and theatre manager Henry Fielding, which turned an irreverent gaze on the prime minister of England, Robert Walpole, as did the smash-hit musical of the century, John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, a few years earlier. In 1737, however, Parliament passed the Licensing Act, which subjected the performance of any new plays in the licensed London theatres to the approval of the Lord Chamberlain. While theatre professionals found many ways to work around this strict government control—by putting on entertainments that were not, strictly speaking, plays, and inviting audiences to enjoy a concert and a “dish of chocolate” while, incidentally, watching a “free” play—this act institutionalized the British government's strong interest and role in the shaping of commercial theatre as it evolved over the century. It also suggests just how important a social institution the theatre came to be in the formation of British culture and the body politic.

AUDIENCES

An observer in London in the 1660s might have had a hard time believing in the cultural power and reach of British theatre later in the eighteenth century. A generation used to the theatres of Shakespeare had died by then, and another generation had grown up without the habit of theatre-going. Nonetheless, many town dwellers, such as the Restoration diarist Samuel Pepys, seem to have been addicted to their theatre-going, while for others, especially those visiting London from the country (like Margery Pinchwife in *The Country Wife*), a trip to the theatre was a rare treat. In the Restoration period, the theatres promoted themselves by staging plays, especially comedies, that made theatre-going seem fashionable, the thing to do. This self-promotion was quickly taken up as nostalgia in the early eighteenth century, as writers such as John Dennis looked back on a mythic Restoration audience organized around the King and his witty, male courtiers:

That Reign was a Reign of Pleasure, even the entertainments of their Closet were all delightful. Poetry and Eloquence were then their Studies, and that human, gay, and sprightly Philosophy, which qualify'd them to relish the only reasonable

pleasures which man can have in the World, and those are Conversation and Dramatick Poetry. . . . The discourse, which now every where turns upon Interest, rolled then upon Manners and Humours of Men . . . free from Fear and Taxes, and by reason of that plenty which overflowed among them, they were in the happiest condition in the World, to attain to that knowledge of Mankind, which is requisite for the judging of Comedy.⁹

Whatever the actual numbers of people in the playhouses when they first re-opened in 1660, going to the theatre became in the cultural imagination “what one did” when “seeing the Town,” that is, London. The growth of this city supported the growth of theatres. London’s population growth is part of a spike in England’s over-all population, which went from 5 to 9 million between 1700 and 1800; about 1 in 10 of the total population lived in London by the century’s end. Even in the Restoration period London had achieved the status of “the Town” (with the capitalized “T” seen in many plays in this volume) and a cultural magnet for both genders and all classes of people. For the traditional ruling class of England, the landed gentry whose estates comprised the wealthy agribusinesses of the period, London was a place one visited to do business but also, increasingly, to socialize, to see and be seen, and to bring one’s marriageable daughters into “good” society. Plays were among the regular amusements that these families consumed while on a visit to London during “the season.” As London’s social and leisure culture flourished, offering not only plays but musical concerts, lectures on esoteric as well as topical subjects, “scientific” demonstrations, exhibits of mechanical and natural curiosities, and pleasure gardens such as Vauxhall and Ranelagh, the landed gentry began establishing permanent residences in London on the fashionable west end of the city, which increased the theatre’s wealthy clientele and enabled a longer season.

With these families came servants—maids of all sorts, cooks, footmen, butlers, and coachmen—to support a fashionable London lifestyle, and servants are a significant part of the London population—and the theatre audience—by the second half of the century. It was a common practice among well-to-do families to send a servant to “hold their place” when the theatres opened; the posh theatre-goer could then make a fashionably late entrance, upon which the servant, usually a footman, was relegated to another place in the theatre. Until manager David Garrick did away with the practice, the footmen had their own gallery in the Theatre Royal at Drury Lane, a free privilege that they used (or abused) to articulate a raucous and to many annoying collective voice at the plays. In addition to servants, many apprentices (young men and women working for artisans and other tradesmen in order to learn a trade), yeoman craftsmen, and, of course, master artisans could afford seats in the pit. In sum, a pretty broad demographic cross-section of the British population comprised the audience.

Changes in the traditions of rural life and agriculture, such as the practice of enclosing common lands for the recreation and revenue of estate owners, which rendered those resources off-limits to the working rural poor, resulted in an increasingly mobile labor force. Many displaced workers went to London, drawn by the promise of urban

employment created by growing markets in trade and business. Many found work supporting the lifestyle and amusements of those who could afford servants and the goods, services, and amusements of the London markets for consumables, including entertainment. Others, frustrated by a glutted market for displaced laborers, resorted to petty crime and prostitution to support themselves, and whores and pickpockets were a much-noted part of London public life. Hierarchies of status based on birth and wealth were no less important in this London public than in an older, rural, more feudally organized England, but the certainty and stability that a rural, agricultural England gave to those hierarchies eroded in the context of an economic market that increasingly allowed for more mobility across traditional status lines. Inter-class relations, stabilized through generations by Britons' sense of social place in the rural scenarios of estate and village, had to be negotiated anew in urban spaces of public leisure and amusement, and the theatres were the largest and most consistently patronized of those spaces. Men and women, as well as different classes, mixed socially in the theatres, and gendered as well as classed relationships were formed and reformed with a variety and novelty that was noted, loved, and feared by many social observers and commentators of the period. As early as 1679, Samuel Pepys worried that the increasingly mixed audience reflected the "vanity and prodigality of the age,"¹⁰ code for the lower ranks having enough leisure and wealth to engage in the same pastimes as their "betters."

London theatres, as a result, were sites of both conflict and the formation of new social relations between different kinds of people. Audiences were not docile spectators in the eighteenth century. The theatres were well-lit spaces conducive to the chatting, flirting, and sometimes fighting of audience members before, after—and during—performances. The later years of the period saw substantial expansions in theatre size, allowing for larger crowds. In addition to interacting with each other, audiences were also not shy about communicating their approval or disapproval to the entertainers on the stage. The former could take the form of clapping, "huzzahing," or calling for a performer to repeat a favorite speech or song—multiple times, if the audience so pleased. The latter was expressed by making noise—lots of it—by hissing, booing, yelling insults, and the infamous cat-call. Less noisy but equally effective expressions of disapproval could involve throwing objects at the performers: dried peas on the stage could put a quick end to dances, and even less savory projectiles, such as rotten fruit and offal, were highly effective expressions of audience displeasure. From at least as early as 1722, armed militia were hired to stand guard in the playhouse on performance days, to contain squabbles between audience members and to quash audience assaults on actors, managers, and, most damagingly, on the playhouse itself. *The London Stage, 1660–1800*, a list of performances in the London theatres and a wealth of information for any student of this period, records rioting serious enough to call for military interventions in 1712, 1722, 1735, 1737, 1738, 1744, 1745, 1750, 1755, 1763, 1766, and 1791.¹¹ By mid century, these riots had taken on aspects of social ritual, beginning with the "ladies" being "asked to leave" the playhouse and proceeding to the breakage of chandeliers and glass, the tearing of curtains and costumes, and the "ripping up" of the benches in the pit. Even the disruptive (and expensive) violence

of audiences solidified into somewhat predictable social ritual. Gradually, the frequency of audience violence subsided into a more quiescent form of spectatorship, but as we can see with the Old Price riots of 1809, when audience violence disrupted performances for three months in response to a rise in ticket prices at the newly rebuilt Covent Garden Theatre, nineteenth-century theatre-goers were still far from the polite, silent audience who sit quietly in the dark.

Theatre audiences were, like the performers, part of a long process of negotiating new social rituals and new social identities within the changing economies and societies of Britain and, as the empire grew, its colonial extensions. Domestically, these negotiations involved forging new social relations and identities responsive to more fluid and less static definitions of social status, and an increasing emphasis on gender difference as a structural principle of social order and behavior. Family relations based on affective as well as blood connection slotted men and women into binary roles that, in turn, mapped onto social behaviors and institutions. (Asking “the ladies” to leave before the “gentlemen” tore up the playhouse is symptomatic of this new order asserting itself even in the most chaotic moments of social life within the theatre.) As Britain grew into its role of colonial and imperial empire, the theatre also served as a means of negotiating imaginary relations between what the English saw as central—themselves—and peripheral—anybody else. From visits from the “Indian Kings” in the Restoration¹² to the pantomime performances of *Omai* at the end of the period, theatrical performances and audiences incorporated into the relatively safe space of entertainment and spectacle embodied concepts of racial, ethnic, and religious differences. Theatrical performance produced even as it responded to the expanding variety of experience brought into British consciousness by colonial exploration, conquest, and trade—including the trafficking of human bodies in the African slave trade. In the British theatres, human variety was performed on the stage and in the audience, alongside performances that presented visions of national, even patriotic cohesion and unity. By late in the century, after-pieces, short performances played after the main piece, such as *The Fairy Prince*, an allegory of royal succession, increasingly celebrated the Royal Family and the British state, and throughout the century audiences were as inclined to join in enthusiastic singing of “Rule Britannia” and “Britons Strike Home” as they were to hiss and cat-call the performers.

THE ENTERTAINMENTS

The human variety performed in the audience correlates with the variety of performance genres within the playhouses. In order to draw the large and diverse audiences needed to support commercial theatres, managers delivered many different kinds of performances. As Richard Leveridge, the composer and theatre manager, wrote in the 1720s, “As Diversion is the Business of the Stage, ’tis Variety best contributes to that Diversion.”¹³ Theatres had to appeal to a wide range of different literacies and aesthetics. The broad, physical comedy performed in a farce might be effectively paired with a word-rich, witty comedy or an expensively produced music- and dance-rich spectacle. Sentimental scenes

of reconciled lovers in the main play might be followed by a comic hornpipe or a contortionist's act. The trick, for the canny theatre manager, was to hit a balance between different parts of the evening's entertainment that would appeal to all of the diverse segments of the theatre-going public without overly annoying any one part.

Opera's history in the London theatres is perhaps the most dramatic example of an entertainment form that polarized audiences. Italian opera was introduced to the British in the seventeenth century and was almost immediately patronized by the cosmopolitan aristocracy, a group who sent its young men to Europe and generally spoke several European languages. At the same time, "semi-operatic" plays in English, such as Henry Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, delivered hybrid mixes of distinctively English plays embellished with music, dance, and spectacular scenery and special effects for a much wider appeal. Italian opera was supported by the patronage of the elite and, beginning with George Frederick Handel's career during the reign of Queen Anne (1702–1714), the Royal Family. Under the reign of George I, Anne's successor, Handel composed music for grand state occasions as well as operas. The importation of Italian singers for this demanding, specialized form of singing soon became, however, a lightning rod for complaints from the public, especially against the high-handed female divas and, worse, the Italian castrati, male sopranos castrated at an early age to preserve their high voices. Aesthetic differences were argued between different status groups in terms of gendered and sexualized moral categories, with theatrical professionals attempting to mediate between them by finding an impossible balance of entertainments that would appeal to all. David Garrick, as late as the 1750s, incorporated Italian singers into English operas in semi-operatic works such as *The Fairies*. But variety, produced by different understandings of what British theatre should be, could become itself an object of critique. "Shakespearianus" could write of Garrick in a 1755 review of *The Fairies*, "All Parties agree in applauding and encouraging his unwearied Endeavours to entertain the Publick; and though Variety may be very agreeable to them, yet he ought not to gratify it at the Expence of an Author, whose Memory is certainly dear to them."¹⁴ One can see Garrick caught in the tension named by "Shakespearianus" between an audience addicted to variety and spectacle and at the same time supportive of a nationalistic theatrical agenda that, especially after David Garrick's Shakespeare Jubilee in 1769, cohered around the figure of William Shakespeare. Theatrical professionals leveraged the British public's support for national unity against the disruptive diversity of audience tastes and demands in the face of almost nonstop European wars.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK

The editors of this volume present students of drama and literature with texts, visual and print, that convey multiple senses of performance: the plays that were performed on the stage, the performative responses of the audiences, and the cultural performances outside the playhouse that informed and sometimes reflected experiences within. We have tried to reconstruct as much as possible how audiences over the long eighteenth century experienced going to the playhouse, reading plays, and reading about plays and the theatre.

The student will find plays, such as *The Country Wife* and *School for Scandal*, that are well-known in twentieth- and twenty-first-century revivals and for their place in the English and theatrical canon. They will also find an example of Shakespearean adaptation, a distinctive feature of this period during which many different versions of Shakespeare's plays were almost constantly on the stage, and this author went from being a good writer to the iconic English Bard. They will find pantomimes that theatre scholars have only recently begun to study as a prominent part of the theatre-goer's experience. We have privileged performance over reading experience, in some cases choosing to present students with the most frequently performed versions of a play, as opposed to the version that conforms to scholarly models of authenticity. For example, *The Tempest* adaptation in this book is from a print edition that captures the most performed version of the play, not the one closest to Shakespeare or even the original adaptation by William Davenant and John Dryden.

In some cases, we give students a play that was not regularly performed but is worth their notice because of the social and political contexts it foregrounds. Aphra Behn, for example, is one of the most popular playwrights of the Restoration, but we have chosen not to present her most frequently published and performed play, *The Rover*, but a play that actually failed in its first performance and has been given little attention since: *The Widdow Ranter*. This seemingly counter-intuitive choice allows students a window into the Restoration's imaginings of ethnic, racial, and cultural otherness at an early moment in British colonialism, as well as a displaced performance of rebellion that speaks as richly to the aftermath of the English Civil Wars as to the rebellion of Nathaniel Bacon in colonial Virginia. It also makes a helpful point of comparison with performances of the 1790s, well into British colonial imperialism and well past the French Revolution of 1789.

With each play we have provided students with additional print documents, and images that will help students tap into performances within and without the playhouses. We have tried to call attention to developments in the physical spaces, craft, and technologies of theatres over the long eighteenth century. Theatres generally grew larger, with greater audiences over the course of this period, and the semi-thrust stages of the Restoration retreated to increase seating capacity and place actors further and further behind today's familiar proscenium arch. This change in stage configuration also allowed for increasingly spectacular and complicated scenery and stage effects. The history of the physical playhouse frames how we might think of the performance of a Restoration *Tempest* very differently from how we imagine a late eighteenth-century play such as *Inkle and Yarico* on the stage. Acting styles, too, changed from the more declamatory methods of the Restoration, with actors assuming relatively static postures and expressing emotion through voice and hand gestures, to the more active and "realistic" acting style famously attributed to the actor/manager Garrick in the mid-eighteenth century. The theatre increasingly cultivated physicality in performance as well as oratory, as is also suggested by the emergence of the first great modern clown, Joseph Grimaldi, at the turn into the nineteenth century.