**New Perspectives on Home: Simon Stephens and Authorship in British Theatre**

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**Abstract:**

In his keynote speech at Theatertreffen in May 2011, Simon Stephens discussed how his confrontation with German theatre culture has irrevocably changed him as a playwright. He suggested that ‘when we travel abroad we see our home with a clarity that we may never have been offered before’, providing him with an intriguingly distanced perspective on British theatre culture. For Stephens, one focus of this new clarity has been his own role within the theatre-making process. His work in Germany – and in particular his relationship with director Sebastian Nübling – has transformed his understanding of theatre, from an art form with the playwright at its heart to a multi-authored, collaborative medium. This paper charts and investigates Stephens’ shifting notion of authorship as a result of his work in Europe and explores what implications this might have for evolving understandings of authorship within British theatre culture. By focusing on plays such as *Pornography* and *Three Kingdoms*, as well as drawing from interviews with Stephens, it suggests the potential of this collaborative approach for energising British writing traditions and challenging some of the restrictive assumptions that have congealed around the figure of the playwright in British theatre.

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Delivering his keynote speech at Theatertreffen in Berlin in 2011, playwright Simon Stephens suggested that ‘when we travel abroad we see our home with a clarity that we may never have been offered before’.[[1]](#footnote-2) In his professional practice, as one of the most regularly produced British playwrights of his generation on the continent, Stephens has been offered this clarity more than most. Since seeing German director Sebastian Nübling’s 2003 production of his play *Herons* (2001), Stephens has enthusiastically embraced European and especially German-language productions of his work, regularly discussing how his encounters with these often radical interpretations of his plays have inspired and galvanised him. As he put it in the same speech in 2011, ‘I went home realising that theatre practise [sic] is not simply about staging the imagination of a playwright but a multi-authored process of collaboration, conflict, intervention and exploration. It led me to reimagine how I write’.[[2]](#footnote-3)

This enthusiasm for a culture which, from a British perspective, is often considered to value the director’s vision over that of the writer is perhaps surprising from a playwright who emerged from the Royal Court tradition of new writing. Stephens was writer in residence at the Royal Court - the self-identifying ‘writer’s theatre’ - in 2000, before teaching on the Young Writers’ Programme between 2001 and 2005. He describes his residency at the theatre as ‘a crash course in playwriting’ and says that the understanding of his craft that he inherited during this time was ‘predicated on the notion that in the production of a new play, the night at the theatre is defined absolutely by what the writer imagines in the stage in their head’.[[3]](#footnote-4) This characterisation of the relationship between writer and production is broadly consistent with the discourse around British new writing. Partly driven by increases in arts funding under New Labour, the 1990s and 2000s saw a surge of interest and investment in the developing of new plays by British theatres and companies, including the Royal Court.[[4]](#footnote-5) As a result, new writing - defined by Jacqueline Bolton as ‘the first production of an individually authored unpublished play’ - has become an increasingly dominant force within British theatre, at the same time as a cultural narrative has formed around the idea of the ‘new writing play’.[[5]](#footnote-6) According to Aleks Sierz, for example, new writing is ‘literary, not performance based’, and ‘an individual playwright is at the centre of the theatre-making process’.[[6]](#footnote-7)

Departing from this culture of serving the writer’s implied vision to see the first German production of his work, Stephens approached Nübling’s version of *Herons* ‘with lots of warnings in place’.[[7]](#footnote-8) The caricature he paints of British perceptions of German theatre is exaggerated, but captures some of the fear that is tied up in encountering a theatre culture in which the director, as opposed to the writer, tends to sit at the top of the theatre-making hierarchy: ‘They’ll wrap all the actors in cling film and swing them from the ceiling on meat hooks, take out all your text and add in new text by Michel Houellebecq they suggested to me’.[[8]](#footnote-9) Instead of being horrified by the way in which his play had been re-imagined, however, Stephens discovered ‘something that I’d never envisaged was in the metabolism of my play but that felt completely truthful and utterly thrilling’.[[9]](#footnote-10) The playwright suggests that this moment of revelation ‘has informed every play I’ve written since’.[[10]](#footnote-11) Just how this encounter with German theatre has influenced Stephens as a playwright, as well as the possible implications this has for Britain’s playwriting culture, is what I will go on to consider. While both British and German theatre cultures are much more complex and diverse than the above sketch suggests, this article is concerned with a particular collision of British new writing and director-led German theatre-making practices. My interest lies less in the ways in which Stephens’s plays may differ on the page, and more in what these plays and their productions might reveal about Stephens’s changed attitudes to authorship and collaboration. What this in turn begins to suggest is a way for British new writing to move out of the shadow of the author and embrace a greater plurality of theatrical approaches.

In his review of *Blindsided* (2014), Andrew Haydon posits the idea that Stephens has now turned into two or three different playwrights: ‘There’s the Stephens who argues his work has been irrevocably changed by his encounter with German-language theatre […] There’s Stephens the medium, conduit, or adaptor […] And there’s the Stephens who wrote *Bluebird, Herons, Country Music*, and now *Blindsided’,* withthese latter plays representing for Haydon a continued realist aesthetic in Stephens’s writing.[[11]](#footnote-12) However, I would contend that the crucial point about Stephens as a playwright is not the way in which his plays are written, but his receptiveness to radically different productions of his texts. In this sense, all of his work has ‘been irrevocably changed by his encounter with German-language theatre’, but at the level of production rather than text. One example is *Punk Rock* (2009), which received a largely naturalistic production from Sarah Frankcom at the Royal Exchange before going on to be directed by Nübling with the Junges Theater in Basel in a production that made use of a stripped-back staging and stylised action, as well as significantly cutting the final scene. As Stephens stresses, offering two more recent examples, appreciation of these directors’ different approaches is not mutually exclusive: ‘I think I can take a position that can accommodate Sarah Frankcom’s production of *Blindsided* as being rehearsed at the same time as Sebastian’s production of *Carmen Disruption*’.[[12]](#footnote-13)

Two further examples shed particular light on Stephens’s encounter with German-language theatre – and, specifically, with Nübling – and how this has impacted upon his approach. The first of these, *Pornography* (2007), was his first commission for Nübling, written after the thrilling and galvanising experience of watching the director’s production of *Herons*. Stephens recalls his desire to ‘write him a play that would be both a present and a gauntlet’.[[13]](#footnote-14) With this intention, and following in the mould of predecessors like Martin Crimp and Sarah Kane, he crafted a script with no character names, virtually no stage directions, and the instruction: ‘This play can be performed by any number of actors. It can be performed in any order’.[[14]](#footnote-15) As Stephens puts it, ‘I wrote him a text that was as open as possible. It not only invites directorial interpretation, it is unstageable without it’.[[15]](#footnote-16)

*Pornography* is set at the time of the 7/7 bombings in London and consists of seven parts. These separate scenes link together a series of transgressions: a woman who leaks corporate secrets, a brother and sister who embark on an incestuous affair, a suicide bomber on one of the London underground trains on 7 July 2005 – to name just a few. While they take the implicit form of monologues and duologues, they offer a challenge to interpreters, who can perform them in any number of ways. For the world premiere, Nübling staged the play against a huge jigsaw puzzle of Bruegel’s *Tower of Babel*, which performers attempted to piece together during the show. Nübling also made the decision to cast two male actors in the incestuous brother-sister pairing, shifting the way in which that relationship would be perceived by audiences. Meanwhile other directors, such as Sean Holmes for the British premiere, have done away with the separate sections and instead intercut fragments of the different stories.

The form of the play, despite its openness, is meticulously constructed. Stephens’s model was the ‘seven ages of man’ speech from *As You Like It*; the play as written has seven sections (or ‘chapters’, as Stephens has described them), each structured around one of those seven ages, and it is set over a period of seven days: the first seven days of July 2005. Throughout these chapters, Stephens lightly threads repeated images and phrases, placed like markers for a director to interpret. One of these is the insistent question ‘Are you laughing or crying?’, asked by several different characters and hinting at the emotional alienation that is one the play’s core themes. The query, suggesting an inability to decode simple signs of human emotion, is an odd one, often standing apart from the text that surrounds it and in turn posing a question to both director and actors about how this emotional uncertainty might be realised in performance. One of the only stage directions, meanwhile, is the enigmatic ‘Images of hell. They are silent’.[[16]](#footnote-17) On the page, this has the authority of an instruction, but – like Kane’s provocative demands for suddenly sprouting flowers or rats carrying away severed feet – it offers no indication as to how this might be practically manifested. As a script, *Pornography* takes on the character of a series of hints, clues, suggestions and challenges. It is both present and gauntlet, as Stephens hoped.

Formally, *Three Kingdoms* (2012) would appear to be less experimental – at least on the page. Once again, the play was written specifically for Nübling, as part of an international collaboration between Teater NO99 in Tallinn, the Munich Kammerspiele, and the Lyric Hammersmith in London. The script takes the form of a detective narrative, tracing an international human trafficking network back from the discovery of a woman’s severed head in the Thames to the streets of Hamburg and Tallinn. Compared with *Pornography*, the script is relatively conventional; there are clearly drawn characters and even a few stage directions, as well as scenes that progress in chronological order and occur in specified locations. As Stephens jokingly points out, even his adaptation of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* - perhaps his most mainstream play to date - is less conventional on the page than *Three Kingdoms*, contradicting reductive claims that the basic architecture of his plays is necessarily altered for different performance contexts.[[17]](#footnote-18)

What is striking, however, is to compare the text with the performance. Nübling’s production staged a collision of different theatrical cultures, creating a kaleidoscopic, disorientating viewing experience. Some of the most memorable moments departed dramatically from Stephens’s script, spiralling off into scenes that appear nowhere in the text. One example of how the production moved away from the text was the character of the ‘Trickster’, an uncanny presence as embodied by performer Risto Kubar. Slithering out of gaps in the walls and leaping through windows, he invaded the space in the same way as he broke into and inhabited the architecture of the play, populating it with multiple meanings. Completely absent from Stephens’s text, this mysterious figure was the collaborative invention of Kubar and Nübling. Through both the disruptive nature of his presence and the sheer physicality of his performance, Kubar pointed towards an act of creation completely divorced from that of the playwright; Stephens himself asserts that Kubar was ‘as prominent an authorial presence in the experience of watching *Three Kingdoms* as me or Sebastian or [designer] Ene-Liis Semper’.[[18]](#footnote-19) The process of bringing *Three Kingdoms* to the stage, meanwhile, involved collaboration at every stage, from early conversations between Stephens and Nübling about the play’s themes, to rehearsal room improvisations which transformed into entirely new scenes.[[19]](#footnote-20)

In considering the relationship here between play and production, it is useful to turn to the reviews that *Three Kingdoms* received during its run at the Lyric Hammersmith, which provide an interesting snapshot of certain prejudices that persist within British theatre culture. In many of the mainstream critical responses to *Three Kingdoms*, the assumption of the playwright’s rightful primacy and the opposition of playwright and director underpin the judgements made. Michael Billington’s review betrays an anxiety about what Stephens is ‘trying to tell us’, a message which he deems to be obscured by Nübling’s ‘grossly self-advertising production’.[[20]](#footnote-21) Henry Hitchings, meanwhile, sets up the playwright/director opposition right from the outset, writing that ‘Simon Stephens’s new play is a detective story but director Sebastian Nübling has turned it into an extraordinary hallucination’; he later concludes that Stephens’s writing is ‘often masked by the polygot production’.[[21]](#footnote-22) In her survey of critical responses to *Three Kingdoms* for the *Guardian*, Maddy Costa reads into the mainstream reviews the message that ‘unfettered experimentation is not welcome here in the UK’, expressing concern that this restrictive view of our theatre culture is reflected in much of the work that makes its way onto British stages.[[22]](#footnote-23)

A helpful corrective is offered by Dan Rebellato, who methodically and persuasively argues against the assumptions outlined above. He points out that the play was written *for* Nübling, adding that if Stephens wrote the text with the intention of it being edited and interpreted, then Nübling ‘has been doing the good old-fashioned British thing of respecting the playwright’s intentions’.[[23]](#footnote-24) The same could be said of *Pornography*, which for all its experimenting still assumes the importance of the writer’s intention in the gesture of *allowing* interpreters to stage the scenes in whichever order they wish. Rebellato also demolishes the notion that *Three Kingdoms* represents a foreign, interventionist ‘director’s theatre’, pointing out that the various individuals involved in a production are always collaborating: ‘A play is both a complete literary object and a fragment that needs to be completed in performance. […] A production must – and always does – add things that aren’t in a play’.[[24]](#footnote-25) It may seem self-evident that all plays are collaborations, but the very fact that this needs to be pointed out by Rebellato is telling, illustrating how British new writing culture tends to prize the authorial role of the playwright.

At this point it is worth taking into account Stephens’s own perception of his place within the theatre-making hierarchy, which offers compelling evidence of how working in mainland Europe has affected him as a playwright. Speaking about his process, he insists that ‘all generation is collaborative’,[[25]](#footnote-26) while elsewhere he has described theatre as an art form that is ‘collaborative in its production and its reception’.[[26]](#footnote-27) Resisting the title of ‘author’ to describe his role, he has repeatedly emphasised the importance of the second part of the word ‘playwright’, pointing out that its etymology lies in craftsmanship rather than writing. This emphasis places the role of the playwright as one craft among others, in contrast with the romanticised idea of the writer as solitary, inspired genius. Another job title that Stephens has suggested is the appealingly egalitarian ‘language designer’, positioning him alongside, rather than above, his creative colleagues.[[27]](#footnote-28) With even more force, the writer has discussed his desire to ‘dismiss the notion of the authorial presence of the playwright […], which is reductive and limiting and silly to me’.[[28]](#footnote-29)

We can also see Stephens’s attitude towards authorship subtly inscribed in the texts themselves. Bolton has argued that ‘Stephens’s construction of character and narrative invites audiences into a process of observation, selection and comparison in order to interpret a story from the individuals, events, dialogue and images presented to them’.[[29]](#footnote-30) The invitation is therefore just as open to the directors, actors and designers who interpret Stephens’s plays. It is also worth briefly considering Rebellato’s argument that attempts by playwrights to unsettle or withdraw from authorship in fact underline the role of the author, whereas conventional new writing keeps the author invisible.[[30]](#footnote-31) I would extend this position, suggesting that by drawing attention to the work of the writer in this way, playwrights such as Stephens productively trouble their own position within the theatre-making process, rather than obscuring the work of the writer in order to maintain a complete and ultimately text-centric fiction. Whether or not there is radical political potential in this conspicuous withdrawal of playwrights from their plays, as Rebellato suggests, it is a move that has the potential to beg questions of Britain’s new writing orthodoxy.

It is possible to detect Stephens’s implicit questioning of authorship in both *Pornography* and *Three Kingdoms*. The text of *Pornography* is strewn with suggestive yet elusive imagery, requiring readers to draw their own connections between the separate scenes. Elsewhere, potentially dialogical speech intrudes with minimal explanation into what otherwise appear to be monologues. At the beginning of scene six, for example, we are offered the words ‘What the fuck are you talking about, Jason, eh? What the fuck are you like?’[[31]](#footnote-32) These questions are bracketed within quotation marks, but who exactly this speech is imitating within the monologue – or whether these words should be spoken by someone else entirely – is undetermined. Actions, such as those between the brother and sister as they ignite their incestuous passion or, in another scene, between a professor and his ex-student, are implied in the speech rather than specified in the text, lending events a certain ambiguity. Furthermore, the play invites judgements and interpretations rather than explicitly making them, offering multiple, complex ways of reading the characters’ various transgressions. The language of violence, for instance, suffuses the entire play, so that this violence has become normalised by the time we encounter the suicide bomber, thus troubling our response to him. We are left to construct our own story and our own versions of these characters.

Even in *Three Kingdoms*, the text contains frequent destabilisations of meaning that beg for plural treatment and interpretation. One such example is the character of Stephanie, a German woman who looks remarkably like the wife of Ignatius, one of the two British detectives, and recurs in a series of potentially hallucinatory episodes where meaning is continually posited, subverted and refused. During one of their dream-like nocturnal encounters, Stephanie says to Ignatius: ‘Put your hand there. Can you feel that?’[[32]](#footnote-33) This initiates an elliptical exchange between the pair, in which the positioning of Ignatius’s hand is never specified, offering multiple possibilities to be explored through performance. Despite much of the text conforming to the conventions of stage realism, there are also speeches – such as German pimp Aleksandr Richter’s expletive-littered invective – which break from the logic of the play, before logic itself increasingly fractures, demanding selection and interpretation of the material from readers and spectators. And while the text of *Three Kingdoms* is not as nebulous as *Pornography*, few stage directions are specified, and when they are, the very mood in which they are expressed is subjunctive: a character ‘might’ perform an action, or ‘maybe’ makes a certain move, deferring to the judgement of readers or interpreters. This is reinforced by Stephens’s note in the Preface to the script: ‘The play the reader is holding in his or her hand is simply *the starting point* of this specific production’.[[33]](#footnote-34)

So, if in theory all theatre is inherently collaborative and written scripts are only ever a starting point, why is Stephens’s approach of any interest to us? The very fact that his working practices are unusual enough to attract comment in a British context begins to offer an answer. Haydon even goes as far as suggesting that Stephens is one of the only British playwrights who has been allowed to embark on this kind of experimentation without directing his own work. Given the roots of Stephens’s career at the Royal Court and his current high status within the British theatre industry, this implies that conventional success is a necessary precursor to later rebellion. Haydon also points to the tendency of British directors to respect the intention of the writer as laid out in the text unless the writer offers a deliberate challenge to interpreters. Painting a caricature of the conventional position, but not without a note of truth, Haydon suggests that ‘writers still have to write a note at the start of their play saying: “Dear director, please \*do something\* with this play”’.[[34]](#footnote-35) Despite numerous challenges to it over the years, the orthodox approach is still to realise the world of a play by cleaving as closely as possible to the playwright’s intentions as outlined on the page. It is, as Stephens characterises director Ian Rickson’s point of view, about ‘staging somebody else’s way of seeing the world’.[[35]](#footnote-36)

This orthodoxy is not one that has simply emerged out of thin air. Instead, it is one that is produced and perpetuated by the dominant institutional structures of British theatre and, to borrow the words of Jen Harvie, their ‘ideological biases’.[[36]](#footnote-37) Institutional structures include the likes of funding, development and theatre criticism, as well as the artistic policies of various theatres. As Harvie puts it, ‘through these structures, the apparent truth of British theatre as fundamentally literary is reiterated so frequently and often uncritically that it is reinforced and naturalised’.[[37]](#footnote-38) Bolton, for instance, traces how the growth of new play development in the 1990s through structures such as writing groups and rehearsed readings reinforced a belief in the ‘unique vision’ of individual writers, arguing that ‘a pervasive rhetoric of individuality and originality serves to downplay, or even erase, the contributions of collaborating practitioners such as directors, actors and designers’.[[38]](#footnote-39) For evidence of the continued grip of such beliefs, one need only look at the mainstream critical response to *Three Kingdoms,* or at the bewilderment with which British theatres first greeted the script of *Pornography* (according to Stephens, then artistic director of the National Theatre Nicholas Hytner was not even sure that it was really a play).[[39]](#footnote-40)

It is in the striking formal statement of *Pornography* that tensions surrounding the orthodox British treatment of text and the contrast of Stephens’s experiences in mainland Europe are crystallised. While it is easy to see this play as a one-off departure from the rest of Stephens’s work, my proposition is that it only appears to be so. It is more accurate to view Stephens’s play as a disruption to British new writing conventions – much like Crimp’s disruptions before him – than as a rupture in the fabric of his own creative output. This text, with its absence of instructions for staging, prompts a reconsideration of how plays are typically realised in British theatres, acting as a provocation rather than as a flight from Stephens’s established approaches to writing. Just as Rebellato describes Crimp’s *Attempts on Her Life* as ‘both a strikingly influential innovation in dramaturgy and the most typical play in the world’, the seemingly radical architecture of *Pornography* simply draws attention to possibilities that are always available in the movement from text to performance.[[40]](#footnote-41) Add character names and stage directions, and *Pornography* is not all that different from Stephens’s other work; there is some substance in the playwright’s joke that it’s ‘just lazy typing disguised as post-structuralism’.[[41]](#footnote-42) Unlike David Lane, who traces a progressive arc in Stephens’s work from *Bluebird* through to *Pornography* and argues that this follows a twenty-first-century movement towards pessimism, I would suggest that the formal break of *Pornography* has as much to do with Stephens’s frustration with the restrictions of British theatre culture in the aftermath of his encounter with Europe as it has to do with the play’s implicit comment on society’s atomisation.[[42]](#footnote-43)

What this play provokes, therefore, is a reconsideration of the ways in which texts are treated in British new writing theatres, whether or not those texts themselves contain the same internal contradictions and deconstructive strategies as *Pornography*. Any written object, after all, is transformed in multiple ways through performance; as W. B. Worthen puts it, ‘performance does not so much interpret the text as rewrite it in the incommensurable idiom of the stage’.[[43]](#footnote-44) It is the implicitly inscribed attitude towards authorship in *Pornography*, not the material of the text, that offers the greater challenge to accepted orthodoxies. This view is supported by Stephens’s own reflections on what he has learned from his European excursions. He discusses how for German playwrights, whose text and wishes are often less central to the theatre-making context in which they work, ‘the whole process of writing a play becomes a consideration of the putting on of a play’.[[44]](#footnote-45) He reflects that working in Germany has made him write in a similar way, with an awareness of various possible productions, adding that ‘even the plays that appear to be quite naturalistic […] were written with the understanding that what I’m doing is writing a play’.[[45]](#footnote-46) While all playwrights of course realise that they are writing for theatre, what Stephens’s comment implies is that he now has a more open and nuanced understanding of the plural possibilities of performance. Whether he is writing *Pornography* or *Blindsided*, he writes with a heightened awareness of the process of theatre-making and of his role within that process as just one collaborator among many – even if he retains certain vestiges of the authorial playwright, such as play-texts published under his name.

What Stephens and his encounter with German-language theatre suggest is the possibility of a theatre which does not enshrine the authorial intent of the playwright at the expense of interpretation; which is open to various different collaborations; and in which Frankcom’s production of *Blindsided* can sit alongside Nübling’s production of *Three Kingdoms*. Thanks to Stephens’s unusual position, straddling both British new writing and continental theatre-making practices, his work has the potential to initiate a shift from inside British institutions, bridging the gap between Britain and Europe and between supposedly text-based and non-text-based ways of creating theatre. As we have seen, Stephens also draws attention to his presence and role within the process, thereby disrupting the fiction of a complete, self-contained, authoritative text. A play such as *Pornography* is an invitation to interpreters, but one that offers an alternative option that was always there if only directors, actors and designers chose to seize it. Through his use of working practices influenced by his time in Germany and his liberating attitude towards his own plays, Stephens points from within the new writing establishment towards multiple different – and often, in the case of his productions, contrasting – ways of treating the text. Or, to give the last word to Stephens, ‘contradictions are creative, aren’t they?’[[46]](#footnote-47)

1. Simon Stephens, ‘Skydiving Blindfolded, Or Five Things I Learned from Sebastian Nübling’, 8 May 2011, Haus der Berliner Festspiele <http://www.theatertreffen-blog.de/tt11/artikel-zu/stueckemarkt/skydiving-blindfolded/> [accessed 27 March 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Simon Stephens, unpublished interview with the author, 12 February 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. See Jacqueline Bolton, ‘Capitalizing (on) new writing: New play development in the 1990s’, *Studies in Theatre and Performance*, 32:2 (2012), 209-225. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Ibid., p. 209. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Aleks Sierz, *Rewriting the Nation: British Theatre Today* (London: Methuen Drama, 2011), p. 44; p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Stephens, unpublished interview with the author, 12 February 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Stephens, ‘Skydiving Blindfolded’. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Stephens, unpublished interview with the author, 12 February 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Simon Stephens, ‘Introduction’, *Plays 2* (London: Methuen Drama, 2009), p. xix. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Andrew Haydon, ‘Blindsided’, 3 February 2014 <http://postcardsgods.blogspot.co.uk/2014/02/blindsided-manchester-royal-exchange.html> [accessed 3 April 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Stephens, unpublished interview with the author, 12 February 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Stephens, ‘Introduction’, *Plays 2*, p. xix. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Simon Stephens, *Pornography,* Ibid., p. 214. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Stephens, ‘Introduction’, Ibid., p. xix. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Stephens, *Pornography*, p. 215. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Stephens, unpublished interview with the author, 12 February 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Simon Stephens, unpublished interview with the author, 16 November 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Michael Billington, ‘Three Kingdoms’, Guardian, 9 May 2012 <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2012/may/09/three-kingdoms-review> [accessed 3 April 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Henry Hitchings, ‘Three Kingdoms’, Evening Standard, 9 May 2012 <http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/theatre/three-kingdoms-lyric-hammersmith--review-7727877.html> [accessed 3 April 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Maddy Costa, ‘Three Kingdoms: The shape of British theatre to come?’, Guardian, 16 May 2012 <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2012/may/16/three-kingdoms-shape-british-theatre-or-flop> [accessed 3 April 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. Dan Rebellato, ‘Three Kingdoms’, n.d. <http://www.danrebellato.co.uk/spilledink/2013/3/12/three-kingdoms> [accessed 3 April 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. Stephens, unpublished interview with the author, 16 November 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. Stephens, ‘Introduction’, *Plays 2*, p. xxii. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. Stephens, unpublished interview with the author, 16 November 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. Jacqueline Bolton, ‘Simon Stephens’, in *Modern British Playwriting: 2000-2009: Voices, Documents, New Interpretations,* ed. by Dan Rebellato (London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama: 2013)*,* pp. 101-124, p. 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. Dan Rebellato, ‘Exit the Author’, in *Contemporary British Theatre: Breaking New Ground,* ed. by Vicky Angelaki (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) pp. 9-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. Stephens, *Pornography,* p. 222. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. Stephens, *Three Kingdoms*, p. 98. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. Stephens, ‘Preface’, *Three Kingdoms*, p. i (original emphasis). [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. Andrew Haydon, ‘“Properly” Revisited’, 27 January 2014 <http://postcardsgods.blogspot.co.uk/2014/01/properly-revisited.html> [accessed 3 April 2014]. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. Simon Stephens, unpublished interview with the author, 12 February 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. Jen Harvie, *Staging the UK* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. Ibid, pp. 114-115. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. Bolton, ‘Capitalizing (on) new writing, p. 221. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. Bolton, ‘Simon Stephens’, p. 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. Rebellato, ‘Exit the Author’, p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. Simon Stephens, Political Theatre Salon, 21 November 2013 <https://www.actorsandperformers.com/actors/advice/128/training-and-skills/professional-skills/political theatre salon parts one and two> [accessed 10 April 2012]. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. David Lane, *Contemporary British Drama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), pp. 33-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
43. W.B. Worthen, *Print and the Poetics of Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
44. Simon Stephens, quoted in Duska Radosavljevic, *Theatre-Making: Interplay Between Text and Performance in the 21st Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
45. Ibid, p. 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
46. Stephens, unpublished interview with the author, 12 February 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)