

now but were very familiar to people at the time” (169).

An eye-opener and a veritable tour-de-force, Hardwick’s book offers a fascinating window into sexual standards in *ancien régime* France and reveals a stunning and complex system of communal complicity. Her careful exploration of Lyon’s archival records sheds new light on the lives and intimate stories of ordinary working-class young adults pre-1789 and offers a new historiography of sex at the time.

Agnès Cousson. *L’Entretien au XVIIe siècle*. Paris: Classique Garnier, 2018. 404 pp. 48 €. Review by BERTRAND LANDRY, UNIVERSITY OF MOUNT UNION.

In the preface of Agnès Cousson’s new book, *L’Entretien au XVIIe siècle*, Bernard Beugnot of the Royal Society of Canada reminds us, in Guez de Balzac’s words, of the definition of *entretien*, an important yet understudied literary form: “[j]’ai en tête un ouvrage que je veux appeler Entretiens, qui seront d’un style plus concis et moins oratoire, mais qui ne sera ni moins pressant, ni moins agréable” (7). Stemming from the conference entitled “L’Entretien au XVIIe siècle” held in Brest, France on 19–20 March 2015, the book is a collection of seventeen essays from international scholars, edited in a volume divided into six parts: *Les Entretiens de Vincent Voiture et Pierre Costar*, *Dialoguer et transmettre*, *Formes de l’entretien*, *Esthétiques de l’entretien*, *Entretiens et récits narratifs*, and *Desseins de l’entretien*. All abstracts of the articles can be found at the end of the book for a quick browse.

*L’Entretien au XVIIe siècle* offers a broad, multifaceted, fresh view on a pregnant topic long overlooked by critics and scholars, a point Agnès Cousson emphasizes in her introduction. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the definition of the *entretien* evolves beyond what Guez de Balzac wrote, as the authors show. Except for a few texts, it becomes a lively, learned, sometimes erudite but not pedantic, written dialogue between trustworthy friends, which allows them to express their self—*moi*—in the most intimate way. The *entretien* occurs in a variety of settings, a practice seen in the works of Aristotle, Plato, and Cicero from which the genre emerged. It allows some difficult *topoi* to be conveyed under a pleasant, accessible, and didactic form

to a high-society audience.

The book investigates six important facets of the genre, and among them, I highlight two: *Esthétique de l'entretien* and *Entretien et récit narratifs*. My first choice is an essay entitled “Le ‘dangereux honneur’ de parler à la cour, pour une pragmatique de l’entretien,” authored by Karine Abiven and found in *Esthétique de l'entretien*. Abiven underscores that an *entretien* can become dangerous in the intimacy of princes. Some situations require implicit statements and the use of rhetorical devices, such as silences, to navigate safely through difficult conversations that could potentially precipitate the downfall of the person of lesser rank. From *Entretien et récit narratifs*, an essay entitled “Les entretiens en mer dans ‘L’Histoire du Canada’ de Gabriel Sagard (1636), entre la tradition des *problemata* et la propagande missionnaire” by Marie-Thérèse Pioffet piqued my interest. Sagard’s book *Histoire du Canada* shows the infighting between Catholics and Huguenots, but it also serves as a basis for Pioffet’s analysis of the power struggle between the Jesuits and the *Récollets* over the spiritual control of Canada. She unveils a propagandist slant of the *entretiens* contained in the book as the Franciscan order fights to assert its fading power against the mounting superiority of the Jesuits. Consequently, some *entretiens* are complex, politically charged, and somewhat detached from the modalities of more traditional ones.

The other essays provide equally important and thoughtful analyses of the *entretien* genre. In chapter one, Cécile Tardy explores a poetic approach to offer a definition of the genre via *Les Entretiens de Vincent Voiture et Pierre Costar*. On the other hand, François-Ronan Dubois considers the *mondain* implications in the linguistic competences of authors Voiture and Costar. In chapter two, Céline Hervey examines the philosophical essence in two *entretiens*, the famous conversation between Descartes and Burman, and *Entretiens entre M. Pascal et de M. Sacy*. Viviane Mellinghoff-Bourgerie investigates the spiritual and didactic functions of the *entretien* in François de Sales’s *Entretiens Spirituels*. In chapter three, François-Xavier Cuche suggests that Fénelon’s *Entretiens Spirituels* depict dialogues with God, and within themselves dialogues with man himself. Jean-Yves Vialleton claims that Brossette’s notes on Boileau expose a new spoken genre, precursor to the *entretien*, which is grounded in the present and which makes

it superior to the other works. Francine Wild analyses *Entretien* and *Ana* and how the two genres overlap and resonate with each other. In chapter four, in addition to Karine Abiven's essay mentioned above, Christian Belin explores the original rhetorical nature of the *entretien* in Chevalier de Méré's texts. Emmanuel Bury examines La Mothe Le Vayer's skepticism through the *entretiens* that pepper the author's work in the tradition of Lucian. In chapter four, beside Marie-Christine Pioffet's article discussed above, Francis Assaf demonstrates that *entretiens* expose more prominently than previously believed the values exposed in comical authors' texts, such as *L'histoire comique de Francion*. In chapter six, Maria Vita Romeo discusses René Descartes's *entretien* with François Burman and reveals how the conversations lead to self-awareness. Sylvie Herman De Francheschi unveils the theatrical and literary angles of theological *entretiens*, which allow the readers to better understand them. Didier Souiller analyses the ambiguity that arises between a transparent conversation and the ambivalence of a fictitious character noted in the *entretiens* of Baltasar Gracián. S. J. Christine Mongenot considers the perception of the educator's self in pedagogical *entretiens*, such as those studied in the *Maison Royale de Saint-Cyr*. Finally, Pascale Thouvenin examines the monastical *entretiens* of Port-Royal, particularly how poetics are used to convey a message of salvation and simultaneously define a monastic classicism.

Whether it be real or fictitious, *entretien* unveils microcosmic and larger issues that impacted the intellectual, literary, cultural, political, and religious fabric of early modern society in meaningful ways. *L'Entretien au XVIIe siècle* is an important book that expands and enriches the meanings of *entretien* through various texts and scholarly perspectives, giving it its richness and appeal. This book will be a perfect fit in any library, at a research institution or on the shelf of an early modern scholar.