

SPECIAL REPORT

FESTSCHRIFT FOR STEVEN N. ZWICKER
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A number of Marvellians—among many students of the seventeenth century—gathered in St Louis, Missouri, this past June for a festschrift celebration in honor of Professor Steven N. Zwicker, who that month marked his 70th birthday. Zwicker has taught at Washington University, St Louis, since 1969. Though a Drydenist first and perhaps last, Zwicker has been publishing on Marvell since 1974¹ and has long been admired by Marvellians as a model of interdisciplinary criticism, both singly and in collaboration with the historian Derek Hirst. Hirst and Zwicker's *Andrew Marvell, Orphan of the Hurricane* was published by Oxford in 2012 and was treated to an [extensive review in this bulletin](#) by Nicholas McDowell.² Zwicker, perhaps as much as anyone, has worked to shed light on Marvell's stunning imaginative confluences of public and private, the sexual and the political: in seminal readings, for instance, of the Archibald Douglas and Frances Stuart passages in *The Last Instructions to a Painter*;³ of the prospect of child abuse bound together with that of national calamity in *The Unfortunate Lover*;⁴ of Marvell and the body "in all its deficiencies and desires."⁵ Zwicker has also taught us to question our commonplace assumptions about literary relations in the later seventeenth century, especially the relations between and among Marvell, Dryden, and Milton.⁶ Zwicker's scholarship is characterized by a writerly elegance rare in academia, and by a deep sense of the pleasures of reading, historical and otherwise.

It comes as something of a surprise that a scholar whose voice is so distinctive should also be such an inveterate collaborator. Nevertheless, in his work with Hirst and with the late Kevin Sharpe, Zwicker has helped define, for a generation of students and researchers, what it means to be "interdisciplinary," how to negotiate a rapprochement between the literary and the historical that is at once powerful and responsible to the aims of both fields.⁷ This commitment to the most robust kinds of interdisciplinarity Zwicker has long promoted at his home institution: through the Literature and History Program in Arts and Sciences, created in 1976, and more recently through a series of Mellon Foundation initiatives, including the postdoctoral program "Modeling Interdisciplinary Inquiry," now entering its 14th year.

How far Zwicker's career-long passions and concerns have come to be shared was cheerfully evident in the festschrift celebration held at Washington University on June 8. Plenary lectures were given by Marvell Society Past President Nigel Smith of Princeton University and by Michael McKeon of Rutgers: Smith dazzlingly connected Marvell's lyric and public poetry with a range of European verse (mainly Spanish and Dutch) heretofore little known to students of the poet; McKeon, in honor of the occasion, left behind the eighteenth-century novel to discuss Marvell and Swift, and indeed found in Swift's "love" for Marvell a potent source of Swift's ethical subjectivity. In the midst of the plenary talks were three panel sessions: "Millennial Praxis, or The Futures of Historical Criticism," featuring papers by Michael Schoenfeldt (U Michigan), Christopher D'Addario (Gettysburg College), and Randy Robertson (Susquehanna U); "Imagining Andrew Marvell," with contributions from Marvell Society President Timothy Raylor (Carleton College), Derek Hirst (Washington U), and Ann Huse (John Jay College); and "Milton, Dryden, and Dryden's Milton," in which were heard Anne Cotterill (Missouri U of Science and Technology), Alex Garganigo (Austin College), and Matthew Augustine (U of St Andrews). The academic part of the day ended with a reflection by Derek Hirst, on the enduring friendship and

intellectual partnership he and Zwicker have enjoyed, and with a memorable appreciation by Steve himself. There followed a sumptuous wine and cheese reception, and an even more sumptuous dinner at the Zwickers' home. In all more than sixty people were in attendance throughout the day, including undergraduate students going back to the early 1970s, and nearly a dozen former PhD students of the honored scholar.

As he made plain throughout the day, Steve is not retiring. His writing desk is as full as ever. For that, Marvellians, and indeed all those who make their professional lives in the seventeenth century, can be grateful.

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Notes

- ¹ Zwicker, "Models of Governance in Marvell's *The First Anniversary*," *Criticism* 16 (1974): 1-12.
- ² Hirst and Zwicker, *Andrew Marvell, Orphan of the Hurricane* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); McDowell, review of *Andrew Marvell, Orphan of the Hurricane*, by Derek Hirst and Steven N. Zwicker, *Andrew Marvell Newsletter* 4.2 (2012): [electronic].
- ³ Zwicker, "Virgins and Whores: The Politics of Sexual Misconduct in the 1660s," in *The Political Identity of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Conal Condran and A. D. Cousins (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1990), 85-110.
- ⁴ Hirst and Zwicker, "Eros and Abuse: Imagining Andrew Marvell," *ELH* 74.2 (2007): 371-95.
- ⁵ Hirst and Zwicker, "Andrew Marvell and the Toils of Patriarchy: Fatherhood, Longing, and the Body Politic," *ELH* 66.3 (1999): 629-54, at 631.
- ⁶ See, e.g., Zwicker, "Milton, Dryden, and the Politics of Literary Controversy," in *Culture and Society in the Stuart Restoration*, ed. Gerald MacLean (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 137-58.
- ⁷ In addition to the collaborations with Hirst cited above, see "High Summer at Nun Appleton, 1651: Andrew Marvell and Lord Fairfax's Occasions," *HJ* 36.2 (1993): 247-69; with Kevin Sharpe, see, perhaps most influentially, *Politics of Discourse*, ed. Sharpe and Zwicker (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), and *Reading, Society, and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. Sharpe and Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).