Pedagogies/Exchanges--Attending To Early Modern Women: Remapping Routes and Spaces
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Co-Organizers:
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Workshop Summary:
Our interactive workshop focuses discussion on teaching and learning about early modern women in undergraduate curricula. Workshop co-organizers Rosanne Denhard, an experienced teacher of early modern studies in literature, drama, and interdisciplinary arts, and Dawn Shamburger, costume historian and theatrical costume designer, invite colleagues to join an experimental, multi-disciplinary conversation about research-based collaboration and interdisciplinary pedagogy. The workshop co-organizers will share examples from our own disciplinary—and interdisciplinary—practices, encouraging workshop participants to contribute their own teaching stories and strategies to the discussion as a basis for envisioning together new and imaginative possibilities for undergraduate teaching and learning.

Workshop Description:
We will present examples of the collaborations of our literary studies, arts, and historical costume/material culture students in contextual research, performance experiments, academic travel, and the research and construction of historical costume.

Undergraduate students are the scholars, teachers, theatre directors, librarians, and museum curators of the future. By recognizing the importance of introducing and deepening knowledge and understanding of the lives and works of early modern women through student research embedded in the undergraduate curriculum, we build a strong and sustainable foundation for the continued growth and development of the subject, helping to shape the teaching priorities and scholarship of the future.

To open the workshop, we will invite participants into our classrooms virtually with a multimedia presentation, sharing examples from our teaching practices and collaborations, including multimedia examples of student research projects that cross the boundaries of literary studies, material culture, performance, and design. We will present highlights of projects conducted both on-campus and during academic travel; teaching-through-performance experiments; and excerpts from our students’ presentations at recent undergraduate research conferences. We will focus on courses that foreground the undergraduate experience of research, collaboration, interdisciplinarity, and academic travel in undergraduate study of early modern women in courses that include the study of early modern men as well. Examples will include a senior seminar course focused on early modern life-writing and students’ own contemporary life-writing projects; experiments in teaching dramatic literature by early modern women through performance; historical and material culture research and costume design; and strategies for extending learning about the culture of early modern women through academic travel (20 minutes).
After our introductory presentation, the co-organizers will encourage open discussion (approximately 60 minutes) of the experiences of faculty teaching about early modern women in undergraduate curricula. At past Attending to Early Modern Women symposia and related conferences, informal and spontaneous conversations with colleagues have often offered the most direct and productive engagement with teaching and learning issues. The workshop co-organizers hope that by facilitating and foregrounding open-ended collaborative conversation about teaching and learning, our session will provide colleagues with a forum for furthering these vital and fruitful conversations.

Initial prompt questions for workshop consideration include:

~How can we use undergraduate research as a powerful tool for active learning about early modern women? How do we model, encourage, and facilitate a culture of research among our undergraduate students?

~What place does student collaboration have in this work? How do we encourage a spirit of collaboration among undergraduates?

~How can we facilitate collaborations as faculty? How do we sustain collaborations in teaching and learning projects with colleagues on our own campuses and across geographic distance? How do we involve students in this work?

~What place does interdisciplinarity have in our work with teaching early modern women?

~How can academic travel extend learning beyond the traditional classroom setting? What special benefits can this have for the study of early modern women interdisciplinarily?

~How do we integrate the study of the works of early modern women into the broader canon? Do we teach about early modern women in women’s studies courses or in more general settings which include the study of early modern women and men? How does this affect teaching and learning?

~What new or experimental teaching approaches might be relevant or useful?

In conclusion, the co-organizers will identify major points of the discussion and facilitate a brief summary of the session’s concerns and priorities (10 minutes). We look forward to a stimulating conversation on teaching and learning with colleagues from various disciplines and at different stages of their undergraduate teaching careers.

Reading List:
Instead of assigned readings, the workshop co-organizers request workshop participants to bring to the session some of their own experiences in teaching about early modern women in ways that might foreground collaboration, interdisciplinarity, undergraduate research, and academic travel. Plan to share syllabi, sample assignments, brief statements of pedagogical philosophy, and more open-ended questions and/or topics for exploration in group conversation.