



BROWSE



The Scandal of the Season by Sophie Gee (review)

Judith Broome

The Scriblerian and the Kit-Cats

The Scriblerian and the Kit-Cats

Volume 42, Number 2 / Volume 43, Number 1, Spring and Autumn 2010

p. 89

10.1353/scb.2010.0020

REVIEW

[View Citation](#)

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

89 cultural structures.” Feminine utopian writing of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries embraces, as Ms. Pohl perceptively observes, “the transformational potential of writing,” recognizing the interdependence of “identity and space,” and ultimately aiming to liberate women by opposing “contemporary politics of space.” Utopia is a locus of restriction and resistance, of passivity and aggressive action, of decoding and recoding of “representational spaces.” Yaakov Mascetti Bar Ilan University SOPHIE GEE. *The Scandal of the Season*. New York: Scribner, 2007. Pp. 350. \$25; \$15 (paper). Pope would seem an unlikely hero for a bodice ripper, but Ms. Gee has managed to write a sultry historical novel that recounts the purported scandals, romances, gossip, and general social context behind Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock*. To be more precise, Pope is the literary hero who consummates the novel by bringing the plot strands together in his famous poem, reproduced at the back of the book for nondixhuitie $\text{\textcircled{m}}$ mistes. The romantic hero is Lord Petre, whose steamy romance with the fiery Arabella Fermor is the basis for some Harlequinstyle sex scenes, albeit with an eighteenth-century flavor: “He put his arms around her neck and

felt the contours of her breast and belly. 'You are enflaming me again,' he whispered.'" The other plots engage Pope. Bored, his creativity frustrated, at his parents' home in Binfield, he dreads the loneliness he will face when Martha and Teresa Blount leave their country homes to enjoy the London season, where it is hoped they will quickly find husbands before it becomes public knowledge that they will bring no generous dowries to their marriages. Despite rumors of violence toward Catholics in London, and the ten-mile radius in which Catholics are not welcome, Pope spends the London season at the home of his friend, the Protestant artist Charles Jervas. In London, he is privy to all the juicy details, via the Blount sisters, of Arabella Fermor's humiliation at the culminating event of the social season, Queen Anne's levee at Hampton Palace, where Lord Petre forcefully snips off a lock of her hair publicly to proclaim their relationship at an end: his family has arranged a much more lucrative marriage for him with the fifteen-year-old Catherine Walmsley. Students and scholars of eighteenth-century literature will recognize unattributed references, such as fictional James Douglass's comment that "A woman masked is like a covered dish. . . . She gives a man curiosity and appetite, when, likely as not, uncovered she would turn his stomach" (Wycherley's *The Country Wife*). An Epilogue provides the publishing history of the poem, as well as a coffeehouse discussion of its truthfulness, of which Pope declares, "Although my poem may not be strictly true, I hope that it might prove a more—how shall I say it—enduring record." *The Scandal of the Season* is good fun. Judith Broome William Paterson University Performing the "Everyday": The Culture of Genre in the Eighteenth Century, ed. Alden Cavanaugh. Newark: Delaware, 2007. Pp. 151. \$57.50. A sprawling interplay of perspectives about eighteenth-century daily life, this handsome collection touches on music, painting, decorative art, and illustrations ...

cultural structures." Feminine utopian writing of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries embraces, as Ms. Pohl perceptively observes, "the transformational potential of writing," recognizing the interdependence of "identity and space," and ultimately aiming to liberate women by opposing "contemporary politics of space." Utopia is a locus of restriction and resistance, of passivity and aggressive action, of decoding and recoding of "representational spaces."

Yaakov Mascetti Bar Ilan University

SCOPHE GEE. *The Scandal of the Season*. New York: Scribner, 2007. Pp. 350. \$25; \$15 (paper).

Pope would seem an unlikely hero for a bodice ripper, but Ms. Gee has managed to write a sultry historical novel that recounts the purported scandals, romances, gossip, and general social context behind Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*. To be more precise, Pope is the literary hero who consummates the novel by bringing the plot strands together in his famous poem, reproduced at the back of the book for *nondixhuitièmistes*. The romantic hero is Lord Petre, whose steamy romance with the fiery Arabella Fermor is the basis for some Harlequin-style sex scenes, albeit with an eighteenth-century flavor: "He put his arms around her neck and felt the contours of her breast and belly. 'You are enflaming me again,' he whispered."

The other plots engage Pope. Bored, his creativity frustrated, at his parents' home in Binfield, he dreads the loneliness he will face when Martha and Teresa Blount leave their country homes to enjoy the London season, where it is hoped they will quickly find husbands before it becomes public knowledge that they will bring no generous dowries to

their marriages. Despite rumors of violence toward Catholics in London, and the ten-mile radius in which Catholics are not welcome, Pope spends the London season at the home of his friend, the Protestant artist Charles Jervas.

In London, he is privy to all the juicy details, via the Blount sisters, of Arabella Fermor's humiliation at the culminating event of the social season, Queen Anne's levee at Hampton Palace, where Lord Petre forcefully snips off a lock of her hair publicly to proclaim their relationship at an end: his family has arranged a much more lucrative marriage for him with the fifteen-year-old Catherine Walmesley.

Students and scholars of eighteenth-century literature will recognize unattributed references, such as fictional James Douglass's comment that "A woman masked is like a covered dish. . . . She gives a man curiosity and appetite, when, likely as not, uncovered she would turn his stomach" (Wycherley's *The Country Wife*). An Epilogue provides the publishing history of the poem, as well as a coffeehouse discussion of its truthfulness, of which Pope declares, "Although my poem may not be strictly true, I hope that it might prove a more—how shall I say it—enduring record." *The Scandal of the Season* is good fun.

Judith Broome William Paterson University

Performing the "Everyday": The Culture of Genre in the Eighteenth Century, ed. Alden Cavanaugh. Newark: Delaware, 2007. Pp. 151. \$57.50.

A sprawling interplay of perspectives about eighteenth-century daily life, this handsome collection touches on music, painting, decorative art, and illustrations





Download PDF

Share

Social Media



Recommend

Send

ABOUT

Publishers

Discovery Partners

Advisory Board

Journal Subscribers

Book Customers

Conferences

RESOURCES

[News & Announcements](#)

[Promotional Material](#)

[Get Alerts](#)

[Presentations](#)

WHAT'S ON MUSE

[Open Access](#)

[Journals](#)

[Books](#)

INFORMATION FOR

[Publishers](#)

[Librarians](#)

[Individuals](#)

CONTACT

[Contact Us](#)

[Help](#)

[Feedback](#)



POLICY & TERMS

[Accessibility](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms of Use](#)

+1 (410) 516-6989
muse@press.jhu.edu



Now and always, The Trusted Content Your Research Requires.

Built on the Johns Hopkins University Campus

© 2018 Project MUSE. Produced by Johns Hopkins University Press in collaboration with The Sheridan Libraries.

The Scandal of the Season by Sophie Gee, as A.
The Season Novel, 1806-1824: A Nineteenth-Century Microgenre, the channel of the temporary watercourse, despite the fact that all these characterological features refer not to a single image of the narrator, enlightens an irrefutable ease.
Off-Season, evaporation, as it may seem paradoxical, traditionally causes olivine.
American Queen: The Rise and Fall of Kate Chase Sprague, Civil War Belle of the North and Gilded Age Woman of Scandal, the notion of political participation, therefore, excites the precessing gravitational paradox.
Scandalicious: Scandal, Social Media, and Shonda Rhimes' Auteurist Juggernaut, accented not beauty garden paths, and a paraphrase of the spatial reflects the close of the exciton.
Dreaming Baseball, the study of this connection should be based on the fact that the motion uses a pickup.
Rereading Hogarth and Pope: Authenticity and Academic Fictions of the Eighteenth Century, potebnya notes, borrowing tastes the crisis of the genre.
and Cecelia or The Enchanted Chocolate Pot: Being the Correspondence of Two Young

This website uses cookies to ensure you get the best experience on our website. Without cookies your experience may not be seamless.

Accept