

ously investing in primary sources that document marginalized and persecuted communities. Multiple kinds of recovery will require multiple and ongoing resources, of course. Stauffer has done his job, much more than his job, advocating passionately and knowledgeably for the archive he cares about as a scholar of nineteenth-century literature and textual materiality. But it's necessary, if we are to work together on these crucial stewardship decisions of our time, for non-librarians to have a better sense of the bigger picture in libraries — a picture that goes beyond their specific fields of expertise, and opens up all that love, hope, and devotion to unfamiliar objects.

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TOTARO, Rebecca. 2020. *The Plague in Print: Essential Elizabethan Sources, 1558–1603*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press. Pp. 300. ISBN 9780820704265, Hardback \$70.00. ISBN 9780271087283, Paper \$32.95.

A remarkable chapter of Maggie O'Farrell's recent novel *Hamnet* traces the progress of fleas transmitting the bubonic plague from Egypt to Warwickshire, with stops along the way in Alexandria, aboard ship outside Aleppo, then to Ragusa, Venice, Barcelona, Cadiz, Porto, La Rochelle, London, and finally Stratford-upon-Avon. O'Farrell also includes agonizing descriptions of Anne (she calls her Agnes) Shakespeare observing the effect of the flea bites, first staring down at the buboes swelling on the body of her daughter Judith, and then holding down her dying son Hamnet while realizing that "this pestilence is too great, too strong, too vicious [. . .]. It has wreathed and tightened its tendrils about her son, and is refusing to surrender him" (O'FARRELL 109).

Her experience, as Agnes knows, is common: "there are few in the town, or even in the country" who have not seen it before. The buboes "are what people most dread, what everyone hopes they will never find, on their own bodies or those of the people they love" (O'FARRELL 105). Perhaps it is our current experience of pandemic that has made us so sensitive to such descriptions, able to understand how present — and how incurable and terrifying — plague and diseases like smallpox were in the early modern period. Young Hamnet was different only because he had a famous father, but that did not protect him, as Queen Elizabeth had not been protected from contracting smallpox in 1562, a few years after her accession. As we have lost millions worldwide who have contracted the plague of Covid.

Rebecca Totaro has become an expert on the early modern literature generated by the best-known plague, as seen in the analyses in her monograph *Suffering in Paradise: The Bubonic Plague in English Literary Studies from More to Milton* (2005), as well as in the essay collection *Representing the Plague in Early Modern England*, co-edited with Ernest B. Gilman (2010). In the book under review, *The Plague in Print* — first published in 2010 by Duquesne University Press and reissued in paperback in 2020 by Penn State — she transcribes, modernizes, and edits the primary sources on which scholars and novelists alike depend as they study legal, theological, medical, and literary reactions to the recurrent epidemics of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century. Although the book's subtitle uses the dates of Elizabeth I's reign (1558–1603), the sources actually begin earlier. As Totaro categorizes them, they include Plague Remedies (an example from 1531), Plague Prayers (the Church of England's *A Form to be used in common prayer*, 1563), government Plague Orders (*Orders thought meet*, 1578), Plague Bills (*The Number of all those that hath died*, c. 1583), and two outstanding examples of Plague Literature, William Bullein's *A Dialogue both pleasant and petyful* (1564) and Thomas Dekker's *The Wonderful Year* (1603). Each piece is accompanied with editorial notes and, where they exist, notes from the original.

The best-known pieces, those by Bullein and Dekker, are also the most substantial. Usefully, Totaro places both in their context and contrasts them. The Bullein, she points out, unlike earlier works such as Boccaccio's, is entirely addressed to the threat of plague, and its author creates “a multilayered, lengthy dialogue to bring comfort to readers by offering them a sourcebook of medical and theological advice” (xii). Comfort is presumably supplied in this “literary entertainment” by its inclusion of “morality tales, travel accounts, humorous husband-wife banter, and satire” (xii). Although Bullein was a practicing physician who had published several plague remedies, nevertheless here he has a “decidedly Protestant, reforming agenda” (50). His conclusion is theological: the origin of plague was Adam's fall. In contrast, Dekker's plague pamphlet, written in the year of Queen Elizabeth's death and after many more outbreaks of plague, “never offers the reader a break from the grim realities. [. . .] It is a seventeenth century critique of earlier efforts, literary and civic, to offer healing in plague-time” (206).

It is interesting to see how sixteenth-century attitudes toward handling plague gradually approached those of our more scientific times, even before the actual source of plague — O'Farrell's traveling fleas — was recognized. *Orders thought meet*, first issued in 1578 but reissued in every subsequent outbreak, “support[s] a human to human contagion theory over both the

competing ‘miasma’ theory that air tainted by putrefaction was the primary cause of plague and over those theories that focus on the role of the astrological influences prominent in Moulton’s plague remedy” (179–80). In a fuller discussion of medical developments in her introduction to *Representing the Plague in Early Modern England*, Totaro elaborates on the way that “secular practices for plague control” developed: “sanitation replaced prayer, Galenic bodily regimens aimed at balance replaced religious fasting, quarantine replaced mandatory church attendance, and the orders were enforced by justices of the peace not clergy” (11). All of this is familiar as we live with hand sanitizer, quarantine, and government orders for shut-downs and masking.

Valuable as this new collection of sources is, readers of *Textual Cultures* may find themselves uncomfortable with the editorial treatment. Totaro’s announced goal is to make the included “early modern texts accessible without compromising their character” (xvii). To do so, “Spelling has been modernized, except in the case of archaic verb endings and obsolete words” (xvii). Unfortunately the resulting mixture demonstrates why Stanley Wells, in what has become the standard work on the subject of modernizing Shakespeare’s texts, sees no “virtue in conscious conservation of archaic and obsolete spellings” or in any attempt to “suggest a ‘kind of linguistic climate’ (which was, of course, modern to Elizabethans)” (4–5). The main form of “archaic verb ending” retained is exemplified, for instance, in Dekker’s *The Wonderful Year* in “smoakt” and “physickt” (214–15). More importantly, some failures to modernize may seriously confuse the unwary reader, as when (again from Dekker) “catch-polls” is not modernized to “catchpoles” (214), “with violence clime” is not corrected to “with violence climb” (216), the fish under the dead Queen’s barge “swom blind” rather than swam (218), and a man is tormented by being “bard up [. . .] in a vast silent Charnel-house” (223). Occasionally an early modern idiom is misunderstood, as when a man in pain is rubbed with “the juice of patience [. . .] So that he left wenching” rather than “wincing” or “winching”, the latter form actually listed in the glossary (240, 286). One particularly misleading moment comes when the black-letter “Iuy”, where the I looks like a J to modern eyes, is misread as “Jew” rather than “Ivy”, with the result that the text reads “Vintners hung out spick and span new Jew bushes [. . .] and their old rain-beaten lattices marcht under other colors” (222). The editorial note says that “Jew bushes were known for their purgative quality”, but the OED only recognizes the term starting in 1830. Ivy bush, instead, is a standard 16th- and 17th-century term for the “bush of ivy or a representation of it, placed outside a tavern as a sign that wine was sold there; often in

phrase **good wine needs no ivy-bush**” (OED). In fact, later in *The Wonderful Year* Dekker himself writes of the citizen who “spied a bush at the end of a pole, (the ancient badge of a Country Alehouse)” (243). Thus, whenever possible, readers are advised to check the original sources or EEBO before quoting.

The Plague in Print is a useful collection, the introductions and choice of examples excellent, and the three glossaries — a Medical and Herbal Glossary, a Glossary of Names, and a General Glossary — very helpful. Totaro, as a scholar of this critical, if unpleasant, aspect of early modern life, also cogently recognizes its current relevance. Writing in 2010 she reminds us that the sources she reprints, unfamiliar as are some of their genres, “give original voice to current thoughts about the relationship between disease and human populations, even as the world braces for the next pandemic” (xvi). Now, in the midst of that very pandemic, it is enlightening to see how similar our responses — medical, theological, governmental and imaginative — are to those from half a millennium ago.

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TURPIN, Zachary and Matt MILLER, eds. 2020. *Every Hour, Every Atom: A Collection of Walt Whitman's Early Notebooks & Fragments*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press. Pp. xxxiv + 373. ISBN 9781609387037, Paper \$25.00. ISBN 9781609387044, eBook, \$25.00.

The publishing of the rich fragmentary writings found in Whitman's notebooks and among his other papers began not long after the poet's death, with the poet's literary executor Richard Maurice Bucke's *Notes and Fragments* in 1899. Among others, Clifton Furness, the editors of the New York University Press collected writings of Whitman, Joel Myerson, and most recently the online *Walt Whitman Archive* in various ways followed suit, but even collectively have come far from a complete representation of what remains in the archives. Zachary Turpin and Matt Miller's *Every Hour*,