ideological pluralism based on New World “wilderness” experience. Firm belief and contingent knowledge intersect in Williams’ works, which sometimes simply leave this awkward juxtaposition unresolved, neither elucidated nor moralized.

If I mention missing in Read’s discussion any awareness of my own closely related interest in logologic cruxes in Design in Puritan American Literature (1992) and logonomic conflict in Authority and Female Authorship in Colonial America (1998), excuse a mumured quibble from an old man who still likes to be invited to a good party now and then—because I do believe that New World, Known World is worth celebrating. Here is an author-centered, text-centered study that eschews fashionable and predictable political hegemonies. Here is a book that emphasizes the conflicted humanity of authors, to whom we are more than casually introduced and then to whom we are urged to listen very, very closely. How uncommonly humane.


The earliest advertisements for New World settlement promised or intimated a plentitude of land, meat and women. Keenly aware of the importance of real estate to one’s social standing and economic survival, landless men became the most likely prospects to undertake the dangerous transatlantic journey. These potential colonists were also largely grain-eaters who valued animals as a culinary luxury as well as a profitable resource. And these men preferred to imagine the ready hospitality of friendly local women.

Of course advertisements, then and now, are notoriously unreliable. The first settlers at James Fort, later expanded into Jamestown, soon discovered the dark side of such fantasies. Water either too salty or contaminated, food spoiled by heat and humidity, crops destroyed by drought, disease spread by insects, Indians fiercely hostile to outsiders, life-threatening accidents, volatile arguments among the colonists themselves and the machinations of Spanish spies, among other hardships, all conspired against the earliest colonial Virginians’ dreams of a better life. It is said that dreams die hard, but at James Fort the dreamer’s end came all too easily.
The winter of 1609 and the spring of 1610 were particularly terrible. It is a historical irony that this period of misery, the “starving time,” provides a highpoint in William M. Kelso’s fascinating *Jamestown: The Buried Truth*. Kelso, who serves as head archaeologist of the Jamestown Recovery Project, discloses the grim *in situ* and documentary evidence of those seasons of famine: desperately eaten dogs, cats, horses, musk turtles, rats and poisonous snakes. By the end of the “starving time” only about ninety settlers survived out of several hundred.

Kelso also considers chemical analyses revealing what these recent immigrants primarily ate while living in their homeland. Chemical studies of isotopic signatures relating to diet enable archaeological speculation about the identity of some of the dead buried at Jamestown. Particularly indicative are two isotopes found within interred human bones. Each of these isotopes suggests whether wheat or corn was the deceased’s primary dietary grain, and this information in turn provides a clue to how long a particular settler resided in the New World before he or she died.

Such findings necessarily remain inconclusive, even as they usefully narrow the boundaries of certain archaeological questions. So Kelso’s book poses more questions than it provides answers. Much of the “buried truth” referred to in this book’s title unfortunately remains still buried. But if Kelso’s book is more about archaeological methods than about firm answers, it nonetheless offers an appealing crazy quilt of informative bits and pieces.

For instance, *in situ* evidence suggests that John Smith, whose veracity about so many matters remains suspect, was probably telling the truth about the quality of the water in the James Fort well. Other evidence implies that the gunshot wound which caused the first death of a James Fort settler appears to have been accidental. Kelso also observes that the James Fort dead were buried with their heads westward, a traditional Christian custom based on the expectation of the Second Coming of Jesus. However, Christian rites and superstitious rituals easily coexisted during the seventeenth century, a fact possibly explaining the artifact caches found in shallow fissures of the earthen floor of the excavated Fort. These curious objects were likely intended to ward off evil spirits.

“The American dream was born on the banks of the James River,” Kelso aptly states at the outset of his report (1). His book provides intriguing traces of just how troubled was the history of the colonists’ pursuit of a
better life in early Virginia. They had imagined a New World land that would fulfill Old World dreams, but instead James Fort settlers quickly discovered nature's stark indifference to human desires, needs, life.


True to the series in which it is published, New Perspectives in Music History and Criticism, Bonnie Gordon's monograph suggests a new way of hearing and interpreting seventeenth-century music. Not a book about Monteverdi per se, Gordon instead uses selected works by the composer—including such well-known masterpieces as the Lamento d'Arianna, Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda, and frequently performed works from the seventh and eighth madrigal books, as well as lesser-known compositions such as Book Eight's Ballo delle ingrate and pieces from the third and fourth madrigal books—as a frame of reference for making larger observations about seventeenth-century musical culture. In a series of five independent but interconnected essays (plus an introduction and brief “Coda”), Gordon pursues two primary goals: to “re-hear” Monteverdi's music as it would have been heard in the seicento, informed by seventeenth-century ideologies of anatomy and gender difference, and also to demonstrate how these ideologies were used to “contain” women's voices while at the same time offering a means for female singers to empower themselves through song. To do so, she draws upon an impressive wealth of source material, including anatomical and other scientific treatises, singing manuals, Monteverdi's own writings, music theoretical works, conduct books and other prescriptive writings, as well as contemporaneous poetry, literature, and painting (plus a sprinkling of recent pop culture references). Along the way she also touches upon a number of other issues, such as the well-worn subject of love and sex in the madrigal and an ambitious discussion of the change in aesthetics and musical style from Monteverdi's early to late works.

If this sounds like a lot for a book of just over two hundred pages, it is, and the various strands that Gordon pursues do not always connect as well as