

## Recent Studies in the Restoration and Eighteenth Century

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"Studies" is the right word for the books of 1974, just as "research" would be the wrong one. No one is turning up much in the way of new data, but everyone is shifting around the known counters and urging his views. There is much dispute about terms and emphasis, much synthesizing, consolidating, reconsidering, rehabilitating. One doesn't exactly want a new rush on the Public Record Office, but it would be nice to find out something really new about a major eighteenth-century writer or convention or literary practice. Many of these new books add to our awareness. Few add to our knowledge. Yet some are superb as works of art and thought, like the one with which I begin.

With *The Restoration Mode from Milton to Dryden* (Princeton University Press) the copious Earl Miner completes his monumental study of seventeenth-century poetry. Here the emphasis is on narrative and thus on Milton, Butler, and Dryden and the high, low, and middle styles they bequeathed to their Augustan successors. Davenant and Cowley, Rochester and Oldham are examined in some detail too. Miner also resuscitates Sir Francis Kynaston's *Leoline and Sydaris*, "probably the best of the 'good reads' provided by the seventeenth century," and William Chamberlayne's *Pharonnida*, "a bizarre but in many ways great poem." The "mode" Miner delineates is the public one, replacing now both the "private" mode of Metaphysical poetry and the "social" of Cavalier. "Action now replaces vision as a prime ideal. . . . Rather than seeking intense moments at which time seems to vanish, or than lamenting the evanescence of things, poets and readers have come to concern themselves with a historical scale, the sense of a *now* clearly related to a past and a future." Miner's frequent allusions to Saintsbury suggest the kind of literary history he's writing: it is leisurely, assured, sensible, authoritative, and even vastly entertaining, as in his horrified fascination with *Hudibras*, "the worst great poem in the language." Saintsburian too is the health of the approach: Miner eschews needless controversy and subtlety; he registers his own taste freely and is not afraid to express his delight in his favorite texts; nor does he refrain from underlining general truth when he finds it. As he says,

"What is known to be central to the experience of all readers deserves more attention than critics normally choose to devote to it." In his freedom from pedantry and every kind of littleness, in his unflinching instinct for central issues, he deserves to be called *classical*. He ends this way: "I think [Dryden's *Fables*] the finest poetic achievement in the century apart from *Paradise Lost*," and the reason he thinks so suggests the values of his own book: "In its variety, its comprehensiveness, and especially its humanity it is . . . almost free of connection with any century."

Miner uses almost 600 ample pages to enact his humane discriminations. William Myers, in *Dryden* (London: Hutchinson, 1973), uses fewer than 200, with the result that his synthesis is somewhat straitened and superficial. He focuses on Dryden's understanding of history and politics and on the way he learned to harmonize his "heroic" vision and technique with his "modern" political perceptions. Believing originally in Divine Right and God's visible presence in history, he came to grips finally with the realities of the new secularism, and, as Myers says, "had the task of integrating his faith in divine love and human goodness with a steady, thoroughly modern awareness of history's infinite capacity to violate every conceivable kind of value." Perhaps Myers' most interesting demonstrations are of Dryden's "mythical method," his skill at "manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity" which Eliot saw Joyce virtually discovering in *Ulysses*. Thus even the *Aeneid* translation glances at "Stuart craft and Stuart weakness." Myers' book is able and serious, but students seeking out his sources are going to be baffled at the card catalog by spellings like Thomas H. Fujimara and James M. Osborne.

In *Dryden's Classical Theory of Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 1975) Edward Pechter elucidates the method and structure of Dryden's critical theory rather than its occasions. A "tranquil equilibrium" between "justness" and "liveliness" is the basis of Dryden's sense of art, and the relation between the two is not *either / or* but distinctly *both / and*. From this sense stems Dryden's instinct to compare without determining, as he tends to do with genres (epic, tragedy) and exemplary authors. The balancing act is not Christian, because it avoids hierarchies; nor is it proto-Hegelian, because it does not dialectically transcend one of the poles. It is rather, in Pechter's sense of the term, "classical," harmonizing variety, calmly welcoming alternatives, treasuring "cumulateness." Subtly but sensibly Pechter shows the way Dryden's prose transitions (like "At the same time") betoken this classical habit of mind, as does the dramatic interplay of ideas in the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*. Pechter has written a

sophisticated book with something of his author's own comprehensiveness.

The admirable California Dryden has almost reached the halfway mark. Two new volumes have appeared in 1974. Volume IV, *Poems 1693-1696*, edited by A. B. Chambers, William Frost, and Vinton A. Dearing, contains the translations of Juvenal and Persius (with the Latin on facing pages), together with the *Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire*, the translations of Ovid's *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria*, and much else. As always, the editors' commentary is excellent, and the only error I've noticed is on p. 510, where Johnson's *Dictionary* is dated 1735. Volume XVIII, edited by Alan Roper and Dearing, is entirely devoted to Dryden's 1684 translation of Louis Maimbourg's *Histoire de la Ligue*, never reprinted, let alone edited, until this moment. In his extensive Commentary, a masterpiece of historical scholarship, Roper shows the way *The History of the League* "bears upon some of the more important questions we have come to ask about Dryden . . . questions about his sense of history and translation; his conversion—the obscure pathway from *Religio Laici* to *The Hind and the Panther*; his prose style and the mind it reveals."

This is the place to celebrate the triumphant conclusion of the Yale *Poems on Affairs of State*, now (1975) finished with Volume VII: 1704-1714, edited by Frank H. Ellis. Elegant and suggestive as the Introduction is, witty as the Preface is, the real distinction of this volume lies in the precise detail of the annotation, as well as in the accuracy of the textual editing. Indeed, the annotation of the whole seven volumes constitutes a virtual biographical dictionary, a *Who's Who* in politics and affairs from Charles II to the death of Anne. The whole work, for which the general editor, George DeF. Lord, deserves the warmest praise, becomes an indispensable historical resource. It is a work of "research" in the pleasant old-fashioned sense, and I say thank God for it.

"The purpose of this volume," said David M. Vieth of his Rochester edition of 1968, "is not to provide comprehensive criticism of Rochester's poetry, but to make such criticism for the first time possible." In *Satires Against Man: The Poems of Rochester* (University of California Press) Dustin H. Griffin rises to the challenge and discloses a Rochester "whose work—however iconoclastic and strikingly individual—grows out of literary tradition." If in the early parts of his study Griffin is a trifle obvious, he is always sensible, moderate, and judicious. The poet he reveals is one who writes from "an actively unsettled mind," one whose method is discontinuity and fitfulness, a constant changing of direction betokening an active,

even a “creative,” principle of skepticism. Especially valuable in Griffin’s study is his revelation that Rochester’s poems, even the bawdiest, very often have not Man—i.e., “pride”—or gentility as their satiric target but the affectations of contemporary poetry, as practiced by Waller, Cowley, and Dryden. As a result of Griffin’s fine ear for phrasal echoes, Rochester’s songs are treated here with an unprecedented literary sophistication. Admirable too is the temperance with which Griffin handles matters of sexuality and obscenity. He invokes Freudian theory intelligently to suggest what Rochester’s obsession with imperfect enjoyments may imply both artistically and biographically. Griffin also performs a service by setting forth the aesthetic and intellectual contexts of *A Satyr* and showing by implication that in addition to constant guzzling and swiving Rochester was doing a great deal of reading and thinking. Griffin’s Rochester is a mind as well as a G-U system, and to educe a mind where many have been content to behold a mere chaos of willfulness is an impressive original achievement.

If the venue of Griffin’s book is, happily, the library, that of Graham Greene’s popular, unannotated *Lord Rochester’s Monkey: Being the Life of John Wilmot, Second Earl of Rochester* (Viking) is the coffee table. The numerous large black-and-white and color prints are undeniably gorgeous, but the text is mundane and the biographical narrative, resting on the standard testimony of Burnet, Pepys, Evelyn, Hearne, Marvell, and Savile, is pieced out with jejune conjecture: “What must his feelings have been when. . . .” Greene’s Rochester is “consistent” in a way Griffin’s is not. Despite Vieth’s firm attribution, Greene can’t believe Rochester wrote “To the Post-boy” because to do so he would have to imagine him treating his own libertinism with inconsistent contempt. Much of Greene’s biographical interpretation rests on the poem “The History of Insipids,” not by Rochester, as Frank H. Ellis has shown, but by Freke. When he does cite poems demonstrably by Rochester, Greene bowdlerizes, choosing the least inflammatory readings even when less authoritative and *causa pudoris* omitting whole stanzas, like the tenth of “The Maimed Debauchee.” Greene’s Rochester remains the old rake and party-goer, the standard “spoiled Puritan” rather than the literary intellectual revealed by Griffin. Greene’s biography offers no reason to forsake Pinto’s *Enthusiast in Wit*, despite all its faults, as the standard life.

Two books re-examine Restoration drama with a view to its defense. In *Topics of Restoration Comedy* (St. Martin’s Press) Donald Bruce aspires to redeem Restoration comedy by showing it as “a debating comedy, and as morally purposeful within its debates.”

Treating characters like real people, he focuses on some of their topics of debate: city vs. country, the social status of wit, modishness vs. honor, plain-speaking vs. simulation, epicureanism and satiety, constancy and jealousy. But the argument is too loosely organized and the book tries to do too many incompatible things. One chapter consists only of canned biographies of seven playwrights, while another discusses with sophistication and originality the influence on the plays of Creech's translation of Lucretius. A much more important book is Geoffrey Marshall's *Restoration Serious Drama* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1975), a sensitive, skeptical inquiry into the conventions of the heroic play and the adequacy of modern reasons for disdaining it. If we scorn the heroic drama, Marshall wants us to do so for the right reasons. Its use of the high style is not a good reason, for its speakers are high personages engaged in "epic" and dynastic actions. Its apparent mechanical adherence to love-honor conflicts is not a good reason, for on examination the conflicts prove more complex and multifold than that formula suggests. Its reliance on simile rather than metaphor is not a good reason, for its moral purpose—serious and "humanistic," Marshall argues—requires its texture to be lucid and formal and "explicit." Instructed by Gombrich, Marshall perceives that our convention associating informality with verisimilitude has no universal validity and doubtless will strike future inquirers as one of our most ridiculous affectations. "Our decorum," Marshall says, "is different from Rymer's, but ours is every bit as pervasive and as profound to our daily and literary lives." The standards of consistency and verisimilitude we invoke to reject the heroic plays "are functions of one's standards of decorum, and not absolutes." And he goes on: "No one today would argue that our own comedy or serious drama is not highly ritualistic, even though we feel, or believe, or sense, or 'know,' that the characters are more 'real' or convincing than those in earlier drama. Theater of the absurd, musical comedy, kitchen-sink plays, rock operas, well-made plays, the nude drama, and the living theater—the names alone suggest the decorums of our day and suggest character types, probable situations, probable responses, probable sets, probable costumes, probable plots." If Marshall's theorizing is occasionally not subtle enough, he never evades the issues willfully, and granted its premises his argument is developed with unremitting intelligence and style. I don't think this book will restore heroic plays to popularity—although I don't know why people who dote on Puccini couldn't be brought to like Otway—but it should force facile contemners of the heroic play to re-examine and refine the rationale of their disgust.

If you want to rehabilitate a discredited body of literature from the past, the readiest way is simply to invest it with the values of the present. In recovering eighteenth-century poetry, for example, you assert that every detail coheres into an "organic unity." You find that its allusiveness—especially to Christian myth—gives it a powerful symbolic dimension anticipating the way of *The Waste Land*. You discover that like nineteenth-century and modern poetry it operates less through explicit utterance than through suggestion and evocativeness. In their attempt to assign heightened aesthetic, mythic, and moral value to eighteenth-century writings, critics like Maynard Mack, Earl Wasserman, Martin Price, Anne Ferry, Aubrey Williams, Brendan O'Hehir, Robert Hopkins, and Barry Slepian have done these things. So says Irvin Ehrenpreis in "Explicitness in Augustan Literature," the main essay in *Literary Meaning and Augustan Values* (University Press of Virginia). And he says that in doing so they have gravely misrepresented the literature, reading into it anomalous values and thus perverting its essence. I think he is largely right. And I think on his title-page should appear the tag Swift, from whom as a polemicist he has learned so much, placed on the title-page of *A Tale of a Tub*: "*Diu multumque desideratum.*"

The trouble is, as Ehrenpreis says, that Augustan literature is generally explicit; that it utters wisdom with little need for competitive or reinforcing suggestiveness; and that the wisdom it utters it finds most often in commonplaces. Since we are naturally impatient with both didacticism and explicitness, we have to pervert the literature if we're going to take it to our bosoms or descant about it with an appropriate enthusiasm in classrooms. Thus, as Ehrenpreis excellently says, "Some friends of Augustan writing . . . have dwelled on the allusiveness, the indirection, the subversiveness of the authors. In poems that sound conventional they have heard iconoclasm. In plays that seem decadent they have found moral health. Poems that look rambling have been called in and issued with elegant forms." Ehrenpreis does all this with such Swiftian *brío*, such joyous exasperation, that he comes very close to constructing a satire disguised as a critical essay. The satire is on modern pride which imagines its temporary values as universal; on modern scholarly illiteracy, which finds *Paradise Lost* lurking beneath every eighteenth-century poem because it hasn't enough Latin to read the *Aeneid*; and on modern moral pretentiousness, which finds Liberalism in Augustan writers or which associates itself with the current artistic and emotional prestige of Christian meaning, especially if such meaning can be detected in works which appear blasphemous or libertine. Ehrenpreis' tonic exposé is finally a critique of the pathetic

needs of the modern personality, which to sustain its faith in itself must resort to acts of "totalitarian analysis," reading modern values into places where they do not reside at all. "I believe," he says, "that some academic critics, in their obsession with coherence and unity—disguised as organic form—have produced a dogma as mischievous as the pseudo-Aristotelian rules." I think this gloriously retrograde essay, sparkling with good sense, is one of the most important utterances of modern literary scholarship. It is destined to be a focus of argument for decades.

A shorter version of it is available as one of the six essays in *New Approaches to Eighteenth-Century Literature*, selected from the English Institute sessions of 1972 and 1973 and edited by Phillip Harth (Columbia University Press). Donald Greene leads off with a pleasantly cantankerous lament over the persistence of Victorian superstitions about eighteenth-century literature. Ralph Cohen, in "On the Interrelations of Eighteenth-Century Literary Forms," argues that "No literary work in the period can be understood without recognizing that it is a combination of parts or forms" rather than an embodiment of some pure generic paradigm. Ralph Rader, in "The Concept of Genre and Eighteenth-Century Studies," warns of ignoring "the native [i.e., generic] limits of significance in literary structures." Lawrence Lipking engagingly suggests some new avenues for research and speculation. Finally, Leo Braudy, in "Penetration and Impenetrability in *Clarissa*," psychologizes vigorously, inviting Ehrenpreis' disapproval by asking anachronistic nineteenth-century questions about "the identity of the self" in eighteenth-century works, and inviting Rader's by ignoring generic distinctions at the outset. It is a provocative collection, but the best essay is Ehrenpreis'.

In *The Augustan Vision* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson) Pat Rogers has produced an unpretentious but likable survey of social, political, intellectual, artistic, and literary life from 1688 to 1760. As a "kind" the book lies halfway between A. R. Humphreys' survey *The Augustan World* (1954) and A. D. McKillop's handbook *English Literature from Dryden to Burns* (1948). Rogers deals first with political and social realities, including the facts about money, voting, and the class system. After interpreting the importance of Newton and Locke, he considers such things as Bath and Beau Nash, dress and accessories, transportation and communication, the book trade, the position of women, and conventions in crime ("Every age has its special crime. . . . In Tudor England it was treason. . . . For the Victorians it was . . . murder. . . . The archetypal Augustan crime . . . was theft.") He then surveys minor writers before considering more exten-

sively Swift, Pope, Gay, and Johnson; and Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Sterne, and Smollett. On every page he sparks off acute and suggestive points, like "the primal Augustan terror is that things will *merge*" or "almost all the leading writers seem to have been exiles or émigrés, orphans or outcasts." Rogers perceives the uniqueness of eighteenth-century literary structures and notes the consequences for meaning of works being "assembled out of separable units." He perceives that for the eighteenth-century writer *revision* most often means that he will *lengthen* the work: "Nobody," he observes, "made a fetish of artistic economy." Rogers deals with so many authors—even John Toland is persuasively reconsidered—that his book can be used as a virtual handbook. And a trustworthy one: the scholarship, which is kept admirably unobtrusive, is solid and up-to-date. One hopes that some American university press will issue an edition here. That would be an opportunity for the author to expand the too-spare index and to check the accuracy of quotations: there are slips on pp. 203 and 235.

It would be a pity if the banality and amateurism of most books in the Twayne's English Authors Series tempted scholars to overlook one excellent item, Richard I. Cook's *Bernard Mandeville*. This fully informed survey, the first book to deal with all Mandeville's writings, is subtle and witty. Conceiving of Mandeville as primarily a literary man, Cook opens up the artistic issues with lucid, incisive analyses responsive always to the complexities of Mandeville's destructive wit. With its critical checklist of Mandeville studies, this is a valuable and much needed book, perhaps the best eighteenth-century study issued by Twayne since Donald Greene's *Samuel Johnson* (1970). One of Mandeville's minor works, *Wishes to a Godson with Other Miscellaneous Poems* (1712), has just been issued in facsimile by The Rota at the University of Exeter. It may suggest that Mandeville's relation to both Butler and Swift as poets needs further study.

One phase of the modern recovery of Pope, whose beginning was Sherburn's *Early Career* (1934) and whose mid-point was the Twickenham edition, may be said to be completed now with Emmett G. Bedford's and Robert J. Dilligan's *Concordance to the Poems of Alexander Pope* (Gale Research Co., 2 vols), based on the Twickenham edition and including the Homeric translations and everything else, including variants. The work, assisted by computer, is immense: 1560 pages in two large quarto volumes, the whole weighing ten pounds. As the editors point out, their *Concordance* is nearly five times larger than Edwin Abbott's (1875), based on Warburton's edition of 1751. The editors have included many valuable features which will make it possible to deal with the texture of Pope's



verse in new ways. For one thing, they retain the typography of the Twickenham text, including apostrophized contractions, large and small capitals, and italics. They supply both an alphabetical and a rank-order list of word-frequencies, the latter registering Pope's interesting reliance on monosyllabic words. And they include both alphabetical and rank-order lists of hyphenated compounds: Pope's favorite is *God-like*, a reminder of the prominence of the Homeric translations in his total production. Grateful as users will be for these dividends, they will have cause to regret one feature. Under each word the editors have chosen to arrange Pope's lines in the order in which they appear in the Twickenham edition, from the *Pastorals* at the beginning to the *Odyssey* at the end. This means that a reader consulting, say, the entry under *All* finds 2,871 lines occupying fourteen pages, which he must plow through looking for the line he has in mind. A better arrangement would order lines according to the metrical position of the word, from the first syllabic position to the tenth. Besides being more convenient, such an arrangement would facilitate study of Pope's stylistic habits. But that is the only defect I find in this *Concordance*, which is sure to stimulate intensive new studies of Pope's language.

Frederick M. Keener's brief *An Essay on Pope* (Columbia University Press) seeks to rescue Pope from the twin threats of historicism and formalism by attending to the dynamics of his career and posing the question: how does a poet who begins as "a veritable Galahad in the . . . early poems," secure in his role as an "absolutist," committed to dualistic *either / or* patterns of perception and thought, become the problematic, empirical intelligence visible in the *Moral Essays* and the Horatian imitations? Keener's answers to this question are not unambiguous nor easy to locate in his rather rambling discourse. But we are to gather that a crucial cause of Pope's change was the shock of having his duplicity exposed in the *Odyssey* translation matter of 1725-1726. "The affair of the *Odyssey*," Keener perceives, "made the role of public saint impossible to sustain any longer."

Keener finds things in Pope's poems that tease him: "How, for example, did the earthly lover gain entry to Belinda's heart, and how, at the end, does the lock rise into the sky? What movement is there beneath the exquisite amber surface of the *Pastorals*? Why does Father Thames enter *Windsor-Forest*? What is the final disposition of Eloisa's mind? Why may the four . . . *Moral Essays* stand in their present order?" Good questions, and some of Keener's answers are satisfying, especially his perceiving that in the *Pastorals* Pope's shepherds are a miserable "maladjusted lot" whose behavior gives the lie to Pope's insistence that such poems show "the best side only of a

shepherd's life." As Keener pleasantly remarks, "If we have been shown 'the best side only of a shepherd's life,' who would want to witness the worst! If this was the Golden Age, what must succeeding eras have been like?" But as Pope's poems grow more complex and the apparent discontinuities between genre and local texture more pronounced, Keener's insights grow less valuable, and before he is finished he commits himself to exactly the sort of views Ehrenpreis so acutely reprehends. For example, Keener seems to expect a sort of "organic" psychological consistency and coherence in the narrative of *The Rape of the Lock*. But actually the people are in the poem for the sake of the literary and moral satire, not the reverse; and the poem cannot be both a successful literary satire and a credible "novelistic" narrative with all elements exactly in place. In this respect it is like *Gulliver's Travels*. A similar anachronistic expectation of dramatic unity impels Keener to find an overwhelming problem in the *Essay on Man*: how can Pope address both Bolingbroke and "Presumptuous Man!" in the same poem, in one breath caressing the peer, in the next calumniating the "Vile worm!"? But the problem recedes to insignificance once we weigh accurately the constituent of satire in the poem and consider the accumulation of odds and ends generically characteristic of a *satira*. Pope invites into his proceedings whatever he conceives will operate to shame pride. The ideal that seems to lurk behind Keener's *Essay on Man* is the late-romantic poem, especially the dramatic monologue. Other problems sensed by this author likewise diminish once we overcome our anxiety over being denominated formalists and bring appropriate generic expectations to bear. Considering the *Moral Essays*, Keener sees it as a puzzling question "why in epistles designedly moral, in essays denominated 'Ethic,' a reader encounters so few characters who are good?" One answer is, Because they are satires.

Keener wants Pope to be attractively modern (to be "pluralistic" is a good thing), and finds it to his credit that "Pope came to incorporate more personal experience in his poems than had any English poet preceding him." That sounds a little like the old attempt to redeem Pope by finding pre-romantic stirrings in him. Directing attention to Pope's "modern" complexities, Keener attaches anachronistic attitudes to him. He wants Pope to be a pacifist, and he wants a man who after all was a proud landholder and improver of villa, garden, and grotto to feel guilty about acquiring private property.

In a book whose value does not lie in new facts, the value must reside in the greater accuracy and point of new readings. Keener's sometimes disappoint a reader seeking Pope's explicit meaning. Of "The Muse obeys the Pow'r" (*Dunciad*, IV, 628) Keener asks: "Which

Muse is she? Is she a Smithfield muse . . . ? Or is she the muse of Homer and Virgil . . . ?” The answer is that she is Pope’s muse, his power of writing poetry (see Johnson’s *Dictionary*, s.v. *Muse*), and the evidence that even she finally must obey the power of Dullness is that the poem is forced to close down soon after. Similarly Keener says that in the *Dunciad* “Time shall take the poet and his song,” but Pope’s text (IV, 5-8) indicates that it is not Time but “Ye Pow’rs,” i.e., Chaos and Night, who are going to “take at once the Poet and the Song.” Hence the petition that they suspend their force awhile, long enough for the Fourth Book to be uttered—which they do. But it would be wrong to leave the impression that all Keener’s “close readings” are so loose: many are precise and illuminating, and his book is one that all students of Pope will find challenging.

“As knowledge advances,” Johnson says, “pleasure passes from the eye to the ear, but returns, as it declines, from the ear to the eye.” That could stand as a melancholy comment on Clarence Tracy’s *The Rape Observ’d* (University of Toronto Press), an elaborately illustrated edition of *The Rape of the Lock*. But if there is no news in it for scholars, its pictures, consisting of eighteenth-century engravings, trade-cards, and maps, as well as photographs of artifacts, are charming, and the innocent reader at whom the book is aimed will be instructed by seeing a Thames barge, a sword knot, a “press’d watch,” sedan chairs, a furbelo, a manteau, an ombre table and cards, an amber snuffbox, and a clouded cane. Still, the devotee of poetry will be thankful that some things, like Heroes’ wits, cannot be pictured so literally. The book is beautifully produced, a testimony, like Mack’s *The Garden and the City*, to the distinction of Toronto’s designer Allan Fleming. The book would make a great present to give a sophomore with artistic leanings who needs to be seduced into majoring in English.

I have already reviewed (in the *TLS*) Martin C. Battestin’s *The Providence of Wit: Aspects of Form in Augustan Literature and the Arts* (Clarendon Press), and what follows is largely quotation from that piece. Battestin’s theme is that “Form is the glory of Augustan art.” After emphasizing neo-Platonic and Pythagorean tendencies in early Augustan theology and aesthetics, he shows principles of order presiding in selected works by Pope, Gay, Fielding, and Goldsmith. He also deals with *A Tale of a Tub* and *Tristram Shandy* as examples of opposite intentions in disrupted form, Swift’s indicating by dramatized antithesis his “real” commitment to coherence and order, Sterne’s enacting his genuine skepticism about the possibility of perceiving a uniform, shapely, and significant universe.

Battestin’s most original and impressive perceptions are theological. Few modern scholars have known enough theology—

including the minutiae of polemic and controversy—to sense all the Christian implications in eighteenth-century writings. Battestin recovers a number of divines and deploys their writings as an intellectual rather than merely antiquarian resource. Animated by an unapologetic ethical seriousness, he illuminates all the familiar texts he's chosen by this recovered light, showing “the influence of the doctrine of Providence upon narrative (or dramatic) structures” and exhibiting the correspondence some eighteenth-century writers felt between the Providence presiding over the universe and the Prudence that, ideally, governs human choices.

But there are problems with Battestin's view. If cosmic and natural order betokens the operations of Providence, then writers committed to that conception will pay homage to the principle of order by constructing their writings in orderly ways, especially writings celebrating Prudence, the microcosmic analogue of Providence. Ideally and logically, they should. But actually most do not. Augustan aestheticians and artists give loud lip-service to Aristotelian principles of structure, but in practice their habitual mode of construction is serial, “episodic,” accumulative. The order in which we encounter individual things in *Trivia*, or *The Seasons*, or *Gulliver's Travels*, or *Night Thoughts*, or *Joseph Andrews* is not governed by the formal imperative Battestin would like to behold. In order to argue that the messiness of *A Tale of a Tub* consistently celebrates by antithesis Swift's implicit instinct for order, Battestin has to simplify it, making the voice too consistently that of the Hack and not noticing those many places where Swift's own angry voice breaks through in passionate, careless violation of artistic and philosophic consistency. By selecting his examples too narrowly and by interpreting “form” with too close an attention to small elements and not enough to large, Battestin conveys a misleading impression of the central structural habit of Augustan writing. He underestimates its lawlessness and rowdiness and jokiness, in part because he underestimates the importance of Locke in encouraging epistemological skepticism long before Sterne.

If people were logical creatures and actually valued what they say they value, Battestin's view of eighteenth-century writing as typically obsessed with form would be more persuasive. Augustans do talk about form all the time, and their symmetrical couplets and sentence structures do manifest it in a high degree. But these serial instants of symmetry disguise the absence of symmetry in the whole. The parts, as Coleridge said of the marbles in the bag, touch without adhering. Thus I am unable to agree with Battestin's findings about the Augustan sense of form, but I do value his superb separate acts of in-

terpretation: his reading, for example, Pope's *Pastorals* and *Messiah* as one poem; his analysis of the *fiat lux* motif in Pope; his analysis of the shield of Achilles in Pope's *Iliad*; and his illuminating encounters with *Trivia* and *Tom Jones*. He has written a serious book, one of the most important of the year.

Next, two books on madness. In *Nightmares and Hobbyhorses: Swift, Sterne, and Augustan Ideas of Madness* (Huntington Library), Michael V. DePorte canvasses seventeenth-century medical treatments of lunacy and considers the conventions of the comical-monitory visit to Bedlam before analyzing the very different ways *A Tale of a Tub* and *Tristram Shandy* exploit the contemporary understanding of derangement: the one work reveals its author's torment by absolutes, the other indicates its author's delight in relativism. If DePorte is acute on Sterne, he is brilliant on Swift, and he makes his long chapter on Swift into an eminently sensible solution of the *persona* problem. Recognizing that literature is not geometry, DePorte allows a sometimes inconsistent play of multiple voices within a Swift work. For example, rather than twisting everything in the *Tale* to make it consistent with satire of a single voice or a single writer, DePorte allows the work its own cacophonous "form" and concludes: "What we have is simply Swift acting out the manner of writers he hates." Indeed, "The constantly shifting perspectives of Swift's satire, which work so well to catch the reader out, suggest the restlessness of his intelligence. . . . His . . . awareness of incongruity [is] too great for him to be wholly satisfied with any single perspective." Thus in the *Tale* "He can envision Christianity as a coat, but he cannot forget that coats mask as well as protect the body. . . . Given a metaphor his impulse is to work out its every possibility." Swift's predicament, DePorte perceives, "is that he was an absolutist who found few things he could accept, or even imagine as absolute." We may expect the fictive voices of a writer to be multifold and contradictory when that writer is the Swift accurately described here: "On the one hand [Swift] believes that moral absolutes are imperative for civilized life. On the other hand he realizes that there can be no proof for the existence of ethical and religious absolutes. He has the empiricist's instinctive contempt for the visionary and theoretical; yet he cannot allow the ultimate foundation of ethics to be empirical unless he gives up the possibility of absolutes and admits that values are merely the creations of particular societies and have no independent existence." With this humane understanding of the complications involved in "taking positions," DePorte negotiates his way around numerous tempting reductionisms.

Turning to *Tristram Shandy*, he indicates what its technique of vagrancy and its mad characters have in common with *A Tale of a Tub*, but asserts the all-important difference: "Walter and Toby . . . fit into their world in a way Peter and Jack do not fit into theirs. Peter and Jack are despised outcasts in a world which Swift, from profound distrust of private judgment, has invested with inflexible norms." In Sterne the traditional idea of madness is de-moralized, and lunacy turns benign. The reason is that "Sterne was perhaps the first eighteenth-century writer of consequence to shake himself free of the fear of subjectivity." "Being well deceived" is now disjoined from Christian and Tory absolutes, and hobbyhorsism grows therapeutic. *Nightmares and Hobbyhorses* is full of quiet good sense, although its best points on both Swift and Sterne seem rather remote from the scholarly and medical background the book establishes in its early stages. It is almost as if there were two books here, the one literal, the other literary. One error exemplifies the perils of aural proofreading: Albert M. Lyles's *Methodism Mocked* appeared in 1960, not 1916.

But to return to madness. Max Byrd's *Visits to Bedlam: Madness and Literature in the Eighteenth Century* (University of South Carolina Press) suffers by comparison with DePorte's book. Byrd's is bolder and appears to be more resourceful, drawing into its net fertility rites, Plato, *King Lear*, Philoctetes, Faust, the city of Boston, Michel Foucault (not mentioned by DePorte), *The Story of O*, Mailer, and De Sade. But for all this breadth of consideration, Byrd comes up with nothing very startling, and his boldness is attended by an energetic imprecision that makes his book untrustworthy for serious use. The scorn for the genuine poet he imputes to Swift, for example, will not survive an attentive reading of "On Poetry: A Rhapsody"; and he forgets Swift's admiration for Virgil, not to mention Pope. Byrd seems likewise to forget all about Stella when he speaks of "Swift's excremental disgust with women." For *women*, read *whores*, like Celia or the Beautiful Young Nymph. Byrd finds that "The Legion Club" presents "a cheerless vision of society as madhouse." For *society*, read *The Irish Parliament*, "society" including Stella and Arbuthnot, Pope and Gay. Byrd is no more successful representing what Johnson says. He finds Johnson serious about the effects of barometric pressure on genius in *Rambler* 112, despite Johnson's palpable mock-pompous irony about the benefits of living in a garret. And Byrd includes Chatterton and Burns in a list of mad poets (like Cowper and Smart) of the later eighteenth century, apparently misled by a naive or careless reading of Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence." Nor is Byrd's critical rhetoric sufficiently aware.

Swift would enjoy hearing him innocently say, "To Swift the role of excrement is fundamental to the working of human nature." No one will deny Byrd's important main point, that "In nearly every significant intellectual formulation in the eighteenth century . . . madness appears in the matrices, a concept buried in the center of other concepts or surrounding them and exerting pressure as an inescapable boundary." And Byrd's demonstration of the virtual equation Pope draws between figures of madness, poverty, idleness, and blindness is just and useful. But the valuable things in the book are only moments.

Brigid Brophy has said quite correctly that the two most interesting things in the world are sex and the eighteenth century. A good way to contemplate them at once is to consider the achievement of the author of *Fanny Hill*. In *John Cleland: Images of a Life* (Columbia University Press) William H. Epstein exhibits a remarkable talent for scholarly biography, somewhat obscured here by the chic metaphors from cinema he's used throughout. This life of the author of *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* is patiently researched from original documents and solidly grounded in the facts of eighteenth-century political, literary, and social history. Cleland was clever, resourceful, and impetuous. He served 12 years as a soldier, clerk, and executive with the East India Company in Bombay before establishing himself in London as a small politician. Arrested for debt and confined to the Fleet for over a year, he wrote *Fanny Hill* to raise money for his release, only to find that, once free, he was arrested again for *Fanny Hill*. Prison made him a writer, first pornographic, then respectable, finally boring. He ended with crankish researches into historical linguistics and theories of hygiene. In old age he was a shrill malcontent, one of the social pariahs of St. James's. "Was the transition from pornography to propriety more than his talent could sustain?" asks Epstein. He continues with winning generosity: "Perhaps that question can never be answered." But it can be: actually Cleland had a quick but commonplace mind, which came alight only when imagining sexual details and thinking up euphemisms for them. Epstein is right to relate Cleland's masterpiece to *Moll Flanders* and Hogarth's *Harlot's Progress* and to see it as an anti-*Pamela* which comically goes too far. He seems on less firm ground when he earnestly considers it a document in the concern over the "woman question" and finds in it incipient gestures towards egalitarianism. It is too funny a book for that, too much about style and language, with its elegant euphemisms burlesquing the periphrases of mid-eighteenth-century "high" diction. A wit like Gay might have written it at a lascivious moment.

James S. Malek's *The Arts Compared: An Aspect of Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetics* (Wayne State University Press) is somewhat heavy and unrelenting. But the reader who perseveres will be rewarded, for this is a discriminating and subtle study. Malek summarizes, analyzes, and appraises documents in aesthetics comparing poetry with painting and music by Dryden, LaMotte, James Harris, Sir Richard Blackmore, Batteux, Charles Avison, James Beattie, Sir William Jones, Daniel Webb, Thomas Twining, Adam Smith, and others. Throughout there is intellectual distinction in Malek's way with other people's ideas. He declines to simplify "the eighteenth-century mind" and disagrees engagingly with those who conceive of eighteenth-century thought as characteristically decisive and seamless and orderly—and sensible. Malek has an admirable feel for the *ad hoc*, the eclectic, and the contradictory in eighteenth-century thinkers, and he perceives that critical terms like *ut pictura poesis* and *imitation* mean quite different things when used by different speakers in different contexts. He has tried to see the works he studies "not . . . as attempts to arrive at a single aesthetic truth known in retrospect by students of the eighteenth century but not by eighteenth-century theorists." His method, unperverted by *a priori* assumptions and free of anachronism, I find exemplary.

In *Fearful Joy: Papers from the Thomas Gray Bicentenary Conference at Carleton University* (McGill-Queen's University Press) James Downey and Ben Jones bring together fourteen essays, most of them delivered at the Carleton conference in 1971 on "Thomas Gray and the Humanist Tradition." The effect of the whole collection is greatly to complicate Gray, to emphasize the contradictions and paradoxes of his character and achievement, indeed to recover for him some most welcome humanity and dimension. Jean H. Hagstrum leads off with an acute, fully sympathetic inquiry into Gray's powerful but frustrated homoeroticism. Hagstrum stresses Gray's intensely passionate nature and points out that Bonstetten was merely the last in a series. What we must infer is that Gray's biography needs a fully modern rewriting: for all its solidity and perceptiveness, Ketton-Cremer's life, although published only twenty years ago, now seems needlessly reticent. By implication Arthur Johnston's essay also challenges the received view of Gray as shy and fastidious and ineffectual, demonstrating Gray's boldness in language and metaphor and emphasizing his obsession with extravagant figures of quasi-military violence and defiance. As Roger Lonsdale says in his essay on "Gray and Johnson: The Biographical Problem," "Where we now may find restraints and inhibitions in Gray's poetry, his early readers found exhilarating verbal richness and powerful imaginative boldness."



Gray's anomalous situation in his time is clear from George Whalley's "Thomas Gray: A Quiet Hellenist," which focuses on Gray's "courage in facing a Latin world in a Greek spirit." No wonder Johnson, as Lonsdale points out, found the whole Mason-Walpole-Gray circle supercilious, indeed hoity-toity. Donald Greene is not won over by the dictional extravagance of the Odes. In a fascinating essay he proposes that English poetry is unique in its intermittent "nostalgic" recourse to archaism, and he wishes that Gray had agreed more with Johnson and Wordsworth on the proper language of poetry. Essays by Irene Tayler and Ben Jones exploit the twenty-five plates of designs to Gray's poems by Bentley and Blake and point to Gray's complex suggestiveness for the illustrator. As Tayler says, "It is a measure of Gray's genius that he possessed the poetic density to provoke two such sets of illustrations—the one so resourcefully consonant with Gray's own tone and manner, the other so disruptively critical and passionately interpretive."

The standard Downey and Jones have maintained is high, and their volume is much better than most collections of this kind. But one thing annoying is textual carelessness in quoting Gray's poems. I don't mean that authors and editors get the words wrong. I mean that they don't sufficiently honor Gray's own meters. They read—not uniformly, but often enough to muddy the waters—*murmuring*, *sufferings*, *Misery*, and *muttering* as if all editions passed by Gray did not read *murm'ring*, *suff'rings*, *Mis'ry*, and *mutt'ring*. Perhaps a very minor oversight. Yet these modernizations of Gray's metrical practice tend to invite a careless view of him as some kind of nineteenth-century or even modern sensibility. It is this view that seems to dominate the two gravely silly Marxist essays that conclude the volume, one by James Steele, one by Louis Kampf. Both apply to Gray and his contemporaries grossly anachronistic moral and political requirements, although Steele finally pays Gray the dubious compliment of adjudging him "progressive in certain respects." Kampf projects his own social and political complaints onto the tradition of "Augustan Humanism" and seems to associate modern literary-historical enthusiasm for Augustan writing with modern political reaction. It is amusing to behold Kampf discharging his paper-wads against privilege and elegance from behind the walls of one of our most exclusive and highly endowed private institutions, while those he seems to tax with ideological complicity in capitalistic selfishness and snobbery soldier on in the state universities. It is not merely unimaginative and unscholarly to demand a revolutionary understanding from those like Gray who lived before the development of a revolutionary context. It is cruel and inhumane, the in-

evitable end of what Ehrenpreis stigmatizes as totalitarian criticism.

Even though inflation seems to have brought the Yale edition of Johnson to a momentary stop—the last volume appeared four years ago—1974 has brought some Johnson items. One is John Wain's eminently readable re-telling of Johnson's life story in *Samuel Johnson* (Viking), designed for that elusive, perhaps nonexistent, creature, the General Reader. In a "Note on Sources" Wain assures the general reader that "there is no research in this book," and says that "As far as possible I have avoided reading modern studies of Johnson, preferring to take my impressions directly from eighteenth-century sources," which means largely Boswell. This deliberate abstention from maximum learning is occasionally costly. For example, if Wain had given himself the advantage of glancing at Waingrow's *Correspondence . . . Relating to the Making of the Life of Johnson*, he would have learned that what Johnson actually said of himself as an Oxford student was "I was rude and violent" rather than Boswell's version, "I was mad and violent," a misreading of his own hand. But since Wain has resolutely decided not to learn things like that, he retains the erroneous reading and even promotes it to the title of his third chapter, where it is also quoted in the text and blazoned in six running-heads. We will hear a lot in future about the mad Johnson from the lewd. But Wain has not abjured all modern studies of Johnson: the learned will detect unacknowledged traces of Clifford, Wimsatt, Sledd and Kolb, and even Fussell. Scholars—Wain does not pretend to be one—will also be put off by Wain's chatty tone, his self-indulgent autobiographical asides, his fondness for apothegms ("All men, in the end, make impossible demands on women"), his occasional prep-school lectures reprehending modern industrial ugliness and irrationalism, and the many little vulgarities of style (e.g., *lifestyle*) presumably demanded by the general reader.

Yet, having said all this, one must admire the book. "Johnson's talk, like his writing," says Wain, "is built on strong, vivid concrete detail." So is Wain's biography. Wain knows the Midlands, and his pictures of Johnson's Lichfield and Birmingham are racy and palpable. Admirable too is his "Midlands" understanding of Johnson's lifetime bent towards the practical, the useful, the soundly "manufactured." Wain is especially good at invoking details that animate minor characters like Levet, Charlotte Lennox, John Taylor, and Thomas Warton. Best of all, Wain loves and respects Johnson just this side idolatry. His Johnson is preeminently the humanitarian, the anti-totalitarian, even the anti-vivisectionist. He constantly emphasizes Johnson's compassion, his fondness for the poor, his blameless Bohemianism. He makes us understand that Johnson's

"circle" consists as much of Levet, Mrs. Demoulins, Anna Williams, and Frank Barber as of Burke, Reynolds, and Goldsmith. So warm is Wain's sympathy that it is to be doubted that Johnson's last years and his illness and death have ever been more movingly depicted. Wain's analysis of Johnson's writings is more informal and personal than, say, Krutch's, but it is never perverse, always acute and illuminating. If the general reader will get no research from Wain, he will get a vigorous, human appreciation which should bring in many converts.

O. M. Brack, Jr., and Robert E. Kelley, the authors of *Samuel Johnson's Early Biographers* (1971), have now edited the texts of fourteen brief biographies of Johnson published from 1762 to 1786 and brought them together in one volume, *The Early Biographies of Samuel Johnson* (University of Iowa Press). Some of these "biographies" are entries in biographical dictionaries, some are from contemporary hack literary histories, and some are works published separately. Bibliographically Brack's and Kelley's work is unpretentious, but they have carefully printed what seems to be the best text—usually the fullest—of each work and supplied sensible, accurate annotation, with frequent cross-references to Boswell, Piozzi, and Hawkins. Although he will be vexed by the repetitions, the reader who reads the book "through" will be struck by the way the essential legend of Johnson as a hero of piety and charity was firmly established long before Boswell, indeed, well during Johnson's lifetime.

One of the most gratifying books of the year for scholarly elegance and expository effectiveness is not by a scholar or critic but by a practicing Scottish lawyer, David Buchanan, a partner in an Edinburgh firm and the son of the lawyer who assisted Lt.-Col. Ralph H. Isham in his purchase of the Boswell papers. As a title, *The Treasure of Auchinleck: The Story of the Boswell Papers* (McGraw-Hill) has an unpromising "popular" sound to it. But Buchanan's book is fully and meticulously annotated; bibliographically it is above reproach; it is admirably indexed; and at every turn it is aware of the intricacies of Boswelliana, as the reader may infer from the acknowledgments to the Hydes, Frederick A. Pottle, the late Robert F. Metzdorf, Frank Brady, James Clifford, Frederick Hilles, Herman Liebert, and many others sealed of the tribe. The fruit of over a decade of research, this book is a model of solid, quiet excellence. In one sense it constitutes a virtual biography of Ralph Isham and a case-history of his passion for reassembling the Boswell material. But there are other heroes too: Lt.-Com. Rupert T. Gould, the first to apply an accurate instinct for English idiom and to guess that Malone's footnote properly read "buried in a mass of papers" rather than "burned in." Another worthy is Lady Talbot de Malahide, who gradually won her husband

over to the idea of selling the papers, even if she did apply very vigorously her censor's black paint to the MSS. Another hero is James H. Van Alen, who, while Isham beggared himself for his obsession, buttressed him to the tune of \$200,000. Another is Pottle, the young Yale Assistant Professor who took over the editing of the Private Edition when Geoffrey Scott died, and who performed his daunting job with unfailing attention, discipline, and lucidity. As he narrates the story of this fantastic enterprise, Buchanan manages to be fair to everyone, and he tries to be decent even to R. W. Chapman, who for some devious motive kept from his fellow scholars news of the further hoard of Boswell and Johnson material discovered at Fettercairn House. Not the least of the book's attractions are the forty-six excellent illustrations, beautifully arranged, intelligently captioned. If much of this book, which can be taken as definitive, is about bibliophily, money, gossip, and the laws governing inheritance in Scotland rather than literature, Buchanan has perceived all the irony, comedy, and pathos in these things, and his treatment of them is so human and sensitive and interesting that it achieves the virtual status of literature.

Partly because of the discoveries Buchanan so memorably records, Johnson's poetic canon and text have undergone considerable change over the past thirty years. In 1941, when D. Nichol Smith and E. L. McAdam edited Johnson's *Poems* for the Clarendon Press, only twenty-six holographs were known. Today the number is forty-two. In addition, scholarly annotation of the poems, much of it embodied in McAdam's and George Milne's Vol. VI of the Yale edition, has increased dramatically. Clarendon has now revised the Smith-McAdam edition, adopting the Yale principle of presenting the poems in chronological order but retaining the Oxford principle of not modernizing. The reviser is J. D. Fleeman, and I share James Clifford's "complete bewilderment as to why Fleeman's very important work is not acknowledged on the title page or even in the Preface" (*Johnsonian Newsletter*, Sept., 1974). Fleeman has done important work, although it may be thought that the proofreading has not been up to Clarendon standard: the first line of the text of Johnson's translation of Virgil's First Pastoral contains an egregious error, and the running-head on p. 278 proclaims that we are in the presence of "Johnson's Pomes." And Fleeman's annotations are not always satisfying. To say of line 59 of the "Drury-Lane Prologue" that "All editions agree in reading 'chase' but it is possible that Johnson wrote 'change,' " and then to stop without evidence or argument is to recall Johnson's stricture on Warburton's emendations in Shakespeare: "Who does not see that upon such principles there is no end of correc-

tion?" Some of the notes Fleeman retains from the first edition may strike thoughtful readers as naïve. On Death as "kind Nature's Signal of Retreat," Smith and McAdam say, "It was not always thus that Johnson looked on death: see in particular Boswell's *Life*, ii. 106." And I still think, as I argued in 1957, that *wings* in "Fate wings with ev'ry Wish th'afflictive Dart,/ Each Gift of Nature, and each Grace of Art" means *propels*, as in Pope's *Iliad*, XIII, 831-832: "With his full Strength he bent his angry Bow,/ And wing'd the feather'd Vengeance at the Foe." Smith retains the first edition's note. "The afflictive dart is feathered with every wish," which sends the mind off in an un-explicit and thus un-Johnsonian direction. Fleeman's bibliographical revision has been excellent. But I think we will not have a wholly satisfying edition of Johnson's poems until the sophistication of the critical and interpretative apparatus matches that of the bibliographical.

R. D. Stock's textbook anthology *Samuel Johnson's Literary Criticism*, in the Regents Critics Series (University of Nebraska Press), prints unmodernized, well-annotated texts of the Prefaces to the *Dictionary* and to Shakespeare, selections from the *Rambler*, *Idler* (guess which), and *Adventurer*, Chap. X of *Rasselas*, brief selections from the *Lives*, and some miscellaneous materials. Stock's introductions make good reading, although we hear too much about Johnson's "neo-classicism."

It's not easy to believe that W. S. Lewis' Walpole edition has been underway for forty-two years. We now have volumes 37, 38, and 39, comprising the lifetime correspondence between Walpole and his cousin Henry Seymour Conway and members of his family. Conway was in the army and in politics, and there is little of specific literary interest here, although one gem is Walpole's reaction to "Boswell's most absurd enormous book" (*Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*): "The more one learns of Johnson, the more preposterous assemblage he appears of strong sense, of the lowest bigotry and prejudices, of pride, brutality, fretfulness, and vanity—and Boswell is the ape of most of his faults, without a grain of his sense. It is the story of a mountebank and his zany." The editing, by Lars E. Troide, Edwine M. Martz, and Robert A. Smith, in addition to Lewis, is impeccable as usual, although standards of production may be thought to have fallen off. The volumes are as elegantly costumed and printed as ever, but I'm sorry to report that as I leafed through Vol. 39, one signature simply fell out—it had been put in but not sewn in. These are hard times.

Finally, some Brief Notices of Books Received which space forbids doing more ample justice to, either way. Britta Olinder's "*The Links*

of a Curious Chain": *Studies in the Acts and Scenes of John Dryden's Tragedies and Tragi-Comedies* (University of Gothenburg, 1973) is an old-fashioned dissertation relating Dryden's critical theory of act and scene division to his practice. It is learned and accurate. Frederick Bracher has edited *The Letters of George Etherege* (University of California Press) with learning and taste. Leon Guilhamet's *The Sincere Ideal: Studies on Sincerity in Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (McGill-Queen's University Press) traces from Milton to Wordsworth "the curious notion that poetry ought to be written with a personal sincerity." Donald C. Mell's *A Poetics of Augustan Elegy* (Amsterdam: Rodopi N. V.) considers elegies and mock-elegies by Dryden, Pope, Prior, Swift, Gray, and Johnson. The method of this brief book, with only 89 pages of text, may suggest possibilities for further study of generic continuities. Donald Kay's *Short Fiction in the Spectator* (University of Alabama Press) devotes itself largely to the classification of the *Spectator's* story types into nine categories, with emphasis on their didacticism and variety. In *Not in Timon's Manner: Feeling, Misanthropy, and Satire in Eighteenth-Century England* (University of Alabama Press, 1975), Thomas R. Preston explores intelligently the paradox of "benevolent misanthropy" and its corollary "benevolent satire," with emphasis on Swift, Fielding, Smollett, and Johnson. Selma L. Bishop's *Isaac Watts's Hymns and Spiritual Songs (1707): A Publishing History and a Bibliography* (Ann Arbor: The Pierian Press) is an immense labor of love and piety, a weighty pendant to the author's 1962 study of variants in Watts's text. Here she describes 672 copies of Watts, or collections of hymns deriving from him, in 117 libraries. The fruit of many a working summer, the book will gratify librarians. Françoise Chatel de Brancion's *R. B. Sheridan: Personalité, Carrière Politique* (Paris: Didier) gives a detailed account of Sheridan's parliamentary career with emphasis on his humanitarianism. The author is a remote descendant, and her book is an entirely unrestrained celebration of his achievements. Terence Tobin's *Plays by Scots, 1660-1800* (University of Iowa Press) is a learned survey of Scottish theatrical activity in Edinburgh and abroad.

The main vacuum in this year's batch of studies is work in Swift. The steady stream of books about Swift from the fifties and sixties has dried up, presumably because everyone is waiting for Ehrenpreis to finish his critical biography. We still need a complete and shrewd book on Swift's poems. Another need is a full critical treatment of eighteenth-century poetry, like Miner's of seventeenth-century poetry, perhaps generically considered.

In closing I must report that about one-quarter of these new books

are so abominably written that reading them is actively painful. The trouble is mainly diction. The term *parameters* seems to have reached the end of its vogue in critical discourse, but *kerygmatic* is coming in. To try to interpret eighteenth-century writers, whose tradition is grounded on unequivocal syntax and absolutely accurate language, with diction like *career patterns, in terms of, ongoing, prestigious, very real, mutuality, fecalization, viable, and guidelines*—all quoted from these books—is to forfeit the game before even stepping onto the court.

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