

the many different ways social structures are disrupted and redefined when women speak, specifically when they say yes and no—or in the case of the formel, maybe.

Another avenue of research that concerns me is perhaps less historical and more aesthetic, although I am attempting to find the link between the two, and that is one raised by Kathryn Gravdal in her ground-breaking book, and queried so provocatively by Gayle Margherita, that is, what role does rape play in the development of Western aesthetics? Why is rape so prevalent particularly in the Western lyric tradition? Why do so many Western poets use Philomel, the voice of the raped and mutilated woman, as their sign of the poetic voice? And why should the laurel, the transformed body of Daphne, a woman who refused to be raped, become the reward for poetic achievement? Just as the representation of rape calls attention to social structures, so the tradition of the nightingale's song, as the song of the raped woman, calls attention to the place of the lyric speaker in non-lyric forms. And that voice—for male and female poet alike—may well be the poet's protest against the violence against women inherent in Western societies.

The bibliography provided by Emma Hawkes here on rape in medieval England is superb, and anyone wishing to tackle this important and surprisingly understudied subject in medieval England should start with it. I would add only the suggestion that we consider this subject not just in isolation but as one part of larger systems of control of the female body. In that regard, I would add Richard Helmholz's fine book on *Marriage Litigation in Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), and urge scholars to cast their nets wider than rape over the expanse of female identity-formation as it is exhibited in Judeo-Christian ideology and practice.

In sum, my primary questions are to what degree is rape systemic in patriarchal society and why is rape so fundamental to the development of Western aesthetics? I would greatly appreciate reactions and suggestions in response to this brief note.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY OF LEGAL RECORDS RELATED TO RAPE AND RAVISHMENT IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

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This bibliography is designed to help researchers access printed primary and secondary sources dealing with rape and ravishment in medieval England. Although rape (forcible coition) and ravishment (abduction without necessarily implying forcible coition) are seen as two very different offences in the twentieth century, medieval legal records generally blurred the two crimes together.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Printed versions of medieval English documents

Statutes

- 3 Edward I, c. 13 (Westminster I, 1275)
- 13 Edward I, c. 34 (Westminster II, 1285)
- 6 Richard II, statute I, c. 6 (1382)
- 3 Henry VI, c. 9 (1452)
- 3 Henry VII, statute II, c. 2 (1487)
- 4&5 Philip and Mary, statute I, c.8 (1557)
- 18 Elizabeth I, statute I, c.7 (1576)
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- *I would like to thank Professor David J. Deipp for his valuable help in locating printed Year Books.

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