

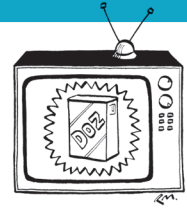
women blamed, / Or by more faulty men so much defamed?’

Although Targoff’s fourth writer, Elizabeth Cary, is not directly connected with the other three, she is linked to them by her sheer audacity. In the face of serious mistreatment by her husband, she became a committed Catholic, willing to stand her ground – and write plays in which women stand their ground – despite tremendous pressure. In this she resembles Clifford, whose autobiography describes her refusal to concede her right to inherit her father’s lands in northern England. Although the law allowed Anne to inherit as his only child, her father’s will left the property to his brother and brother’s male heir. James I sought to work a compromise; Anne refused. Finally, after her uncle and cousin had died, Anne – then in her fifties – inherited vast property and several castles, restoring them from the neglect and devastation wrought by the English civil wars. It was a long time since Elizabeth’s funeral, but Anne Clifford, by then Dowager Countess of Pembroke (her second husband was Mary Sidney’s second son), lived until 1676, known for her good works, and reporting herself ‘in good health’ on the day before she died at age 86.

Targoff brings these four women to life without resorting to the ‘she must have thought’ school of fictionalised history. At least three of their lives have provoked fictional reveries: Woolf’s *Orlando* was inspired in part by Vita Sackville-West’s publication of parts of Anne Clifford’s diaries. Naomi Miller has recently published a fictionalisation of Mary Sidney’s life. Aemilia Lanyer has been the subject of several novels and two plays, all tied, to some extent, to the debunked theory that she was the ‘dark lady’ of Shakespeare’s sonnets. Perhaps Targoff casts these four individuals as slightly more obscure than they really are, in academic circles at least; Margaret Hannay, Josephine Roberts, Barbara Lewalski and other scholars were focusing attention on early women writers from the 1980s onward. Nonetheless, these women are not yet widely known. This is a book I hoped someone would write, and Ramie Targoff has done a fine job.

Susanne Woods is the editor of *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer* and author of *Lanyer: A Renaissance Woman Poet* (Oxford University Press, 1995 and 1999).

THE READING LIST... ADVERTISING



A phenomenon inseparable from modernity and the culture of capitalism. It’s everywhere – what to read to understand it?
Chosen by Anat Rosenberg

● **Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America**
Jackson Lears, 1994

The story of modern advertising encompasses magic, religion, science and art. Lears’ wide-ranging history moves from early modern Europe to 20th-century America, showing how developments in advertising helped a managerial ethos of efficiency eclipse animism as the dominant form of relationship between people and things.

● **Advertising: A Cultural Economy**
Liz McFall, 2004

A dialogue between advertising theory and history, McFall argues against the view that contemporary advertising is more powerful, sophisticated and pervasive than that of the ‘naïve’ past. A genealogy of advertising in the UK and the US between 1780 and 1935 showcases early sophistication.

● **Advertising, Subjectivity and the Nineteenth-Century Novel: Dickens, Balzac and the Language of the Walls**
Sara Thornton, 2009

The boundaries between literature and advertising have long been porous, as readers required to read around the adverts surrounding Charles Dickens’ monthly instalments found. As Thornton argues,

to live in the modern world is to interact with text: with the onslaught of advertising in the 19th century the world was increasingly experienced in a fragmentary and nonlinear fashion.

● **A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World**

Erika Rappaport, 2017
This history of a global commodity follows the tea trade from the 17th century to the 1970s, giving pride of place to the industry’s commercial propaganda. It was these advertisements, encouraging the consumption of tea, that helped sell the Empire as a civilising force, as well as creating – with no little conflict and local messiness – a global market that thrives today.

● **The Emergence of Brand-Name Capitalism in Late Colonial India: Advertising and the Making of Modern Conjugalities**

Douglas E. Haynes, 2022
A study of the interwar advertisements created by multinational brands for the Bombay Presidency’s Indian middle class. Haynes shows how these advertisers adjusted their Western ideals to the perceived cultural priorities of their new market, centred on the family as opposed to the ‘modern girl’ or hedonistic celebrities found in Western adverts.

Anat Rosenberg is author of The Rise of Mass Advertising: Law, Enchantment, and the Cultural Boundaries of British Modernity (Oxford University Press, 2022).