

Galathea. More significantly, Knoll challenges the conventional reputation of Lyly's plays as being static and undramatic. In her lengthy analyses, she urges their broad range of erotic experiences, their "vibrant, frenzied action" on stage (15), and the "active properties of their dramatic language" (16). In this, she endorses the views of Kent Cartwright and Andy Kesson, as well as the results of recent theatrical experimentation (16). For those who study Lyly's plays, *Conceiving Desire in Lyly and Shakespeare* should be required reading.

Ruth Lunney, *University of Newcastle, Australia*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.185

Gifts and Graces: Prayer, Poetry, and Polemic from Lancelot Andrewes to John Bunyan. David Gay.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021. xiv + 210 pp. \$70.

David Gay's *Gifts and Graces* takes as its subject the fraught role of prayer in the religious controversies of the seventeenth century; in particular, Gay is interested in the divisions between set forms of prayer and extempore utterances. His range is wide, from Lancelot Andrewes through John Bunyan, and his genres diverse. But Gay's primary interest, as his title makes clear, is in the complex relationship between prayer and poetry, and the intersection of both with polemical writing. In the background of this study—and sometimes in the foreground—is the ongoing debate over the Book of Common Prayer and its mandatory use in the English church.

With the exception of his first chapter, which discusses Andrewes and George Herbert, Gay's focus is on the period following 1645 when the prayer book was officially abolished and replaced with the very loose (and, as he notes, aesthetically unconvincing) *Directory for Public Worship*, as well as with the decades following its reinstatement in 1662. In the central chapters of the book—focused on Jeremy Taylor, John Milton, and Bunyan—Gay explores what it meant for the Book of Common Prayer to be the subject of so much controversy, and he positions his authors within a debate that was in many respects at the very center of the Civil Wars. (Although Gay doesn't discuss this, Laud's efforts to impose the prayer book on the Church of Scotland are considered one of the catalysts for the entire conflict.)

Running through Gay's chapters as a kind of leitmotif is the status of the Lord's Prayer. As he persuasively explains, how one understood the instructions Christ gave when first uttering this prayer (which, as Bunyan took pains to point out, was not actually named "The Lord's Prayer" in scripture) typically revealed the position one took on whether Christians were meant to pray in set forms. The debate is anchored in the Gospels themselves: whereas in Matthew, Christ declares, "After this manner therefore pray ye," in Luke he commands that the exact words be followed: "When you pray,

say . . .” Matthew’s version appealed to nonconformists like Bunyan and the older Milton, who wanted prayer to be inspired and spontaneous; Luke’s version was preferred by Andrewes and Taylor, who interestingly often regarded extempore prayer as both pretentious and arrogant in its assuming God’s willingness to continue to inspire.

In one of the most striking moments in the book, Gay argues that Milton used the Lord’s Prayer as the subtext for Satan’s soliloquy in book 4 of *Paradise Lost*, where each part of the prayer is invoked, parodied, or inverted. He also astutely observes that Bunyan, in his objection to human invention in prayer, “sought to invent the Lord’s Prayer as allegory.” Less convincing was Gay’s effort to read both *Comus* and *Paradise Regained* as liturgical texts, with the first a more conservative form of liturgy honoring the ceremonial setting for the original masque (on the occasion of Michaelmas), and the second as a “liturgy of dissent.” The argument rests on a very capacious understanding of what is meant by *liturgy*, and one of Gay’s overriding arguments in the book is to expand what liturgy, prayer, and poetry mean. He defines poetry, for example, as “any kind of imaginative writing including narrative and allegory.” This can also yield some interesting insights, as when he takes a prose passage from Jeremy Taylor’s sermon “The Return of Prayers” and reprints it to become a “found poem.”

In his “Afterword,” Gay wants to argue for poetry as a unifying and civilizing force, but the burden of the book often pulls in the opposite direction. For every Taylor with his remarkable tolerance, there is a Bunyan fighting internecine battles. On the whole, *Gifts and Graces* leaves the reader less with a celebratory sense of poetry than with a strong reminder of how essential debates over prayer were to the identity and unity of the kingdom, and how profoundly these debates penetrated the literary imagination.

Ramie Targoff, *Brandeis University*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.186

Living with Shakespeare: Saint Helen’s Parish, London, 1593–1598.

Geoffrey Marsh.

Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021. x + 502 pp. \$29.95.

Ask any Shakespearean what they actually know about the life of the world’s preeminent writer. They might reference his plays and sonnets, the occasional conspiracy, and possibly his impact on English language and culture. Less likely is the discussion of him as a person, where he gained inspiration, and what his daily challenges were. While Geoffrey Marsh’s new book cannot definitively answer any of these questions, he does open it up to inquiry. And while this unique text does not conform to one specific genre, he meticulously examines resources and lavishes readers with a narrative of William Shakespeare in his thirties.

The importance of this text is that it examines an often neglected time that preceded Shakespeare’s most influential and acclaimed works. How did his surroundings and