

The book's arguments are supported by a balance of corpus study and case studies. A companion website supplies the full data sets that support the numerous tables featured in the book, and includes a spreadsheet of over 300 dedications from composers to other musicians with basic bibliographic information plus the dedicatee's name and information on their relationship to the composer as stated on the title page (where applicable). This should be a valuable resource for scholars interested in further probing music's social networks in the period. The corpus study approach reveals patterns such as the one Green calls "reciprocal dedications" (in which a composer who received a dedication from another returned the gesture), and the gender distributions of dedications (discussed by Green on pages 21–24). It is through selected case studies, meanwhile, that we learn about such things as particular rhetorical devices, and how dedicatory gestures related to their makers' and receivers' circumstances. An appendix contains the full text, in original language and translation, of eleven dedicatory epistles published from 1766 to 1811, thus documenting the final flowering of the genre (the seven to Haydn provide a reminder of his unparalleled musical celebrity in the period).

"I yearn to understand my own presence as a printed excerpt of a once-performed stage piece." So we read in Green's article, "Memoirs of a Musical Object, Supposedly Written by Itself: It-Narrative and Eighteenth-Century Marketing."² The article is written from the perspective of a score published in London in 1779, now held in the Beinecke Library, and it is in the eighteenth-century stylized voice of the material object that the article brings historical and theoretical perspectives to bear on that yearning to understand. *Dedicating Music* makes plain the rigor that made possible the apparent whimsy of "Memoirs of a Musical Object"—though this reader would have appreciated finding a dose of whimsy in the book. Aside from venturing to cast dedications as "actants" (139) and a use of Igor Kopytoff's notion of a "cultural biography of things" (135–36), *Dedicating Music* steers clear of intellectual currents that encourage entertaining how objects might have (or be narrated into having) lives of their own. Dedications emerge from this study as sites of composers', publishers', and consumers' shifting desires and capacities, making this a book from which scholars not only of music but of any artistic medium can gain insight into the significance of a work's paratextual packaging and the process of transition from patronage system to market economy.

NOTES

1. Thomas L. Hankins and Robert J. Silverman, *Instruments and the Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1995), 5.

1. Emily H. Green, "Memoirs of a Musical Object, Supposedly Written by Itself: It-Narrative and Eighteenth-Century Marketing," *Current Musicology* 95 (2013): 197.

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Chris Gabbard, *A Life Beyond Reason: A Father's Memoir* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2019). Pp. 240. \$24.95 cloth.

When Chris Gabbard was hired by the University of North Florida upon completion of his Ph.D. at Stanford, it was as a scholar of the British Enlighten-

ment who would soon publish articles on Behn, Defoe, and travel writing. His most recent scholarly work, which includes chapters in collections including *Intellectual Disability: A Conceptual History, 1200–1900*, *Keywords for Disability Studies*, and *The Madwoman and the Blindman: Jane Eyre, Discourse, Disability*, attests to a turn in his writerly preoccupations. In a sense, Gabbard's new book, *A Life Beyond Reason*, makes use of both stages of his scholarly career, even as it moves beyond them. This book, however, is no scholarly monograph on the Age of Reason, but rather a moving personal memoir chronicling his family's life and times in their own very different Augustan Age, a period which commenced with the arrival of Gabbard's son August in 1999. This amazing boy lived for fourteen years facing a litany of diagnoses stemming from the complications of an obstructed labor: "cerebral palsy, spastic quadriplegia, profound mental retardation, cortical visual impairment, microcephaly, seizure disorder, osteopenia—and the list went on" (35). There is pain and suffering aplenty in this narrative, along with understandable doses of anger and frustration, but above all this is a story about love and joy, and long before one reaches the final page it is abundantly clear that Gabbard's Augustan Age has not ended with an untimely death from pneumonia in 2013; the child lives on not only in the author's memory, but through this book in the hearts and minds of every reader who meets him and comes to appreciate the many lessons that a life beyond reason offers to us all.

Before taking up my review proper, it is perhaps best to begin by assuring regular perusers of *Eighteenth-Century Studies* that this memoir is directed substantially to those interested in the period. The volume refers to a wide variety of figures associated with the Enlightenment or the eras abutting it, including John Donne, John Milton, John Locke, Mary Astell, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, Sarah Scott, Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, and Mary Wollstonecraft. At the same time, Gabbard's narrative asks us to reconsider the Enlightenment world view and its connection to our contemporary faith in science and medicine (as well as academia's own privileging of reason). That *A Life of Reason* eloquently accomplishes this aim is evidenced by the praise the book has received from scholars including Rachel Adams, Michael Bérubé, Terry Castle, Lennard Davis, Sandra Gilbert, Andrea Lunsford, Mark Osteen, and Ralph James Savarese.

A Life of Reason is a satisfying read of several kinds. Before August, Gabbard confesses, "I tended to frame everything around me in terms of the Enlightenment and viewed all forms of progress as its legacy" (3). Believing the movement "had laid the foundation of medicine and science," thereby "allow[ing] humankind to control its destiny," he even goes so far as to characterize Enlightenment ideals as his "religion" (10). Perhaps fittingly, though, given Gabbard and his partner Ilene Chazan had identified R.E.M.'s "Losing My Religion" (even before their marriage) as "Our Song" (9), life as a new parent profoundly altered his faith in the Age of Reason. After August's birth, during the discharge conference that he had expected would function "along the lines of a graduate seminar," where "the scientific method would be on display" and "rational decision-making would be conducted in an atmosphere of complete transparency and neutrality" (29), Gabbard's increasing sense that something was amiss lead him to suddenly blurt out, "How did this happen?" and then, when no explanation seemed forthcoming, to ask if this silence was "because you haven't found the answer? Or because you're not permitted to say?" (31). And so the "confirmed materialist" (77) began to confront his Enlightenment "clockwork universe" as it "lay[s] shattered on the ground" (73), suspecting its heir, modernity, is itself "hollow," offering "nothing but incessant change and vague promises of a better tomorrow" (72).

Happily, loving August led Gabbard to come to understand the great value of life beyond reason. We glimpse this even before the aforementioned conference, during Gabbard's first visit to the Intensive Care Nursery. After the traumatic delivery, he finds himself wondering if it would be better for all if the baby died, and initially he can hardly recognize an infant in the "jungle of wires and lines relayed back and forth between the tiny form and several monitors and machines" (24). Suddenly, however, while closing his eyes for just a second, he experiences a profound sensation of reverie through which he can visualize August's perspective, and when he looks again he beholds only a luminous, unencumbered child. All the paraphernalia of medical technology "had vanished like visions in a dream," and in that moment Gabbard is "astonished" to see him "for what he was": he is "magically beautiful, the most amazing, radiant being," and Gabbard can only gasp, "My darling boy" (25).

Socrates's dictum that "the unexamined life is not worth living" (11) serves as the pivot upon which Gabbard transforms his whole understanding of what matters in life, for August's cognitive capacity prevents him from ever being able to examine his life in this way, and yet Gabbard finds plenty of worth in the pleasure that August experiences and expresses through shrieks of glee and squawks of delight and through his contagious laughter: "I loved watching the way delirious joy overcame him, the manner in which he would throw his head far back, the way his body convulsed, his eyes half closed and his mouth agape" (51).

As Gabbard notes, since society sees in disability a "single story," that of tragedy, when people hear about August they "immediately assume heartbreak" (96). Gabbard acknowledges if his family let "medical terminology or bioethical stereotypes" inform their view of his person, they likely would have fallen into despair, but they knew otherwise (89–90). They knew him to be a "happy and lively being," a "devotee of the senses" whose "chief business" was "cultivating whatever gave pleasure," most notably how "extravagantly fond of good food" he was (90). Whether it was the extreme thrill of getting caught together in a thunderstorm or the familiar nightly bedtime ritual, these experiences are so beautiful and rich because they are so obviously shared moments of love. Whispering "nonsense sounds into his ear" was a way Gabbard would tell his son "wordlessly" that he loved him, and August "in his own singular way would tell [his dad] the same thing" by "inclining his face" toward him, "grin[ning]," even "cackl[ing] with glee" (95).

Gabbard credits the work of disability rights activist Harriet McBryde Johnson, and especially her public debates with philosopher Peter Singer, as crystalizing his new position on what exactly constitutes a life worth living. Singer's position on decriminalizing child euthanasia is, as Gabbard delineates, "aligned with the Enlightenment goal of improving quality of life by judiciously organizing human affairs" (98); his belief that disabled lives "will be permeated with suffering and therefore will not be worth living" is informed by a belief that equates personhood with "characteristics like rationality, autonomy and self-consciousness" (100). The accomplished and articulate Johnson not only embodied how an individual's life with a severe disability is anything but "intrinsically suboptimal" (100), but she further revealed how relationships with such persons, far from being worthless, can in fact be "profoundly beautiful" (103).

Gabbard describes the turning point to which he was brought by a reassessment of his interest in Coleridge. Coleridge might judge Gabbard's shifting sense of human life as negatively as he judged Betty Foy in Wordsworth's "The Idiot Boy," dismissing her as an "impersonation of an instinct abandoned by judgment."

But “what is love,” Gabbard writes, “if not ‘instinct abandoned by judgment?’” (104). With this epiphany, Gabbard comes to see himself moving beyond the Enlightenment-based assumptions that led him to, and through, graduate training, affirming instead that “it is not the unexamined life that is not worth living but the life without love” (104). Here, too, Gabbard remains in dialogue with figures that have long mattered to him. Drawing on the “land of interdependence” he finds in Donne’s “Meditation 17” (85), Gabbard posits his shared experiences with his son constitute “a mutually beneficial ethics of care” (108). Attuned to “August’s little ways”—“the twitch of his lips, the shift of an eyebrow,” his grins and grimaces, his fussing and laughing—Gabbard views their connection not as “adhering to a so-called custodial care model” but instead as “characterized neither by his dependence on me not by my surrender of independence to him” (108). That is, while they “depended upon one another in radically different ways,” the father’s caregiving was anything but “selfless”: “I needed him as much as he needed me. If I didn’t love him, all of this effort would have been a grudging sacrifice. But he made me happy, and, so, in our peculiar way, we split everything down the middle” (109).

A Life Beyond Reason takes its place among other engaging memoirs written by academics who parenting disabled children, including Rachel Adams’s *Raising Henry*, Michael Bérubé’s *Life as Jamie Knows It* and *Life As We Know It*, Vicki Forman’s *This Lovely Life*, Priscilla Gilman’s *The Anti-Romantic Child*, Mark Osteen’s *One of Us*, and Ralph James Savarese’s *Reasonable People*. Readers of *Eighteenth-Century Studies* might find particular interest in Paul Collins’s *Not Even Wrong: Adventures in Autism*; even though the contemporary sources on autism on which it draws are now dated, its inclusion in its argument of consideration of Peter the Wild Boy, found living naked and alone in a German forest in 1725, remains both provocative and compelling.

But here we celebrate Chris Gabbard’s important work. The account of August’s last moments is as beautiful as it is heart-wrenching, as his take turns whispering in his ear while holding him in their arms and Gabbard harkens back to his early and transformative vision in the Intensive Care Nursery, proclaiming August, à la Donne, to be his “moon and stars,” “the boy who’d made one little room an everywhere” (196). Gabbard counters those who might assume August’s death brought “great relief” with the end of round-the-clock parental duties, emphasizing instead the rewards of caregiving, which “allowed bonds more intimate and intense” to bring about “an emotional communion beyond the average person’s comprehension” (198). Caring for August was “taxing, time-consuming, and exhausting”; it had been “emotionally, physically, and financially draining” (198). “Yet,” Gabbard continues, “it was also a tremendous event, a peak experience, the defining time of our lives” (198).