

does not press the case for the harassed reader. After all, one of his central claims is that Renaissance readers were especially adept at moving back and forth from note to text and were not “usually disturbed or alienated by the procedure” (95). Indeed, after touring the dense, exotic terrain of the margin, one is left to conclude that, despite loud and insistent voices from the edge of the page, readers somehow managed.

Jennifer Anderson and Elizabeth Sauer, eds. Afterword by Stephen Orgel. *Books and Readers in Early Modern England: Material Studies*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002. 295 pp. + 22 illus. \$55.00. Review by GARY KUCHAR, MCMASTER UNIVERSITY.

This ambitious volume of original essays on early modern reading practices, interpretive communities, and printing histories begins with a meditation on the surprisingly slippery question, “What is a book?” The editorial introduction, “Current Trends in the History of Reading,” opens by distinguishing between two main ways in which books are configured as material objects existing primarily in space and as social systems existing at a specific time and geographical locale. While earlier forms of bibliographical studies have emphasized the former conception, more recent scholarship on the history of the book have tended to emphasize the latter. This particular volume of essays fruitfully demonstrates that there is no easy separation of physical evidence from social context: the significance of a text as a material object is intrinsically tied to the ideological envelope in and through which it is received, just as the envelope itself is formed in relation to the interpretive possibilities realized through material objects. Recognizing this volume’s contribution to book history, Stephen Orgel points out in his Afterword that in this work the print revolution “is presented as a reading revolution, a revolution not of technology but of dissemination and reception” (282). The strength of the essays collected by Anderson and Sauer thus lies not only in their demonstration of the ephemeral nature of many early modern

printed texts, but also in their attention to the way in which the material structure of particular works mediate the experience of reading, the way in which the book as object gives rise to and/or reflects specific reading practices.

The work is divided into three broad but thematically coherent sections: 1) Social Contexts for Writing; 2) Traces of Reading: Margins, Libraries, Prefaces, and Bindings; and 3) Print, Publishing, and Public Opinion. Keeping with the volume's reassessment of the ephemeral nature of many early modern texts, David Scott Kastan opens section one by reflecting on the way that our experience of Shakespeare is a product of the "mediations of the playhouse and printing house" (24). Arguing that the first quarto of *Hamlet* is more likely the result of everyday printing practices rather than pirating motivations and pointing out the non-marketability of Shakespeare's name as author in the early seventeenth century, Kastan emphasizes that play texts were published for profit within a community that did not yet recognize authorship as an important part of textual transmission and thus did not really require any discernible link to Shakespeare himself. In the second and most provocative essay in the volume, Peter Stallybrass considers how the development of the codex and attendant technologies occasioned more discontinuous modes of biblical reading. Stallybrass shows how the openness and interpretive accessibility that the codex makes possible has important implications not only for histories of the book but also for understanding the differences between medieval and early modern reading practices. One such practice that Stallybrass does not consider but which is relevant to his important essay is typological modes of reading—a form of interpretation that reflects the tendency towards non-linear if not exactly discontinuous reading. Furthering the analysis of the relationships between literary forms and historical circumstance, Christopher Grose carefully examines the differences between varying editions of Burton's *Anatomy* in order to demonstrate how Burton's failure to achieve encyclopedic totality is symptomatic of the politically volatile nature of "religious melancholy" in Jacobean England.

Examining the cultural import of a different encyclopedic text, Anne Hughes shows how invective and polemic in Thomas Edwards's *Gangraena* aim to produce a coherent Presbyterian identity. While Stallybrass's essay has more far-reaching implications than the other three in this first group, each essay here, particularly Grose's, intriguingly demonstrates the complex and conflicted relationships between literary/textual forms and early modern social formations.

The authors of section two are in search of "real" early modern readers. In the case of the first essay, William H. Sherman examines the promises and problems that early modern marginalia offers in the attempt to reconstruct actual readers. It is difficult to make the case for the historical and literary usefulness of marginalia, and Sherman concludes by admitting that when marginalia is not irrelevant it often exacerbates rather than resolves our understanding of early modern readers. A more fruitful place to examine the lived-experience of early modern readers is the collected libraries of individuals and families as demonstrated by Heidi Brayman Hackel's essay on Frances Egerton, Countess of Bridgewater's, personal library. In this essay, Hackel furthers our understanding of the gendered nature of reading and book ownership, opening up further investigative possibilities regarding the role that books played within the domestic economies of socially privileged early modern English families. In the third and richest essay in this section Randall Ingram considers how epigram collections, particularly their prefatory material, participated in the formation of reader's tastes. Ingram here offers a mature complication of any easy distinction between so-called "real" and so-called "implied" readers, pointing out the extent to which readership is always a function of textual as well as extra-textual processes: Texts, as Ingram shows, produce as well assume readers. The final essay in this section makes a straightforward but illuminating point about the way that different bindings of Herbert's *The Temple* reflect the ideologically distinct ways in which devotional books could be appropriated. Overall, the essays in this section offer a series of illuminating examples of how readers

appropriated texts for their own purposes, bending the meaning and even the packaging of works to particular and sometimes socially illuminating ends. As with the volume as a whole, the essays open up further space for investigations into the question of how individual readers appropriated texts for varying political and personal ends.

Furthering the volume's focus on the ephemeral nature of early modern printed texts Michael Mendle begins the final grouping of essays by examining the practice of pamphlet collecting and the implications it had for changes in reading practices and the contexts in which they occurred. Sabrina A. Baron follows this by making the intriguing argument that the contradictions between Milton's views on licensing and his role as State licenser are only ostensible when viewed within the wider context of mid- to late-century printing and censoring practices. Offering a series of interesting details about Milton's place within the seventeenth-century printing and licensing communities, Baron concludes that Milton's beliefs about reading and trial by temptation transcended politics and authorship. Continuing the focus on licensing, Lana Cable examines the pamphlet war between Samuel Parker and Andrew Marvell in order to show how Anglican propaganda matured during the Restoration. Rather than focusing on the licensing of individual texts, Parker, according to Cable, presented a more far-reaching ethics of language aimed at bringing non-conformists into the Anglican camp. Anna Battigelli closes this section with a deeply satisfying reading of how Dryden's works elicit opposing interpretations, particularly political ones, without the closure occasioned by an unequivocal authorial presence. The anger and frustration elicited by this strategy is recorded, Battigelli demonstrates, in the reception history of Dryden's major works. The essay is a fitting one to conclude with not only because of Dryden's chronological placement, but also because it draws together the volume's concern with the traces left by distinct reading communities and the textual strategies and technologies that inspire them.

While readers may take issue with particular theses presented in the course of this volume, the overall contribution is significant. When taken together the essays offer a consequential meta-commentary on materialist methodologies, their limits, their promises, and the possibilities that a distinctly interdisciplinary approach to book history may offer for future studies. Indeed, it is the volume's attention to the possibilities of future interdisciplinary study in this field that make it such a lively and relevant read for scholars interested in the infinitely productive question, "What is a book?"

Florike Egmond and Robert Zwijnenberg, eds. *Bodily Extremities: Preoccupations with the Human Body in Early Modern European Culture*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2003. ix + 235 pp. + 27 illus. \$79.95. Review by REBECCA DE HAAS, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA.

Florike Egmond and Robert Zwijnenberg's collection of essays, *Bodily Extremities: Preoccupations with the Human Body in Early Modern European Culture*, is an enlightening and interesting selection of essays about the body in early modern culture. The "body-project," as the editors term it, was supported by the Huizinga Institute. It begins with a brief introduction and explanation of the title; the editors state at the outset that the essays in their book will address the more extreme treatments of the human body, including execution, torture, and pain. In addition, the editors emphasize that in addressing these "bodily extremities," the approach will necessarily be interdisciplinary. Indeed it is, for the contributors (who represent a wide range of scholarship from European universities) discuss a variety of texts, including paintings, literary works, and historical documents. One may now ask what links such a disparate group of essays. As the editors assert, the collection has "four closely connected themes that recur in different combinations in most of the chapters: honour and shame, bodily integrity, identity and self-preservation, and pain" (9).