

English 410
Senior Seminar: Writing Renaissance Women
Spring 2007
W, 4:00-6:50
Hoover 105

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T-Th, 4:30-5:30 (and by request)

The title of this course is ambiguous--even slightly "punny"--in that it refers to two things at once. Most obviously, this is a course about women writers working in Italy and England between about 1500 and 1700. But you will notice that a number of important male writers are represented as well. That is not because there are not enough women's works to fill a whole semester; on the contrary, texts have so proliferated over the past decade that I have had to be very selective. I have included such important male writers as Petrarch, Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton because they are central to the story of writing women in the Renaissance.

Why are these men so central? They are central because of the way literature both reflects and, in turn, influences--even re-invents--life. Due in part to social factors, in part to the power of their vision, these male poets have indelibly shaped the way men have imagined and represented women, as well as the way countless female readers have imagined and represented themselves. Thus, even when writing for others of their own sex, women have had to write in *response* to male voices, male pens, male images of female identity.

Some recent critics have argued, in fact, that if people write history, they are also "written" by it. Each of our lives, they say, is a kind of fiction, written in collaboration with the social forces that shape them. And, especially in the early modern period, those forces tended to privilege the male perspective. The Renaissance was a period of enormous change and upheaval, in which a relatively unified and stable medieval world-view gave way to what would become the Enlightenment. It was a period in which men (at least an elite of outstanding and privileged men) were involved actively in a reconstruction of identity, a reconstruction Stephen Greenblatt has called "Renaissance self-fashioning."

Women, too, were engaged in this "self-fashioning" enterprise--but with a difference. Less free to begin the inquiry "from scratch," they engaged in the process under the jealous eye of a patriarchal society that saw them, essentially, as passive members--valued above all, as Suzanne Hull has noted, for three traditional virtues: chastity, obedience, and *silence*. Even as they wrote, then (and many did write), they were also "being written"--by male writers, and yet more profoundly by the social conventions that shaped both male and female roles.

Thus we will need to keep two key questions in mind in our reading (and writing) this semester. First, we need to keep asking ourselves about the context of the literature we read: what were the social conditions under which it was produced? (These social conditions finally take into account every branch of history--social, intellectual, and economic--as well as theology and its manifold nuances.) But we also need to read each *text*--closely and with open minds--in order to see the extent to which Renaissance writers, male *and* female, were "written" by the context in which they wrote; and to see, conversely, the extent to which they managed to "re-write," or "refashion" themselves and one another.

All semester we will see both phenomena--the writing and "being written"--occurring again and again. But the best criticism, to my mind, uses theory to *illuminate* texts--not to reduce them to evidence for a particular point of view or ammunition for a particular agenda. Thus, our story will not be a "neat" one. Different writers will reveal a different mix of freedom and constraint, originality and conventionality, patriarchal bias and impulse toward gender equality. Our verdict will differ, I suspect, from writer to writer, from text to text--and from person to person.

But, whatever our conclusions (and however tentative those conclusions may be) each of us, by the end of the course, will also have "written" Renaissance women to some extent. In fact, if things go really well, we may end up collaborating in a corporate history still in the process of being written. In any case, you should know at the outset that the questions we engage this semester are live questions for me--not questions to which I have clear and settled answers. *I too* want to know how women were written in the Renaissance--and how they in turn rewrote it.

Required Texts:

Fitzmaurice, James et al., eds. *Major Women Writers of Seventeenth-Century England*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2000.

Lewalski, Barbara Kiefer. *The Polemics and Poems of Rachel Speght*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996.

Maclean, Hugh, ed. *Edmund Spenser's Poetry*. New York: Norton Critical Editions, 1992.

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost*. (Any unabridged twelve-book edition is OK. An inexpensive paperback is available in the bookstore with our other course materials for those who do not own a copy of the poem.)

Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It*. New York: Pelican, 1987.

Stortoni, Laura Ann, ed. *Women Poets of the Italian Renaissance*. New York: Italica P, 1997.

Webster, John. *The Duchess of Malfi*. Mineola, New York: Dover, 1998.

Wynne-Davies, Marion, ed. *Women Poets of the Renaissance*. New York: Routledge, 1999.

A packet of readings, seen in the schedule as *Renaissance Writings (RW)*.

Several essays on reserve in the English Department Office. (See below in schedule.)

Required Work:

1. Reading assignments to be completed *before* the day for which they are assigned (i.e. in time for class discussion), and attendance at all class sessions (including three evening films, Feb. 21 and 28; Apr. 11, and an evening final meeting on May 16). In preparation for each class, you should not only read the assigned materials, but answer in your class notebook the prompts found next to each day's readings in the syllabus.

Note: Because this course is an advanced seminar, each person's participation is especially important. Each absence will lower the final grade one whole step. Three absences will be regarded as cause for a failing grade. If you are unable to attend one of the evening films, you may rent it on your own--as long as your film review is turned in on the date due. Seeing the film on your own will not be regarded as an excuse for a late review.

2. Your "portfolio in the major," which by the end of the course will include the following:
 - a. Six analysis and response papers (2-3 pages), beginning with a quotation and dealing with some aspect of the reading for each unit of the seminar.
 - b. Three film reviews (1-2 pages), in which you discuss the ways in which each film illuminates (and/or perhaps misinterprets!) the author, period, or topic under discussion in the seminar.
 - c. Two 2-3 page introductions to a woman writer in the course--to be submitted, then revised and distributed in advance, so you can lead the class discussion of that writer.
 - d. One longer paper (about 15 pages), placing the work of that writer (or another chosen in consultation with me) in a larger historical context.
 - e. An oral report (about 10-15 minutes), accompanied by an annotated bibliography and appropriate hand-out summarizing your research for the longer paper.

Note: Late work will be accepted, but will be marked down one half grade for each school day (not *class* day) after the due date. Under extraordinary circumstances, I will consider an extension without penalty--provided that I am consulted in advance and that the circumstances seem serious enough to warrant such an extension. Even if a piece of work should be so late that it would technically receive a failing grade, all work must be turned in and be of passing quality (whatever the grade) in order for a passing grade to be earned in the seminar.

Grading Factors:

1. Six analysis and response papers	45
2. Three film reviews	15
3. Author introductions and discussion leadership	20
4. Final contextual paper and oral report	<u>20</u>
	100%

Grading Options: A to F only.

Manuscript Style:

Papers are to be typed double-space in a 12-point font (this syllabus serves as an example), and printed on a laser-quality printer. They should be handed in on separate sheets of 8 1/2 X 11 bond paper, stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Margins should be one inch; paragraphs are to be indented five spaces. Spaces should not be skipped between paragraphs. Notes and bibliography must follow the *MLA Handbook*, copies of which are available in both the library and the bookstore. (You can also find the form neatly laid out in your good old *Random House Handbook*.)

Always keep hard-copies of all your work. Documents can get lost--both from my desk and from your disk. Should this occur, I will expect you to be able to produce a copy immediately; otherwise, I will be forced to count the paper as late beginning with the original due date. (See above for general policy on late papers.)

Note: Electronically submitted work will not be accepted. It is your responsibility to leave enough time to submit a clean hard copy for evaluation.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism occurs whenever the true author of a piece of prose, of an idea, or of a line of thought is not the person who claims to be the author. Plagiarism can occur in varying degrees, and will be penalized--in this class as in all others at the College--in proportion to its severity. Papers in which plagiarism is sufficiently serious will receive an F, and student's name will be turned in to the Dean of Students. A repeated act of plagiarism will result in an automatic F in the entire course, in addition to any action taken by the Office of Student Life (which can include suspension from the College). A number of such serious sanctions have been imposed in recent years.

A particularly common and egregious form of plagiarism is the down-loading of materials from papers posted by others on various websites. Please be aware that faculty have the tools to identify any work unfairly borrowed from the internet--as well as other sources.

If you are in doubt about the need for documentation of borrowed material, please feel free to consult me or any other professor on campus. Also be sure that you have mastered the material in the 2005-2007 *College Catalog*, 29-33. Ignorance of this material will not be regarded as an excuse.

ADA Policy:

If you have any disabling condition that may require some special arrangements in order to meet course requirements, please begin by contacting Disability Services in CAS (extension 4285). I will be happy to provide any accommodations regarded by the Director as appropriate, but am not in a position to offer such accommodations independently. Short of actual accommodations, however, please feel welcome to talk with me about anything I can do to help you succeed in the course.

Projected Schedule (subject to change as necessary):

Introduction: Renaissance self-fashioning and the fashioning of woman.

Feb. 14 Introduction to the course, to the period, and to some images of women in art--allegorical, erotic, political, and theological. Varieties of feminism in literature, *RW*, 26. All semester, we will be considering texts in light of this question.

Varieties of Renaissance Feminism; Biblical and Platonic backgrounds to Early Modern writing. Read *RW*, 3-25. What biblical passages here have you heard quoted to "keep women in their place"? Which have you heard used as feminist arguments? How is *The Courtier's* situation and setting similar to Plato's *Symposium*? How is it markedly different? What ideas does Lord Peter Bembo (in *The Courtier*) borrow from Plato's speakers-- especially Socrates? How does he change these ideas to suit his own situation and time? What alternative views do other speakers give?

I. The Italian Renaissance and Italian Petrarchism.

21 "Petrarchism" and the "male gaze": sonnets of Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374), *RW*, 30-35. What is a sonnet? What formal devices make these "Petrarchan" sonnets? How does Petrarch represent Laura as a love object? How does he represent himself as a lover? What is the "plot" of the sonnet cycle? What is the connection, for Petrarch, between love and poetic creativity; between love for a woman and love for God? How does his view differ from Lord Peter Bembo's in *The Courtier*? How is Laura's role different from that of Castiglione's Lady Emilia? What difference do these differences make? Are there forms of feminist thinking you can identify in either of these works? Which forms?

Petrarchism and the female predicament: sonnets of Vittoria Colonna (1492-1547) and Gaspara Stampa (1523-1554). Read Stortoni, ix-xxvi. Then read 49-75 (Colonna) and 134-59 (Stampa)--in addition to *RW*, 37-41. (Ideally, you should intersperse these additional poems numerically with those in Stortoni.) Look up and identify all the terms listed on *RW*, 36. From Stortoni's introductions: How were the lives of Colonna and Stampa similar; different? What were their respective roles in society? And, as you read the poems: What forms, ideas, and images have Colonna and Stampa borrowed from Petrarch? How have they changed these forms, ideas, and images to make them their own? How do *they* represent their beloved objects? How do *they* represent themselves as lovers and poets? If these poems were presented to you anonymously, what clues would you have that they were written by women? Are there forms of feminism you can identify in these works? Which forms?

Feb. 21 7:30 p.m. Film: *Dangerous Beauty* (1997--a popular film based on the life of Venetian courtesan poet Veronica Franco).

28 Beyond Petrarchism: the "honest courtesan" Veronica Franco (1546-1591), Stortoni, 169-207. How are Franco's poems (written just about a century after those of Vittoria Colonna) similar to and different from those of Colonna and Stampa--in form, imagery, and themes? How was her time in history and position in life different from theirs? The film actually uses Franco's Letter 22 and Terza Rima 16. How have the writer and director changed or adapted Franco's words and/or meanings? What is the effect of these changes? What forms of feminism do you find in Franco's work; in the film?

How are they similar? How different?

Highly recommended further reading: Margaret Rosenthal's *Honest Courtesan* and translations of Franco's collected poems. (See Course Bibliography.)

Film Review #1 due.

II. Elizabethan England: The virgin queen and the romance of chastity.

Introduction to Renaissance England and the Court of Elizabeth I. Read Wynne-Davies' Introduction and Timeline, viii-xxix, and poems by Elizabeth (1533-1603), 11-15. How are these poems different--in form, in style, and in content--from the poems written by the Italian women whose work we have read? What seem to be Elizabeth's major concerns? How do you account for the difference? Do you find any of the forms of feminist thinking in Elizabeth's work? What about in her life?

Analysis and Response # 1 due (starting with a quotation from an Italian poem).

**Feb. 28 7:30 p.m. Film: *Elizabeth* (1998--starring Cate Blanchett as Elizabeth).
Media Center.**

Mar. 7 (A) The Sonnet and Lyric: Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), *Astrophel and Stella* (1591), *RW*, 45-50; and Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), the *Amoretti* (1595), Sonnets 1, 13, 16, 17, 21, 22, 28, 34, 37, 39, 45, 57, 60, 63, 64, 67, 68, 69, 75, 76, 79, 84, 88, 89. Maclean, 587-623 (inclusive). How do Sidney and Spenser adapt the Petrarchan sonnet to express their own personalities and views? What are their technical innovations in writing "English" sonnets? How does each borrow from Renaissance Platonism, as seen in *The Courtier*? How does Astrophel ("Star Lover") represent Stella ("Star"--actually Lady Penelope Rich) as the beloved? How does he represent himself as a lover? What are some recurring images and themes in these poems? What is their tone? Who is Sidney's actual intended audience? (Is it just "Stella," or is there another audience as well?) How does Spenser represent his beloved (Elizabeth Boyle)? How does he represent himself as the lover? How does he change the calendar structure of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*? (Compare, for instance, Petrarch's #s 1, 47, and 48 with Spenser's #s 1, 22, and 68.) What is the "plot" of his sonnet cycle and how does that make a difference? Finally, how are these two sonnet cycles similar and different in their representation of women? Can you

identify

any of the forms of feminist thinking in

either of the cycles? Which--and in which

cycle?

On reserve: Clark Hulse, "Stella's Wit: Penelope Rich as Reader of Sidney's Sonnets," in *Rewriting the Renaissance*, ed. Margaret Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy

J. Vickers. Film Review #2 due.

Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke (1561-1621). Read Wynn-Davies, 59-98 and *RW*, 51-52. In her 1599 Dedication to Queen Elizabeth (which accompany her collection of metrical psalms) Sidney gives an apologia for her undertaking as a poet.

Why does she say she has written these translations? Why has she decided to present

them to the queen? What is the tone of the poem? How might it be different if written

by her brother? Compare a psalm of your choice to its counterpart in the 1611 King James Bible (or another literal translation if you can't get hold of a 1611). Is Sidney's poem really just a translation, or is it more than that? What has she done to turn your chosen psalm into an English poem? Why do you think Sidney chose to dedicate her poetic career to a comprehensive poetic rendering of these biblical songs? Can her work be seen as a feminist gesture in any of the ways we have been considering? How? How not?

On reserve: Beth Wynne Fischen's "Mary Sidney's *Psalmes*: Education and Wisdom," and Margaret P. Hannay, "'Your vertuous and learned Aunt': The Countess of Pembroke as Mentor to Mary Wroth," from *Reading Mary Wroth*, ed. Naomi Miller and Gary Waller.

Also 14 Lady Mary Wroth, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthes* (1621), Wynne-Davies, 183-228. review Wynne-Davies' Introduction, xix-xxix and read the biographical note in Fitzmaurice, 109-13. The niece of Sir Philip Sidney and Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, Mary Wroth became one of the three or four most important women poets of the English Renaissance. Writing thirty years after the vogue for Petrarchan sonnet had pretty much run its course, she chose to write a long, multi-part, sonnet cycle, embedded in her prose romance *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*. But the

sonnets of *Pamphilia* ("All Loving") to *Amphilanthes* ("Lover of Two") are very different both from those of her male models (Sidney and Spenser) and from those of the Italian Petrarchans (especially Gaspara Stampa). What do we know about the actual relationship represented in these poems? How does Wroth (Pamphilia) represent it? What is her role in the relationship and how does she represent it? What is Amphilanthes' role (William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke's), and how does she represent it? What is the "plot" of her cycle as opposed to those of Petrarch, Sidney and Spenser, and as compared with that of Gaspara Stampa? What patterns of imagery does she use to express her situation? How is the effect different when the poet is a woman?

(See, for instance, numbers 13, 34, and 35 of the first set of sonnets.) Who seems freer to express her thoughts and feelings--Sir Philip Sidney or Wroth? Stampa or Wroth? What might account for these differences? Finally, can we call Wroth a feminist poet? If so, in what sense?

On reserve: Nona Fienberg, "Mary Wroth and the Invention of Female Poetic Subjectivity"; and Jeff Masten, "'Shall I turne blabb?': Circulation, Gender, and Subjectivity in Wroth's Sonnets," in *Reading Mary Wroth*, ed. Naomi Miller and Gary Waller. Analysis and Response # 2 due (starting with a quotation from an English lyric poet).

(B) Romance: Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, Book III, cantos I-IV, Maclean, 231-92. At the beginning of Canto II (249), Spenser protests the long neglect male poets have accorded to female greatness, and expresses his purpose of redressing this failing in his poem. In these first four cantos, we meet Britomart, Spenser's knight

of chastity. How does he represent her? In what ways can she be seen as representing Queen Elizabeth? How does she relate to the male characters in the poem? How does her role contrast to that of Florimell? What does Spenser suggest by this contrast? How does Britomart fall in love with Artegall? What does this allegorical story suggest about love and about its role in human life and national histories? How is Britomart's suffering different from Malacasta's? What, in view of these two passionate stories, is the meaning of *chastity* in this poem? (Next time, in the twin characters Belpheobe and Amoretta, we will see Spenser complicating this definition.)
On reserve: Lauren Silberman, "Singing Unsung Heroines: Androgynous Discourse in Book III of *The Faerie Queene*," in *Rewriting the Renaissance*, ed. Ferguson, Quilligan, and Vickers.

21 Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, Book III, cantos V-VIII, Maclean, 293-347. At the beginning of Canto V, Spenser expostulates on the great variety of expression one passion (desire) can inspire in "diverse minds." What effect does Florimell's beauty have on the forester and his brothers; on the fisherman? What is Spenser suggesting about the relationship between beauty and violence? What is the significance of the twinship of Belpheobe and Amoretta? What do these characters represent for Spenser in terms of varieties of love? What kind of place is the Garden of Adonis? What does it represent? Why is the Squire of Dames an appropriate target for the "mighty Giauntesse" Argante?

Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, Book III, cantos IX-XII, including alternate endings, Maclean, 347-400. How does the story of Malbecco, Hellenore, and Paridell function as a kind of spoof of Petrarchan traditions? Why can't Scudamore rescue his beloved Amoretta? How has Busyrane imprisoned her? What is the nature of his enchantment? Why is Britomart wounded in the fight and why mustn't she kill Busyrane? What are the effects of the two endings of the Book? What have we learned about desire in this romance--about its power, about its variety of expression, about the ways in which it affects women and men? Finally, in what ways can *Faerie Queene* Book III be read as a feminist poem? How does it compare in that respect to the works we have read so far by women?

III. Jacobean England: Gendering the lyric muse.

28 (A) Patriarchy, patronage, and retreat: Ben Jonson and Aemilia Lanyer. Read poems by Petronius and Martial ("The things that Make a Life to Please"), *RW*, 54-55. Then read Ben Jonson (1573-1637), "To Penshurst," *RW*, 56-58; and Aemilia Lanyer (1569-1645), "The Description of Cookham," Fitzmaurice, 23-26; 38-43. Notice

that both of these poems belong to an important seventeenth-century genre: the "country

house" poem. Both were written about the same time--so close that we don't know which poet could have influenced the other. How does Jonson represent Penshurst, the Sidney estate (Mary Wroth's childhood home)? What is the poet's relationship to the Sidney family? What view of nature does the poet put forth in this poem? What is important about it for him? What are the respective roles of Robert Sidney and his wife in the poem? What is the poem's overall mood, or tone?

How, in contrast, does Lanyer represent her relationship to the Clifford Estate at Cookham? What has happened since the time recorded in the poem? What is *this* poet's relationship to the noble family? What view of nature does Lanyer represent in this poem--and how is it different from Jonson's? What are the roles of women in this poem; who are the male figures represented, or at least alluded to? Why? If you didn't know which of the poems was written by a man and which by a woman, would you be able to guess which was which? If so, how? What evidence can you find in these poems of a patriarchal as opposed to a feminist view of society? What forms of feminist thinking can you identify in Lanyer's poem?

Analysis and Response # 3 due (starting with a quotation from *The Faerie Queene*).

(B) Varieties of devotion: Lanyer and John Donne. Read Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* (1611), Wynne-Davies, 99-148; and John Donne (1572-1631), selected devotional lyrics, *RW*, 61-65. Both Donne and Lanyer focus intently on the mysteries of Christ's life and Passion. But their relationships to God are gendered in significant ways. How does John Donne represent his own role in the Passion of Christ--and his relationship with God the Son in general? (See especially Holy Sonnet #s 7 and 10.) What is the significance of his choosing the sonnet as the form for these poems? Who is the lover in these poems, who the beloved? How does Lanyer represent the role of women in *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*? What is the basic argument of her poem? Who has been blamed disproportionately for sin, and thus for Christ's atoning death? Whom does *she* blame? Whom does she vindicate? What is her argument on behalf of Eve? Of women at the time of Christ? Of women in general? Look at the extra stanzas (hand-out) describing the crucifixion: Who is the love object in these stanzas? Who is the lover? What is the significance of all the prefatory dedications at the beginning of the poem (actually *eleven* of them altogether: nine poems to royal and noble ladies; a prose epistle to "the virtuous reader"; and a prose dedication to the Countess of Cumberland [Lady Clifford]--all of them addressed to women)? What is Lanyer attempting to create in this poem? How radical, do you think, is her project? What is she asking of the men in her society? How "feminist" is her project on *its own* terms? How feminist in *contemporary* terms?

On reserve: Lewalski, "Of God and Good Women," in *Silent But for the Word*.

Spring Break, April 2-8.

IV. Renaissance drama: Re-writing the heroine.

Apr. 11 William Shakespeare (1564-1616), *As You Like It* (1599/1600).

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What is the range of representation of women in this play? How do the women in play relate to each other and "fashion" themselves? What about the men? How does this dramatic fashioning compare to Spenser's and Wroth's? Does it matter that much of the play takes place in a pastoral world, removed from the court (from the "real world" of society)? Why, or why not? What is the world of the forest like, as compared with that of the court? What kind of values prevail in the two settings? What is the significance of Rosalind's cross-dressing as Ganymede in this play? (If you don't know the origin of the name *Ganymede*, look it up in a Who's Who of Classical mythology.) What are some of the things her disguise allows Rosalind to do? What does she have to do as soon as she sheds the disguise? What does the cross-dressing in this play suggest about the relationship between sex and gender? Is there a difference? (Think about this question, too, as you watch the film tonight.)

What does the interaction between the four pairs of lovers in the play suggest about Petrarchan conventions and the relations between the sexes? How does each couple represent a different version of Petrarchan distortion of human needs and desires? What is the difference, for Shakespeare, between romance and marriage? What are we to make of the ending of the play? What of the epilogue? Does the epilogue undercut the ending? How or how not? To what extent (and in what ways) is *As You Like It* a feminist play? To what extent (and in what ways) does it reinforce patriarchal views? Does either discourse finally "win" in the play? Analysis and Response #4 due (starting with a quotation from Lanyer, Jonson, and/or Donne).

Apr. 11 7:30 p.m. Film: *Shakespeare in Love* (1998--Tom Stoppard's now-classic romantic comedy about cross-dressing in Elizabethan Theatre). Media Center.

18 John Webster (1580?-1625), *The Duchess of Malfi*. (1614). As we move from comedy to tragedy, questions of female power become more urgent. What happens, according to this play, when a woman dares--without disguise and without the protections of pastoral and comedy--to express her own desire, to seek her own happiness, and to choose her own mate? How is her desire represented--and how is it seen (1) by her brothers, (2) by the playwright, and (3) by the audience? How admirable, in short, is Webster's *Duchess*? Do you see Webster as a feminist playwright? Why or why not? And if so, in what sense(s)?

25 Elizabeth Cary (1585/86-1639), *The Tragedy of Mariam the Fair, Queen of Jewry* (1613), *Fitzmaurice*, 47-104. What is the fundamental dilemma Mariam faces at the beginning of the play? How does she attempt to address it? To what extent is her problem a feminist one--to what extent the dilemma of any person of conscience in a corrupt society? What seems to be the role of the other characters in the play? What forces do they represent?

In this very difficult and ambiguous play, Cary gives us not one, but five, female characters--each of whom represents a different response to an oppressively patriarchal, even tyrannical, society. Which strategy seems to work best--or do any of the strategies work? Knowing what you do about Cary and her own life, which of them do you think best represents her own values? Why? In what sense(s) can this play be regarded as a feminist statement? In what senses not? How does the form of feminism represented in this play differ from the form represented by *The Duchess of Malfi*? Analysis and Response # 5 due (starting with a quotation from one or more of the plays).

On reserve: Sandra Fischer, "Elizabeth Cary and Tyranny, Domestic and Religious," in *Silent But for the Word.*, ed. Hannay.

V. The Problem of Eve: the Bible, Milton, and female subjectivity.

May 2 Read Genesis 1-3 in any Bible (preferably the KJV, 1611). Then read Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book I, ll. 1-26; Books IV and VIII.

How are Adam and Eve represented in these two books? What about their description and their conversation suggests that they are

"equals"? What suggests that they are not? What do you think the work "equal" means

in the various contexts of the two books? What does Milton suggest in the relationship

of Adam and Eve about the ideal marriage? To what extent do his ideas match with conventional religious ideas of gender roles even today?

Paradise Lost, Books IX and X; Book XII, ll. 375-649. These two books are one of the most controversial and vexed sites in all of literature. And how could they not be?

For three millennia (not just in Western tradition, but in Jewish and Islamic tradition as well)

death. women have been blamed for the Fall of humankind into misery, sin, futility and

You have not read all of Milton's epic (at least for this class), but you know from the Invocation to Book I that Milton spends a lot of the poem writing about Satan and the mystery of the origin of evil itself. Still, as he represents the Fall of Humankind, is either Adam or Eve more to blame? If so, who--and why? What about after the Fall? Who seems to emerge as the more heroic of the two fallen characters? When? How? What, finally, does Milton seem to be saying about human responsibility? In what sense does the poem gesture toward a feminist understanding of the sexes? In what sense does it seem to support a patriarchal understanding? What kinds of feminism can the poem be seen as representing?

9 Rachel Speght. Read Lewalski's Introduction, xi-xxxii;"A Mousell for Melastomas," 1-27; and "Certain Quares to the Bayter of Women," 30-41. It can be argued that

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every work we have read this semester has been part of a debate between patriarchal and feminist views of the appropriate roles of women in society. But Speght's defense of women is part of an explicit *querelle des femmes*--an argument over the nature and worth of women--which took place in the early seventeenth century and which pitted truly *misogynist* views of women (as opposed to merely patriarchal arguments (like Speght's) for their essential and equal worth as human beings made in the image of God. What--from Lewalski's introduction and from Speght's tracts--can you gather was the burden of Joseph Swetnam's *The Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward and Unconstant Women*? What is the basis of Speght's answer? What was her background--and how did it perhaps allow her the freedom to publish such a work under her own name? Make an outline of her basic points in order. What are they? In what ways is her view similar to Milton's? In what ways does she seem to differ from him? What kind(s) of feminism does her work represent? How effective do you find it (1) on its own terms and (2) in contemporary terms? In what social contexts might it still be useful today?
Analysis and Response # 6 due (starting with a quotation from Milton and/or Speght).

VI. Writing women: Women poets of the later Renaissance and Restoration

16 Katherine Philips (1631-1664). Read Fitzmaurice's Introduction, 177-180 and the poems, 181-208. For comparison, read the selection from Donne's *Songs and Sonnets*, RW, 66-70 and Martial's and Jonson's Epigrams, RW, 55 and 59-60.

What seem to have been the forces in Philips' life that enabled her to achieve fame (as the "matchless Orinda") and to publish her work within her lifetime? How does her career compare to the careers of earlier women poets, such as Stampa, Wroth, Cary, and Lanyer? To what can you attribute the change? As Wroth wrote sonnet cycles nearly a generation after her male models, Philips wrote poetry in the Cavalier (neo-classical) and Metaphysical modes some time after Donne and Jonson made them popular. How has she borrowed their forms, themes, and imagery and made them entirely her own? (See if you can find, for example, her use of the phoenix and the compass--and then go on from there.) How do you interpret the poems written to women?

As you compare her poem on the death of her son Hector Philips to Martial's and Jonson's epigrams on the deaths of *their* children, what is similar? What is different? How do you account for the differences? If you had to guess (without knowing, and without words like *father* and *mother*) which poems were written by men, which by a woman, would you be able to tell? Why or why not? Finally, to what extent and what sense(s) can we view Philips' poetry as feminist work?

Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle (1623-1673) and Anne Kingsmal Finch, Countess of Winchilsea (1661-1720). For Cavendish, read Fitzmaurice's Introduction, 151-52 and selections from her *Sociable Letters*, 152-73, plus the poems in RW, 72-74.

For Finch, read Fitzmaurice's Introduction, 333-35 and poems, 335-67, plus the selection from "Petition for an Absolute Retreat," RW, 75-78. As with Philips, what

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were the conditions in these women's lives that allowed them to flourish as writers? How were their careers similar? How different? What seem to be Cavendish's interests and values? To what extent, and in what ways, can we read her work as feminist? What seem to be Finch's (very different) interests and values? To what extent, and in what ways, can we read her work as feminist? How might literary look different as readers begin to rediscover Finch's (still little-known) work? (See, instance, her "To the Nightingale"--published in 1713! To whom might you attribute this work if you had to guess?)

Final paper and revised portfolio due.

May 16 7:30-9:50: Final oral reports and class party. (Dinner at my house, perhaps?)