

Beckwith's concerted focus in her argument has some drawbacks. Her central section argues strongly for the sacramentality of the Passion sequence, but while the Passion accounts 'for half of the cycle' (23), there is another half without which this play is incomplete. This other half will undoubtedly come in for closer scrutiny. Here it will be useful to look back to an earlier argument for sacramentality in the Towneley Plays by Lauren Lepow, *Enacting the Sacrament: Counter-Lollardy in the Towneley Cycle* (Rutherford, NJ, 1990). Lepow propounds a thesis that intersects with Beckwith's at numerous points and gives a broader coverage of the Creation to Last Judgment story. She argues, for example, that the 'priest ... is the hero of the *Mactacio Abel*' and that 'priest figures like Abel contribute to the drama's counter-Lollard force' (63). In the Old Testament sequence as a whole, Lepow concludes that the 'frequent evocation of the audience's liturgical experience points ahead to the contemporary priest's centrality and the Word's sacramental fulfillment' (79). It will now be a matter of interest to see if a similar broadening of Beckwith's central thesis extends into the Old Testament sequence of the York text. *Signifying God* is as important for its invitation to further discussion as it is for its insights and should prove to be a milestone in the scholarly debates in the fields of early theatrical and cultural studies.

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David M. Bergeron. *Practicing Renaissance Scholarship: Plays and Pageants, Patrons and Politics*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2000. Pp x, 221.

In this wide-ranging collection of essays, Bergeron addresses a number of loosely-related topics – from Shakespeare to royal entries to women patrons of drama – collected under the four broad rubrics of his subtitle: plays and pageants, patrons and politics. These diverse essays are intended to exemplify an approach to Renaissance scholarship that Bergeron calls 'interrogative metonymy'. In response to Gerald Graff's call for contextualization and interdisciplinary work, Bergeron worries that 'such ambitious theories and interdisciplinary generalizations risk taking the place of the hard, disciplined work that scholars must do' (1). He praises Wayne Booth's attitude toward scholarship as a process of association and affiliation with scholars past and present, which starkly contrasts with what Bergeron perceives as Graff's market-driven notion of scholarship. Such affiliations with scholarly past and present, or 'metonymy of scholarship' (4), need also be interrogative or

sceptical ones: for Bergeron, scholarship must discover new evidence, uncover errors in fact or in interpretation, and recover neglected material.

The essays in the collection set out to do precisely that: they discover new evidence, offer new interpretations to correct old ones, or direct our attention to material that has not had sufficient notice. Chapter 1 is a somewhat bifurcated essay on Shakespeare's *Richard II*, attending to the dual problems of the play's dating and of the missing deposition scene (4.154–318) from early quarto editions. Bergeron argues that in dating *Richard II* scholars have been using questionable evidence – Sir Edward Hoby's 7 December 1595 letter, which allegedly referred to a private performance of the play – and that the absent deposition scene points to Shakespeare's revision of the text rather than to an act of censorship. Chapters 2 to 4 discuss patronage of drama. Chapter 2 is an interesting, though short, piece on how manuscript evidence relating to Elizabeth's 1559 coronation entry shows the monarch's interest and participation in the preparations for the civic pageant. Arguing that Elizabeth was no passive spectator, the chapter points out that Elizabeth's interest in the costumes for the pageant and the active involvement of her Revels Office suggest that though the pageant was funded and prepared by the city and guilds of London, Elizabeth was also a meaningful patron of the drama. Chapter 3 cogently argues that patronage was broader than previously acknowledged. Using the example of Thomas Heywood, Bergeron shows how dramatists received support not simply from the court, but also from an eclectic range of sources including the nobility, paying audiences at public theaters, and London guilds (which commissioned writers to create civic pageants), in a mixed system of patronage. Chapter 4 is a reassessment of the role of women as cultural agents. Although too dependent on evidence from dedications, the chapter argues persuasively that noble women were important patrons of drama.

Analyzing Francis Bacon's *History of the Reign of King Henry the Seventh*, Chapter 5 makes the provocative suggestion that Bacon's representation of Henry VII's ill treatment of his wife Elizabeth had less to do with historical fact than with Bacon's observation of the relations between James I and Anne of Denmark and his projection of the later marriage backwards. The next chapter, also touching on Queen Anne, detects a masculinist bias in historians' assessments of the queen consort. Surveying the historical accounts of the last century or so, Bergeron exposes male historians' unsubstantiated negative (and misogynist) characterizations of Anne. Offering a much-needed correction to the distorted views of Anne in past scholarship, the chapter nonetheless loses some of its impact when coming on the heels of Chapter 5, which rather too

easily dismisses Anne's importance: 'As a political force, Anne had negligible impact' (85).

The next two chapters engage the question of whether there was a 'war of the theaters' in the late sixteenth-century. Both chapters answer the question with a resounding 'no'. Chapter 7 argues that the so-called rivalry between Thomas Middleton and Anthony Munday is the result of a nineteenth-century misreading of the evidence, a claim that later scholars have repeated unquestioningly. Chapter 8 convincingly shows that the 'war of the theaters', allegedly conducted among the playwrights Ben Jonson, John Marston, and Thomas Dekker, was an invention of nineteenth-century scholars that tells us more about the scholars' preoccupations than about English Renaissance theatre. The concluding chapters turn from theatre to focus on pageants. Chapter 9 is a fascinating discussion of Gilbert Dugdale's eyewitness account of James I's royal entry in 1604 as a text that sheds further light on civic pageants. Finally, the last chapter boldly argues against received opinion for a thriving English visual culture before Inigo Jones introduced Italian art to England by recuperating the architect Stephen Harrison's work on civic pageants.

Armed with a goodly portion of common sense and writing in clear, readable prose, Bergeron offers important revisions to previous accounts of the patronage of theatre and pageant traditions. His aim to interrogate the entrenched scholarly assumptions is a laudable one, often producing acute insights. The essays would nonetheless have benefited from closer attention to recent scholarship, particularly scholarship on early modern women and theatre. While this book was published too soon to take into account Leeds Barroll's 2001 biography *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, a more extended exposition of his revisionary thesis that Anne had a significant role in the political and cultural milieu of the Jacobean court first advanced in Barroll's earlier articles, the essays on Anne and women patrons demand a fuller engagement with Barbara Lewalski's work on women's contribution to literary culture, particularly in her 1993 *Writing Women in Jacobean England*. I highlight these two instances simply because Barroll and Lewalski are scholars Bergeron himself mentions in passing.

This is a book that in many ways looks backward. Some essays are critical historiographies; others cast their glance back to neglected evidence from the early modern past. The essays also have had their genesis over a considerable period of two decades: all but two of the ten chapters have previously been published in an earlier form, with dates of publication from 1975 to 1996. The essays and their preoccupations reveal not only how Bergeron's mind had developed in the last two to three decades but also how the field of Renaissance

drama itself had developed. Many ideas now taken for granted had only come into critical discussion recently, for instance, scholarship on women's cultural influence and artistic production. This book testifies to the rich and exciting developments in early modern studies as a whole and Renaissance drama in particular.

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Edward Berry. *Shakespeare and the Hunt: A Cultural and Social Study*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp xii, 253.

This book is ambitious, illuminating, and provocative. The author moves from an eye-opening account of actual hunting practices in Elizabethan and Jacobean England to a specific analysis of Shakespeare's many uses of hunt imagery in his works. Individual chapters deal with *Venus and Adonis* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Julius Caesar*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *As You Like It*, and *The Tempest*. Finally, in his last chapter, Berry moves directly to confront the overwhelming question: what do the works show about Shakespeare's attitude toward hunting?

Granting the inevitably subjective search for implied authorial attitudes, Berry quotes the opposing views of two major commentators on the hunt: D. H. Madden, who concludes that Shakespeare was 'beyond doubt a sportsman, with ... rare skill in the mysteries of woodcraft, loving to recall the very names of the hounds with which he was wont to hunt'; and Matt Cartmill, who notes that Shakespeare consistently links hunting to rape and murder, and creates characters for whom 'a distaste for the hunt is a sign of common decency'.<sup>1</sup> Berry sides strongly with Cartmill, concluding bravely and for the most part convincingly, that '[i]ndividually, each of the works implies a critique of the culture of the hunt; collectively, the recurrent patterns of the critique imply a coherent authorial point of view' (209).

In his introduction Berry emphasizes the importance of hierarchy among both hunters and prey. Hunting was an aristocratic sport. Berry points out that 'those who hunt in Shakespeare are invariably royalty, aristocracy, or privileged gentry' (12). Hunters also observed the hierarchy, apparently familiar to Shakespeare, among different classes of deer, an order topped by the adult male red deer usually known as a 'hart' (17). By its aristocratic practitioners hunting was defended as a recreation and as providing experience for war, but ambiguities in attitude were widely apparent. There were, of course, lower class hunters, possibly including Shakespeare, but they were regarded as poachers.