*Adult Playing Companies 1593-1603*

Roslyn L. Knutson

* 1593 was a bad year for theatres due to the plague.
* Many companies went touring.
  + Due to this companies were separated from their playwrights.

**Business Models**

* There were 2 business models.
  + The 1st was an affiliation of patron and player organization.
    - The license to play was granted from the authority of the lord, but the business aspect left the players relying on themselves as a partnership of sharers.
  + The 2nd was an entrepreneurial model.
    - The business and playhouse building mixed. The players had a venue at their disposal, as well as a partner whose business coincided with the play.
* From 1593-1594 the main concern was to find a place in a troupe.
  + The plague and the rough business climate of 1593 had taken its toll.

**Patrons and Political Critics**

* In 1594 the Admiral’s Men and the Chamberlain’s Men were known as a duopoly.
* The success of the companies was large in part due to the patrons.
* In November 1594 the Privy Council wanted all places built for plays to be torn down.
* On February 19, 1598 the Privy Council licensed the Admiral’s Men and the Chamberlain’s Men, suppressing a 3rd company.
* The Master of Revels did have regular contact with adult playing companies, especially those who performed in court.
  + Edmond Tinley was the Master of Revels at that time.
    - He approved plays that caused problems for others, but not himself (i.e. Richard II).
* The lord mayor and the alderman had little control over what happened with plays. This left the Privy Council with complete control**.**

**Playing Venues**

* When playing resumed in 1594 there were 4 playhouse and at least 4 inns.
* The Rose housed the Admiral’s Men from June 15, 1594 into the summer of 1600.
  + Moved to The Fortune.
* Pembroke’s Men were at the Rose in October 1600.
* Worchester’s Men were at the Rose in 1602-1603.
  + After this the Rose folded.
* The Chamberlain’s Men were house out of the Theatre.
  + Disputed with Giles Allen about the Theatre.
  + The company moved to the Curtain, then the Globe.
* In the 1590’s 2 other theatres were built.
  + 1595- the Swan
  + 1595- the Boar’s Head
* Touring was still taking place during this time. Thanks to REED, we now know of 25 touring companies active in the 1590s.
* There were 4 major inns functioning.
  + the Bell, the Bull, the Bel Savage, and the Cross Keys.

**Repertory**

* Philip Henslowe’s recorded every play at the Rose in his diary from February 19, 1592 to November 5, 1597 .
* Henslowe accepted payments for playbooks from October 1597 to March 1603.
* This helped establish play runs, patterns, size, and the relationship between old and new plays at the time.
* Historians believe that companies somewhat worked together and in harmony.
  + They shared many of the same play poets.
* Shakespeare and Marlowe were seen as competition.
* Adults companies had similar repertory habits.

**Book Trade**

* From December 1593-December 1595 there was a push to get plays advertised due to the long hiatus because of the plague.
* Several title pages of plays offer outdated information.
* In May 1599-October 1601 there was a need for the patrons of the companies, the expansions of their business, and the playhouse to be advertised.
* The accurate title pages from 1600-1601 proves that the companies made the scripts available to stationers.
* Stationers used to be thought of as pirates that stole text and published unauthorized bad text.

**Audiences**

* The debate about audiences includes their class, gender, taste, and their loyalty to a particular playhouse.
  + Admiral’s Men used to be classified as having the older, less sophisticated crowd, while the Chamberlain’s Men pulled the younger, sophisticated crowd.
* The repertory of each company was fine tuned to their audience.
* The competition among companies could lead to better understanding of each audience.

*Adult Playing Companies 1603-1613*

Tom Rutter

* In 1603 Elizabeth died and James took the throne.
* It was also during this time that the patronage of the theatre changed.
  + This change affected adult companies and business structures.
* One of the most important element affecting early modern drama was not individual dramatist, but rather playing companies.

**Patronage**

* James classified actors as servants of royalty, instead of servants of nobility.
  + Historians believe this was a way for James to centralize control over the theatre.
* In July 1604 the Elizabethan Statue for the Punishment of Rogues and Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggers was revised and the patronage of the theatre was lost to everyone but royalty.
  + This was a state interference.
* There are historians who disagree with this. They believe that this royal patronage is something that the actors wanted.
* Reasons that actors sought patronage are
  + they could be called servants to royalty,
  + they had better benefits (i.e.- grants were given during financial hardships, like the winter),
  + they could charge more for their productions,
  + they were given more court performances,
* During James’ time performances in public theatre sought the interest of their patrons.
* There was also a creative rejuvenation with restaging of material.

**Business Structure**

* There are no records to help us better understand the day-to-day operations of the theatre between 1603-1613.
* The King’s Men, Anne’s Men, and Prince Henry’s Men were the only companies that stayed successful during the time period.
  + These companies were taking into patronage in 1603-04 and still survived in 1613.
* Two new companies gain charters: Servants of Prince Charles 1610 and Servants of Lady Elizabeth 1611.
* The stability of the adult companies was due in part to the demise of the children’s companies.
  + In 1608 the Children of the Queen’s Revels staged plays based on James’s Scottish mines and the conspiracy of Byron. This infuriated the king and he ordered the dissolution of the companies.
* The plague was a huge factor during this time, but the 3 successful companies toured to make ends meet.
  + The King’s Men really flourished.
* The wills of several actors showed that they had substantial earnings and were wealthy. Several from the King’s Men, for example, also listed themselves as Gentlemen.

**Repertories**

* The successful companies depended on a large repertoire.
  + Shakespeare’s company produced 17 new plays a year. There were 2 seasons, which means that a new play was released every 14 to 15 days.
* For the most part, the major 3 companies performed the same type of plays.
* The authors of plays were trying to write city comedies.
* The major companies competed with one another to gain the best audience.