

EARLY MODERN WOMEN'S WRITING
(English 307: Women Writers Before Austen)
Winter 2018

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Office Hours and Location: Mon. and Wed. 10-11am (or by appointment); Erindale Hall 311A

Class Time and Location: Mondays 11am-1pm; Wednesdays 11am-12pm; Davis Building 3093



Course Description

Though women wrote a great number and variety of poetic, fictional, and dramatic texts in the early modern period, few actually appear in grand surveys of British literature, and only in the past couple decades have they been taken seriously at all as writers or thinkers. This class corrects that omission. We will read a wide range of writing by women from the English Renaissance. Many women wrote explicitly on female rights, addressing from the inside the *querelle des femmes* or the “question of women”: their rights, their relationships to men, their abilities to reign as queen (as did Mary I and then Elizabeth I in the second half of the sixteenth century), what the story of Eve’s fall in the Garden of Eden is *really* about. We will read many works on women by women, alongside foundational works of feminist criticism about early modern texts (for example, Virginia Woolf’s “A Room of One’s Own”; Joan Kelley’s “Did Women Have a Renaissance?”), as well as more recent feminist approaches.

However, we will also grant women the right to be as interested in a range of topics as their male counterparts. We will therefore also read, for example, Anne Askew’s fierce political and religious beliefs that got her burned as a heretic; Aemelia Lanyer and Mary Sidney Herbert, on class and patronage; Katherine Philips on the metaphysics of friendship; Aphra Behn on erotic sexualities; Lucy Hutchinson on atoms and the chaotic universe; Margaret Cavendish’s imaginary journeys to other, scientific worlds; and Hester Pulter’s poetic fantasies of being completely annihilated by God.

Required Texts

Early Modern Women's Writing. An Anthology. 1560-1700. Ed. Paul Salzman. (Oxford, 2008) ISBN 9780199549672

Paper Bodies: A Margaret Cavendish Reader. Ed. Sylvia Bowerbank and Sara Mendelson. (Broadview, 2000) ISBN 9781551111735

Recommended Text

The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing, ed. Laura Lunfer Knopper.

ISBN 0521712424. Available to read online with your utorid login here: <https://literature-proquest-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/ShowJournalArticles.do?area=cambridgeCompanion&journalName=The%20Cambridge%20Companion%20to%20Early%20Modern%20Women%27s%20Writing>

Course Requirements

A significant part of reading women's writing is thinking about the history of what female authors have been read when, and who has been excluded from the canon – as well as how to redress some of the absences of women writers from literature classes and books. For that reason, the marks in this course are divided roughly into two parts – half come from learning about the history and practice of editing, culminating in an editorial project; and half come from more traditional assignments that assess and give you a chance to develop literary-critical reading skills.

Editing Women Writers Project – 35%

Throughout the semester we will be thinking about what women writers are available and why, as well as how it might be possible to expand that availability. This course will culminate in a collective editing endeavor: we will, as a class, build our own anthology that might be used in other early modern women writer classes (at this university or others). This project is, accordingly, a large part of the final mark, and will be made up of the following smaller assignments:

Phase 1: Critical Editing Worksheet – 5%

You will read 2-3 articles on textual editing and feminist editing, and fill out a worksheet to demonstrate your understanding of basic principles.

Phase 2: Anthology Analysis – 10%

You will choose an anthology of female writers (early modern or otherwise), and analyze it as an anthology. I will distribute a list of sources, as well as more detailed instructions, closer to the due date.

Phase 3: Producing an edition of a text – 20%

In consultation with me or your TA, you will choose a short text written by an early modern female writer, and will edit it for inclusion in a class-wide anthology. You will also be asked to write a short introduction to your work and author, and to situate it in a larger anthology. Though you will be responsible for editing your text, I may ask you to coordinate with a small group of classmates as we build our anthology together.

Participation in Early Modern Recipes Online Collective Transcribathon – 5%

On a TBD Friday in March, our class will host a transcribathon with one of the founding members of the Early Modern Recipes Online Collective (EMROC). This group organizes annual transcribathons to gather together researchers to help take images of recipe books (most of which were compiled and collected by women) and transcribe them into online platforms, so they are more accessible. The event will be held all day on a TBD Friday in March on the UTM campus; I will ask

you to sign in for 1 hour of transcribing, and to send me a paragraph afterwards reflecting on the process. I have cancelled class on March 28 to make up for the time I am asking you to spend on this.

Problem Paper – 10%

This 3-page paper will ask you to propose a “problem” – a question about one of the texts we have read for the course – and then answer it with close textual analysis. This assignment will help you develop the close reading and analytical skills necessary for the final paper.

Final Paper – 20%

A cumulative paper of 8-10 pages. You will receive more information on this assignment closer to the due date.

Quizzes (3, worth 5% each) – 15%

There will be 3 quizzes over the course of the semester, each worth five percent of your final grade. Quizzes will test that you have been keeping up with the reading, and may ask you plot points or textual details or may ask you to accurately “translate” sections of our reading.

Participation – 15%

Participation in class is a large component of your grade and is extremely important. Your participation grade evaluates your abilities as a classmate and member of a discussion group, and your grade will depend on what role you play in the community of the classroom. Be conscious of your classmates: staying silent makes a robust conversation difficult, as does dominating discussion. If you are nervous about speaking in a group setting, please can come speak to me about it; I am willing to work with you to strategize on ways to prepare and find ways to insert your voice into a conversation. **You should ALWAYS bring your book, coursepack, or other materials to class:** most of our class sessions will consist of careful, close, detailed readings of our texts, and we cannot function as a class if we don't all have our texts in front of us. You can prepare for our discussions by always reading with a pen or pencil in hand, marking passages as you read, and taking notes on what you find difficult, interesting, provocative, weird, exciting, and troubling: these will all serve as moments you can point to in our discussions.



Anna Fitzpatrick ✓

@bananafitz

Follow



ITEMS EVERY WOMAN SHOULD OWN:

- Little Black Dress
- Cute flats
- Strappy s- ok now that the men have stopped reading, we revolt at dawn.

5:08 PM - 3 May 2016 from Toronto, Ontario

Class Schedule

Though I will do my best to stick to the schedule below, readings may be subject to change. Texts that can be found in Salzman's *Early Modern Women's Writing* are marked with [EMWW] and page numbers below. Texts from the Cavendish paper bodies reader are marked [PB]. All other texts will be posted online (on the Blackboard site for the course), and are marked [CP] (for Course Pack).

- W Jan 3 Introduction to the Course
Anne Southwell, "All.married.men.desire.to.have.good.wifes." [CP]
- M Jan 8 What does it mean to study women's writing?
Virginia Woolf, "A Room of One's Own" (selections) [CP]; Margaret Cavendish, "To All Noble and Worthy Ladies" (<http://poemsandfancies.rblake.net/noble-ladies/>)
- W Jan 10 What does it mean to read for the female voice?
Anne Askew, *The Examinations of Anne Askew* (selections) [CP]
- M Jan 15 What does it mean to edit women writers?
Mary Wroth, sonnets from *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* [EMWW, pp. 133-135], look at sonnets in Folger MS. V.a. 104 [CP], and visit this site <http://wroth.latrobe.edu.au/>
Keleman, "Introduction to Textual Editing" [CP]
Wayne, "The Sexual Politics of Textual Transmission" (excerpted) [CP]
EW Phase 1 due
- W Jan 17 Isabella Whitney, all poems in *Early Modern Women's Writing* (pp. 3-20)
- M Jan 22 Queen Elizabeth I: versions of "The doubt of future foes," "Written on a Wall at Woodstock", versions of the Tilbury speech, "On Monsieur's Departure" [CP]
- W Jan 24 Mary Sidney Herbert, "Even Now that Care", "To The Pure Sprite" [CP]
- M Jan 29 Aemilia Lanyer, "On Cookham" [EMWW, p. 56-62]
Quiz 1
- W Jan 31 Aemilia Lanyer, dedicatory poems to *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* [EMWW, pp. 21-47]
Problem Paper due
- M Feb 5 Aemilia Lanyer, *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* [EMWW, pp. 47-62]
- W Feb 7 Katherine Philips, metaphysical friendship poems: all poems but the Epitaph and the death of Hector [EMWW, pp. 271-282]
- M Feb 12 Aphra Behn, erotic friendship poems [EMWW pp. 377-390], Lucy Hutchinson, selected elegies [CP]
- W Feb 14 Lucy Hutchinson, *Order and Disorder*, Preface and Canto 1 [CP]
EW Phase 2 due

[FEB. 19-23 – READING WEEK – NO CLASSES]

- M Feb 26 Lucy Hutchinson, *Order and Disorder*, Canto 5 [CP]
- W Feb 28 Priscilla Cotton and Mary Cole, *To the Priests and the People of England* [EMWW, pp. 142-147], Hester Biddle, *The Trumpet of the Lord Sounded Forth* [EMWW, pp. 148-166]

- M Mar 5 Margaret Cavendish, *The Convent of Pleasure* [PB]
Quiz 2
- W Mar 7 Margaret Cavendish, “Of Sense and Reason Exercised in Their Different Shapes”
 (from *Philosophical Fancies*) [CP]
- M Mar 12 Margaret Cavendish, *Poems and Fancies* (selections from Parts III and II) [CP]
 W Mar 14 Margaret Cavendish, *Poems and Fancies* (selections from Part I) [CP]
[ROSI DROP DATE]
- M Mar 19 Cavendish, selections from *Observations Upon Experimental Philosophy* [CP], *The Blazing
 World* (Part I) [PB]
 W Mar 21 Cavendish, *The Blazing World* (Part II) [PB]
EWV Phase 3 due
- M Mar 26 Hester Pulter, selected poems [CP]
 W Mar 28 No class – hours redistributed to Transcribathon
- M Apr 2 Discussion of collective Women Writers anthology
Final Paper Due
Quiz 3