

The Culture Of Epistolarity Vernacular Letters And Letter Writing In Early Modern England 1500 1700

The Culture of Epistolarity

Print Letters in Seventeenth-Century England

The Material Letter in Early Modern England

Letter-writing Manuals and Instruction from Antiquity to the Present

Debating the Faith: Religion and Letter Writing in Great Britain, 1550-1800

Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain

The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Women's Writing in English, 1540-1700

John Locke: Correspondence

Were Early Modern Lives Different?

Business News in the Early Modern Atlantic World

Understanding Early Modern Primary Sources

American Passage

A New Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture

Women and Epistolary Agency in Early Modern Culture, 1450-1690

Emotional Settings in Early Modern Pedagogical Culture

Rhetoric and Medicine in Early Modern Europe

News Networks in Early Modern Europe

Genre in English Literature, 1650-1700: Transitions in Drama and Fiction

The Material Culture of Writing

Shakespeare through Letters

The Oxford Handbook of English Prose 1500-1640

Epistolary Community in Print, 1580-1664

The Opened Letter

The Elizabethan Secretariat and the Signet Office

Male Friendship and Testimonies of Love in Shakespeare's England

Tudor Networks of Power

One Who Knows Me

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2016-04-08 Nancy S. Struever Through close analysis of texts, cultural and civic communities, and intellectual history, the papers in this collection, for the first time, propose a dynamic relationship between rhetoric and medicine as discourses and disciplines of cure in early modern Europe. Although the range of theoretical approaches and methodologies represented here is diverse, the essays collectively explore the theories and practices, innovations and interventions, that underwrite the shared concerns of medicine, moral philosophy, and rhetoric: care and consolation, reading, policy, and rectitude, signification, selfhood, and autonomy—all developed and refined at the intersection of areas of inquiry usually thought distinct. From Italy to England, from the sixteenth through to the mid-eighteenth century, early modern moral philosophers and essayists, rhetoricians and physicians investigated the passions and persuasion, vulnerability and volubility, theoretical intervention and practical therapy in the dramas, narratives, and disciplines of public and private cure. The essays are relevant to a wide range of readers, including cultural, literary, and intellectual historians, historians of medicine and philosophy, and scholars of rhetoric.

2005 Gary Schneider This book is an extensive investigation of letters and letter writing across two centuries, focusing on the sociocultural function and meaning of epistolary writing - letters that were circulated, were intended to circulate, or were perceived to circulate within the culture of epistolarity in early modern England. The study examines how the letter functioned in a variety of social contexts, yet also assesses what the letter meant as idea to early modern letter writers, investigating letters in both manuscript and print contexts. It begins with an overview of the culture of epistolarity, examines the material components of letter exchange, investigates how emotion was persuasively textualized in the letter, considers the transmission of news and intelligence, and examines the publication of letters as propaganda and as collections of moral-didactic, personal, and state letters. Gary Schneider is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at the University of Texas-Pan American.

2018-02-06 Gary Schneider Print Letters in Seventeenth-Century England investigates how and why letters were printed in the interrelated spheres of political contestation, religious controversy, and news culture—those published as pamphlets, as broadsides, and in newsbooks in the interests of ideological disputes and as political and religious propaganda. The epistolary texts examined in this book, be they fictional, satirical, collected, or authentic, were written for, or framed to have, a specific persuasive purpose, typically an ideological or propagandistic one. This volume offers a unique exploration into the crucial interface of manuscript culture and print culture where tremendous transformations occur, when, for instance, at its most basic level, a handwritten letter composed by a single individual and meant for another individual alone comes, either intentionally or not, into the purview of

hundreds or even thousands of people. This essential context, a solitary exchange transmuted via print into an interaction consumed by many, serves to highlight the manner in which letters were exploited as propaganda and operated as vehicles of cultural narrative.

2015 Lindsay O'Neill By the early eighteenth century, the rapid expansion of the British empire had created a technological problem: communication and networking became increasingly vital yet harder to maintain. As colonial possessions and populations grew and more individuals moved around the globe, Britons both at home and abroad required a constant and reliable means of communication to conduct business, plumb intellectual concerns, discuss family matters, run distant estates, and exchange news. As face-to-face communication became more intermittent, men and women across the early modern British world relied on letters. In *The Opened Letter*, historian Lindsay O'Neill explores the importance and impact of networking via letter-writing among the members of the elite from England, Ireland, and the colonies. Combining extensive archival research with social network digital technology, *The Opened Letter* captures the dynamic associations that created a vibrant, expansive, and elaborate web of communication. The author examined more than 10,000 letters produced by such figures as Virginia planters William Byrd I and his son William Byrd II; the Anglo-Irish nobleman John Perceval; the newly minted Duke of Chandos, James Brydges, and his wife Cassandra Brydges; and Sir Hans Sloane, the president of the Royal Society, and his colleague Peter Collinson. She also mined letters from the likes of Nicholas Blundell, a Catholic member of the Lancashire gentry, and James Eliot, a London merchant and ardent Quaker. *The Opened Letter* reassembles and presents the vital individual and interlocking epistolary webs constructed by disparate groups of letter writers. These early social networks illuminate the structural, social, and geographic workings of the British world as the nation was becoming a dominant global power.

2016-06-10 James Daybell *Women and Epistolary Agency in Early Modern Culture, 1450–1690* is the first collection to examine the gendered nature of women's letter-writing in England and Ireland from the late-fifteenth century through to the Restoration. The essays collected here represent an important body of new work by a group of international scholars who together look to reorient the study of women's letters in the contexts of early modern culture. The volume builds upon recent approaches to the letter, both rhetorical and material, that have the power to transform the ways in which we understand, study and situate early modern women's letter-writing, challenging misconceptions of women's letters as intrinsically private, domestic and apolitical. The essays in the volume embrace a range of interdisciplinary approaches: historical, literary, palaeographic, linguistic, material and gender-based. Contributors deal with a variety of issues related to early modern women's correspondence in England and Ireland. These include women's rhetorical and persuasive

skills and the importance of gendered epistolary strategies; gender and the materiality of the letter as a physical form; female agency, education, knowledge and power; epistolary networks and communication technologies. In this volume, the study of women's letters is not confined to writings by women; contributors here examine not only the collaborative nature of some letter-writing but also explore how men addressed women in their correspondence as well as some rich examples of how women were constructed in and through the letters of men. As a whole, the book stands as a valuable reassessment of the complex gendered nature of early modern women's correspondence.

2012-11-05 Anne Dunan-Page The first book to address the role of correspondence in the study of religion, *Debating the Faith: Religion and Letter Writing in Great Britain, 1550-1800* shows how letters shaped religious debate in early-modern and Enlightenment Britain, and discusses the materiality of the letters as well as questions of form and genre. Particular attention is paid to the contexts in which letters were composed, sent, read, distributed, and then destroyed, copied or printed, in periods of religious tolerance or persecution. The opening section, 'Protestant identities', examines the importance of letters in the shaping of British protestantism from the underground correspondence of Protestant martyrs in the reign of Mary I to dissident letters after the Act of Toleration. 'Representations of British Catholicism', explores the way English, Irish and Scottish Catholics, whether in exile or at home, defined their faith, established epistolary networks, and addressed political and religious allegiances in the face of adversity. The last part, 'Religion, science and philosophy', focuses on the religious content of correspondence between natural scientists and philosophers.

2016-05-13 Diana G. Barnes *Epistolary Community in Print* contends that the printed letter is an inherently sociable genre ideally suited to the theorisation of community in early modern England. In manual, prose or poetic form, printed letter collections make private matters public, and in so doing reveal, first how tenuous is the divide between these two realms in the early modern period and, second, how each collection helps to constitute particular communities of readers. Consequently, as *Epistolary Community* details, epistolary visions of community were gendered. This book provides a genealogy of epistolary discourse beginning with an introductory discussion of Gabriel Harvey and Edmund Spenser's *Wise and Wittie Letters* (1580), and opening into chapters on six printed letter collections generated at times of political change. Among the authors whose letters are examined are Angel Day, Michael Drayton, Jacques du Bosque and Margaret Cavendish. *Epistolary Community* identifies broad patterns that were taking shape, and constantly morphing, in English printed letters from 1580 to 1664, and then considers how the six examples of printed letters selected for discussion manipulate this generic tradition to articulate ideas of community under specific historical and political circumstances. This study makes a substantial contribution to the rapidly growing

field of early modern letters, and demonstrates how the field impacts our understanding of political discourses in circulation between 1580 and 1664, early modern women's writing, print culture and rhetoric.

2016-07-07 Laura Sangha *Understanding Early Modern Primary Sources* is an introduction to the rich treasury of source material available to students of early modern history. During this period, political development, economic and social change, rising literacy levels, and the success of the printing press, ensured that the State, the Church and the people generated texts and objects on an unprecedented scale. This book introduces students to the sources that survived to become indispensable primary material studied by historians. After a wide-ranging introductory essay, part I of the book, 'Sources', takes the reader through seven key categories of primary material, including governmental, ecclesiastical and legal records, diaries and literary works, print, and visual and material sources. Each chapter addresses how different types of material were produced, whilst also pointing readers towards the most important and accessible physical and digital source collections. Part II, 'Histories', takes a thematic approach. Each chapter in this section explores the sources that are used to address major early modern themes, including political and popular cultures, the economy, science, religion, gender, warfare, and global exploration. This collection of essays by leading historians in their respective fields showcases how practitioners research the early modern period, and is an invaluable resource for any student embarking on their studies of the early modern period.

2012-01-30 Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr. Featuring entries composed by leading international scholars, *The Encyclopedia of English Renaissance Literature* presents comprehensive coverage of all aspects of English literature produced from the early 16th to the mid 17th centuries. Comprises over 400 entries ranging from 1000 to 5000 words written by leading international scholars Arranged in A-Z format across three fully indexed and cross-referenced volumes Provides coverage of canonical authors and their works, as well as a variety of previously under-considered areas, including women writers, broadside ballads, commonplace books, and other popular literary forms Biographical material on authors is presented in the context of cutting-edge critical discussion of literary works. Represents the most comprehensive resource available for those working in English Renaissance literary studies Also available online as part of the Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Literature, providing 24/7 access and powerful searching, browsing and cross-referencing capabilities

2020-05-30 Judith Owens This book is notable for bringing together humanist schooling and familial instruction under the banner of emotions and for studying seminal works of early modern literature within this new analytical context. It thus furnishes unique ways to think about two closely interrelated moral imperatives: shaping boys into civil subjects; and fashioning heroic agency and selfhood in literature. In tracing the emotional

dynamics of the humanist classroom, this book shows just how thoroughly school could accommodate resistance to authority and foster unruly boys. In gauging the emotional pressures at work in filial relationships, it shows how profoundly sons could experience patriarchal authority as provisional, negotiable, or damaging. In turning to Shakespeare's Hamlet, Spenser's Prince Arthur, and Sidney's Arcadian heroes, *Emotional Settings* highlights the ways in which the respective emotional and moral imperatives of home and school could bring conflicting pressures to bear in the formation of heroic agency - and at what cost. Engaging and accessible, this book will appeal to scholars interested in early modern literature, pedagogy, histories of emotion, and histories of the family, as well as to graduate students and advanced undergraduate students in these fields.

2016-06-27 *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* attempts to redraw the history of European news communication in the 16th and 17th centuries. News is defined partly by movement and circulation, yet histories of news have been written overwhelmingly within national contexts. This volume of essays explores the notion that early modern European news, in all its manifestations - manuscript, print, and oral - is fundamentally transnational. These 37 essays investigate the language, infrastructure, and circulation of news across Europe. They range from the 15th to the 18th centuries, and from the Ottoman Empire to the Americas, focussing on the mechanisms of transmission, the organisation of networks, the spread of forms and modes of news communication, and the effects of their translation into new locales and languages.

2020-10-14 David M. Bergeron In *Shakespeare through Letters*, David M. Bergeron analyzes the letters found within Shakespeare's comedies, histories, and tragedies, arguing that the letters offer the principal intertextual element in the plays as text in their own right. Bergeron posits that Shakespeare's theater itself exists at the intersection of oral and textual culture, which the letters also exhibit as they represent writing, reading, and interpretation in a way that audiences would be familiar with, in contrast with the illustrious culture of kings, queens, and warriors. This book demonstrates that the letters, profound or perfunctory, constitute texts that warrant interpretation even as they remain material stage props, impacting narrative development, revealing character, and enhancing the play's tone. Scholars of literature, theater, and history will find this book particularly useful.

2015-01-05 Katherine Grandjean Katherine Grandjean shows that the English conquest of New England was not just a matter of consuming territory, of transforming woods into farms. It entailed a struggle to control the flow of information—who could travel where, what news could be sent, over which routes winding through the woods along the early American communications frontier.

2022-09-22 Elizabeth Scott-Baumann *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Women's Writing in English, 1540-1700* brings together

new work by scholars across the globe, from some of the founding figures in early modern women's writing to those early in their careers and defining the field now. It investigates how and where women gained access to education, how they developed their literary voice through varied genres including poetry, drama, and letters, and how women cultivated domestic and technical forms of knowledge from recipes and needlework to medicines and secret codes. Chapters investigate the ways in which women's writing was an integral part of the intellectual culture of the period, engaging with male writers and traditions, while also revealing the ways in which women's lives and writings were often distinctly different, from women prophetesses to queens, widows, and servants. It explores the intersections of women writing in English with those writing in French, Spanish, Latin, and Greek, in Europe and in New England, and argues for an archipelagic understanding of women's writing in Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and England. Finally, it reflects on—and challenges—the methodologies which have developed in, and with, the field: book and manuscript history, editing, digital analysis, premodern critical race studies, network theory, queer theory, and feminist theory. *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Women's Writing in English, 1540-1700* captures the most innovative work on early modern women's writing in English at present.

2020-10-26 Anna Shields *The friendships of writers of the mid-Tang era (780s–820s)—between literary giants like Bai Juyi and Yuan Zhen, Han Yu and Meng Jiao, Liu Zongyuan and Liu Yuxi—became famous through the many texts they wrote to and about one another. What inspired mid-Tang literati to write about their friendships with such zeal? And how did these writings influence Tang literary culture more broadly? In One Who Knows Me, the first book to delve into friendship in medieval China, Anna M. Shields explores the literature of the mid-Tang to reveal the complex value its writers discovered in friendship—as a rewarding social practice, a rich literary topic, a way to negotiate literati identity, and a path toward self-understanding. Shields traces the evolution of the performance of friendship through a wide range of genres, including letters, prefaces, exchange poetry, and funerary texts, and interweaves elegant translations with close readings of these texts. For mid-Tang literati, writing about friendship became a powerful way to write about oneself and to reflect upon a shared culture. Their texts reveal the ways that friendship intersected the public and private realms of experience and, in the process, reshaped both.*

2024-01-15 Sophie Jones *Business News in the Early Modern Atlantic World* explores the creation, dissemination, and consumption of a specific type of news, 'business news', within early modern commercial news networks. The volume contains eleven case studies, written by scholars from a range of disciplines, which span the breadth of the early modern Atlantic from the first appearance of serial corantos in the seventeenth century to the United States' Declaration of Independence in the late eighteenth century. These expert contributions showcase the range of innovative

methodological and theoretical approaches which can be used to study business news, including social network analysis, textual analysis, and qualitative methods.

2007 Carol Poster Once nearly as ubiquitous as dictionaries and cookbooks are today, letter-writing manuals and their predecessors served to instruct individuals not only on the art of letter composition but also, in effect, on personal conduct. Poster and Mitchell contend that the study of letter-writing theory, which bridges rhetorical theory and grammatical studies, represents an emerging discipline in need of definition. In this volume, they gather the contributions of eleven experts to sketch the contours of epistolary theory and collect the historic and bibliographic materials - from Isocrates to email - that form the basis for its study.

2013-07-04 Andrew Hadfield The Oxford Handbook of English Prose 1500-1640 is the only available overview of early modern English prose writing. It considers the range and variety of the substance and types of English prose, and also analyses the forms and styles of writing adopted in the early modern period.

2016-04-23 Will Tosh Male Friendship and Testimonies of Love in Shakespeare's England reveals the complex and unfamiliar forms of friendship that existed between men in the late sixteenth century. Using the unpublished letter archive of the Elizabethan spy Anthony Bacon (1558-1601), it shows how Bacon negotiated a path through life that relied on the support of his friends, rather than the advantages and status that came with marriage. Through a set of case-studies focusing on the Inns of Court, the prison, the aristocratic great house and the spiritual connection between young and ardent Protestants, this book argues that the 'friendship spaces' of early modern England permitted the expression of male same-sex intimacy to a greater extent than has previously been acknowledged.

2012-04-24 J. Daybell The first major socio-cultural study of manuscript letters and letter-writing practices in early modern England. Daybell examines a crucial period in the development of the English vernacular letter before Charles I's postal reforms in 1635, one that witnessed a significant extension of letter-writing skills throughout society.

2016-06-28 James Daybell In Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain leading scholars approach the letter from different disciplinary perspectives to illuminate its workings. Contributors to this volume examine how elements, such as handwriting, seals, ink, and use of space, were vitally significant to how letters communicated.

2022-11-15 Cydney Alexis The Material Culture of Writing opens up avenues for understanding writing through scholarship in material culture studies. Contributors to this volume each interrogate an object, set of objects, or writing environment to reveal the sociomaterial contexts from which writing emerges. The artifacts studied are both contemporary and historical, including ink, a Victorian hotel

visitors' book, Moleskine notebooks, museum conservators' files, an early twentieth-century baby book, and a college campus makerspace. Close study of such artifacts not only enriches understanding of what counts as writing but also offers up the potential for rich current and historical inquiry into writing artifacts and environments. The collection features scholars across the disciplines—such as art, art history, English, museum studies, and writing studies—who work as teachers, historians, museum curators/conservators, and faculty. Each chapter features methods and questions from contributors' own disciplines while at the same time speaking to writing studies' interest in writers, writing identity, and writing practice. The authors in this volume also work with a variety of methodologies, including literary analysis, archival research, and qualitative research, providing models for the types of research possible using a material culture studies framework. The collection is organized into three sections—Writing Identity, Writing Work, Writing Genre—each with a contextualizing introduction from the editors that introduces the chapters themselves and imagines possible directions for writing studies research facilitated by material culture studies. The Material Culture of Writing serves as an accessible introduction to work in material culture studies for writing studies scholars, graduate students, and undergraduates, especially as it makes a distinctive contribution to writing studies in its material culture studies approach. Because of the interdisciplinarity of material culture studies and this volume's contributors, this collection will appeal to a wide range of scholars and readers, including those interested in writing studies, the history of the book, print culture, genre studies, archival methods, and authorship studies. Contributors: Cydney Alexis, Debby Andrews, Diane Ehrenpreis, Keri Epps, Desirée Henderson, Kevin James, Jenny Krichevsky, Anne Mackay, Emilie Merrigan, Laura R. Micciche, Hannah J. Rule, Kate Smith

2010-02-12 Michael Hattaway In this revised and greatly expanded edition of the Companion, 80 scholars come together to offer an original and far-reaching assessment of English Renaissance literature and culture. A new edition of the best-selling Companion to English Renaissance Literature, revised and updated, with 22 new essays and 19 new illustrations Contributions from some 80 scholars including Judith H. Anderson, Patrick Collinson, Alison Findlay, Germaine Greer, Malcolm Jones, Arthur Kinney, James Knowles, Arthur Marotti, Robert Miola and Greg Walker Unrivalled in scope and its exploration of unfamiliar literary and cultural territories the Companion offers new readings of both 'literary' and 'non-literary' texts Features essays discussing material culture, sectarian writing, the history of the body, theatre both in and outside the playhouses, law, gardens, and ecology in early modern England Orientates the beginning student, while providing advanced students and faculty with new directions for their research All of the essays from the first edition, along with their recommendations for further reading, have been reworked or updated

2017-03-31 Angela Andreani This book investigates the work of the Elizabethan secretariat during the fascinating decade of the 1590s, when, after the death of Francis Walsingham, the place of principal secretary remained vacant for six years. Through original sources in the collections of the State Papers and Cecil Papers, this study reconstructs the activities of the clerks and secretaries who worked in close contact with the Queen at court. An estimated fifty people, many unidentified, saw to every minute detail of the production of official documents and letters in an array of offices, rooms and locations within and outside the court. The book introduces the staff of the Elizabethan writing offices as a community of shared knowledge with a privileged and constant access to papers of state, working behind the scenes of court display and high politics. While the production of the state papers is explored as a means to reconstruct the functioning of the inner mechanisms of state, it also provides a lens through which to access the knowledge of the administration in a pre-bureaucratic age.

2023-02-13 Nina Lamal In this groundbreaking book, Nina Lamal provides a compelling account of Italian information and communication on the Revolt in the Low Countries, casting an entirely new light on the keen Italian interest and involvement in this protracted conflict.

2023-09-28 Mark Goldie This is the twenty-first volume in the Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke. The series aims to provide authoritative critical editions of all the writings of one of the most important intellectuals in the early-modern Anglophone world. The present volume completes the Correspondence edited by the late E. S. de Beer, published between 1976 and 1989. It contains some 300 documents: newly discovered or augmented, or newly collected, letters by or to Locke, or between his close associates. New finds have emerged from archives worldwide; previously known letters are now improved from new manuscripts or supplemented by enclosures that had become detached from them; 'epistles dedicatory' in books by Locke or addressed to him are collected; third-party letters with direct bearing on Locke are included; as also Locke's agreements with publishers for the printing of his books. The volume covers Locke's manifold interests, from childrearing to medicine to cartography; from the exercise of patronage to the political economy of England's burgeoning empire; from the management of his Somerset tenants to relations with fellow philosopher Damaris Masham; from a trial for heresy to surveillance letters when Locke was suspect; from book collecting to calendrical reform. Locke's critics and vindicators are here, attacking and defending his published works. Considerable material has come to light bearing on Locke's encounters with Carolina and policies when a founding member of the Board of Trade and Plantations. The volume is supported by Mark Goldie's introduction and by an extensive explanatory editorial apparatus.

2016-03-16 Andrew Hadfield Should we assume that people who lived some time ago were quite similar to us or should we assume that they

need to be thought of as alien beings with whom we have little in common? This specially commissioned collection explores this important issue through an analysis of the lives and work of a number of significant early modern writers. Shakespeare is analysed in a number of essays as authors ask whether we can learn anything about his life from reading the Sonnets and Hamlet. Other essays explore the first substantial autobiography in English, that of the musician and poet, Thomas Wythorne (1528-96); the representation of the self in Holbein's great painting, *The Ambassadors*; whether we have a window into men's and women's souls when we read their intimate personal correspondence; and whether modern studies that wish to recapture the intentions and inner thoughts of early modern people who left writings behind are valuable aids to interpreting the past. This book was originally published as a special issue of *Textual Practice*.

2023-10-12 Prof Ruth (Professor of Literary History & Digital Humanities Ahnert, Professor of Literary History & Digital Humanities School of English & Drama Queen Mary University of London) *Tudor Networks of Power* is the product of a groundbreaking collaboration between an early modern book historian and a physicist specializing in complex networks. Together they have reconstructed and computationally analysed the networks of intelligence, diplomacy, and political influence across a century of Tudor history (1509-1603), based on the British State Papers. The 130,000 letters that survive in the State Papers from the Tudor period provide crucial information about the textual organization of the social network centred on the Tudor government. Whole libraries have been written using this archive, but until now nobody has had access to the macroscopic tools that allow us to ask questions such as: What are the reasons for the structure of the Tudor government's intelligence network? What was its geographical reach and coverage? Can we use network data to show patterns of surveillance? What role did women play in these government networks? And what biases are there in the data? The authors

employ methods from the field of network science, translating key concepts and approaches into a language accessible to literary scholars and historians, and illustrating them with examples drawn from this fantastically rich archive. Each chapter is the product of a set of thematically organized 'experiments', which show how particular methods can help to ask and answer research questions specific to the State Papers archive, but also have applications for other large bodies of humanities data. The fundamental aim of this book, therefore, is not merely to provide an innovative perspective on Tudor politics; it also aspires to introduce an entirely new audience to the methods and applications of network science, and to suggest the suitability of these methods for a range of humanistic inquiry.

2009 Theresa Strouth Gaul *Rejecting the common categorization of letters as primarily private documents, this collection demonstrates the genre's persistent public engagements with changing cultural dynamics of the revolutionary, early republican, and antebellum eras. Transatlantic studies, authorship, reform movements, and the politics and practices of editing letters are treated in this exemplary collection that offers scholars a template of new approaches for exploring an understudied yet critically important genre.*

2014-09-26 Pilar Cuder-Dominguez *This book examines the theories and practices of narrative and drama in England between 1650 and 1700, a period that, in bridging the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, has been comparatively neglected, and on which, at the time of writing, there is a dearth of new approaches. Critical consensus over these two genres has failed to account for its main features and evolution throughout the period in at least two ways. First, most approaches omit the manifold contradictions between the practice and the theory of a genre. Writers were generally aware of working within a tradition of representation which they nevertheless often challenged, even while the theory was being drafted (e.g., by John Dryden).*

The ideal and the real were in unacknowledged conflict. Second, critical readings of these late Stuart texts have fitted them proactively into a neat evolutionary pattern that reached eighteenth-century genres without detours or disjunctions, or else they have oversimplified the wealth of generic conventions deployed in the period, so that to the present-day reader, for instance, Restoration drama consists only of either city comedies or Dryden's tragedies. A cursory survey of the critical history of seventeenth-century drama and fiction confirms these views. Although the 1970s and 1980s brought about a crop of interesting reassessments of the field, fiction continues to be seen as a genre that emerged in the eighteenth century. Most critics still treat earlier manifestations as marginal or as prenovelistic experiments; and in most instances it is even possible to discern a sexist bias to justify this treatment, as these works were written by women, unlike much of the canonical fiction of the eighteenth century. A revision of the critical foundations hitherto held and a re-evaluation of the works of fiction written in the seventeenth century is therefore in order. This study adopts, as a basic and essential methodological tenet, the need to decenter the analysis of Restoration fiction and drama from the traditional canon, too limited and conservative and featuring works that are not always suitable as paradigmatic instances of the literary production of the period. These studies have thus been based on a larger than usual—if not on a full—corpus of works produced within the period, and have sought to ascertain the role played in the development of each of the genres under consideration by works, topics, or even by authors hitherto somewhat outside mainstream literary criticism. This opens the field of English literature further through the framing of new questions or revising of old ones, as well as to beginning a dialogue, yet again, as to the meanings of these literary works and also to their circulation from their inception up to the present time. In addition, the rare attention given to works by women makes this all the more an important book for collections in English literature of the period.