

Anthology Analysis
(Editing Women Writers, Phase 2)

For EWW1 you learned the basics of editorial theory, and thought about textual variants and textual organization. For this assignment I would like you to analyze how anthologies function, in preparation for Phase 3, where we work as a class to produce a group anthology. Below I include a brief introduction and then detailed instructions.

Introduction to Anthology Analysis

Anthologies have long excluded women writers; given a limited number of pages in print anthologies, (male) editors argued, who would want to replace a well-known poem by a well-known and respected man with an obscure poem by a woman? The first edition of the Norton Anthology of English Literature, for example, included exactly 0 (ZERO) works by women written before 1750 in its first edition. These kinds of incredible injustices led to what are now known as the “Canon Wars,” debates that raged (in the special kind of rage that can only happen in academia) in the 1980s and 1990s about what should be included in the “Canon” of English literature, what was essential to teach (with women writers a particular focus). Even as recently as 2006, the editor Colin Burrow ends his introduction to an anthology of metaphysical poetry by noting: “I have at least tried to reflect the preoccupations of my age ... by including more poems by women. This has not proved easy to do. The female voices in this volume mostly work against the grain of metaphysical poetry: Katherine Philips, for example, turns Donne’s visions of erotic and spiritual union into emphatically desexualized poems about female amity. The virtual absence of women from the canon of metaphysical poetry is not surprising. ...”—in other words, he defines the (invented) genre of metaphysical poetry as erotic so he can exclude women writers, who tend not to write erotically. But I digress.

One response to the incredible misrepresentation of women writers has been an insistence that anthologies like the Norton accept more women writers into their ranks. But another way that people who study women writers have fought back is to make their own anthologies of women writers. The early modern period is especially rich in these anthologies, partly as a reaction to a common misconception that women writers didn’t really exist before the restoration (thanks, Virginia Woolf). A full list of women writer anthologies (both early modern and non-early modern) is attached to the end of this assignment sheet. Be prepared to be impressed by the range of options from which you have to choose.

Assignment Details: Analyzing Anthologies

For this assignment you will analyze two anthologies: one an anthology of early modern women writers, and one anthology of women writers either more widely (as the Gilbert and Gubar sweeping *Literature by Women* anthology), or from another period (medieval women writers, Victorian women poets, early American female playwrights, etc.). Note that I am not asking you to analyze the contents of the anthology—e.g., to pick a poem and close read it. Instead, I am asking you to analyze how the anthology as a whole is put together—I’m asking you to analyze it *as an anthology*.

You should turn in to me at least three robust paragraphs. The first paragraph will analyze the early modern women writers anthology that you chose. The second paragraph should analyze the non-early-modern women writers anthology that you chose. For each of these paragraphs you should start by reporting the basic data. Give a full citation, including the editor's name, title, and place and date of publication. Say how many pages it is, and how many authors it includes.

After this basic data, you should organize your paragraphs around an argument about how your anthology is functioning. Your first two paragraphs should each be an approximate answer to the following question: **What is the argument of the anthology: how is it functioning as a collection?** Read through the introduction, and look in particular for moments where the editor(s) describe their editorial practices and selection criteria. As you prepare to make an argument about your anthology, you might ask your self the following questions: How does the introduction set up the anthology? If your editor(s) have an explicit statement of selection criteria, how do you analyze their criteria (for example, when I read Colin Burrow I see him nodding to the inclusion of women only to justify their exclusion)? If they don't explicitly talk about selections, look for yourself at what kinds of things get included. Creating an anthology is all about making hard choices: what choices has your anthology made, and how transparent is it about those choices? Do some authors have a significantly larger sections than others, and if so, why? How is the anthology organized? What other ways might it have been organized? What does it do well, and what could it do better? Look at the texts themselves. Are they modernized? Footnoted? How much introduction is there before each group of texts, or before each individual text? What kind of information is included in introductions to sections or authors? What else do you notice when you read it as an anthology? Collect your observations into a coherent argument about your anthology, and support that argument with as many specific references and details as possible.

For the third paragraph, you will put together a list of best practices, in your opinion, for building our group early modern women writers anthology. Consider such questions as: What will be the argument of your anthology? What will its agenda be? What will be your principles of selection? What should the introduction include? What will the texts themselves look like? Will they be facsimiles? Edited with emendations? Modernized? How extensive should your footnotes be? What are the limits of your anthology (temporal or otherwise)? What interesting strategies did you learn from your two anthologies that you analyzed, and what new practices do you propose to introduce into your own anthology? Please be as specific as possible: define your anthology's goals, and describe specific practices you will use to realize that goal.

Below (pp. 3-5) is the full list of anthologies on which you may draw for this assignment. If you have an anthology that you think should qualify that you do not see on the list, check with me before analyzing it. Note that many may need to be either fetched directly, or ordered to UTM via Intercampus Delivery, from downtown libraries; I suggest you place those orders as soon as possible to make sure you have texts on hand in time to complete the assignment. Instructions on how to place such orders are at the top of the next page.

Women Writer Anthologies

Below is a list of Women Writer anthologies, divided into three sections: Anthologies of early modern women writers; anthologies that are of early modern women writers that might be difficult to locate; and anthologies of women writers that are *not* (or not exclusively) early modern women writers.

The UTM library has some of these texts, but not all; for those that are in the library, I have put below them “UTM” and then the call number. For those that do not have a UTM call number, you can order a copy to be sent to the UTM Library front desk from the St. George campus. To do this, go to the library website (<https://library.utm.utoronto.ca/>) and search the title and/or editor’s name. Select the right entry, and when you are on the book’s page, if it says it is “In” somewhere, click the square button the right side of the screen that says “Options” and select “Request”. This will then pop up a window; select the bubble for “Request Intercampus Delivery (ICD) / Hold” and then press the “Continue” button. Then input your library barcode and pin, and say you want it sent to UTM. You’ll get an email when it has arrived! Note that if a book is in the UTM library you may be blocked from ordering a downtown copy.

Remember that you have over 40 classmates, so don’t hog all the anthologies! Choose **one** from each list (early modern, and not early modern) to order or check out of the UTM library, to make sure there are enough left for your classmates!

Remember that our class anthology / textbook is: *Early Modern Women's Writing* (ed. Paul Salzman). You should **not** analyze his anthology for the assignment (we will do this as a group in class).

Early Modern Women Writers Anthologies

Early Modern Women Poets: An Anthology (ed. Jane Stevenson and Peter Davidson)
order from downtown

Kissing the Rod: Seventeenth-Century women writers (ed. Greer et al.)
order from downtown

Early Modern Women's Manuscript poetry (ed. Millman and Wright)
order from downtown

Women Poets of the Renaissance. (ed. Wynne Davies)
order from downtown

Reading Early Modern Women: An Anthology of Texts in Manuscript and Print, 1550-1700 (ed. Helen Ostovich and Elizabeth Sauer)
order from downtown

First Feminists: British Women Writers 1578-1799 (ed. Moira Ferguson)
UTM PR1111 .F45 F57 1985 or order from downtown

Early Modern Women Writers
Prof. Liza Blake

The Paradise of Women (ed. Betty Travitsky)
UTM PR1110 .W6 P3 or order from downtown

Major Women Writers of the Seventeenth Century (ed. James Fitzmaurice, et. al.)
UTM PR1110 .W6 M35 1997 ERIN or order from downtown

Women's Writing of the Early Modern Period 1588-1688 (ed. Stephanie Hodgson-Wright)
order from downtown

Early Modern Women on the Fall (ed. Michelle M. Dowd and Thomas Festa)
UTM PR1110 .W6 E45 2012 or order from downtown

English Women's Voices, 1540-1700 (ed. Charlotte F. Otten) [non-literary]
UTM PR1110 .W6 E54 1992

Female and Male Voices in Early Modern England: An Anthology of Renaissance Writing
(ed. Betty S. Travitsky and Anne Lake Prescott)
UTM PR1121 .F46 2000 ERIN

(Ones that may be more difficult to locate)

Poems by Eminent Ladies (this one published in 1755 – if you want to find it write me for instructions on how to try to get it on ECCO)

The Female Poets of Great Britain (ed. Federic Rowton, 1848)

Specimens of British Poetesses (ed. Alexander Dyce, 1825)

Women Poets of The English Civil War (ed. Sarah Ross and Elizabeth Scott-Baumann)

Poetry by English Women: Elizabethan to Victorian (ed. R.E. Pritchard)

Non Early Modern Women Writer Anthologies:

(to locate these, put the title and editor name(s) into the UTM Library search box on their website (<https://library.utm.utoronto.ca/>), and see where they are available)

Norton "Literature by Women" anthology (ed. Gilbert and Gubar)
UTM PS508 .W7 N67 1985 or order from downtown

A Book of Women's Verse (ed. John C. Squire) [1921]

Women's works: 900-1550 (ed. D. Foster)

Early Modern Women Writers
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Medieval Women's Visionary Literature (ed. Elizabeth Petroff)

Women's Writing in Middle English (ed. Alexandra Barratt)

Eighteenth Century Women Poets: An Oxford Anthology (ed. Roger Lonsdale)

Criminals, Idiots, Women, & Minors: Victorian Writing By Women On Women (ed. Susan Hamilton)

Victorian Women Poets (ed. Angela Leighton)

Nineteenth-Century Women Poets (ed. Isobel Armstrong and Joseph Bristow with Cath Sharrock)

No More Masks: An Anthology of Twentieth-Century American Women Poets (ed. Florence Howe)

Plays by American Women, 1900-1903 (ed. Judith Barlow)

The Kilroy's List: 97 Monologues and Scenes by Female and Trans Playwrights

The Feminine Future (ed. Mike Ashley) [sci fi]