made for suburban policing too: the Westminster court of burgesses show some shared preoccupations with the city governors in the early seventeenth century; one can use the constables' accounts of the precinct of St Katherine's to show active policing. I suspect, however, that we would agree that the case is rather harder to make. Only by tackling the tangled variety of institutions and personnel charged with policing can one make proper sense of crime in the city. In that respect perhaps Griffiths has fallen short of his ambitious goals.

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Found Londons?

Excited, impressed, critical, detached, immersed, overwhelmed, mesmerized, frustrated, amused, angry — these are just some of the many emotions I experienced on reading Paul Griffiths' extraordinary new book — or perhaps more accurately "production" — *Lost Londons*. But why talk about my feelings? One of the first rules of literary criticism (and I assume of historical analysis as well) is not to say "I feel" but rather "I think." We have been taught to deal with the mind not the heart, and with facts not feelings. But I *feel* Griffiths would applaud my emotional reaction, if not all the emotions *per se*. "It helps to know the city better," he declares in the conclusion to his book, "if we imagine it as 'emotional states' or 'moods,' now frozen in perceptions written down in records" (p. 437). What Griffiths does in his moving, if also monumental, production of *Lost Londons* is to immerse us in an explosion of minutia of early modern London — what he refers to as "200,000 Londons" (p. 67) — and to force us to experience it, and them, most feelingly. We vividly smell, see, and most especially hear the voices of those long dead Londoners.

We hear the voices of authors, neighbours, suspects, prisoners, authorities (in their many figurations) but even things and places — "Bridewell's 'intent' was to get rid of 'the great number' of vagrants and 'valiant beggars'" — as if Bridewell, a thing, could

Academy, vol. 107 (2001), pp. 133–147, which is a preliminary attempt to compare the effectiveness of government across the wider metropolitan area and would in fact broadly support the thrust of Griffiths' reassessment on policing. See also R. Shoemaker's important *Prosecution and Punishment: Petty Crime and the Law in London and Rural Middlesex, c. 1660–1725* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), which anticipates Griffiths' stress on misdemeanours and identifies variations in prosecution levels within the suburbs.

voice words that could be quoted and have "intent" (p. 16). So, too, we read "The City often thought..." (p. 6), "the City talked up trade or pet projects," "the City was also unsure," and the City "concludes" (p. 7). Everyone and everything is alive in this book; everyone and everything is inhabited and ventriloquized by Griffiths. Thus he greatly expands upon the goals of the 1997 collection *Chronicling Poverty* by Tim Hitchcock, Peter King, and Pamela Sharpe, who wished to hear not quantitative data nor elite observations but "loosely termed, 'the words of the poor'."[28] Furthermore, he also raises Ian W. Archer's work, *The Pursuit of Stability* (1991), to the Nth degree. With an Archerian habit of weighing both sides of the question — "I want to get deep into the minds of people on both sides of the law," Griffiths affirms (p. 23) — and an Archerian narrative pursuit of stability, as Griffiths' subtitle implies (moving through "Change and Crime" to "Control"), replete with a concluding appendix that fixes his argument into six maps and 23 tables, Griffiths' book is *Pursuit of Stability* extended into the seventeenth century and put on steroids, or in drag, or — given the number of different voices we hear (likely in the tens of thousands) — with a multiple personality disorder, or maybe just gone Hollywood, with 3-D surround sound.

Still, Griffiths holds to the Archerian pursuit of stability — with how contemporaries sought to stabilize or at least control a newly emergent London that was irreversibly multiplied over the course of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and was now "swarming" with vagrants and other debilitating environmental effects of unruly growth (filth, disease, ramshackle tenements, street hawkers, thieves). If Archer focuses on the 1590s, Griffiths sees 1600 — sometimes 1625 — as the turning point. If Archer's gaze is more generally cast on "social relations," Griffiths zeros in on crime as a result of unruly change and the deliberate (if sometimes rather desperate) efforts by London's officials to enforce control. Griffiths concentrates most intently on the institution of Bridewell prison and its officers (in the process recouping the reputation of constables maligned by previous historians) and its many, many shifting words or labels for offenders. Through the nine surviving Bridewell court books, from 1559 to 1657, and their more than one million words, Griffiths strives to recapture the voices of officers and of criminals and to expose shifts in attitudes to crime (from a preoccupation with sex crimes up to 1600 to increasing obsessions over vagrancy and associated crimes such as begging, theft, and — needing a new label — "nightwalking," which became increasingly gendered female; and from attacks on the institution of Bridewell as invasive, corrupt, and ill-run to acceptance of that institution as a necessary agent of police).

The problem with this overarching narrative line is not that it is faulty — I find it quite convincing — but that it would imply a different title for his book: perhaps "*Found* Londons"? As well, its narrative goes against another important argument of Griffiths that also explains his pluralized "Londons" and more feelingly explains his adjective "Lost" — the fact that there were 200,000 Londons,

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28 Tim Hitchcock, Peter King, and Pamela Sharpe, eds., *Chronicling Poverty: The Voices and Strategies of the English Poor, 1640–1840* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp. 3, 5.

200,000 ways of viewing and speaking about the city, and we should thus come away from any study of those viewings/speakings with a profoundly felt sense of the rhetorical ambiguities and ambivalences and sheer mystery or "ghamidh" of London that Londoners themselves sometimes even sensed. This other argument disrupts the neat narrative line from "Change" (the first three chapters) to "Crime" (the next two chapters) to "Control" (the decisively substantial final six chapters), to the massive appendices filled with orderly maps and tables. I wonder whether the experience of "topsy-turvey times" that Griffiths says Londoners felt and that he wants, in some ways, to recreate for us would not have been better enacted if the chapters had been reversed. What if he had begun with his statistics about arrests and labels, moved through efforts to control crime, then into the depths of crimes resistant to control, and finally ended on change as an unstoppable and irresolvable reality? Perhaps the best rendering of his book would be as a hypertext that would allow us to read in either direction and link randomly between uses of labels — from, say, one use of "lewd" as sexually loose to another where it implies "idle" or "ignorant"? Perhaps that would be a way to remain true to the ambiguities and ambivalences and mystery of early modern London that Griffiths so wants to capture, but perhaps it is to ask too much. We are already nearing sensory overload as we cross the finish line in one direction on page 544.

That narrative line still nags and points to other uneasy moments I experience in the later "Control" chapters, where the unruly London of unfathomable nooks and crannies, teaming with unknowns from the early "Change" chapters, is now portrayed as suddenly more stable and knowable. Rather than being informed of an influx of swarming migrants and constant instability, we hear that "people often stayed put in one place for a while" (p. 293) and that officers functioned effectively, something like home-town sheriffs, as if we were on the set of *The Andy Griffith Show*: "Officers," Griffiths assures us, "had a resident's knowledge of rumour mills, rowdy houses, back alleys, and black sheep in their neck of the woods, and a friendly word in the ear was often more effective than a warrant" (p. 293). These same homey but savvy officers, we are told, circulated information amongst themselves and so "had good working knowledge of seedy people and places in their patches" (p. 420). Thus Griffiths unquestioningly trusts the unidentified marshal "who made sure that Jane Frederick was locked up when she stood 'stiflye upon her honesty' and tried to talk Bridewell's bench into believing that 'she liveth by sewinge and her worke' in 1619: no, he said, 'shee is a common haunter of tavernes' and leads a very 'suspitious' 'course of lyfe'." Griffiths concludes, "Many cases were comfortably cleared up with such front-line knowledge" (p. 421). But I don't feel comfortable at all. As I learned from Griffiths' own earlier book, *Youth and Authority* (1996), women who lived by their own hands doing work such as sewing were viewed suspiciously in the period — even labelled and arrested as "vagrant" and "lewd"[29] — so why should we trust this marshal

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29 Paul Griffiths, *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England, 1560–1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 15–16.

now? At the very least, we should recognize here a moment of labelling (and selective quoting) that could be read two ways. I have similar problems with Griffiths' report that "John Goad said in 1600 that 'he came to London on Sonday last to get worke and to enquire for this brother.' But the bench did not fall for this, noting 'that yt is well knowne to this court that he is a verie rogue'" (p. 424). Similarly, we are told "Joan Butler was in court one week later and said that she came to London a week ago and was living with her cousin in Holborn and looking for work. Again, governors knew better" (p. 425). Many itinerant workers or people merely seeking employment in the period came to London and got swept up and labelled vagrants or rogues or, in the case of Joan Butler, "a comon wanderer" (common was never a good label). Labelling them such by the officers of Bridewell did not make them such or, at least, not comfortably so. Maybe they were looking for work and also stole or just wandered? One recorded "fact" does not negate the other. And — who knows? — maybe Griffiths is right in his trust of the authorities' confidence that marks on the skin — aka brands — could indeed be read as recidivism, as they assumed, but should we unquestioningly accept such readings? It makes my own skin crawl to think so.

   Griffiths can side with the criminals as well as with the officers of crime, sometimes also with a tad too much enthusiasm, as when he inhabits the thoughts of a wily beggar:

> Tatty rags were beggars' trademarks, signifying suffering. Sad looks spoke sorrow. There was an art to the right tone. Some heart-tugging pleas helped waverers in two minds to reach for purses. But not too much and not loudly. Insistence could backfire, and it was better not to try too hard for only pennies. A softer lower tone with shades of suffering opened purses. It was a smart move to think ahead and give thanks as there was a good chance that people would walk back the same way again. A "God bless you" as a coin fell into a stretched palm made both sides feel good about themselves. Flattery was fine, but it was clever not to overdo it. Begging and sugar-coated speech did not go together too well, somehow. But a joke lifted someone's spirits with cash to spare, although tomfoolery could get awkwardly out of hand. There were fine lines between importuning and intimidation or chitchat and cheek. (p. 116)

Not one direct quote here; not even a footnote. This is the Hollywood *Lost Londons*. It is Griffiths inhabiting the mind of a beggar — not any "real" beggar, but an imaginary one. Here is Griffiths as early modern rogue pamphleteer.

   Still, the goal of this book is valiant, and for the most part we do feel intensely the cacophony of direct quotations that shape the narrative of Griffiths' 200,000 Lost Londons. If the quotations are mostly fragmentary and thus selective, they are at least stable in staying on the page for us to ponder (and criticize). This book is like a dramatized encyclopaedia of voiced petty crime in the

period — it opens doors and takes us down streets where real-life people can be heard and accessed in ways most feelingly fine.

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Lost Londons: **Reprise**

Let me explain what *Lost Londons* is and what it is not. "The core and centre of this book" is not "its literary practices," as Tim Hitchcock writes, but London. It is first and foremost about experiences, and, if I might be allowed to make a couple of allusions here, it is about all aspects of the experience of authority in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century "Londinopolis."[30] I am told by Tim that I squeeze the life-blood out of everyday experiences with the ways in which I choose to use words. In *Lost Londons*, he writes, it is "impossible to re-imagine" the "experi- ence" of what it was like to be vagrant and down-and-out on London's streets all that time ago. In my book there is no narrative, Tim says, no stories, biogra- phies, or lives. Nothing. Individuals are all at sea in words not worlds. Like City magistrates I impose ideas on thousands of people standing shaking in the dock, catching their lived lives and feelings in a cage of words from elite lexicons that slices life into pockets for my authorial convenience: words like lewd, for instance, loose, sad, bad, or nightwalker. He writes that I boil down each case in the archives to a word or two in my writing, stripping them of stories and their London lives, pushing individuals to one side because I am too deeply pre- occupied with early modern language. In his view of *Lost Londons*, words are jux- taposed with narrative and also with living and breathing Londoners. He gets to the heart of the matter in chapters 5 and 11 (the two shortest chapters in the book, by the way), in which I consider at some length contemporary labelling of crimes and criminals and logging of names in records after counts, searches, and other forms of surveillance. But this is too smart; to trim *Lost Londons* down to one thing — words — when its stage is the heady city is just too severe by far. Clearly my book is being shaped for me by a powerful gravitational pull from deepest Hertfordshire, sucked into a vortex with words spinning, never once coming together to form a straight story. Tim Hitchcock imposes words on my book, and it is nice to be told what *Lost Londons* is about.

30 See Griffiths, Fox, and Hindle, eds., *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England*; Griffiths and Jenner, eds., *Londinopolis*.