yield to a postlapsarian binary system of signification in which nakedness and clothing are allied with conditions or qualities of human language” (178), Poole concludes, registering the current distrust of binary oppositions which she consistently dismantles throughout her book.

Religious sectarianism was a considerable cultural force in early modern England, but for (past and present) readers of seventeenth-century texts, Puritanism is also allied with political revolution/rebellion. John Spurr in English Puritanism, 1603-1689 (1998) reminds us that the elusive Puritan movement has been charged (and credited) with everything from igniting the English civil wars to introducing capitalism. Poole comments on the surge in printed materials and the discursive chaos of the 1640s, but says little about the politicizing of radical religion between the time of Shakespeare and Milton. Yet as a Round-head, the nonconformist metamorphosed into yet another series of satirical tropes, which became part of the royalist arsenal, beginning in the 1640s. In their popular writings, royalists, for example, used imagery of grotesque physicality to portray (female) characters who recited false confessions and published their crimes by vomiting or bearing appropriately monstrous offspring. These wide-reaching applications of Poole’s rewarding study of the evolution of the grotesque Puritan form will only add to its value for literary critics and historians.


Wrestling with God is a collection of essays honoring a distinguished scholar of seventeenth-century devotional literature and religious history. Anyone working in this area has learned to rely
on Paul Stanwood’s impeccable scholarship, beginning with his edition of John Cosin’s *A Collection of Private Devotions* (1967), and then continuing with editions of Henry More’s *Democritus Platonissans* (1968), William Law’s *A Serious Call to a Devout Life* and *The Spirit of Love*, Richard Hooker’s *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1981), Jeremy Taylor’s *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying* (Books VI, VII, and VIII, 1989). His many essays on Donne, Milton, Herbert, as well as his monograph on Izaak Walton are also well known. What has united the life’s work of Paul Stanwood has been a concern for matters theological in the seventeenth century, a concern that also unites the fifteen original essays in *Wrestling with God*, which are presented in “admiration and respect” by his friends and students.

The collection opens with a dedicatory sonnet by the poet X. J. Kennedy, a friend of Stanwood’s since graduate school at Michigan, whose theme is “the quest for excellence / And nourishment for spirit, mind, and body.” The first essay is by one of the great authorities of seventeenth-century literary studies, the late Louis Martz, whose “Donne, Herbert, and the Worm of Controversy” discusses the political and theological situations of two of the chief poets of the period. The next piece by John Shawcross, “The Virtue and Discipline of Wrestling with God” engages directly the idea of spiritual “wrestling”—i.e., “when godward thought and action (morality) would seem to oppose one’s desire for and understanding of oneself” (27). A number of the essays that follow are thought-provoking as they deal with some aspect of spiritual “wrestling” or religion in a more general way.

Most of the other essays deal with figures from the seventeenth century, such as Shakespeare, Donne, and Milton, though several move out of the English Renaissance altogether. John Booty, the official historiographer of the Episcopal Church, offers a brief look backward to the Elizabethan Book of Common Prayer, which he calls “The Core of Elizabethan Religion.” Eight of the essays concern Donne in some way. Especially noteworthy are Ted-Larry Pebworth’s “John Donne’s ‘Lamentations’” and Christopher Fetherstone’s *Lamentations … in prose and meeter* (1587); Claude
Summers’ “W[illiam] S[hakespeare]’s A Funeral Elegy and the Donnean Moment”; and William Blissett’s “The strangest pageant, fashion’d like a court: John Donne and Ben Jonson to 1600—Parallel Lives.” The essays on lesser studied works of Donne by Wyman Herendeen (The Progress of the Soule) and R. G. Siemens (Biathanatos) are also strong. Another strength of the collection is that lesser known figures are considered. Shawcross compares Lord Herbert of Cherbury to Henry Vaughan; Pebworth introduces us to an Elizabethan translator, Christopher Fetherstone; in a very fine essay, “The Devotional Flames of William Austin,” Graham Parry draws our attention to a sacred writer well known to Donne and others in his time. Equally of note is Bryan Gooch’s discussion of the manner in which Benjamin Britten composed settings for Donne’s poetry, which directly engages the idea of spiritual struggle in both poet and composer: “his wrestle, like Donne’s, is with the problem of faith in a tortured world with its death and misery, and in The Holy Sonnets both musician and poet find their resolution” (204).

Students of seventeenth-century literature will find much to interest them in the essays in this volume. Available on-line as a special issue of Early Modern Literary Studies (vol. 7), Wrestling with God serves as a fitting tribute to a scholar who has devoted himself to excellence and spiritual nourishment.

Andrew Gordon and Bernhard Klein, eds. Literature, Mapping and the Politics of Space in Early Modern Britain. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xiii + 276 pp. + 30 illus. $59.95. Review by IRA CLARK, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA.

This collection includes an introduction by the editors and an epilogue by Richard Helgerson, whose Forms of Nationhood first made chorography and geography professionally exciting for most of the contributors and other students of early modern English culture. The eleven essays in between represent a conference that the editors organized at the University of London in 1997, Paper