Response

In our summer 1995 issue, we published a review of Anthony Raspa's edition of John Donne's *Pseudo-Martyr*, by our contributor Judith S. Herz. We have received the following exchange of comments on the review:

*May I please ask you to print a response to the well-intentioned but nevertheless misleading impressions in the review of my edition of John Donne's **Pseudo-Martyr** by Judith Herz. There is no evidence whatsoever that the title page of a Renaissance text was set up by its author, and this holds for **Pseudo-Martyr**. The line breaks in the biblical texts on **Pseudo-Martyr**'s title page had nothing to do with Donne's manuscript or with the original scriptural verses; they were made by the compositor to fit his space on the page (when he came to the end of a line, he started another one, as in the rest of the text) so that the line breaks used in my edition are not an "error." The opening bracket on l. 17 of p. 9 is dropped (which is not an editing "error") because there is no closing bracket to go with it — the review ignores the annotation in the textual apparatus at the bottom of the page. The modernization of "cyted" to "cited," is the kind of silent textual emendation followed regularly by Donne's editors to standardize the use of the alphabet, without replacing the genuine 1610 phonetic alternatives that then existed for modern letters. As for "wherein" for "wherin," *mea culpa*, but then there is nothing in my edition entitled the reviewer's **Table of Contents**. Finally, contrary to your reviewer's statement, Donne did not know Hebrew, and I know of no authority who says he did. In **Pseudo-Martyr** (1610), **Devotions** (1624), **Ignatius His Conclave** (1611) and **Essays** (c. 1615), literally all of Donne's references to past and present Hebrew writers are to the Latin translations of mainly German, Italian and Spanish translators (Like Reuchlin and Galatinus, sometimes converts to Judaeism). There is in all these works only one reference to a Hebrew word, "besurah," which is not quoted and which Donne annotates to two lexicons. The detailed placing of **Pseudo-Martyr** in the context of Donne's other works declared missing in the review would have required another 525 pages.*

Anthony Raspa
Université Laval

Anthony Raspa is correct to note some errors in my review. His volume does not have a "Table of Contents"; I was referring to his "Table of Chapters" and I apologize. Also, I should have acknowledged that he indicates the dropping of the bracket in his note to p. 9. If I am going to point out errors, I should not make any myself. That said, I stand by my comments. My point was not that Donne supervised the setting of the title page, but to question the point of changing any details when one presents a page as if it were a diplomatic transcription. As to changing spelling: I did note the decision to make silent changes. What I query, however, is the wisdom of the practice in an edition the purpose of which is to present Donne's text as historical document. I would also note that much recent editorial practice, as exemplified by the multi-volume Variorum Edition of Donne's poetry (Indiana University Press) is to make only typographical emendation silently (reducing long S; substituting W for VV, etc.). Furthermore when I quoted "wherin" and "authours," it was to point out that they were not covered by the comments on p. lxxxvii of the Introduction. "Cited," which is covered by his emendation principle, was quoted (probably unnecessarily) in a phrase with the word "authors" to which I did wish to call attention. As to Donne's knowing Hebrew (a minor point in the review): Walton says so, and so does Bald ("his knowledge of Greek was far less than his knowledge of Hebrew" [p. 40]). Bald also suggests that Donne studied Hebrew with John Layfield (p. 281). Simpson shows that Donne's knowledge, while certainly not like that of Lancelot Andrewes, still was sufficient to allow him to use it "in approximately 140 passages of his Sermons." She suggests that Donne learned Hebrew at Oxford, and continued studying it when preparing to take Orders (vol. 10, 306-312; 329-344). All this notwithstanding, there is a great deal to appreciate and learn from this volume, especially its provision of multiple theological and historical contexts for reading *Pseudo-Martyr* — an appreciation I hoped to convey in the review and am happy to reiterate here.

Judith Scherer Herz
Concordia University