

REFLECTIONS ON THE LIFE OF A SCHOLAR LOOKING FOR THE WOMAN'S PART IN RENAISSANCE ENGLAND¹

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I have come to realize that biography is at the heart of much of the research and the teaching that I do. My own biography has been shaped by what I have chosen to study and no doubt my own values and interests have shaped the work that I do. Here I examine some differences between traditional biography and newer ways of investigating lives, particularly in early modern England. I also want to explore as well the differences in biographies of men and of women of this period. This essay began as part of a session organized by Marla Segol on theory and medieval feminist studies at the Medieval Congress held at Western Michigan University in May 2006. I was delighted that Marla asked me to be part of the session as Marla has been part of my life both as a scholar and a teacher for many years. I first met Marla almost twenty years ago when she was an undergraduate at SUNY-New Paltz and I was teaching there. Marla was one of those students who make teaching a joy. Since receiving her BA at New Paltz, Marla has completed her PhD, taught for a number of years, and is now a professor at Skidmore in medieval religious studies particularly focusing on Judaism and conversion. We have been colleagues who have shared work with each other for a number of years. I mention this connection not only because of my great pride in Marla, but also because it is part of a shared biography and I want to discuss ideas about biographical work from a cultural feminist perspective, including my own work on Elizabeth I. I believe that we feminist scholars of the medieval and early modern periods have clear connections between our own biographies and what we produce as scholars. As Susan Wiseman puts it, "In trying to listen to the past we cannot help but hear ourselves."²

I have been interested in Elizabeth I since I was about ten years old when I first read a "kid" biography at the public library. This interest has been reshaped, one certainly hopes, and become more analytic and sophisticated. And now—all these years

later—Elizabeth I is a large part of my specialty as a scholar of early modern English women’s and cultural history. I have published two books about her: *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (1994), and *The Reign of Elizabeth I* (2002). I have also co-edited a collection about her, *Elizabeth I: Always Her Own Free Woman* (2003), and co-edited a special issue of *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* (2004) on the queen. I have also published a series of articles about Elizabeth, and I served as the senior Historical Consultant of the exhibit, Elizabeth I: Ruler and Legend that was at the Newberry Library in Chicago in 2003 for the four hundredth anniversary of her death, and which, under the auspices of the American Library Association, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Newberry Library, traveled to forty libraries in the United States from 2003–2006. I know this is a lot of work and concentration on one topic, and I can certainly say that Queen Elizabeth has been very good to me.³

Despite all the work I have done on Elizabeth, I have never done a full-scale traditional biography of her, nor do I plan to. I have done short entries for a number of scholarly dictionaries and in both *The Heart and Stomach of a King* and *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, I certainly use biographical information about her life. Yet as I am stating, “that my work is not a biography,” what is or is not biography has been changing and evolving. I am also wondering about the connections between scholarship and our own biographies—how our research projects tell us a lot about ourselves, our concerns, our values. So I would argue that biographies tell us not only about the subjects of the biographies, but about the biographers as well.

I have long disputed when people refer to my books on Elizabeth as biographies, since indeed they are not traditional biographies that chapter by chapter narrate a life from beginning to end rather than discuss the person thematically and in context as I have done. Yet perhaps we need to rethink what the term biography means and how we present information about specific historical people. The recent publication both in print and on-line of the completely revised *Dictionary of National Biography*, now referred to as the Oxford DNB, which many scholars reading this article

no doubt have written for (and which many of us use almost daily), has brought biography even more to the forefront of scholarly investigation. Yet we also need to consider how much about the lives of historical people we can ever record and interpret. We indeed know that lives of people of an earlier time have been lived, but we must also admit no *direct or complete* access to early modern English “life”—or early modern lives or one specific life. Given what sources we have and do not have, we can never know, and should never assume, that our emotional lives mirrored theirs. I would call what I do and what I find most interesting “cultural biography;” by this I mean examining a life within the culture lived and using wide-ranging sources that include attitudes and belief-systems such as rumor and gossip. I am defining cultural biography as the interplay between a person and the aspects of culture that shaped the life, and with some lives at least, such as Elizabeth I’s, the impact of her life on the cultural milieu.

Ian Donaldson recently argued that there were two questions at the heart of all biography. The first he raises is the one I have just suggested: how much can biographers ever know about the subjects that they write about? But I would also argue it is not only what biographers can learn; it is also how that knowledge is interpreted. So connected with that question of how much we can know is how each biographer uses the evidence that she or he discovers. Two scholars can have very different interpretations of someone using the very same evidence. If this question is concerned with knowledge, the second posed by Donaldson reflects a different perspective—not how much biographers can know about their subjects, but rather “how much should they try to know?” Donaldson, however, adds that for biographers who focus their work in earlier historical periods “the ethical question survives only in the most attenuated forms: there are few if any imaginable circumstances in which one might hesitate to disclose particular facts about a person who died four hundred years ago.”⁴ But David Ellis suggests that this ethical question is in fact replaced by another equally important and one that certainly resonates for those of us who are feminist scholars: should biographers “not ponder the ethics of reconstructing the feelings, beliefs, or sexual practices

of subjects about whom little significant and reliable information survives?”⁵ I would like to discuss further this issue with another that is intertwined: how do we deal with these issues and how much of ourselves do we also reveal?

These are questions to consider when we examine biographical studies of early modern individuals accomplished in the last decade or two. Some are very interesting studies of a specific person without being traditional biographies. In 1992, Charles Nicholl published *The Reckoning*, about the murder of Christopher Marlowe. It won awards when it was published for both best mystery book *and* best history book; it is a wonderfully written book that deals substantially with the life, and death, of Marlowe, but I was most struck by how in his preface Nichols made the disclaimer—this is not a biography.⁶ And *The Reckoning* is certainly not a traditional biography. But by placing Marlowe’s fascinating life and haunting death at the center of an analysis of late Elizabethan politics and culture, Nichols has produced a new way of doing a biographical study.

At the same time that biography is changing, some scholars are also putting in far more about themselves in the works that they write. No one, however much they may protest that they are, writes in a completely objective manner; we all have our own perspectives and our own agendas, and it is important that people are finally admitting them. In the year 2000, Stephen Greenblatt stated when he was discussing the meaning of new historicism: “Literary criticism is on the whole almost unbearable to read because it lacks much in the way of personal stakes and commitment. The only way to get those qualities is to actually put yourself on the line as somebody [. . .]. I couldn’t stand back and manipulate pieces of text as if I wasn’t present in them.”⁷ He has also stated that part of what drew him to literary studies was the desire to speak with the dead, “but the mistake was to imagine that I would hear a single voice, the voice of the other. If I wanted to hear the voice of the other, I had to hear my own voice.”⁸ Greenblatt does make himself present and “hears his own voice” in many of his works. He ended *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, a study he published twenty-five years ago that changed the landscape of English literary, cultural studies, with the

bizarre account of sitting on an airplane and being asked by the man next to him to mouth the words, "I want to die." Greenblatt used that anecdote to tie together important aspects of his own life and those that he had studied in the book, arguing that just as today in the Renaissance words said really mattered to the sense of self.⁹

In the prologue to *Hamlet in Purgatory* (2001), Greenblatt states, "I know [. . .] that I am incapable of simply bracketing my own origins; rather, I find myself trying to transform them, most often silently and implicitly, into the love I bring my own work." But he then adds, "Let me on this occasion be explicit."¹⁰ He spends the next several pages talking very personally about himself and his father, his father's death and his father's relationship with his father, and the impact of that death on his own father's life.

Greenblatt did turn to biography in his recent book, *Will of the World* (2004), a biography of Shakespeare aimed at a general audience. *Will of the World* is an elegantly written and accessible book, perhaps the most popular of the many biographies of Shakespeare that have appeared in the last few years. There are also interesting and thoughtful ones by Park Honan (1998), Katherine Duncan-Jones (2001), Stanley Wells (2002) and Peter Ackroyd (2005).¹¹ I think those in the Shakespeare industry may even crank out more biographies than those written about Elizabeth I, though I am not sure of that.

In an interview about *Will of the World*, Greenblatt talks about how important "imagination is in any biographical study of Shakespeare, how such biographies must be exercises in speculation."¹² This statement made me think of a more general question asked by the feminist theorist and scholar Dale Spender, "Does the biographer write fact or fiction? Is the subject independent, or a creation of the writer?"¹³ Some books about historical individuals add so much that is created, such as conversations, that they are listed as novels. But how much can a biography be fiction and still be biography? How much imagination and speculation are acceptable? While Daniel Leary cautions readers of *Will of the World* to not "dismiss this extraordinary fictional/factual biography because a lot of the 'facts' are informed hunches," and adds his conclusion that Greenblatt "has assembled

Shakespeare's autobiography," David Ellis warns that "the surviving information about Shakespeare reveals next to nothing about his attitudes, close friends, behaviour in public, and all those other features of a human being which might tell us [. . .] what he was like."¹⁴ Some might wonder, given the paucity of factual information about Shakespeare's life, if *Will of the World* is as much Greenblatt's own biography as Shakespeare's.

I have found the best recent book in helping me understand Shakespeare and the time in which he lived is James Shapiro's *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599*. Shapiro looks at only one year in Shakespeare's life, but it is not only a year when Shakespeare's movements are unusually well documented, but it is also a year of the composition of four great plays. Furthermore, Shapiro puts Shakespeare and his work within the context of series of crises that Elizabethans experienced that year. Shapiro was concerned with what was occurring as Shakespeare "went from being an exceptionally talented writer to one of the greatest who ever lived."¹⁵ Shapiro did extensive research on what Shakespeare read, on who the actors and playwrights that he knew were, and on how his engagement in the world around him ignited his imagination. Shapiro greatly expanded the usual sources because he was "as interested in rumors, as in facts, in what Elizabethans feared or believed as much as in what historians later decided really happened."¹⁶ This book is beautifully written and uses an extraordinary wide range of sources with great sensitivity. While not a traditional biography, it is a model of what the best of biographies can be. As Stephen Orgel stated his review of the book, it is "an extraordinary study about the intersection of time, place and individual genius."¹⁷

Thus far this essay has discussed biographies of Shakespeare, the most famous Elizabethan man. Traditionally, our idea of biography is perhaps shaped by biographies of famous men. As I have suggested, we know little about Shakespeare's life but this has not stopped the flow of biographies about him; usually, however, when we read the biographies of famous men we have a great deal of information offered, much about the public role. But the biographical study of women, which has been emerging as a

new genre in the last few decades, often does not fit into the same model. While some women who have been subjects of biographies have played a public role, others who have lived in a private realm are also well worth studying. Understanding both private and public women's lives can illuminate the culture in which they lived.

Some of the very finest work in English Renaissance studies has been done by literary scholars who have changed our view of the entire field by discovering a whole host of writings by women. As these writers have been discovered, people want to know not only their work but also about their lives. We often, however, have to research and write biography in a different way in working on these women as our knowledge of their lives can be quite fragmentary; we need to figure out how to piece together these fragments to illustrate a life.

Sometimes the material exists but because women have not been traditionally perceived as important, it must be recovered. One early example of excellent recovery in the biography of a woman writer is Margaret Hannay's work on Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke. While the Countess of Pembroke is now a very well known figure in English Renaissance Studies, one major reason is Hannay's early significant work. In *Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works* (1985), Hannay presents several essays about the Countess of Pembroke including one that she wrote. This collection brought attention to a number of early modern English women writers. Hannay wrote later about this collection that these women writers felt "not so much the anxiety of influence as 'the anxiety of absence,' [. . .] an absence that I felt myself, as did many others working in this field. Our writing was often no more valued than that of the women we studied, giving us a sense of solidarity with them."¹⁸ The Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship, founded in 1992, and The Society for the Study of Early Modern Women, begun the following year, function in making visible women and their work of earlier centuries. The organizations also provide recognition of the women scholars today who study them. For all too long not only was traditional biography about men the accepted model, but the work that was different—often by women scholars—was also not valued.

While the Countess of Pembroke is relatively well-known, early work such as Hannay's on a more public aristocratic woman who was also an author, has led to biographical studies of women who are virtually unknown. One such work is *Locating Privacy in Tudor London*, a superb study by Lena Cowen Orlin of Alice Barnham, someone of whom I had never heard until I read this book. Orlin began this project when she examined an unusual portrait, one of the earliest family groups from England, dated 1557. It shows a middling-sort of woman with her two sons and has always been identified as "Lady Ingram." Through textual inscriptions on the painting, which provide given names and baptismal dates for the sons, Orlin was able to properly identify the sitter as Alice Barnham. Orlin has described her project thus: "Despite all we've been told about how difficult it is to trace women in the archives, I also discovered a biography's worth of information about her, in large part, admittedly, because her husband was so prominent in the records of the Drapers' Company, the London Board of Aldermen, the Bridewell, and St. Thomas' Hospital. But these records also provide information about her own life as a committed Protestant and one of the last of the London silkwomen."¹⁹ Orlin's careful research that allows us to know Alice Barnham is an example of how much can be found out about women's lives when working in the archives if one asks the right questions. This fascinating book opens up ways to understand sixteenth-century Protestant women who had both family and work responsibilities.²⁰

Most of us have never heard of Alice Barnham, but we all know about Elizabeth I, who is in some ways one of the most canonical of all historical figures. So one might wonder, why I write on Elizabeth, why I have chosen not to write a full-scale biography, and, for me certainly more important, what I choose to do instead as I keep working on this fascinating and enigmatic woman. My work on Elizabeth has been greatly influenced by feminist scholarship and cultural history and by using some non-traditional sources I have been able to approach writing about Elizabeth in a quite different manner than what has been traditionally written about her.

One reason I have decided not to write a biography is that there are so many biographies of Elizabeth already written, many of them excellent. Some of the more recent ones are by D. M. Loades, Richard Rex, Wallace MacCaffrey, and Susan Doran. I would also mention that in 2003 there were the excellent exhibits on Elizabeth I at The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington DC, the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, England, and the Newberry Library in Chicago. Georgianna Ziegler, Susan Doran, and Clark Hulse each produced a beautiful, elegantly written and illustrated book that accompanied the exhibit on which they worked.²¹

But there was a more serious reason for me not to do a full-scale biography. My work examines how Elizabeth represented herself and how people in turn responded to her as an unmarried woman in power. I am interested in issues of sexuality, gender construction, and image making. I have used many different sources in my work: tracts and pamphlets, religious works, Parliamentary statutes and speeches, sermons and homilies, ceremonies and progresses, plays and ballads, diaries, gossip, rumor, calendar and holy days, liturgy, sixteenth-century books, records of the Privy Council, Elizabeth's own speeches and letters, and recorded dreams about Elizabeth. Much of the evidence we have for popular reaction to the queen comes from first-hand descriptions of her public ceremonies and progresses, letters, ambassadors' reports, and, especially, court cases involving people arrested for slandering the queen. While these sources do not always provide accurate factual information about Elizabeth's life, they tell us a great deal about the social-psychological response to queenship, to a woman in power, particularly in terms of attitudes toward sexuality and power. So my sources include gossip, slander, and rumor. I should add that once when I presented my research, I was told that I was doing "The National Enquirer Form of History." Anthropologist Jan Vansina, however, suggests that "Rumor is the process by which a collective historical consciousness is built [. . .]. Hence a tradition based on rumor tells more about the mentality of the time of the happening than about the events themselves."²²

So for me, a traditional biography was not really so useful, as in some ways I am less interested in the "facts" about her life,

as I am interested in what she said about herself, and even in the gestures that she made, and in what others said about her. Whether it was factually true or not, it held a “truth” for me as representing an attitude or belief-system. As award-winning novelist Tim O’Brien once stated in discussing his experience in Vietnam and what he has written about it, “Sometimes a lie is truer than the truth.”²³ There were a variety of rumors and gossip recorded during Elizabeth’s reign that she had a number of lovers and illegitimate children. There is no factual evidence that Elizabeth either had lovers or children, but these beliefs about Elizabeth present us with a truth about values and cultural anxieties of the time, of the great fear toward the end of the reign of what would happen after Elizabeth’s death since she, an unmarried woman in power, had no designated heir. In my work on Elizabeth, cultural biography if you will, we see a complex interaction and a constant interplay of person with a specific period of time and place.

I have talked about my scholarship on Elizabeth I but also wish to emphasize the interconnections between my teaching and scholarship. Students are also fascinated with historical lives and I teach a course on medieval and early modern history through biography. I ask students to read extensively about certain historical figures such as Eleanor of Aquitaine, Joan of Arc, Martin Guerre and Bertrande de Rols, and Elizabeth I. They read contemporary accounts, drama, ballads, and modern historians, and they watch segments of plays and films. Through these many different approaches they learn about analyzing sources and understanding them within the culture in which they were produced. They learn about women whose lives had a public role but also about an equally valuable woman whose life was far more private, and is only available to us because of a sensational law case over identity. In 1548, young Martin Guerre ran off, abandoning his wife Bertrande and their small son. Eight years later “Martin” returned. Many of the Artigat villagers accepted the man as Martin, though there were also some who doubted his identity, even though he looked similar and demonstrated a detailed knowledge of Martin’s life. Bertrande accepted the man as her husband and they had two children together. But quarrels over the land between Martin and his uncle

led Pierre Guerre to denounce the man as an impostor. At the trial in 1560, the judges were about to find for Martin when another man appeared claiming to be Martin Guerre. He convinced everyone he truly was Martin Guerre, and the other man confessed his name was Arnaud du Tilh. In his travels he had often been mistaken for Guerre, and had decided to take his place. The imposture was a costly one for him; du Tilh was hanged. The case of Martin Guerre and Bertrande de Rols is not only of interest because of the situation itself with its twists on identity but also because of how scholars have responded to it.

Natalie Zemon Davis' *The Return of Martin Guerre* (1983) is the first modern examination of the case.²⁴ Her study provides significant analysis about sixteenth-century ideas about identity and female agency, and has found a wide readership. In 1988, the year after Davis had served as only the second ever woman president of the American Historical Association, Robert Findlay published "The Refashioning of Martin Guerre," in the *American Historical Review*.²⁵ Lisa Jardine eloquently describes Findlay's article as

a long and intemperate attack [. . .]. Five years after the appearance of Natalie Davis' much-lauded book, in the official publication of the American Historical Association, a male historian takes it upon himself formally to challenge the credentials as a historian of the woman who has achieved the remarkable feat (for a woman) of presiding over the learned society of his (predominantly male) profession.²⁶

What Findlay attacked most vehemently was Davis' analysis that gave Bertrand de Rols a critical role in the construction of the Martin Guerre identity and selfhood for Arnaud du Tilh. Findlay argued that Bertrande was duped by Arnaud and that Davis was recreating Bertrande in terms of twentieth-century sensibilities. He was also distressed with Davis' honesty in admitting that she had no certainty about her explanation of the events; her book is filled with "perhaps" and "may have been." Findlay appears to be arguing for certainty in exposition, which is a traditionally male mode of operation.

I said at the beginning that what we write on tells us something about ourselves, as well as our subjects. James Shapiro's

willingness to listen to a variety of points of view may influence his belief that Shakespeare was a great listener. Davis' honesty in her writing and her articulation of Bertrand de Rols' active role speaks of Davis' own integrity, courage, and agency. I think my choice to spend so many years of my life researching, writing, and presenting on Elizabeth I says that I greatly value doing history with women—a certain woman in this case—at the center, and that questions of how a woman was able to attain and then maintain power seem to me important ones. I certainly admire and value biographies of men; however, the writing of women's biographies, both those who have been almost lost to history and those who are famous, allows us to not only to write women's history but also to reframe the rewriting of all history. I think one reason I was so impressed as a child reading a kid biography of Elizabeth was that I as a female was reading about another female. So my scholarship generally but especially this essay is also a celebration of a particular woman in history and of women writing history.

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END NOTES

1. This paper was originally presented as part of the SMFS at Twenty session on "Theory" at the International Medieval Congress; Kalamazoo, MI, May 10-13, 2006. I wish to thank Marla Segol for organizing this panel that allowed me to think through many of these issues. Elaine Kruse gave me insight and advice on this topic. Lena Orlin, Michele Osherow, Jo Carney, and Anya Riehl each read a draft of this essay and it is immeasurably better because of that. I am most grateful.
2. Susan Wiseman, *Conspiracy And Virtue: Women, Writing, and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006), p. 174. Also see, for example, the essays in Teresa Iles, ed., *All Sides of the Subject: Women and Biography* (New York: Teachers College P, 1992).
3. *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: U Pennsylvania P, 1994); *The Reign of Elizabeth I* (New York: Palgrave, 2002); *Elizabeth I: Always Her Own Free Woman*, ed. Carole Levin, Debra Barrett-Graves, and Jo Eldridge Carney (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003); *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* Special Issue: "Images of Elizabeth I," edited by Donald Stump and Carole Levin 30 (2004).

4. Ian Donaldson, "Biographical Uncertainty," *Essays in Criticism* 54 (2004): 305-22; p. 306.
5. David Ellis, "Biographical Uncertainty and Shakespeare," *Essays in Criticism* 55 (2005): 193-208, p. 195.
6. Charles Nicholl, *The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Harcourt, 1992). While this is a fascinating book, it should be read in conjunction with Paul E. J. Hammer, "A Reckoning Reframed: The 'Murder' of Christopher Marlowe Revisited," *English Literary Renaissance* 26 (1996): 225-42. Hammer successfully argues for a different interpretation of Marlowe's death. See also David Riggs, *The World of Christopher Marlowe* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005), and Park Honan, *Christopher Marlowe: Poet and Spy* (Oxford/New York: Oxford UP, 2005).
7. "Stephen Greenblatt: The Wicked Son Interview with Harvey Blume," <<http://www.bookwire.com/bookwire/bbr/reviews/june2001/GREENBLATTInterview.htm>>. Accessed 29 March 2006.
8. Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1988), p. 20.
9. Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1980; rpt. 2005), pp. 255-57.
10. Stephen Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory* (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton UP, 2001), p. 5.
11. Stephen Greenblatt, *Will of the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare* (New York: Norton, 2004); Park Honan, *Shakespeare: A Life* (Oxford/New York: Oxford UP, 1998); Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Ungentle Shakespeare: Scenes From His Life* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2001); Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare: For All Time* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002); Peter Ackroyd, *Shakespeare: The Biography* (New York: Nan A. Talese, 2005).
12. Stephen Greenblatt interview on amazon.com. Originally accessed 29 March 2006. URL no longer functioning.
13. Quoted in Iles, "Introduction," *All Sides of the Subject*, p. viii.
14. Daniel Leary, rev. of *Will of the World*, *American Book Review* (July/August 2005), 21; Ellis, "Biographical Uncertainty and Shakespeare," p. 196.
15. James Shapiro, *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare: 1599* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), p. xvi.
16. Shapiro, *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare*, p. xvii.
17. Stephen Orgel, rev. of *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* by James Shapiro. *Times Literary Supplement* 19 August 2005 (5342/5343): 11.
18. *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women As Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, ed. Margaret P. Hannay (Kent, OH: Kent State UP, 1985); "Constructing a City of Ladies: The Scholarly Community for Early Modern Women's Studies," *Shakespeare Studies* 25 (1997): 76-88. Hannay's 1990 book, *Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke* (New York: Oxford UP, 1990) is a biographical complement to the editions of Pembroke's work that Hannay has co-edited, most recently *Selected Works of Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke*, ed. Margaret P. Hannay, Noel Kinnamon, and Michael G. Brennan (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005).

19. Lena Cowen Orlin. E-mail to author. 10 April 2006.
20. In medieval and early modern England “silkwomen” engaged in the manufacturing and sale of silk. Lena Cowen Orlin, *Locating Privacy in Tudor London* (Oxford: Oxford UP, forthcoming 2008). I am deeply grateful to Lena for allowing me to read her book in manuscript.
21. Wallace MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I* (London, New York: E. Arnold, 1993); D. M. Loades, *Elizabeth I* (London/New York: Hamledon, 2003); Richard Rex, *Elizabeth I, Fortune’s Bastard: A Short Account of the Long Life of Elizabeth I* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2003), Susan Doran, *Queen Elizabeth I* (New York: New York UP, 2003); Clark Hulse, *Elizabeth I: Ruler and Legend* (Urbana: Published for the Newberry Library by U of Illinois P, 2003); Georgianna Ziegler, ed., *Elizabeth I: Then and Now* (Washington, DC: The Folger Shakespeare Library; Seattle: Distributed by U of Washington P, 2003); Susan Doran, ed., *Elizabeth I: The Exhibition Catalogue* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2003).
22. Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1985), p. 6.
23. Tim O’Brien said this at a lecture at SUNY-New Paltz about fifteen years ago.
24. Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1983).
25. Robert Findlay, “The Refashioning of Martin Guerre,” *American Historical Review* 93 (1988): 553-71. See also Davis’ reply, “On the Lame,” *American Historical Review* 93 (1988): 572-603.
26. Lisa Jardine, “Unpicking the Tapestry: The Scholar of Women’s History as Penelope Among her Suitors,” in *Reading Shakespeare Historically*, ed. Lisa Jardine (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 133.