Cupid became a popular figure in the literary and visual culture of post-Reformation England. He served to articulate and debate the new Protestant theory of desire, inspiring a dark version of love tragedy in which Cupid kills. But he was also implicated in other controversies, as the object of idolatrous, Catholic worship and as an adversary to female rule: Elizabeth I’s encounters with Cupid were a crucial feature of her image-construction and changed subtly throughout her reign. Covering a wide variety of material such as paintings, emblems and jewellery, but focusing mainly on poetry and drama, including works by Sidney, Shakespeare, Marlowe and Spenser, Kingsley-Smith illuminates the Protestant struggle to categorize and control desire and the ways in which Cupid disrupted this process. An original perspective on early modern desire, the book will appeal to anyone interested in the literature, drama, gender politics and art history of the English Renaissance.

Jane Kingsley-Smith is Senior Lecturer in the Department of English Literature and Creative Writing at Roehampton University and is a regular guest lecturer at Shakespeare’s Globe. She is the author of Shakespeare’s Drama of Exile (2003) and has also published on a range of topics including representations of Shakespeare in popular cinema, Elizabethan love tragedy and John Ford’s ‘Tis Pity She’s a Whore.
For Roxana
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Illustrations

1. ‘Sleeping Venus’ after Titian, Dulwich Picture Gallery. By permission of the Trustees of Dulwich Picture Gallery. DPG 484. page 39

2. *Vanitas* by Bartholomaeus Spranger (c. 1600), Wawel Castle, Krakow. Copyright © Zamek Królewski na Wawelu. 62


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