Christopher Ivic and Grant Williams, ed. *Forgetting in Early Modern English Literature and Culture: Lethe's Legacies*. London and New York: Routledge, 2004. Pp. x, 195.

In this volume, editors Christopher Ivic and Grant Williams have assembled an interesting and occasionally provocative group of essays that demonstrates the important role forgetting played in early modern English literature and culture. In their introduction, Ivic and Williams argue forcefully that understanding the early modern period requires that we pay attention to what has been forgotten, repressed, deposited as residue, and displaced. If memory is "immanent within and not transcendent to culture," then forgetting also must "circulate within culture, possessing its own discourses and practices; it can no longer remain the negative space of an obsolete model of memory" (2). Furthermore, forgetting "performs vital and complex cultural work," and "it is very much the silent yet active partner of memory in the social sphere" (3). This wide-ranging and cogent introduction may, ultimately, be the best feature of the entire volume for although some individual essays are excellent, the collection taken as a whole falls somewhat short of the high promise of the introduction.

The editors, for example, argue that forgetting "permits scholars to rethink meta-narratives about the period and thereby promises to challenge and expand the present critical vocabulary with which we understand early modern English culture and its literature" (14). Few of the essays, however, take up this important question of periodization or use forgetting to challenge preconceived metanarratives. Only three of them—the contributions by Ivic, Baker, and Summit—attend in any detail to the relationships between early modern England and its medieval past. In their discussion of the phrase "to forget oneself," Ivic and Williams argue that its "ubiquity raises profound questions about the crucial role forgetting plays in pre-modern notions of social, racial, and gendered identities" (5), but this sweeping claim remains generally unsupported by the assembled essays. While some of the authors obliquely consider questions of social identity, class and economic status are conspicuously absent. Gender and race are similarly under-represented in the volume. Elizabeth Mazzola's densely packed essay comes closest to a consideration of race. She argues that although slavery was crucial to England's economy and its New World aspirations, it is marginalized in Renaissance discourse, and Spenser's *Faerie Queene* epitomizes this facility at "pushing to the margins those cultural materials that were instrumental in shaping its center" (129). Thinking about slavery, however, is not synonymous with thinking about race. The volume is equally thin in the area of gender studies. Garrett A. Sullivan argues persuasively for the intertwining of forgetting and lethargy, and his study demonstrates that forgetting is as much a set of corporeal practices as a mental lapse. He aptly points out the effeminizing nature of lethargy, but he does not further explore female lethargy or consider what it means for a woman to "forget herself." Elizabeth D. Harvey's essay begins by observing that, for the medical writer Helkiah Crooke, amnesia is central to procreation, for women must forget the pain of childbirth in order to want more children. Harvey then

uses this point to argue that Crooke himself similarly relies on and yet forgets this reliance on Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Harvey's and Sullivan's essays are interesting and persuasive on their own terms. Their arguments, however, are not primarily focused on gender and sexuality, and so having asserted that forgetting can change how we think about the important conceptual categories of gender and race, editors Ivic and Williams have not collected essays that deliver effectively on that claim.

If scholars interested in race, gender, and sexuality may find the volume disappointing, those interested in early modern historiography, politics, and religion will find more to interest them here. As Grant and Ivic point out in their introduction, the "(re)formation of national subjects in early modern England owed much to amnesia" (3). David J. Baker's fine essay, "'The religion I was born in': forgetting Catholicism and remembering the king in Donne's *Devotions*," argues that Donne's late work is acutely aware of his and his nation's Catholic past, a flexible and tolerant awareness of Catholicism that mirrored James I's own stance. In a similarly historicist vein, Ivic's essay explores the ways in which *I Henry IV* stages a strategic forgetting of the Wars of the Roses, remembering them as an inter-familial squabble among brothers and thus minimizing the deep rifts that marked the different factions historically. The volume closes with Jennifer Summit's excellent essay, reprinted from *ELH*, on the Protestant reinvention of the library from an "ecclesiastical receptacle of written tradition to a state-sponsored center of national history" (165). She argues convincingly that Book 2 of *The Faerie Queene* shows this "dialectic of remembering and forgetting that began in the library" (166). Summit's and Ivic's essays, incidentally, epitomize the dominance of Shakespeare and Spenser in this volume, for seven out of the total eleven contributions consider forgetting in the works of these two authors. As Ivic and Williams argue in their introduction, "To recover forgetting's active involvement in early modern culture means contesting Spenser's and Shakespeare's status as cultural mnemons" (15). True enough, but it must be noted that the focus on Spenser and Shakespeare takes away from the volume's overall breadth and depth. For example, readers interested in how forgetting operated in the early decades of the Reformation or in Milton's works will find little here of direct relevance.

One of the more gratifying aspects of this volume is the way in which the essays speak to one another. This internal conversation is evident in the first two essays where William Engel and Garrett A. Sullivan both use the same visual images (the frontispiece to Raleigh's *History of the World* and the entry on "Memory" in Richard Day's *Booke of Christian Praiers*) to make complementary arguments about forgetting and corporeality. And these two arguments about forgetting's embodiments provide a useful foundation for Grant Williams's essay showing how two early modern commonplace books represent forgetting as material, and especially textual, excess. Other essays present a variety of contexts for thinking about forgetting. Amanda Watson, for example, argues that questions of forgetting lie at the center of early modern debates over rhyme; Philippa Berry shows how the fluid geography outside Athens in *Midsummer Night's Dream* is a space of forgetting and thus of nomadic identity; and Zachariah Long uses anti-theatrical tracts and questions of spectator-

ship in *As You Like It* to argue that the theatre itself was a site of forgetting. Overall, while the excellent introduction seems hopeful that this volume will help inaugurate a new interest in forgetting, the volume as a whole takes a medium-sized step into new, exciting critical territory rather than a large stride. The essays do not quite congeal into a larger critical conversation, perhaps because of the very variety of approaches and subject matters gathered here. Scholars and upper-level students of Renaissance literature and culture, however, will find this a solid book overall and one that may furnish a useful starting point for further inquiries.

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Elizabeth Spiller. *Science, Reading, and Renaissance Literature: the Art of Making Knowledge, 1580–1670*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Pp. xi, 214.

Elizabeth Spiller's thesis in this book is that seeing early modern natural philosophy and imaginative fiction as sharply opposed is anachronistic. So, she proposes that the "two cultures" model which has been used to describe intellectual life in the last few decades does not work for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, where both scientific and poetic writing are characterized and unified by an interest in "making knowledge."

Spiller's introduction distinguishes the history of knowledge from the history of ideas (with which she does not propose to deal), and sketches her fundamental argument, that early modern writers from Sidney to Hooke saw knowledge as *made*—made by various kinds of art and artifice, including the writing of poetry and the contriving of laboratory experiments, and by the active experiences of reading and seeing. This argument is then worked out in four chapters, each of which brings a text from experimental natural philosophy together with a fictional text. In the first, Sidney's *Defence* and Gilbert's *De magnete* are linked by the idea of making worlds: the golden world of the poet, and the globe-shaped magnets or terrellas of Gilbert's work. The second reads Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and William Harvey's *De generatione animalium* with an eye to their "shared interest in theorizing the creation of knowledge": for both, the double semantic field of conception, the relationship between making babies and making ideas, is important. The third (part of which first appeared in *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* in 1999) extends the range of the book beyond England to examine Galileo's *Sidereus nuncius* and Kepler's vision of life on the moon in the *Somnium* as intertwined engagements with questions of knowledge and seeing. The fourth turns back to England, discussing Robert Hooke's depictions of what he could see through the microscope and Margaret Cavendish's responses to Hooke and other natural philosophers in the *Blazing world* and elsewhere. An afterword fast-forwards to the late twentieth century, reflecting on the questions of fact and fiction raised in responses to the Sokal hoax