we see Pindar working as if he had read ("als hätte er … gelesen") the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. The German’s stroke of wit is too good to pass up.


*Passion and Persuasion* claims to examine “the impact of the rhetorical tradition on Dryden’s work” (1). It is comprised of four parts—“Passion and Persuasion,” “*Captatio benevolentiae*: Appeals to the audience,” “Invention: The temperance topic,” and “Elocution: The body poetic”—spread out over seventeen chapters, with a conclusion, notes given in short title, and a bibliography. Astoundingly, there is no index. In place of the index, there is an ad for VDM press, soliciting “current academic research papers, Bachelor’s Theses, Master’s Theses, Dissertations or Scientific Monographs.” Because I frequently consult a book’s index, I found myself re-reading this ad several times. And, indeed, it explains a lot about what kind of a work *Passion and Persuasion* is.

*Passion and Persuasion* is not a book; it is a dissertation. It is not a dissertation-book. It is an unrevised dissertation. To be sure, there are very few technical errors in the work—some minor typos, the notes to chapter eight are misnumbered, Matthew Lewis is misnamed “Mark” (225 n38)—so I don’t doubt that there was a thorough checking before publication. But that isn’t the problem. The problem, as most of us know, is that a dissertation is not a book. There are plenty of guides that offer advice on how to prepare a dissertation for publication, notably William Germano’s *Getting It Published* (2001), as well as frequent columns in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Indeed, in an essay published just last summer, Leonard Cassuto identified the problem that plagues *Passion and Persuasion*: “A dissertation is a book-length project, but it’s not a book that is just awaiting cover art…. Your dissertation is part of your education. It’s not just a goal of your education. You thesis is almost certainly the first project of
its magnitude that you’ve attempted, and such things take practice. It takes a while to assimilate a large amount of material and the different perspectives it affords” (“It’s a Dissertation, Not a Book,” The Chronicle of Higher Education, July 24, 2011.) Simply put, Passion and Persuasion is only half-baked.

I can discern no overarching narrative in Passion and Persuasion. Its topics are broad and mostly determined by other scholar’s research. This makes sense for a dissertation, and Skouen has certainly done her homework. She has read widely in Dryden, Dryden criticism, early modern linguistics, passion theorists, politics, and history, but herein lies the rub: in a dissertation, a student needs to show familiarity with both primary and secondary materials. The presentation is necessarily cursory and rapid. There is not always room for a focused, original argument. Skouen’s whopping seventeen chapters reflects this practice. She jumps from authorship, to publication, to drama, to religion, to politics, to rhetoric, to audience reception, each receiving its own chapter. But how do they all fit together? Of course, all of these topics are relevant to Dryden, but should they all be treated equally? What is the focus? Dryden and rhetoric and the passions and The Hind and the Panther? Not good enough. I shall not attempt to devise a workable thesis for this book, but it needed one.

Instead, Skouen dances to the beat of other critics’ drums. Again, fine for a dissertation, but how can anyone possibly incorporate new ideas while jitterbunning? The lack of focus in the argument affects many paragraphs in the book. We are offered a review of the literature almost every fifth paragraph. The subsections do not have logical conclusions; Skouen simply starts a new one. This created a strange effect where it seemed as though I was reading backwards. All of the information offered is not always necessary. At the very least, Skouen should have re-considered what deserves to be in the text and what should serve as supplemental information in the notes. The information just kept coming. It was pure display, and it made for frustrating reading because whatever useful and informative things she has to say disappears in the slipstream of a casually reprinted dissertation.

The writing itself is as bloated as the paragraphs. Sentence construction desperately cried out for Richard Lanham’s Revising Prose and required serious revision for readability. I checked one of Skouen’s
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.


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-