and how by 1607 this provided a strong justification for settlement. The next three essays are more cohesive in that they each re-examine the important individuals of early English expansion. One examines the discourses that surround the works and promotions of Richard Hakluyt, the second explores what Sir Walter Ralegh read and how the works of this period were consumed, while the final one works to reconsider John Smith. Each essay looks at these familiar individuals in new ways. The final section, on the Atlantic World and Virginia, contains essays by James Horn, J.H. Elliot and Stuart B. Schwartz that each work to provide an Atlantic context for the events at Virginia. The first explores the role of uncertainty in Virginia by showing that both sides interacted with the other, and often predicted what they might do, based upon either imperfect or insufficient knowledge. The next places Virginia within the context of the Iberian Atlantic and argues that Atlantic history involves both connections and comparisons. The final one, like Mancall's introduction, tries to tie all of the essays together by explaining what they teach us about, and how they shape, our current historical understanding.

Like many edited collections that develop out of conferences, this one has both strengths and weaknesses. Each essay is a solid piece of scholarship that refines our understanding of the subject of each yet the work lacks cohesion. Thus the volume can be read in its entirety, it can be read as individual essays or it can be read as sections. In the end, the editor picked the right title in that the work is much more about the Atlantic World then Virginia. The volume examines the numerous ways in which Atlantic history is done, understood or utilized yet in the end it shows that the dominant interest in these new directions involves an attempt to understand the multiple layers and perspectives of interactions within the Atlantic World.

Anne Goldgar, *Tulipmania: Money, Honor, and Knowledge in the Dutch Golden Age*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007. 425 pp. $65.00
Review by LAURA CRUZ.

The story of tulipmania is well known to scholars. The frenzied trading and high prices it engendered constitute a cautionary tale, one that reveals the universal folly of relying on innate human economic rationality. Recent com-

mentators, for example, have drawn parallels between tulipmania and Beanies Babies and dot.com stocks. Anne Goldgar's *Tulipmania* begins with the author acknowledging the success of her predecessors (the best known of whom is probably Charles MacKay) in propagating the moral lesson inherit in the seeming madness of the Dutch crowds clambering for a rather ugly, even at times non-existent, bulb. The fabulist value of tulipmania, in other words, has been well established and is relatively incontrovertible. Goldgar's book is testimony to the power of the scholarly imagination to crack even the toughest and most enduring of historical chestnuts.

Part of the reason for the enduring legacy of tulipmania is that previous scholars have relied upon the copious works of propaganda that surrounded the phenomenon at the time. In good Dutch fashion, these works play up the lessons to be learned and the tragic folly of the poor *bloemisten* who chased after a single ephemeral flower. Goldgar, on the other hand, digs much deeper and eschews the colorful portraits in the pamphlets and plays for the relatively more staid archival, especially notarial, resources. Her research on the topic is both intensive and extensive, even after she limits the scope of much of her demographic research to three towns, Haarlem, Amsterdam, and Enkhuizen. Based on this research, she turns the methodology of her predecessors neatly on its head, looking not at the universal qualities inherent in the spectacle, but rather the distinctive qualities it displays and the richness of the insight it provides into a culture and a people very much different that today.

In Goldgar's hands, tulipmania does have much to tell about the precocious republic and the culture of early modern Europe. She organizes the book thematically, though the themes coincide with the rise and fall of tulip adoration. She first establishes the reasons why tulips in particular where the subject of such fascination and appreciation by the Dutch. It is in the second chapter, however, where the full power of her explanatory framework takes flight. Prior to the full outbreak of tulipmania, these singular flowers played a role in a culture of curiosity that preoccupied many of the elites in early modern Europe. She painstakingly reconstructs a small group of connoisseurs who collected and discussed tulips, along with maps, paintings, shells, and other diverse and exotic objects. These *liefhebbers* (loosely translated as fans in English) recognized, Goldgar argues, no inherent contradiction between their exchange value and their beauty. In other words, tulips were at once commodities, works of art, and objects of scientific inquiry. By blending

rather than dividing these perceptions, Goldgar crosses what have been great divides in Dutch history between art history and history and between cultural history and science. Her research suggests that the niches of contemporary scholarship have produced myopia in dealing with an era where such compartments did not yet exist.

The third chapter, *Bloemisten*, and Goldgar's desire to uncover the social networks of exchange that underlay the tulip trade, owe some debt to the groundbreaking methodologies of her mentor, Jon Michael Montias. While much of the pamphlet literature depicted tulipmania as infecting even the poorest Jan on the street, Goldgar is able to establish the phenomenon as more limited particularly to groups of people connected to one another for other reasons, such as marriage, religion, or trade. For example, the chapter begins, as all of them do, with a story. In this case, it is of a dinner party where negotiations are being conducted by different members of an extended family of relatively well-to-do Mennonites, all of whom it turns out, are connected or will be connected, even if only tangentially, to the tulip trade. As in the previous chapter, Goldgar highlights another potentially rich area for renewal in early modern scholarship; the reconstruction of informal networks of exchange and how these inform the operations of more formal market systems. While lacking the revolutionary quality of her mentor's work, she nonetheless lays bare a methodology that has widespread applications outside of the tiny northwestern corner of Europe.

The last two chapters, *Grieving Money* and *Bad Faith*, both look at the long-term impact of tulipmania on Dutch society. Goldgar deftly dispels many of the long-held myths about the devastating blow the crash made on the overall health of the Dutch economy and even notes that the commentators and playwrights greatly exaggerated the number of individual hardships and bankruptcies associated with the popping of the tulip bubble. That said, she argues that the exaggerations served a purpose to bring to public attention the very real dangers inherent in the rise and fall of the subjects of the capricious goddess Flora. The threat of tulipmania was not to the pockets of the unlucky left holding the tickets of receipt, but rather to the collective fabric that held Dutch society together. The failure of buyers to collect over-priced bulbs threatened the nature of trust in personal relationships. It tore asunder established social bonds and led to a collective anxiety about the deeper meaning of market exchange. The propaganda literature, taken collectively,

heavily implied that without such an infrastructure, neither Dutch society nor the economy based upon it, could subsist. Goldgar makes a leap of faith herself to reach so deeply into the minds of these Dutch observers, but she has painted such a rich portrait of a vibrant and cohesive society that she can perhaps be granted license for her more intuitive and empathetic conclusions.

The inside pages of *Tulipmania* are adorned with many colorful plates and interesting drawings of, among other things, a group of men farting into the wind. In her prose, Goldgar does not do the usual historiographical name checking and disguises her knowledge of a highly cross-disciplinary literature behind a rolling narrative style. When appropriate, she provides clear explanations for events and people not well known outside of the Netherlands. Each chapter (as stated previously) begins with an evocative vignette that illustrates the deeper issues in the ensuing chapters. Despite all this, *Tulipmania* is not a work primarily intended for a popular audience or an undergraduate classroom, nor should it be. This is a book for historians. Critics often excoriate the inaccessibility of historical prose, but there is nothing that can match the satisfaction a scholar finds in reading a text that speaks to a deep understanding of historical phenomenon, advances that understanding, and inspires new directions in historical research. These goals are incompatible with those of popular literature. In Goldgars hands, the moral of the story of *Tulipmania* is not about admonitions regarding economic behavior, but rather the satisfaction of rich and imaginative scholarship.

Catherine Armstrong. *Writing North America in the Seventeenth Century: English Representations in Print and Manuscript.* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007. vi+226 pp. 6 illus. $89.95. Review by GREG BENTLEY, MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY.

In another handsome volume from Ashgate Press, Catherine Armstrong differentiates travel narratives of the 15th and 16th centuries from those of the seventeenth century. As she says "*Writing North America* explores the intellectual framework of Englishmen who were beginning to break free from the confines of classical knowledge" (3), the primary vehicle of Elizabethan travel narratives. In addition, Armstrong states, her book challenges "over-simplified arguments about the intellectual history of the nascent British Empire by exploring the English reactions to the challenging conditions experienced in