contrasting fates of good and bad protagonists, . . . becomes merely a way to organize the presentation of two contrasting secular progressions: Witgood's 'prosocial' integration into an individualistic, competitive, and economically motivated society, and Dampit's 'antisocial' withdrawal through drink and his decline through the material consequences of his alcoholism" (p. 94). But the "merely" is misleading, as he notes, since what Middleton has registered is something like the breakdown of Christian epistemology. Allegory does not work any longer as a mode of representing or understanding the cut-throat competition among Witgood, Lucre, Hoard, Dampit, and all the others. Ironically, their allegorical tag names serve only to flag that inadequacy. Martin's analysis of Middleton's philosophical stance is complemented by his concerns with sharp economic practice in the *Trick* chapter and with what he calls "patriarchal paradoxes" (p. 115) in the *Chaste Maid* chapter. Though there needs no ghost come from the grave to tell us that dads often undercut their own authority, the "second main comic principle" that Martin finds at work in *Chaste Maid*, namely "the paradox that restraint not only opposes but also in various ways generates license" (p. 125), significantly forwards his case for the power of sceptical thought to destabilize communal values. When the much restrained Moll Yellowhammer escapes the watchful eye of her parents through the back door of apparent death and resurrection, it is theatrical performance, not spiritual transcendence that resolves Middleton's elaborate romance plot.

The readings of individual plays in *Between Theater and Philosophy* are sensible and fun to read, at least when the jargon of Theory is held in check. Phrases like "city comedy often dialogizes absolutist ideology" (pp. 83–84) and "to dramatize the improvisational and paradoxical reproduction of patriarchal socio-symbolic structures" (p. 155) will not, I suspect, stand the test of time at all well. Nor do they lend precision to an often insightful first book for serious students of Jacobean drama offered by an already very accomplished scholar. I would venture to predict that Martin's second book will rely less heavily than this one does on the deconstructive and materialist philosophers whose heyday was the mid-80s.

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Eugene R. Cunnar and Jeffrey Johnson, eds. *Discovering and (Re)Covering the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2001. Pp. viii, 408.

In one of the essays on the neglected lyrics of Joseph Beaumont which round out *Discovering and (Re)Covering the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric*, Paul Parrish observes, "As we move beyond a 'great poets' approach to literary history to a more inclusive understanding of what it meant to read and write poetry in the seventeenth century, we are obligated . . . to look at the wide range of poets, women and men . . . who are not found in our anthologies, textbooks, or critical studies" (p. 331). This volume admirably serves the purpose of providing for scholars,

teachers, and students that “more inclusive understanding” of seventeenth-century poetry, as well as the conditions of its conception, production, and reception. Eugene Cunnar and Jeffrey Johnson emphasize their editorial intention to foreground “women writers and high church and Anglo-Catholic writers” in order to provide “an ‘antirevisionist’ correction to the hegemonic emphasis on Protestant/Puritan aesthetics and culture that has long dominated scholarship” (p. 15). Their declaration suggests a polemical edge to the volume, and to individual essays, but this proves in general not to be the case. The judicious and wide-ranging selection of essays is quite latitudinarian. It participates in the scholarly project of rewriting the map of the seventeenth-century lyric in several significant ways. It sharpens the profiles and upgrades the literary status of a number of interesting and significant poets. It problematizes the categories of “Catholic” and “Protestant” poetics into which individual expressions of piety in seventeenth-century poetry have been too radically polarized. It admirably summarizes recent feminist engagement with seventeenth-century poetry, and directs it forward in promising ways. It heightens attention to the poetic sequence as the meditative and argumentative structure of the soul’s implied progress, in which the individual lyric stages its drama. Some of the essays in the volume are more theoretically engaged than others, but all are variously and refreshingly engaged in the practice of close reading upon which any vigorous theorizing of the literature of the period must depend.

Each of the fifteen essays in this volume deserves a more comprehensive critical description and engagement than this brief review can offer. I try here simply to describe each essay’s treatment of one of the two questions which organize the concerns of all the contributions: the “poetics” question, *i.e.*, representations of piety in relation to “Catholic” and “Protestant” paradigms; and the “woman writer” question, *i.e.*, the complex negotiations with patriarchal literary tradition and genre undertaken by women in devotional writing. These are hardly exclusive categories, nor are they exhaustive, for none of the essays is single-minded, and all the essays intersect and indirectly reference one another in various ways.

Several essays reposition the ongoing controversy over “Catholic” versus “Protestant” poetics by demonstrating the complex resistances, exchanges, interpenetrations, and negotiations between the two religious cultures, as well as the nuanced range of meditative and rhetorical choices made by particular poets in representing their spirituality. Scott Pilarz describes the “pious utilitarianism” (p. 42) of Robert Southwell’s Jesuit mission in late Elizabethan England as pastoral and reconciling, rather than dogmatically driven or politically subversive. Southwell defends the loyalty of English Catholics and represents his work with them as the cultivation of pious faithfulness in adversity and repentance through remorse (pp. 54–55), rather than political subversion of the Elizabethan religious regime. Pilarz’s portrait of Southwell’s poetic self-representation interestingly contrasts with Kari Boyd McBride’s description of Southwell’s homoerotic subjectivity (pp. 30–31) as part of her ambitious comparative study, “Gender and Judaism in

Meditations on the Passion: Middleton, Southwell, Lanyer, and Fletcher." McBride studies the genre of the Passion narrative in late Elizabethan and earlier Jacobean poetry as "a kind of universal subject/object machine productive of both community and individual identities" (p. 19). Her thesis, historically framed, is that the determinations of "Protestant" and "Catholic" are less crucial to the formation of English piety than the power of the gospel narratives to "other" marginal groups in English culture, in particular Jews and women. In "Drummond's Artistry in the Flowres of Sion," Robert C. Evans, like McBride, eschews the Protestant/Catholic polarization. Yet whereas McBride's attention is on the ideological imperatives which underwrite devotional verse, Evans attends to formal properties of wit, versification, rhetoric, and influence, in particular Drummond's continental influences, in order to resuscitate Drummond's nimble, flexible, allusive, and musical verse from the longstanding verdict of his friend Ben Jonson that "they smelled too much of ye schooles and were not after the Fancie of ye tyme" (p. 121).

Several essays study individual variations in centrist and high-church Anglican piety as instances of the complex weave of Catholic and Protestant influences and tradition in the early mid-century. In "William Austin, Poet of Anglianism," Kate Narveson argues that the intellectually sociable and underestimated Austin shared with Donne a "contented conformity" (p. 143) of the middle way, nurturing a reformed piety of the individual conscience with the deep and rich resources of English traditional liturgy and piety, before Laudian enforcement and Puritan reaction "re-polarized lay piety" (p. 162). George Klawitter undertakes an editorial reconstruction of the "vacillating recusant" (p. 66) William Alabaster's "Ensign" sonnet sequence in order to demonstrate that, "as a preparation for the soul-searching to come, the allegiance to two faiths at various times, imprisonments in three countries, the examinations and cross-examinations by numerous prelates and clerics, these heartfelt verses were a first luster of the ardor that kept Alabaster formidable" (p. 78). "Patrick Cary's Education of the Senses," by Sean McDowell, offers a parallel case study in ecclesiastical ambivalence: McDowell examines Cary's thirteen religious lyrics as spiritual exercises in the rationalization of sense experience to perceive everyday objects and experiences "as signs leading to God" and wedding the newly consecrated self to virtue (pp. 174–75). Cary composed these poems in the brief period of his Benedictine novitiate (p. 166), but McDowell compares their positive view of the senses and their meditative structure to the Anglican Richard Brathwaite's 1620 *Essaies Vpon the Five Senses* (p. 168) to illustrate the common meditative culture of Catholic and Protestant intellectuals.

Paul Stanwood also stresses the sequential coherence of Joseph Beaumont's *Minor Poems*, although the organizational principle, built around annual commemorations of the poet's birthday and baptism, has to do with temporal succession and recurrence, as the poet disciplines himself to look beyond the trials and sufferings of "civil wars" raging in English society and in his own heart for the sweet and ravishing grace of a passionately loving God. Stanwood notes the ways in which the music, the sensuality, and the witty paradoxes of the humanist high

churchman Beaumont resemble those of his Peterhouse friend in exile, Richard Crashaw. But one interestingly hears strong echoes of the plainer and more grounded Herbert in many of Beaumont's lyrics, a point which Paul Parrish elaborates in his reflective, categorizing overview of Beaumont's lyrics (p. 324). In company with the essays on Beaumont, Barry Spurr's "Felicity Incarnate: Rediscovering Thomas Traherne" examines Traherne's unique celebratory intensities, particularly attuned to the mysteries of the Creation and the Incarnation. Describing Traherne as an "Anglo-Catholic in embryo" (p. 278), Spurr suggests that his verse flows from a post-Revolution revival of traditional Anglican spirituality in conjunction with the testimonial mode of intensified personal faith that flourished in English Puritanism (p. 276).

As the several essays mentioned study the ways in which poets fashioned an image of the devotional self in a religiously polarized period out of the religious common store of meditative and exegetical resources, several other essays study the ways in which women found both opportunity and constraint in the fashioning of self through the devotional lyric. This is not to say that women were not also concerned with the assemblage of a personal piety out of the resources of both Protestant and Catholic sensibility; the particular social status and conventional religious and psychological expectations of women necessitated an extra dimension of self-consciousness in their meditative and compositional practice. In her close reading of An Collins's poetry, Ann Hurley characterizes Collins as "mainstream" in her Protestantism, "rejecting too narrow a definition of 'the elect' while avoiding the dangers of Arminianism" (p. 234). Collins's plain style, diverse metrical exercises, and organization of lyrics in meditative sequence bring the force of scripture into personal focus and articulate a faith in the cumulative rather than immediate experience of the gospel (p. 237). Michael Rex's essay on religious devotion in *Eliza's Babes*, published after the Civil War in the early interregnum, shows how its tantalizingly anonymous aristocratic author composes her devotional self in a period of social turbulence through a structure which he considers "similar to an Ignatian meditation" in its development, while grounding itself in "moderate Protestant theology" through its search for a stable personal relationship to God and its stress on the biblical Word as both focus and guide to inspiration (p. 213). Eliza's projected union with Christ serves as a socially liberating commitment that sets limits to a husband's worldly claims upon her as spouse and allows her to defend the publication of her poems as legitimate "offspring" and evidence of her true love for God.

Three essays treating Aemilia Lanyer indicate her growing importance to scholars "as a situated author, transforming and being transformed by the vortex of religious ideas that energized England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" (p. 32). Kari Boyd McBride's essay, already mentioned, shows how Lanyer, in the *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, subtly diffuses the guilt for Jesus' death conventionally managed by the "othering" of Jews, and "allows for the construction of an autonomous female identity," without "an absolute othering of men" (p. 35). In "Dreaming Authorship: Aemilia Lanyer and the Countess of Pembroke,"

Debra Rienstra provides an account of revisionary female influence that inverts the lyric and exegetical conventions, as well as the class hierarchies of the patriarchal literary tradition. In Lanyer's dedicatory poem to Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke and author, with her brother Philip, of a ground-breaking set of translations of the Psalms, Lanyer claims a major female precursor for her own claims to exegetical freedom and originality, to prophetic insight, and to the audacity to publish. Patrick Cook completes the triad of essays on Lanyer with an analysis of "The Description of Cooke-ham" as a devotional lyric. Cook shows how Lanyer pioneers in the conventions of the country-house poem — a genre that, with this lyric, she helps to create in English — by treating landscape, not as "a spatial embodiment of the owner's power and authority," but a "contemplative opportunity" whereby "a community of women can fashion themselves spiritually" (p. 106).

Patricia Demers and Donna J. Long both write essays exploring the efforts of women writers to accommodate the conventions of devotional verse to the life experiences of women. Demers's complex comparative study, "*Penseroso* Triptych: 'Eliza,' An Collins, Elizabeth Major," frames a consideration of the religious melancholy of these three writers with theoretical reflections drawn from Kierkegaard and Julia Kristeva. Demers discovers features of "sobriety" and "eschatological insight" (p. 191) joining "Eliza," Collins, and Major, as each encounters the melancholia of loss and social corruption and, out of that encounter, informed by biblical reflection, is able to "fashion an idiosyncratic faith that sustains and buoys their burdened and occasionally aphasic spirits" (p. 188). In "It is a lovely bonne I make to thee": Mary Carey's 'abortive Birth' as Recuperative Religious Lyric," Long focuses on a single writer whose experience of miscarriage and the death of infants was tragically common to women of the early modern period. Although Long may exaggerate the degree to which conventions of elegy permitted men "greater expression of grief" than women (one thinks of the extraordinary self-restraint of Ben Jonson's great elegies for his son and his daughter), she argues rather compellingly for Carey's original and recuperative transformation of her loss: "Carey discovers in her miscarriage, in her desire for children, and in her body, metaphorically and literally, her potential for a state of grace" (p. 263).

As should be evident from the range of descriptions of these essays, Cunnar and Johnson's volume is something of a healthy jumble. Several sorts of thematic coherence and interaction emerge from the variety, even as the volume eschews any totalizing disposition toward ideological unity. The editors have been willing to let the critical reflections they have gathered be as various as the kinds and characters of the verse and the poets they consider. The several essays which reclaim and reposition previously lost or undervalued women writers tend toward more deliberative theoretical intervention in the writing, and toward a stronger advocacy of its poetic value, whereas treatments of already recognized "minor" male writers tend toward more traditional technical and biographical criticism, and remain more modest — at times too modest — in their claims about the poetic

value of some of the really good work in question. The yield is a fruitful kind of critical table-talk, vigorous, good-natured and modest in self-presentation, an eclectic range of vivid individual voices. It's appropriate that this volume is published both in the honor and in the spirit of the magnanimous and judicious scholar John Roberts. In the encomium which concludes the volume, Claude J. Summers reminds us how much our current critical and historical understanding of seventeenth-century literature depends upon the massive, detailed, and generous annotated bibliographies and variorum editions of the poetry of Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, and others to which Roberts has devoted himself. *Discovering and (Re)Covering the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric* is a worthy response to, and continuation of, such projects.

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Margo Swiss and David A. Kent, eds. *Speaking Grief in English Literary Culture, Shakespeare to Milton*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2002. Pp. xi, 365.

In the newly rejuvenated critical discourses on the history of mourning, *Speaking Grief* is a very helpful interlocutor. This collection springs from an MLA session on "Grief Expression in Seventeenth Century English Literary Culture" (1997), but it has gone far beyond that to include essays by a wide range of critics, from Louis Martz, John Shawcross, and Paul Stanwood to a younger generation (Donna J. Long, W. Scott Howard, Michael McClintock) and many others in between. The essays range in period across the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and include studies of English drama, lyric poetry, and prose. The authors examined are likewise pleasingly diverse, including not only Shakespeare, Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, Marvell, and Milton, but also Collins, Thornton, Carey, Hammond, and Heywood, some of whom may be new to many readers. The collection's twelve essays are capped by an afterward by Ralph Houlbrooke, the eminent social historian of death in early modern England, who suggests several new directions for this fascinating field of cultural and literary history.

As Houlbrooke points out in his afterward, the essays concern themselves in particular with two or three central issues. The first of these is the social history or narrative arc of English culture's responses to grief in the seventeenth century. Are there patterns that develop over the course of the century: rigorism replaced by affective grief (the now-standard narrative), or perhaps spiritualized grief becoming increasingly secular, or perhaps the demonization first of the religious right's excesses and then the left's? In suggesting these fruitful lines of inquiry, the essays imagine a variety of different histories. Second, several essays explore the question of gender in relation to grief: the particular associations of women with weeping; the class/domesticity issues in gendered grief; the distinctions between women's writing and men's in elegiac modes; the uses and appropriations