

Eastern Illinois University

## The Keep

---

Fall 2019

2019

---

Fall 8-15-2019

### ENG 3903A-001: Women Literature Language Pre-1800

Julie Campbell

*Eastern Illinois University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_fall2019](https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_fall2019)



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Campbell, Julie, "ENG 3903A-001: Women Literature Language Pre-1800" (2019). *Fall 2019*. 74.  
[https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_fall2019/74](https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_fall2019/74)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2019 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Fall 2019 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact [tabruns@eiu.edu](mailto:tabruns@eiu.edu).

**English 3903A-001: Women, Literature, & Language, Pre-1800**  
**Renaissance Women Writers in Context**  
**Fall 2019**

Dr. Campbell  
Office CH 3572  
Office hours TTH 2-3:30pm;  
W 11am-noon; and by appointment

TTH 12:30pm-1:45pm  
CH 3150  
[jdcampbell@eiu.edu](mailto:jdcampbell@eiu.edu)

---

Even granting that some women are foolish, or full of every kind of vice, or faithless in love and lacking all loyalty, or proud, wicked, cruel or inconstant, fickle, changeable, or crafty, false hearted and deceptive—should all women therefore be put in the same category, with not a single exception?

Christine de Pizan, *The God of Love's Letter*

Our behaviors alter daily, because men's virtues decay hourly.

Jane Anger, *Her Protection for Women...*

**Texts**

Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)  
Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, *Renaissance Drama by Women*  
Stortoni and Lillie, *Women Poets of the Italian Renaissance*  
Lawall and Mack, *Norton Anthology of Western Literature*, vol. 1 (8<sup>th</sup> ed.)  
D'Aragona, *Dialogue on the Infinity of Love*  
Tasso, *Aminta*  
Andreini, *La Mirilla*  
Wroth, *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*.  
Montpensier, *Against Marriage*  
Fonte, *The Worth of Women*

**E-Reserves**

Plato, *Symposium*  
Speroni, *Dialogue on Love*  
Robin, *Publishing Women* excerpt  
Farrell, Labé, "To Clemence de Bourges" and poems  
Campbell, "Salon Hostesses in Paris, Sixteenth Century"  
Larsen, The Dames de Roches, "Introduction" and poems  
Klosowska, L'Aubespine, "Introduction" and poems  
Will, "Camille de Morel..."  
Teague, "Queen of England, Elizabeth I"  
Lewalski, "Revising Genres...Mary Wroth's *Oeuvre*"  
Lewalski, "Exercising Power...The Countess of Bedford"  
Lewalski, "Imagining Female Community...Aemilia Lanyer"  
Freer, "Countess of Pembroke, Mary Sidney"  
Abrams et al., Lanyer and Jonson poems  
Anger, "Jane Anger, her Protection for women..."  
Gosynhill, "Mulierum Paeon"  
Gosynhill, "Schoolhouse of Women"  
"Hic Mulier"  
"Haec-Vir"  
Shakespeare, *Midsummer Night's Dream*; *Much Ado About Nothing*

## Films

*The Acclaimed Saga of England's Virgin Queen*

*The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex*

*Queen Margot*

*Dangerous Beauty*

## Suggested Resources on Gender in the Early Modern Period

Simone Chess, *Male-to-Female Crossdressing in Early Modern English Literature: Gender, Performance, and Queer Relations*, Routledge, 2016.

Will Fisher, *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture*, Cambridge, 2010.

Valerie Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England*, Cambridge, 2002.

Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations*, Cambridge 1996.

Rosalind Kerr, *The Rise of the Diva on the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Commedia dell'Arte Stage*, Toronto, 2015.

## Suggested Resources on Literature and Writing

Harmon and Holman, *A Handbook to Literature*

Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*, 2007—available online via Google Books

## Course Focus

The pious expressions of Renaissance noblewomen and the seductive gazes of courtesans that grace the canvases of Renaissance artists from Bronzino to Tintoretto disguise the clever wits of women complicit with the strictures of their circumstances yet, in many cases, active as writers who participated in Renaissance literary society. This phenomenon of women portrayed in very limited ways, but who were actually well-educated, vocal, influential participants in literary circles was a fixture of Renaissance culture as it spread across Europe to England during the late fifteenth to early seventeenth centuries. In this course, we will look at the lives and works of several women writers from a variety of social strata, and we will examine their writing in tandem with some works by their male contemporaries. The major theme that we will explore is the discontinuity of received history regarding Renaissance women, i.e., the notions that women were to be silent, chaste, and obedient, and were to be objects of spiritual and artistic inspiration for men vs. the facts that women were actively and vocally participating in salon and academic society, writing, publishing, and otherwise circulating their work, and searching for ways to represent women's experiences in life and love, all the while pushing the boundaries of women's place in intellectual and literary discourse.

## Learning Objectives

- Students will read the works of early modern women in context with those of their male contemporaries.
- Students will read secondary sources about the historical and cultural contexts of early modern women.
- Students will perform research tasks based on primary and secondary source readings, and they will make use of traditional library resources as well as library databases and online resources of scholarly repute.
- Students will synthesize, critique, and interpret their findings in their writing assignments.
- Students will craft cogent, defensible, and well-researched theses for their projects.
- Students will discuss their findings in informal, small group settings and with the whole class.

## Policies and General Information

- The English Department statement on plagiarism stipulates that any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's original work" (*Random House Dictionary of the English*

*Language*)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. See <http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php> for further information.

--Papers and exams: **Papers are due in Dropbox on the dates and at the times noted. See Dropbox in D2L.** Late papers will be reduced a letter grade for each class day that they are late without a university approved excuse (properly verified absences due to illness, emergency, or participation in an official University activity). If you miss an exam, and you have a university-approved excuse, you may make up that exam. You will have no more than one week to do so, and the make-up exam may be different from the one given during class.

--If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) or stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, as soon as possible to make an appointment.

--If you require general help with your studies, please make an appointment with The Student Success Center. Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (<http://www.eiu.edu/~success>) for assistance with time management, text taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

--Please make use of EIU's Writing Center, located at 3110 Coleman Hall, this semester. The consultants there can help you with brainstorming, organizing, developing support for, and documenting your papers. One caveat: the Writing Center is not a proofreading or editing service. It is a place where you can learn how to become a more thoughtful, independent, and rhetorically effective writer. To schedule an appointment, drop by (3110 Coleman Hall) or call 581-5929.

--Be prepared for class. You'll get more out of class discussions if you are participating in them, and I'll notice if you do not seem prepared to participate.

--If you begin missing multiple classes or assignments without communicating with me, I will make use of the EIU Early Alert System to help you get back on track. Your RA (if you live on campus) or someone from the Academic Success Center will try to contact you to offer help. This isn't meant to "get you in trouble," but to help you avoid trouble.

--Conferences: You may make an appointment to meet with me to discuss papers during my office hours or at other times as may be arranged.

--The Writing Center: Consider making use of EIU's Writing Center, located at 3110 Coleman Hall, this semester. The consultants there can help you with brainstorming, organizing, developing support for, and documenting your papers. One caveat: the Writing Center is not a proofreading or editing service. It is a place where you can learn how to become a more thoughtful, independent, and rhetorically effective writer. To schedule an appointment, drop by (3110 Coleman Hall) or call 581-5929.

## Requirements and Grades

--Three exams . . . . . 45% (15% each of final grade)  
 --One 7-10 page research paper . . . . . 20%

--One research report with annotated bibliography . . . . . 10%  
 --One presentation . . . . . 10%  
 --Three Response writings . . . . . 15% (5% each of final grade)

**Grading:** Some assignments may be graded with a **check mark system**, which will be weighted as follows:  $\surd+$  = A,  $\surd$  = B,  $\surd-$  = C. Anything lower will be an F.

Any **letter grades** will be assessed numerically as follows: A+ = 98, A = 95, A- = 92; B+ = 88, B = 85, B- = 82; C+ = 78, C = 75, C- = 72; and so on.

The **three exams** will cover the three units of study. The third exam (the final) will contain some comprehensive elements in addition to covering the third unit.

The **paper** topic will be chosen from the assigned texts and issues related to them. I will give you a list of possible areas of study to consider early in the semester because you will be expected to select a topic and begin research as the semester proceeds. The paper will be 10-12 pages long. You will use at least 5 outside sources to support your arguments, and **they should consist of scholarly books, journal articles, and Internet sources of well-known scholarly repute**. You will use MLA Parenthetical Style, with a Works Cited page, for documentation. Around midterm, you will have a **preliminary research report with an annotated bibliography** due to show the progress that you have made regarding your research project. Do not worry that we have not covered the topic that interests you in class—this portion of our study is meant to be independent exploration of a topic that may be completely new to you. Your independent study is meant to augment for you what is covered in class and to broaden the scope of the course as a whole.

The **research report and annotated bibliography** will cover the preliminary research that you do for your research paper and presentation. The report (1-2 pages) will address the topic, why you chose the topic, and the avenues of research that you chose to explore. The annotated bibliography will consist of bibliographic citations of at least five sources with your notes on each work that describe the document, summarize why it may be useful to your project, and include possible quotations that you might use in the paper.

The **response writings** will be short essays (3-5 pages), film reviews, or creative writing projects in which you reflect on specific material from the three units. You will use MLA Style for any documented research.

## Tentative Schedule

**T. Aug. 20**—Introduction to course. Consider aesthetics of the era and portraits of some of our writers this semester.

**Homework:** Read the Introduction as well as Ideas and Laws Regarding Women in *Women and Gender*. (See group questions.) Note—we will use this text as a background source throughout the semester. Read the sonnet handout, as well as Petrarch's sonnets in *Norton* and Michelangelo's sonnet 235 to Vittoria Colonna, in *Norton*.

## Unit One—Italy

**Th. Aug. 22**—Discuss the Renaissance woman—the ideal and the real. Discuss the group questions over *Women and Gender* reading. (See also Christine de Pizan in *Norton*, p. 1862). Start Petrarch and Renaissance poetry.

**Homework:** Note—always read the biographical introductions to each author. In *Women Poets of the Italian Renaissance*, read Veronica Gambarà (1, 2, 3, 10, 17; 21); Vittoria Colonna (1, 19, 45, 64); Laura Battiferri Ammannati (When the sun, Before the color...); Tullia d’Aragona (To Ochino, To Muzio, To Manelli, Love once consumed me); Veronica Franco (Sonnet 1, terza rima 16, letter 22).

**T. Aug. 27**—Women, class, and poetry in Renaissance Italy.

**Homework:** Read *Aminta*; read also The Female Life-Cycle in *Women and Gender*. Skim also the excerpt from Diana Robin’s book on the Colonna salons (E-Reserves).

**Th. Aug. 29**—Continue discussion of Italian women poets. Begin discussing drama and the influence of the pastoral; discuss *Aminta*. Consider especially from *Women and Gender* the implications of cross-dressing in reality vs. on stage (see especially p. 72). Note the related texts listed above in “Suggested Resources on Gender.”

**Homework:** Read *La Mirtilla* and in *Women Poets of the Italian Renaissance*, Andreini’s letter On the Birth of Women.

**T. Sept. 3**—Continue with Tasso and compare with Andreini. What does a female actor and playwright do with the traditions of the pastoral? Consider *La Mirtilla* and Andreini’s letter.

**Homework:** Read Plato’s *Symposium* and Speroni’s *Dialogue on Love*, (E-Reserves).

**Th. Sept. 5**—Discuss the genre of the Renaissance dialogue. Discuss Plato and Speroni’s works. What roles do women have in them? In particular, what roles do courtesans have?

**Homework:** Read Aragona’s *Dialogue on the Infinity of Love*.

**T. Sept. 10**—Discuss Aragona’s *Dialogue on the Infinity of Love*. In what specific ways does she respond to Speroni’s works?

**Homework:** Read Fonte’s *The Worth of Women*. Work on **Response Writing One**.

**Th. Sept. 12**—Discuss Fonte’s *The Worth of Women*. What does this dialogue have in common with Aragona’s? In what ways does it seem to be for a different audience?

**Homework:** Complete **Response Writing One**.

**T. Sept. 17:** Catch-up day. Review for Exam One. **Response Writing One is due in Dropbox by noon.**

**Th. Sept. 19: Exam One**

**Homework:** Read Christine de Pizan, *Letter from the God of Love* (Norton) and the chapters, Literacy and Learning and Religion in *Women and Gender*.

## Unit Two—France

**T. Sept. 24**—Consider the beginnings of the literary quarrel called the *Querelle des femmes* and Christine de Pizan. Discuss chapters from *Women and Gender*.

**Homework:** Read Boccaccio’s Prologue to *The Decameron*, The Sixth Story of the Ninth Day (Pinuccio and Nicolosa), and The Tenth Story of the Tenth Day (Griselda) (Norton).

**Th. Sept. 26**—Discuss Boccaccio’s *Decameron* and issues from the *Querelle des femmes* that we see addressed there.

**Homework:** Read Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptameron* (Norton).

**T. Oct. 1**—Consider the French court, patronage, and Marguerite de Navarre's literary career, as well as her friendship with Vittoria Colonna. *Heptameron* and *Decameron* discussion. Where do you see Marguerite de Navarre engaging in the *querelle*?

**Homework:** Read Louise Labé selections, Madeleine de l'Aubespine selections, and Dames des Roches selections, as well as "Salon Hostesses in Paris, Sixteenth Century" (E-Reserves).

**Th. Oct. 3**—Discuss French literary circles and the poetry of women who participated in them. Note especially the examples of sonnets and other poems exchanged by male and female participants in the L'Aubespine readings.

**T. Oct. 8**—Continue with French women poets.

**Homework:** Read Samuel Will, "Camille de Morel" (E-Reserves) and work on **Writing Response Two** for this unit. Read also selections from Montpensier, *Against Marriage*.

**Th. Oct. 10**—Discuss Morel and Montpensier. Discuss **Research Paper** and Assign **Research Report with Annotated Bibliography**.

**Homework:** Finish **Writing Response Two**.

**T. Oct. 15**—Catch up and review for Exam Two. **Writing Response Two is due in Dropbox by noon.**

**Th. Oct. 17**—**No Class. Research Report with Annotated Bibliography is due in Dropbox by 5pm.**

**Homework:** Study for Exam Two.

**T. Oct. 22**—**Exam Two.**

**Homework:** Read Women and the Creation of Culture in *Women and Gender* and Teague, "Queen of England, Elizabeth I" on e-reserves.

### Unit Three—England

**Th. Oct. 24**—Discuss the Renaissance in England and Queen Elizabeth's prominence as an international intellectual. Also begin discussing the Sidney women and their influence on literary society. Consider how English women's involvement in literary society resembled that of their French counterparts.

**Homework:** Read Lewalski, "Exercising Power...The Countess of Bedford" and Freer, "Countess of Pembroke, Mary Sidney" (E-Reserves).

**T. Oct. 29**—Discuss Mary Sidney, the Countess of Pembroke, and Lucy Harrington Russell, the Countess of Bedford.

**Homework:** Read Wroth's and Philip Sidney's sonnets in **sonnet handout**. See also Philip Sidney's poems in *Norton*. Read Lewalski, "Revising Genres...Mary Wroth's Oeuvre" (E-Reserves). Begin reading Wroth's *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*.

**Th. Oct. 31**—Compare Philip Sidney and Mary Wroth's sonnet sequences. What are the Petrarchan elements that you find?

**Homework:** Continue reading Wroth's *Urania*. Also, skim through Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* in *Norton*. Consider elements of this Italian romance that made it a source for Wroth.

**T. Nov. 5**—Begin discussion of Wroth’s *Urania*. Discuss it in context with Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia*, as well as *Orlando Furioso*. How are women in the romance tradition typically portrayed? How does Wroth work in that tradition?

**Homework:** Group questions.

**Th. Nov. 7**—Continue discussion of *Urania*. Go over group questions.

**Homework:** Read Abrams et al., Lanyer and Jonson poems, and Lewalski, “Imagining Female Community...Aemilia Lanyer” (E-Reserves).

**T. Nov. 12**—Discuss the world of female patronage that Lanyer pursues. Consider her country house poem in tandem with that of Jonson’s. Note how Jonson, too, pursues female patronage. Go over

**Handout from Intro. To Half-Humankind.**

**Homework:** Begin consideration of the Pamphlet Wars. Read Anger, Gosynhill, “Mulierum Paean,” Gosynhill, “Schoolhouse of Women,” “Jane Anger, her Protection for women...,” “Hic Mulier,” “Haec-Vir” (E-Reserves).

**Th. Nov. 14**—Fun with the English version of the *Querelle des femmes*. Discuss the English pamphlet wars and how the *querelle* is incorporated. What seem to be 4-5 key issues in the debates that you see in the pamphlets you have read? **Discuss Presentations and Writing Response Three. Sign up for Presentations.**

**Homework:** Read Wroth’s *Love’s Victory* in *Renaissance Drama by Women* and Shakespeare’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream* (E-Reserves). Work on Presentations and Writing Response Three.

**T. Nov. 19**—Discuss Wroth’s and Shakespeare’s plays. Consider elements of the public stage in Wroth’s play; consider elements of the Italian stage in Shakespeare’s. What issues, *querelle* and otherwise, do you see at work in these plays? Where do we see reference to classical practice regarding the law and daughters? What do you see reflected in the father/daughter relationship that illustrates the extreme of Renaissance practice? What are the dangers for a young, unaccompanied woman? What happens when roles are reversed—and women pursue men? What are themes and issues from the entire semester that we see in the play?

**Homework:** Work on Presentations and Writing Response Three.

**Th. Nov. 21**—**Begin Presentations.** Review for **Exam Three.** **Note: place outlines of Presentations in Dropbox by noon on Dec. 5. Writing Response Three is due in Dropbox by noon.**

**Homework:** Work on research projects and presentations.

**T. Nov. 26**—Thanksgiving.

**Th. Nov. 28**—Thanksgiving.

**T. Dec. 3**— **Presentations.**

**Th. Dec. 5**—**Presentations.**

**Final Exam: (Exam Three) Mon., Dec. 9, 12:30pm-2:30pm. Research Papers are due in Dropbox by noon.**