

# HP212-15 Knowing Women: Gender, Education and Power in Hispanic Writing

**24/25**

**Department**

School of Modern Languages and Cultures

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 2

**Module leader**

Leticia Villamediana Gonzalez

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

9 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

This module explores questions of gender and feminist thinking across different periods of Hispanic culture, focusing on the Golden Age and the Hispanic Enlightenment.

### Module aims

The aim of this module is to explore the different ways in which authors and thinkers have engaged with questions of gender and female equality in different periods of Hispanic culture. This will be done initially by focusing on controversies surrounding women's access to education and the 'querelle des femmes' as a major locus for feminist debate in the early modern period and the 'Siglo de las Luces', alongside related literary conventions that conventionally impose limitations on female agency. Students will analyse how the presentation of these issues varies not only by period but also by genre, and will study a variety of different kinds of text, from fiction and drama to poetry and the treatise. Emphasis will be placed throughout on the detailed analysis of primary texts within their own cultural contexts, allowing students to see how these fundamental questions

have been engaged with in different ways over time.

## Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

The module will be divided into two sections.

Weeks 1-4: Gender and Knowledge in the Golden Age. This section will explore the presentation of established gender roles in early modern writing and the criticisms of the status quo voiced by María de Zayas, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and Ana Caro. This will be done by analyzing individual writers' ideological positions, which take the issue of women's access to education as a starting point for a defence of female equality more broadly, before assessing how – and how completely – such ideologies are reflected in these authors' literary output, and what challenges they pose to the unquestioned privileging of the male self in early modern culture.

Texts: María de Zayas, *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, *Desengaños amorosos* (extracts); Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, 'Respuesta a la muy ilustre sor Filotea de la Cruz' and short accompanying dossier of poetry; Ana Caro, 'Valor, agravio y mujer'.

Weeks 5-9: Gender and Knowledge in the Hispanic Enlightenment. This section will focus on how gender discourse in eighteenth-century Spain introduced new ideas about the role and education of women, but also continued previous intellectual debates (introduced in the first section of the module) that had been current since the fifteenth century. We will study three crucial and controversial texts which highlight the rational equality debate carried out at the heart of the Spanish empire: Benedictine friar Benito Jerónimo Feijoo's 'Defensa de las mujeres' (1726), and erudite writer Josefa Amar y Borbón's 'Discurso en defensa del talento de las mujeres' (1786). The former asserted women's rational equality with men and defended their intellectual capacity, while Amar y Borbón stoutly defended women's right to receive an education and to participate practically in the public sphere. Finally, we will look at women's experience in society, family, education, love and marriage through Leandro Fernández de Moratín's play *El sí de las niñas* (1806), and Maria Rosa Gálvez's 'Zinda', an antislavery play that explores the intersections of gender, race, and colonialism.

Week 10: Revision and Assessment Preparation (taught jointly by the two convenors)

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- An awareness of contemporary debates about gender and the role of women in different historical periods
- An ability to produce detailed close readings of complex texts, with reference to their context and analysis of stylistic features
- Intercultural awareness, understanding and competence
- Refined knowledge of language varieties, register, genre, nuances of meaning and language use
- Ability to access, read, and critically analyze primary and secondary source materials in the

target language

- Familiarity with the methodologies and approaches appropriate to the discipline

## Indicative reading list

Section one:

Primary texts:

Zayas y Sotomayor, María de, *Honesto entretenimiento y sarao*, ed. Julián Olivares, 2 vols. (Zaragoza: Prensas de la Universidad de Zaragoza, 2017). [Extracts]

Juana Inés de la Cruz, Sor, *The Answer/La respuesta*, ed. and tr. Electa Arenal and Amanda Powell (New York: Feminist Press, City University of New York, 1994)

Juana Inés de la Cruz, Sor, *Poesía lírica*, ed. José Carlos González Boixo, *Letras Hispánicas* 351 (Madrid: Cátedra, 2001). [Extracts]

Caro de Mallén, Ana: drama as printed in: Teresa Scott Soufas, ed., *Women's Acts: Plays by Women Dramatists of Spain's Golden Age* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1997).

Secondary reading (to be updated):

Albers, Irene, and Uta Felten, eds., *Escenas de transgresión: María de Zayas en su contexto literario-cultural* (Madrid and Frankfurt: Iberoamericana and Vervuert, 2009).

Archer, Robert, *The Problem of Woman in Late-Medieval Hispanic Literature* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2005).

Berg, Sander, *The Marvellous and the Miraculous in María de Zayas*, *Studies in Hispanic and Lusophone Cultures* 40 (Cambridge: Legenda, 2019).

Bergmann, Emilie, 'The Exclusion of the Femenine in the Cultural Discourse of the Golden Age: Juan Luis Vives and Fray Luis de León', in Alain Saens-Saint, ed., *Religion, Body, and Gender in Early Modern Spain* (San Francisco: Mellen Research UP, 1991), pp. 124-36.

Brooke, Alice, "'Las ciencias curiosas': Curiosity, Studiousness, and the New Philosophy in the Carta de Sor Filotea de la Cruz and the Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 94.7 (2017), 697-713.

Brownlee, Marina S., *The Cultural Labyrinth of María de Zayas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

Dopico Black, Georgina, *Perfect Wives, Other Women: Adultery and Inquisition in Early Modern Spain* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2001).

Foa, Sandra M., *Feminismo y forma narrativa: Estudio del tema y las técnicas de María de Zayas y Sotomayor* (Valencia: Albatros Hispanófila Ediciones, 1979).

Franco, Jean, 'Sor Juana explores space', in *Plotting Women: Gender and Representation in Mexico* (New York: Columbia UP, 1989), pp. 23-54.

Greer, Margaret Rich., *María de Zayas Tells Baroque Tales of Love and the Cruelty of Men* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000).

Griswold, Susan C., 'Topoi and Rhetorical Distance: The "Feminism" of María de Zayas', *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos* 14.2 (1980), 97-116.

Howe, Elizabeth Teresa, *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), especially pp. 157-86.

Jed, Stephanie, 'Gender, Rationality, and the Marketing of Knowledge', in Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker, eds., *Women, Race, and Writing in the Early Modern Period* (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 195-208.

Langle de Paz, Teresa, 'Beyond the Canon: New Documents on the Feminist Debate in Early

Modern Spain', *Hispanic Review* 70.3 (2002), 393-420.

Merrim, Stephanie, *Early Modern Women's Writing and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999).

Merrim, Stephanie, ed., *Feminist Perspectives on Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991).

Myers, Kathleen, 'Sor Juana's Respuesta: Rewriting the Vitae', *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 14 (1990), 459-71.

O'Brien, Eavan, *Women in the Prose of María de Zayas* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2010).

Paz, Octavio, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, o las trampas de la fe*, 2nd ed. (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994).

Perelmuter Pérez, Rosa, 'La estructura retórica de la Respuesta a Sor Filotea', *Hispanic Review* 51.2 (1983), 147-58.

Powell, Amanda, 'Revisiting the Querelle in María de San José Salazar and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Inciting Disturbances of Patriarchy', *Letras Femeninas* 35.1 (2009), 211-32.

Rhodes, Elizabeth, *Dressed to Kill: Death and Meaning in Zayas's 'Desengaños'* (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 2011).

Scott, Nina M., 'Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: "Let your women keep silence in the churches..."', *Women's Studies International Forum* 8 (1985), 511-19.

Scott, Nina M., "'If you are not pleased to favor me, put me out of your mind...': gender and authority in Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and the translation of her letter to the Reverend Father Maestro Antonio Núñez of the Society of Jesus', *Women's Studies International Forum* 11 (1988), 429-38.

Simerka, Barbara, 'Feminist Epistemology and Premodern Patriarchy, East and West: The Kagero Diary by Michitsuna's Mother and the Novellas of María de Zayas', *Letras Femeninas* 35.1 (2009), 149-67.

Terry, Arthur, 'Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: the end of a tradition', in *Seventeenth-Century Spanish Poetry: The power of artifice* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), pp. 238-55.

Vollendorf, Lisa, *Reclaiming the Body: María de Zayas's Early Modern Feminism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

Vollendorf, Lisa, ed., *Recovering Spain's Feminist Tradition* (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2001), especially pp. 88-102, 103-20.

Welles, Marcia L., 'María de Zayas y Sotomayor and her novela cortesana: a re-evaluation', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 55.4 (1978), 301-09.

Willis, Angela L., 'Fleeing the Model Home: María de Zayas Rewrites the Rules of Feminine Sensuality and Honra in the Boccaccesca Novela Cortesana', *Letras Femeninas* 35.2 (2009), 65-89.

## Section two:

### Primary texts:

Feijoo, Benito Jerónimo, 'Defensa de las mujeres', in *Teatro Crítico Universal*, ed. by Ángel Raimundo Fernández González (Madrid: Cátedra, 2006).

Amar y Borbón, Josefa, 'Defensa de las mujeres' (1787), translated in Barker, Joanna M., *In Defence of Women*, MHRA New Translations, Vol. 14 (Cambridge: MHRA, 2018).

Joyés y Blake, Inés, 'Apología de las mujeres' (1798) Translated in Barker, Joanna M., *In Defence of Women*, MHRA New Translations, Vol. 14 (Cambridge: MHRA, 2018).

Fernández de Moratín, Leandro, *El sí de las niñas*, ed. by Emilio Martínez Mata (Madrid: Cátedra, 2010).

### Secondary reading:

Bolufer Peruga, Mónica, *Mujeres e Ilustración: la construcción de la feminidad en la Ilustración española* (Valencia: Institució Alfons el Magnànim, 1998).

Bolufer Peruga, Mónica, *Mujeres e ilustración: una perspectiva europea*, Cuadernos de historia moderna, 6 (2007), 181-201.

Bolufer Peruga, Mónica, *La vida y escritura en el siglo XVIII: Inés Joyés: Apología de las Mujeres* (Valencia: Universitat de Valencia. Servei de publicacions, 2008).

Franklin Lewis, Elizabeth and Catherine M. Jaffe (eds.), *Eve's Enlightenment: Women's Experience in Spain and Spanish America, 1726-1839* (LSU Press, 2019).

Franklin Lewis, Elizabeth, Mónica Bolufer Peruga and Catherine M. Jaffe (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to the Hispanic Enlightenment* (London: Routledge, 2020).

Kitts, Sally-Ann, *The Debate on the Nature, Role and Influence of Woman in Eighteenth-Century Spain* (The Edwin Mellen Press, 1995).

Kitts, Sally-Ann, 'Power, Opposition and Enlightenment in Moratín's 'El sí de las niñas'', *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 86 (2009), 193-212.

Lehner, Ulrich L. (ed.), *Women, Enlightenment and Catholicism. A Transnational Biographical History* (London: Routledge, 2017).

Palacios Fernández, Emilio, *La mujer y las letras en la España del siglo XVIII* (Madrid: Ediciones del Laberinto, 2002)

Pao, Maria T., 'Educating Paquita: The Maid and Moratín', *Dieciocho*, 37 (2014), 81-103.

Smith, Theresa Ann, *The Emerging Female Citizen: Gender and Enlightenment in Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

Smith, Theresa Ann, 'Writing out of the Margins: Women, Translation, and the Spanish Enlightenment', *Journal of Women's History*, 15.1 (2003), 116-43.

## International

All modules delivered in SMLC are necessarily international. Students engage with themes and ideas from a culture other than that of the UK and employ their linguistic skills in the analysis of primary materials from a non-Anglophone context. Students will also be encouraged to draw on the experiences of visiting exchange students in the classroom and will frequently engage with theoretical and critical frameworks from across the world.

## Subject specific skills

This module will develop students' linguistic skills through engaging with primary materials in the target language. It will build students' capacity to engage with aspects of Hispanic culture through analysis of this primary material and through seminar discussion aimed at deeper critical thinking. In particular, students' awareness of discourses of gender in different periods, and of literary works which respond to or challenge contemporary thinking on the subject, will be enhanced through lectures and seminars which engage with scholarship in the field.

## Transferable skills

All SMLC culture modules demand critical and analytical engagement with artefacts from target-language cultures. In the course of independent study, class work and assessment students will develop the following skills: written and oral communication, creative and critical thinking, problem

solving and analysis, time management and organisation, independent research in both English and their target language(s), intercultural understanding and the ability to mediate between languages and cultures, ICT literacy in both English and the target language(s), personal responsibility and the exercise of initiative.

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## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	9 sessions of 2 hours (12%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

### Private study description

Preparation for seminars, including reading the primary text; carrying out research for assessed work, guided by the module bibliography; planning and writing assessments.

### Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

### Assessment group A3

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessed Essay 2000-2250-word essay	50%		Yes (extension)
Critical edition 2000-2250-word critical edition of a text studied in class	50%		Yes (extension)

### Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in the course of the module in a number of ways. Feedback should be understood to be both formal and informal and is not restricted to feedback on formal written work. Oral feedback will be provided by the module tutor in the course of seminar discussion. This may

include feedback on points raised in small group work or in the course of individual presentations or larger group discussion.

Written feedback will be provided on formal assessment using the standard SMLC Assessed Work feedback form appropriate to the assessment. Feedback is intended to enable continuous improvement throughout the module and written feedback is generally the final stage of this feedback process. Feedback will always demonstrate areas of success and areas for future development, which can be applied to future assessment. Feedback will be both discipline-specific and focused on key transferable skills, enabling students to apply this feedback to their future professional lives. Feedback will be fair and reasonable and will be linked to the SMLC marking scheme appropriate to the module.

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## **Availability**

## **Courses**

This module is Option list B for:

- UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
  - Year 2 of M166 Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
  - Year 3 of M166 Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies