

Panels at RSA (Toronto, 17-19 March 2019)

RSA conference, Toronto, Mar 17-19, 2019

Deadline: Jul 20, 2018

ArtHist Redaktion

Calls for papers for the Renaissance Society of America conference in Toronto:

[\[1\]](#) Re-assessing the Early Modern Court: Connection, Negotiation and Transgression

[\[2\]](#) He Said - She Said: Women's Words in Defence of Women in Early Modern Europe

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[\[1\]](#)

Subject: Re-assessing the Early Modern Court: Connection, Negotiation and Transgression

Contributor: Maria Maurer maria-maurer@utulsa.edu

2019 will mark the 50th anniversary of the publication of Norbert Elias' *The Court Society*, which placed the early modern court at the center of a long civilizing process wherein the king exercised social control over and imposed emotional restraint upon his courtiers. While his methods and conclusions remain contested, Elias called attention to the role of the court in both early modern and modern society. Since the publication of *The Court Society* scholarship on the court has proliferated, yet we still tend to treat the court as a closed and controlled system with elaborate means of monitoring behavior and excluding outsiders.

This panel seeks to break open the early modern court by focusing on the court as a point of contact rather than a realm of separation. We welcome papers that examine relationships between courts and courtiers, as well as those that analyze the intermingling of social strata or connections between the court and civic or religious authorities. The panel also seeks to illuminate the ways in which fields such as critical gender, race, and sexuality studies and transnational studies have changed the ways in which we approach the court. What roles did servants and slaves play at court? How did courts function in non-European contexts, and what effects did international trade, diplomacy and colonization have upon court structures?

Given the re-birth of a small, but extremely wealthy and politically influential class in the 21st century, the 2019 meeting of RSA offers us a chance to re-assess our approaches to the early modern court and its continued relevance in our contemporary society.

Paper topics might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Relationships between or among court centers (European and/or non-European)
- Colonial courts and relationships between indigenous rulers and colonizers
- Social climbing or disfavor at court

- Negotiations of courtly strictures; this might include transgressing or stretching rules governing ritual, etiquette, gender, and the use or abuse of court positions, as well as violence, theft or other unsanctioned behaviors
- Laudatory and/or satirical representations of the court and its members
- The roles of servants and/or slaves as social or cultural agents
- Contacts between courts and civic or religious organizations

Please send an abstract of 300 words, paper title and a brief curriculum vitae to Maria Maurer (maria-maurer@utulsa.edu) by 20 July 2018. Selected panelists will be asked to shorten their abstracts and paper titles to conform with RSA guidelines by 10 August 2018.

[\[2\]](#)

Subject: He Said - She Said: Women's Words in Defence of Women in Early Modern Europe

Contributor: Sarah Schell sshell@aud.edu

"Do you really believe ... that everything historians tell us about men – or about women – is actually true? You ought to consider the fact that these histories have been written by men, who never tell the truth except by accident." - The Worth of Women (1600)

Writing about women in the late medieval and early modern period focused on ideals of female behaviour. In the 16th and 17th centuries the discussion became a public debate over not just how women should act, but also whether or not they were even capable of the prescribed behaviours: what was the nature of womankind? The "controversy" reached its height in the sixteenth century, with attacks and defences flying off the printing presses.

Not content to leave their defence to men, writers such as Moderata Fonte (quoted above) produced works that provided a counterpoint to traditional narratives that cast women as incapable and morally weak. From Christine de Pizan's 'La cite des dames' (1405) to Archangela Tarabotti's 'Tirana Paterna' (1654), women have sought to directly confront misogynist views on the purported nature of women and their appropriate roles and behaviours in society.

This panel invites submissions on women who consciously and directly challenged the male-dominated discourse by interjecting their own voices into it. How did these women attempt to change or alter the debate? What argumentative tools/mediums did they choose? What were their expectations of the intervention? Who was the audience? How were such interventions received? What were the ramifications of such direct / public actions for these women?

Suggested topics may include but are not limited to: "in defence of" and other activist texts; literary or visual representations of 'illustrious women' cycles; conduct manuals or advice texts written by women for women; women educators; political tracts/political activism by women; and philosophical or religious writing on the role and nature of women.

Papers from all disciplines will be considered.

Please submit 200-word proposals to Sarah Schell (sshell@aud.edu) and Tabitha Kenlon (tkenlon@aud.edu). Please include your name, email address, institutional affiliation, title of paper, and a brief CV.

Feel free to email us with any questions.

ArtHist.net

Deadline: July 25th, 2018

Reference:

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