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978-1-107-10585-0 - At Vanity Fair: From Bunyan to Thackeray

Kirsty Milne

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AT VANITY FAIR

At Vanity Fair tells the story of Bunyan's powerful metaphor, exploring how Vanity Fair was transformed from an emblem of sin and persecution into a showcase for celebrity, wealth and power. This literary history, focusing on reception, adaptation and influence, traces the fictional representation of Vanity Fair over three centuries from John Bunyan's masterpiece, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), to William Makepeace Thackeray's own *Vanity Fair* (1847–48). It explores the influence of anonymous journalists and booksellers alongside well-known authors including Ben Jonson, Samuel Richardson and Thomas Carlyle. Over time, Bunyan's dystopian fantasy has been altered and repurposed to characterise consumer capitalism, channelling memories that inform and unsettle modern hedonism. By tracking the idea of 'Vanity Fair' against this shifting background, the book illuminates the relationship between the individual and the collective imagination, between what is culturally available and what is creatively impelled.

KIRSTY MILNE (1964–2013) was a highly regarded British journalist and academic. During her career she was staff writer for *The New Statesman* and *The Scotsman*; was awarded a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University; was Fellow at Harvard's Center for European Studies; was author of a pamphlet, *Manufacturing Dissent* (2005), and gained a Leverhulme Fellowship.

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Part of Chapter 2 appeared as ‘Reforming *Bartholomew Fair*: Bunyan, Jonson and the Puritan Point of View’, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 74 (2011), 289–308.

Abbreviations and conventions

Abbreviations

<i>Conventicle and Parnassus</i>	<i>John Bunyan: Conventicle and Parnassus</i> , ed. by N. H. Keeble (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988)
<i>Critical and Historical Views</i>	<i>The Pilgrim's Progress: Critical and Historical Views</i> , ed. by Vincent Newey (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 1980)
<i>DNB Online</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (Oxford University Press, 2012)
ECCO	<i>Eighteenth-Century Collections Online</i>
EEBO	<i>Early English Books Online</i>
<i>Glimpses of Glory</i>	Richard L. Greaves, <i>Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent</i> (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002)
<i>Letters</i>	<i>The Letters and Private Papers of William Makepeace Thackeray</i> , ed. by Gordon N. Ray, 4 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1945–1946)
<i>MW</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Works of John Bunyan</i> , general editor Roger Sharrock, 13 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976–1994)
<i>OED Online</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary Online</i> (Oxford University Press, 2012)
<i>PP</i>	John Bunyan, <i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i> , ed. by James Blanton Wharey, second edition revised by Roger Sharrock (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960)

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<i>Third Part</i>	<i>The Pilgrim's Progress from This World to That Which Is To Come: The Third Part</i> (London: E. Millet for J. Deacon, J. Back and J. Blare, 1693)
<i>Turbulent</i>	Christopher Hill, <i>A Turbulent, Seditious, and Factious People: John Bunyan and His Church, 1628–1688</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988)
<i>Vanity Fair</i>	William Makepeace Thackeray, <i>Vanity Fair</i> , Norton Critical Edition, ed. by Peter Shillingsburg (New York: Norton, 1994)

Conventions

Dates are New Style. The terminology of *Vanity Fair* is potentially confusing; I use the form *Vanity Fair* to refer to Thackeray's novel, and 'Vanity Fair' when referring to Condé Nast's magazine; otherwise, I rely on context to clarify usage.