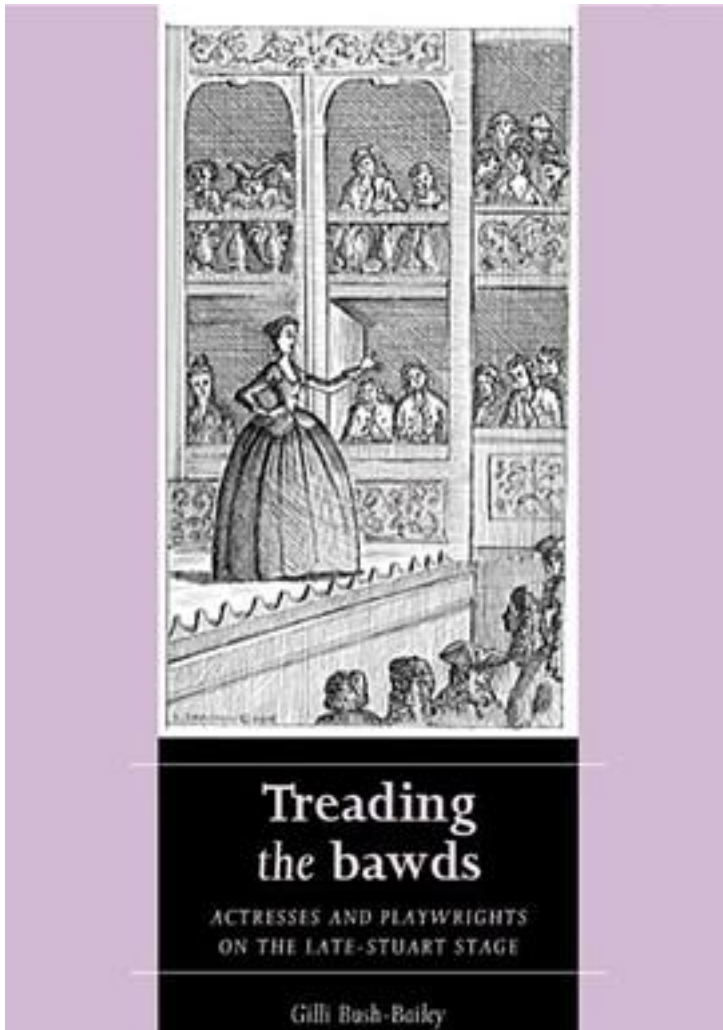


Treading the Bawds



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Treading the bawds challenges the traditional boundaries that have separated the

histories of the first actresses and the early female playwright. It brings the approaches of new histories and historiography to bear on old stories to make alternative connections between women working in the business of theatre. Drawing from feminist cultural materialist theories and historiographies, Bush-Bailey analyses the collaboration between the actresses Elizabeth Barry and Anne Bracegirdle and women playwrights such as Aphra Behn and Mary Pix, tracing a line of influence from the time of the first theatres royal to the rebellion that resulted in the creation of a player's co-operative. This is a story about public and private identity fuelling profit at the box office and gossip on the streets and investigating how women's on- and off-stage personae feed each other in the emerging commercial world of the business of theatre. Employing the narrative strategy of the micro-history, Bush-Bailey offers a fresh approach to the history of women, seeing their neglected plays in the context of performance. Competition with the patent house resulted in a dirty tricks campaign that saw William Congreve supporting the female rebels or, as this book suggests, being supported by them. By combining detailed analysis of selected plays within the broader context of a playhouse managed by its leading actresses, Bush-Bailey challenges the received historical and literary canons, including a radical solution to the mysterious identity of the anonymous playwright 'Ariadne'. It is a story of female collaboration and influence with the spotlight focussed on the very public world of women in the commercial business of theatre. This book is for those interested in a new way of reading 17th century theatre and for all students of performance, culture, women's studies and gender history.

作者介绍:

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