Richard Mulcaster. *Positions Concerning the Training Up of Children*, edited by William Barker. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1994. Pp. lxxxvi, 521.

Richard Mulcaster has not lacked admirers. Best known for his defence of public education in *Positions* (1581), he has been called “the greatest Elizabethan school-master,” “the Father of English Pedagogy,” and a “pivotal figure in the history of Anglo-American education.” Despite several reprints and abridgements, however, he *has* lacked an authoritative modern edition. William Barker’s splendid edition admirably fills this lack.

Barker’s introduction includes a summary of Mulcaster’s most important ideas that places them in historical context, an essay on his style, a short biography, and a bibliographic essay. The text itself is a “lightly modified old-spelling edition” (p. lxxxiii) reflecting a thorough examination of the textual evidence. Following the text are a list of textual notes and variants, a lengthy commentary, bibliographies of Mulcaster’s writings and of the works cited in Barker’s introduction and commentary, and a very full index. In all, the apparatus slightly outweighs the text.

In his introduction, Barker argues that Mulcaster’s most significant position is that “uniformity and the pre-eminence of the state lie at the heart of any educational theory” (p. xv). A staunch monarchist, Mulcaster saw all learning as serving the public good, and argued that gentlemen should receive essentially the same state-authorized education as commoners. Barker offers no new insights into the “great shift in schooling” (p. xxix) in which Mulcaster participates, but summarizes Mulcaster’s relation to it. Barker also contextualizes a number of significant features of *Positions*, including Mulcaster’s relative avoidance in it of religion, his Aristotelian conception of the relation of body and soul, his (limited) defence of women’s education, and his championing of the teaching profession.

The greatest contribution of Barker’s introduction, however, is his discussion of Mulcaster’s lengthy consideration of physical education. These chapters, which comprise fully one-quarter of *Positions* and which are omitted from Richard DeMolen’s 1971 edition, may be the part of the book holding the most interest today. Following his earliest article, Barker resurrects Mulcaster’s use of Girolamo Mercuriale’s *De arte gymnastica*, an influence discovered by George Schmid in 1892 and apparently forgotten. Barker’s rediscovery should invite further study of this curious expression of early modern attitudes towards the body.

One of Barker’s chief aims is to rehabilitate Mulcaster’s reputation as a rhetorician and stylist. He argues that Mulcaster’s intention in writing *Positions* is to use the techniques of deliberative rhetoric to gain his audience’s support for his solutions to educational problems. He also helpfully explains the tension between persuasion and badgering in the work as a product of Mulcaster’s attempt to write for a mixed audience, one including the court, educational specialists, the generally learned, and the unlearned. Barker’s study demonstrates that Mulcaster was a painfully self-conscious stylist, but falls short of establishing that he was a good

one. Barker never confronts an apparent contradiction between the difficulty that he, Mulcaster, and many other readers acknowledge in Mulcaster's style, and the playfulness that Barker wishes to claim for it. Instead, he implies that there is no contradiction, claiming that the "overall effect" of Mulcaster's style "is one of relentless playfulness, strenuousness, and willed energy" (p. liv). Perhaps, play can be hard, after all. But play and deliberateness are also a potentially unstable blend, and I would like to see a stronger argument that Mulcaster overcomes this potential. Barker goes on to locate Mulcaster's rhythmic, highly figured, and elaborately balanced periods in a late sixteenth-century flowering of Ciceronianism that included Roger Ascham, Richard Rainolds, Gabriel Harvey, and John Lyly. Aside from a suggestion that such rhetorical display is appropriate to a counsellor of state, however, Barker does not probe the significance of this movement or justify his claim that Mulcaster's "stylistic method expresses a politics of education" (p. vii). (G. K. Hunter's *John Lyly: The Humanist as Courtier* might have been a good starting point here). Indeed, Barker's very different argument that "in his rhetoric [Mulcaster] shows himself to be a moralist, not a politician" [p. xlvi] seems much more convincing. Still, Barker's thorough and informed study of the rhetoric of *Positions* should accomplish his goal of establishing Mulcaster's work as a serious object of rhetorical study.

Barker is at his encyclopedic best in the commentary. Many of his annotations gloss unusual vocabulary, and several offer corrections to the *OED*. Many others are miniature essays identifying sources, pointing out stylistic devices, and elucidating key concepts. Barker's commentary on Mulcaster's use of the word "methode" may serve as an example. He begins by citing Thomas Wilson's definition of method in *The Rule of Reason* (pp. 311–312). He then sketches the word's polyvalence, noting both that it may denote "a highly complex area of philosophy, concerned with problems of language and epistemology," and that for some during the Renaissance it "became synonymous with 'simplification'" [. . .] "and in an age of popular instruction a philosophically respectable theory of simplification was bound to be quickly embraced and used to its fullest advantage." He next gives examples of schematically structured manuals of learning, before referring to the scholarly works of Neal Gilbert, Wilbur S. Howell, and Walter Ong. He notes that Thomas Nashe associated Mulcaster with Peter Ramus, although Mulcaster is not notably a Ramist (in the introduction Barker concedes that Mulcaster's section on sports uses "a branching method to set out its argument" [p. xxxv]). Finally, Barker explains that Mulcaster's idea of method is primarily rhetorical, relying on persuasive arguments to support his "positions." The range of learning displayed in the commentary is truly impressive, but, as I hope this example shows, it is Barker's ability to distill the essence of often complex scholarly traditions and debates into brief explanations that distinguishes this commentary, giving it a value that far surpasses its immediate purpose.

In his thirty-seventh chapter, Mulcaster considers "the meanes to restraine the overflowing multitude of scholars" (p. 145). In a time of too few positions for too many scholars, and of too many books for too few library dollars, his remarks should be noted by those who control graduate school admissions and library acquisitions. However, William Barker and his edition of *Positions* — clearly a labour of love — deserve to be part of the flood. Though at \$80 (the University of Toronto Press charges the same in Canadian and American dollars!) it will strain more than a few budgets, this is a significant work of scholarship that merits inclusion in every university library.

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Daniel Martin, ed. *Montaigne and the Gods: The Mythological Key to the "Essays."* Amherst, MA: Hestia Press, 1993. Pp. 279.

Daniel Martin's *Montaigne and the Gods* represents the proceedings of an international colloquium held in Amherst, Massachusetts, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Montaigne's death in 1592. Readers of Martin's earlier work will not be surprised to learn that the essays in this collection continue to develop his earlier theory that Montaigne arranged his chapters in a particular order, for specific reasons. In this volume, the contributors strive to support Martin's view that the order is largely determined by the affiliation of groups of essays with Greco-Roman divinities, so that, for example, I, 26, "De l'institution des enfans," is associated with Diana, as one of seven chapters, I, 26 to I, 32, dedicated to that deity. Thus this book, like all Martin's earlier work, runs radically counter to the main stream of traditional Montaigne studies, exemplified by Pierre Villey and later by Donald Frame, which sought to date the essays chronologically, and to explain their subject matter by speculation as to what Montaigne was reading at the time that he composed each one. In this earlier view, the philosophical stages, "Stoic," "Sceptic," and "Epicurean," were suggested to explain the supposed "evolution" in Montaigne's thought. Martin, on the contrary, believes that Montaigne planned the order of the essays from the outset, filing chapters under particular gods, by subject, theme or motif. Thus he sees a visual organization to the book, similar to the frequently cited "memory theater" which has been explicated by Frances Yates; or to a gallery of paintings, arranged in a particular order, which only becomes apparent when seen as a whole.

The studies in the collection vary in length and methodology, but all attempt to elucidate Martin's theory about the order of the *Essais*, with varying degrees of success. The book is structured around a series of deities: Ceres, Mercury, Venus, Bacchus, Minerva, Diana and Apollo. These are not the *only* gods found in Montaigne's work, according to the editor, but they are the ones selected for treatment by the participants in the conference. The most successful essays in the