

# Brief Investigations Metaphysical poetry:

Cowley: *Ode of Wit*, Cleveland: *Upon Phillis Walking*,

Crashaw: *Hymn in Adoration, To the Countesse of Denbigh*

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Metaphysical poetry: Cowley: *Ode of Wit*, Cleveland: *Upon Phillis Walking*, Crashaw: *Hymn in Adoration, To the Countesse of Denbigh*

### *Ode: Of Wit*

- See if you can find the twelve negatives in stanzas 3-7 of Cowley's *Ode*
- Would you say Cowley's *Ode* is a particularly good example of wit?
- Are you any clearer about what Metaphysical wit is after reading it?
- In your previous discussions and analyses of Donne or other Metaphysical poets, has the concept of wit helped your analysis?

### *Upon Phillis Walking in a Morning before Sun-rising*

- What would you say is metaphysical about *Upon Phillis*?
  - Compare it with Donne's *The sunne rising*
- Work out the versification of the poem
  - How does it fit the light and complimentary tone of the poem?
- Examine the extent of the personification in the poem
  - What effect does it have, especially on the portrayal of Phillis?

### *Hymn in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament*

- What do you find the most striking images in *Hymn in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament*?
- Analyse the verse structure of the poem
- How can faith be a skill?
- It is worth comparing this poem with the hymn by Isaac Watts, *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*.
  - What differences do you notice in the two poems?
- Herbert also wrote a poem, *Holy Communion*
  - If you can, compare the two poems.

### *To the Countess of Denbigh*

- Read through Crashaw's *To the Countess of Denbigh*
  - Pick out the paradoxes in the final section
    - Can you work them out?
  - How does Crashaw mix up his imagery?
    - Does the mixture work?
- Can you unpack 'The self-shutt cabinet of an unsearcht soul'?
- Does Crashaw's avoidance of specifically Catholic themes help us appreciate the poem more?
  - Or does its vagueness prove a weakness?