product not of divine authority but of human artifice ("poesis"), to his controversial *De Iure Apud Regni Scotos Dialogos*, which uses this logic as the basis for the removal of a monarch.

At times, Majumder’s prose is repetitive: the same points are made across the book, at times with the same supporting quotation or evidence. And if anything, *Tyranny and Usurpation* is too deferential to its forebears: pages are devoted to other critical voices and quotations are offered without commentary, which leaves the impression that the author is unquestioningly repeating the ideas of others rather than building on them. The book leans too often into summary. Yet the strengths of *Tyranny and Usurpation* are undeniable. While Shakespeare is a key figure, this book places his history plays in conversation with earlier, and less studied, dramatic works and argues effectively for tyranny and usurpation as all-pervading, if ever-shifting, topics of concern in both the political and the public spheres. It expands our understanding of early modern cultural production, including theater, beyond the confines of London, which, given that Mary was seen as a tyrant north of the border and a potential usurper in the south, makes a great deal of sense.

The result is not only the rich interpretation of *Richard III* that culminates the book, alongside other stage iterations of his story, but also deft analyses of political writing (both theoretical and dramatic) in England and Scotland that are scattered throughout. *Tyranny and Usurpation* succeeds in providing a convincing long view of the writing of sovereignty in Tudor England and Stuart Scotland. It would be interesting to see, should she wish to take it on, how Majumder might follow these ideas into the seventeenth century, given what we know about what happened then in terms of tyranny, resistance, and the usurpation of sovereign rule.

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From the child actor, to the young characters they played, to memories of childhood—early modern drama offers wide-ranging and fluid visions of the child-adult dichotomy. Indeed, social historians and literary scholars continue to debate how children were defined and perceived in early modern England. In this ambitious project, Charlotte Scott posits that Shakespeare’s representations of children and childhood are central to his canon; especially significant is how these representations both reflect and reimagine ideas of childhood. Scott intervenes in larger conversations about the child in early modern England, arguing that our modern distinctions between child and adult, the perception of the child as innocent, and the child as a powerful, emotional symbol
are far from anachronistic. Scott divides her readings by genre, considering children talking about the past in Shakespeare’s histories; children emerging as “independent of the shackles of history” in the tragedies; and “young people” attempting to relinquish their childlike dependency in order to become parents in the comedies. Scott ends her analysis with Shakespeare’s romances, arguing that these plays best “represent Shakespeare’s theatrical investment in the child” (30).

The second chapter of The Child in Shakespeare opens with a close reading of act 3, scene 2 of Richard III that sets the groundwork for Scott’s argument. In an incisive close reading, Scott argues that Richard’s exchange with the young princes underscores their innocence—and ignorance—through their inability to grasp the distance between language and meaning. Scott goes on to read child characters in Shakespeare’s canon as identifiable, more often than not, by being uninitiated into “the adult world of words where meaning becomes contingent, contextual, and conflicted” (37). Scott’s close readings of these kinds of power dynamics often open up new possibilities for understanding Shakespeare’s representations of childhood as well as the plays themselves. Her reading of the entangled relationship between child and slave in The Tempest, for example, illuminates the relationship between Shakespeare’s father figure in the late plays and the obedience and submission expected of children in the period.

In grappling with the fluidity of what constitutes a child, however, both in Shakespeare’s plays and more generally, Scott sometimes offers generalizations as truths. After a brief reading of Euripides’s argument that “all love children,” for example, Scott’s introduction opens with the question, “But what is it about children that make them such powerful registers of human emotion?” (1). This framing question does not allow for the possibility of indifference toward children, in Shakespeare’s plays or otherwise. Indeed, after an extended analysis of the child as a contested idea with porous, contextual boundaries in the early modern period, Scott claims that in early modern parents’ writing “the language of love is often in evidence,” and she extends this historical argument to her subsequent readings of children and childhood (10). In The Winter’s Tale, for example, Scott argues that childhood is associated with truth in Shakespeare “because it represents a period in human life that is distinct from the adult world, and for this it is both condemned and celebrated” (153). Throughout The Child in Shakespeare, Scott draws conclusions such as these based on her readings of the children and childhood of white, upper-class, heteronormative families, predominantly.

Although the child in Shakespeare is, more often than not, a white child with means, there are notable exceptions. In order to make an argument about certain children’s centrality in Shakespeare’s canon, Scott often glosses over equally important and distinct representations of marginalized children in Shakespeare’s plays. This is particularly evident in her reading of A Midsummer Night’s Dream, when Scott’s focus on Hermia’s and Helena’s loss of childhood innocence and initiation into adulthood morphs into a reading of Oberon, Titania, and the Indian boy as a vision of familial harmony and
cohesion by the play’s end. Scott describes Oberon’s final blessing as a celebration of the “unmarked ideal” child and family, arguing that the play attests “to a successful transition from child to adult through forms of social acceptance” (114–16). How would some of these arguments and generalizations change, however, if Scott were to have lingered on the Indian boy and his displacement a little longer, as Margo Hendricks, Shankar Raman, Imtiaz Habib, Bindu Malieckal, Abdulhamit Arvas, and other scholars have done?

That said, the ambitious and complex nature of Scott’s project does not allow for an extended analysis of each play. In building on Scott’s work, readers might consider The Child in Shakespeare alongside the aforementioned scholars and Kathryn Stockton, often taken up by queer theorists in Shakespeare studies, who emphasizes the dangers of presuming the innocence of any child—but certain children in particular. At its best, The Child in Shakespeare calls scholar-teachers working with Shakespeare to think deeply about how representations of unique and particular children and childhoods make meaning in Shakespeare’s plays and beyond—a call that is of utmost importance in this particular political moment.

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If I say this is an impressive book, I do so with a more nuanced understanding of what the adjective means. Much has been written in recent years about images of printing in Shakespeare’s plays, the canonical example being The Winter’s Tale: Florizel’s mother “did print your royal father off” and baby Perdita is the “copy” of her father, “although the ‘print be little.’” But Harry Newman shows that this trope has a long prehistory, as printing, or impressing, relates to coining and sealing as well as book printing. In each chapter he studies one of these forms of impressing in a specific play and marries it to another subject: character in Coriolanus, poetics in A Midsummer Night’s Dream, counterfeits and value in Measure for Measure, and authorship in The Winter’s Tale. Cumulatively, these topics lead to Newman’s central premise: that Shakespeare’s impressive reputation across the centuries is founded on our impressions of his language of impressing.

My short summary inevitably underplays the sophisticated interweaving of material culture (the history of sealing and coining), rhetorical theory (“feigning” poetry, from the Latin fingere, to “form” or “mould”), book history (The Winter’s Tale as a dramatized