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This is the first comprehensive study of the system of literary patronage in early modern England; and it demonstrates that far from declining by 1750 – as many commentators have suggested – the system persisted, though in altered forms, throughout the eighteenth century. Combining the perspectives of literary, social, and political history, Dustin Griffin lays out the workings of the patronage system and shows how authors wrote within that system, manipulating it to their advantage or resisting the claims of patrons by advancing counter-claims of their own. Professor Griffin describes the cultural economics of patronage and argues that literary patronage was in effect always “political.” Chapters on individual authors, including Dryden, Swift, Pope, and Johnson, as well as Edward Young, Richard Savage, Mary Leapor, and Charlotte Lennox, focus attention on the author’s role in the system, the rhetoric of dedications, and the larger poetics of patronage.

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E. M. Ward, *Doctor Johnson in the Ante-Room of Lord Chesterfield, waiting for an Audience, 1748*, a reconstruction (1845). The Tate Gallery, London

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*To Jenny and Colin  
and  
in memory of Daisy  
(1980–1995)*

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