

Newcomb Seminar
“Early Modern Women Philosophers” (Spring 2003)

Paul Lodge, Dept. of Philosophy, Tulane University

Texts

Atherton, Margaret ed.: *Women Philosophers of the Early Modern Period*. (Hackett Press, 1994).

Conway, Anne. *Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*. Ed. Allison Coudert & Taylor Corse (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Cavendish, Mary: *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy*. Ed. Eileen O’Neill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001)

Course Reader *includes other primary texts below & secondary texts (not listed)*.

Requirements

The grade for the course will be based on:

- 1) Attendance and participation
- 2) One in-class presentation
- 3) Two short critical analyses (5 pages - 1500 words)
- 4) One term paper of (10-15 pages 4500 words)

- 5) Students will also be required to participate in a semester-long project to construct a web-site for the seminar.

List of Topics

Week 1: Introductory Lecture (no readings)

Section 1: Women Philosophers as Critics of Canonical Figures

Week 2: Elizabeth of Bohemia’s critique of Descartes’ dualism of mind and body

Reading: Selections from the correspondence between Elizabeth and Descartes

Week 3: Damaris Masham’s critique of Leibniz’s ‘New System’

Reading: Selections from the correspondence between Masham and Leibniz

Week 4: Mary Shepherd's critique of Berkeley

Reading: Selections from 'Essay on the Perception of an External Universe'

Week 5: Mary Shepherd's critique of Hume

Reading: Selections from 'An Essay on the Relation of Cause and Effect'

Section 2: The Philosophy of Anne Conway

Week 6: Introduction to the philosophy of Anne Conway

Reading: Introduction to *Principles of the most Ancient and Modern Philosophy* by Allison Coudert.

Week 7: Conway on God and creation

Reading: *Principles of the most Ancient and Modern Philosophy* (Chs. 1-4)

Week 8: Conway and the Kabbalah

Reading: *Principles of the most Ancient and Modern Philosophy* (Chs. 5-6)

Week 9: Conway's metaphysics

Reading: *Principles of the most Ancient and Modern Philosophy* (Chs. 7-9)

Section 3: The Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish

Week 10: Introduction to philosophy of Margaret Cavendish

Reading: Introduction to *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* by Eileen O'Neill

Week 11: Cavendish's account of the material world

Reading: Selections from *Observations Upon Experimental Philosophy Grounds of Natural Philosophy*

Week 12: Cavendish's account of the mind and human nature

Reading: Selections from *Observations Upon Experimental Philosophy Grounds of Natural Philosophy*

Section 4: The Philosophy of Catharine Trotter

Week 13: Trotter on human nature and the doctrine of resurrection

Readings: selections from *a Defense of Mr. Locke's Essay of Human Understanding*

Week 14: Trotter on the epistemological foundations of morality

Readings: selections from *a Defense of Mr. Locke's Essay of Human Understanding*