

Richardson

Women and the Circulation of Texts in Renaissance Italy

During the Italian Renaissance, laywomen and nuns could take part in every stage of the circulation of texts of many kinds, old and new, learned and popular. This first in-depth and integrated analysis of Italian women's involvement in the material textual culture of the period shows how they could publish their own works in manuscript and print and how they promoted the first publication of works composed by others, acting as patrons or dedicatees. It describes how they copied manuscripts and helped to make and sell printed books in collaboration with men, how they received books as gifts and borrowed or bought them, how they commissioned manuscripts for themselves and how they might listen to works in spoken or sung performance. Brian Richardson's richly documented study demonstrates the powerful social function of books in the Renaissance: texts-in-motion helped to shape women's lives and sustain their social and spiritual communities.



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