

I. Intro – Historical Context

1. Disclaimers: I am not suggesting that there were no women writers
2. I am not suggesting that these writers hated women or supported patriarchy
3. Elizabeth's reign is a time of great change for England
4. Reformation: Abolition of monasteries cuts off means for women to have a full independent life of the mind
5. Inheritance laws – 14th-century shift to primogeniture (inheritance by eldest male descendent, even if there are daughters) encourages arranged marriages across social groups, to exchange wealth for title in lineages.
6. Only alternative to marriage by this period is domestic service
7. Marriage age – mid to late 20's for men and women
8. Literacy – many women learned to read but not write

II. Quotations, and assumptions about women

What should a woman be?

1. Women are inferior and weak; should be silent and compliant - Shrew Prep "Much Ado" quotes by laying out the conventional vs. unconventional couple
2. Claudio wants to verify that Hero will inherit before he seeks her hand
3. Beatrice – outspoken and not looking to marry – is admired but disapproved of
4. When Hero's chastity is questioned, no one listens to her, and her father wishes both himself and she were dead. Her chastity is her cardinal value.
5. Women are fickle, deceitful, and untrustworthy (Note the "lily-white")
6. You can't even blame them, it's just their natures; they're made inferior.
7. When praising women, we focus on chastity and soft-spokenness
Wicked women: Strong, loud, deceitful, sexually promiscuous
8. Cucking-stool – the stereotype of the shrewd outspoken woman and the ready punishment for it by the patriarchy
9. Women's power of allure is in the end no match for male entitlement
10. The cautionary tale of a girl who loses her chastity. She is damaged goods, has no recourse in society now, and bitterly regrets her choice, serves as warning.
11. Women are false, endlessly deceptive—again, it's in their nature
12. Negative stereotype of the strong woman: the clever unfaithful wife who puts her needs and pleasure ahead of her duty to her husband.
13. Hamlet – blames Claudius's interfering with his inheritance on Gertrude for remarrying and having attraction to Claudius

Face-painting: Makeup comes to England, becomes a signifier of beauty and class

14. Luxurious makeup concealing a foul and rotten interior (aging Elizabeth)
15. Shakespeare's lads' banter shows the racial attitudes that underlay the desire for women to be pale and fair
16. Red and white show up constantly as exemplars of beauty, but women are criticized increasingly for relying on "ornament" to achieve them
17. An honest darker-skinned lover is preferable to a dishonest pale one
18. Contrasting the deceptiveness and transactional sexuality of upper-class women to the honest simplicity and beauty of "nut-brown", sexually free, working class women
19. Summation of women as worthless in all ways