

articles that was published from her dissertation. I compared the note to the corresponding sections in the book. Paragraphs and sentences were tighter and howlers were removed. This comparison convinced me that *Passion and Persuasion* received no serious editing from the press before publication.

Despite all the hard work that clearly went into this dissertation, *Passion and Persuasion* does not, alas, contribute to our understanding of Dryden. The readings are either obvious or unoriginal (or, in a few instances, strained). But Skouen's method does not allow for her to satisfy her dissertation committee *and* to break new ground. Skouen has re-arranged the furniture by adding the context of the passions and rhetoric to a neglected poem. Not that I think she was wrong to do so. What is most frustrating about *Passion and Persuasion* is that Skouen has a valid idea. The language of the passions pervades early modern writing and for too long it has been ignored by scholars. The subject is certainly multi-disciplinary, since it covers medicine, language, and aesthetics, and Skouen should be credited for not only recognizing it for what it is, but also for making an earnest attempt to articulate a way of using language that has been long forgotten. She clearly is knowledgeable about Dryden, but we still have to wait for a proper study of Dryden and rhetoric. Skouen is qualified to do so, but she needs to think about it a lot more.

At its price, I would not recommend *Passion and Persuasion* for library acquisition, considering how tight budgets are these days. I also found the lack of an index intolerable. A word to the wise: if your press does not allow you the opportunity to provide a map for your readers to help them navigate your work, then you should find a new press.

Katherine Hodgkin. *Women, Madness and Sin in Early Modern England: The Autobiographical Writings of Dionys Fitzherbert*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010. x + 290 pp. \$114.95. Review by MARION A. WELLS, MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE.

Katharine Hodgkin's valuable book offers readers two important contributions to early modern scholarship within a single volume. First and foremost, the book sets out to make available the fascinating au-

tobiographical narrative of Dionys Fitzherbert, a woman born around 1580 into a minor gentry family in Oxfordshire. Fitzherbert's narrative of her own life focuses on what she considers her "fall" into sin and the spiritual "sickness" that follows. Included in this manuscript are several letters to friends with whom Fitzherbert discusses her illness and recovery. In addition to the transcript, the book also contains a quite extensive introduction that contextualizes Fitzherbert's narrative by giving a useful account not only of her life circumstances but also of the relationship between her illness and early modern views of madness, melancholy, sin, and redemption. The introduction also includes a detailed description of the original manuscript and the two scribal copies examined by the author, as well as discussion of the editorial practices followed in the book. The book is part of Ashgate's series *The Early Modern Englishwoman 1500-1750: Contemporary Editions*. It will appeal therefore particularly to those interested in early modern women's writing as a category, but will also be of interest to anyone concerned with the history of medicine or early modern religious narratives.

Hodgkin bases her own transcription on Bodleian Library MS. E Mus. 169, which contains Fitzherbert's account of her experience written in her own hand. On facing pages she presents a transcription of the original, complete with highly inconsistent spelling and punctuation, and a modernized, re-punctuated version of this text. She has also consulted the two other existing scribal copies, indicating in notes where these copies differ from the original. Some of these differences seem significant, as Hodgkin points out, including a group of amendments that seem intended to soften her accounts of extreme mental or physical suffering in the original. Hodgkin's editing practice is meticulous and helpful, providing the reader with explanatory notes where necessary, and directing the reader to edited passages from the scribal copies in the appendix.

The introduction amounts to a short book on its own, and offers a quick but thorough exploration of the many interrelated contextual issues that Fitzherbert's narrative explicitly or implicitly addresses. Though Fitzherbert's narrative does not easily fit into any of our modern generic cubbyholes, it does constitute, as Hodgkin points out, an early essay in spiritual autobiography, and as such marks an

adventurous step for Fitzherbert as a writer. Hodgkin's discussion of the various issues stemming from the nature of this narrative is exemplary; she examines the connections between women, writing and religion in a section devoted to "writing the self and Protestant culture" (34-38), noting how Fitzherbert's work both follows (in its use of an "exemplary" life, for instance) and departs from, the various models that might have been available to her.

One of the trickiest and most interesting issues to emerge from Fitzherbert's account of her illness is her apparent insistence that she did not experience melancholy or madness, but rather a spiritual sickness whose onset and cure she attributes directly to God's workings in her. Hodgkin organizes her material very well here, deftly parsing out the complex relationships between gender, religion, madness, and melancholy in support of her view that "Fitzherbert was joining a continuing debate amongst devotional writers over the relation between melancholy and spiritual affliction" (63). Fitzherbert's own language about the relation between the affliction of the body and the passions of the mind is highly informative about the psychology of illness in the period: "for in melancholy persons, the body, being overladen with thick and dull humours, by little and little oppresses the heart and spirit; but in these cases [i.e., her own] it first of all falls violently upon the heart and distracts the spirit; then no marvel if all the rest go out of frame" (151). Though she is urging the secondariness of the body in her illness, it is clear that the boundaries between body and mind, emotional and physical illness are highly attenuated. At times I found myself wishing for a little more detail in the discussion of the physiology/psychology of Fitzherbert's illness. Because she emphasizes that it is entirely possible for the "passions of the mind" to provoke the "distemperature" (153) of the body rather than the other way around, Fitzherbert's account of her illness complicates recent analysis of the early modern emotions in provocative and interesting ways. Much recent work on the topic focuses exclusively on the physical, humoral bases of emotional disorders rather than their cognitive contents, and a little more discussion of the implications of Fitzherbert's account in this respect would connect this work usefully to current debates about the early modern emotions. Overall though, given the necessary limitations of the introduction, Hodgkin synthesizes a great deal of

information about madness and melancholy in ways both useful to the specialist and engaging to the more general reader.

Hodgkin also has a shrewd eye for which of the less obvious aspects of Fitzherbert's sometimes unruly narrative are valuable from a historical and literary perspective. She notes her conscious construction of herself as an author, exploring her place in the emerging canon of women's life-writing. She also unpacks in interesting ways the somewhat anomalous position of a woman of Fitzherbert's background who chooses not to marry (indeed sets her face firmly against it) and instead pursues a life of single devotion to God.

Overall, this volume represents an extremely valuable contribution to the study of early modern women's writing. Hodgkin not only presents a meticulously edited version of this fascinating document, but also highlights skillfully and sympathetically the many ways in which it speaks to contemporary critical interest in gender, mental illness, notions of self, practices of self-writing, and the role of piety in early modern female life. The book is an excellent addition to this admirable Ashgate series.

Erin Murphy. *Familial Forms: Politics and Genealogy in Seventeenth-Century Literature*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2011. 307 pp. \$65.00. Review by LISSA BEAUCHAMP DESROCHES, ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY.

The family-state analogy in seventeenth-century Britain, specifically in terms of its connection to the issues of lineal succession, is the focus of Erin Murphy's book. She offers a comprehensive analysis, drawing attention to the use of the metaphor of domesticity for political houses in literary senses as well as to the practical application of genealogies that tied monarchical families to biblical ones. In addition to this, she describes how the term "family" can, for various political purposes, be concerned with either marriage or reproduction. This involves a close consideration of how the female gender operates or is erased, depending on how seventeenth-century writers configured the analogy and how tricky their genealogies proved to be. Murphy does an admirable job of directing her attention in her extended analyses