where it would be helpful to see a more sustained interaction with recent scholarship on women published in both English and Spanish. However, the collection as a whole is an important contribution to the history of women. The individual entries provide much valuable and elusive information on women whose lives were often obscured by the attention given to their husbands and fathers. It also provides a wealth of information on the lives of younger daughters, married women, and a surprising number of single women, all of whom can be difficult to locate in archival and printed sources. Scholars interested in the Mendoza family, in aristocratic women, in gender history, in the religious culture of late medieval and early modern Spain, and in Spain’s participation in the Renaissance, will find this a valuable resource.

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The works of early modern French women authors continue to enjoy a vibrant bilingual revival in both the Francophone and Anglophone twenty-first century worlds thanks to the highly-regarded “Other Voice in Early Modern Europe” series, published under the superb general editorship of Margaret King and Albert Rabil, first by the University of Chicago Press and currently by the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies at Victoria University in the University of Toronto. In volume thirty-three of the Toronto series, French Renaissance specialist Kelly Digby Peebles and poet Marta Rijn Finch have collaborated to produce the first bilingual edition of the 1542 _Tales and Trials of Love_ by Jeanne Flore, who along with Louise Labé and Pernette du Guillet, published her work in Lyon, the burgeoning literary and cultural capital of France in the early to mid-sixteenth century. Like the prose and verse of Labé and the poetry of du Guillet, Jeanne Flore’s stories, all prefaced and related by female narrators, participate in the questions and debates on gender, love, and marriage pervading sixteenth-century France and seen through the lens of Lyon’s relatively progressive social milieu. In addition to presenting Flore’s dedicatory letter and all seven of her
middle French tales with Peebles’s English translations on facing pages — as well as six poems with Finch’s translations on facing pages interspersed throughout the text — this meticulously prepared volume includes an extensive critical introduction and translators’ notes; exhaustive annotations to the text; appendices with a selection of cover, page, and woodcut illustrations from the 1542 edition and related texts/artworks; and a wide-ranging bibliography and index of primary and secondary sources. Thus, the new edition provides a complete array of pedagogical and research information that will enhance the experience of seasoned early modern scholars and first-time Francophone or Anglophone readers of Jeanne Flore alike.

Peebles’s impressively researched introduction provides important background to a series of critical issues engaged by Flore’s Tales: from the question of the writer’s identity and authorship; to the evolution of the work’s early editions in the context of early modern print culture and editorial practices; to the social, cultural, and literary climate in which it was produced; to the multiple influences on her work stemming from the traditions of classical and chivalric literature, Neoplatonism, female conduct books, and the contemporary literary querelle des Amyes. As Peebles underlines from the outset, unlike Labé and du Guillet, whose biographical identities are not in question, there is no archival evidence concerning Flore, and the name is assumed to be a pseudonym representing not simply one, but possibly a group of writers who may have taken part in the composition, editing, and early printings of the tales and verse in the collection — a phenomenon reflecting the ongoing influence and interpenetration of manuscript, catalogue, and oral traditions that contributed to the development of the sixteenth-century print industry.

In fact, this “collective,” broadly-inclusive aspect of early print culture is implicitly referenced and metaphorically replicated in the conventional dedicatory epistle by Flore to her cousin, Madame Minerve, who has already addressed the female audience of storytellers and listeners as “nobles Dames amoureuses” (“Noble Ladies-in-Love”) in a prefatory eight-line poem announcing the overarching theme of love in the context of a warning that Cupid — not blind, but sighted — must be esteemed and heeded. In an astute reading of the epistle that follows, Peebles shows that Flore’s fulfilled vow to her cousin to write down the tales their group of friends and relatives have recounted and critiqued engages that entire coterie in “cultivating women’s literacy” (17) — that is, promoting the ability to become together both savvy participants in the sphere of love, and
potentially skilled contributors to the broader literary community. As Peebles goes on to point out, the various female narrators are driven to pursue their storytelling in part by “their desire to ‘convert’ a dissident voice” — that of Madame Cebille, who embodies “an antiquated voice that associated women’s speech with lust, excess, and impropriety” (47). Flore’s presentation of the seven tales thereby revolves around not only a majority position “for” and a minority position “against” love, but the assertion that women’s language can be the vehicle of their independence and agency in determining how to achieve a fulfilling amorous connection — whether within or outside social convention: in Peebles’s words, “a reciprocal, loving relationship between two like-minded individuals, that is, two people who see one another clearly, . . . understand their compatibility, and consciously decide to share their lives” (48).

Among the varied tales told to counter the dissenting voice of Madame Cebille and to persuade her to forgo her unyielding rejection of love, the classical story of Narcissus is cleverly modified and exploited by Flore’s very dedicatee, Madame Minerve, whose aforementioned admonitory lines of verse opening the volume are beautifully translated by Marta Finch in meter and rhyme identical to the original French: “That you do not offend True Love, beware, / For he is not, as he’s depicted, blind; / Instead, he so afflicts those most unkind / Whose cold and impure hearts lack tender care” (61). Indeed, the ironic gender reversal implicitly proposing the male Narcissus (fatally avenged here not by the goddess Nemesis as in Ovid, but by Cupid himself) as the stone-cold analogue of Madame Cebille’s impervious resistance to love highlights again Madame Minerve’s stature as a persuasive advocate of women’s acceptance and embrace of love — communicated through just one example of Peebles’s consistently vivid and engaging translation: “This, my ladies, is how Narcissus, condemned of true love, died. . . . Do not, I tell you, scorn your suitors. . . . He who denies Cupid’s sovereignty certainly will meet an unfortunate end . . . and if you believe me Madame Cebille, you could yet remove that veil from your eyes” (193).

Madame Minerve’s powerful image of removing the veil from the solitary dissenter’s eyes is one fitting summation of the path forged by Jeanne Flore — or whoever she may be — in articulating for the evolving sixteenth-century literary community the voice and agency of women in confronting deep-seated and longstanding challenges to the pursuit of love. This is the path that her female Lyonnais compatriots Pernette du Guillet and Louise Labé, as well as their contemporaries and successors, will continue to favor and celebrate — thereby
reinforcing the status of this new bilingual edition as a major contribution to early modern literature, history, culture, and gender studies.

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Domna C. Stanton’s ambitious and long-awaited book examines the workings of what she calls the “dynamics of gender” in the early modern period. Rejecting essentialist approaches, Stanton grounds her study in a “dynamic” theory of gender where gender is always shifting and impossible to define once and for all, and is therefore subject to constant renegotiations, accommodations, concessions, and resistances. Since gender is a relational construct, her study is also about men even as it focuses on women. While the *Dynamics of Gender* is centered on seventeenth-century French literature, Stanton’s impressive scholarly reach, exemplary methodology, and crucial questions about decoding gender in earlier periods make her work essential reading for students and scholars of the early modern period across the disciplines. Stanton’s deep engagement with contemporary critical theory and her lucid interrogation of what “reading-as-a-feminist” means — its ethical and political implications and responsibilities — confirm her well-earned place at the forefront of feminist criticism today.

Stanton endorses and masterfully deploys a methodology of historically grounded close textual analysis to reveal and complicate normative discourses on women and men as well as counter-discursive narratives. Through impeccably close readings of texts examined in interplay with other discourses and counter-discourses of the period, Stanton shows early modern texts to be extraordinary sites for reconstructing the interrogation and negotiation of the period’s unstable and contradictory gender norms. She consistently embraces the complexities of the dynamics at work in each of her chosen texts, never accepting a singular or simplified reading but instead welcoming the contradictions and tensions revealed within each text as opportunities to complicate the understanding of gender in early modern France. Indeed, it is Stanton’s insistence on analyzing discourses