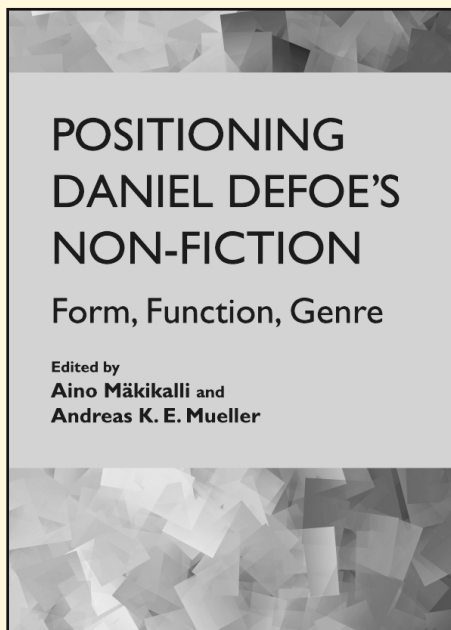

Positioning Daniel Defoe's Non-Fiction

Form, Function, Genre

Edited by Aino Mäkikalli and Andreas K. E. Mueller



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This volume analyses the form, structure and genre of a selection of non-fictional works by Daniel Defoe. Directing our scholarly gaze away from the much studied novels, the essays explore the rhetorical strategies and generic inventiveness on display in Defoe's better known non-fictional texts, such as *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* and *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, and some of his lesser known publications, such as his *Complete English Tradesman* and *An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions*. What emerges from the collection is the picture of an author who responded to early eighteenth-century debates and events with outstanding authorial skill and energy, and to whom matters of form and style were of great importance.

“The nine essays in this book accurately analyze not only the contexts of Defoe's writing on topics as diverse as England's union with Scotland, the present and future growth of London, Jacobite threats, religious bigotry, and what he took to be the oddly constituted reality of ghosts. Even more importantly, these essays explain the large repertoire of genres and rhetorical strategies Defoe had mastered for use as he thought different occasions demanded. What results is better understanding of his great skill as a professional writer on matters of fact or speculation, and therefore better appreciation of an author whose strange, surprising leap of genius to *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders* can neither be chalked off to lucky amateur accident nor, even in retrospect, viewed as a predictable, inevitable progress from capable journalism to innovative artistry.”

—Paul K. Alkon, Bing Professor Emeritus
of English and American Literature
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