

permeated the writings Stephens examines, after all, can it be denied that the writers not only wanted but felt they should believe in a world rationalism threatened? Perhaps the desire for tangible proof of some spirit world does inhabit the tabloid and televised news accounts of wildly secularized close encounters, but surely not as something in which we feel we should believe in the way in which the weight of culture and institutional authority presumably led Stephens's witch theorists to feel they should. Perhaps, a parting cavil, we need to know a bit more of the popular culture operant on the minds and psyches of the writers Stephens examines than Stephens's hermetic, if compelling, approach rather filters, a culture of beliefs and prejudices, not the least of which was the misogyny that made the preponderance of witches female, a phenomenon Stephens surely acknowledges, but treats as a convenient given from which witchcraft theorists such as the influential Johannes Kramer proceeded, not a position they felt a need to prove anew (37). Still, Stephens's incisive study challenges preconceptions and gives us a view of a vexed era through the vexed minds of some of its recorders and shapers.

Henry S. Turner, ed. *The Culture of Capital: Property, Cities, and Knowledge in Early Modern England*. New York: Routledge, 2002. 304 pp. + 14 illus. \$30.00. Review by NICOLE GREENSPAN, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO.

"Is there a new subject for criticism?" John Guillory queries in his chapter of Henry S. Turner's edited collection, *The Culture of Capital* (223). What useful theoretical models and methodologies can scholars from different disciplines borrow from the *new economic criticism* and material culture, and how can they be applied to the study of early modern England? What exactly is the *culture of capital*? The thirteen essays in this volume, which emerged from the October 1998 conference, "Working Capital," held at Columbia University and Barnard College, attempt to address these questions. Collectively the articles, composed by literary scholars and

historians, undertake to study the forms, meanings, and modes of action of early modern capital. The period between 1500 and 1700 was one of transition in the history of capital, and the essays explore this transformation in various contexts, ranging from the stage to mathematical treatises to probate inventories.

In addition to outlining the main arguments of each paper, Turner's introduction briefly sets out a number of theoretical claims. First, Turner argues, the study of capital requires a revision of traditional Marxist theory. While the foundations of this revised theory are not set out in any systematic way, the main points seem to be the use of the term *capital* rather than *capitalism* and the rejection of Marxist economic determinism. Secondly, Turner states that a study of the culture of capital must assume the "inevitability" of an "historicist cultural criticism" (2). Further, eschewing the recent use of anthropological models in studies of material culture, Turner maintains that Foucauldian paradigms are better suited to the study of early modern capital. These claims, however, are asserted rather than justified, and consequently, the reasoning behind the adoption or rejection of particular theoretical approaches is unclear. Examination of some of the challenges posed by this project are left to Guillory, whose short essay appears more than two thirds of the way through the volume.

The chapters are divided into three sections, each of which contains a separate introduction. Part one, "Of Coin and Property" deals with forms of economic capital. Martha Howell's introduction summarizes a number of the key discursive and material transitions from medieval to early modern capital. Growing commercialization produced a gradual shift in the balance of economic power from immovable to movable goods, a transformation which over time resulted in legal and discursive redefinitions of property. Robert DuPlessis examines the terminological and conceptual shifts of *capital*, which moved in a non-linear fashion from the use of multiple linguistic and theoretical ways of signifying wealth, property, and capital earlier in the period to the emergence of classical economic theory in the late eighteenth century. Lena Cowen Orlin contributes

a helpful assessment of the problems associated with using probate inventories as historical evidence, detailing the numerous ways in which inventories can conceal or disguise at least as much as they reveal about property, the early modern household, and material culture. Turner's own chapter explores the application of "practical knowledge," in particular the methods, techniques, and language of surveying and measurement, to the early modern stage.

Part two treats urban and topographical capital. David Harris Sacks' historiographical essay evaluates Robert Brenner's work on merchants and capital in early modern London, concluding that Brenner's arguments must be modified to take into account the diversity of London's population and the relationship between the city and the provinces. Jane Howard's look at city comedies and Chloe Wheatley's chapter on pocketbooks outline the ways in which theatrical productions and chronicle abridgements respectively attempted to represent, shape, and legitimize the transition from *old* to *new* London. The sheer variety of forms of capital, including cultural, economic, and sexual, encountered and negotiated in the city are taken up in Karen Newman's essay on pedestrian poetry.

The final section, "Of Culture and Its Currency," begins with Guillory's introduction, suggesting some of the conceptual, methodological, and theoretical "risks" involved in adopting a new subject for criticism, in this case the economic. Jonathan Goldberg, analyzing Miranda's speech in *The Tempest*, concludes that race and literacy were tied to cultural capital long before the emergence of Enlightenment racial distinctions: it was Caliban's race that prevented him from acquiring literacy skills, and this inability in turn cast doubt upon his capacity for reason and ultimately his humanity. This is an intriguing line of inquiry and would benefit from more detailed comparison with the pronouncements of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English intellectuals, clergymen, and political figures that women, the poor, and much of the Irish and Scottish nations were resistant to reason and accordingly to participation in literate culture and civil society. Denise Albanese's chapter treats the emerging separation of mathematical literacy

from artisanal numeracy in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Finally, Peter Stallybrass seeks to uncover the “economics of belief” underpinning Christian thought. This exploratory article paints in broad strokes the transition from a “materializing Catholicism”, which raised such inherently valueless *commodities* as fingernails, bones, and hair to the status of priceless artifacts, to a “dematerializing Protestantism” that discredited these types of practices (281).

No collection can hope to accommodate all possible avenues of inquiry, though the short shrift given to women is worth mentioning. With the exception of Orlin’s discussion of probate inventories, evaluations of the role of women in the culture of capital and the gendering of capital formations are largely absent from this volume. Also problematic is the teleological refrain which runs intermittently throughout the collection. This tendency, which may be a product of the self-conscious examination of a transitional era, is apparent in the repeated use of such labels as ‘pre-’ and ‘proto’-scientific and periodically forms the basis of analysis. To take one example of many, Duplessis contends that, by failing to take into account forms of capital apart from money and land, the eighteenth-century physiocrats in fact advanced a deficient model. While many modern economists and theorists might certainly agree, it is questionable whether a teleological framework provides a useful way of understanding the early modern culture of capital.

The diversity of methodologies and analytical frameworks employed, together with the wide variety of forms of capital under investigation, produce a loosely unified collection. Yet this very juxtaposition reveals connections that are usually confined to separate disciplines, including literary criticism, social and economic history, and the history of science and technology. Early modern capital formations drew upon and were shaped by a complex and fluid network of languages, practices, symbols, structures, and modes of action. *The Culture of Capital* demonstrates the need to pursue

this interconnectivity further, and the collection contains numerous articles which should prove useful for scholars working in a variety of disciplines.

Ira Clark. *Comedy, Youth, Manhood in Early Modern England*. Newark: University of Delaware Press; London: Associated University Presses, 2003. 170 pp. \$39.50. Review by BYRON NELSON, WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY.

Ira Clark is probably right in arguing that the entry of young men into marriage, as depicted in early modern comedies, has not received as much attention as it deserves. (By implication, has there been an overabundance of feminist studies of the travails of young women in the marriage market?) He offers an attractive “cluster of inquiries” into five topics linked to the eligibility of young men for marriage, and he shows easy familiarity with a number of early modern comedies that are never performed and rarely attract critical scrutiny. Although Clark’s helpful book is unlikely to inspire the revival of, say, Thomas Randolph’s *The Muses’ Looking Glass*, it will help better to locate Shakespearean comedies like *Love’s Labour’s Lost* and *As You Like It* in the context of Elizabethan and Jacobean anxieties about marriage and career advancement. *Comedy, Youth and Manhood* closes by asking some pertinent questions about the extent to which early modern comedies held the mirror up to their audience’s trepidations; and it ends by asking if the early modern audiences did not catch on and were not persuaded by the comic depictions of genuine social anxieties.

Developing the ideas of social historians like Anthony Fletcher, Clark argues that manhood in the early modern period was an achievement or a status to be attained by effort, not an automatic stage in personal formation. For him, the stage comedies present possible forms of action whereby young men in the audience could witness ways of asserting their arrival at manhood. The second chapter contrasts the depiction of academies of behavior for young men, which could presumably have genuine value for all those