Henry's Satyrs: Topicality in Jonson's Oberon" and Clayuton Delery does an Aristotelian and mimetic approach to the metadrama of a too-often neglected Massinger play: "Dramatic Instruction and Misinstruction in Philip Massinger's The Roman Actor." We then move on to the Milton section, where Sung-Kyun Yim presents a well-argued claim about Harapha as a pivotal figure in Samson Agonistes ("Samson and Harapha: Milton's Anti-Heroism in Samson Agonistes"). There follows David Boocker's essay on Milton, and, finally, Darrell Bourque's poems, "Dürer's Hare," "Courtyard at Innsbruch Castle, after Dürer," and "Dürer's Apollo."

If there is any flaw to be noted in this collection, it may be its principle of selection or perhaps its indeterminacy about who the audience is supposed to be. Some essays seem meant for a general audience, while others seem meant for experts. For example, the Sims essay, originally delivered as public lectures, includes elaborately detailed plot summaries of plays with which most Renaissance students (let alone scholars) are probably quite familiar, and at times it seems more focused on the reader's Christianity than on Shakespeare's. However, this essay is surrounded by two others, the Payne and Baker essays, which expect a great deal of expertise in the reader and which certainly expect the reader to be well acquainted with the text under discussion, including at least one of the plays so carefully described in the Sims essay. The poems, too, although interesting in their own right and displaying a high degree of craftsmanship, seem almost tacked on at the end; we move from primarily English texts, except for a foray into American theatre history, directly to Dürer, with no indication of how we have arrived there or what connection we are supposed to make with the preceding essays. Even the editor's normally helpful introduction is not of much help here.

All in all, though, this is an interesting—if at times quirky—collection of essays and poems, almost uniformly well-written, and any scholar of the seventeenth century will certainly be able to pick out a few gems from the collection that match his or her tastes and needs.

Adam Smyth’s collection of essays, *A Pleasing Sinne*, has its origin in a short conference on early-modern English “drink and conviviality” (xi) held at the University of Reading in July of 2001; of the twelve pieces in this volume seven began as papers delivered at that event. What has emerged is a useful set of considerations—from various angles—of the use (and abuse) of drink (largely in the 17th century) and its place in the social hierarchy. Indeed, the type of alcohol consumed (from humble beer, to English ale, to imported wine) was an indicator of status and, therefore, often of political stance, as was, on occasion, the degree of indulgence. While these essays frequently engage and comment upon literature, treatises, etc., to illustrate and support their central tenets (and such observations are valuable to students of early-modern poetry and prose), this is not, ultimately, a book of literary criticism; its thrust, rather, given the fairly wide range of topics addressed, is towards social history, and thus its appeal is as much directed to those with an interest in history, politics, and the pleasures and frailties of the human condition as to those more focused on the arts and culture of the age. Smyth’s well-chosen title, *A Pleasing Sinne* (derived from *A looking glasse for drunkards: or, The hunting of drunkennesse* [1627]) points clearly to a central motif: drink, for some, may be a source of pleasure, but the result of consumption beyond moderation has clear dangers, as every age has known. The references at various points to the story of Circe are not misplaced: elevation or inspiration found in a pleasant glass can potentially give way to incoherence and improper behaviour, and humans can be reduced to the level of beasts.

Following Smyth’s cogent introduction, containing a clear précis of each essay, are five well-defined sections, although the reader who takes this text from start to finish will be aware of some repetition of crucial issues from time to time—there can be nothing entirely water-tight in a collection such as this. And, by way of general comment, one must note that the strength of each paper (none is weak) rests not only in the level and, to the extent that constraints of length that such contributions necessarily impose, thoroughness of each study but in the quality of documentation and bibliographic detail evident in the footnotes (no formal bibliography being appended to the book as a whole). Thus, the researcher is well served: doors to further enquiry are opened, not closed.

The first section, “Identity and Community,” contains three essays. The
first is Cedric C. Brown’s “Sons of Beer and Sons of Ben: Drink as a Social Marker in Seventeenth-Century England,” offering particular attention to Robert Herrick’s *Hesperides* (advocating the pleasures of wine for the cultivated and Royalist elite) and Leonard Wheatcroft (the “Black Poet,” rural promoter of the social benefits of beer or ale). Then follows Stella Achilleas’ “The *Anacreontea* and a Tradition of Refined Male Sociability,” dealing with “tavern dubbing” (31) and providing further links to Herrick and the Sons of Ben, and Michelle O’Callaghan’s “Tavern Societies, the Inns of Court, and the Culture of Conviviality in Early Seventeenth-Century London”—the comments on the Mermaid, Mitre, and Inns of Court circles are illuminating.

The second section, “Politicised Drink,” also contains three pieces: Marika Kublesek’s “Wine for Comfort: Drinking and the Royalist Exile Experience, 1642–1660”—wine is again seen as the elite quaff of choice, and as a compliment to the royal exiles and a source of sociability and solace; Angela McShane Jones’ “Roaring Royalists and Ranting Brewers: The Politicisation of Drink and Drunkenness in Political Broadside Ballads from 1640 to 1689”—the habits of the Tories and Whigs (consider Oliver Cromwell’s links with beer and Anthony Ashley Cooper’s [i.e., Shaftesbury’s] wine barrels) come clearly to the fore; and Charles C. Ludington’s “‘Be sometimes to your country true’: The Politics of Wine in England, 1660–1714”—the details regarding the history of the importation of various spirits are particularly revealing.

“Drink and Gender,” the third section, proffers two essays, Karen Britland’s “Circe’s Cup: Wine and Women in Early Modern Drama”—Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra* and John Marston’s *The Wonder of Women or The Tragedie of Sophonisba*, in particular, both receive insightful comments, and both have clear links to Circean attractions and penils, and Susan J. Owen’s “Drink, Sex and Power in Restoration Comedy”—figuring here in detail are “royalist” Aphra Behn’s *The Rover* (wine is once more attractive and dangerous and Willmore is both a predator and victim of his own desires [130]) and William Wycherley’s *The Country Wife*. As in preceding sections, such literary examples serve to illuminate social issues, values, political stances and put the flesh (albeit frequently frail) on the bones of historical/political record.

“Improvement,” the fourth section, takes a different though intriguing path. The first of two pieces is Louise Hill Curth and Tanya M. Cassidy’s “Health, Strength and Happiness: Medical Constructions of Wine and Beer in Early Modern England”—here is, for instance, a discussion of the locales
REVIEWS

and social levels of wine, beer, and ale (143), importation of wine (145), the debate over the virtues of English ale and hopped beer (148), the rise of English medical literature in the 17th century, and the preventative and curative effects of alcohol. The second is Vittoria di Palma's "Drinking Cider in Paradise: Science, Improvement, and the Politics of Fruit Trees"—this is, for example, an attractive introduction to the cultivation and use of fruit trees, the production of cider, and the growing importance of such cultivation as the 17th century wears on (including such encouragement as provided by John Evelyn's Sylva (1664), articles in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, etc. [165 ff.]), and the documentation here is generous and impressive.

Smyth's volume concludes with a section titled "Excess." Charlotte McBride's "A Natural Drink for an English Man: National Stereotyping in Early Modern Culture" suggests that the traveling Englishman (and, by implication, the one at home) drinks beer to excess. McBride notes the shift from earlier (mediaeval) local/home-brewed ale to commercial (hopped) beer and the argument for growing hops in England (184-185), treatises criticizing drunkenness, the social split between ale-house (lower class) and tavern (more elite). The ale-house was run by the poor for the poor who, because of their patronage, continued to be poor, drawing people away from domestic life and relative innocence (187). Here are references to Shakespeare's famous tavern scenes in 1 Henry IV, 2 Henry IV, and Measure for Measure as well as to John Fletcher's The Pilgrim (1621), along with details of attacks on drunkenness. Smyth's own "'It were far better to be a Toad, or a Serpent, then a Drunkard': Writing About Drunkenness," the final piece in the book, looks at the seventeenth-century English depiction of insobriety and its effects in the myth of Circe comes into play again: drink can be seen as insidious in its allure, despite arguments in its favour. It is, to cite A Looking Glass again, sometimes seen as attractive, but beyond moderation, the result is, for many then and now, a "sine." The "glasse," in a sense, is both a container and a mirror, of distortion and the first is key to the inebriated reflection of the second. An Index concludes the volume.

A Pleasing Sine is a useful and well-researched collection of thoughtful essays which, although at first glance may seem to deal with matters somewhat peripheral to central issues of early modern scholarship, manages well to fill in and to solidify one's curiosity and sometimes lurking impressions of parts of the seventeenth-century English social world. The issues it raises and
settles are not new—a haunting note of contemporaneity sounds throughout the volume if only to remind the reader that, though details and political specifics may have changed, the problems and discourses are part of the present world.


The Restoration theater allowed for a much greater openness than English audiences had experienced in earlier periods of public drama. Most significantly, women joined the casts of plays, but in numerous other ways the scope and interests of the theater changed radically after 1660. Cynthia Lowenthal attempts to explain some of these new interests in *Performing Identities on the Restoration Stage*. Arguing that the later seventeenth century was a period in which different forms of identity had to be reconstituted, Lowenthal shows that the theater allowed both for the violation of previous categories of identity and for their policing and confirmation. In this view, theater serves an ultimately conservative function, bringing to the stage the visual cues of identity that help to naturalize and inscribe notions of gender, status (rather than class), and national identity in a turbulent period of English expansion and consolidation. Each of her chapters focuses on a key play from the period 1656 to 1707 complemented by readings of several other plays, including in each instance a work of Aphra Behn’s. A few of the points in Lowenthal’s study are certainly interesting, but this poorly executed book undermines these few good points, making *Performing Identities* a frustrating and disappointing read.

Lowenthal argues that the Restoration stage explores and remakes English imperial, national, status, and gender identities. She begins with two chapters devoted to defining English identity in this key period of imperial and mercantile expansion. In the first, focusing on Dryden’s *Indian Emperor*, Lowenthal suggests that England’s emergence as a belated colonial power required an engagement with Spain’s successful but declining legacy in the Americas. Reading Dryden’s representation of the Spanish victory over Montezuma as a way of imagining the ideal English imperial project—Cortés