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<Genre>ARTICLE

<AT>**Nobodies and Somebodies: Embodying Precarity on the Early Modern English Stage**

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<T>Stock characters named "Nobody" and "Somebody" were mainstays of British performance culture in the mid- to late eighteenth century. Playbills and newspaper advertisements show that these roles were popular with audiences in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh, as well as on the regional stages.[1] Men and women alike took on these personae to deliver songs, prologues, and epilogues, often as part of benefit performances where they chose their most crowd-pleasing roles to maximize ticket sales. Some of the pieces spoken by Nobody and Somebody were popular enough to make their way into print, excerpted in novels and miscellanies.[2] The duo appeared in George Alexander Stevens's wildly popular *Lecture on Heads* (1764), which traveled across the Atlantic to stages in Charleston, Philadelphia, and New York, continuing to be performed in the early Republic until the nineteenth century.[3] Offstage, the figures were staples of visual culture; as Terry Robinson has shown, audience awareness of these figures from Romantic-era political cartoons formed an important backdrop for Mary Robinson's theatrical afterpiece *Nobody* (1794).[4]

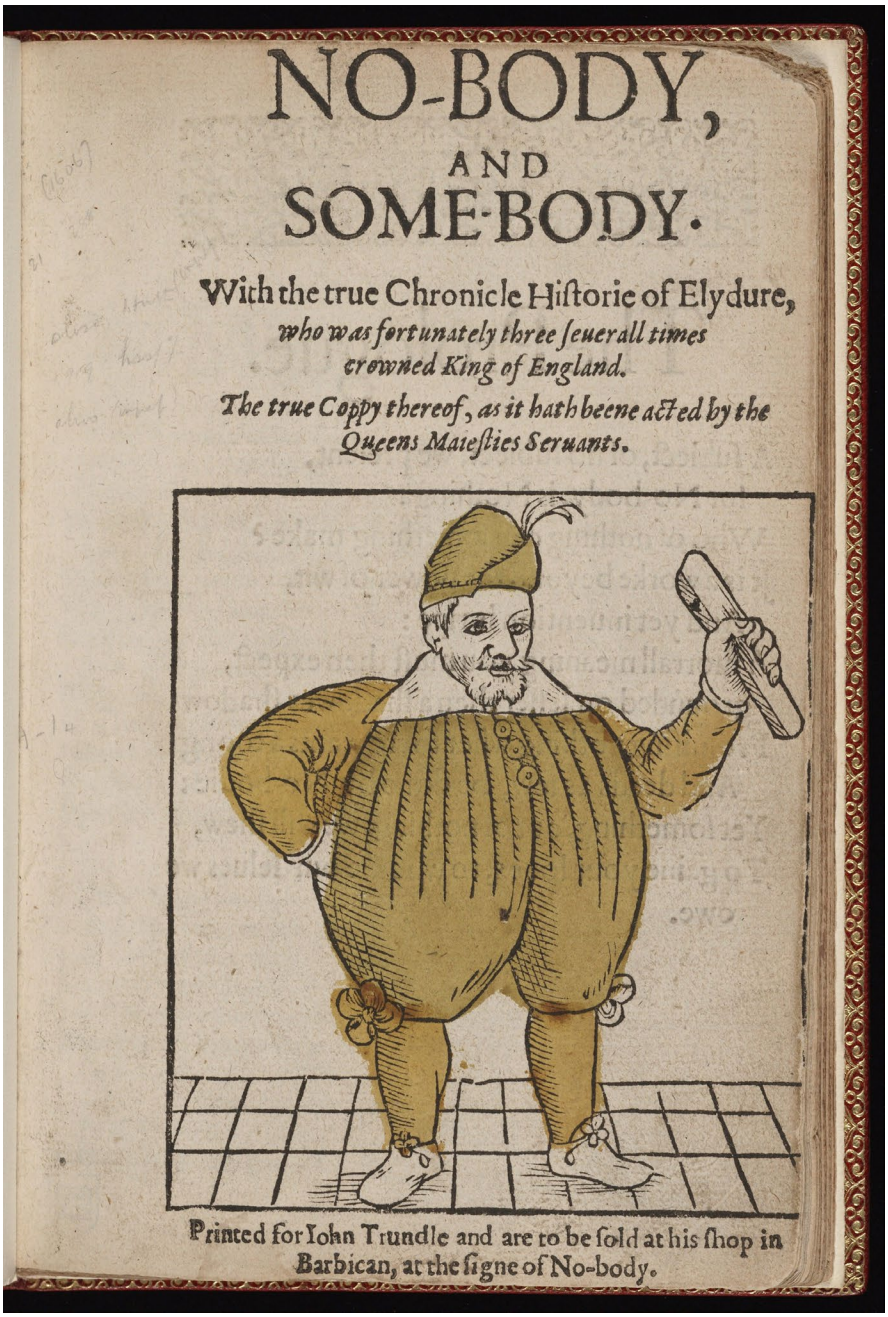
How did these characters become so ubiquitous in British culture? Robinson, following Catherine Gallagher, links them to a centuries-old transnational tradition of linguistic play.[5] In what Joseph R. Jones calls "the oldest joke in the world"—dating at least to the Polyphemus

episode in Homer's *Odyssey*—"one party uses the pronoun *nobody*, and a second party takes the term to be somebody's proper name."[6] Medieval European writers created mock sermons and saints' lives revolving around the miraculous Nemo (Latin for "nobody"), whose deeds play on Bible verses: Nobody has seen God; Nobody gives alms to the poor. In 1507, a German broadside titled *Niemand* introduced a new variation on the joke. In Jörg Schan's poem and accompanying image, Nobody is a domestic servant who receives blame every time something goes wrong in the household: Who broke the plates? Nobody. This text, along with German humanist Ulrich von Hutten's poems *Nemo* (1510) and *Nemo II* (1518), laid the foundation for Nobody's development as a popular figure in Protestant pamphlets during the Reformation.[7] Related figures appeared in performance, as well. In peninsular drama of the sixteenth century, for example, poor characters named Nadie and Ninguem—roughly equivalent to "Nobody" or "No One"—exchange repartee with rich counterparts named Mundo and Todo o Mundo (Everybody).[8]

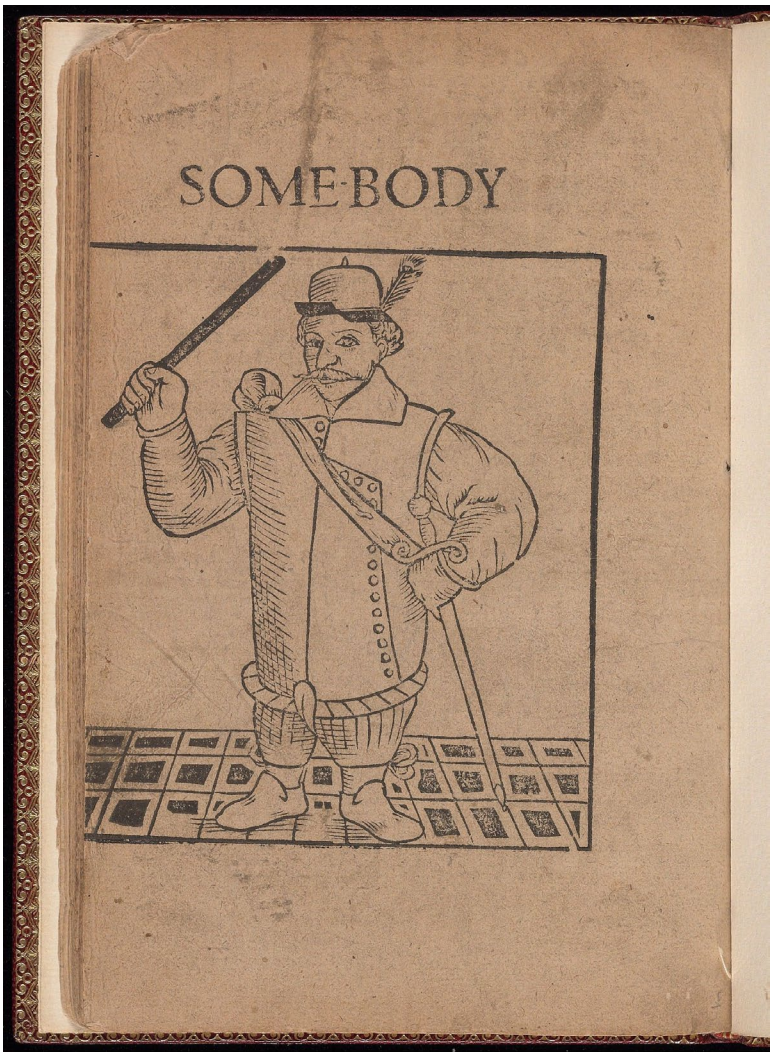
When the full-length play *Nobody and Somebody* debuted in London sometime between 1592 and 1606, it brought together all of these threads, fusing the saintly Nemo with the scapegoat Niemand, and exploiting the dramatic potential of dialogue between a marginalized No One and his more privileged foil.[9] It also added a layer of humor available only in the English language. As the title page of the 1606 printed play reveals, Nobody has no torso; instead, his arms protrude from the pockets of his comedically large pants (Fig. 1). His counterpart, Somebody, appears in the back matter as a man with an exaggeratedly long torso and short legs (Fig. 2). These images are not only prompts to the imagination but, in fact, seem to represent typical costuming for the roles at the time.[10] On the English stage, then, the stock figures of Nobody and Somebody took on new energy as bodied actors attempted to embody a

state of disembodiment and to translate abstract jokes about negation into physical action.[11]

This new theatrical energy was vital to the characters' persistence and to their evolving significance over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Yet scholars who have identified the through line between the Jacobean Nobody and Somebody and their Georgian and Romantic-era counterparts have not yet accounted for the theatrical life of these characters during the eighteenth century. Instead, they have pointed to evidence of the figures' circulation in literary, print, and material culture, including appearances in the periodical journalism of Henry Fielding, in the art of William Hogarth, in the fiction of Frances Burney, and on a range of consumer goods.[12] Here, I aim to fill in our understanding of Nobody and Somebody as theatrical staples across the eighteenth century. Doing so provides important context for the availability of these figures to writers and artists of the time; it also helps to bridge the gap between their well-documented presence on the Jacobean stage and the apparent explosion in their popularity in the second half of the eighteenth century.



<CAP>**Figure 1.** Woodcut of Nobody on the title page of *No-Body, and Some-Body. With the True Chronicle Historie of Elydure, Who Was Fortunately Three Severall Times Crowned King of England* (London, [1606]). *Photo:* Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.



<CAP>**Figure 2.** Woodcut of Somebody on verso of the final leaf of *No-Body, and Some-Body. With the True Chronicle Historie of Elydure, Who Was Fortunately Three Severall Times Crowned King of England* (London, [1606]), I3v. *Photo:* Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Figure 3. Tin-glazed earthenware figures of Nobody, manufactured ca. 1680–85. *Photo:* © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

As I show, the 1606 play *Nobody and Somebody* established key associations that bound the title characters to questions of economic justice and to critiques of credit culture that held continued and evolving significance as England embraced financial capitalism. Building on the pan-European tradition of social critique from which they arose, the English figures' humorous

interrogation of embodiment allowed them to encode specific concerns about the social costs of the credit economy. Already at the turn of the seventeenth century, the play registers a fear that credit-based markets will abstract identity and undermine face-to-face relationships in ways that could make it easier for bad actors to obscure their role in unjust systems. As English financial markets became increasingly complex and increasingly entrenched, Nobody and Somebody likewise adapted to offer evolving critiques of the capitalist institutions alongside which they developed.[13] This continued to be the case even as, over the course of the eighteenth century, they came to signify the past as such, eliciting responses ranging from nostalgia to scorn toward pre- and protocapitalist economic and social structures. This essay highlights specific reemergences of Nobody and Somebody in the 1730s, 1740s, and 1750s, placing a series of seemingly disconnected performances and meanings within the context of a continuous yet dynamic cultural phenomenon spanning at least two centuries of British history.

The Nobody and Somebody phenomenon is not only interesting in its own right and in the context of early modern cultural studies; it also reveals the power of the stage—a site that privileges embodiment, sensory experience, and felt presence—to critique an economic system that insistently abstracts human life. Nobody represents an early modern conceptualization of precarity—as later formulated by Lauren Berlant, the interplay between the universal, existential vulnerability of being human and the specific instabilities and cruelties of life under capitalism.[14] Writing in conversation with Berlant and in the context of social movements like Occupy Wall Street, the Arab Spring, and Black Lives Matter, Judith Butler further argues that embodied acts of performance are vital ways of making economic precarity visible:

> <EXT>[W]hen bodies assemble on the street, in the square, or in other forms of public space . . . they are exercising a plural and performative right to appear, one

> that asserts and instates the body in the midst of the political field, and which, in its expressive and signifying function, delivers a bodily demand for a more livable set of economic, social, and political conditions.[15]

<T>Butler differentiates this kind of bodily performativity from the linguistic performativity of speech acts, insisting that assembled bodies signify prior to and independent of their utterances. Performance theory thus offers a useful lens for understanding how embodiment operates in the street theatre of political protest; at the same time, as the Nobody and Somebody phenomenon reveals, the stage itself has a different potential for engaging with and critiquing precarity. The 1606 *Nobody and Somebody* did arise in the context of popular uprisings like the Midland Revolt, and it alludes directly to the food shortages, price gouging, and supply hoarding that resulted from the enclosure of public lands and conversion of grain fields into privately owned pasture.[16] Yet a play works differently from an enclosure riot. Nobody and Somebody are figures whose full meaning depends on the relationship between scripted wordplay and physical presence, which is to say, the interplay between bodily and linguistic performativity.

Butler might as well be describing the figure of Nobody when they talk about public assembly as a way that bodies can wordlessly refuse to "become the glaring absence that structures your public life." Likewise, they might be describing the more privileged and exploitive Somebody when they talk about precaritization as "a form of power without a subject, which is to say that there is no one center that propels its direction and destruction."[17] If Somebody realizes the fantasy that this power center could be named and held responsible, Nobody likewise represents the possibility that bare life rendered precarious and invisible could take up space in the world.[18] As a duo, they expose the ways capitalism disempowers individuals, then obscures where that power has been reallocated. Equally important, their

identities are relational and mutually defined; the centrality of puns to their meaning suggests, on a linguistic level, the social and political interdependency that Butler urges us to recognize in order to resist our ongoing and collective precaritization.[19]

<H1>I

<T>In order to track the ways Nobody and Somebody adapted to the development and entrenchment of financial capitalism in eighteenth-century England, we must first understand how the 1606 play that introduced English audiences to these figures firmly established their associations with credit culture and problems of economic justice. The title characters of *Nobody and Somebody* are in fact the protagonists of its underplot. The main action, adapted from Monmouth and Holinshed, revolves around the mythical ancient British King Elidure, who repeatedly ascends and then loses or abdicates the throne.[20] Like the contemporaneous *King Lear*—with which it shares a source and a setting—this history plot highlights the contingency and fragility of sovereignty. Meanwhile, in alternating scenes that evoke a mix between a morality play and an estates satire, Nobody (like his precursor Niemand) unwillingly takes the blame for crimes committed by Somebody: fathering illegitimate children, cheating at dice, raising rents, and hoarding grain. As he travels from country to city to court attempting to clear his name, Nobody performs good deeds and releases the poor from their debts (much like the saintly Nemo). The two plots, which run independently of one another for most of the play, finally collide when Nobody and Somebody appear before the king to settle their grievances.[21]

Despite their striking tonal differences, the historic and comedic plots share a set of thematic concerns, as identified by Anston Bosman: identity and negation, embodiment and disembodiment, and possession and dispossession.[22] The conceptual exchange between these

distinct halves of the play reflects the economic and political process Elizabeth Maddock Dillon terms the "'virtualization' of the commons." Dillon identifies the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a period that simultaneously witnessed empowerment of a political "commons" through revolutions and movements for popular sovereignty and the enclosure of public lands formerly held in common. As these processes unfolded in tandem, "the collectivity of the commons that was once embedded in material and economic practices [was] increasingly understood as an abstraction—as a virtual body that appear[ed] less in material than figurative terms."[23] Dillon's argument helps to make sense of the way *Nobody and Somebody* oscillates between a history play about the contingency and vulnerability of sovereignty and an estates satire highlighting the precarity of ordinary people's lives at a time of resource scarcity and consolidation. The instability of identity serves as a common thread connecting the decline of feudal social and political structures dramatized in the high plot with the rise of protocapitalist, credit-based markets on display in the low plot—all of which comes together in the body of a person imagined as the materialization of immateriality, virtualization made flesh.

Although nominally set in ancient Britain, the action of *Nobody and Somebody* is firmly grounded in the material realities of English society at the turn of the seventeenth century. Lands previously used for grain were being enclosed and converted to pasture, threatening the grain supply on which England's rapidly expanding population depended for subsistence. As supply contracted, prices rose, as the law of supply and demand would dictate. This predictable market response was also a result of deliberate racketeering. As Luke Wilson points out, Nobody functions as "a symbolic substitute for the invisible agency associated with the inscrutable forces of the market," a kind of precursor to Adam Smith's invisible hand.[24] Hence, as the Clown wryly observes, "theres not an orphants portion lost out of the Chamber, but Nobody has got it, no

Corne transported without warrant, but Nobody has donne it, no goods stolne but by Nobody, no extortion without Nobody."[25] Even as he takes the blame for grain hoarding and price gouging, however, Nobody sells grain to the poor at below-market prices—an actual tactic landowners used to prevent unrest during periods of dearth, and a striking example of how markets can obscure agency and disguise exploitation as benevolence.[26] Nobody, who helps the most vulnerable even as the powerful heap calumnies on his head, stands in for the failure of England's early capitalist economy to distribute resources equitably, as well as its tendency to obfuscate the individuals and actions behind market effects. *Nobody and Somebody* figures the ethical crisis that occurs when a system of embodied, face-to-face transactions is replaced by a large, complex credit network that obscures the agency and identities of its members.

Credit is a system of symbolic exchange that produces fictional substitutes for human agents and then attempts to imagine these substitutes as real, coherent individuals—much like the linguistic system that underpins the jokes around Nobody and Somebody's names. In his study of credit culture in early modern England, Craig Muldrew explores how the two meanings of "credit"—social trustworthiness and fiscal reliability—were profoundly intertwined throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Decisions about whether to lend money to another person often depended on communal judgments about that person's ethical and moral standing: "Reputation, in the form of language, was produced and communicated for profit, and the potential effect of this production was continually evaluated by householders as they sought publicly to define their own reliable and virtuous personalities, and to be reassured about those of others with whom they did business."[27] Such judgments were subject to corruption in the form of gossip, rumor, and slander, which could have devastating effects on the financial standing not only of individuals but of entire households.[28] Maintaining one's reputation in the face of these

forces was only made more urgent as currency shortages pushed daily economic activity away from cash to credit.[29]

Nobody and Somebody insistently problematizes the construction of reputation and its economic implications for individuals. Although he spends much of his time freeing others from debt, Nobody struggles to establish and maintain good social and financial credit for himself, repeatedly confronting the vulnerability of his identity to gossip, rumor, and slander. Indeed, the first time the audience hears of Nobody is through Somebody, whose opening lines reflect Nobody's growing reputation: "But is it true the fame of *Nobody*, / For vertue, almes-deedes, and for charitie, / Is so renownd and famous in the Country?" Somebody's servant confirms that Nobody is "talkt of farre and neere" for his good deeds and hospitality (B3v). Jealous of Nobody's renown, Somebody formulates a plan to "bring his name in publick scandall" as his servant puts it (B4r). Somebody directs his servant to "sowe seditious slaunders through the Land" by blaming Nobody for the crimes that Somebody will commit—hoarding commodities, starving the poor, and sowing discord between friends and neighbors (B4v). Somebody's polyptotonic repetition of "fame" and "famous," along with the alliterative phrase "sowe seditious slaunders," aurally reinforces the centrality of reputation to the comedic plot.

Nobody's opening lines, like Somebody's, reflect his preoccupation with public opinion. As Somebody eavesdrops, he asks the Clown for an update on his reputation: "Come on myne owne seruaunt, some newes, some newes, what report haue I in the country? how am I talkt on in the Citty, and what fame beare I in the Court?" (B4v). The Clown replies that Nobody has "an ill name," and Nobody, discerning that Somebody is to blame, laments: "Fie, fie, how I am slaunderd through the world" (C1r). Nobody's characterization of himself as "slaunderd" recalls Somebody's promise to ruin his good name and connects Nobody's declining reputation,

conceptually if not causally, to the villainous plan outlined in the previous scene. Eventually, Nobody realizes that the damage to his good name in the countryside is too great to remain there: "I will endure no longer in this Clymate / It is so full of slaunders" (C2r–C2v). This sentiment is echoed throughout the play, culminating in Nobody's final defense of himself at court, in which he makes the winning argument that "slanders are no proofes" (H4v). Nobody's obsession with slander is central to the play's larger commentary on the construction of identity within the emergent credit economy.

The climatic confrontation between Nobody and Somebody is also the culmination of the play's interest in credit economics. Nobody is found to be carrying "bonds forfeit by poore men, / Which he releast out of the vsurers hands, / And canceld. Leases likewise forfeited, / *B*y him repurchast" (I2r). Within the action of the play, the papers are evidence of charitable deeds reminiscent of those undertaken by Nobody's folk predecessor, Nemo. Outside the fictional frame, however, Nobody's assumption of others' debts takes on additional significance as an act of resistance, critique, and demystification. In that sense, it anticipates recent performances that have used debt forgiveness to highlight the cognitive dissonance surrounding capitalist models of subjectivity. For instance, between 2012 and 2014, the organization Strike Debt purchased consumer debt for pennies on the dollar from Wall Street hedge funds—an ordinary transaction between financial institutions, but one typically hidden from and unavailable to individuals—and then refusing to collect on it. This "Rolling Jubilee" campaign[30] was designed to educate the public about market practices like debt securitization and collateralization—the bundling of many individuals' unpaid bills or loans and the division and recombination of these bundles as novel instruments that can be rated, bought, and sold based on the degree of overall risk they represent. By purchasing these agglomerations and refusing to collect on the portions of

individual loans represented therein, Strike Debt did not wipe out the entirety of any particular person's financial obligations or even the entirety of a specific loan. Instead, these transactions demonstrated the incommensurability of depersonalized market operations with our collective understanding of consumer debt as an individual moral responsibility. As Christian Riley Nagler puts it, the Rolling Jubilee forced a confrontation between the "two faces of contractuality": on the one hand, "*the transaction* (with its implication of transferability and anonymity)"; and on the other, "*the promise* (with its implication of stable identity, of internal sincerity)."[31] In buying up others' debts, Nobody highlights the same tension between transferable credit instruments and the judgments of individual morality that supposedly subtend them. If someone without a stable identity of their own (Nobody) can purchase and erase these debts, then their value is not actually premised on the predictable future behavior of a specific individual with a known reputation.

The central verbal conceit of *Nobody and Somebody* emphasizes the degree to which identity, reputation, and credit are relational rather than intrinsic: Nobody is Nobody by virtue of not being Somebody. Their dynamic epitomizes the credit system's attempt to stabilize this fundamentally unstable relationality artificially, to assign a fiction of identity to a dislocated and unlocatable agency, and to place blame for collective, systemic injustices on individuals. Presaging the economic pedagogy of Strike Debt, *Nobody and Somebody* highlights what Nagler calls the "constructed asymmetry between the supposed stable identity of the promiser/debtor and the conventionalized hyperfluidity of the finance world/creditor," a duo who nonetheless exist in a state of "strange interdependence" and "relentless and unrecognized mirroring."[32] Four hundred years later, performer-activists continue to draw attention to capitalism's dependence on portable, scalable financial instruments that transform tangles of linguistic and social relations

into supposedly stable identities imagined to operate at the individual level. Markets mystify Somebody's actions and make them Nobody's fault—a displacement of risk and blame away from the center of power that renders Nobody's life increasingly precarious. *Nobody and Somebody* reflects the special ability of stage performance to theorize the complex ontologies of capitalism and to warn audiences of the system's vulnerability to corruption and exploitation. This performative context and the economic protest it enabled remained strongly associated with the figures even as they continued to change in response to new cultural, political, and economic circumstances in later centuries.

<H1>II

<T>After the publication of the 1606 play, it would be more than a century before Nobody and Somebody would reappear in the theatrical record. That is not to say, however, that they disappeared from English culture. Evidence suggests that they remained visible and relevant figures of economic critique and that they brought this legacy onstage with them in Henry Fielding's *The Author's Farce and the Pleasures of the Town* (1730).

The English economy of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century was vulnerable to the corruptions of reputation and the predations of greedy lenders highlighted in *Nobody and Somebody* because it was increasingly based on credit. Yet the financial instruments used in these transactions were still fairly straightforward by today's standards. As Carl Wennerlind observes:

> <EXT>The vast majority of early credit contracts were based on personal agreements, many of which were struck verbally in face-to-face interactions. Even when credit obligations were more formally recorded on bonds, notes, and

> pledges, they remained with the creditors until the due date. The short terms of most credit agreements, private and public, limited the capacity of credit to circulate.[33]

<T>The Nobody of 1606 represents the dangers of a nascent financial system that would only become more abstract and depersonalized as the century wore on. Newly developed instruments like bills of exchange, company stocks and shares, and government-backed annuities gradually enabled credit to circulate more widely and over a longer duration by severing debt from its source. Early versions of today's forward contracts allowed experienced risk-takers to bet on the future success or failure of a company's stocks, applying the principle of commodity futures trading to the value of financial instruments rather than that of underlying assets. Even novice investors of modest means could buy a partial share in a lottery ticket or annuity, fronting a fraction of the entry fee in exchange for a portion of the potential returns. Such abstractions increasingly supported commerce and trade, cultural institutions, and the state itself.[34]

What happened to Nobody and Somebody over the course of the seventeenth century? Without a reliable record of performances in Caroline or Restoration London, we cannot know whether they continued to appear on the English stage. It is clear that they lived on in German and Dutch dramatic contexts and continued to circulate in English print, visual, and material culture.[35] The characters made regular appearances in pamphlets and newspapers, some of which included illustrations evoking those from the 1606 play.[36] Ceramic figurines of Nobody dated to the late seventeenth century are housed in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, an indication of the ongoing popularity of his iconography (Fig. 3).

After 1705, when newspapers began printing regular daily advertisements for the evening's theatrical offerings, it begins to be possible to reconstruct a performance calendar.[37] In

the spring of 1709, Nobody and Somebody reappear in the English theatrical record for the first time in more than a century—now, as the speakers of prologues and epilogues at several benefit performances. On 26 March, the *Daily Courant* ran an advertisement for that evening's offering of Jonson's *The Alchymist* at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, a benefit for Colley Cibber, "With a new Epilogue spoken by Mr. Cibber representing the Figure of Nobody."[38] This epilogue does not survive in the 1709 reprint of the play and was likely occasional, designed perhaps to thank audience members for supporting Cibber. The piece was enough of a hit at its first performance to encourage the company to try another similar performance a week and a half later, once again as a vehicle for the evening's beneficiary, Will Penkethman. This time, Nobody's counterpart appeared alongside him, transforming the monologue into a dialogue "spoken by Mr. Penkethman and Jubilee Dicky [i.e., actor Harry Norris], Representing the Figures of Somebody and Nobody." Evidence from the periodical press suggests the popularity of these pieces. In the fall of 1709, for instance, the scandal sheet the *Female Tatler* alluded to Norris's recent turn as Nobody within a broader satire on the actors at Drury Lane.[39] Without any surviving text of these epilogues, however, their traces offer only hints at what meanings the early eighteenth-century manifestations of these figures might have held for audiences.[40]

The next cluster of onstage appearances by Nobody and Somebody occurs in Fielding's *The Author's Farce*, which debuted on 30 March 1730 at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket.[41] It was a smash hit, enjoying more than forty performances that spring and summer and establishing Fielding as a major name in the London theatre.[42] In turning to the Little Haymarket, he chose a venue that embraced formal innovation, high-concept experimentation, and topical satire.[43] Accordingly, *The Author's Farce* is both an embodiment and a takedown of trends in the London culture industries at the time. Through the misadventures of a writer named

Luckless—generally taken as a stand-in for Fielding himself—the play mocks the conservatism of the theatrical establishment, the greed of hack printers, and the tasteless pleasures of audiences, painting an unflattering picture of a literary and theatrical market that revolves around profit value rather than cultural value.[44]

The action of *The Author's Farce* centers on Luckless's efforts to sell a playscript he has written so that he can discharge his debts to his landlady, Mrs. Moneywood, and make a bid for her daughter Harriot's hand. In this period, playwrights were essentially freelancers who offered individual scripts to the competing theatres in hopes of earning income from the profits of the third-night author's benefit. Mrs. Moneywood opens the first act by refusing to accept Luckless's rent on credit, saying "I would no more depend on a Benefit-Night of an un-acted Play, than I wou'd on a Benefit-Ticket in an un-drawn Lottery."[45] The exchange immediately foregrounds the interdependence of economic and social credit: Luckless cannot transact business on the promise of future earnings until he develops a reputation for writing plays that can make it to a third performance.

Like Fielding, whose own previous dramatic attempts had been rejected by the powerful management of the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, Luckless is unable to convince the tastemakers that his wares have the potential to generate profits. Theatre manager Marplay (a thinly disguised stand-in for Colley Cibber) wishes to alter the script the better to suit the public's tastes. He insists upon his aesthetic judgment in purely transactional language: "I think it is very hard if a Man who has been so long in a Trade as I have, shou'd not understand the Value of his Merchandize: shou'd not know what Goods will best please the Town" (17). Unwilling to consent to Marplay's butchery, Luckless tries instead to sell his script to a publisher, but he finds himself trapped in a vicious circle: Bookweight refuses to print the play until it is accepted for

performance. Again, his logic is purely financial: "A Play, like a Bill, is of no Value before it is accepted" (10). The analogy is to a bill of exchange, the value of which (as an instrument of credit), depends on collective consent. In this system, the playhouse managers act as financial gatekeepers who establish Luckless's credit, not only with his landlady, but with the printers who ostensibly offer an alternative point of access to the cultural market. Here and throughout the play, Fielding signals loud and clear that his critique of literary economics applies to the broader workings of credit markets and the acceleration of financial capitalism.[46]

Disheartened by the treatment of his art as a commodity, Luckless eventually decides to sacrifice his principles in order to settle his accounts. He stages a medley entertainment, *The Pleasures of the Town*, with actors dressed as puppets—a parody of the puppet shows that proliferated at the summer fairs and the pantomime entertainments offered at Lincoln's Inn Fields. The action of this play-within-a-play is a contest for the esteem of the Goddess of Nonsense, held between thinly disguised celebrities of the London cultural establishment: Sir Farcical Comick (Colley Cibber), Don Tragedio (dramatist Lewis Theobald), Dr. Orator (preacher John Henley), Signior Opera (singer Francesco Senesino), Monsieur Pantomime (actor-manager John Rich), and Mrs. Novel (fiction writer Eliza Haywood).[47] Within this context, his inclusion of the figures of Nobody and Somebody—visual emblems of social and economic critique—allows his satire of the profit-driven entertainment industry to resonate outward as a critique of broader problems with the workings of capitalist markets.

Following a bare-bones introduction from Luckless as the Master of Ceremonies, Somebody and Nobody enter and dance to the following song, set to the tune of the bawdy ballad "Black Joke." Somebody sings first: "Of all the Men in *London* Town, / Or Knaves, or Fools, in Coat, or Gown / The Representative am I" (38). These initial lines conform with the

conventional representation of Somebody as a person of rank and reputation unsubstantiated by individual character. In the lines that follow, however, Nobody complicates the usual dichotomy between himself and his counterpart: "Go thro' the World, and you will find, / In all the Classes of Human-kind, / Many a jolly *No-body*. / For him, a *No-body*, sure we may call, / Who during his Life, / But Eat, and Snore, / And Drink, and Roar, / From Whore to the Tavern, from Tavern to Whore, / With a lac'd Coat, and that is all" (38–9). This Nobody is neither a scapegoat for others' crimes nor a champion for the poor; indeed, he preempts the question of class by claiming to represent a type found at all levels of society. Nonetheless, Nobody's description of the kind of person he represents is, in fact, economically and socially specific: a person of leisure who "does nothing at all" besides indulge in food, drink, sleep, and sex. The kind of rake Nobody describes wears "a lac'd Coat," a signifier of class pretentions if not status. By the end of the song, it is not entirely clear whether this kind of nobody is any different from the somebodies about town described in the beginning—"Knaves, or Fools, in Coat, or Gown." Unlike the Jacobean Nobody and Somebody, these characters appear less as counterparts who define one another by opposition than as two ways of looking at the same phenomenon: the failure of people with material means to contribute usefully to society.

Somebody and Nobody's appearance in the human puppet show is usually glossed in critical editions as an allusion to the 1606 play; otherwise, it barely registers in scholarship on *The Author's Farce*, which tend instead to center the play's complex metatheatricalism and its revealing portraits of reigning personalities in the Augustan literary scene.[48] In many ways, the moment is easily ignored. As recognizable figures whose appearance went without saying in Georgian England, the characters' signature costumes are not described in the stage directions—a silence that obscures for readers today a key register of their meaning. Nobody and

Somebody's song is also briefer and less developed than the surrounding pieces, leading some critics to see it as nothing more than a parody of the entr'acte entertainments interspersed throughout an evening at the theatre. Peter Lewis, for example, characterizes Somebody and Nobody's song as "completely gratuitous and thoroughly inane," designed to "ridicule those interludes of assorted entertainment introduced into many productions without regard to their appropriateness."[49] As I have shown, Nobody and Somebody were associated from their earliest days on the English stage with formal incongruity; their disruption of the main action was always a feature that enabled their social and economic critique.

Far from an isolated moment, however, Nobody and Somebody's song continues to resonate through the rest of the puppet show, as several more songs build upon the themes it introduces. The very next air, sung by Signior Opera to the tune of "Lillibolera" (i.e. "Lillibullero"), is an ironic celebration of the power of wealth.[50] The lyrics urge listeners to set aside foolish pursuits like learning or military valor and embrace instead the pursuit of riches: "No Joy is on Earth, but what Gold can obtain. / If Women, Wine, / Or Grandeur fine, / Be most your Delight, all these Riches can" (41). The "Women" and "Wine" of this song recall the "Tavern to Whore" of the last, while the "Grandeur fine" evokes the "lac'd Coat" worn by the previous song's Nobody. The song ends in a repeating chorus of "When you cry he is Rich, you cry a Great Man," a clear critique of a society in which wealth is celebrated for its own sake rather than for the deeds it might enable. Elsewhere in the show, Dr. Orator sings "There was a jovial Beggar," which details another way that dishonesty pervades all levels of society: the merchant overcharges for his goods; the courtier promises to pay for them but does not follow through; the lawyer sends pickpockets to hang despite being a thief himself. One vivid example recalls the landlord–tenant relations in *Nobody and Somebody*: "The Tenant doth the Steward

nick, / (So low this Art we find,) / The Steward doth his Lordship trick, / My Lord tricks all Mankind" (47). Here, the tenant is a cheat like everyone else, but his potential to do harm is constrained by his relative poverty. When the landlord aims to cheat, however, his position and wealth allow him to "trick all Mankind." To be rich, this song insists, does not make one a great man; rather, it allows one to pass off responsibility for one's crimes.

For Fielding, the expansion of financial capitalism does not increase prosperity throughout all ranks of society; instead, the worst habits of exploitation and idleness spread across all classes, while the ability to get away with bad behavior remains a privilege available only to the wealthy few. The changing representation of Nobody and Somebody as mirror images rather than antagonists reflects the contagion of capitalist values and the expansion of market logic well beyond its proper confines. Furthermore, their very presence in the *Author's Farce* is a form of anachronism that confronts the audience with the long histories of current problems. Indeed, the juxtaposition of old and new cultural materials is a technique Fielding employs in more than one way. Dr. Orator's song "There was a jovial Beggar," discussed above, is a twist on a tune first popularized in Richard Brome's *A Jovial Crew; or, The Merry Beggars* (1641). Fielding modifies the refrain from "A-Begging We Will Go" to "a Cheating they will go" (46). This cynical update of a well-known song from the Caroline theatre, like a cameo from the archaic figures of Nobody and Somebody, invites audiences to compare the economic evils of the present to an imagined pre- or protocapitalist past—recognizing both the continuities between credit markets in their nascent and more developed forms and the cultural and social ruptures caused by the wider spread of capitalist values.

<H1>III

<T>The very names "Nobody" and "Somebody" suggest the processes of deindividuation that helped to enable the rise of credit culture: these figures encoded a critique of economic systems that were becoming increasingly abstract and distressingly impersonal. The idea of being a "Nobody" stands in direct contradiction to the idea of having a distinct identity. Yet Fielding's summoning of the figure may actually point to a particular and very recognizable individual: playwright, actor, and theatre manager Colley Cibber. Fielding certainly takes aim at Cibber elsewhere in the play, using him as the basis for the theatre manager Marplay and for the puppet character Sir Farcical Comic.[51] If Fielding was counting on audiences recalling Cibber's turn as Nobody in 1709–10—or even, perhaps, his folding of the role into his repertoire for minor entertainments not captured in the newspaper advertisements for theatrical performances—then the song performed by Nobody and Somebody in the puppet show may have represented an additional satirical portrayal of Cibber.[52] An association among Nobody, Marplay, and Sir Farcical would further reinforce Fielding's portrayal of Cibber as a pretentious class upstart trying to pull the ladder up behind him.

Such a strong association between the role of Nobody and Colley Cibber would also help to explain why Cibber's son Theophilus later took up Nobody as a signature role, donning the giant trousers to perform a series of prologues and epilogues on the London and Dublin stages throughout the 1740s and early 1750s. Theo tended to perform these pieces on evenings when he was playing parts written and first acted by his father, suggesting that his revival of the figure of Nobody was part of a broader strategy to position himself as the rightful inheritor of the family theatrical dynasty—and, as I show, to extend that dynasty through his own daughter, Jenny. At the same time, he drew on Nobody's history as a figure of economic protest to defend himself

against scandals that threatened his social and financial credit.

By the first time he donned Nobody's giant trousers, the younger Cibber had already developed a reputation for financial and moral insolvency. He had been at the center of a major public scandal in the late 1730s when it was revealed that he had pimped his wife, actress Susannah Cibber, in order to pay off his gambling debts. After Susannah became pregnant and tried to run away with the child's father—a married man named William Sloper—Theo took his benefactor to court. The jury in the highly publicized trial handed Theo a pyrrhic victory, awarding nominal damages that fell short even of covering his legal fees. He immediately launched a public relations campaign portraying himself as the victim of Susannah's dishonesty and infidelity—but the public, like the jury, saw him as an abuser and dissolute rake who had financed his lavish lifestyle by trafficking his wife and stealing her salary.[53] As a result of the scandal, Theo was pushed out of the management at Drury Lane that he considered his birthright. Susannah went into hiding, and when she reemerged in 1742, it was with something like a restraining order combined with an industry blacklisting: her husband could no longer access her earnings, nor could he perform in the same company as her. In an era in which divorce was almost prohibitively difficult, this was as definitive and punitive an outcome as she could manage. With Susannah making a comeback at Covent Garden, Theo was effectively barred from both major playing companies. In the years that followed, Elaine McGirr argues, "This public scandal resignified not just the Cibbers but also the stage characters they embodied: each role they performed in the 1740s was coloured with the public memory of the scandal."[54] Theo painted himself as a man wrongfully deprived of income by an unfaithful wife, while Susannah mined her image as wronged woman to cultivate a line performing tragic heroines.[55]

At the moment of Susannah's reemergence in the public eye, Theo—driven to perform with a minor, unlicensed company at Lincoln's Inn Fields—decided to revive his father's role as Nobody. On 24 November 1742, he starred as Lord Foppington in *The Careless Husband*, taking on one of his father's signature roles in one of his most enduringly popular plays. He also played the title role in the afterpiece, *The Mock Doctor*. The performance was advertised as featuring "a New Prologue to be spoke by Mr. Cibber. And a reviv'd Epilogue to be spoke by NOBODY."[56] While Theo is not named as the speaker of the epilogue, the rest of the bill strongly implies that this "reviv'd" tailpiece was part of an evening of performance in which Theo reprised multiple roles associated with his father.

Publicity for the rest of the season reinforces the idea that this November performance marked the start of a series of performances by Theo in the persona of Nobody. The same prologue and epilogue were repeated several times in the ensuing weeks, including at a performance of Colley Cibber's *The Relapse* in which Theo once again played the recurring role of Foppington. An advertisement for 17 February 1743 promises "an Epilogue spoke in the Character of Nobody by Mr. Cibber." The same piece is touted in the bills for a 28 February performance of *The Non-Juror* and for an 8 April performance of *The Careless Husband*, both written by Colley Cibber. The 28 February performance was also a benefit for Theo; as actors would frequently choose to perform their most popular roles on their benefit nights, his selection of the Nobody epilogue suggests that this had become one of his signature roles throughout the season.

Theo's performances as Nobody can be understood as part of the ongoing process of collective memory and forgetting Joseph Roach calls "surrogation": a community's "doomed search for originals by continuously auditioning stand-ins" for vacated roles.[57] Much as the

statement "The Queen is dead; long live the Queen" holds open space in which the identity "queen" can be transferred from one person to another—surrogation as speech act—the role of Nobody served as a placeholder through which the younger Cibber could attempt to displace the living legend on whose fame (and infamy) his own career was built.[58] In performances as Nobody, Theo alternately linked himself to and distanced himself from his father, tapping into the gap between their physical presences onstage and between the generations they represented for audiences. Even as he latched onto this stage tradition to advance his own aims, however, the role itself seems to have exerted a kind of inertial force, inserting a history of intertwined linguistic play and economic protest into an attempted act of surrogation. The result: a series of uneasy questions about the extent to which a fictional or partial substitute can circulate in place of the individual, about the ethical attribution of agency to such a substitute, and about the ways the past makes itself felt in the present. Even as Cibber insisted on his own financial and social precarity in the aftermath of the Sloper scandal, then, the Nobody tradition revealed his attempted surrogation of his father as an act of abstraction and deferral that reinforced the capitalist imaginary.

In this sense, we might think of Nobody's giant pants as coming to inhabit, in their moment, much the same space as the pink pussyhats and yellow vests of twenty-first-century populist protest. Andy Lavender examines how costumes such as these enable a kind of doubling:

> <EXT>[W]e see individuals appearing as themselves in person, and as intertext, evoking the panoply of referentiality that accompanies (for example) the Guy Fawkes mask or the Handmaid's costume. . . . They act as an iteration, an actualization, of the ideas evoked by the costume, while also embodying an idea

> delineated by opposition to that which is protested against. The protest not only states its requirements or disagreements; it also performs its resonant mythology, its symbolic back-story.[59]

<T>As I hope to show, the "resonant mythology" of Nobody exceeds and undermines Cibber's attempts to use the role for his own ends.

This complex cultural work is exemplified by an epilogue printed in *Cibber and Sheridan; or, The Dublin Miscellany* (1743), a collection of letters and documents related to Theophilus's highly public feud with Thomas Sheridan. "An EPILOGUE, spoke by Mr. CIBBER, in the Character of Nobody" appears there in an appendix of prologues and epilogues Cibber performed during temporary residency at the Smock Alley Theatre. This epilogue draws strategically on the historical associations of the figure of Nobody while encoding an ambivalence toward the very acts of revival and adaptation it performs. The stage directions call for Cibber to enter wearing a cloak that presumably covers his telltale giant trousers. He needles the audience for expecting the impossible, an epilogue spoken by nobody as promised on the playbill: "WELL, Sirs, to keep my Word, tho' as I take it, / You're all but fairly bit, if I should break it; . . . But least the Humour with the Cheat should lye, / Thus I transform myself to Nobody." A footnote explains the flourish that accompanies this line: "*Throwing off his Cloak, he appears habited in a large pair of Breeches—as the Character of Nobody is often represented in Pictures, &c.*"[60] This direction explicitly ties the stage costume to the popular visual idiom, suggesting that audiences and readers alike would have been familiar enough with the figure of Nobody to appreciate the significance of this reveal as an embodied punch line.

Cibber immediately disparages the costume he has just uncovered: "In this vile punning form some ancient Noddy, / At first presum'd to represent Nobody."[61] The visual and theatrical

legacy of this figure is not venerated for its ability to resonate across time; instead, its creator is referred to an as "ancient Noddy," a long-dead fool mocked for his presumptuous attempt to embody the concept of disembodiment. When spoken by Theo, these lines have at least two layers of reference. The "ancient Noddy" is at once the person who put on the massive breeches a century and a half earlier to introduce this particular version of the Nobody figure to the English stage, and also his father Colley, who presented an epilogue much like this one a generation before. These lines tie Theophilus to a repertoire of collective memory embodied in performance traditions that stretch from the first heyday of the English theatre up through the early decades of the eighteenth century.[62] In speaking these lines, Theo simultaneously trades in and repudiates the Nobody tradition and the larger-than-life family with which it had become associated, implicitly promising the audience all the benefits of novelty in this iteration of a familiar figure.

The following year, Theophilus returned to London to manage an unlicensed season at the Haymarket Theatre, poaching his daughter Jenny from the company playing at Covent Garden. As McGirr points out, Jenny was "claimed by her father in periods of economic or reputational crisis," and strong evidence suggests that he saw her rising star as an alternative source of the income he had lost when he was barred from accessing Susannah's salary. Just as he yoked his own fortunes to his father's celebrity, Theophilus promoted Jenny as the rightful inheritor of the Cibber name—as, for example, in a prologue that touted her "just, hereditary Claim" to "Fame" through her parents and grandparents.[63]

On 17 December 1744, Theophilus and Jenny played the title roles in *Romeo and Juliet*; despite widespread public awareness of their age difference and familial relationship, the performance was such a success that it ultimately led the Lord Chamberlain's Office to shut

down the illegitimate theatre at the Haymarket. The fateful event was advertised as being for Jenny's benefit and included "a Prologue (on Somebody) to be spoke by Nobody." Theophilus made no secret of his intentions to take the proceeds from his daughter's benefit for himself, publishing a letter expressing his sense of grievance and entitlement in the daily papers in the days leading up to the performance.[64] This letter was part of the same printscape as the newspaper advertisements for the performance, which emblazoned Jenny's name across the top in what appears to be an appeal to theatregoers sympathetic to her rather than to her father. It is deeply ironic that Theophilus reprised his popular prologue while taking his daughter's benefit proceedings. He leveraged the role of Nobody to reinforce his public self-presentation as a victim of slander and casualty of credit culture. Like Somebody, he used Nobody's name as a smokescreen behind which to hide his own privilege and his willingness to exploit others for his own gain.

Theophilus later reprised the role of Nobody at benefit performances that were openly intended to help him free himself from his creditors. For example, after another hiatus in Dublin, Theophilus returned to London in 1753 to raise the funds to release himself from debtor's prison.[65] Newspaper advertisements for a 6 February performance at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane framed it as Theo's triumphant return, proclaiming that it would be "the first Time of his Appearance on that Stage these Six Years." The editors of *The London Stage* record the inclusion of an "Epilogue (By Desire) by Nobody" in the full-sized playbills, which prompter Thomas Cross's diary indicates was spoken by Cibber. The mainpiece—Colley Cibber's *The Non-Juror*—was touted as "not Acted these 8 years." These phrases signal indicate that the performance was meant to appeal simultaneously to the novelty of the offering and player, and to a sense of their long history.

In taking on the role of Nobody, Cibber deployed a centuries-old figure of economic protest—one that had long evoked the failure of the credit economy to assign reputation and blame fairly and equitably—to recuperate his own social and financial standing. The role of Nobody allows Theo to suggest that his credit has suffered because of the fundamentally relational and unstable nature of identity. Yet even as he insists that his reputation is a fiction constructed by others to slander him, he depends on that notoriety to inform audience reception of his performances. Through his reprisal of this role, Theo leverages public awareness of his offstage scandals to activate the Cibber brand and to ensure the continuity of celebrity across generations.

As Lisa Freeman has shown, eighteenth-century English theatre resisted the model of identity on display in the rise of the novel. While fiction writers experimented with representational modes that rendered transparent the interiority of a stable subject, playwrights put forth an alternative model of "character" as a play of surfaces. Freeman links this conceptualization of identity as contested, relational, and unstable to the entrenchment of capitalism as well as to the emergence of celebrity culture: "in the eighteenth century—the age of the actor—the fictional persona created by a playwright often had to compete with the persona or public reputation of the actor or actress taking that part. In this very basic sense, the 'character' presented to an audience was neither singular nor unitary, but rather manifold and incongruous."[66] The overlap and tension between actor and role was a feature, not a bug: managers encouraged audiences' prurient interest in celebrity sex lives by, for example, casting real-life lovers as paramours. The actor's body was not a container for a knowable interior subjectivity, with coded signs that the audience needed to learn to interpret correctly; instead, the body was a site of contestation between visible and performative selves:

> <EXT>[A]t any given moment in the course of a performance the actor's protean body presented, rather than concealed, a variety of surfaces to the viewer, each of which vied for control over the intelligibility of the action. This condition, with its tenacious emphasis on readable surfaces and its resistance to notions of 'sincere' depths, drew on the concept of character in all its semantic complexity to form an alternative rubric for shaping and apprehending identity.[67]

<T>As my reading of *Nobody and Somebody* has already suggested, the Jacobean Nobody anticipated this much later conception of character in a way that was quite distinct from the problematics of "inwardness" at stake in a play like *Othello* or *Hamlet*.[68] The insistent superficiality of Nobody is what allows him to critique the stabilization of identity as a condition of capitalist precaritization, and it is also what allows him to remain relevant and resonant over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

As I have shown, the figures of Nobody and Somebody periodically resurfaced on the London stage of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as figures of economic theorization, protest, and critique. Even as they adapted to changing material and social realities, these characters highlighted the ongoing displacement of responsibility and loss away from centers of power and onto persons. They functioned, that is, as avatars of precaritization. As public discourse emphasized the novelty of speculative finance—its ability to generate seemingly unprecedented levels of wealth and of crisis—Nobody and Somebody reinserted history into the present, insisting on precarity as a defining feature of capitalist market systems from their inception. The stage itself had a key role in facilitating this critique, in two ways. First, the embodied nature of performance was key to the ways these figures made meaning: verbal and dramatic irony collided as a body named Nobody bodied forth the invisible victims of capitalism

and assumed the weight of disavowed corporate agency. Second, the characters depended for their meaning on forms of historicity that inhere in theatricality, the physical presence of the past onstage in the "ghosting" of theatre costumes, properties, and scripts and in the embodied repertoire of performance.[69] Theo's revival of the Nobody epilogues at midcentury has gone largely unnoticed by scholars up to this point precisely because it signified for audiences along these axes of haunted physicality. It generated meaning at the intersection of a pair of trousers, a family resemblance, and a set of gesture and movement practices that had carried the role through more than a century of performance tradition that left few textual traces. Yet it is precisely this insistence on the body and on its embeddedness in history that makes the stage a vital space of resistance to the relentless presentism and logics of abstraction at the heart of financial capitalism.

<H1>Acknowledgments

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<H1>Appendix

<APP>This appendix focuses on the early to mid-eighteenth-century efflorescence of headpieces

(e.g. prologues) and tailpieces (e.g. epilogues) featuring Nobody and Somebody; it excludes the characters' appearances in plays like *The Author's Farce*. Quotations have been taken from eighteenth-century advertising copy wherever possible. Where multiple sources are relevant, primary sources are listed first, followed by reference works and their electronic remediations. However, discovery of these performances generally worked in reverse, beginning from database queries and/or reference works and proceeding to primary sources (usually accessed through digital witness).

<T1>**A Partial Calendar of Prologues, Epilogues, Sketches, and Songs Delivered by Nobody and Somebody on the London, Dublin, and Edinburgh Stages, 1709–59**

<T2>Abbreviations<T3>

AES	James C. Dibdin, *Annals of the Edinburgh Stage with an Account of the Rise and Progress of Dramatic Writing in Scotland*. Edinburgh, Richard Cameron, 1888. Accessed 18 June 2020 via HathiTrust, <URL>hdl.handle.net/2027/uc2.ark:/13960/t22b90b7p<T3>.
BD	*A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers and Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660-1800*, ed. Philip H. Highfill, Jr., Kalman A. Burnim, and Edward A. Langhans, 16 vols. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973–93. Accessed 18 June 2020 via HathiTrust, <URL>catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000149271<T3>.
BLTP	*British Library Theatrical Playbills*, <URL>http://blplaybills.org <T3>.
BN	*Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Burney Newspapers Collection*,

accessed via institutional subscription

EEBO *Early English Books Online*, accessed via institutional subscription

ECCO *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*, Parts I and II, accessed via institutional subscription

LS2 *The London Stage, 1660–1800: A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments and Afterpieces, Together with Casts, Box-Receipts and Contemporary Comment. Compiled from the Playbills, Newspapers and Theatrical Diaries of the Period*, part 2: *1700–1729,* ed. Emmett L. Avery, 2 vols. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965. Accessed 18 June 2020 via HathiTrust, <URL>catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000200105<T3>.

LS3 *The London Stage, 1660–1800*, part 3: *1729–1747,* ed. Arthur H. Scouten, 2 vols. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1961. Access information same as for *LS2*.

LS4 *The London Stage, 1660–1800,* part 4: *1747–1776,* ed. George Winchester Stone Jr., 3 vols. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967. Access information same as for *LS2*.

LSD *London Stage Database*. URLs are abbreviated in calendar below; to locate record, append the identifier number at the end of this address: <URL>londonstagedatabase.uoregon.edu/event.php?id=<T3>.

TID John C. Greene, *Theatre in Dublin, 1745–1820: A Calendar of Performances*, 6 vols. Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2011. Specialized indexes available at

<URL>http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/lupress/dublintheatre<T3>.

<T2>Calendar<T3>

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26 Mar. 1709	Performance at the Theatre Royal–Drury Lane of Ben Jonson's *The Alchymist*, a benefit for Colley Cibber, "With a new Epilogue spoken by Mr. Cibber representing the Figure of Nobody." *Daily Courant* 2315 (26 March 1709), *BN;* see *LS2*, 1: 188 and *LSD,* 4180.
4 Apr. 1709	Performance at the Theatre Royal–Drury Lane of *The Alchymist*, a benefit for Will Penkethman, "With a new Epilogue spoken by Mr. Penkethman and Jubilee Dicky, Representing the Figures of Somebody and Nobody, Mr. Penkethman hoping himself to be Somebody that Night, (or Nobody) it being his Jubilee-Day." *Daily Courant* 2318 (30 March 1709), 2319 (31 March 1709), 2320 (1 April 1709), and 2321 (2 April 1709), *BN*; see *LS2*, 1: 189 and *LSD*, 4189.
26 Jan. 1710	Performance at the Queen's Theatre of Richard Steele's *The Tender Husband*, a benefit for Colley Cibber, "With a new Mimical Prologue, and an Epilogue representing the Person of Nobody, both Spoke and Writ by Mr. Cibber, for his own Benefit." *Daily Courant* 2576 (25 January 1710), *BN*; see *LS2*, 1: 210 and *LSD*, 4399.
24 Nov. 1742	Performance at the Theatre Royal–Lincoln's Inn Fields of *The Careless Husband* ("Written by Colley Cibber, Esq., Poet-Laureate") and Henry Fielding's *The Mock Doctor*, both featuring Theophilus Cibber, with "a New Prologue to be spoke by Mr. Cibber. And a reviv'd Epilogue to be spoke by

NOBODY." *LS3*, 2: 1015; see *LSD*, 21447. *N.B.:* The *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, which was edited by Theophilus Cibber, printed the majority of theatrical notices at this time (*LS3,* 1: 1000); however, issues of this publication from 1742 are missing from *BN*.

29 Nov. 1742 Performance at the Theatre Royal–Lincoln's Inn Fields of Susanna Centlivre's *The Busy Body* and Henry Fielding's *The Mock Doctor*, both featuring Theophilus Cibber, with prologue and epilogue "as 24 Nov." *LS3*, 2: 1016; see *LSD*, 21459.

1 Dec. 1742 Performance at the Theatre Royal–Lincoln's Inn Fields of Robert Howard's *The Committee*, featuring Theophilus Cibber in the role of Teague, with prologue and epilogue "as 24 Nov." *LS3*, 2: 1017; see *LSD*, 21464.

3 Dec. 1742 Performance at the Theatre Royal–Lincoln's Inn Fields of John Vanbrugh's *The Relapse*, featuring Theophilus Cibber in the role of Foppington, with prologue and epilogue "as 24 Nov." *LS3*, 2: 1015–18; see *LSD*, 21469.

17 Feb. 1743 Performance at the Theatre Royal–Lincoln's Inn Fields of William Congreve's *Love for Love*, with Theophilus Cibber playing the role of Tattle and delivering "an Epilogue spoke in the Character of Nobody." *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* 2598 (17 February 1743), *BN*; *LS3*, 2: 1035; see *LSD*, 21644.

28 Feb.1743 Performance at the Theatre Royal–Lincoln's Inn Fields of Colley Cibber's *The Non-Juror*, a benefit for Theophilus Cibber, who played the title role in the mainpiece as well as the lead role of Fondlewife in an afterpiece adapted

from William Congreve's *The Old Batchelor*; in addition, Cibber spoke "an Epilogue in the Character of Nobody." *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* 2607 (28 February 1743) does not mention that this is a benefit for Cibber, but *Daily Advertiser* 3779 (28 February 1743) does. See *BN* and *LS3*, 2: 1037–8 and *LSD*, 21669.

6 Mar. 1743 A benefit at Taylor's Hall in Edinburgh for a possibly pregnant Mrs. Thomas Este, who spoke "an humorous Epilogue in the character of Nobody." *AES,* 55; on Dibdin's incorrect dating of Este's benefit, see *BD,* 5: 104.

8 Apr. 1743 Performance at the Theatre Royal–Lincoln's Inn Fields of *The Careless Husband*, featuring Cibber in the role of Foppington, and "With an Epilogue, in the Character of Nobody, by Mr. Cibber." *Daily Advertiser* 3813 (8 April 1743), *BN*; see *LS3*, 2: 1047 and *LSD*, 21749.

4 Oct. 1744 Performance at the Haymarket Theatre of Richard Steele's *The Conscious Lovers*, marking Jenny Cibber's debut in the leading role of Indiana and featuring Theophilus in the comparatively minor role of Tom, "With a PROLOGUE, And an EPILOGUE to be spoke by NOBODY," speaker unnamed. *Daily Post* 7827 (3 October 1744) and 7828 (4 October 1744); cf. *Daily Advertiser* 4352 (4 October 1744), *BN*; and see *LS3*, 2: 1121 and *LSD*, 22325.

6 Oct. 1744 Performance at the Haymarket Theatre of *The Conscious Lovers*, featuring both Theophilus and Jenny Cibber in the same roles as 4 October, "With a PROLOGUE, And an EPILOGUE to be spoke by NOBODY," speaker

unnamed. The head- and tail-pieces are not mentioned specifically in *LS3*, 2: 1121 or *LSD*, 22328, but see *Daily Post* 7829 (5 October 1744) and 7830 (6 October 1744), *BN*.

9 Oct. 1744 Performance at the Haymarket Theatre of *The Conscious Lovers*, featuring both Theophilus and Jenny Cibber as for 4 October, "With a PROLOGUE, And an EPILOGUE to be spoke by NOBODY," speaker unnamed. The head- and tail-pieces are not mentioned specifically in *LS3*, 2: 1122 or *LSD*, 22331, but see *Daily Post* 7831 (8 October 1744) and 7832 (9 October 1744), *BN*.

18 Oct. 1744 Performance at the Haymarket Theatre of *The Conscious Lovers*, featuring both Theophilus and Jenny Cibber as for 4 October, "With a PROLOGUE, And an EPILOGUE to be spoke by NOBODY," speaker unnamed. The head- and tail-pieces are not mentioned specifically in *LS3*, 2: 1123 or *LSD*, 22343, but see *Daily Post* 7839 (17 October 1744), *BN*. While advertisements earlier in the run had listed Jenny first, followed by a full cast, and then Theophilus last, this ad names only the two Cibbers and omits the rest of the actors. The notice printed in *Daily Post* 7840 (18 October 1744) for the same performance includes the longer cast list and additional details about the afterpiece and entr'acte entertainments.

17 Dec. 1744 Performance at the Haymarket Theatre of *Romeo and Juliet* for Jenny Cibber's benefit, in which she played the Juliet to her father's Romeo, followed by *The Mock Doctor* with Theophilus in the title role, and "With a

Prologue (on Somebody) to be spoke by Nobody; And an occasional Epilogue by Miss Jenny Cibber." *Daily Post* 7891 (17 December 1744). See also *Daily Post* 7887, 7888, 7889, and 7890 (12, 13, 14, 15 December 1744). The same performance is advertised in *General Advertiser* 3149 (17 December 1744), with abbreviated cast lists that omit all parts not played by Cibbers and the epilogue by Nobody, strongly suggesting that the speaker was in fact one of the two Cibbers. *BN*; see *LS3*, 2: 1139 and *LSD*, 22473.

25 Apr. 1745 Performance at the Theatre Royal–Covent Garden of *King Henry the Fifth* with Theophilus Cibber in his signature role of Pistol, and an "Epilogue (on Somebody) in the Character of Nobody, by Mr. Cibber." *General Advertiser* 3258 (25 April 1745), *BN*; see *LS3*, 2: 1170 and *LSD*, 22787.

10 Mar. 1746 Performance at Goodman's Fields of *The Conscious Lovers*, followed by "An Epilogue by No-body"; on this night, Cibber was advertised as performing the part of Gratiano in *The Merchant of Venice* at Covent Garden. *General Advertiser* 3547 (10 March 1746), *BN*; see *LS3*, 2: 1223–4 and *LSD*, 23183 and 23182.

18 Mar. 1746 Performance at the Theatre Royal–Covent Garden of Colley Cibber's *She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not*, "With an Epilogue on Somebody in the Character of Nobody by Mr. Cibber." *General Advertiser* 3554 (18 March 1746), *BN*; see *LS3*, 2: 1227 and *LSD*, 23203.

15 Feb. 1749 Performance of *Hamlet* at Canongate Concert Hall in Edinburgh, followed by "a new Epilogue written by Somebody and spoke by Nobody." *AES,* 62.

14 May 1750 Performance of *Henry IV Part II* at the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin, with Theophilus Cibber in the role of Pistol. Playbills advertised the head- and tail-pieces: "Prologue wrote by Dryden (and the Epitaph by Milton) to the memory of Shakespear will be spoke by Digges, representing the shade of Shakespear as figured in his Monument in Westminster Abbey. And by desire Cibber will speak the epilogue on Somebody in the Character of Nobody." *TID,* 1: 177.

13 Apr. 1752 Performance of Benjamin Hoadly's *The Suspicious Husband* at the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin, "with an Epilogue on Somebody in the Character of Nobody by Cibber." *TID,* 1: 284.

6 Feb.1753 Performance of *The Non-Juror* at the Theatre Royal–Drury Lane, for the benefit of Theophilus Cibber, who was billed prominently as the beneficiary at the top of the newspaper advertisement and again for his role as Dr. Wolf in the mainpiece. The main play was advertised as "not Acted these 8 years" and touted "the first Time of his [Cibber's] Appearance on that Stage [Drury Lane] these Six Years." *London Daily Advertiser* 541 (5 February 1753), *BN*. *LS4*, 1: 350 records the inclusion of an "Epilogue (By Desire) by Nobody" in the full-sized playbills; see *LSD*, 26436. The same issue of the *London Daily Advertiser* includes a notice of the publication of the first volume of Cibber's *Lives of the Poets*.

2 July 1754 Performance of *The Busy Body* at the Theatre Royal–Drury Lane, for Theophilus Cibber's benefit, with Cibber in the role of Marplot, and with a

new afterpiece by and starring Cibber called *The Humorists*, and "With an Epilogue by Nobody." *Public Advertiser* 6137 (1 July 1754) and 6138 (2 July 1754), *BN*; see *LS4* 1: 430–1 and *LSD*, 27115. *BD* describes the afterpiece as "a potpourri of scenes from *2 Henry IV* in which he [Theophilus Cibber] played Pistol" (3: 258).

9 Dec. 1754 Performance of *Aethiopian Concert* at the New Theatre in the Haymarket, for the benefit of "a Gentleman under Misfortunes, and Mr. MULLINER," featuring "a Song upon Every Body, to be sung by No Body." *Public Advertiser* 6272 (9 December 1754), *BN*; see *LS4*, 1: 456 and *LSD*, 27308. *BD* (3: 258) notes that Theophilus Cibber was associated with the company at Covent Garden at the time, making it unlikely that he featured in this performance.

3 May 1755 Performance of *Henry IV Part I* at the Theatre Royal–Covent Garden, "With an "*Epilogue* to be spoken by NOBODY." *Public Advertiser* 6400 (3 May 1755), *BN*; *LS4*, 1: 485; *LSD*, 27597. Theophilus Cibber is not featured in the advertised cast list and *BD* (3: 258) notes that he was associated with the company at Covent Garden at the time, making it unlikely that he featured in this performance.

21 Aug. 1755 Performance of *The Busy Body* marking the opening of a new company under Cibber's management at the Haymarket Theatre; see *BD* 3: 258. Advertisement, including one placed prominently in the top left corner of the first page of the *Public Advertiser*, touted the debut "With AUTHORITY" of

	"BAYES' New-raised Company of COMEDIANS" and billed Theophilus Cibber in the role of Marplot in the mainpiece, as well as the title character in the afterpiece, *The Mock Doctor*. "After which (by Desire) an *Epilogue* by Nobody." *Public Advertiser* 6504 (21 August 1755), *BN*; *LS4* 1: 489; *LSD*, 27637.
25 May 1757	Performance of Colley Cibber's *The Provok'd Husband* at the Theatre Royal–Covent Garden, for the benefit of Theophilus Cibber, who played the roles of Sir Francis Wronghead in the mainpiece. Newspaper advertisements noted that it was Cibber's "first Appearance on the Stage these two years" as well as his first time in the role of the Fine Gentleman in the afterpiece, David Garrick's *Lethe*. "With an *Epilogue* by NOBODY." *Public Advertiser* 7047 (25 May 1757), *BN*. *LS4*, 1: 601; *LSD*, 28564.
21 Apr. 1759	Performance at the Crow Street Theatre in Dublin for the benefit of Master Fisher, who spoke "an occasional prologue and a humorous Epilogue . . . in the Character of Nobody." *TID* 1: 603.

<H1>Endnotes

<EN>**1** The Appendix to this essay provides a starting point for tracking the roles of Nobody and Somebody in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh, and contains bibliographic information for works cited herein by abbreviation. Data for the regional theatres remain scarce, although Fiona Ritchie, Michael Gamer, and others are working to make this information more accessible. The

British Library Theatrical Playbills (*BLTP*) website, "a research tool to find and view playbills . . . from some collections of the British Library's theatrical playbills," includes a bill for a performance of *Love Makes a Man* at the New Theatre in Portsmouth on 21 June 1782, featuring "An Epilogue on every Body, to be spoken by Somebody, in the Character of Nobody, by Mr. EVERARD" (found using the search term "nobody" at <URL>http://blplaybills.org<EN>, 1 September 2020).

2 See, for example, "An *Epilogue* spoken by *Nobody*," in R. Lewis, *The Adventures of a Rake, in the Character of a Public Orator: Interspersed with Several Serious and Comic Pieces, . . .* , 2 vols. (London, 1759), I: 62–7; and "An Epilogue, In the Character of SOMEBODY, with a malicious design against NOBODY" in *The Spouter's Companion; or, Theatrical Remembrancer. Containing a Select Collection of the Most Esteemed Prologues and Epilogues, . . .* (London, [1770?]), 10–11. Both accessed 12 June 2018 through *ECCO*.

3 Jane Wessel, "'My Other Folks' Heads': Reproducible Identities and Literary Property on the Eighteenth-Century Stage," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 53.2 (2020): 279–97, <URL>https://doi.org/10.1353/ecs.2020.0009<EN>, accessed 1 September 2020; Kurt L. Garret, "Palliative for Players: *The Lecture on Heads,*" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 103.2 (1979): 166–76; Gerald Kahan, *George Alexander Stevens and "The Lecture on Heads"* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984), 61.

4 Terry F. Robinson, "Becoming Somebody: Refashioning the Body Politic in Mary Robinson's *Nobody*," *Studies in Romanticism* 55.2 (2016): 143–84.

5 Ibid., 149–56; Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670–1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 205–7.

6 Joseph R. Jones, "A Gathering of Nobodies: The Oldest Joke in the World and Its Traces in Cervantes and Hispanic Literatures," *Comparative Literature Studies* 31.2 (1994): 128–47, at 128.

7 Gerta Calmann, "The Picture of Nobody: An Iconographical Study," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 23.1–2 (1960): 60–104; Luke Wilson, *Theaters of Intention: Drama and the Law in Early Modern England* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 219–21; Martha Bayless, *Parody in the Middle Ages: The Latin Tradition* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 57-86; for edited and translated Latin texts, see also 259–310, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015038607985, accessed 22 March 2022.

8 Jones, "Gathering," 136; Alban K. Forcione, "El desposeimiento del ser en la literatura renacentista: Cervantes, Gracián y los desafíos de *Nemo*," *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica* 34 (1985–6): 654–90, at 668 n. 26. Thanks to Felipe Valencia for pointing me to these sources.

9 *Nobody and Somebody* was entered in the Stationer's Register in 1606 but may have circulated in performance years before publication; see Richard Simpson, *The School of Shakespeare,* 2 vols. (New York: J. W. Bouton, 1878), I: 270–2; Roslyn L. Knutson, "The Start of Something Big," in *Locating the Queen's Men, 1583–1603: Material Practices and Conditions of Playing*, ed. Helen Ostovich, Holger Schott Syme, and Andrew Griffin (Farnham, Surrey, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 99–108, at 106; and David Hay, *Nobody and Somebody: An Introduction and Critical Edition* (New York: Garland, 1980), 63–6.

10 Nobody appears in a 1603 masque by Ben Jonson, "attired in a pair of breeches which were made to come up to his neck"; see *The Entertainment at Althorpe*, ed. James Knowles, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online,* https://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/benjonson/k/works/althorp/facing/#, accessed 22 March 2022. Philip Henslowe also noted in his diary that he lent comedian Will Kempe money in August 1602 to purchase buckram for "a payer of gyente hosse," possibly the costume for Nobody; see Roger Bourke, "Falstaff, Nobody, and Will Kemp's 'Giant Hose,'" *Notes and Queries* 55.2 (2008): 183–5.

11 Peter Womack, "Nobody, Somebody, and *King Lear*," *New Theatre Quarterly* 23.3 (2007): 195–207.

12 Robinson, "Becoming Somebody," 152. Gallagher points out that they also appeared on playing cards and as "stock masquerade characters" (*Nobody's Story*, 207).

13 On the relationship between markets and theatrical culture during this period, see Jean-Christophe Agnew, *Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theater in Anglo-American Thought, 1550–1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); and Mattie Burkert, *Speculative Enterprise: Public Theaters and Financial Markets in London, 1688–1763* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2021).

14 Berlant in Jasbir Puar, "Precarity Talk: A Virtual Roundtable with Lauren Berlant, Judith Butler, Bojana Cvejić, Isabell Lorey, Jasbir Puar, and Ana Vujanović," *TDR: The Drama Review* 56.4 (2012): 163–77, at 166, https://muse-jhu-edu.libproxy.uoregon.edu/article/491900, accessed

25 October 2021. See also Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).

15 Judith Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 11. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang voice important critiques of the colonialist understandings of labor and land at play in the Occupy movement in "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society* 1.1 (2012): 1–40, https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/18630/15554 , accessed 9 January 2022.

16 Steve Hindle, "Imagining Insurrection in Seventeenth-Century England: Representations of the Midland Rising of 1607," *History Workshop Journal* 66.1 (2008): 21–61, https://www.jstor.org/stable/25473007, accessed 22 March 2022. Thanks to Karen Britland for drawing my attention to the link between *Nobody and Somebody* and the Midland Revolt.

17 Butler in Puar, "Precarity Talk," 168.

18 On bare life, see Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

19 Butler in Puar, "Precarity Talk," 171, 174.

20 *Nobody and Somebody* is compared frequently with *King Lear*; see Womack, "Nobody, Somebody, and *King Lear*"; Anthony Archdeacon, "Somebody and Nobody: The Authorial Identity of the Player-Playwright-Poet in Early Modern Theatre," *Authorship* 5.2 (2016): n.p., <ULR>http://dx.doi.org/10.21825/aj.v5i2.3879<EN>; and Josée Nuyts-Giornal, "King Lear's Reflection in the Mirror of Nobody: An Iconographical Question," *Cahiers Élisabéthains: A Journal of English Renaissance Studies* 54.1 (1998): 55–73.

21 On the courtroom scene in particular, see Scott Oldenburg, "The Petition on the Early English Stage," *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 57.2 (2017): 325–47.

22 Anston Bosman, "Renaissance Intertheater and the Staging of Nobody," *English Literary History* 71.3 (2004): 559–85.

23 Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, *New World Drama: The Performative Commons in the Atlantic World, 1649–1849* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 3.

24 Wilson, *Theaters of Intention*, 217.

25 *No-Body, and Some-Body. With the True Chronicle Historie of Elydure, Who Was Fortunately Three Severall Times Crowned King of England* (London, [1606]), D3r. Yale University Library, https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/10191169, accessed 22 March 2022. Further references to this text are cited parenthetically.

26 Archdeacon, "Somebody and Nobody: Authorial Identity," *Authorship* 5.2 (2016): para. 20.

27 Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave, 1998), 151.

28 Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

29 Compare with today, when credit scores translate a lifetime of financial transactions into a number between 1 and 850 that is used to decide how expensive consumer debt will be for that person. Individuals deemed to be a safe bet enjoy lower interest rates than those who have missed payments or defaulted on loans in the past—an even more abstracted and depersonalized version of the system of reputation on which early credit culture was built.

30 The campaign's name evokes the historical ritual of jubilee: in Jewish scripture, a time every fifty years when debts are forgiven and enslaved people liberated ("jubilee, n.," definition 1a, *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, 2021).

31 Christian Riley Nagler, "Strike Debt's Rolling Jubilee: The Promise and the Performativity of Financial Contracts," *TDR: The Drama Review* 62.1 (2018): 113–30, at 117.

32 Ibid., 126, 121.

33 Carl Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit: The English Financial Revolution, 1620–1720* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 2.

34 Burkert, *Speculative Enterprise*, 10–13.

35 Bosman, "Renaissance Intertheater."

36 The title page of George Baron, *No-Body his Complaint A Dialogue between Master No Body, and Doctour Some-Body* (London, 1652) features a woodcut engraving of the two title characters, pictured with cartoonish proportions evocative of those from the 1606 play's frontispiece and back matter. *A Letter from No Body in the City, to No Body in the Countrey. Published at the Importunity of No Body* (London, 1679) states on its title page that it was "Printed for Some-Body"; an ostensible response, *Some Bodyes Answer to a Letter sent from No Body in the City, to No Body in the Country. Written at the Request of Some Body* ([London]; 1679), declares that it was "Printed by Some Body, for Any Body." In November 1681, a new periodical satirized Roger L'Estrange's royalist *Observator*; the first two issues were titled *A New Dialogue Between Some Body and Nobody; or, The Observator Observed*, and numbers 3–5

were called *A New Dialogue Between Somebody and Nobody; or, The Observator and Heraclitus Observed*. All items accessed 30 May 2018 through *EEBO*.

37 Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, "Dating Play Premieres from Publication Data, 1660–1700," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 22 (1974): 374–405. On the limitations of the records that can be gleaned from these advertisements, see the *London Stage Database* "About" page, <URL>https://londonstagedatabase.uoregon.edu/about.php<EN>.

38 See the Appendix for documentation of performances discussed throughout this section.

39 *Female Tatler* 41 (7–10 October 1709).

40 They are sadly absent from Pierre Danchin's encyclopedic *The Prologues and Epilogues of the Eighteenth Century: A Complete Edition* (Nancy, France: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1990–2001), 8 vols.

41 For first performance, see *The London Stage, 1660–1800: A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments and Afterpieces, Together with Casts, Box-Receipts and Contemporary Comment. Compiled from the Playbills, Newspapers and Theatrical Diaries of the Period*, part 3: *1729–1747,* ed. Arthur H. Scouten, in 2 vols. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1961), 1: 46. For advertisements for both the second performance and the first printing, see *Daily Post* 3285 (31 March 1730); accessed 21 March 2022 through *Burney Newspapers* (*BN*).

42 Susan K. Ahern, "The Sense of Nonsense in Fielding's *Author's Farce*," *Theatre Survey* 23.1 (1982): 45–54, at 45; Robert D. Hume, *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728–1737* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 68; Albert J. Rivero, *The Plays of Henry Fielding: A Critical Study of His Dramatic Career* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1989),

31; Thomas Keymer, "Fielding's Theatrical Career," in *The Cambridge Companion to Henry Fielding*, ed. Claude Rawson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 17–37, at 24.

43 J. Paul Hunter, *Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 51.

44 Jill Campbell, *Natural Masques: Gender and Identity in Fielding's Plays and Novels* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 32; Brean S. Hammond, "Politics and Cultural Politics: The Case of Henry Fielding," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 16.1 (1992): 76–93; J. Douglas Canfield, "The Critique of Capitalism and the Retreat into Art in Gay's *Beggar's Opera* and Fielding's *Author's Farce*," in *Cutting Edges: Postmodern Critical Essays on Eighteenth-Century Satire,* ed. James E. Gill (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995): 320–34.

45 Scriblerus Secundus [Henry Fielding], *The Author's Farce; and the Pleasures of the Town* (London, 1730), 1; *ECCO*, accessed 30 May 2018. Although Fielding made later revisions, I follow the common editorial practice of using the first 1730 printing as my source text. Further references to this text are cited parenthetically.

46 A large body of scholarship addresses the relationship between the development of financial capitalism and literary genres like satire or the novel; see, in particular, Catherine Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England: A Culture of Paper Credit* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Comparatively fewer studies address the imaginative reckoning with market culture that took place on the eighteenth-century stage.

47 Ahern, "Sense of Nonsense," 47.

48 For a typical editorial gloss of the moment, see *The Author's Farce,* ed. Jill Campbell, in *The Broadview Anthology of Restoration and Early Eighteenth-Century English Drama*, ed. J. Douglas Canfield (Petersborough, ON: Broadview, 2001), 1782–1824. On the play's metatheatrical and satiric elements, see Hunter, *Occasional Form*, 54–5; Valerie C. Rudolph, "People and Puppets: Fielding's Burlesque of the 'Recognition Scene' in *The Author's Farce*," *Papers on Language and Literature* 11.1 (1975): 31–8; Lisa A. Freeman, *Character's Theater: Genre and Identity on the Eighteenth-Century English Stage* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 62–4; William B. Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684–1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 242; and John O'Brien, *Harlequin Britain: Pantomime and Entertainment, 1690–1760* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 199.

49 Peter Lewis, *Fielding's Burlesque Drama: Its Place in the Tradition* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1987), 97. Along similar lines, Sheridan Baker expresses disappointment that these characters "sing a brief duet with only the most general of political overtones." See Sheridan Baker, "Political Allusion in Fielding's *Author's Farce*, *Mock Doctor*, and *Tumble-Down Dick*," *PMLA* 77.3 (1962): 221–31, at 223–4.

[50] Henry Purcell's popular march is also burlesqued in John Gay's smash hit *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), a major intertext for *The Author's Farce*.

51 *Author's Farce,* ed. Campbell, 1787–8 n. 9, 1792 n. 19, 1793 n. 20, 1794 n. 24–5, 1804–5 n. 54; Baker, "Political Allusion," 221–6; Rivero, *Plays of Henry Fielding*, 43; and Charles

Woods, "Cibber in Fielding's *Author's Farce*: Three Notes," *Philological Quarterly* 44.2 (1965): 145–51.

52 Cibber's turn as Nobody might also be read as part of his strategy of "overexpression," as identified by Julia Fawcett: his taking on of highly and unusually physicalized roles in order to disrupt audience attempts to read his body and reclaim control over the narratives of his own celebrity. Julia H. Fawcett, *Spectacular Disappearances: Celebrity and Privacy, 1696–1801* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016), 3-4.

53 Elaine McGirr, "Shooting Star: Theophilus Cibber's Disastrous Self-Fashioning," in *Making Stars: Biography and Celebrity in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Nora Nachumi and Kristina Straub (Newark: University of Delaware Press, forthcoming).

54 Elaine M. McGirr, "'What's in a name?': *Romeo and Juliet* and the Cibber Brand," *Shakespeare* 14.4 (2018): 399–412, at 400.

55 Chelsea Phillips, "Bodies in Play: Maternity, Repertory, and the Rival *Romeo and Juliet*s, 1748–51," *Theatre Survey* 60.2 (2019): 207–36, at 210–12.

56 See the Appendix for documentation of the performances discussed throughout this section.

57 Joseph R. Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 2, 3.

[58] See also Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957, 2016), 13.

59 Andy Lavender, "Theatricalizing Protest: The Chorus of the Commons," *Performance Research* 24.8 (2019): 4–11, at 10, <URL>https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2019.1718424<EN>, accessed 25 October 2021.

60 *Cibber and Sheridan; or, The Dublin Miscellany* (Dublin, 1743), 71; *ECCO*, accessed 12 June 2018.

61 Ibid.

62 On repertoire, see Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

63 McGirr, "What's in a name?," 404.

64 Ibid., 399. The letter reads, in part, "After twenty-five Years being on the Stage, I am, without even a pretended Reason, excluded it; I have therefore resolv'd (with Permission) on taking a Benefit for my Child" (*Daily Post* 7887, 12 December 1744); accessed 20 September 2020 through *Burney Newspapers* (*BN*).

65 *Biographical Dictionary* (*BD*) 3: 257-58.

66 Freeman, *Character's Theater*, 18.

67 Ibid., 39.

68 Katharine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

69 On ghosting, see Marvin Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003)..

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