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## Review of *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation* by Louis Montrose

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who wrote the scribblings. The authors once again are unable to argue that any of the handwriting is Sir Henry Neville's (their discussion of handwriting styles [239–40] is typically confused), and there is no reason to think that the scribbled name "Nevill" refers to him. It is more likely to refer to a different branch of the family related to the earls of Northumberland, in whose papers the manuscript was found. Katherine Neville was the mother of Henry Percy, the "wizard earl," who held the title when this manuscript was compiled.

Further examples of problems with this train wreck of a book could be multiplied almost indefinitely. It should not surprise anyone that the American edition was published not by an academic press, but by ReganBooks, a HarperCollins imprint that specialized in memoirs of celebrities such as Howard Stern and Jose Canseco. One month after this book's publication, ReganBooks announced that it would publish O. J. Simpson's pseudoconfessional *If I Did It*, but shortly afterward, Rupert Murdoch cancelled that project and then dissolved ReganBooks altogether. It is a shame that Murdoch did not take the initiative to cancel this book as well, for then American readers might have been spared its pseudoscholarly inanities.

*The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation.* By

LOUIS MONTROSE. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.

Pp. xiv + 341. Illus. \$64.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper.

Reviewed by CAROLE LEVIN

In a clever play on words, Louis Montrose's important new book on Elizabeth I suggests a study with Elizabeth both as the focus and as a topic of her people's discourse. The title also suggests the importance of Elizabeth in understanding early modern England; this book is not itself simply about Elizabeth but about how this queen was created, understood, and negotiated by her subjects, male and female. As Montrose points out, all of Elizabeth's subjects produced and reproduced their queen in a variety of ways throughout their daily practices. And throughout her reign, the queen's image was manipulated by her foreign enemies as well.

With such articles as his 1983 "Shaping Fantasies: Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture," which included a reading of Simon Forman's dream about the queen, Louis Montrose changed the direction of Elizabeth I studies. Much of the scholarship that has come out in the last two decades, including my own, has been far richer for Montrose's pioneering and highly innovative work. Students of early modern English cultural studies have long waited for this book to appear, and his audience will not be disappointed. If, in certain ways, this study of Elizabeth I appears to offer less of a paradigm shift, it is because Montrose's ideas and influence have already permeated descriptions of the queen and larger issues of gender and power in recent scholarship.

Montrose's book, which uses a wide range of sources, helps us understand the collective discourse about Elizabeth during her lifetime. Although Montrose is a literary scholar who has published extensively on canonical works of literature,

this study focuses on both verbal and visual texts. Using a deliberate strategy to make his book valuable and illuminating to early modern scholars from a range of disciplines, he examines cultural materials that are more usually the domain of historians and art historians, but he analyzes them in a way that demonstrates his training as a literary scholar.

In the first section, Montrose examines Elizabeth's personal history and focuses on such issues as legitimacy and succession and all the intertwined family, legal, political, and religious topics they entail. In reviewing period debates on female rule, Montrose is careful to discuss Mary Tudor, as well as Elizabeth. Part 2 looks at questions of imagery, policy, and belief and at what the Reformation repudiation of idolatry meant for Elizabeth and the Elizabethan state. Part 3 examines both foreign and domestic examples of what Montrose calls "the Elizabethan geopolitical imaginary" (116). This section examines how England's enemies such as Spain and Rome construed Elizabeth in order to present the conflict between nations in intensely personal terms. Many scholars consider Elizabeth's reign to be clearly split into two parts, with the last two decades being much more difficult for the English people, owing to the high cost of war, inflation, bad harvests, and fears about succession. In part 4, Montrose looks at intense popular dissension and resistance to royal authority in both England and Ireland. Montrose's analysis of symbolic violence against the royal image by disaffected subjects, Catholic and Protestant, is especially valuable. These violent actions against portraits and images of the queen are fascinating examples of the connections between belief in magic and political action. In part 5, Montrose regards the aging body of the monarch and the complications caused by her status as an unmarried woman. He carefully articulates how Elizabeth and her court employed portraiture and self-display in order to neutralize the contempt for the queen felt by many at the end of her reign.

Montrose's study describes the shifts in Elizabeth's image during the course of her reign; he successfully argues that the cult of Elizabeth was far more than an object of belief or a courtly game. Rather, it was a complex core component of Elizabethan statecraft. This is a very rich book by an author who has spent much of his professional career studying Elizabeth and who has an encyclopedic knowledge of texts about her. It is full of very sophisticated close readings and well repays the attention it demands. *The Subject of Elizabeth* will be read and discussed for many years to come.

*Before Intimacy: Asocial Sexuality in Early Modern England.* By DANIEL JUAN GIL. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006. Pp. xvi + 187. \$66.00 cloth, \$22.00 paper.

Reviewed by VALERIE TRAUB

In the fields of historical scholarship most influenced by Michel Foucault's genealogical method, a locution has arisen to articulate the notion of large-scale epistemic change: *before and after* modernity, *before and after* identity, *before and*