

CHRISTOPHER D. FOLEY

Jonson's Acoustic-Oriented Dramaturgy in the First Folio Playtexts of *Epicoene* and *The Alchemist*

Introduction

The marginal stage directions printed in the First Folio edition of *The Workes of Beniamin Jonson* (1616) present an interpretive challenge to modern scholars. Although these stage directions may suggest a final authorial intentionality with respect to their commemoratively printed form in the First Folio, it is impossible in most cases to determine definitively whether any augmented stage directions appearing in the 1616 folio represent Jonson's original or revised intentions with respect to the staging of individual plays. Jonson's major revision to the playtext of *Everyman in his Humour*, for example, makes clear that he viewed his pioneering First Folio project as an opportunity for substantial authorial revision, not simply retrospective commemoration.¹ Jonson also made substantial revisions to the stage directions for a number of plays, most notably *Everyman out of his Humour* and *Sejanus*.² Despite such

The Ben Jonson Journal 25.1 (2018): 81–105

DOI: 10.3366/bjj.2018.0211

© Edinburgh University Press

www.euppublishing.com/bjj

dramatic examples of revision for the 1616 folio edition of these plays, there are nonetheless strong indications from the paratextual layout of Jonson's First Folio that he was substantially invested in commemorating his plays' early performance histories. Each play printed in the 1616 folio, for example, commemorates the original troupe that performed the play as well as the year of its first performances. In fact, this information is recorded twice, once on the opening title page of each play and then again on the final page devoted to the same play. Such concluding pages further contain a list of principal actors involved in each play's earliest productions.

Given Jonson's investment in commemorating the early performance histories of his First Folio plays through such paratextual material, might his marginal stage directions also serve this same authorial intent—at least in the case of certain plays? In attempting to provide a provisional answer to this question, *Epicoene* (1609) and *The Alchemist* (1610) represent two intriguing—and related—cases to consider. Both plays were entered in the Stationer's Register for printing within weeks of one another: *Epicoene* on 20 September 1610 and *The Alchemist* on 3 October 1610. Two years later, by 28 September 1612, Walter Burre had acquired the printing rights to both plays.³ Though Burre printed a number of extant quarto versions of Jonson's plays, among them the 1612 quarto of *The Alchemist*, there is no extant 1612 quarto of *Epicoene*. Whether Burre ever printed a quarto edition of *Epicoene* may remain a point of continuing discussion among scholars, but unless (or until) an extant copy of the intended quarto is discovered, the stage directions printed in the 1616 folio version of *Epicoene* will have no authoritative basis for comparison.⁴ The 1612 quarto of *The Alchemist*, meanwhile, does offer an authoritative text with which to compare the First Folio printing of 1616. As discussed in further detail below, the 1616 folio text of *The Alchemist* includes substantially augmented stage directions, in addition to its replication (with slight typographical modification) of the three stage directions initially recorded in the 1612 quarto. What Jonson's augmented stage directions in the 1616 folio printing of *The Alchemist* reveal, above all, is the degree to which dramatically charged moments in the play are sonically constructed.⁵ In other words, Jonson's dramaturgy in

The Alchemist relies extensively on the dramatic manipulation of acoustic proxemics. My ensuing analysis also demonstrates that this is a central feature *The Alchemist* shares with Jonson's other notable plague-time comedy, *Epicoene*.

As scholars frequently note, Jonson's consecutive plague-time comedies overlap conceptually in a number of ways. Like *Epicoene* before it, *The Alchemist* was first performed during the long-running plague outbreak that afflicted London from 1606 to 1610.⁶ This contemporary plague outbreak also serves as the explicit backdrop for the dramatic action that unfolds in both plays. Furthermore, in addition to their plague-time composition and their explicit plague-time settings, both *Epicoene* and *The Alchemist* are notable for their site-specific engagements with London's unique indoor performance environments. Most importantly of all, perhaps, both plays feature gentlemen characters who perform (and by extension, satirically embody) antisocial behaviors often evident among London residents during outbreaks of the plague.

In fact, Morose and Lovewit are parodic inversions of the same oft-criticized (and oft-followed) practice of flight.⁷ Lovewit clearly embodies the figure of the rich runaway in *The Alchemist*, whose prolonged absence enables his servant Jeremy (masquerading as Captain Face at the start of the play) to act out as a so-called "masterless man" inside his master's house. Jonson also pushes the selfish and ultimately antisocial impulse of Lovewit's plague-time flight to parodic extremes: as Face sarcastically remarks of his master's absence, "While there dies one, a week, / O' the plague, he's safe, from thinking toward London" (1.1.182–83).⁸ Lovewit's fantasy of social exclusivity, which "elides both the communicable and communal nature of the disease," is thus a major target of Jonson's satirical critique in *The Alchemist*.⁹ Morose, by comparison, represents a parodic inversion of the impulse to flee the plague-ridden city. Rather than escape to the wholesome airs of his country estate, as he previously did "i' the queen's time" or "on holiday eves," now "by reason of the sickness" he has attempted to sequester himself from all aspects of social life in Early Modern London (1.1.144–45). Although *Epicoene's* treatment of Morose is undoubtedly harsher than *The Alchemist's* treatment of Lovewit, the privileged plague-time fantasies of social exclusivity that both

characters demonstrate are clearly critiqued in favor of a collective sense of sociability—a sociability, of course, that was fundamental to the playgoing experience.¹⁰

As this essay demonstrates, it is not a coincidence that Jonson's plague-time comedies, both of which feature evidence that Jonson site-specifically imagined them for performance in London's socially exclusive indoor theaters, rely so extensively on the acoustic manipulation of their indoor performance environment for dramatic effect. While scholars such as Martin Butler and James Mardock have recognized important critical connections between the spatially inflected anxieties of *Epicoene* and *The Alchemist* and their respective indoor performance environments, Jonson's acoustic-oriented stage directions for both plays have been largely overlooked—and so have remained largely unheard—in critical discussions of these plays.¹¹ When considered in light of Jonson's long-running associations between noise pollution and epidemiological anxieties, however, his acoustic-oriented dramaturgy assumes a prominent satirical function.

Because the "private" indoor theaters in Early Modern London catered to wealthier and more socially exclusive audiences, the embodied ironies that Jonson's dramaturgy cultivates in *Epicoene* and *The Alchemist* are double-edged. While these plays clearly critique the extreme, anti-social impulses represented in the figures of Morose and Lovewit, Jonson's plague-time comedies also turn the embodied attention of their London audiences back on themselves by drawing discomfiting attention to the audience's co-presence inside the enclosed performance environment in a manner that undermines any pretension to social exclusivity on the audience's part. In addition to illuminating this previously unconsidered aspect of Jonson's dramaturgy, attending to the interplay between his acoustic-oriented dramaturgy recorded in the marginal stage directions of the First Folio printings of *Epicoene* and *The Alchemist* and the evident site-specific engagements presented elsewhere in these playtexts also sheds light on the importance of site-specificity to Jonson's commemoration of his own authority in the First Folio of 1616. Ultimately, when we consider the centrality of site-specific engagements in the plays Jonson wrote between 1609 and 1616, we can appreciate to a greater extent the degree to which Jonson's self-monumentalizing in the

printed First Folio paradoxically depends on the ephemerality of performance—particularly in his major plague-time comedies.

Noise Pollution and Epidemiological Anxieties from *Volpone* to *The Alchemist*

As early as *Volpone* (1606), Jonson imaginatively associated the material threat of plague with exposure to noise pollution. In the titular character's revulsion to Lady Would-Be's noxious presence inside his house, he equates the sounds and effluences emanating from her mouth with the morbid effects of plague exposure: "My madam, with the everlasting voice; / The bells in time of pestilence ne'er made / Like noise . . . All my house, / But now, steamed like a bath, with her thick breath" (3.5.4–8). Though the comparison between Lady Would-Be's incessant chatter and the constant din of church bells "in time of pestilence" posits both as particular forms of noise pollution equally worthy of avoidance, Volpone's ensuing description of her vaporous breath discloses the cathartic source of anxiety, which provides the underlying impulse for the comparison: the specter of miasma and the associated threat of plague exposure. According to premodern miasmatic theories of disease transmission, the plague was engendered through the corruption of air.¹² Two key aspects of miasmatic theories further illuminate Volpone's bitter aside. First, humid air was more likely than dry air to become corrupt and therefore was perceived to be more infectious.¹³ Second, at least some authors of plague treatises in the period identified human breath as the most lethally infectious form of corrupted air: Jean Goeurot, for example, claimed that "the venomous air itself is not half so vehement to infect as is the conversation or breath of them that are already infected."¹⁴ Volpone's bitter resentment toward Lady Would-Be's embodied presence and her desire for "conversation" clearly identifies her as a source of both sonic and spatial infection, one with troubling epidemiological implications that Jonson would continue to explore in his future plays.

From Volpone's brief misogynistic aside seems to have sprung, fully formed, the dramatic premise of Jonson's next major

comedy: *Epicoene, or the Silent Woman* (1609). The clear—if also satirized—intention of Morose’s fantasy-driven quest to find and wed the eponymous silent woman of the play’s title is for him to obtain a wife who will prove to be the exact opposite of *Volpone’s* Lady Would-Be. As Clerimont remarks of Morose’s intended bride, “Her silence is dowry enough” (1.2.22). However, once Morose and Epicoene have wed and she reveals herself to be more outspoken than he has been led to expect, Morose denounces her as “Some plague, above the plague” (3.5.48–49). Given the play’s extensive satiric treatment of Morose, the association between insidious noise pollution and the threat of plague extends beyond the titular character in the play’s representational scheme. Jonson notably recycles *Volpone’s* identification of “bells in time of pestilence” as a form of noise pollution in the opening scene of *Epicoene*, when Morose’s pathological aversion to sound is represented as an antisocial reaction to bells commemorating those who have died from the plague:

Now, by reason of the sickness [plague], the perpetuity of ringing has made him [Morose] devise a room with double walls and treble ceilings, the windows close shut and caulked, and there he lives by candlelight.

(1.1.145–148)

While Jonson does not explicitly conjure the material threat of plague onstage, as he later would in *The Alchemist*, this passage is nonetheless the first of many in *Epicoene* to represent Morose’s aversion to noise—in particular, the perverse steps he takes to sequester himself from the sounds of social life in an otherwise urban environment—in accordance with measures Early Modern Londoners routinely undertook to protect themselves from exposure to the plague.¹⁵ In addition to caulking his windows shut, Morose hangs out his potentially plague-ridden bedding as means of soundproofing his bedroom door.¹⁶ He also seeks total silence from would-be interlocutors, which offers the added benefit of stopping up their potentially contagious breath.¹⁷ In *Epicoene*, then, Jonson further develops the dramatic potential previously articulated in *Volpone’s* aversion to Lady Would-Be’s embodied presence. Like Lady Would-Be to *Volpone*, Epicoene in Morose’s

estimation is not only noisy; she is also potentially noisome. So, too, are the daily sounds of social life in his urban environment.

Although the dramaturgical relationship between Jonson's conjuration of embodied, plague-time anxieties and his reliance on acoustic proxemics may be less pronounced in *The Alchemist* (1610) than in *Epicoene*, it is arguably no less profound – in consideration of the fact Jonson invokes the material threat of plague onstage in *The Alchemist*, a remarkably rare occurrence in the corpus of extant Renaissance dramas. As I have argued elsewhere, *The Alchemist* directly engages with the social controversy generated by the figure of the rich runaway in the opening decade of the seventeenth century. Given the play's intense meta-theatrical ironies, a critical component of Jonson's satirical dramaturgy in *The Alchemist* is directed toward the potentially vulnerable bodies of the socially exclusive audience at the Blackfriars in November 1610 – especially those members of the audience conspicuously seated on stage. One of the primary methods by which Jonson persistently highlights the “hazardous proximity of other bodies” for his privileged Blackfriars audience is his notable reliance on acoustic proxemics.¹⁸ Both *Epicoene* and *The Alchemist*, then, critique fantasies of social exclusivity in the midst of London's longest running plague outbreak, and a significant vehicle of Jonson's satiric critique in both plays is his manipulation of the acoustic performance environments at the respective Whitefriars and Blackfriars indoor theaters.

The Embodied Reception of Theatrical Noise Pollution in *Epicoene*

Numerous critics have argued that Jonson's *Epicoene* demonstrates a certain site-specificity with respect to the Whitefriars theater and the wider liberty of the same name in which it was located. Reading the prologue's winking reference to the “daughters of Whitefriars” (or prostitutes who frequently attended performances) alongside the play's persistent exploration of non-normative sexualities, Mary Bly has argued that *Epicoene* offers its audience a form of vicarious entertainment that commodifies the other well-known,

if also less-reputable, social activities associated with the Whitefriars liberty.¹⁹ Butler and Mardock, meanwhile, have argued in complementary ways that *Epicoene* meaningfully leverages the relatively cramped (and potentially claustrophobic) structure of the indoor performance space to heighten the play's demonstrable plague-time anxieties.²⁰ As stated above, their predominant critical focus attends to the spatial dimensions in *Epicoene* (as well as in *The Alchemist*). However, Jonson's persistent association between plague exposure and noise pollution from *Volpone* onward suggests that the acoustic dimension of his dramaturgy is also critical to consider in relation to the play's plague-time satire.

Of the thirty-six stage directions printed in the margins of the First Folio playtext of *Epicoene*, eleven (or 31 percent) focus on manipulations of the sonic environment. The vast majority of these are clearly intended to disturb Morose's desire for absolute silence, often through the use of musical instruments: the "horne" announcing Truewit's arrival in 2.1 and his departure in 2.2; the "*Musique of all sorts*," performed under Clerimont's direction at the start of 3.7; and finally, the musical instruments – most notably, the trumpet and drum – that accompany Otter as he conjures up a mock animal-baiting spectacle with his "Bull, Bear, and Horse" drinking game (539, 542, 564, 568–70).²¹ As Otter announces, "I have brought my bull, beare, and horse, in private, and yonder are the trumpeters without, and the drum, gentlemen" (3.7.36–37). Here, Otter's announcement is glossed in the First Folio text with a marginal stage direction indicating that "*The Drum, and / Trumpets sound*" (565). In addition to the use of musical instruments of various sorts to torment Morose, the marginal stage directions informing the exchange in 3.4 between Morose, Cutbeard, and the Parson indicate that the latter audibly performs his alleged sickness – "*He coughs*" loudly and then does so "*Again*" – in such a way as to cause Morose noticeable discomfort. As Matthew M. Thiele has argued, this dramatic moment in particular links Morose's aversion to noise – and to the sounds emanating from the mouths of others – to epidemiological anxieties befitting a play set (and performed) during a contemporary plague outbreak in Early Modern London (250). Morose's discomfort also recalls *Volpone*'s reaction to Lady Would-Be's vaporous breath, suggesting that Jonson's prior associations between noise pollution and the

potential exposure to plague can help us interpret the satiric function of Jonson's acoustic-oriented dramaturgy in *Epicoene*.

Close analysis of three key scenes further reveals Jonson's sophisticated dramaturgical engagements with the acoustic performance environment of the Whitefriars theater. In addition to the eleven stage directions that clearly rely on manipulation of the acoustic environment (primarily through the production of noise pollution via musical instruments), there are several more stage directions that highlight Morose's (temporary) obtainment of the silence he monomaniacally seeks from the play's other characters. These include Morose's interactions with his appropriately named servant, "Mute," in 2.1 and in his initial encounter with Epicoene in 2.5. The latter scene marks the nearest achievement of Morose's fantasy presented onstage in the play. In 2.5, Morose interacts with Mute and Cutbeard on his own terms, insisting that they "answer [him] not but with [their] leg[s]" (2.5.10–11). Morose's interactions with his bride-to-be are even more pleasing to him. She clearly remains silent as "*He goes about and views her.*" When she responds to Morose's first question – "Can you speak?" – the stage directions indicate that she "*speakes softly[,]*" so softly that Morose literally asks her to speak up because he hasn't been able to hear (or at least be certain) of what she has said (2.5.25). Of course, neither Epicoene the character nor *Epicoene* the play allows Morose to inhabit his fantasy world for very long. The comic friction between Morose's brief but superficial achievement of silence and the performative shattering of that silence is perfectly exemplified in 2.1, where Morose's achievement of control over the acoustic environment onstage during his interactions with "Mute" is unexpectedly shattered by the horn announcing Truewit's arrival and subsequent departure. There is thus a dialectical tension running through the first half of the play between the temporary achievement of Morose's antisocial fantasy of silencing other people and the comic obliteration of that fantasy.

Nowhere, perhaps, is this comic obliteration more pronounced – or acoustically jarring – than in 4.2, when Otter brings the noisy spectacle of his "Bull, Bear, and Horse" drinking game along with its notable trumpet and drum accompaniments into Morose's house. In fact, it is notable that all acoustic-oriented stage directions cease after this scene, as the torment of

Morose morphs from reliance on musical instruments to Morose's discovery of the manifold domestic tortures he must endure as a consequence of his ill-fated plan to wed Epicoene. Of the stage directions included through the end of 4.2, eleven of twenty-five (or 44 percent) of them are devoted to acoustic manipulation. There are, furthermore, a number of moments in this scene where the stage directions are implied rather than explicitly noted in the margins. As Peter M. Wright has observed, Jonson's treatment of marginal stage directions in the First Folio is not always consistent.²² At times, Jonson expects his readers—especially his ideal, “extraordinary” ones—to comprehend implied stage directions. One such moment is clearly Otter's “Sound, sound” (4.2.15). Given that Otter explicitly draws attention to his musical accompaniment at 3.7.36–37, a fact underscored by the marginal stage direction indicating that “*The Drum and / Trumpets sound*”, he is clearly invoking the raucous performance of the drum and trumpets once again. This is confirmed by his subsequent Virgilian gloss: *Et rauco strepuerunt cornua cantu* [“And the trumpets sounded with a hoarse sound”].²³ Otter once more invokes the performance of noise pollution indoors with his “Sound, Tritons o' the Thames!” (4.2.55–56). Truewit likewise invokes the drum and trumpets with “Sound, Sound” and, lines later, “Sound, sound still,” during the spectacle of Mistress Otter attacking her husband (4.2.87, 94). During the climax of this scene, after the acoustically disturbed Morose descends with his “long sword,” he inveighs against trumpeters in particular, those “sonnes of noise and tumult, begot[ten] on an ill *May-day*[,]” who have “rent [his] roof, walls, and all [his] windows asunder, with their brazen throats” (4.2.102–3, 106–7). As Morose's denunciation makes clear, the trumpeters and their instruments are the primary source of his sonic affliction in this scene.

The drum and trumpets accompanying the anticipation of Otter's drinking game in 3.7 and its subsequent enactment onstage in 4.2 are thus a central feature of Jonson's acoustic-oriented dramaturgy in *Epicoene*. In effect, Jonson brings the musical instruments customarily associated with open-air (outdoor) playhouses and structurally similar animal-baiting arenas into the much more acoustically sensitive indoor performance space of the Whitefriars. This move appears to depart conspicuously from

normative dramaturgical practices at London's indoor theaters.²⁴ What makes this fact even more remarkable is that, even among London's private indoor theaters, the Whitefriars was "appreciably small."²⁵ Whereas the Blackfriars theater measured 101' by 46', the Whitefriars measured a mere 85' by 35'.²⁶ With respect to the question of embodied reception, then, how would the theatrical performance of such noise pollution have affected the audience inside the Whitefriars Theatre in 1609?

One of the major consequences of Jonson's extensive reliance on musical instruments associated with outdoor theaters in such an intimate performance environment is that it draws attention to the theater as a materially constituted space that is collectively embodied. The audience, on a very real and meaningful level, is subjected to the same performance of noise pollution that Morose is. These repeated sonic disturbances produced by musical instruments are clearly one of the most vital aspects of the play in live performance. If the audience doesn't bear witness to Morose's physical and mental suffering from noise pollution that is uncomfortably loud, then the play stands to lose a key element of its comic vitality.²⁷

Nonetheless, Jonson's acoustic-oriented dramaturgy is also shot through with epidemiological anxieties. In the play's opening description of Morose's affliction, Jonson associates noise pollution with mortal exposure to the plague. Over the course of the play, Jonson then exposes the Whitefriars audience to the same noise pollution to which he subjects Morose. Far from encouraging the Whitefriars audience to feel insulated from the threat of plague, as Thiele has suggested, Jonson's dramaturgy seems to draw inspiration from the potentially ambivalent embodied experience of playgoing in the midst of an ongoing plague outbreak in Early Modern London (256–57). One plausible explanation for Jonson's satirical motivation would be the fact that London's private indoor theaters, including the Whitefriars, catered to wealthier and more socially exclusive audiences. If Jonson's *Epicene* critiques Morose's fantasies of social exclusivity in the midst of a plague outbreak by way of its acoustic-oriented dramaturgy, it critiques any such presumptions to social exclusivity among the play's well-to-do audience(s) at the Whitefriars along these same conceptual lines. The implications of this acoustic-oriented critique

assume greater significance when considered in relation to the controversy generated by the rich runaway in the opening decade of the seventeenth century.²⁸ One of the primary drivers of this controversy was the emerging awareness that plague mortality in Early Modern London was becoming an increasingly classed phenomenon, due in large part to the practice of flight, of which Morose is a parodic inversion.

Acoustic Proxemics and Embodied Ironies in *The Alchemist*

Although Jonson's acoustic-oriented dramaturgy in *Epicoene* is quite overt, insofar as the explicit performance of noise pollution onstage is central to the play's comic ridicule of Morose, Jonson develops the satiric potential of his acoustic-oriented dramaturgy in *The Alchemist* in less obvious, but no less profound, ways. As with *Epicoene*, Jonson's acoustic-oriented dramaturgy is most evident in the marginal stage directions of the First Folio. The 1612 quarto version contains only three approximated stage directions: Face's call from "{within}" (C4v), the moment when "Dol is seene" (E2v) by Mammon as he converses with Face-as-Lungs, and later, when Dol performs a fit of distraction, speaking at the same time as Mammon (K2r).²⁹ This last direction simply indicates that the two characters speak their lines onstage simultaneously. Apart from the question of its augmented stage directions, the folio playtext is substantially similar to the 1612 quarto text.³⁰ The folio even orthographically replicates the unique "{within}" stage direction, suggesting that the 1612 quarto may have served as the initial copytext for the First Folio edition. *The Alchemist* text printed in the 1616 folio preserves these three original stage directions in the 1612 quarto, with slight marginal modifications, while adding an additional forty-three stages directions.

Jonson's augmented stage directions to the 1616 folio printing reveal an extensive dramaturgical attention to the acoustic environment in performances of *The Alchemist*. Of the total forty-six stage directions included in the First Folio, nineteen (or more than 40 percent) of them acoustically manipulate the

performance environment, often in more meaningful ways than simply noting a knock at the door. In fact, nearly all of the most dramatic moments are represented in marginal stage directions as sonically constructed. These key moments include, most notably, the explosion of the purported alchemical laboratory—"A great crack and noise within" (659)—and the point in the play at which Dapper's gingerbread gag dissolves and he cries out from the privy in which he has been locked—"Dapper cries out within" (669). Taken together, these two stage directions represent climactic moments in the play's action. The former marks the moment at which the greedy fantasies of Mammon (and the other gulls) literally go up in smoke—accompanied, of course, by startling sonic pyrotechnics. The latter, meanwhile, marks the moment of dissolution, not of the gulls' plans but of the rogues'. As Face, now returned to his subordinated social position of Lovewit's butler, confides to the audience: "his [Dapper's] gag is melted, / And now he sets out the throat . . . What shall I do? I am caught" (5.3.66–67, 75).

Furthermore, two additional moments reveal the degree to which the rogues' masterful control of the performance space throughout the play hinges on the question of acoustic proximity. In the opening scene, which begins *in medias res* with a heated argument between Face and Subtle, Dol pleads with her fellow rogues to be quiet: "Will you have / The neighbors hear you? Will you betray all?" (1.1.7–8). Though this opening exchange is not highlighted with a marginal stage direction, Dol's opening anxieties about the potential for acoustic proximity to "mar all" (1.1.81) do dramatically anticipate Dapper's climactic cry for assistance, which Subtle (echoing Dol) bemoans will "mar all" (5.3.71). In light of such emphasis on acoustic proxemics, even a knock at the door has the potential to raise the dramatic stakes considerably. This is precisely what happens when Mammon's arrival at 3.5 catches the rogues unprepared and off-guard. Here, the marginal stage direction reads, "He [Face] speaking through the keyhole, the other [Mammon] knocking" (647). If the "venture tripartite" up to this point has maintained control over the stage and the house in the Blackfriars it represents, then the unexpected arrival of Mammon marks the point at which the rogues' control over this space begins to slip. While the rogues have thus far provided a masterclass in acting for the audience observing their

performative duping of the gulls, Mammon's unexpected arrival forces them to react. Their reactionary decision to stash Dapper in the privy buys them a bit more time with Mammon, but it ultimately proves to be their undoing. In what proves to be a prophetic fulfillment of Dol's opening anxiety, then, the rogues' intricately woven plots fall apart due to the consequences of acoustic proxemics beyond their control.

The dramatic consequences of acoustic proximity also seem intended, at least in part, to condition the audience's embodied reception of the action presented onstage. In the opening scene, Dol not only fears that "neighbours" will overhear the bickering between Face and Subtle; she also insists that she "hear[s] somebody" (1.1.8–9). As my ensuing analysis will suggest, this moment affords an early, playful recognition among the play's Blackfriars audience in November 1610 concerning their embodied presence in the theater. The bodies Dol acknowledges onstage at this moment might well have been stage-sitters at the Blackfriars taking their seats after the performance had commenced, a practice fashionable among the exhibitionistic stage-sitters but notorious among actors and playwrights.³¹ At least initially, then, it is the play's audience whose proximate, overhearing ears Dol dreads in the opening scene. Over the course of the play, however, the audience comes to occupy vicariously the same embodied anxiety with respect to offstage noises that the rogues do. This subtle aspect of Jonson's dramaturgy is particularly evident from Mammon's unexpected arrival onward. In 3.5, Face speaks to Mammon "through the keyhole," while Mammon continues his knocking from an offstage area. According to this stage direction, which has struck at least one critic as an ostensibly authentic recording of how the play was performed onstage prior to the printing of the First Folio, Jonson's acoustic-oriented dramaturgy represents significant threats to the rogues' well-laid plots as a consequence of the physical proximity of other characters.³² This physical proximity, as the stage direction here indicates, is registered through acoustics.

Jonson's acoustic-oriented dramaturgy in *The Alchemist* reaches a crescendo in 5.3, as flocks of angry gulls – Mammon and Surly, then Kastril, and finally Ananias and Tribulation Wholesome – return to Lovewit's house demanding recompense. Jonson's marginal stage directions indicate that each of their unsuccessful interactions with

Lovewit is preceded by several loud knocks on his front door, the culmination of which occurs when "*They* [Ananias and Tribulation Wholesome] *beat, too, at the dore*" (668). This scene clearly demands the performance of (self-) righteous anger on the part of the gull characters. With respect to Jonson's acoustic-oriented dramaturgy, it also seems to demand a higher decibel-level from their knocking. Underscoring the play's frequent representation of the danger that acoustic proximity poses to the discovery of the rogues' plots, this scene climaxes with Dapper crying out from the privy.

As with *Epicoene*, Jonson's evident dramaturgical manipulation of acoustic proxemics assumes increased critical significance in light of the evident site-specificity of the printed playtext. Despite the fact that the earliest recorded performance of *The Alchemist* took place at Oxford in September 1610, both the 1612 quarto and the 1616 folio playtexts suggest that the play memorializes a performance at the Blackfriars Theatre in early November 1610. The location, date, and time and the play's action approximate—nearly down to the very hour—the location, date, and time of the play's probable London premiere. How might this apparent discrepancy be explained? Is *The Alchemist* noteworthy not just for the conspicuous staging of the threat of plague, a rarity among extant English Renaissance dramas, but also for its proleptic staging of Lovewit's return to London in the fall of 1610? Perhaps. However, the more likely explanation is that the King's Men commissioned Jonson to write a new play for their inaugural season at the troupe's newly acquired Blackfriars indoor theater. Jonson's play undoubtedly reflects a particular spatial focus at a particular temporal moment—one that coincides with the highly anticipated reopening of London's commercial theaters in the autumn of 1610 following a series of plague-induced closures dating back to 1606, and with it, perhaps, the long-awaited premiere of the King's Men in their newly renovated private indoor playing space.

Extensive evidence from the printed playtext of *The Alchemist* demonstrates a conspicuous intent to locate the action of the play in the Blackfriars precinct of London and to populate the play with characters who had suggestive associations with the precinct. Subtle, in the opening scene of the play, identifies the setting of Lovewit's house as "here, in the Friars" (1.1.17).

Later, as Mammon attempts his preposterous courtship of the prostitute Dol Common, he references "This nook here of the Friars" (4.1.131). Any potential spatial (or geographic) ambiguity concerning these references is dispelled with Dol's colorful insult of Face, also in the opening scene, when she calls him "A Whoreson upstart, apocryphal captain, / whom not a Puritan, in Blackfriars, will trust / So much as for a Feather" (1.1.127–29). This insult, which required no editor's gloss for the play's earliest London audiences, drew upon contemporary associations of the Blackfriars liberty with a black-market feather trade as well as the liberty's sizable Puritan population, the most famous of which was perhaps Stephen Egerton.³³ This latter association, of the Blackfriars with Puritans, may further explain the presence of the radical Puritans Ananias and Tribulation Wholesome among the roster of gulls in Jonson's play. In addition to the Blackfriars' reputation for its black-market feather trade and its Puritan residents, the precinct was also associated in the early seventeenth century with apothecaries and grocers.³⁴ Once more, this contemporary association may help to explain the profession of another gull: Abel Drugger is a freeman "of the Grocers" (1.3.5). Jonson thus seems to have taken care not only to situate *The Alchemist* within the Blackfriars precinct but also to populate it with characters who would have been recognizable to London audiences in 1610 as potential inhabitants of the Blackfriars.³⁵ This conspicuous coincidence between the play's setting and its characters, on the one hand, and the likeliest site of the play's London premiere on the other clearly confuses spatial boundaries between the imagined space of the play and its material performance setting. This confusion is further reinforced, as Anthony J. Ouellette has argued, by repeated "references to the variety of visitors who flock to the house, many in coaches, and to the banners, bills, and drums that announce the playing."³⁶ In effect, "Lovewit's house is not only within the Blackfriars district but is the Blackfriars playhouse and even more specifically the stage upon which the play is performed."³⁷

If Jonson's surviving playtext thus collapses the spatial distinctions between the imaginative space of the play and the stage on which the play was performed during its London premiere, internal textual references also serve to collapse temporal distinctions between the moment at which the play's

action commences and the moment of the play's first London performance. As R. L. Smallwood has argued,

Two particularly careful pieces of calculation by Ananias, at III.ii.131–2 and V.v.102–3 indicate the date of performance as late October or early November, a time which might be expected to accord with the decline of the epidemic of plague which raged in London through the late summer of 1610 and which is built into the play's plot . . . It is, in fact, difficult to see any other purpose in such precise timing of the action than the desire for absolute topicality and simultaneity.³⁸

If Jonson's (or the King's Men's) intent was to achieve absolute temporal simultaneity for any performance during the plague outbreak of 1610, these two brief textual references could easily be amended to accommodate a change in performance date. Nonetheless, when considered in conjunction with the conspicuous metaspatial elements of the surviving playtext, the preponderance of evidence strongly suggests that Jonson was particularly invested in preserving the site-specific dimension of this Blackfriars play.

As I have argued elsewhere, in light of the playtext's interest in collapsing distinctions between the imagined space of the play and its initial material performance environment in Early Modern London, Jonson's ironic staging of "the hazardous proximity of other bodies [functions] as a provocation to its socially privileged audiences," especially those members seated onstage at the Blackfriars playhouse in November 1610. *The Alchemist* clearly plays with the tensions between an emergent awareness of plague mortality as a classed phenomenon and competing theories of disease transmission (materialist and providentialist), which explicitly linked the act of playgoing with plague exposure.³⁹ First and foremost, the play frames the prospect of Lovewit's structurally anticipated return in relation to the statistics published in London's weekly bills of mortality. Additionally, while civic and royal ordinances routinely identified the transgressive spatial mobility of such masterless men and women as Subtle and Dol (who are notably residents of the poorer suburbs rather than the Blackfriars) as a cause of the spread of plague throughout the realm, there is a marked absence of any material threat of

the plague onstage during Lovewit's prolonged absence. This absence assumes greater significance upon Lovewit's structurally anticipated return, for it is not until after the rich runaway Lovewit has returned to his house in the Blackfriars that Jonson (by way of Face/Jeremy) first invokes the material threat of the plague onstage. After informing Lovewit that his house "has been visited," Face references practices routinely undertaken to air-out infected homes and household items (5.2.4, 12–14). Although this invocation ultimately amounts to a tricky servant's brief onstage prank, one that makes Lovewit (and perhaps more than a few of the play's earliest audience members) a bit squeamish, it is through this exchange that Jonson calls ironic attention to the classed dimensions of plague exposure in Early Modern London.

He compounds this irony even further in Act 5 by drawing conspicuous attention to the spectacle of the crowd on what was undoubtedly an increasingly crowded stage space. This spectacle of the crowd is first invoked by Dol's description of action occurring offstage: "Forty o' the neighbours are about him, talking" (4.7.112). This description is then realized onstage at the start of Act 5, as Lovewit enters flanked by his neighbours, at least six of whom have speaking parts. Both the 1612 quarto and 1616 folio texts of *The Alchemist* include an identical cast of characters in the "Persons of the Play." The final groups of characters in each cast are "officers," "neighbours," and "mutes." The first two such groups appear only in Act 5, after Lovewit has returned to the stage. In all likelihood, Act 5 is also when the extra "mutes" would appear onstage as well, in light of the fact that this scene featuring Lovewit's interactions with his neighbours offers the most appropriate opportunity to people the stage with extra characters who do not have speaking parts. In such a staging, the dramatic potential for irony here is dizzying—at the moment Lovewit and his numerous neighbours crowd the Blackfriars stage, their descriptions of the countless visitors to Lovewit's house conjures visions of theater-going crowds for the audience in attendance. Presented with a spectacle of the crowd onstage alongside the invocation of the theater-going crowd as a body, the gaze of the spectating crowd is directed back at itself. The dramatic effect of including "mutes" in this scene would be to further trouble the embodied distinctions between performers and spectators on the Blackfriars stage.

The dramaturgical consequences of such embodied indistinction on the Blackfriars stage at this moment are profound. After Face informs the returned runaway that his house "has been visited," Lovewit reacts with expected epidemiological anxiety: "What? With the plague? Stand thou then farther [away from me]" (5.2.5). In their ensuing exchange, as Lovewit's anxieties focus on Face/Jeremy as an embodied source of contagion, the returned runaway instructs his butler to "Breathe less, and farther off" (5.2.15). Here, again, we see Jonson dramaturgically playing with the tensions between contemporary theories positing a material link between playgoing and the threat of plague exposure, on the one hand, and the emergent awareness of plague mortality in Early Modern London as a classed phenomenon on the other. Might the actor playing Face, at this moment, move uncomfortably close to one or more of the Blackfriars audience members seated onstage? If so, then Jonson here makes explicit what seems merely implicit in his conjuring of the theatrical crowd at the moment of Lovewit's return to the stage: the play imaginatively subjects Lovewit and the Blackfriars audience to the same epistemological uncertainty regarding the potential presence of the plague in the Blackfriars theater in November 1610. It does so, moreover, by underscoring the shared materiality of the theatrical performance environment. The play's pervasive concern with acoustic proximity similarly underscores the collectively occupied (and therefore shared) material performance space.

Although the surviving playtext of *The Alchemist* does not explicitly call attention to the Blackfriars stage-sitters in the manner of Beaumont's *Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1607), Jonson's demonstrable site-specific engagements with the Blackfriars liberty and the playhouse (including its crowds) strongly suggests that the playhouse's infamous stage-sitters were well within his dramaturgical sights as he composed (or revised) *The Alchemist* in advance of its London premiere. Jonson certainly demonstrated acute awareness of the stage-sitters later in his career. In his "Dedication to the Reader" in *The New Inn* (1629), Jonson criticized stage-sitters for coming to the theater "to possess the stage against the players," while in the "Prologue" to *The Devil is an Ass*, (1616) Jonson drew attention to the uncomfortable proximity of stage-sitters to the bodies of the actors in a direct address to the

former: “If you’ll come / To see a new play, pray you afford us room” and presume not to “force us act / In compass of cheese-trencher” while “knock[ing] us o’ the elbows” (ll.19–20, 7–8, 12). Jonson’s pointed criticism of the stage-sitters assumes greater critical significance in light of the play’s intense metatheatricity and site-specificity. In *The Alchemist*, Dame Pliant’s age and birth year—she is nineteen years old and was born three years after the Spanish Armada—indicates that action of the play takes place in the year of the play’s first performance, 1610 (2.6.31, 4.4.29–30). Likewise, in *The Devil is an Ass*, Satan calls explicit attention to the year of the play’s performance in his assessment of prevailing contemporary theatrical tastes, which have long since abandoned morality-play figures such as Iniquity (1.1.76–81). Furthermore, Fitzdottrel hopes to attend that day’s performance of *The Devil is an Ass* at the Blackfriars Theatre, where he plans to sit conspicuously on the stage during the performance (1.6.31, 3.5.38). Thus, *The Devil is an Ass*, like *The Alchemist*, demonstrates explicit site-specific engagements that derive in large part from its intense metatheatricity. Moreover, although Jonson may not call explicit attention to the Blackfriars stage sitters in the surviving playtext or the marginal stage directions of *The Alchemist*, as he later would in *The Devil is an Ass*, Jonson’s acoustic-oriented dramaturgy in the former—along with the play’s related anxieties concerning the hazardous proximity of other bodies—arguably demonstrates his satirical engagement with the stage-sitters at the Blackfriars in November 1610.

Conclusion

As I have argued in this essay, one significant yet understudied aspect of the First Folio printings of *Epicoene* and *The Alchemist* is that their marginal stage directions highlight the importance of Jonson’s acoustic-oriented dramaturgy to both plays. Given Jonson’s imaginative associations between undesired exposure to sound and the threat of exposure to the plague from *Volpone* onward, such acoustic-oriented dramaturgy can be understood in relation to the explicit plague-time settings of both plays. In

addition to its connections to the plays' plague-time settings, Jonson's acoustic-oriented dramaturgy assumes an important audience-oriented satirical dimension in light of the evident site-specific engagements of both playtexts. Manipulating the acoustic performance environments of the Whitefriars and Blackfriars theaters, Jonson's dramaturgy satirically critiques the fantasies of social exclusivity embodied by *Morose* and *Lovewit*. Drawing on the potentially ambivalent experience of playgoing during a long-running plague outbreak in Early Modern London, these plays likewise critique fantasies of social exclusivity among their earliest well-to-do audiences by directing their embodied attention to the shared material space of the commercial theater.

Jonson's assertion in his prefatory address to Sir Francis Stuart in the First Folio printing of *Epicoene*, that "[t]here is not a line or syllable in it changed from the simplicity of the first copy" (527), appears to indicate that the entire playtext, including its site-specificity and marginal stage directions, conform to his original dramaturgical intentions. Though the 1612 Burre quarto of *The Alchemist* only contains a few explicit stage directions, the greatly augmented stage directions printed in the First Folio seem of a piece with the stage directions printed in the First Folio text of *Epicoene*. Cumulatively, the myriad points of comparison between these First Folio texts analyzed in this essay suggest that the augmented marginal stage directions of *The Alchemist*, though they were printed for the first time in the First Folio of 1616, nonetheless reflect Jonson's dramaturgical intentions with respect to the play's probable London premiere at the Blackfriars Theatre in November 1610. Of course, even if such stage directions do reflect Jonson's original intention, we cannot ascertain whether such intentions were realized in performance on the Early Modern stage prior to the printing of the First Folio.

Nonetheless, the marked site-specificity of both *Epicoene* and *The Alchemist* proves especially meaningful in light of Jonson's continued site-specific engagements in *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) and *The Devil is an Ass*.⁴⁰ Considered together, Jonson's dramatic output from 1609 to 1616 reveals a persistent interest in site-specific engagements with the varying material performance environments of London's commercial theaters. Furthermore, although neither *Bartholomew Fair* nor *The Devil is an Ass* was included in Jonson's

First Folio, this final period of dramatic output before Jonson left “the loathed stage” for a decade coincided with the period he spent shepherding his commemorative First Folio into print. Thus, although numerous scholars have traced Jonson’s anti-theatricality from his early quartos through the First Folio, Jonson’s evident interest in site-specific dramaturgy from 1609 through 1616 partially challenges this predominately anti-theatrical narrative.⁴¹ As Jonson saw his commemorative First Folio into print, his self-monumentalizing presentation as an author of dramatic poems paradoxically depended—especially in his commemoration of the site-specific engagements of *Epicoene* and *The Alchemist*—on preserving in print the most ephemeral aspect of his plays’ earliest London performances.

The University of Southern Mississippi

NOTES

1. Peter M. Wright, “Jonson’s Revision of the Stage Directions for the 1616 Folio ‘Workes,’” *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England* 5 (1991): 271.

2. *Ibid.*, 266–67, 273.

3. David Bevington, “*Epicoene*: Textual Essay,” in *The Cambridge Works of Ben Jonson Online*, ed. Martin Butler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); and William Sherman, “*The Alchemist*: Textual Essay,” in *The Cambridge Works of Ben Jonson Online*.

4. W. W. Greg, “Was there a 1612 Quarto of *Epicoene*?”, *The Library* 4th Series (1934): 306–15. See also Thomas Kranidas, “Possible Revisions or Additions in Jonson’s *Epicoene*,” *Anglia* 83 (1965): 451–53.

5. Wright, 275. While Wright notes the prominence of marginal stage directions that rely on offstage noises “to intensify the action onstage,” his analysis does not address the critical relationship between such noises and epidemiological anxieties, which is a chief focus of this essay.

6. Patrick Phillips, “‘You need not fear this house’: The Absence of the Plague in *The Alchemist*,” *Ben Jonson Journal* 13 (2006): 45. See also James D. Mardock, *Our Scene is London: Ben Jonson’s City and the Space of the Author* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 69.

7. Margaret Healy, “Discourses of the Plague in Early Modern London,” in *Epidemic Disease in London*, ed. J. A. I. Champion, *Centre for Metropolitan Working Paper Series* No. 1 (1993): 19–34.

8. Aside from references to the First Folio's marginal stage directions, and unless otherwise noted, this and all subsequent textual references to Jonson's plays are taken from *The Cambridge Works of Ben Jonson*, Vols. 3 and 4, ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

9. See my forthcoming article, "'Breathe Less, and Farther Off': The Hazardous Proximity of Other Bodies in Jonson's *The Alchemist*," *Studies in Philology* 115.3 (Summer 2018). Though my interpretive reading of *The Alchemist* presented in this essay echoes some aspects of my previously formulated argument, many of the textual examples I draw upon—particularly with respect to Jonson's marginal stage directions—are either substantially reframed or wholly novel to this consideration of acoustic proxemics in the First Folio printings of Jonson's plague-time comedies. Additional aspects of my current argument will appear in my forthcoming work.

10. Matthew M. Thiele, "The Sociability Cure: Expelling the Plague in Ben Jonson's *Epicoene*," *Ben Jonson Journal* 19.2 (2012): 241–43. Though I share Thiele's recognition of the fundamental importance of the playgoing experience to the embodied reception of *Epicoene*, my emphasis on the satirical implications of Jonson's recurrent interest in the connections between noise pollution and exposure to the plague leads me to interpret the play's treatment of Morose (vis-à-vis the Whitefriars audience) more ambivalently than does Thiele.

11. Martin Butler, "Jonson's London and its Theatres," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ben Jonson*, ed. Richard Harp and Stanley Stewart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 26; Mardock, 68–70.

12. F. P. Wilson, *The Plague in Shakespeare's London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), 5.

13. Anonymous, *The plagues approved physitian Shewing the naturall causes of the infection of the ayre, and of the plague. With divers observations to bee used, preserving from the plague, and signes to know the infected therewith. Also many true and approved medicines for the perfect cure thereof. Chiefely, a godly and penitent prayer unto almighty God, for our preservation, and deliverance therefrom* (London, 1665), sig. A3v. *Early English Books Online*. See also, Lucinda Cole, "Of Mice and Moisture: Rats, Witches, Miasma, and Early Modern Theories of Contagion," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 10.2 (2010): 69.

14. Jean Goeurot, *The regiment of life, whereunto is added a treatise of the pestilence, with the boke of children, newly corrected and enlarged by T. Phayre* (London, 1550), Sig. N.iv. *Early English Books Online*.

15. Thiele, 246–50.

16. *Ibid.*, 247–48.

17. Ibid., 249–50.
18. See Foley (forthcoming).
19. Mary Bly, “Playing the Tourist in Early Modern London: Selling the Liberties Onstage,” *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 122.1 (2007): 61–71.
20. Butler, 26; Mardock, 68–70.
21. Ben Jonson, *The Workes of Beniamin Jonson* (London, 1616). *Early English Books Online*. All subsequent citations of stage directions and their page numbers come from this edition, unless otherwise noted.
22. Wright, 261.
23. Gordon Campbell, ed., *The Alchemist and Other Comedies* (Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 1998), 474. I borrow the Latin translation from the editor’s explanatory note to 4.2.16, which is a quotation from *The Aeneid*.
24. Sarah Dustagheer, *Shakespeare’s Two Playhouses: Repertory and Theatre Space at the Globe and the Blackfriars, 1599–1613* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 102–16.
25. Jane MacIntyre, “Production Resources at the Whitefriars Playhouse, 1609—1612,” *Early Modern Literary Studies* 2.3 (1996): 2.3. <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/02-3/maciwhit.html>. One apparent consequence of the smaller dimensions of the Whitefriars Theatre is that the practice of allowing stage-sitters—a notable practice at the Blackfriars—seems not to have been followed at the Whitefriars.
26. Ibid.
27. As Wes Folkereth, *The Sound of Shakespeare* (London: Routledge, 2014), 73–74, has noted, Shakespeare’s plays often draw attention to the vulnerability of the human ear through acts of physical violence. In his comedies, this violence often takes the form of a “box” of the ears. Jonson’s dramatic treatment of Morose represents an example of this same comic principle, though its comedic effect relies on acoustic rather than physical violence.
28. Paul Slack, *The Impact of the Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), 228–35.
29. Jonson, *The Alchemist* (London, 1612). *Early English Books Online*.
30. Compared to the 1612 quarto, there are occasional word changes peppered throughout the 1616 folio text of *The Alchemist*, most likely explained by changes in censorship laws and practices between 1612 and 1616.
31. See, for example, Thomas Dekker’s satirical account of stage-sitters arriving fashionably late to the theater in *The Gull’s Hornbook*, edited by R. B. McKerrow (London: De La More Press, 1904), 52–53.
32. Wright, 268–69.

33. For an analysis of the district's reputation for puritan preachers and residents in light of surviving archival records from the precinct, see Brian Burch's "The Parish of St. Anne's, Blackfriars, London, to 1665," *The Guildhall Miscellany* 3.1 (1969): 10–12. For a brief discussion of the precinct's reputation for an illicit or underground feather trade, see Bly, 65.

34. Anthony Paul House, *The City of London and the Problem of the Liberties, c1540–c1640* (PhD Thesis, University of Oxford, 2006), 151.

35. Notably, Jonson was a resident of the Blackfriars himself at this time. In his prefatory "Epistle" to the 1607 quarto edition of *Volpone*, Jonson's salutation reads: "From my house in the Black-Friars / this 11. of February. 1607." Jonson, *Volpone, or the Fox* (London, 1607), ¶4r. *Early English Books Online*.

36. Anthony J. Ouellette, "The Alchemist and the Emerging Adult Private Playhouse," *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 45.2 (2005): 381.

37. *Ibid.*, 381.

38. R. L. Smallwood, "'Here in the Friars': Immediacy and Theatricality in *The Alchemist*," *The Review of English Studies* 32.126 (1981): 147.

39. Paul Slack identifies the weekly bills of mortality as a key driver of the emerging awareness of plague as a classed phenomenon around the turn of the seventeenth century. See Slack, *The Impact of the Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), 239.

40. In the "Induction" to *Bartholomew Fair*, Jonson famously compares the stink of the Hope Theater, which doubled as a bear-baiting arena, to the grounds of the annual fair held in Smithfield (otherwise noted for its livestock pastures). Furthermore, as C. Walter Hodges, *The Globe Restored: a Study of the Elizabethan Theatre*, 2d ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 63, quoted in Smallwood, 149, has argued, Jonson's site-specific considerations in this play extend to the staging of fair booths and the puppet theater on moveable trestles, of the kind commonly utilized not only at fairgrounds but also, specifically, at the Hope Theater, where the play was first performed.

41. See, for example, Jonas Barish, "Jonson and the Loathed Stage," *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), 132–54; Timothy Murray, "From Foul Sheets to Legitimate Model: Antitheatrical Text, Ben Jonson," *New Literary History* 14.3 (1983): 641–64; and Joseph Lowenstein, "The Script in the Marketplace," *Representations* 12 (1985): 101–14.