

Material Cultures of Early Modern Women's Writing. Patricia Pender and Rosalind Smith, eds.

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This collection of essays concerns itself with notions of authorship in the context of the materiality of books and manuscripts. It harkens back to ideas put forward by Michel Foucault in "What Is an Author?" and extends credit for texts from those who perform the initial writing to those who annotate, translate, publish, and aid or control dissemination. The examination of shared credit in print culture is much in vogue these days, but this particular collection works well and is a pleasure to read.

Rosalind Smith's essay on the marginalia in Mary, Queen of Scots' book of hours is a case in point. It does not make sense to read Mary's manuscript poetry except in the context of the book where it is found and of the various signatures collected by Mary over the years. Bess of Hardwick's autograph is present, a fact that creates more questions than answers. Does a handwritten name on a page, for instance, bespeak solidarity or simply acquiescence in a request from a queen? The book of hours generates many such questions. In a piece on Erasmus's *Paraphrases*, Patricia Pender explains that another queen, Catherine Parr, played a key role in determining the physical makeup of a book. In addition to providing funding for the printing of *Paraphrases*, Catherine oversaw the selection of its prefaces and organized its dissemination among the lower orders in the clergy. Pender argues convincingly that Catherine was far more than a facilitator for Erasmus. Catherine's contribution to *Paraphrases* helped to shape English Protestant understanding of the Bible.

In a highly personal and even daring chapter on Katherine Philips, Kate Lilley writes about holding printed copies of the poetry in her own hands and the "haptic experience of proprietorial intimacy." There are, of course, critics who are disdainful of precisely this sort of approach to material culture, an approach that they find fetishistic. I side with Lilley and agree with the legitimacy as well as importance of haptic encounters.

Literary scholars as a group are not much given to using quantitative methods, so Marie-Louise Coolahan's chapter should serve as a reminder that such methods exist and can be fruitful, especially in a world of increasing availability of databases. We all know about the EEBO Text Creation Partnership, but far too few of us use it to generate numbers relevant to reception history of early modern women's writing.

Paul Salzman's chapter on Lady Mary Wroth's pastoral play *Love's Victory* pushes our understanding of material cultures and reception history in interesting and unexpected directions. Henrietta Halliwell-Phillipps transcribed the play from a manuscript now held at the Huntington Library, and, while that transcription is lost, the transcription was mined at the time by Henrietta's husband, James, for a collection that was printed in 1853. James did not know that Wroth was the author, a fact that allows Salzman a good deal of room to speculate about why James selected what he did for publication. I was also pleasantly

surprised to find a chapter treating both cell-phone novels written by twenty-first-century Japanese women and Penny Post publications created by Englishwomen in the 1690s. Margaret Ezell understands the cell-phone novel as form of interactive publication with significant similarities to modes of publication in seventeenth-century England.

Helen Smith's chapter engages the ironies that are involved as women write about the material conditions of their writing: they use paper and pen to write about paper and pen. Most interesting for me was the suggestion, contra received wisdom, that paper was plentiful. I also liked the idea that use of paper in such domestic activities as baking gives it a womanly context.

If I have a quibble with this collection of essays, it is that I would have liked to have seen a bit more materiality, more about such matters as paper and typefaces. Still, the essays are strong, including one by Deborah Uman on translation and one by Michelle O'Callaghan on burlesque poetry. The collection is both useful and readable. It sometimes surprises and does not disappoint.

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