



# Besieging the Castle of Ladies: Bernardo Lecture Series, No. 4 (Pegasus Paperbooks)

*Thomas M Greene*

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Besieging the Castle of Ladies is the fourth in a series of publications occasioned by the annual Bernardo Lecture at the Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies (CEMERS) at Binghamton University. This series offers public lectures which have been given by distinguished medieval and Renaissance scholars on topics and figures representative of these two important historical, religious, and intellectual periods. In *Besieging the Castle of Ladies*, Thomas M. Greene traces the mysterious motif of the castle defined by women across several centuries, regions, and cultural expressions. Basing his study on a disguising performed in 1501 at the court of Henry VII, he moves backward in time to discuss the early medieval chronicle by Cosmas of Prague, a staged game in twelfth-century Treviso, the *Roman de la Rose*, and English manuscript illuminations and French ivory caskets of the fourteenth century, along with other texts and materials. But Greene also examines early modern versions of his protean theme: in a Flemish tapestry, in festivities at the court of Henry VIII (including the king as participant), in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, and in a mock-siege centering on the person of Elizabeth I. Each instance of the motif, like the entire series of representations, poses questions about sexual politics and sexual control."

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