

Bell-Ringer Handout: Passi's *On the Defects of Women* (1598)

Below is the Table of Contents, or chapter list, from an anti-women text of the *Querelle des Femmes* from Giuseppe Passi entitled *Dei Donneschi Difetti* or *On The Defects of Women* (Venice, 1598 [reprint 1618]). The book is a systematic assault on women and their character that runs for 380 dense pages. You can see something of the tone and breadth of the misogynistic contributions to the *Querelle des Femmes* in the Table of Contents below.

On the Defects of Women: Table of Contents

1. What a Woman Is.
2. Of Proud Women.
3. Of Avaricious and Treacherous Women, of the evil effects that avarice generates in them and of their unhappy ends because of it.
4. Of Intemperate, Lascivious Women, given to carnal appetites in lustfulness.
5. Of Wrathful, Choleric, and Furious Women.
6. Of Dissolute, Debauched, Heavy-Drinking, Wine-Loving, and Drunken Women.
7. Of Envious Women, and how envy is the cause of many evils.
8. Of Slothful and Idle Women.
9. Of Vainglorious Women.
10. Of Ambitious Women.
11. Of Ungrateful Women, and how the vice of ingratitude is always blameworthy in every state of person.
12. Of Cruel Women, and how cruelty harms not only those who suffer it, but also those who practice it.
13. Of Adulterous and Vagrant Women, and how adultery is always blameworthy.
14. Of Women of Easy Virtue, Prostitutes, Whores, and Shameless Women.
15. Of Woman Pimps, and how pimping is a notable vice.
16. Of Sharp-Tongued, Chattering, Slandorous, Murmuring, Lying, Deceitful, and Biting Women.
17. Of Curious Women.

Avaricious: greedy

Intemperate: given to excessive use of intoxicating liquors

Lascivious: filled with or showing sexual desire

Choleric: easily moved to often unreasonable or excessive anger

Dissolute: lacking restraint

Debauched: extreme indulgence in bodily pleasures

Vainglorious: excessive pride

Vagrant: someone who wanders from place to place

Pimps: people who controls sex workers

18. Of Pertinacious and Obstinate Women.
19. Of Litigious, Contentious, Quarrelsome, Discordant, and Disagreeable Women.
20. Of Women who are Witches, Enchanters, Poisoners, Maleficent, Superstitious, Spell-casters, Sorceresses, and Fortune-tellers.
21. Of Hypocritical Women.
22. Of Fraudulent and Deceitful Women.
23. How unseemly it is for a Woman to make herself beautiful, what happens to her through this beautification, with the artificial cultivation of hair, and the ridiculous madness of those head ornaments of hers.
24. How blameworthy excessive ornaments are in Women, how she may lawfully use them, and which are her true, not false ornaments, with some of their abuses.
25. How suspicious a Beautiful Woman is, how dangerous, fragile, fleeting, transitory beauty is in her, and how it is a cause of pride, immodesty, and other evils.
26. That all Men, but particularly married ones, should be very circumspect in revealing their important secrets to their women or wives.
27. That one should not accept counsel from a Woman, and that her counsel is unstable, fragile, and unsound.
28. Of Jealous Women, how much jealousy can do in them, and of its evil effects in them.
29. Of Tyrannical Women.
30. Of Thieving Women.
31. Of Fickle, Inconstant, Unstable, Light, Credulous, Foolish, and Simple Women.
32. Of Cowardly, Base, Timid, and Fearful Women.
33. Of Worthless, Inept, and Lazy Women.
34. Of Vain Women.
35. Women who have shown desperation in adverse cases.

**Pertinacious and
Obstinate:** stubborn

Litigious: prone to
fighting

Maleficent: producing
harm or evil

Credulous: willingness
to believe with little
reason or evidence