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Ravishing Restoration [The]: Aphra Behn, Violence, & Comedy

By Ann Marie STEWART.

Susquehanna University Press, Selinsgrove, 2010.

Hardback/Cloth. Book Condition: New. 1st Edition. 136pp . [In stock in Australia, for immediate delivery] Aphra Behn used theatre as a forum to highlight social issues, particularly those regarding gender roles, sugar-coated within the genre of comedy. Inequality for women, forced marriage, the sexual double standard, and the perils of female powerlessness are themes to which Behn returns repeatedly. She kept her audiences captivated with clever plots and witty dialogue, beautiful poetry and sophisticated intellectual arguments, inventive use of staging and risqué romantic scenarios; and it was from this platform that Behn drew attention to violence and injustice against women. Altogether, nine of her plays include scenes of sexual coercion, equating to almost half of her dramatic work. The high instance of rape and attempted rape seems to imply that Behn had a particular preoccupation with seduction, domination, and victimisation, and the artistic representation or recreation of ravishment. In her scenes, a unique pattern arises in which she stages ideological debates between male desire and female chastity; displays violent force by men against women; and often provides an example of women's ability to usurp male authority via escape. Her comedies conclude with greater or lesser...



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