

Poetry” as edited by Paul Hammond for the Longman’s series. Harth points out that modern editors have sometimes misappropriated Joseph Moxon’s *Mechanick Exercises on the Whole Art of Printing* (1683-84), misconstruing seventeenth-century printing practices and then producing new editions with unwarranted textual revisions in spelling, contractions, and italics. Having appeared in Kieth Walker’s edition of Dryden selections, those working assumptions also operate to a lesser extent in Hammond’s edition. As Harth points out, for example, shifting capitals to lower case risks interfering with their use in personifications, and removing italics risks diminishing rhetorical effects. In dropping authors’ italics, “Hammond has obliterated a feature that is an infrequent but nonetheless important ingredient of Dryden’s poetic expression” (240).

Harth admires other features of this edition, especially its annotations, for which “Hammond’s achievement deserves the highest praise” (243). Hammond, he says, brings “new and unpublished information” to “every important poem in these two volumes” (243), thus offering a perspective on Dryden’s verse which does not supercede but complements the California edition.

In another review, David Bywaters shows “Historicism Gone Awry” in several recent articles and books on Dryden, where history has either been misapplied or irrelevant to the subject, or used to “force literary texts into positions on questions of ideology or epistemology unknown to Dryden” (251), with the result that he is made to “speak as a ventriloquist’s dummy on a subject and before an audience of which he knew nothing” (253). While Bywaters has reservations about the application of history in Anne Barbeau Gardiner’s breathtaking new reading of *The Hind and the Panther*, he admires her “exhaustive review of court polemic under James” and concludes that “Dryden scholars are in her debt” (248). Bywaters also praises Susan J. Owen’s *Restoration Theatre and Crisis* (1996) and Steven Zwicker’s “The Paradoxes of Tender Conscience” (*ELH*, 1996) for their uses of history.

Gillian Wagner. *Thomas Coram, Gent. 1668-1751*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2004. x + 218 pp. + 8 illus. \$39.95. Review by GILLIAN HENDERSHOT, CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY.

The chief legacy of Thomas Coram is, of course, the foundling hospital

he established in 1739. This venture culminated in 1745 with the establishment of the Hospital's permanent site in Bloomsbury, London, which is thought to be the world's first incorporated charity. Clearly Coram was a man of unique vision, a vision which, it becomes clear after reading Wagner's biography, was marred by the limitations and flaws of his own personality. These limitations were exacerbated by general attitudes existing in Coram's lifetime. These popular attitudes marginalized many of the issues important to him, such as his belief in the necessity of helping abandoned children and his desire for equal rights for women.

Wagner's biography is timely as Coram has never been subject to a full scale study of his entire life, most accounts instead focusing on his later years and the foundling hospital. *Thomas Coram, Gent. 1668-1751* helps fill this gap. Wagner has gone back to Coram's early years to establish the general motivations and specific events that shaped his charitable contributions towards the "fate of its [England's] youngest, most defenseless, destitute and abandoned citizens" (1).

Wagner's text, although chiefly concerned with Coram, does offer some interesting glimpses of more general early modern English life. Attitudes towards women as well as the role and activities of women in elite society are discussed, and useful insights into the struggles and antagonisms of life in colonial Massachusetts can be found in the discussions of Coram's troubled early adult years in Taunton. Further insight into seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century life can be found in the frequent references to Coram's attempts to navigate the rigid structure of the English patronage system in which connections were everything and access to the right people was all important. *Thomas Coram, Gent. 1668-1751* will certainly appeal to anyone with interest in seventeenth-century English culture and society, gender relations, treatment and attitudes towards the poor (especially children), and of course early modern charitable efforts.

As stated above, Thomas Coram is most readily identified with the establishment of his foundling hospital. However, Wagner dedicates a large portion of her text to Coram's earlier years, in which he devoted much time and personal wealth to his various schemes to expand British interests in the American colonies. Coram's activities as a fully trained ship builder are also discussed. He worked in this trade for several years in both Boston and Taunton, and Wagner's discussion serves to highlight some of the struggles

and difficulties a young man would have had in establishing and maintaining a business in the colonies during the seventeenth century. Due in part to his own difficult personality and the apparent vengefulness of some of his Taunton neighbors, Coram returned to England heavily in debt following this unsuccessful venture.

It is in the examination of Coram's activities following this unspectacular return to England that Wagner is most successful. She ably highlights many of Coram's schemes and plans, including of course his concern for abandoned children and also his desire for the British government to exploit the natural resources of the Americas, particularly in Nova Scotia. Wagner illustrates many of the more fascinating traits of Coram's personality and interests, especially in the chapters "First Success" and "Lure of America." Wagner demonstrates in each of these that Coram was an early crusader for women's rights, and in doing so she highlights many of the gender biases inherent in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century London society.

It becomes apparent from reading these chapters that Thomas Coram was certainly a believer, if not a champion, of women's rights. He campaigned throughout his middle years for inheritance rights for women and for the necessity of educating girls. As Wagner states, "Coram was vociferous in their support. His sense of fair play was outraged. He had always seen the role of women as important, and in particular had championed the education of girls as necessary because they were the mothers of the next generation" (97). The importance of women to Coram can also be seen in the details Wagner provides of the twenty-one "ladies of quality and distinction" who provided essential patronage for Coram's scheme for a foundling hospital (198). However, the examination of the role these women played in Coram's activities would have benefited greatly from a more detailed discussion in the text, as it is clear that Coram himself felt their contributions were essential both to the long-term success of his plan and to his ability to acquire further patronage.

As a former chair, and indeed the first woman to chair the Thomas Coram Foundation, the favorable bias of Dame Gillian Wagner towards Coram is apparent throughout the text of *Thomas Coram, Gent. 1668-1751*. She rarely criticizes the actions of the man who fell out with his fellow governors of the foundling hospital he established to the extent that he was ejected from its governing body. When placed alongside other unhappy events in

Coram's life, this incident suggests that Coram had a difficulty maintaining cordial relations with people. But Coram's cantankerous nature is still apparent throughout the book, despite the sympathetic treatment by Wagner. This is especially true in the chapter entitled "Trouble in Taunton." In this chapter, Wagner absolves Coram of blame in his dealings with the townspeople of Taunton. She refers to Coram as "Hardworking, energetic and confident" (30). Of the people of Taunton she states, "There seems to have been a concerted move to obstruct Coram" (31). She describes a court case that Coram lost in which "executions were issued against Coram and were immediately levied against the two vessels in his yard," that "it was a coordinated attempt by some of the leading citizens of Taunton to pervert the course of justice" (33). However, despite Wagner's account, the image of Coram that emerges from this chapter is not a favorable one. He appears to be a proud, stubborn man who does not or will not understand the nuances of social interaction.

Gillian Wagner, in *Thomas Coram, Gent. 1668-1751*, has provided a much-needed biography of this early pioneer of children's charity. She highlights the life and inspirations of a man whose efforts helped save many of London's unwanted children. Wagner's efforts provide details of a man who "fits no stereotype and was unique in being a man of integrity in an age of corruption, with a generosity of spirit and a capacity for compassion that has rightly earned him a place in the history of his time" (5).

Andrew McRae. *Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. ix + 250 pp. \$65.00. Review by MELISSA MOHR.

McRae makes claims for literature that will excite most literary scholars. He argues that writing and reading the unauthorized texts of early Stuart England led to concrete political changes. Libels, pamphlets, formal satires and other texts in the 'satiric mode' provided a means for authors and readers to interrogate existing political structures and to imagine new ones, resulting ultimately in the Revolution. Satire, in McRae's account, is characterized by strategies of discrimination and stigmatization, making it uniquely useful in "a culture becoming increasingly anxious, and undeniably curious, about the phenomena of dissent and division" (4). Satire gave its authors and readers tools