

*Bathsua Makin and Mary More with a Reply to More by Robert Whitehall:  
Educating English Daughters: Late Seventeenth-Century Debates.*

Frances N. Teague and Margaret J. M. Ezell, eds.

With Jessica Walker. *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series 44; Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 491.* Toronto: Iter Academic Press; Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2016. xvi + 202 pp. \$34.95.

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*Educating English Daughters* is a recent addition to *The Other Voice* series, which makes available texts by early modern women who challenged their era's dominant gender structures. Frances Teague offers Bathsua Makin's *The Ancient Education of Gentlewomen*, and Margaret J. M. Ezell pairs Mary More's *The Woman's Right* with a response by Robert Whitehall, *The Woman's Right Proved False*. Both scholars rely on their earlier editions—*Bathsua Makin, Woman of Learning* (Bucknell University Press, 1998) and *The Patriarch's Wife: Literary Evidence and the History of the Family* (University of North Carolina Press, 1987)—as their base texts. By pairing the two writers in updated editions, accompanied by a general introduction, the volume successfully contributes to the mission of the series and orients the reader to issues of women and education.

The general introduction traces early modern educational developments, outlines the challenges women faced in circulating their ideas in writing, and examines the difficulties scholars confront in establishing the provenance of women's texts. This background prepares the reader for the primary texts, which are framed by expertly written overviews, the highlights of this volume. Through exhaustive analyses, both editors establish that Makin and More—and, by extension, early modern women writers in general—are best understood within their complex family and social networks. The texts themselves are offered in modern-spelling editions, and helpful notes identify the writers' biblical, classical, and contemporary references. These features make the volume useful for beginners, but experts will be equally rewarded by the depth and nuance of the contextual materials.

Teague orients the reader to Makin's *The Ancient Education of Gentlewomen* (1673) by setting forth proof that she authored this defense of learned women. A child prodigy, Makin was raised in a home that valued learning, and she associated with male thinkers interested in science and education, as well as learned women. She tutored the princess Elizabeth, daughter to King Charles I, and other daughters of important families, who are mentioned in the text. Teague also confronts the contradictions in Makin's somewhat disjointed text that have led some critics to question her authorship. *The Ancient Education* begins with a dedication to women readers and three letters purportedly written by men that engage in the debate over women's education. The body of the essay argues that women are clearly able to learn, explains that all people will benefit if women are educated, and gives details of

how that education should be carried out. The text concludes with an advertisement for a new school for women. For Teague, this multivocality reads as Makin's rhetorically inventive attempt to persuade the reader.

Ezell similarly contextualizes Mary More's writing. More spent her life among merchants and business people, and she was connected to philosophers and scientists. She was also an artist: she gave the Bodleian her copy of a Holbein painting, worked among other women artists, and may have taken apprentices. The world of Robert Whitehall, the Oxford don who was her literary sparring partner, receives equally acute analysis. The acquaintance between the two is improbable, but Ezell convincingly demonstrates that they were both familiar with "the conventions of friendly social literary exchanges" and engaged in ongoing correspondence (118). Their essays, written in the early 1670s, survive in a fair-copy manuscript miscellany, likely compiled by Whitehall (BL MS Harl. 3918). In *The Woman's Right*, More argues that the Bible grants less power to husbands than English law and custom have generally allowed, and she concludes by urging parents to educate their daughters on this topic. In his rejoinder, Whitehall worries that More is inverting established social order. While Makin's text is clearly about education, More's essay fits a bit less comfortably in this framework, for education is just one point in her larger investigation of the biblical misreadings that have perpetuated gender-based injustice.

In sum, this approachable volume is pertinent not only to readers studying Makin, More, or Whitehall, but also to those interested in early modern women and in questions of education. Moreover, both editors' analyses serve as models of early modern scholarship as they trace complex social networks, applying them fruitfully to literary analysis.

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