extensive knowledge of the Italian archives results in attuned readings of the ways in which courtesans managed “power” in a predominantly male culture. She tells the fascinating tale of Maddalena Saltarella who slept with the men who took her to Rome, received male guests like a queen, but ended up (probably) out on the street. An unusually confessional letter of Lelio Capilupi to a religious friend about his pursuit of a Neapolitan courtesan, asks in a mix of pride and shame that if the friend might convert the courtesan through his “preachings,” her shame might be turned to charity. Capilupi thinks the girl enjoyed it, but, already the property of the banker Tobias Pallavicino and another Spanish gentleman, one wonders how far that can have been true.

This immensely valuable collection pioneers ways of reading both visual and textual erotic materials from the early modern era. It neither hides the challenges of doing so, nor indulges in academic pretension. Each essay is the result of patient, careful, accurate scholarship and many hours working through original and documentary sources. It moves decisively away from body-fixated discourse and opens up the fascinating diversity of sexual representations to serious cultural enquiry. Elegantly written, meticulously presented, inordinately expensive but important in so many ways, this book constitutes an impressive contribution to the current “archival turn” in early modern studies and makes a significant contribution to the emerging history of human joy.


Henry Neville’s 1688 text *The Isle of Pines* has appeared in various collections of utopian literature and seventeenth-century republican texts, but John Scheckter’s edition is the first of its kind. Scheckter’s new critical edition of Neville’s *Isle of Pines*, entitled *The Isle of Pines, 1668: Henry Neville’s Uncertain Utopia*, also includes five chapters of interpretation that analyze this enigmatic utopian text, a text that has largely been neglected in seventeenth-century English literary studies. Such an edition of *The Isle of Pines* comes much needed to scholars,
the critical analysis and apparatus perform informative and exhaustive readings as well, as he has provided a very useful and timely edition of a text that deserves more critical attention. Although Neville’s *Isle of Pines* inherently offers a very complicated textual puzzle (it appeared in print over a series of complicated pamphlet printings), Scheckter goes far beyond the seventeenth-century implications of this complicated publication history by analyzing the reception, printing history, and translation history of the text through well into the eighteenth century. Not since Worthington Chauncey Ford’s 1920 study, *The Isle of Pines: A Study in Bibliography*, has such an exhaustive study of this unfairly marginalized text been attempted, and Scheckter’s critical edition will render any future critical editions unnecessary.

Although a relatively brief text, *The Isle of Pines* nevertheless presents significant textual and critical conundrums. The critical edition in this volume demonstrates considerable textual facility and exhaustive collation of a number of texts. Scheckter makes the intriguing editorial decision of keeping the long “s” as it appears in the series of pamphlets that constitute the original text. This decision adds an element of authenticity to reading *The Isle of Pines*, but beyond that there appear to be no real benefits. But in the span of the subsequent five chapters, Scheckter provides a very insightful sequence of readings of *The Isle of Pines* that survey matters ranging from printing history to paratextual elements of various editions of the text to critical interpretation. Chapter 1 of the analytical section, “‘Which Copy hereafter-followeth’: Editions and Procedures,” details how Scheckter collated and combined the numerous editions of the text. But this chapter goes further, however, and offers a survey of editorial procedure for other editions, starting with that of Thomas Hollis in the eighteenth century. Scheckter contrasts Hollis’s editorial choices with those of William Chauncey Ford, whose 1920 edition and essay marks the beginning of modern study of *The Isle of Pines*. Scheckter ends the chapter with details about his own editorial choices and segues effectively into Chapter 2, which offers an insightful look at the translations of Neville’s text that appeared immediately after its initial publication in England in 1668 and continued to appear well into the eighteenth century. Chapter 2 also addresses the various paratexts of
the various editions of *The Isle of Pines*, and Scheckter does a fine job negotiating the complexities of how these “paratexts” actually constitute part of the narrative proper. As *The Isle of Pines* appeared as a series of pamphlets, Scheckter may err in his use of the term “paratexts,” but nevertheless he offers useful insight into this rarity of a “literary” text that appeared as a series of pamphlets and fragments that themselves could be individually considered “paratexts.”

Scheckter’s third chapter, entitled “‘I shall enquire more particularly’: Veracity, Uncertainty, and Narrative Structure,” aims for more of a philological close reading of *The Isle of Pines* and its verisimilitude in the context of the increasingly popular genre of travel writing in the seventeenth century. Scheckter argues that Neville “draws upon and destabilizes concepts of uncertainty within the mechanisms of vraisemblance” that he bases on the increasingly popular genre of travel writing (77); this chapter provides strong groundwork for inaugurating *The Isle of Pines* into this portion of utopian scholarship at large. Chapter 4, “‘A great help to one another’: Gender Race, and the New Society,” addresses the most prevalent critical issues of the narrative in *The Isle of Pines*: gender and race. This chapter does not exhaustively address these issues in the context of Neville’s text and an increasingly stronger stream of publications continue to appear from Gaby Mahlberg, Daniel Carey, and others who discuss these issues in more detail. Chapter 5, “‘The Countrey being thus settled’: The Development of Indigenous Culture,” makes the bold claim that *The Isle of Pines* attempts to illuminate seventeenth-century England as a “century of isolation” (134). Scheckter also illustrates a linguistic implication of *The Isle of Pines* and its relationship to English-European interactions: “In problematizing language, for example, the text emphasizes the questions of dissemination and reception—perhaps unresolvable—that already influence European transactions” (137). Chapter 6, “‘The strange effects of Powder’: Anglo-Indigenes and European Encounter,” addresses the larger implications of the post-colonial themes of the text as well as the Dutch-English encounter that takes place when the Dutch sailor Henry Cornelius van Sloetten arrives on the heavily populated island. Scheckter argues that *The Isle of Pines* presents “the world as endless play of forces in which self-enactment and self-interest offer greater advantage than cooperation
and commonwealth” (154). Similarly to the work of J.G.A. Pocock, this chapter accurately positions Neville’s commonwealth sympathies and relationship with James Harrington in the political discourse of the seventeenth century.

Scheckter has also provided two very useful appendices, one of which offers a complete account of the surviving copies of *The Isle of Pines*. In addition, Scheckter provides a virtually complete bibliography of critical reaction to Neville’s utopia text as well as a meticulous account of textual variations of the numerous texts he examined to compose his critical edition. Also included is an impressive bibliography of relevant seventeenth century primary texts that offer original and illuminating insight into analysis of *The Isle of Pines*. But Scheckter does not just focus on direct literary and archival scholarship; he employs the applicable critical theories of Michel Foucault and Fredric Jameson to contextualize Neville’s text within the utopian genre at large. Despite the long-standing critical neglect afforded *The Isle of Pines*, critics have recently begun to rediscover not only the utopian *Isle of Pines*, but also Henry Neville and his other publications. A 2006 issue of the journal *Utopian Studies* dedicated to *The Isle of Pines* seems to have inspired an outpouring of recent critical examinations of Neville’s text. Such scholars as Gaby Mahlberg and Daniel Carey have begun to contribute to a growing critical reassessment of *The Isle of Pines* as well as Neville’s other writings, such as his prose dialogue *Plato Redivivus* and his translations of works by Machiavelli. Scheckter’s critical edition should thus prove useful to anyone working with Neville in particular and with seventeenth-century English Republican writers at large.