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## **Cutting and Pasting in Renaissance England: Gender, Authorship, and the Use of Others' Words**

### **“Her Book”: Early Modern Women and Book Inscription**

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This paper explores forms of writing that resist easy classification, such as the various kinds of inscriptions we find in books owned by early modern women: copied passages by other writers that can take on new meaning when incorporated into claims of ownership and personal identity; the ‘ownership verses’ that appear in book after book but which appear to have no printed source; and marginalia as a form of palimpsestic creativity. I begin with a survey of recent research on female book ownership, sketching ways of ‘reading’ booklists as texts, even in the absence of the books themselves. I note the methodological affinities between reading textual absence, presence, and conjunction in booklists with the challenges of reading textual cutting and pasting, borrowing and appropriation in miscellanies. I conclude with some examples of women’s ownership inscriptions in pre-1700 English books, including examples of ‘ownership verses’; a book containing copied-out poetry by Katherine Philips; and an example of marginalia restricted to original English translation of all the Latin words and sayings in a copy of Elizabeth Grymeston's *Meditations*. How e.g. do we read marginal translation: as copying? appropriating? an academic exercise that is also in its own right creatively original? In short, this paper offers a series of case studies that raise the kinds of classificatory questions the seminar collectively addresses.

### **Lucy Hutchinson, Early Modern Women, Writing, and Virtue**

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Lucy Hutchinson’s classical education was attained despite her mother’s resistance to the breadth and depth of such an education for a young woman. Even though her mother was hesitant to support the extent of Lucy Hutchinson’s education, Hutchinson notes in her autobiography “A Fragment” that, even in gestation, her mother “foretold” of her coming child’s bright future. Hutchinson’s retelling of her mother’s words in her fragmented autobiography provides us with an important conception of Lucy Hutchinson’s self-identity, one germinating from the prophesy provided by her mother. While her mother’s resistance to her education appears to make her mother an obstacle to Hutchinson’s endeavors – endeavors which make Hutchinson a historically significant early modern woman writer – it’s only endemic of the early modern perspectives of women (which scholars have researched thoroughly). However, what scholars have yet to explore is the emotional rhetoric of this “here say” legacy: a mother’s legacy of believing that virtue had been inculcated in her children, and that, like a seed, that virtue would grow to impact both family and nation. The existence of this mother-daughter link in Hutchinson’s writing suggests that there may be an early modern understanding of mothers, daughters, and virtue, creating a matriarchal legacy of virtuous women significant not just to the family from which they emerge but also their nation (Trubowitz). In the end, Hutchinson’s publications can be read like virtue “sprinkling” or “peppering.” The early modern view of virtue was that virtue was copy and pasted from mothers to children, from family to nation. We can trace this idea of copying and pasting virtue in Hutchinson’s epic, memoirs, and elegies in the way that she directly quotes scripture and uses Puritanized rhetoric. This paper investigates the ways that Hutchinson’s writing depicts virtue and how virtue is attained and shared.

## **“From her owne mouth”: Confession, Authorship, and Narrative Authority in Early Modern Crime Pamphlets**

Emily George, University of Washington / South Seattle College

Producing early modern “true crime” narratives involved compiling fragmented parts. Prison letters, dedications, confessions, scaffold speeches, margin notes, woodcuts, witness lists, and other pieces of the story were circulated and reassembled in pamphlets, ballads, and plays, presenting multiple versions of sensational stories featuring domestic violence, witchcraft, murderous mothers, and petty treason. In the competitive environment of early modern cheap print, access to the imprisoned could lend authenticity to these narratives. But this could also pose a problem: the authority of the crime narrative derived from the authority of the criminal, creating a vexed entanglement of subjectivities and agendas. In this essay, I focus on several of the crime pamphlets of Henry Goodcole, Visitor of Newgate, who used his unique level of access to prisoners including Elizabeth Sawyer, Elizabeth Evans, and Alice Clarke as they awaited execution to publish *The wonderfull discoverie of Elizabeth Sanyer a witch* (1621), *Heavens Speedie Hue and Cry sent after Lust and Murther* (1635), and *The Adultrresses Funerall Day* (1635). These purportedly authoritative accounts also include contradictory confessions and scaffold speeches, admissions of guilt that dispute the details of official convictions and resist easy resolution. I explore how the resulting patchwork of truth-claims, appearing in typographic shifts, subtitles, running headers, incongruous woodcuts, and disruptive marginalia, blurs the line between collaboration, personation, and appropriation.

## **Control-Shift-C, Control-Shift-V: Copying Form and Meter with Isabella Whitney**

Jennifer Higginbotham, The Ohio State University

It’s well-known that in *A Sweet Nosegay* (1573), Isabella Whitney drew on Hugh Plat’s *Floures of Philosophie* (1572) as inspiration for the content of her series of poetic platitudes. To engage with the genre of the commonplace, Whitney draws upon the verse meter we now know as ballad stanza and which the early moderns called common meter. Whitney’s style was influenced by popular secular poetics as well as English psalms where common meter had become the dominant formal choice for translations. In this paper, I will be looking at the way Whitney’s compositional process figures form, like content, as a kind of cutting and pasting akin to the way we think of copying formatting in Microsoft Word (highlight the area with the desired format, hit Control-Shift-C, highlight the text you want to reformat, hit Control-Shift-V). Her process is indicative of mid-sixteenth-century aesthetics, which valued the repeatability of form and its ability to generate new material through the recycling of metrical patterns. I compare the ability of ballad meter in *A Sweet Nosegay* to generate poetry to the way contemporary poetry generators and ChatGPT follow patterns to write verse. While the power of AI to “write” poetry has disturbing ethical implications, when put into dialogue with Whitney’s technique, it sheds light on the way that form can self-generate and author its own text.

## **“Angst with a Happy Ending”: Fannish Affect in Anna Weamys’ *Continuation of Sir Philip Sydney’s Arcadia***

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In her *Continuation of Sir Philip Sydney’s Arcadia*, printed in 1651, the twenty-one-year-old Anna Weamys appropriates the characters of Sidney’s unfinished sixteenth-century romance and ties up the loose ends of his story. Her version of *Arcadia* ends with several marriages that Sidney’s revised

text had not yet accomplished when he died in 1586—including some that Sidney seems to have intended, but others that he may not have. Indeed, Weamys’ romance prioritizes not Sidney’s primary romantic pairings (Musidorus/Pamela and Pyrocles/Philoclea), but rather the relationships of secondary characters: its subtitle is *Wherein is handled the loves of Amphialus and Helena Queen of Corinth, Prince Plangus and Erona. With the Historie of the Loves of Old Claius and Young Strephon to Urania.*

Weamys’ *Continuation* has received minimal academic attention. One notable exception is a treatment by Elizabeth Spiller, who gives it an excellent historical reading in light of the English Civil War and the recent execution of Charles I, placing Weamys in a culture of royalist writers who turned to romance as a covert expression of their politics and culture. My own interest moves in a different direction: I read Weamys’ *Continuation* as evidence of early modern “fan culture.” Abigail De Kosnik, a seminal scholar of fandom studies, briefly references Weamys’ appropriation of Sidney as an instance of pre-modern fan fiction, and I hope to elaborate on this insight. We can see Weamys balancing her concern with being faithful to the voices and personalities of Sidney’s characters with her own plot preferences. I argue that Weamys’ special interest in the Amphialus/Helena pairing qualifies as early modern “shipping,” since in Sidney’s text Helena’s passion for the anti-hero Amphialus remains unrequited. Weamys’ fixation on Sidney’s most potentially tragic characters gives us an early example of fannish affect that valorizes “angst with a happy ending.”

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