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“Original Practices” and Jonson’s First Folio

Over the past twenty years or so, performance-based efforts to recreate the staging conditions and production modes of Elizabethan/Jacobean playhouses through “original practices” (OP) have developed at a considerable rate. One has only to note the popular appeal of theatre companies working from Early Modern architectural replicas (like London’s Bankside Globe or Virginia’s Blackfriars) to recognize the pervasive influence of the “reconstructive Shakespeare” movement on our understanding and interpretation of Renaissance drama.¹ Yet, as the name would suggest, the movement is too often grounded in a performance aesthetic predicated solely on Shakespeare’s playtexts (indeed, for many, the 1623 Folio is followed with a near religious fervor). But truth be told, other playwright/practitioners of the era have far more to say on the matter of staging verse drama than Shakespeare, and made a point of publishing their thoughts directly through prefatory material, commendatory verses, pamphlets, etc. Fletcher and Heywood immediately come to mind, but this paper will focus on the most prolific critic of the period, Ben Jonson. Not to be overshadowed by the numerous commemorations of

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Shakespeare's death, 2016 also marked the 400th anniversary of the publication of Jonson's landmark First Folio, and a brief review of his 1616 *Workes* should provide ample occasion to challenge several of the "original practices" championed by bardocentric theatre companies and their educational auxiliaries.

From the earliest days of William Poel's Elizabethan Stage Society and Harley Granville-Barker's paradigm-shifting *Prefaces* to the more recent Folio-based experiments of Neil Freeman and Patrick Tucker, advocates of OP have looked to Shakespeare as the authoritative source for their various reconstructive efforts. One has only to glance at the websites of a few of the more prominent American practitioners to recognize their deep indebtedness to all things Bard. For example, the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, VA takes pains to perform elements of OP in all their productions, lest they "obscure a vital part of the drama as Shakespeare designed it."² Oregon's Original Practice Shakespeare Festival claims that they "do something no one else does: break down Shakespeare's text the way it was originally delivered and interpreted,"³ and Atlanta's Shakespeare Tavern Playhouse makes the remarkably bold assertion that they employ the text "Shakespeare approved for use in his own company" and "talk directly to you, the audience, in much the same way we believe Shakespeare and his acting company would have directly addressed Elizabethan audience members."⁴ These troupes (and many more like them) invariably ground their performance ethos in Early Modern production modes supposedly culled from the plays of Shakespeare—even when performing plays by Shakespeare's contemporaries. The commercial motivations behind such brand-name appeals are obvious (doubtless, there's a reason that London's Bankside Globe was christened "Shakespeare's Globe" in 1996–97 rather than "Burbage's Globe" or the "Chamberlain's/King's Men's Globe" or the "Shakespeare-Dekker-Jonson-Middleton-etc.'s Globe"), as a formidable Shakespeare industry continues to drive the market realities for both present-day playhouses and publishing houses.⁵ But for theatre companies seeking to emulate the techniques and procedures of Early Modern actors through close readings of extant playtexts, the Shakespearean default position proves difficult to justify in terms of OP—particularly when Jonson's carefully crafted

publications are compared with Shakespeare's highly corrupt printed works. If the argument is that the original texts provide our only reliable window to past theatrical practices, then the meticulously constructed Folio of 1616 would appear to afford a far more accurate view than its posthumously pieced-together 1623 counterpart.

Of course, the critical comparison between Jonson and Shakespeare is at least as old as John Dryden's comments in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*.⁶ Writing during the early years of the Restoration and reopening of the theatres, Dryden looks back to "the age wherein [Shakespeare] lived, which had contemporaries with him Fletcher and Jonson, never equalled them to him in their esteem: and in the last king's court, when Ben's reputation was at the highest, Sir John Suckling, and the greater part of the courtiers, set our Shakespeare far above him."⁷ By the tenor of his assertion, Dryden would seem to restate a simple everyday truism, widely accepted by all those in the know (as well as suggest that Shakespeare was ours and Jonson was someone else's). Yet, as G. E. Bentley details exhaustively in his analysis of seventeenth-century allusions to both Jonson and Shakespeare, the former far outweighed the latter in terms of initial popularity and critical esteem. Among his other findings, he notes, "[b]y and large, Jonson was quoted more than Shakespeare in commonplace books" and his "individual works were more widely known and praised than Shakespeare's"—in fact, "[p]erformances of Jonson's plays and masques were discussed by writing people nearly twice as often as Shakespeare's." Bentley completes his study with the conclusive statement that "Jonson, and not Shakespeare, was the dramatist of the seventeenth century."⁸ The Augustan era, however, brought a change in dramatic taste and sentiment, and with it, a seismic shift in the playwrights' respective fortunes. A proportionally divergent trajectory occurred for each, and while Shakespeare's star ascended to celestial universality, Jonson's plummeted to terrestrial topicality. The force of this realignment was so strong that, by the late eighteenth century, commentators referred to Shakespeare's "natural" preeminence with unassailable certainty. Lurking beneath this transferal of cultural prominence, as Mick Jardine observes, "is the proposition that the hegemonic status of Shakespeare, together with the construction of Jonson as his

binary opposite, has had, and continues to have, a corrosive effect on [Jonson's] theatrical as well as his literary reputation."⁹ When one considers the worldwide festivities surrounding the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016, an event that was barely recognized by the public in 1616, and compares them to the outpouring of sentiment at Jonson's passing in 1637, which included the publication of a memorial volume of poems, *Jonsonus Virbius*, his claim is especially ironic. And quite telling, too.

But perhaps, the fault lies not in Jonson's stars, but in his own generous compliments to a fellow rival. In another occasion of supreme cosmic irony, it can be argued that Jonson's famous dedicatory poem in the 1623 Folio lays the very foundation for his own critical usurpation. According to Ian Donaldson, "no one until then had so positively asserted the perennial and enduring nature of Shakespeare's genius, hailing him so boldly as a writer *for all time*."¹⁰ Thus, the basis for Shakespeare's transhistorical value has a Jonsonian origin, which becomes especially curious when contrasted with the post-Restoration judgment of Jonson's work. If eighteenth-century critics fashion Shakespeare as both timely and timeless, Jonson suffers the opposite fate—a man whose poetic achievements are perceived as firmly situated in (and therefore limited to) a specific historical time and place. As such, Shakespeare's works remain monumental, whereas Jonson's are merely of the moment. Much can be, and has been, said in refutation of this overly simplistic dichotomy,¹¹ but for the purpose of this paper, the distinction serves as a worthwhile point of departure for those theatre artists claiming an adherence to principles of OP. Again, as Donaldson remarks, "the promotion of Shakespeare's reputation necessitated his being detached more and more from the supposedly primitive age in which he lived, idealized to the transcendental role, seen as belonging to *no age*;" while Jonson's demotion "necessitated, conversely, that he be increasingly associated with and relegated to the age in which he lived, seen as its product, its chronicler, and ultimately its victim."¹² Nevertheless, in spite of his diminished laurels (self-crowned or otherwise), it is precisely in the role of "product" and "chronicler" that Jonson's print endeavors deserve a reevaluation. For those professing acting styles and production elements that mirror an Early Modern model, the details found in the text of Jonson's First

Folio are likely to furnish the most reliable conduit to Jacobean staging practices.

In the same essay above, Dryden provides neo-classical support to his comparison of Jonson and Shakespeare, concluding with the now oft-anthologized passage:

If I would compare him with Shakespeare, I must acknowledge him the more correct poet, but Shakespeare the greater wit. Shakespeare was the Homer, or father of our dramatic poets; Jonson was the Virgil, the pattern of elaborate writing; I admire him, but I love Shakespeare.¹³

Given the premium placed upon “wit” by later Augustan writers, it is no surprise that Dryden’s appraisal of the two should find favor with a culture that celebrates Shakespeare’s innate genius. But as the name of age suggests, it is to Virgil that eighteenth-century writers look for formal guidance (with Dryden’s own widely renowned translation of the *Aeneid* leading the way). And, to be sure, every Early Modern player and playwright who received as much as a grammar school education also looked to Virgil for paradigmatic models. Why, then, should OP practitioners seek for ill-conceived Homeric answers in the indecipherably Grecian 1623 Folio? If Jonson is England’s “more correct poet,” then surely his *Workes* supplies the better “pattern” by which textually derived qualities of Renaissance drama can be enacted (or, at least, approximated). It bears repeating that before its folio publication in 1616, Early Modern plays and poems were considered ephemeral amusements performed merely to “beguile / The lazy time . . . with some delight.”¹⁴ Few thought them worthy of the considerable time and expense necessary to produce a large-format, leather-bound edition. All this changed with Jonson. Though scoffers mocked the audacity of his literary pretensions, his book proved to be a commercial success, not only prompting an enhanced second edition during Jonson’s lifetime, but also paving the way for future folio publication of dramatic texts (and, as a result, elevating the status of plays and playwrights to a new found respectability). Thus, the debt owed to Jonson by theatre artists and audiences is immense. But the most important factor for those promoting OP is that Jonson (unlike most other Renaissance

playwrights, including Shakespeare) actually oversaw the printing of his plays.¹⁵ With the First Folio, he “carefully supervised the publication . . . of over a thousand pages, including texts of nine plays, thirteen masques and two groups of poems,” all the while closely following “the model of Renaissance editions of classical authors.”¹⁶ When compared with the slapdash compilation of material for Shakespeare’s 1623 Folio, by the disparate hands of opportunistic colleagues and overworked compositors, Jonson’s *Workes* offers clear authorial advantages to those pursuing a cleaner text for the study of Early Modern staging methods.¹⁷

Among the many distinguishing features of the 1616 Folio, the plentiful paratextual commentary stands out as particularly informative for OP practitioners. Through its prefatory material, Jonson spells out his artistic aims in a manner that is refreshingly forthright, especially when matched with other Renaissance playwrights, and in the process affords us one of the first systematic treatments of dramatic criticism before Dryden. “His prefaces, prologues and inductions do indeed constitute a foundational defense of stage practice,” writes Martin Butler, and in turn “were crucial in establishing London’s theatres as a legitimate artistic medium.”¹⁸ Mixing astute assessments on dramatic practice with hard-hitting didacticism, the various dedications and introductory letters provide readers with a Jonsonian blueprint for performance on the Early Modern stage. By way of bad examples (in a Sidneian vein), Jonson goes to some length to instruct his audience on the abuses of contemporary theatrical indulgence. In the dedication to *Volpone*, he states,

the writers of these days are other things; that not only their manners, but their natures are inverted; and nothing remaining with them of the dignity of Poet, but the abused name, which every scribe usurps: that now, especially in dramatic, or (as they term it) stage-poetry, nothing but ribaldry, profanation, blasphemy, all license of offence to God and man is practised.¹⁹

Key to this missive is the delineation of the playwright as a “Poet,” a synonymous pairing that Jonson and other Renaissance writers would have taken for granted. But Jonson’s concern for the

mishandling of the divine art by poetasters (and if not an "offence to God," at least one to the refined sensibilities of taste) speaks to the primary importance placed upon versification by Early Modern dramatists. As is all too often the case, many current-day theorists and practitioners of OP are reluctant to relinquish Stanislavskian teachings, based on anachronistic notions of "character" that they purportedly derive from Shakespeare (or rather, Shakespeare *via* A. C. Bradley, Harold Bloom, etc.). Jonson knows quite well that metrics drive the meaning, prosody the personage. His letter to readers of *The Alchemist* differentiates the true player from the imposter, and the critic from the "cozened":

If thou be'st more, thou art an understander, and then I trust thee. If thou art one that tak'st up, and but a pretender, beware at what hands thou receiv'st thy commodity; for thou wert never more fair in the way to be cozened (than in this age) in poetry, especially in plays, wherein, now, the concupiscence of dances and antics so reigneth, as to run away from Nature and be afraid of her is the only point of art that tickles the spectators. But how out of purpose and place do I name art? When the [practitioners] are grown so obstinate contemners of it, and presumers on their own naturals, as they are deriders of all diligence that way, and, by simple mocking at the terms, when they understand not the things, think to get off wittily with their ignorance.²⁰

There are, certainly, elements of Hamlet's speech to the players to be found in the above passages, but Shakespeare never steps forth from his writings to identify a personal position. Jonson does regularly. Instead of conveying the typical obligatory sentiments of patronal obeisance, the paratext surrounding the various works in the 1616 Folio constructs a framework of aesthetic commentary that defines what it takes to create verse drama in Early Modern England. Jonson's "conspicuous learning also supported articulate opinions about the form and value of poetry," notes Peter Womack, and his "plays have prologues, inductions and self-reflexive devices that amount to a continuing dramatic manifesto. Thus, unlike most writers of Early Modern drama, he was explicitly a critic of it too."²¹ With Jonson's *Workes*, we receive direct address

from the playwright regarding matters of OP, not compositionally contrived supposition and conjecture.²²

But just as his employment of paratext differs from his contemporaries, so does the print apparatus built to maintain his distinct verse structures. In the vibrancy and verbal relish of his rhythmic bursts, Jonson captures the colloquial cadences of Elizabethan/Jacobean speech patterns better than any other playwright, with the possible exception of Middleton. His poetic dialogue explodes with a verisimilar dynamism that reflects the linguistic peculiarities of his flesh and blood voices. As he claims in his Prologue to *Every Man in His Humour*, Jonson makes a conscious effort to move past the well-worn artificialities and tired stage antics of his predecessors (especially Shakespeare), and declares the time ripe for “deeds, and language, such as men do use.”²³ And unlike the scattershot lineation and punctuation found in Shakespeare’s Folio, Jonson ensured that *Workes* perserved his metrical arrangements through the use of specific textual devices. For instance, most OP practitioners recognize the need to maintain the integrity of the verse line through multiple speakers. The Folio of 1623 makes this a matter of editorial emendation (a highly suspect practice for many involved with OP), as shared lines are consistently printed as short lines on any given page. Not so with Jonson—nearly all the shared lines in the 1616 Folio are constructed as single units. He even devises a visually effective format to express simultaneous speech acts among players, as the parallel columns in 4.5 of *The Alchemist* cleverly demonstrate. Pointing in the text offers still another distinction. Jonson’s innovative use of enjambment, midline caesuras, appositives, and parataxis demands a system of punctuation that effectively denotes these particularities of sound and sense.²⁴ Supervised by its author, *Workes* contains just such a scheme. In their edition of *Sejanus*, Herford and Simpson remark that Jonson is even attuned to qualities of what is now referred to as original pronunciation: “*Sejanus* also yields many examples of a metrical punctuation designed to mark the presence of an extra syllable lightly sounded in the movement of the line.”²⁵ Though editors often signify additional syllables with diacritical marks today, this significant practice in playwriting is uniquely Jonsonian in the early seventeenth century, and therefore attentiveness to his

original folio text should prove a top priority for all practitioners of OP.²⁶

Alas, I have yet to find a book that speaks to the glaring absence of Jonson’s 1616 Folio in the working methods and models of OP (perhaps, something along the lines of *Acting Jonson’s First Folio* is in order). Without question, along with the above categories, it should include chapters on audience interaction (Jonson’s choric prologues, epilogues, and inductions), judicious editing and organic music (*Sejanus*), uninterrupted performances (*Alchemist*), etc. Then, maybe, Shakespeare’s overly constrictive influence on OP might be mitigated through the well-ordered textual evidence provided by “rare Ben.”

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NOTES

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1. For further insight on the history of the “reconstructive Shakespeare” movement, see J. L. Styan, *The Shakespeare Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), Marion O’Connor, “Reconstructive Shakespeare: Reproducing Elizabethan and Jacobean Stages,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Stage*, ed. Stanley Wells and Sarah Stanton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 76–97, Jeremy Lopez, “A Partial Theory of Original Practice,” in *Shakespeare Survey* 61 (2008): 302–17, and Christie Carson and Farah Karim-Cooper, ed., *Shakespeare’s Globe: A Theatrical Experiment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

2. American Shakespeare Center, “What We Do,” 21 January 2017. <<http://www.americanshakespearecenter.com/pages/42/76/staging-conditions>> . Accessed 21 January 2017.

3. Original Practice Shakespeare Festival, “Education and Outreach,” 21 January 2017. <<http://www.opsfest.org/education.html>> . Accessed 21 January 2017.

4. Atlanta Shakespeare Company, "About Original Practice," 21 January 2017. <http://www.shakespearetaVERN.com/index.php?/about_us/original_practice> . Accessed 21 January 2017.

5. For a thorough history of the appropriation of Shakespeare for commercial and political purposes, see Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989).

6. However, as David Bevington, "Jonson and Shakespeare: A Spirited Friendship," *The Ben Jonson Journal* 23.1 (2016): 2, notes, the critical "contrast between the severely neoclassical Ben Jonson, famous for his 'learned sock,' and Shakespeare as 'Fancy's child' warbling 'his native wood-notes wild,'" dates back as far as Milton's *L'Allegro* in 1631—notwithstanding Jonson's own comments on their differences.

7. John Dryden, *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch et al. (New York: Norton, 2001), 381.

8. Gerald Eades Bentley, *Shakespeare and Jonson: Their Reputations in the Seventeenth Century Compared* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945), 139. Bentley's methodology from the 1940s might be in need of an overhaul. Nevertheless, as Ian Donaldson, "'Not of an Age': Jonson, Shakespeare, and the Verdicts of Posterity," in *New Perspectives on Ben Jonson*, ed. James Hirsh (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1997), 213n10, states, "the broad picture he gives of Jonson's commanding reputation throughout the seventeenth century seems indisputable."

9. Mick Jardine, "Jonson as Shakespeare's Other," in *Ben Jonson and Theatre: Performance, Practice and Theory*, ed. Richard Cave, Elizabeth Schafer, and Brian Woolland (London: Routledge, 1999), 106.

10. Donaldson, 197.

11. For a detailed discussion of this binary, see Donaldson, *Jonson and Shakespeare* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1983), Russ McDonald, *Shakespeare and Jonson / Jonson and Shakespeare* (Lincoln: University Nebraska Press, 1988), James Hirsh, ed., *New Perspectives on Ben Jonson* (1997), and the recent issue of *The Ben Jonson Journal* 23.1 (2016).

12. Donaldson, "'Not of an Age,'" 201.

13. Dryden, 383.

14. William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), 5.1.40–41.

15. In his essay "Jonson's Texts in the First Folio," in *Ben Jonson's 1616 Folio*, ed. Jennifer Brady and W. H. Herendeen (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1991), 25, Kevin Donovan describes this process in detail:

Jonson apparently marked up the Quartos, which served as copy for the Folio printers when they set up the eight previously published plays, introducing a host of minor revisions, especially in the plays before *Sejanus*. In addition Jonson was responsible for a number of press corrections in the Folio, mainly in the texts of the "comical satyres" (*Every Man Out Of His Humour*, *Cynthia's Revels*, and *Poetaster*) and *Sejanus*. Many of the press corrections are further departures from the Quartos, and thus constitute another stage of revision. Thus, there are two general classes of revision: changes already made in the copy given to the printers, and press corrections. Both classes of revision include many changes in punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and italicization, as well as a number of added stage directions and many changes of word or phrase.

16. Warren Chernaik, "The Dyer's Hand: Shakespeare and Jonson," in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Contemporary Dramatists*, ed. Ton Hoenselaars (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 56.

17. Among academics, Don Weingust is especially adamant in advancing the virtues of *Acting from Shakespeare's First Folio* (the name of his book from 2006). (See Weingust, *Acting from Shakespeare's First Folio: Theory, Text, and Performance* [New York: Routledge, 2006]). He finds vindication for his performance-based readings of Shakespeare's text in the current work of Neil Freeman and Patrick Tucker. In their teachings based on the 1623 Folio, actors embrace original spellings, emphasize capitalization and italicizations, and regularly pause for punctuation, metrical variations, and irregular lineation. Although both men stress that their interpretations are merely a guide for actors trying to make their way through Shakespeare's text, Weingust gushes with enthusiasm for the "possibilities" potentially unlocked for performance. Right idea, perhaps, but wrong text, as Weingust dismisses too readily the contamination of compositorial error. Though acknowledged briefly, he argues that printers in Renaissance printing houses were much closer to the idiosyncratic elements of Early Modern speech patterns, and therefore their punctuation practices are more likely reflective of popular usage. That these "practices" vary sharply within certain texts in the 1623 Folio does not seem to bother Weingust. And since Freeman and Tucker admit that their approach does not work as well with quarto editions of Shakespeare's plays, the representative merits of acting techniques based on Shakespeare's Folio appear dubious at best.

18. 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), 23.

19. Ben Jonson, *Volpone*, in *The Complete Plays of Ben Jonson*, ed. G. A. Wilkes (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), 30–35.

20. Jonson, *The Alchemist*, in *The Complete Plays*, 1–12.

21. Peter Womack, “Ben Jonson,” in *English Renaissance Drama* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 107.

22. Additional prefatory material of interest to OP practitioners includes Jonson’s printing of the original performance date, theatre company, and list of actors for each play. Marginal annotations are also found throughout the Folio playtexts, which, according to Richard Cave, “Script and performance,” in *Ben Jonson and Theatre*, 25, “clearly indicate the nature of *performed actions*” and “reflect Jonson’s intentions about staging.” Paratext aside, the extent to which certain textual variants in the Folio are authorial or compositorial remains a matter of some debate. Though substantive alterations from the quarto editions are generally considered to be Jonson’s, accidentals prove more difficult to ascribe. David Gants, “The 1616 Folio (F1): Textual Essay,” in *The Cambridge Works of Ben Jonson Online*, ed. Martin Butler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), http://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/benjonson/k/essays/F1_textual_essay/, documents the history of scholarly opinion surrounding Folio press corrections and finds that the “[c]urrent editorial consensus holds that Jonson had some involvement in the changes found in the first four or five plays in the collection, but after that his influence wanes.” Still, as Donovan, 25, earlier maintains, “[t]here is no reason to doubt that the verbal changes and many of the changes in accidentals are authorial; they are so extensive and, in many cases, so inconsequential that no one but the author would have taken the trouble to make them. This is especially true of the revisions made as press corrections; certainly no efficient printer would interrupt a press run to make such changes on his own.”

23. Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour*, in *The Complete Plays*, 21.

24. Jonson’s ear for performance metrics can be traced to his background as a professed classicist. As Sean McEvoy, *Ben Jonson, Renaissance Dramatist* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 9, recognizes, “Jonson’s commitment to the importance of classical rhetorical practice entailed paying even more attention to the patterns of sound and action in his work than was usual even in early modern drama. The physicality of the text transmits itself powerfully into performance.”

25. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson, ed., *Ben Jonson*, Vol. 4 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1932), 338. Critics of privileging Folio accidentals for copy text, like Fredson Bowers, tend to base their assessment on spelling variants rather than punctuation. In his “‘Rationale for Copy-Text’ Revised” *Studies in Bibliography* 31 (1978): 113, he claims that since Jonson generally “did

nothing in the press-corrections about the Folio departures from his ordinary spellings (and these were fairly numerous),” the practice of favoring specific Folio accidentals becomes arguable. Donovan, 27, agrees with his orthographic skepticism, but makes a clear distinction with regard to Jonson’s punctuation:

The surviving Jonsonian autograph manuscripts provide a good deal of information about Jonson’s spelling and punctuation habits. A comparison of these with the Folio’s departures from the spelling and punctuation of the Quartos suggests that while many—perhaps most—of the Folio’s changes in punctuation tend to move closer to the ... practice of the autographs, spelling changes tend to move further away from Jonson’s habits and seem principally determined by compositorial preference.

26. This is especially true for Shakespearean performers if Abigail Rokison’s assertion in *Shakespearean Verse Speaking: Text and Theatre Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 93, is correct, i.e., there is a possibility “that [Shakespeare] was influenced in his increasing use of short phrases, regular line-breaks and enjambment in passages in his later plays by the more colloquial rhythms of Jonson’s dramatic dialogue.”