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# The History of Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy ed. by John Richetti (review)

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and no others. There is a short Selected Bibliography and no index.

Rebecca Shapiro *The City University of New York*

*The History of Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy*, ed. John Richetti. Lexington: Kentucky, 2005. Pp. xli + 412. \$60; \$24.95 (paper).

Mr. Richetti has street cred. He makes another major contribution to the study of women writers with his edition of Haywood's *The History of Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy* (originally published in three volumes in 1753). Besides Garland's 1974 facsimile, this marks the first modern edition—and the only edited, fully annotated version—of Haywood's last novel.

Haywood (1693?–1756) wrote some eighty wildly popular works, including novels, conduct books, essays, political satires, poetry, plays, translations, and scandal chronicles, as well as *The Female Spectator*, one of the first women's magazines. She was, however, virtually ignored from her death until recently, when her most popular works, such as *The History of Betsy Thoughtless* (1751), have attained quasi-canonical status.

She played a profound role in the development of the novel, emphasizing female experience and sexual politics. Mr. Richetti argues that *The History of Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy* represents a development in Haywood's narrative style, which allows her to present an unsentimental and insightful critique of marriage and courtship among the privileged rich in eighteenth-century England. Tempered by humor and satire, Haywood's psychological realism illuminates the relationship between gender and culture in women's lives.

Mr. Richetti's excellent scholarly edition has generous textual apparatus, extensive editorial notes, a helpful chronology, and selected Bibliography. This edition is altogether a joy to read.

Deborah D. Rogers *University of Maine*

ROBIN DIX. *The Literary Career of Mark Akenside. Including an Edition of His Non-Medical Prose*. Madison, Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson, 2006. Pp. 410. \$52.50.

Even to eighteenth-century scholars, Mark Akenside (1721–1770) is likely to be only a name with a wispy vapor trail, memories of having flown over *The Pleasures of Imagination*. What scholars may recall better is Johnson's brief and, by and large, magisterially dismissive account, within a decade after Akenside's early death, in *The Lives of the Poets*. Here Johnson is at his apparently most credible, because most skillful at treating opinion as distilled fact: "To examine such compositions singly cannot be required; they have doubtless brighter and darker parts: but when they are once found to be generally dull all further labour may be spared, for to what use can the work be criticised that will not be read?" This rhetorical question elicits a simple response: what is once found dull may later look better, when better read. Mr. Dix's *Literary Career of Mark Akenside* provides the critical wherewithal for better readings.

This new book by Mr. Dix complements his editions of Akenside's poetry (1996) and of essays reassessing Akenside (2000). It spares no labor to pace readers appreciatively and learnedly through Akenside's literary output. Admittedly, only already willing readers are likely to profit from Mr. Dix's rather