

abstract, transcending the social: think of the (cosmopolitan?) humanism of *Alle Menschen werden Brüder*. Many other composers wrote at their best late in life (Mozart, Schubert, Mahler, Janáček, etc.), so one wonders if Mallette is right in her use of “Adorno’s adjectives” which, besides, “don’t describe Petrarch’s late style perfectly” (41). This stimulating study makes use of a range of concepts and linguistic tools but, above all, and true to its name, it offers a literary journey through the lives of Latin and Arabic, to the delight of those already familiar with linguistic research’s finer and often more arid points, and surely also of an interested educated public.

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Positive Emotions in Early Modern Literature and Culture.

Cora Fox, Bradley J. Irish, and Cassie M. Miura, eds.

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Ever since the grand theories of Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche, we humanists have focused on “the hermeneutics of suspicion,” as Paul Ricoeur put it. Consciousness is false; we are driven by dark impulses barely known to us; every social action is a symptom of a submerged, antagonistic play of power. Hence, the histories of early modern emotions have so far focused on the melancholic varieties of pathologies that mark the tremors of the soul and the disquietudes of the body. And in literary studies at large, Lauren Berlant’s *Cruel Optimism* (2011) and Sianne Ngai’s *Ugly Feelings* (2007) have had an enormous impact in articulating our early twenty-first-century structures of feelings.

Yet for every scholarly trend there comes along an equal and opposite countertrend. As the feminist Sara Ahmed has signaled, there is now a “happiness turn.” In the after-shocks of multiple and continual planetary crises, we care much more about therapy, consolation, and the well-being of the self. Thus, the editors of this most interesting and original volume—Cora Fox, Bradley J. Irish, and Cassie M. Miura—make the case for how a sustained attention to the “positive emotions in early modern literature and culture” might be good for us; since, after all, we can trace the genealogy of so much of our contemporary world to early modernity. This smartly conceived and deftly executed collection is therefore a very much welcomed and substantial contribution to affect studies.

How does one cultivate, represent, and propagate pleasure? Richard Strier’s “Happy Hamlet” starts off the volume by arguing that we’ve got the reading of the melancholic Dane all wrong. He’s not sad by nature at all, but actually quite happy, were it not for the circumstances that befall him. Likewise, for Miura, Robert Burton’s *The Anatomy of*

Melancholy is not all depressing. Miura shows how Burton was equally invested in laughter as a therapeutic means to purge bad humors out of our system. Ian Frederick Moulton focuses on how Rabelais and Montaigne construct the persona of the happy reader against the stereotype of the moody scholar. In “Pleasure and the Rustic Life,” Ullrich Langer explores how all sorts of joy can be found in the country villa: peace, relaxation, the copious beauty of nature.

Do we feel emotions as individuals or members of a social group? Timothy Hampton in his contribution (drawn from his delightful *Cheerfulness: A Literary and Cultural History*, 2022) argues that good cheer links religious feeling of belonging to the secular ethics of sociability and hospitality in the early modern period. For Paul Joseph Zajac, Shakespeare in his first tetralogy uses the virtue of contentment as a necessary skill in political leadership and inspiring the troops. In a reading of *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Cora Fox suggests how merriness—as inflected by gender—is a way for women to create communities of care and fun.

How do the formal properties of literature create the structures of positive feelings? Thomas Traherne’s devotional verses are intensely preoccupied with finding happiness not in the life beyond but the here and now, as Leila Watkins argues. Lalita Pandit Hogan reads Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi* as negotiating the “precariousness of positive emotions” in the complex attachments between the characters. For Eonjoo Park, much of the payoff in revenge drama—in particular *The Spanish Tragedy*—comes in the form of pleasure of getting vengeance at a malefactor. Patrick Colm Hogan closes the volume with a reading of *All’s Well that Ends Well* with the messy ambivalence of the play’s closure.

Future work will perhaps better historicize early modern emotions against its ancient and medieval predecessors, give a more nuanced account of the specificity of sexuality, race, and class shape affect, and examine emotions beyond Northern Europe so that Renaissance studies will truly be globalized at last, but for now, in our age of mindfulness, positive psychology, and well-being, this winsome volume will surely open the paths of more salutary, hopeful, and, yes, positive thinking in the humanities.

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Publicity and the Early Modern Stage: People Made Public.

Allison K. Deutermann, Matthew Hunter, and Musa Gurnis, eds.

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xiv + 294 pp. \$149.99.

Publicity and the Early Modern Stage tackles the gargantuan labor of consolidating the discursive ramifications and ideological amendments that have redrawn the conceptual