

Rape in Early Modern England: Law, History and Criticism. Helen Barker.
London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. xiv + 128 pp. \$54.99.

Any scholar researching or writing about rape in early modern England should read this book. The aptly titled monograph summarizes the complex common law history of rape (and the associated crime of abduction) and criticizes, often in polemical style, scholars who rely too heavily upon two works in particular: Nazife Bashar's "Rape in England between 1500 and 1700," in *The Sexual Dynamics of History* (1983) and *The Lawes Resolutions of Womens Rights* (1632). Helen Barker analyzes the errors in these two works, traces how flawed understanding of rape law flowed into later works, especially those of literary scholars, and offers guidance on how to correctly interpret the confusing and sometimes inconsistent laws and legal precedents related to rape in late medieval and early modern England. Throughout, Barker rejects presentist arguments that read the history of rape law through the lens of modern concerns about female bodily autonomy and argues for a more nuanced understanding of patriarchy than a dichotomy of oppression and victimhood.

Chapter 1, "Critical Context and History," introduces Barker's topic and arguments, largely by tracing the historiography of sexual crimes in the early modern period. Barker establishes the influence that Bashar's essay has enjoyed among non-legal historians (especially theater scholars). According to Barker, numerous studies have cited Bashar's analysis since it was published in 1983 but have often read it uncritically, citing Bashar's assertions as fact. In this chapter, rather than reading all cases through a lens of patriarchy, Barker asserts that other factors—religion, social status, law and public order, and how cases come to court—are all important to assess and understand.

In chapter 2, Barker elucidates various influences upon the English common law, its attitude towards rape, and its explication in medieval and early modern handbooks. Barker explores various pathways of confusion for both historical and contemporary readers hoping to understand legal underpinnings of sex crimes and seeks to clarify errors and confusion regarding the hue and cry, Galenic theory of conception, the resolution of prosecution through marriage between rapist and victim, and the term ravishment which conflated rape and abduction from the later Middle Ages. Again, Barker emphasizes that the discussions of sexual assault law by the authors of legal textbooks stemmed from various religious and cultural beliefs about women and the social order, a necessary point for understanding why opinions might diverge.

One might hope that statute law would be more consistent than authors of medieval and early modern legal textbooks, but, as Barker documents in chapter 3, that was not true with laws of ravishment. Here Barker outlines relevant statute clauses and analyzes the conflation of rape, elopement, and abduction explored by medieval scholars such as J. B. Post, H. A. Kelly, and myself. To this end, Barker focuses more on the problem of confusion, rather than clarifying the sometimes contradictory terminology. Yet in collating the legislation through the early modern period, and addressing relevant

historiography, Barker provides a useful background for scholars wishing to explore rape and sexual assault in history or literature.

Chapter 4, Barker's most successful chapter, explores theories behind the authorship and production of *The Lawes Resolutions* and establishes that text's unreliability and lack of formal authority. Published during the era of the burgeoning print industry, possibly on speculation that it would find a home with lay readers building libraries, *The Lawes Resolutions* instead generated little reading interest, and should not be relied upon by modern scholars seeking an accurate evaluation of rape law in early modern England, although its sometimes playful tone and revelations of gender stereotypes make it useful for social history.

Barker's monograph underscores the necessity of *longue durée* analyses in certain fields, here the complex legal history of sexual violence. I wish that Barker had addressed literary works beyond drama; she ignores ballads or poetry by authors such as Sidney and Spenser. Some might object to how Barker writes about patriarchy, finding her views somewhat simplistic in disregarding how pervasive it could be in subconscious and institutionalized forms. There are some inconsistencies in the bibliographies and footnotes, and the unconventional bibliographies at the end of chapters make evaluating sources cumbersome for those reading the entire book. Nevertheless, this is a book that should be read by scholars needing to understand the complexities of rape law and attitudes towards the offense in early England.

Caroline Dunn, *Clemson University*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.580

The Duke of Lennox, 1574–1624: A Jacobean Courtier's Life. David Bergeron. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022. x + 244 pp. \$110.

The Stuart courts of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries have been the subject of much scholarship in the last twenty years, though book-length biographies of individual courtiers are rare. David M. Bergeron's new biography of Ludovic Stewart, Duke of Lennox, thus offers a fresh perspective on the Scottish-English courts of James VI/I, in addition to being the first "sustained study of Lennox's life" (2). Bergeron's knowledge of and passion for his subject are evident immediately. He argues that Lennox "was the most important courtier in King James VI of Scotland's court in both Scotland and England in the forty years (1583–1624) that he faithfully served the king" (1).

The book begins *in media res*, with nine-year-old Ludovic arriving in Scotland from his native France in 1583. Upon arrival, he received appointments to the Privy Council, the King's Bedchamber, and as Lord Chamberlain. Further influential positions followed as he matured. Chapter 2 moves south to England with the king and covers James's reign there from 1603 to the death of Henry, Prince of Wales, in 1612. Lennox transitioned easily to England, acquiring new titles and properties there