



Reading Early Modern Women: An Anthology of Texts in Manuscript and Print, 1550-1700

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Much has been written about women of the English Renaissance, but few examples of women's writing from that era have been readily available until now. This remarkable anthology assembles for the first time 144 primary texts and documents written by women between 1550 and 1700 and reveals an unprecedented view of the intellectual and literary lives of women in early modern England. The writings range from poetry to philosophical treatises, addressing a wide array of subjects including law, gender, education, motherhood, medicine, religion, life-writing, and the arts. Each selection is paired with a beautifully reproduced facsimile of the text's original source manuscript, allowing a glimpse into the literary past that will lead the reader to truly appreciate the care and craft with which these women writers prepared their texts. This essential anthology is a captivating guide to the legacy of early modern women's literature and its authors that must not be overlooked.

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Editorial Review

Review

""Reading Early Modern Women is an essential resource for teaching and research, providing as it does a wide array of texts not easily accessed, from medical books, through prophecies and letters, to poetry and music. Contextualized both critically and historically, this book allows contemporary readers to benefit from the dazzling array of early modern women's writing."

-Marion Wynne-Davies, University of Dundee

"This book should certainly be recommended to students as an expert guide through a range of materials which will be new to them; it will also be of invaluable use to scholars in the field, as it makes available and discusses a fascinating number of texts otherwise available only in archives. One of the book's many strengths is the way in which each text and each genre is not only adeptly introduced, but is also cross-referenced with other works, primary and secondary, both in the anthology and beyond it. This serves not only to open up the expanding field of early modernwomen's writing to the newcomer, but also to indicate ways in which researchers can expand their studies across a number of interrelated literary areas."

-Hilary Hinds, Lancaster University, UK

""Reading Early Modern Women is an astonishing achievement. Bringing together 150 manuscript and print texts--many published here for the first time--as well as commentaries by more than 80 scholars, this remarkable collection introduces us to a very broad spectrum of the literary achievements of women. It should quickly become the centerpiece of many undergraduate and graduate courses in early modern literature, history, and women's studies. Thanks to Ostovich and Sauer's extraordinary efforts, earlymodern women writers may finally get the Renaissance they so richly deserve."

-Douglas A. Brooks, Texas A&M University

"This imaginatively conceived and brilliantly executed anthology with its ingeniously chosen texts, its illustrative images from the original books or manuscripts, and its impressive array of distinguished contributing editors shows that whatever their disadvantages and the injustices of their society early modern women did indeed have not just a room of their own but a whole house, a whole palace, and even (as Christine de Pisan insisted), a whole city. Ostovich and Sauer have produced an invaluable resource for anybody interested in Renaissance literature or women's studies."

-Anne Lake Prescott, Professor of English at Barnard College and coeditor of "Female and Male Voices in Early Modern England: A Renaissance Anthology

About the Author

Helen Ostovich is Professor of English at McMaster University. She is editor of *Ben Jonson's Every Man Out of His Humour* and *Ben Jonson: Four Comedies*, and coeditor of *Other Voices, Other Views: Expanding the Canon in English Renaissance Studies*.

Elizabeth Sauer is Professor of Early Modern English Literature at Brock University. She currently holds a Chancellor's Research Chair. She is author of *Barbarous Dissonance and Images of Voice in Milton's Epics*, and coeditor of *Imperialisms: Historical and Literary Investigations 1500-1900, Milton and the Imperial Vision, and Books and Readers in Early Modern England*.

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