

The art of the Renaissance has fascinated people for centuries. The great figures that people typically associate with the era are the male artists, such as Leonardo Da-

such as nationalization and humanism. E. R. Chamberlin, focusing on the Italian Re-

hold their own with men.

While Burckhardt was arguing that men and women were equal, it is clear that his definition of equality is not the same as today. This is exemplified by his words, “there was no question of ‘women’s rights’ or female emancipation, simply because the thing itself was a matter of course,” and, “these women had no thought of the public; their function was to influence distinguished men, and to moderate male impulse and caprice,” both in the same paragraph.<sup>10</sup> He goes from arguing that women had rights and were emancipated to stating that women didn’t even want to participate in the public sphere, rather they wanted to support their husbands from the background. Burckhardt’s bias as a white man living in the mid-nineteenth century is very clearly defined within these quotations. Through Burckhardt’s writing it can be presumed that men of his time idealized the separation of women from the public sphere. For him, it was even a marvel that women wrote as well as men. Within his writing, Burckhardt shows that .8 (Burckhardt’s sphere.y (en-US)/MCID 3288 Burckhardt.3 005300

knight courtiers owe services to women as vassals owe services to their feudal lords. Women would give the gift of her love to the knight while he promised her homage, by serving her and fulfilling her wants and needs. In this way, “homage signified male service, not domination or subordination of the lady.”<sup>14</sup> The homage of the knights in this genre acknowledged the sexual and affectionate needs of women<sup>15</sup> in a way that was acknowledged little within the medieval Christian context. Within medieval courtly love women were depicted as real humans with the power to satisfy their own wants and needs, rather than simply being depicted into a stereotypical role as either a saint or a seductress.

The representation of women in the medieval courtly love genre provides a direct contrast to Burckhardt’s depiction of women whose “function was to influence distinguished men.”<sup>16</sup> Kelly’s depiction of medieval noblewomen instead describes women as distinguished noblewomen being served by the knight who was in turn influencing her to acknowledge her own needs. In contrast, Kelly’s depiction of the Renaissance lady aligns more closely with Burckhardt’s depiction of women, though Kelly does not have the same misogynistic undertone in her writing as Burckhardt. Using the writings of Castiglione and other Italian Renaissance writers, Kelly shows the shift in the depiction of women within literature. She explains the great importance of Castiglione’s work on love and manners within the Renaissance, and how his work broke away from the medieval courtly love tradition. She focuses on two of his love theories, the connection between love and marriage and the “Neo-Platonic notion of spiritual love.”<sup>17</sup> Castiglione believed that there should be love within marriage, that love must lead to marriage the pKH



*Joan Kelly and Aemilia Lanyer.* Coletti was a Medievalist English professor at the University of Maryland who recently retired in 2021. Her essay was published in the journal *Early Modern Women* in a 2013 forum addressing the work of Joan Kelly. The essay examines how Kelly’s work might be different if she had published in 2013 and how the topic has been nuanced over the years.<sup>29</sup> One of the largest changes that Coletti proposes would be in the periodization of Kelly’s essay. Coletti points out that Kelly is using the Burckhardtian formulation in which the Italian Renaissance was brought about by political, social, and economic developments between 1350 and 1530 C.E., allowing for a sharp division between the medieval era and the Renaissance.<sup>30</sup> With additional research and study, this division in Kelly’s essay provided an outline for the new temporal divide of the “transition from medieval feudal society to the early modern state.”<sup>31</sup> This does not mean though that Kelly’s essay provided a new definite periodization, but rather she provided a new way of thinking about periodization as the boundaries within the temporal categories are extremely fraught.<sup>32</sup> Coletti even goes so far as to suggest that Kelly might not even use the terminology the “Renaissance” as the word carries “cultural and ideological freight.”<sup>33</sup> In her essay, Colletti tends to opt to use the term early modern to describe the period that Kelly is claiming as the Renaissance, showing her reluctance to use the term “Renaissance.”

In looking at how the changes of periodization would change Kelly’s essay, Colletti focuses on women’s literary culture. Looking at the early modern period, Colletti claims that there was an “increased volume # t ve csd tenc Tge qn\$ e ea

cation. To Burckhardt, the best aspect of women in the Renaissance was their writing, as it was almost indistinguishable from the writing of men. This misogynistic representation of women in the Renaissance was depicted within the social lens of the 1860s where women were seen as less than men. This view is clearly shown within Burckhardt's writing. Kelly wrote a century later than Burckhardt, during the 1970s women's movement. Due to this, Kelly introduced a feminist fair to her essay. Rather than following Burckhardt in defining women by their relationship to how close they were to men, Kelly instead came up with a system to define and gauge women's power within society. Also, unlike Burckhardt, Kelly argued that women had lost power in the Renaissance with the shift from socially acceptable marital affairs in the medieval

Colletti questions the use of the title Renaissance itself, instead opting for the use of the early modern era. The field has rapidly grown and changed from its origins 150 years ago and I hope it will continue to grow and explore the lives of women who were overlooked for so long.