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*Second series

IN ARDEN: EDITING SHAKESPEARE

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF
RICHARD PROUDFOOT



Edited by
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CONTRIBUTORS

A.R. Braunnüller is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is editing *Measure for Measure* for Arden 3.

John Russell Brown is Professor of Theatre at Middlesex University; he edited *The Merchant of Venice* for Arden 2.

Anthony B. Dawson is Professor of English at the University of British Columbia. He is editing *Timon of Athens* for Arden 3.

Juliet Dusinberre is a Fellow of Girton College, Cambridge, and is currently editing *As You Like It* for Arden 3.

R.A. Foakes, Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Los Angeles, edited *Henry VIII* and *The Comedy of Errors* for Arden 2 and, more recently, *King Lear* for Arden 3.

Suzanne Gossett, Professor of English at Loyola University Chicago, is currently completing an edition of *Pericles* for Arden 3 and is a general editor of Arden Early Modern Drama.

Barbara Hodgdon is Professor of English at the University of Michigan. She is editing *The Taming of the Shrew* for Arden 3.

E.A.J. Honigmann was Joseph Cowen Professor of English Literature at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne from 1970 to 1989. He is the editor of *King John* for Arden 2 and *Othello* for

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READING IN THE MOMENT:
THEATRE PRACTICE AS A GUIDE
TO TEXTUAL EDITING

Lynette Hunter and Peter Lichtenfels

We are interested in the extent to which theatre practice contributes to and interrelates with editorial practices. While our exploration is partly context-specific it also raises a number of general questions about editing, especially about the theory of copy-text.¹ The context for this essay is an edition of *Romeo and Juliet* for the Arden 3 series: one of us is a theatre director (Peter Lichtenfels) and one a bibliographer (Lynette Hunter). The bibliographic and textual context for the essay is bound to the editing history of *Romeo and Juliet* to which we have a specific remit to bring theatre practice.

The bibliographic context of the play materializes in the four editions published in quarto format before the Folio edition [F], with Quarto Four [Q4] possibly after. Quarto One [Q1] and Quarto Two [Q2] are quite different to each other, the former being roughly two-thirds the length of the latter. Q1 is plot-focused, based in romance, direct and with narrative point: for example, what does a young man do when feudal structures and late-medieval concepts of manliness disintegrate? Q2 adds material for actors to work on in terms of characterization, on rhetoric and figuration, on women, on the non-gentry characters, and is far more ambiguous about manliness, femininity and effeminateness, as well as more contradictory about the relation between capital and the law, the domestic, the civic and the state. Because we are interested in the social and political relations of

the early modern period and how they have laid grounds for current liberal nation state democracies, our edition is based on Q2 and edited to offer a historically contextualized material object. It is not an 'authentic text', but a reconstructed text close to what was available to a sixteenth or early seventeenth century actor or reader, yet readable in the twenty-first century, and which actors, directors, readers and critics may engage with, adapt, cut and analyse for contemporary purposes.

The reconstructed text is difficult to see as a distinct material object outside of its apparatus and commentary because it often 'looks like' an authentic text which tries to duplicate exactly what the late sixteenth century had in its hands. The line 'O if I walke, shall I not be distraught' (4.3.49) is apparently the same, but for typography, in the Q2 edition and in that of the Arden 3. Yet the Arden has been thoroughly dismantled and rebuilt by editorial work informed by bibliographic, critical and theatre practices. At the same time, the Arden 3, in common with most editorial practices, also produces a text that does not 'look like' Q2 when we, as editors, consider the significance of the text to be curtailed. It is not necessary to deploy theatre practice in reconstructing a text, but what we have found difficult to articulate are the bases on which we have allowed theatre practice to inform our decisions about whether to keep or change the Q2 text, given that there is so little previous scholarly work that has wholeheartedly used the theatre.

Critics tend not to address the problem of whether to take Q1 or Q2 (or Q3 or Q4?). Bibliographers disagree about the status of Q1 and Q2: they do not know which was first, or the extent of influence of one on the other (both issues preoccupy them). Editors tend to go for Q2 because it is more complex, hence more satisfying for literary critics if not necessarily for cultural studies. And directors tend to opt for Q2 because most printed editions use it, but often cut it so that it resembles Q1. Editions make significant changes to Q2, as with any editing, but there is a particularly high variation because there are so many early texts and because of the popularity of the play on the stage. Despite the frequent 'failure' of stage performances, the play is often

produced. Editions are at times influenced by a vague guideline called 'will it work in the theatre?', and take the theatre practice of cutting and adapting the text as a justification for a number of decisions. However, productions change texts in line with cultural pressures that are often economically and financially initiated, and to do with expected running time, rehearsal length, content and available actors. Hence this guideline is usually to do with cultural suppressions rather than engaged textual work. Just as frequently, a production will decide on a particular edition and simply reproduce, with cuts, many of the suggestions that appear in it.

The process of directing a play is completely different to the process of editing. The director is there to cohere the production company, and to structure the building blocks or the grammar of the production so that the actors can take responsibility for connecting, through the text, to themselves, to other actors, to the elements of the stage and to the audience. The director's primary task is to listen, and to ensure that all the elements in a production – from lighting to stage management to costumes – work on making it possible for the actor to continue to work out what is asked of them from moment to moment from the first rehearsal to the last performance. The actor will know the detail of their character better than anyone, including the director whose work is focused on finding and making possible the rhythms of their interaction of the production elements, not the rhythm of the one character. Unless there are specific elements such as swordfighting, blocking is not a director's function. As long as the situation is played, where the actors are on stage does not need to be predetermined and will be responsive to their training in breathing, movement and relaxation. The text is articulated through doing, not in advance. It has to speak to each audience and will change from one to another.

This is not to say that the insights of a director are impossible to bring to a critical edition, but precisely how to bring this experience to bear without replicating the reductiveness of the public stereotype of directing is difficult. This essay will focus on some elements of work that a director does with the actors, and

on specific strategies for directing different kinds of texts. Having made the decision to reconstruct a material text historically contextualized by the late sixteenth century, we used a device from theatre practice to make one of our most important decisions. After a bibliographic study of the first four Quartos and the Folio, we decided to take Q1 and Q2 and put them into production as if they were new plays. This made possible an experience rarely realized on the modern stage: productions that used a text with little editorial input, except as a physical object, after 1623. Many subsequent editorial actions were informed by this experience, as we moved into more conventional editorial strategy. While there is an enormous amount of commentary that illuminated the text in ways the initial productions had not anticipated, there were also many instances where the social, cultural and political differences, the historical differences between an earlier edition and what it needed from its relationship with the text and our needs, became apparent.

The usual means for understanding the changes in a text is the collation. The bibliographer for our edition constructed a collation between the production of Q1 and those of Q2, completing it at the same chronological time as those latter performances. We were struck by the inexorable power of working on collation, during which one follows the historical logic of particular decisions, and how this generates a physical musculature of acceptance. 'Yes' the bibliographer would say, 'I understand that change, it's appropriate for the social context', and the new word or punctuation would sediment itself into understanding. Despite all the training in historical materialism and the theories of subjectivity and discourse, all the previously hard-won theoretical battles and risky writing, collation, like evolutionary theory, can trap one into progressivist concepts of literature and language. Even its visual format implies linearity.³ When the bibliographer watched the final performances of Q2, she experienced considerable shock, as did many in the scholarly audience who were intensely familiar with the traditional editorial work.⁴ One described the experience of hearing the word 'hour' instead of 'honour' at 1.3.68 and 69 as an awkward

event, like recognizing a phantom limb after amputation, not getting the satisfaction of the expected completion to a body memory. Those who did not know the text apparently found the word acutely funny, going so suddenly from Juliet's momentous marriage 'hour' to the Nurse's sexual 'hour'.

At the same time, in retrospect, we would want to argue for the importance of collation as a strategy for foregrounding what is often implicit in editorial practice in general, that it precisely locates the historical specificity of decision-making. It makes us self-conscious about the ease with which audiences transform the past into what is appropriate for the present day, and it may be helpful to the actor who would like prompting to historical difference in order to work better on embodying current needs. But actors also work on language and text in ways less available to the literary critic: through their breath, their bodies, their physical interaction with other actors and the audience. The basis of this essay is to begin to try to articulate how some of those elements may guide editorial decisions, so that they may offer an alternative set of guidelines, not to replace traditional editing but to enhance it.

ELEMENTS OF THEATRE PRACTICE IN TEXTUAL EDITING

The danger with the account here is that on the whole it deals with the strengths rather than the weaknesses of theatre practice⁵ and with an artificial commitment not to cut the text. Q1 was workshopped with an undergraduate acting school yeargroup at Manchester Metropolitan University, and Q2 was produced with a mixed cast of undergraduates and graduates and semi-professionals in an MFA programme at the University of California, Davis.⁶ In addition to semantics, rhetoric and gesture, the companies worked on punctuation, grammar and syntax, prose and verse layout, old and modern words, irregularly syllabic lines, act and scene division, stage directions, and various structural features. Some of these elements were later workshopped with the Globe Theatre (London) Winter Players. The result of the California

productions, on which we will concentrate, was a reconstruction of Q2 that worked in theatre practice, and which included quite a bit that has been stripped away and forgotten by generations of editors, even if it also drew on and illuminated many of those decisions as well.

Take for example some of the structural features such as repetition which have worried modern editors. Nearly all of the major cruses of the Q2 text are concerned with repetition of material that generations of editors have explained away as having been 'lightly scored out' on the manuscript, an erasure carelessly ignored by the compositor. During the Friar's explanation to Juliet, Q2 includes the line 'Be borne to buriall in thy kindreds graue' (4.1.111). Presumably because of the word 'borne' being repeated in the fourth line, most editors excise this one. However, as Randall McLeod argues, the repetition could easily be part of the characterization of Friar Lawrence, who is elsewhere in the play quite wordy.⁷ We would rephrase this to suggest that the repetition gives the actor something to work on in terms of breath and voice. In production the actor playing this part built a performance that led to the audience recognizing a sense of someone tending to think as he speaks, emphasizing the improvisatory quality of the Friar's plans for Juliet and Romeo and the unpredictableness of their actions. Similarly Romeo's fly encomium (3.3.40–4)⁸ in Q2 has repetitions in lines 40 and 43 that prompt editors to rearrange the lines in various ways, often consulting Q1 or F. From the F text onward, which omits lines 43–4, editors have decided that these lines are problematic and partly redundant. However, the text constructs Romeo's part largely out of generic structures like the Petrarchan, or the Ovidian, or the neoplatonic, and here the 'fly' blazon, with a specific movement to disintegration in each one. An actor can work on the generic breakdown to find patterns of body movement, the repetition in this case providing the textual material to release the energy of disintegration.

Possibly the most substantial but least debated of the repetitions occurs at the end of the 'balcony' scene, 2.2.188–93, which concludes in Q2 with four lines before the penultimate

couplet, similar to the opening four lines of 2.3. The repetition is not much debated, except in terms of whether to give the lines to Romeo or to the Friar (usually to the latter), and which lines to take or whether to take an amalgam of the two sets. Even R. McLeod notes that the repetition would not have been present in 'any production involving Shakespeare'.⁹ McLeod argues for the inclusion of the lines anyway because they indicate the process of writing and revision the text has undergone, and their presence encourages the reader to read actively and think for themselves about the production of the text. It is an admirable position with which we would fully agree, but the fact is that the Q2 productions both used the repetition to good effect. The actors playing Romeo found the change of register from the preceding lyric into this Ovidian style required a complete change to their movement on stage. For the character of Romeo the lines indicate for the first time his recognition of the end of the night and the start of a day in a positive way. In contrast, the actor playing the Friar begins with this florid image that serves in practical terms as a way of thinking about waking up, and prompts him to think about whether the echo is a warning, a disturbance, or as an indication of how close the character is to Romeo. For the audience, the repetition implies an overlap of time that impels us from one scene to the other, constructing the illusion of haste that ominously emerges in 2.3.

The one repetition which the production could not handle positively occurs in 5.3 just before Romeo takes the poison. He is describing Juliet's body and begins a long passage of repetition with 'I will believe / Shall I believe' (5.3.102–3). In effect this causes little problem, and armed with the significant difference between 'will' and 'shall', the former indicating the simple future tense and the latter an sense of promise or command, the rephrasing can offer the actor more material for working on the growing desperation of the character. But the repetition of 'Depart again, come Iye thou in my arme. ... Thus with a kisse I die' (5.3.108) in various following lines, especially the concluding 'O true Apothecary: / Thy drugs are quicke. Thus with a kisse I die' (5.3.119–20), is difficult for an actor because death is an action

that cannot be repeated. Quite apart from any critical sensibilities that may be offended by exact repetition, the theatre performance was not able to deal with the more pressing question of how to die the second time. It is of course possible to do so if the actor plays for comedy, but there is enormous resistance to maintaining the comic line of the play this far.

At another extreme of textual variance, the stage productions looked at punctuation as a guide to breath, voice and movement. Sometimes the Q2 punctuation was exceptionally helpful in understanding the dynamics of a scene. For example, 1.2.37–8 reads '... and to them say, / My house and welcome, on their pleasure stay;' while the Cambridge, Arden 2 and Oxford editions all read '... and to them say, / My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.' The latter editions signify by line 38 'My house and my welcome are waiting for them', but the comma after 'welcome' in Q2 indicates a different signification, 'They are welcome to my house. Wait to find out whether they can come.' Either reading makes sense, but the comma after 'welcome' changes the dynamic between CapF and Peter, making it far more practical as a command given to a servant.

Rhythm is also controlled by punctuation, and theatre productions tend to follow the rhythm built into the text they are using. Of course some changes from Q2 can be helpful. For example, 1.2.45 reads 'Tut man, one fire burnes out, an others burning;' yet as early as Q3, which often changes only grammar, spelling and what it perceives as punctuation 'errors', the comma after 'out' is deleted. Q1, Q4 and F follow this marking, and most editions since. The opening to ambiguity and double-meaning that the deletion makes possible is productive and enabling to the actor. In contrast we could turn to 2.4.154–61 during which the Nurse is angrily berating Peter and Romeo, the former for not defending her and the latter in anticipation of his manipulation of Juliet. The Q2 text inserts a colon after 'knave', 'worde', 'selfe', 'say' and 'yong', constructing a long hypotactic sentence out of the entire speech. The construction is exceptional in this play, and the actors working on this part found the colons controlled their breathing and led to the production of speech that kept finding

dead ends or truncations, kept being frustrated from finding any completion. For the audience the speech began to signify the Nurse's confusion about her responsibility: she was supposed to set up a meeting for Juliet with Romeo, but after having seen the behaviour of the young men, here she was blustering around not quite being able to deliver the message, torn between the contradiction of being a servant and being a guardian. The Cambridge, Arden 2 and the Oxford editions substitute semicolons and full-stops for the colons, which for an actor will arrest the momentum of speaking. Yet there is a problem here because the colon is today not a frequently used punctuation mark, so it is difficult to decide how to render the pointing for a modern edition.

Other kinds of significance affected by punctuation can refer to the definition of a word. A contentious line by Juliet at 3.2.52 reads in Q2 'Briefe, sounds, determine my weale or wo.', a punctuation that in contrast to 1.2.45 is unchanged in Q3, and remains unchanged in Q4 and F. Most editions punctuate as 'Brief sounds determine my weale or wo.', implying that 'sounds' refers to the 'ay' and 'no' of the previous line, presumably because women of Juliet's social standing do not usually swear in Elizabethan plays (despite Queen Elizabeth I's reputation for doing so) and even more because editions have a hard time imagining Juliet as other than an innocent girl. But the punctuation in Q2 led the actors to read the line as signifying 'Be brief! zounds! determine my weal or woe.', in effect swearing at the Nurse for her lengthy prevarication which has tartrizingly suggested that Romeo may be in trouble, may even be dead. Juliet's line follows a speech (47–51) in which the text demonstrates a disarticulation of the self, a breakdown of sorts, which could easily leave the actor casting about for rhythm, stress and sense, making a swear word rather appropriate. 'Zounds' is a contraction of 'God's wounds', a word apparently so strong that the Folio editors twenty-odd years later would not set it.¹⁰ But the Nurse's reply 'I saw the wound' indicates that she did probably hear this word, which is also spelt as 'sounds' elsewhere in the text (3.1.101).

A third area in which theatre practice can refresh editorial practice is in the handling of lines that are not syllabically consistent. This is a highly debatable element in Shakespearean study, because of the complexity of metrical understanding both today and in the late sixteenth century, and our lack of knowledge about verse-speaking in the early modern theatre. But acting craft today usually includes voice training in verse-speaking, and several techniques emphasize breaking down the text into syllabic units¹¹ and further into morphemic and phonetic elements. With syllables, an actor working on *Romeo and Juliet* is faced with considerable regularity: most verse lines are ten syllables long. The composers working on Q2, Q3 and Q4 were clearly aware of the ten syllable convention, which anyway often marries up with the stresses in a line, and would change spelling to indicate whether or not to include say a spoken 'ed' ending by setting 'banished' instead of 'banisht'. But there are a number of instances where they do not regularize the syllable count, even though it would have been possible to do so. 1.2.14–15 reads in Q2 'Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she, / Shees the hopefulfull Lady of my earth;', which remains unchanged in Q3 but is altered by Q4 to read 'The earth. . . . / She is . . .', presumably to conform to the ten syllable line. The actors working on the Q2 production, however, found the nine syllables of each line a provoking instability, a temporary wavering from the almost pedantically regular rhyming couplets CapF uses in 'this scene. For the audience the temporary difference seems to locate some loss of control, some disturbance in the presentation of character that could generate all manner of signification. Many recent editions recognize the potential and retain Q2, although Arden 2 changes 'She's' to 'She is:'.

In contrast, at 3.2.77 Q2 reads 'Rauenous doufeathered rauen, woluishtrauening lamb', which nearly all editors change to some shortened form such as 'Dove-feather'd raven, wolvisch-ravening lamb' (Arden 2) or 'Dove-feathered raven, wolvisch-ravening lamb' (Cambridge, Oxford). Q3 does not change the line except to hyphenate 'wolvisch-ravening', and Q4, despite its concern to regularize 1.2.14–15, simply shifts the syntax to, 'Rauenous dove,

feathered raven, wolfish ravening lamb', neither being concerned to change the syllable count. Actors working on the speech commented that the line's excess pinpoints the turnaround in the scene, from the rhythm of the initial distress and breakdown to the character's controlled logic and sudden mature hold on the situation. The line is not so much irregular as anarchically lengthened in the face of convention. Many other syllabically irregular lines, in comparison with the surrounding verse, make markedly different demands on the actor, whose work contributes to moments of extreme stress in performance.

If these examples indicate places where an edition might want to reconsider prevailing attitudes to what 'works on stage', an example of the way conventional theatre practice interacts uncritically with editing is in the relatively unaware attitude that productions take to their chosen texts. Scene 1.5 is a case in point: most editions refer to it as a 'ball scene', and most productions reproduce this setting. However, our production, working on Q2 as if it were a new text and therefore without this kind of editorial guidance, reinforced what the text actually tells us, that it is a 'supper' and that the young men gatecrash it just as it is finishing, yet the codes of hospitality demand that they be welcomed and a dance is started. Recent research has elaborated on the gatecrashing, demonstrating that the young men are likely to have been recognized as part of a group of 'amorous maskers', given special licence to disrupt and be entertained.¹²

Another instance of a place where the theatre productions frequently cut because they cannot understand the rationale is during Juliet's 'false death' scene in 4.5. The lamentation of the characters is repetitive and can initially feel redundant. Editions rarely cut it presumably because each lamentation is unique and they rarely comment on it as difficult for stage production. On stage the fact that the words are unique is not necessarily helpful, especially when the verse tells us little about action and is formulaic about character. Staging the scene in our productions led to the actors foregrounding the *commedia dell'arte* elements so that the scene becomes a burlesque, hovering on the line of mocking death at the same time as sharpening the sense of grief.

The scene provoked exceptionally strong reactions in the audience, with some objecting to the overt mockery but most overwhelmed with a sense of shocked nervous laughter. The scene can also be played with effect as a Senecan lamentation. We had the opportunity to work with the Globe Winter Players on 4.5 and the actors played the lines as if they were pieces of formal epideictic funeral rhetoric, each actor facing the audience and focalizing the grief of their character. Even more suggestive was an experiment indicated by Q1's stage direction 'All at once cry out and writing their hands'. For this work the Globe actors spoke at the same time first using the text of Q1, which is not as balanced in terms of lines or character as Q2, and which cuts the Nurse's part completely. This rendition of choral lament was untidy and difficult to orchestrate. However, when the actors turned to the same work with the text of Q2, the effect was rhythmically powerful, with words and sounds echoing from speech to speech, indicating that the whole lamentation could work as music rather than text.

DISCUSSION ABOUT GUIDELINES

Recent editions pay lip service to traditional editorial guidelines, often saying that Q2 is their main text, or copy-text, but having few qualms about using Q1 where they prefer it and in fact ending up with a text more like Q4 with cuts. Editions of *Romeo and Juliet* rarely adhere to theories of copy-text, except very loosely, yet put nothing in their place. At the same time they accrete changes from other recent editions, or at times from earlier editions across the 400 years of Shakespeare edition history, to find a proof or source for a particular word or phrase that they like. This may be ameliorative with regard to recent editions, and arbitrary with regard to earlier editions. Either way, without explanation it is culturally passive, the result being a relativist text: one that does not provide a rationale for its choices, one that can give the reader, including the director and actor as readers, little guidance about how to engage with the text, and hence implicitly authoritative. For us this is a problem. Even if teachers

are there to guide readers through an edition, the whole point of editing for us is not to make a text conform to what 'most of its readers' think it ought to be, but to encourage and engage the reader in the enjoyment, if hard work, of reading differently. Theatre productions are just as likely to read an edition with little interaction because they simply do not know how to engage.

Copy-text theory¹³ was born of the 'New Bibliography' of the early twentieth century, and a recognition that the idea of a 'definitive text' based on an analysis of book production was self-defeating. The more we find out about the production and distribution of books, the more complex texts become, not less. The idea of copy-text attempted to anchor editorial decision in a set of common grounds that could at least be accepted as reasonable guidelines. But changes in reading practices mean that we can no longer distinguish between accidentals and substantives with the same confidence. Authorial authority is increasingly questionable, both in terms of theorizing about the status of the author as distinguished from the writer, and in terms of what historians have suggested about the probable interaction between writer, text and acting company. We have to have better reasons for using Q2 than copy-text theory, to provide more appropriate guidelines for reading the text today. As David Greetham has pointed out, neither psycholinguistic nor social textual critics address the problem of 'evidence',¹⁴ probably because both still depend solely on the concept of subjectivity. Yet even those writers who do address this problem and distinguish as for example Tanselle does between document and work,¹⁵ or as Shillingsburg between document, work and version,¹⁶ do not offer an alternative concept for deriving one's source text. Greetham's own suggestion that textual editing is closely connected to psychoanalysis, while exceptionally generative, does not move beyond the discursive resistances to textual power. And as generative as it has been, McGann's concept of textual engagement as 'invariably multiple' cannot respond to the situated knowledges in which we all live,¹⁷ for which interpretation is not only desire but need.

Producing the Q2 text taught us many things about the play that added valuable reasons to the decision to base our edition on

this earlier printing, and which illuminated many of the issues that the play's text throws up. We would like to retain nearly all the repetitions of Q2 because, for different reasons, they worked in theatre practice. Similarly the punctuation of Q2, although not entirely helpful, was largely enabling: it constructed helpful ambiguities, encouraged the actors to work on breath rather than syntax alone, and indicated significance layered under contemporary assumptions; and the lineation of Q2 suggested many points of change in rhythm and meaning that were closed off by more recent editions. In addition, the productions of Q2 text helped to understand the text's scenic development in different ways that would have been outside the remit of conventional editing. And these are only a few of the elements that theatre practice can contribute. Among others are a better understanding of silences and absences, an awareness of how the actions prompt the words rather than the words the actions, and the aural play with etymological connections. Each element that guided us to a particular decision became apparent in rehearsal and/or performance, but in effect the actor or director is working as a reader, so all these elements can also inform readings by people working on text outside the theatre.¹⁸

Is our use of Q2 a return to an 'authentic text'? No. The work of theatre practice in producing a draft edition was not an attempt to restore the text but to reconstruct it, and reconstruction occurs in the present. We want to produce a text that gives readers and theatre people access to choices which have been stripped away and forgotten by generations of editors, on the basis that

- (1) editions have removed or changed things because of the cultural needs of their historical position, which may not be appropriate to the readers or performers who will use this Arden 3 edition;
- (2) theatre workers usually rewrite texts, and that if they do so from an already reduced version their choices and interpretations will be unnecessarily limited;
- (3) readers need to be encouraged to do similar work on full texts but possibly for different reasons;

(4) traditional editorial practices can be evasive and implicitly authoritative, and editions sometimes justify cuts and changes because 'it wouldn't work on the stage' and theatre practitioners frequently go along with the changes, mainly because they don't have time to test them out.

There will however be many emendations and changes that are made because of an overlap: partly because of theatre practice and partly because of traditional editorial practice.

Is this a theatrical 'artefact'? It just happens that this production worked, but what basis does that give us for including or excluding or changing material? All editing has been the result of bibliographic or critical artefact. One needs good reasons, reasons that will be accepted as appropriate, for theatre practice as an editorial tool. Given that this is one of the first times a professional theatre director has been asked to co-edit a scholarly edition, we can only propose reasons that seem to be 'good' by analogy. There is a carefully prepared script that relates to bibliographic evidence. The work of actors and other theatre professionals on voice, movement and staging is taken account of in the script. And the critical reception and audience response has informed a number of decisions. However we also realize that one of the implications of bringing theatre practice to editing is to develop a new or different attitude to reading. Hence some 'good reasons' will only be testable after publication. Is this work a return to a 'definitive edition'? We were asked this question on a number of occasions and would firmly answer 'no'. Although there is a danger that copy-text could be replaced by copy-performance, or copy-production, just because these productions worked does not mean that we imagine that all subsequent productions should use all of Q2 as rendered in this edition. Theatre does not work that way, or at least engaged, responsive and responsible theatre does not. Our productions were editorial productions, produced for the specific reason of reconstructing the text. If another production gets the 'Depart again ...' (5.3.108ff) speech to work in terms of voice and movement, staging and reception and response, then that might be a reason

for including it. Of course if one thinks that the purpose of a production is to fix an interpretation, then there will be definitive editing from theatre practice, but that is not the purpose here. We would like to produce a printed text that offers the reader or theatre person more choice, and more possibility of engagement. If you like, the theatre director approaches textual editing as if the text were an element of the production process. Hence the main concern is to ensure the edition makes it possible for the actor to work on finding a rhythm from moment to moment each time the text is played.

These possibilities are the primary reasons for working on an alternative set of guidelines for editing which pays attention to theatre practice. Those familiar with the text will know how to engage, just as theatre people used to working on new texts will almost invariably reconstruct many elements in a script for their own purposes, so an edition like this will simply inform their decisions with detail of which they may not have been aware. But those unfamiliar with the text, which means most of its readers in the case of *Romeo and Juliet*, for although many know the story most encounter the text just once, are not used to the idea of choice. They do not get enough training in the craft of textual editing to understand how to use it; there is a problem in how to educate the reader into a more active engagement – with this play, an engagement with a text that nearly everyone thinks they already know. Readers not only have a right to know that some of the guidelines are different, but also that the difference in those guidelines highlights what is necessary to their engagement with the text. Indicating those differences is our most difficult task.

Producing the play for reasons of editing means working on exceptionally alien bits of the text and being committed to understandings that might be elusive, just as reading a critical edition is an act of reading committed to dealing with difference. Reading for difference takes resistant reading one stage further. Not only does one read in a 'writerly' way, resisting representation, but one also faces difference and negotiates the possibility that there are some things that will elude both understanding and

resistance. Understanding is the ability to 'stand under', comprehend the grounds and uphold meaning in a way related to another representation of history or politics. Resistant reading challenges representation with its ability to make visible grounds in someone else's work, and to constitute significance that is denied by understanding. Reconstructive readings are specific to a cultural materiality; they depend on the ability to negotiate, to net together new grounds between oneself, one's context and the text, that will delineate the materiality of difference. Reconstructive readings build the supportive processes to validate actions that respond to the needs of a particular situation: they work moment to moment. Only when the grounds for negotiation are in place and value is recognized can resistant readings occur, and resistant readings are those that make us self-conscious/aware of the limits of understanding.

We are not going to jump out of the social and cultural envelope we are in, and many recent and not-so-recent editorial decisions and insights inform our own choices. However, *Romeo and Juliet* is a late sixteenth century text and part of the value of studying or reading it is to face difference, to develop a respect for history and culturally specific practices, to be better aware of those today. One of the aims of our editing is to reconstruct a text that has acted as a primary source text for other editions over the last 400 years, because we believe an awareness of the relations between them is part of modern history. Textual editors could take on the labour of enabling reconstructive readings more readily. Our edition wants to offer a text that not only raises the political and social and cultural questions which we want to address (and our current readers to address), but also encourages them to engage with these issues in their particular situation. This is a process enabled not only by critic (literary or intellectual and cultural transmission) and bibliographer (physical transmission), but also by theatre person (transmission on stage). This essay is an attempt to articulate how that might begin to happen.

NOTES

- 1 Richard Proudfoot, our general editor, has been guiding us with exemplary attention to understanding of theatrical practice – although as they say any opinions voiced and any errors made are entirely our own responsibility.
- 2 See L. Hunter, 'Why was the editor of Q4 *Romeo and Juliet* so intelligent?' in M. Bill *et al* (eds), *Reconstructing the Book* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 9–21.
- 3 Computer hypertexts will help with this issue because they visualize in icons much of the combination of flexibility and cultural specificity built into editing apparatuses and commentary, and because contemporary readers are sophisticated in iconicity.
- 4 The productions were, in the later stages, watched by several Shakespearean scholars from the Universities of California system who were kind enough to offer their responses.
- 5 One weakness is the impossibility of all-male casting being particularly significant as an historical bridge, although the main productions in California did address gender issues in a different way.
- 6 The work on Q2 involved a rehearsal period of ten weeks, and two single-sex casts, one female and one male. The women's cast started off the performances, followed by the men's, and the final four days brought together the two casts in two mixed-cast performances each. The two casts did not rehearse together (except for the fight scenes, for safety reasons), nor did they watch each other's productions before going onstage in the final four days.
- 7 R. McLeavel, 'The Marriage of good and bad quartos', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 33 (1982), 425.
- 8 S.A. Tomarken, 'Plea encomia and other mock eulogues of animals', *Fifteenth-Century Studies* 11 (1985), 137.
- 9 R. McLeavel, 'The Marriage of good and bad quartos', as above, 427.
- 10 G. Taylor, 'Swordes Revisited: Theatrical, editorial, and literary expurgation', in G. Taylor and J. Lowett (eds), *Shakespeare Reshaped 1606–1623* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1993), 51–106.
- 11 For detail on this technique, see Patsy Rodenburg, *The Need for Words* (London: Methuen, 1993), and Cicely Berry, *The Actor and the Text* (London: Virgin, 1987).
- 12 M. Twyross and S. Carpenter, *Masks and Masking in Medieval England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).
- 13 W.W. Greg, 'The Rationale of Copy-Text', *Studies in Bibliography* 3 (1950), 19–36.
- 14 D.C. Greetham, 'Textual Forensics', *PMLA* 111.1 (January 1996), 32–51.
- 15 G.T. Tanselle, 'External Fact as an Editorial Problem', *Studies in Bibliography* 32 (1979), 1–47.

- 16 P.L. Shillingsburg, *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age* (University of Georgia Press, 1986), 47-50.
- 17 J.J. McCann, 'Literature, Meaning and the Discontinuity of Fact', *Modern Language Quarterly* 54 (1993), 167.
- 18 For an extended discussion of the analogous work carried out by both actors and readers, see W. Worthen, *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997), 21ff.

II

ANNOTATING SILENCE¹

John Russell Brown

In a book, Shakespeare's words say everything to a reader, arousing endless reactions, associations and visual images. But his texts can do more than that. In theatrical performance, with the help of actors and their many supporters, the plays take on a living presence and a spectator views a complex phenomenon, an imitation of the everyday world that transforms ordinary occurrences and sometimes transcends and intensifies ordinary experiences. The words are still there but as part of an event in and, indeed, might judge to be impossible or plain wrong. Words are eaten up in performance, and digested with much added, subtracted, accentuated or ignored; they give rise to a happening on stage that, on every occasion, is unique and, to some degree, surprising.

The contrast between a play read and a play experienced has increasingly occupied critics and scholars so that editors of a Shakespeare text will today take as much care with stage directions as with dialogue and, in annotation, will often indicate what particular performers have contributed or what performances seem to be required by the text. Stage histories, photographs, drawings and extensive quotations are used to place the reader as far as possible, in a similar relationship to the text as a member of an audience. Such a task is more easily contemplated than achieved since no-one can possibly annotate all that has, could, or should