

William Pulteney, *A Proper Reply to a Late Scurrilous Libel; Intituled, Sedition and Defamation Display'd* (1731). Edited by H.T. Dickinson. AMS Press, New York. 1998. xxi + 46pp. \$24.50 (pb).

Originally published in January 1731 under the pseudonym 'Caleb D'Anvers', William Pulteney's 'Proper Reply' was part of an increasingly venomous press war between the Walpole government and the allied Tory and dissident Whig opposition. In part this concerned a debate over press freedom, as the administration tried to repress the leading opposition weekly periodical founded by Pulteney and Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke, *The Craftsman*; but it also descended into the depths of character assassination on both sides. Pulteney's 'Proper Reply', written in hasty response to a pamphlet published by William Yonge and introduced by John, Lord Hervey, is therefore important for its place in both the political debates and in the political manoeuvring of its time. It is also of interest to scholars of gender and sexuality for its sensational allegation that Hervey engaged in active homosexuality. This accusation resulted in a duel between Hervey and Pulteney, from which both emerged virtually unscathed, but after which Pulteney tried to suppress his pamphlet. It is therefore a rare item today, and this facsimile reprint from the copy held at the University of Texas, Austin, will make it much more widely available. It is accompanied by a helpful introduction and notes by H.T. Dickinson, and it is the second in a group of four reprinted texts (including Yonge's and Hervey's attack) published as 'Walpole's Friends and Foes' in the new series 'British Ideas and Issues, 1660-1820' being produced under the general editorship of Alexander Pettit.

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