

2016 SAA Seminar:

**EARLY MODERN WOMEN AND TRAVEL**

Organizers:

Patricia Akhimie, Assistant Professor of English, Rutgers University, Newark

Bernadette Andrea, Professor of English, University of Texas, San Antonio

**STAGE ONE: WELCOME LETTER** (Sent to participants 10/3/2015 and posted in Dropbox):

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to welcome you to the 2016 Shakespeare Association of America seminar on “Early Modern Women and Travel: Local Histories and Global Designs.” We are especially pleased with the range and quality of the participants in the seminar, as you can see from the attached list, and we look forward to a dynamic exchange of ideas before and during the conference in New Orleans.

To help frame our discussions, we have included a detailed description of the seminar below. The questions we raise around the broad topic of “Early Modern Women and Travel” are meant to be suggestive rather than prescriptive. We are interested in any approach you may take to this topic, including archival, pedagogical, and theoretical, as well as analytical and critical. If you have any questions about the form your contribution may take, please let us know.

As SAA seminars strive to be fully participatory, we have also provided a schedule for submitting written work and receiving responses prior to the seminar. Based on the successful use of Dropbox (a popular file sharing service) in other recent seminars, we plan to use this platform for posting collated abstracts and bibliographies; individual papers and responses; and any group announcements. If you have any questions or concerns about using Dropbox, please contact us immediately. We can give you more information about accessing this resource; we are also happy to facilitate other means for sharing information. We hope this interactive process leads to further collaborations, including possible publications. In the meantime, we will send reminders as the scheduled deadlines approach.

We are very excited about this seminar and look forward to working with you over the next few months and as we convene in New Orleans. Again, if you have any questions or concerns in the meanwhile, please do not hesitate to contact us.

**ADDENDUM TO WELCOME LETTER:**

Patricia Akhimie and Bernadette Andrea

SAA Seminar 2016

**Early Modern Women and Travel: Local Histories and Global Designs**

This seminar invites papers that seek to engage the topic of women and travel in

Shakespeare's era — and throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries — from archival, critical, and theoretical perspectives. Questions for consideration include: What constitutes “travel” for early modern women in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland? In Continental Europe? Between Christendom and Islamdom? In the TransAtlantic and TransPacific circuits of global exchange? How is women's mobility accomplished and to what ends? To what extent is it voluntary, not to say permissible, valuable, pleasurable, beneficial, or praiseworthy? How do we understand “travel writing” in terms of early modern women's movements? Might such travel writing include material and ephemeral sources that do not resemble the anthologies of Ramusio, Hakluyt, and Purchas; the iconic narratives by and about male explorers during the “Age of Discovery”; or the semi-fictional semi-historical works of cosmography and encyclopedic cartographic tomes? Papers might consider life-writing or other less substantial or substantiated sources for the study of early modern women who travel. Papers might also address the ways in which women's travel is defined within or against the fantasy of travel (framed as adventure, capture, itinerancy, elopement, or being “lost” or fugitive) on the stage, in narrative romance, and in poetry. Do the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries envision women's travel as necessary, transgressive, desirable? To what extent does women's travel writing, wherever and however it is extant, intersect with personal narratives and discourses of captivity, slavery, migration, and exile? What archival questions emerge from a discussion of early modern women's travel? What possibilities for teaching early modern women's travel writing emerge from an assessment of documentary, literary, and other sources? And what sorts of critical editions, anthologies, or electronic databases can emerge out of these discussions?

Our schedule in preparation for the seminar is as follows:

#### **UPON RECEIPT OF THIS EMAIL**

To confirm your participation in this seminar, please respond to both of us (bernadette.andrea@utsa.edu; patricia.akhimie@rutgers.edu), including any corrections to your contact information (preferred name, institutional affiliation, email address). While we plan to conduct our pre-seminar communication via email and to use Dropbox for larger files, we are happy to assist anyone who has questions about either. SAA guidelines stress that “no paper should be circulated outside the seminar membership without the author's permission. Acknowledgement of another participant's paper is incumbent upon its user, whether or not the work has subsequently been published. An author's permission must be secured for any quoted materials.” The same applies to seminar participants' contact information. If you have any concerns or questions about this matter, please let us know.

#### **MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015**

Please email both of us 1) a working title and short abstract for your paper (200-300 words) and 2) a preliminary bibliography of 3-5 references related to the seminar topic. We will collate these abstracts and the references into one file, which we will post in Dropbox. At this time, you will receive an email with a link that will allow you to access all the seminar files and post your completed papers (be sure to check your “junk” email box in case your invitation from Dropbox is moved there). For more information on downloading and accessing Dropbox, see <<https://www.dropbox.com>>.

## **FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 2016**

Please post in Dropbox your completed paper (3000 words maximum, not including bibliographical references). You are expected to read all the papers prior to the seminar, some of which you will engage more specifically as a respondent. Shortly after receiving all the papers, we will cluster them in thematic groups and assign a respondent for each paper, the details of which we will email to you.

These responses (500-600 words) are meant to stimulate conversation across papers, with attention to the focus of the seminar as detailed in the description above. Responses should engage the analytical, historical, literary, theoretical, and related issues a paper raises, with the goal of facilitating discussion and exchange, rather than critique its substance, style, or structure.

## **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2016**

By this date, you should email your response to the members of your thematic group, copying both of us.

At this time, we must send to the SAA “the names of seminar participants who are entitled to be listed in the printed conference program.” It is the policy of the SAA “that all seminars should require advance work and only those who have completed the advance work can be listed.” So, please ensure that you have met the deadlines for papers and responses listed above, as well as checked that your SAA membership and registration are current.

In addition, if you wish to submit a revised abstract for your paper, please email a copy to us by this date. We will post on Dropbox the final collated file of abstracts and will provide hard copies to auditors at the seminar.

Finally, at least a week prior to the conference, we will email an agenda for the seminar, including some discussion questions based on our readings of the papers and responses. We will also provide information about a post-seminar gathering to which you are invited to join us for drinks and/or dinner.

## **MARCH 23–26, 2016**

The Shakespeare Association of America will hold its Forty-Fourth Annual Meeting at the Sheraton New Orleans Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana, from Wednesday, 23 March to Saturday, 26 March. We will let you know our time slot as soon as we receive this information.

**STAGE TWO: LIST OF RESPONDENTS** (Sent to participants 1/24/2016 and posted in Dropbox):

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for posting your papers on Dropbox. Patricia and I are very impressed with their quality and range; we are looking forward to a lively conversation when we meet in New Orleans around the topics you have covered. For now, we ask that you respond to the papers in your thematic cluster, as listed below, by February 12 at the latest. (This is also our

deadline as organizers to contact the SAA with a list of participants who have completed the advance work for the seminar; these names will be listed in the official program.)

Your response should be no more than 500 words (one to two pages) and it should address all the papers in your group (for instance, in group one, Barbour would respond to Robertson and Sen; Robertson would respond to Barbour and Sen; and Sen would respond to Barbour and Robertson). We are seeking to elicit points for further discussion at the seminar itself and so recommend that the responses focus on suggestions and questions to help advance these projects rather than offer critiques of style, structure, etc. Can you suggest further directions for research? Further points of comparison? Can you suggest additional primary or secondary sources? What are some of the methodological challenges of this type of research? How does it add to current critical conversations? How does it relate to other disciplines? Of course, these questions are themselves only suggestions. Please approach your response in whatever way seems most productive in the context of your group.

We asked in our welcome letter that you email your response to your group members, as well as to us (Bernadette and Patricia). However, if you decide as a group that posting on Dropbox makes more sense, that is also an option. Either way, Patricia and I will draw on these responses to develop some framing questions for our seminar, which will proceed through these thematic groupings to give everyone enough time to address questions, issues, and further lines of argument related to “Early Modern Women and Travel.”

In addition, I’ve posted updated abstracts, with the titles you used for your papers. If you have any more changes, please let us know by February 12. We will provide copies of these abstracts for auditors of our seminar.

If you have any other questions or suggestions, don’t hesitate to let me and Patricia know.

[The titles of participants’ papers and their email addresses follow, grouped as listed in the agenda below.]

**STAGE THREE: AGENDA FOR SEMINAR** (Sent to participants 3/9/2016 and posted in Dropbox):

**Agenda for SAA 2016 Seminar:**

**“Early Modern Women and Travel: Local Histories and Global Designs”**

Seminar Leaders: Patricia Akhimie (*Rutgers University, Newark*) and

Bernadette Andrea (*University of Texas, San Antonio*)

**Friday, March 25, 2016 3:30 to 5:30 pm**

Drawing on the questions we offered in our initial description of the seminar and those generated by your preliminary responses to each other’s papers, we propose to facilitate discussion by means of the following thematic groupings:

1. Global Women Travellers

Richmond Barbour, *Desdemona and Mrs. Keeling*

Karen Robertson, *Mariam Khan, The Resourceful Widow: Generic Shadows in the Archive*

Amrita Sen, *Sailing to India: Women, Travel, and Censorship in the Seventeenth Century*

## 2. Women Travellers in the British Isles:

Elisa Oh, *The Trajectories of a Colonial Subject: Pocahontas' Choreographies of Ritual, Travel, and Dance*

Kristiane Stapleton, *Taking it to the Streets: Collectively Researching Women's Movements in the Streets of Early Modern London*

Laura Williamson Ambrose, "Paths to dwell in": *Maps of Memory and Lady Anne Clifford's "Way"*

## 3. Women's Travel and *Othello*

Laura Aydelotte, *Mapping Shakespeare's Women*

Stephanie Chamberlain, *In Pursuit of the Anthropophagi: Desire and Danger of Women's Travel in Othello*

Eder Jaramillo, *Women and the Travels of Colonial Discourse in Shakespeare's Plays*

Michael Slater, *Desdemona's "Divided Duty": Gender and Courtesy in Othello*

## 4. Staging Women's Travel

Ruben Espinosa, "In th'habiliments of the goddess Isis": *Marian Mobility, Black Madonnas, and the Cleopatra Complex*

Gaywyn E. Moore, *English Women, Romance, and Global Travel in Thomas Heywood's The Fair Maid of the West, Part 1*

Dyani Johns Taff, *Precarious Travel, Gender, and Narration in Shakespeare's Pericles, Prince of Tyre and Margaret Cavendish's The Blazing World*

Suzanne Tartamella, *Travelling Companions: Shakespeare's As You Like It and the Book of Ruth*

We plan to devote twenty to twenty-five minutes to each theme, allowing for very brief comments (2 to 3 minutes) from each member of the thematic group before broadening to a conversation within each group, to which other seminar participants are encouraged to contribute. Indeed, many of your papers speak to multiple issues and themes and we hope to have a lively dialogue that extends your initial responses. Naturally, you should not read your papers or responses aloud, as you can assume everyone has read them in advance. Rather, your initial comments should situate your contribution in terms of our questions

below and other questions from the responses. In the last twenty minutes of the seminar, we will invite the auditors to join our discussion. For those who wish, we can continue our discussion over drinks and/or dinner (details TBA).

As a reminder, our questions around the broad topic of “Early Modern Women and Travel” are meant to be suggestive rather than prescriptive and we hope you will add more at the seminar:

**What constitutes “travel” for early modern women? How is women’s mobility accomplished and to what ends? How do we assess women’s agency as “voluntary” and “involuntary” travelers?**

**How do we understand “travel writing” in terms of early modern women? What sources should we consider or reconsider? How do literary sources, including Shakespeare’s plays, illuminate women’s travel in the period? What archival questions emerge from a discussion of early modern women’s travel?**

**What critical and theoretical approaches do we bring to a study of women’s “domestic travel” within the British Isles? Across Western Europe? Into the Islamic world? Into the Americas? What are the connections between the “local histories” of women’s travel and the “global designs” of the early modern/colonial period?**

**What possibilities for teaching early modern women’s travel writing emerge from an assessment of documentary, literary, and other sources? And what sorts of critical editions, anthologies, or electronic databases can emerge out of these discussions?**

We look forward to the upcoming conference and our conversation. If you have any other questions or suggestions about our plan for the seminar in the meanwhile, please do not hesitate to let us know.