Lyric poetry can seem like the most private of genres, grounded on the insights and experiences of individual minds. Yet at the same time, the history of lyric is a history of schools and movements, from the Metaphysicals to the Romantics -- or more recently, from Oulipo to the Black Mountain poets. In this course, we will consider the production of early modern lyric poetry as a group activity, taking the circle or coterie rather than the individual author as our unit of analysis. Beginning with Spenser and Sidney's Areopagus, we will examine Donne and his friends and imitators, Jonson and the "Sons of Ben," the Cavaliers, and the Restoration Wits. Focusing closely on style, we will look at patterns of shared imagery, diction, verse forms -- and their parodies and inversions. We will also consider methods of literary transmission, including manuscript circulation, oral performance, and print; literary environments, from court to country houses to taverns; and the competitive, volatile, and often passionate relationships that connected poets to one another. Secondary readings drawn from the sociology of aesthetics, including Veblen, Bourdieu, and Luhmann, will help us to address the fundamental aim of this course: to think about lyric itself as a form of sociability.