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# ENG 5002-001: Studies In English Renaissance Literature

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**English 5002-001: Studies in English Renaissance Literature:  
Shaping the English Renaissance  
Fall 2011**

Dr. Julie Campbell  
CH 3572, 581-6974

Office hours T 10-11am; Th 10-11am, 12:30-3:30pm  
and by appointment

R 3:30-6:00pm

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**Textbooks**

Abrams & Greenblatt, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vol. 1, 7<sup>th</sup> ed.

Lawall et al, *The Norton Anthology of Western Literature*, Vol. 1, 8<sup>th</sup> ed.

Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Henry V*

Wroth, *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*

**E-Reserves**

Primary works

--Jonson, *Masque of Queens and Masque of Blackness*

--Nashe, excerpt from *Pierce Penniless*

--Lyly, excerpt from *Euphues's Glass for Europe*

--Sidney, excerpt from *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (New Arcadia)*

--Andreini, excerpt from *La Mirtilia*

--Anger, "Jane Anger, her Protection for women..."

--Gosynhill, "Mulierum Paeon"

--Gosynhill, "Schoolhouse of Women"

Secondary works

--Ayers, "'Fellows of infinite tongue': *Henry V...*"

--Vanita, "'Proper' Men and 'Fallen' Women: ... *Othello*"

--Fienberg, "Mary Wroth's Poetics of the Self"

--Wagner, "Contesting Love's Tyranny... Wroth"

--Lindheim, "Rethinking Sexuality and Class in *12<sup>th</sup> Night*"

**Electronic Text**

For more Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, (Find at <http://books.google.com/books>). See also EEBO.

Note: To see a period edition of any of our English texts, see Early Books Online (EEBO) via Both Library site.

**Course Description**

How *English* is the English Renaissance, anyway? And why do so many Shakespearean characters speak their pithy Elizabethan English lines in Italian settings? In this course, we will explore how English Renaissance literature is actually in large part a product of Continental courtly and popular cultures adapted to suit English tastes, as well as English political and religious concerns. We will read key texts of the English Renaissance by such writers as Wyatt, Surrey, Spenser, Sidney, Shakespeare, Jonson, and Wroth, alongside a selection of powerfully iconic Continental texts whose influence helped to shape these English works. We will begin, for example, with poems by Petrarch, then look at a selection of poetry by Sidney, Shakespeare,

Wroth, and others to explore English Petrarchism. We will discuss Machiavelli's *Prince* and Castiglione's *Courtier* alongside speeches and other communications by Queen Elizabeth, as well as Shakespeare's *Henry V*. We will look at excerpts from Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* in tandem with excerpts from Sidney's and Wroth's romances. Additionally, we will explore Renaissance comedy as we discuss aspects of Italian *commedia* and performance practices that influenced such plays as *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Merchant of Venice*. While on that subject, we will also see what English critics such as Thomas Nashe and John Lyly had to say about Continental influences upon the English stage, as well as upon courtly manners and mores. If time permits, we will also look at some of Jonson's court masques. While one goal of the course is to broaden your understanding of what is and isn't English about English Renaissance literature, another is to explore the ways in which aspects of Renaissance literature still inform our contemporary tastes.

Since this is a graduate seminar, you will be responsible for oral presentations based on short research projects that help us build our collective knowledge as we explore the texts this semester. Moreover, you will prepare one major research project/paper this semester. A good strategy for graduate students who are interested in professional development is to target a professional conference at which they might present a paper. With that thought in mind, I hope that you will consider submitting a conference paper proposal based on your main project—or any of the oral report topics. Finally, there will be a mid-term and a final.

### Policies

--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 a grade of NC for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

--Hand papers in and have reports prepared on time. If you're having problems, let me know. We'll do our best to work the reports into our schedule, but I cannot guarantee that there will be time for them at any time other than that for which they are scheduled. Papers more than a week late without a University-approved excuse will not be accepted at all.

--If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

--Be prepared for class. You'll get a lot more out of class discussions if you are participating in them, and I'll notice if you do not seem prepared to participate. **Note: *In most of the entries on the syllabus, there are questions that you are expected to have answered for class discussion.***

### Requirements and Grades

2 exams: 20% each of final grade	40%
2 presentations with reports: 15% each of final grade	30%
1 seminar paper: 30% of final grade	30%

The **seminar paper** topic will be chosen from subjects that arise in class, regarding the assigned texts. You will use MLA Parenthetical Style with Works Cited. The **presentations** and **reports**

will be the products of two short research assignments to contextualize the material we are reading. They are also meant to be opportunities to begin exploring topics that may interest you for the seminar paper. For them, you will also use MLA style. The research paper will be 15-20 pages in length. The reports will be 4-5 pages in length. Presentation times will be 10-15 minutes.

**Sources for further reading** listed in the weekly schedule are meant to help you prepare reports and be possible sources for your seminar paper research.

**Exams** will be take-home assignments, requiring essays and short answers.

Note: students are responsible for making appointments to discuss their individual research projects for their seminar papers.

## Tentative Schedule

Note: Some readings may be shifted around or dropped during the semester to accommodate the class discussion.

### Introduction to the Course

**Th. Aug. 25**—Introduction to the course. Discuss and sign up for reports. Review general background on the Renaissance.

**For next class:** read Petrarch in *Western Literature*. Read also Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder; Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey; Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti*; Sir Philip Sydney's *Astrophil and Stella*; Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*; and Shakespeare's *Sonnets* in *English Literature*. Be sure to read the "Introduction to the Sixteenth Century" in *English Literature*. See sonnet handouts for other poems.

**Note on Dates:** Renaissance: Italy, 1300s, ends in England, early 1600s. The term *rinascimento* was coined by Giorgio Vasari in his *Lives of the Artists*, 1550. Italian Art: Leonardo da Vinci 1452-1519; Michelangelo Buonarroti 1475-1574, Sandro Botticelli 1445-1510. Visual art in Ren. England: see royal portraits by Lucas Horenbout, Dutch, (early 1490s-1544), Nicholas Hilliard, English, (1547-1619), and Hans Holbein the Younger, German, (1497-1543).

### Poetry in Motion: Petrarch Takes the Continent and England

#### Th. Sept. 1

Report 1: Background on English and Italian Sonnets

Report 2: Philip Sidney's *Apology for Poetry*

**Note on Dates:** The "Three Crowns of Florence" are Dante Alighieri 1265-1321; Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374); and Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375). Key authors in France: François Rabelais ca. (1494-1553); Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585), Joachim du Bellay (1522-1560); and Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592).

**Class:** Explore the development of Renaissance poetics, noting the emphasis on the need to imitate a master vs. the desire for originality. Questions to consider: What is Neoplatonic love? How is it evident in Petrarch's verse? What happens to it in Shakespeare's verse? What is courtly love? Is it occasionally evident in the poetry? What is the relationship of self to other in a sonnet? What is the typical relationship like between the poet and the subject in a love sonnet?  
**Sources for further reading:** "Diana Described: Scattered Woman and Scattered Rhyme" by Nancy J. Vickers. *The Currency of Eros* by Ann Rosalind Jones. William Kennedy's *Authorizing Petrarch*.

**For next class:** read Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* (begun, 1513, published 1528) in and Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1513), in *Western Literature*. What critical issues that Renaissance rulers faced? List three or four to discuss in class next week.

### How to Act: Winning Friends and Just Winning

#### Th. Sept. 8

Report 1—Origins of *The Courtier* and Its Publishing/Translation History

Report 2—Origins of *The Prince* and Its Publishing/Translation History

**Note on Dates:** Henry VIII (1491-1547, reign 1509-1547); Edward VI (1537-1553, reign 1547-1553); Lady Jane Grey (1537-1554, reign July 6/10, 1553-July 19, 1553); Mary I (1516-1558, reign 1553-1558); Elizabeth I (1533-1603, reign 1558-1603); James I (1566-1625, reign [Scotland, 1567-] 1603-1625).

**Class:** Discuss the concept of conduct books: were these texts early examples? Explore the idea of "self-fashioning" during the Renaissance. How does personal "self-fashioning" recall the art of imitation in literature and visual arts, or does it? What were the critical issues that Renaissance rulers faced? How were such issues reflected in the literature? This is a theme that we will return to as the semester progresses.

**Sources for further reading:** "The Court" in *The Elizabethan Renaissance* by A.L. Rowse. *The First Elizabeth* and *Great Harry* by Carolly Erickson. *The Fortunes of The Courtier* by Peter Burke. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* by Stephen Greenblatt.

**For next class:** read Queen Elizabeth's writings in *English Literature* and *Henry V*. List three or four instances in the play that clearly echo a Machiavellian sensibility. Also consider where, in his rhetoric and speeches in general, HV seems to scorn the niceties of the education of the ideal prince (or courtier), listing one or two examples.

### Portraits of Rulers: Sweet Talk and Threats

#### Th. Sept. 15

Report 1—Holinshed's *Chronicles* and Henry V

Report 2—The Last Years of Elizabeth's Reign

**Note on Dates:** 1576, James Burbage builds The Theater; 1599, Globe Theater opens; the play, *Henry V*, ca. 1599; 1603, Elizabeth dies; James VI, I ascends the throne—end of Tudor dynasty; beginning of the English Stuart dynasty.

**Class:** Discuss the variety of possible readings for the play, *Henry V*, then focus on the influence of Machiavelli. What are three or four instances in the play that clearly echo a Machiavellian sensibility? Where, in his rhetoric and speeches in general, does HV seem to scorn the niceties of the education of the ideal prince (or courtier)? Also to consider, where in the play do you see patriotism treated as an aspect of religion? Regarding the readings by Elizabeth, what similarities do you see between her rhetoric and that employed in the play? What do you know about her reign that reflects the idea of divine providence for England interwoven with patriotism? Why might Shakespeare embrace Machiavellian ethics in this play?

**Sources for further reading:** for information on the *Querelle des femmes*, see Linda Woodbridge's *Women and the English Renaissance*; Constance Jordan's *Renaissance Feminism*; Henderson and McManus, *Half-Humankind*; "Introduction to the Series"—any volume in the Other Voice Series by the University of Chicago Press. See Tullia d'Aragona's *Dialogue on the Infinity of Love*, for example.

**For next class:** Read Notes on Film as Visual Text.

**Th. Sept. 22**—Film: *Henry V*, and discussion.

**For next week:** Read Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* and Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (in *English Literature*). Read also Lindheim, "Rethinking Sexuality and Class in *12<sup>th</sup> Night*" on e-reserve.

## Wit, Religion, and the Perils of Taking Sides

**Th. Sept. 29**

Report 1—Sir Thomas More's Relationship with Henry VIII

Report 2—Recusancy in England during Elizabeth's Reign

**Note on Dates:** 1517, Luther nails the Ninety-Five Theses to the Castle Church Door in Wittenberg. 1529-32, More is Lord Chancellor to Henry VIII. 1535, More is executed. 1537, John Calvin's *The Institution of Christian Religion* is published. 1533, Henry VIII is excommunicated by Clement VII. 1534, Henry VIII declares himself head of English church. 1547, death of Henry VIII; 1553, death of Edward VI; 1558, death of Mary I; 1567, Mary Q. of Scots is imprisoned in England; 1570, Elizabeth I is excommunicated by Pope Pius V.

**Class:** Discuss More's *Utopia* in relation to political/religious upheaval of the times. Consider Luther's emphasis on "sola scriptura" and "sola fide." Why did Henry VIII have More executed? Discuss *Twelfth Night*. Consider the echoes of religious controversy in this play. Which characters represent which sides of the controversy?

**Source for further reading:** John C. Olin's *Christian Humanism and the Reformation*.

**For next class:** Read Andreini's Satyr Scene from *La Mirtilla* (e-reserve) and Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. Consider the characteristics of popular roles for female characters.

## Female Characters Take the Stage

### Th. Oct. 6

Report 1: History of Jews in England

Report 2: *Commedia dell'Arte* Troupes and Actresses in Shakespeare's Time

**Class:** Discuss Italian troupes in England and the reaction to them by the English. Consider, why Venice? Where, in *Merchant*, do we see acting within acting? Where do you see a doubling of the *innamorati* roles? What about the female characters in this play surprises you? Are there ways in which this play, set in Venice and Belmont, could be read as a satire of English characteristics?

**Sources for further reading:** Pamela Brown's "The Counterfeit *Innamorata* or The Diva Vanishes," *Shakespeare Yearbook* 10 (1999): 402-26. See also Louise George Clubb's *Italian Drama in Shakespeare's Time*. See also Andrew Grewars's "Shakespeare and the Actors of the *Commedia dell'arte*" in *Studies in the Commedia dell'arte* ed. by David J. George and Christopher J. Gossip. See *Women Players in England, 1500-1660* ed. by Pamela Brown and Peter Parolin.

### Note: Give Midterm Exam

**For next class:** work on midterm. Begin work on your preliminary seminar paper topic idea and your plan for developing it.

### Th. Oct. 13: No class meeting. Work on Take-Home Midterm Exam.

**For next class:** Be prepared to present your preliminary seminar paper topic idea and your plan for developing it. We'll take 15-20 minutes at beginning of next class to discuss these. Read *Othello*.

## Women, Race, and Legitimacy: Hot Topics on the English Stage and Cultural Mind

### Th. Oct. 20

Report 1: The *Querelle des femmes* in England

Report 2: The Turks and the Ottoman Empire

**Class:** First, present and discuss seminar paper topic ideas. Then, discuss issues of xenophobia in England during this period. Regarding *Othello*, consider that fact that this is a play built on prejudices. Identify the main propagator of prejudicial rhetoric, and see if you can trace some of the cause/effect relationships regarding prejudice upon which Shakespeare constructs this tragedy. In other words, how does Shakespeare showcase prejudices as a construct for tragedy? What are the main elements of prejudice in English society that he apparently strives to critique?

**Sources for further reading:** "Marginal England: The View from Aleppo," by Peter Stallybrass in *Center or Margin: Revisions of the English Renaissance in Honor of Leeds Barroll* (2006), ed. by Lena Cowen. For information on the *Querelle des femmes*, see Linda Woodbridge's *Women*

and the English Renaissance; Constance Jordan's *Renaissance Feminism*; Henderson and McManus, *Half-Humankind*; "Introduction to the Series"—any volume in the Other Voice Series by the University of Chicago Press. See Tullia d'Aragona's *Dialogue on the Infinity of Love*, for example.

**For next class:** Read *Much Ado*. Read also on e-reserve: Anger, "Jane Anger, her Protection for women..."; Gosynhill, "Mulierum Paeon"; "Schoolhouse of Women."

**Th., Oct. 27—SCSC conference: no class meeting.**

**Th. Nov. 3**

Report 1: Issues of Legitimate and Illegitimate Birth in Renaissance England

Report 2: *Querelle des femmes* in England

Working backward chronologically in Shakespeare's *oeuvre*, consider the ways in which *Much Ado* is the prototype for *Othello*. What characters in *Othello* seem to shadow those in *Ado*? Consider the fact that *Much Ado* is a play built on lies and issues regarding legitimacy. How does Shakespeare's strategy for development in this play mirror that in *Othello*? How do the elements of tragicomedy in *Ado* recall to a certain extent the elements of tragedy in *Othello*? Finally, using *Much Ado* as a summary piece of sorts for Renaissance elements in English drama, consider the following: what aspects of the *querelle des femmes* are at work in the plot of this play? Where does Shakespeare make fun of Petrarchism? Where does he make use of *sprezzatura*? What stock Renaissance female characters do Beatrice and Hero represent? What stock male characters do Benedick and Claudio represent? Why Italy? Are there *commedia* resonances in *Much Ado*?

**Secondary sources for further reading:** For further notes on drama, see Stephen Orgel, ed., *Shakespeare and Gender*. See also Michael Shapiro's "Lady Mary Wroth Describes a 'Boy Actress.'" in *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 4 (1989): 187-94. Revisit essays in *Women Players in England, 1500-1660*, ed. by Pamela Brown and Peter Parolin.

**For next class:** Begin reading Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* in *World Masterpieces*; Spenser's *Fairie Queene* in *English Literature*.

**Th. Nov. 10—Film:** *Much Ado About Nothing* and discussion. Refer to Notes on Film as Text.

**For next class:** finish reading Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* in *World Masterpieces*; Spenser's *Fairie Queene* in *English Literature*. List two or three concepts that you think Spenser borrowed from Ariosto. List two or three thematic differences in the works.

**Fine Romances: Pastoral Pushed to Its Limits?**

Th. Nov. 17

Report 1: Classical Epics and the Roots of Romance

Report 2: Spenser: His Romance and Elizabeth

**Class:** Define and discuss characteristics of the Renaissance Romance. Compare elements of

*Orlando Furioso* and the *Fairie Queene*: consider concepts that you think Spenser borrowed from Ariosto. Consider thematic differences in the works. Especially be ready to discuss issues concerning religion in Spenser. Consider the depictions of women in these romances. What figures would you describe as stock, or, perhaps, archetypal? Consider the making of Elizabeth into a Neoplatonic Ideal Beloved, the Virgin (Queen) /Mary, the ideal ruler, and a virago or Amazon. Think about Jean de Meun's *Roman de la rose* and Christine de Pizan's *Epître au dieu d'amour*: discuss the beginnings of the *querelle des femmes* and why, from its earliest stages, it was related to depictions of women in Romance.

**Sources for further reading:** Dana Heller's *The Feminization of Quest-Romance*; Louis B. Wright's *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England*.

**For next class:** read Wroth, the abridged *Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, and Sidney, the excerpts from *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*. Make a list of three to five ways in which you can trace aspects of Renaissance poetry, drama, and earlier romances in Wroth's and Sidney's romances.

### **At Play with Genres: Romances, Drama, and Court Masques**

**Th. Nov. 24—Thanksgiving**

#### **Wrapping up Romance**

**Th. Dec. 1**

Report 1: Sidney: The History of his *Arcadia* (both Old and New)

Report 2: Wroth: The History of her *Urania* (both Parts)

**Class:** We are looking at these last two romances as texts that embody aspects of the whole of the English Renaissance. How does the *Arcadia* reflect the English Renaissance's engagement with a) pastoral, b) drama, c) Petrarchan poetry? How does the *Urania* reflect all of these as well? Where does the *Querelle* come into play? Consider also where two other popular genres fit: emblems and masques.

**For next class:** read Jonson's masques (e-reserve).

#### **Considering Ephemeral Dramatic Productions**

**Th. Dec. 8**

Report 1: Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, Masters of the Masque

Report 2: The Court of Queen Anne and Masquing

**Class: Seminar papers due.** Consider the rarified world of court masque performances. This discussion takes us to the end of the English Renaissance as it is especially an artistic stronghold of the court of King James and Queen Anne. What elements of Renaissance art do you see at work in the masques that have been parts of our conversation since the beginning of the semester?

**Sources for further reading:** Molly Murray, "Performing Devotion in the Masque of Blackness," *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 47.2 (2007): 427-449. Clare McManus's *Women on the Renaissance Stage: Anna of Denmark and Female Masquing in the Stuart Court (1590-1619)* and *Women and Culture at the Courts of the Stuart Queens*. See also Stephen Orgel's *Inigo Jones and the Theatre of the Stuart Court*.

**Note: Give Final Exam (take-home).**

**Final Exam due:** Tues., Dec. 13, 2:45-4:45.