some politica—that acknowledged the breakdown of a social order predicated on gift giving and Buckingham’s influence.

To Scott’s credit, Selfish Gifts speaks to several related audiences. The book is geared toward scholars interested in the ways that early modern social and political structures are sustained by what might seem an ancillary custom or tradition. It also offers teachers of the period’s most canonical texts interesting ways to frame many of its most significant poems and plays for their students. In its investigation of the paradoxical gift economy that influenced political and social relationships in early modern England, Selfish Gifts effectively weaves functional theoretical methodology with compelling historical context and astute literary analysis.


Julie Campbell’s study of how gender operates in the literary circles and salons of early modern Europe relies on a balance between genders as a matter of fact and gender as a matter for discourse. In other words, querelle discourse forms the basis for rhetorical and practical involvement in literary groups. Campbell’s method treats a complex and interdependant series of influences, from late medieval *Querelle des femmes* to early modern *Querelle des amours*, from Italy through France to England, and between actresses and courtesans and court ladies. Yet her examinations of texts and textual influences, even when focused on relatively obscure material, are always lucid and held together coherently.

Divided into six chapters, the book considers Italian, French, and English literary circles in turn, with two chapters for each regional culture. The first two chapters pair male- and female-authored texts in order to demonstrate the collaborative basis of literary circle authorship: Sperone Speroni and Tullia d’Aragona, and Tasso and Andreini, each represent various angles of querelle rhetoric in their discourses. These pairings also demonstrate how literary interaction worked through the contemporary questions of gender roles and representation as employed in the querelle rhetoric. In the third and fourth
chapters, which examine French cultural contexts, Italian influences are clear: the salon of the Countess of Retz and the works of Louise Labé indicate how the late medieval *Querelle des femmes* extends into the *Querelle des amours*, drawing the intellectual discourse of the woman question to bear on the behaviour of both men and women in love. As well, the “liminality between [French] court and [Italian] stage” fosters flexibility for female roles in cultured society, providing women with positive and useful *exempla* (86-87). In the fifth and sixth chapters, the Protestant influences on the Sidney circle, presided over by the Countess of Pembroke, concentrate on questions of gendered virtue in *querelle* discourse, as considered by Sidney himself, Lady Mary Wroth, Shakespeare, and others in a variety of pastoral works, closet dramas, and public theatre. Not only does the scope of gender widen to include the behaviour of men as well as women in love, but also the notion of female virtue as chastity shifts to incorporate that of constancy, which had previously been identified as a masculine virtue in *querelle* rhetoric. Again, too, the liminality of stage and court in England (albeit in a somewhat more domestic and private sense of “court” in the noble houses) suggests interesting connections between the concerns of intellectual and public communities. The Sidney circle’s Senecan-style tragedies, for instance, like *Othello*, tend to focus on a woman oppressed by misogyny as a central figure, to “affirm by the very intensity of … grieving the value of what is lost” (Campbell qtg. Linda Woodbridge, 157). As well, Campbell’s discussion of the various Cleopatras of the period, both in public and closet drama, is intriguing in its suggestion that authorship is inscribed in dying well (163), much like Shakespeare’s Lucrece, whose suicide, after publishing the details of her rape, serves to re-assert and mythologize her self-determined value rather than simply to cover her shame.

Throughout her various discussions, Campbell manages to reiterate the importance of female discourse regarding gender, their own as well as men’s, as an important element of ongoing intellectual and cultural debates, without ever sounding repetitive. This persistent reminder implies that it is not only despite misogynistic attitudes, but perhaps also because of them, that such female discourse is even possible, since a *querelle*, or quarrel, by its very nature requires an oppositional or antagonistic dynamic. Especially where Campbell pairs male- and female-authored works, this dynamic is clearly beneficial for the female writers to make use of—and the pairings work as well for Campbell herself, as she draws out the interdependent concerns and nuances of *querelle*
rhetoric more precisely than if she had focussed on women’s works only. For instance, her exploration of the ongoing “body-speech link,” in which male authors associate female speech/writing with a particularly sexual availability, is interesting and evocative, in that her discussion goes on to show how women could use this otherwise oppressive problem to their advantage: while this Petrarchan notion does contribute to preventing women like Retz from publishing their works, it also renders the notion of privacy as a quality of femininity. Thus when Labé publishes her work, she is careful to assert her female identity as, ironically, a performance of privacy (101-103). Just as Labé’s alternative to the praise/blame rhetoric of the woman question addresses love rather than kinds of lovers (115), her publication addresses authorship rather than kinds of authors.

Generally speaking, Campbell shows that while male writers tend to employ Petrarchan figures and ideals, whether to criticize or elevate women, female writers like Aragona and Wroth consistently tend to avoid ideals of any kind in order to shift the focus of the dialogue away from praise or blame of either gender. Instead, the works of these women, and others including Andreini and Labé, denote a distinction between ideal images and real bodies, exposing the inherent Narcissism of Petrarchan beloveds and but also revealing the legitimate passions of real women through the very *exempla* they embody as female writers. Again, though Campbell never draws this out explicitly, women turn the otherwise negative *querelle* “body-speech link” to their advantage. In other words, between the “whorish seductress” and the “mirror of virtue,” the “elephant in the salon” is the educated and outspoken woman who discusses gender roles in the plural. The new *querelle* that arises through women’s participation in the antagonistic discourse regarding the female gender expands to include not only actual female voices, but also actual male voices too, rather than idealized virtues of either gender (97). As a result, a model of literary collaboration grows out of quarrelling, as if to shape the emerging discourse of love itself, where constancy must become not a singular ideal but a “joint virtue” if love is to be satisfying (188).

Campbell quotes Margaret Ezell’s suggestion to organize the study of female works “around the mode of production and the intended audience” to “invite fresh questions about the past rather than silence its answers” (qtd. in Campbell, 96). Campbell certainly takes this approach and thoroughly illustrates its benefits, and her wide-ranging and suggestive study is a sound con-
Subha Mukherji. *Law and Representation in Early Modern Drama*. Cambridge University Press, 2006. xii + 286 pp. + 4 illus.+ 3 maps. $95.00. Review by NANCY M. BUNKER, MACON STATE COLLEGE.

"Law and Representation in Early Modern Drama" convincingly argues for the "nature and extent of the engagement" between legal and dramatic "cultural practices" (2), focusing on the "nature of the interaction" more than "either of the two disciplines per se" (15). Subha Mukherji concentrates on links between dramatic and legal evidence and highlights the unique devices drama employs to represent the legal experience. Her study, she notes, is the "first book of literary criticism or interdisciplinary enquiry that attempts to reconstruct the physical realities of courtroom interaction and experience" (16). She points out that this method uses "drama itself as historical evidence–implying the larger argument about historical method and the place of literary evidence in it" (12).

Chapter one interrogates early modern marriage law through grounding in legal records, Henry Swinburne’s seminal text, *A Treatise of Spousals* (c1600), and Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* and *All’s Well That Ends Well*. Exposing legal skepticism, Mukherji addresses this often overlooked uncertainty located within the legal evidentiary patterns. Her examination sheds new light on both *de futuro* and *de praesenti* oral marriage contracts and calls attention to the instability of verbal intent, the ring accepted as a non-verbal token, and the misappropriation of signs as legal proof, all of which further complicate adequate dramatic representation.

In a carefully studied unpacking of Thomas Heywood’s *A Woman Killed With Kindness* (1607) and a 1596 Cambridge University employee’s court case, Mukheri’s second chapter explores the judicial attitudes that accompany adul-

tribution to early modern scholarship. Like the female-authored arguments that insist on collaboration between men and women in love (whether positive and to good effect, or negative, to ill effect), the literary collaboration of circles and salons celebrates a mutual criticism between speakers/authors. Furthermore, this social institution of early modern Europe emerges as a significant medium for cultural play between men and women, much like love itself.