Jennifer R. Waller

"MY HAND A NEEDLE BETTER FITS:" ANNE BRADSTREET AND WOMEN POETS IN THE RENAISSANCE.

To write on such a subject as women poets in the age of Kate Millett and Germaine Greer is perhaps to invite suspicion of either writing sexist propaganda or being condescending. It goes without saying that there is no inherent reason why a woman should not write poetry, and yet it may appear that the category "women poets" is an artificial one. Until recently in European history, however, certain functions have traditionally been imposed upon women such as child-bearing and domesticity, and often a woman, like Sylvia Plath, deliberately chooses to explore through poetry the peculiar implications of such aspects of her femaleness. Theodore Roethke, slightly tongue-in-cheek, once remarked that women poets did have distinctive features, including "the embroidering of trivial themes; a concern with the mere surfaces of life...refusing to face up to what existence is; lyric or religious posturing, running between the boudoir and the altar; stamping a tiny foot against God; or lapsing into a contentiousness that implies the author has re-invented integrity."[1]

To a student of early American literature, Roethke's unfair and idiosyncratic generalisation has a certain initial relevance in relation to the poetry of Anne Bradstreet. As well, it gains substance from a study of the women who write poetry in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In this paper, I will argue that these women poets share characteristics which make up a recognizable if loosely linked tradition, which reaches its highest point in the poetry of Mistress Bradstreet. John Buxton has claimed for the Countess of Winchelsea (1661-1720) the distinction of being the "first English woman to write poetry that no man could have written", finding "her best inspiration in the domestic happiness of her marriage, in the retired

life which she shared with her husband."[2] I will argue that Anne Bradstreet not only finds inspiration in similar experiences some fifty years earlier, but expresses it in verse of more significant quality. Further, I want to suggest that to see her not just as New England's first poet of any importance but as the English Renaissance's most important woman poet is to bring greater understanding and status to her work.[3]

ii.

John Winthrop voiced a common suspicion of women when he remarked of Anne Hopkins, who had given "herself wholly to reading and writing" and subsequently gone insane:

> If she had attended her houshold affairs, and such things as belong to women, and not gone out of her way and calling to meddle in such things as are proper to men, whose minds are stronger she had kept her wits and might have improved them usefully and honourably in the place God had set her.[4]

Nevertheless, the impact of humanist educational theories did, as Louis B. Wright and others have shown, contribute to the growing literary ambitions of many women. Nicholas Udall in 1548 commented on the great learning of many women, while in 1559 it was possible for William Bercher to list a number of contemporary women who had published both scholarly and popular books. By 1673, Bathusa Makin's list added many more, including Mistress Bradstreet herself.[5] In his *Positions...* (1581), Richard Mulcaster had extended the earlier encouragement given to women's education by Erasmus and Vives. He asserts the value of teaching women languages, and regards their education as a duty required of man by God.[6] Although standards varied enormously, many of the aristocracy and increasing numbers of middle-class women received a solid educational grounding. Queen Elizabeth's education, to take one extreme, obviously produced a deep and learned mind skilled in a variety of arts and languages, and many aristocratic women had similar training, although the proportion of well-educated women in England was probably never as high as in Italy, France or the Low Countries. Most girls were limited to what attendance at elementary schools was possible after the completion of household duties. Women's education was limited by public attitudes as much as by educational theory and practice. Winthrop's attitude merely reflects the commonplaces of the recurring epidemics of anti-feminism

in England. Swetman's scurrilous *Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward and unconstant Women* (1617), for instance, ran through 10 printings in 20 years.

It is instructive here to note the reaction of some of the more vocal and sensitive women to their situation. The most independently-minded Englishwoman of her time was Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle. She perceived and responded quite violently to the restrictions of woman's life:

> Through careless neglects and despisements of the masculine sex to the female thinking it is impossible we should have either learning or understanding, wit or judgement as if we had not rational souls as well as men, and we out of a custom of dejectedness, think so too, which makes us quit all industry towards profitable knowledge...so we become like worms that only live in the dull earth of ignorance winding ourselves out by the help of some refreshing rain of good education, which is seldom given us.[7]

Other women respond more cautiously or timidly. Rachael Speight in a work entitled *Mortalities Memorandum, with a dream Prefixed* (1621) attempted to prove the intellectual potential of her sex by an appeal to Scripture:

> Both man and woman of three parts consist
> Which *Paul* doth bodie, soule and spirituall
> And from the soule three faculties arise,
> The mind, the will, the power: then wherefore shall
> A woman have her intellect in vaine,
> Or not endevour *knowledge* to attain.[8]

Anne Bradstreet was occasionally moved to feel similarly, although her protest is strongly qualified:

> Men have precedency and still excel,
> It is but vain unjustly to wage war,
> Men can do best, and women know it well.
> Preeminence in all and each is yours
> Yet grant some small acknowledgement of ours.[9]

Dorothy Leigh, a Puritan gentlewoman, in a short treatise of advice to parents gave her reasons for writing as being "to encourage women (who, I fear will blush at my boldness) not to be ashamed to shew their affinities, but to give men the first chief place; yet us labor to come in second." She had, according to her own admission, undertaken the work in the spirit of expiation for her sex. Her work reflects an abject submission to men, asking her son to remember "the great mercy of

During the first part of the seventeenth century the number of biographies and autobiographies written by women demonstrate the awakening talents of the sex —Lucy Hutchinson's account of her husband's life, Anne Fanshawe's autobiography, Margaret Cavendish's life of her husband, to mention but a few. The same note of selfeffacement recurs in these. A recent study of British autobiography claims for such women biographers "a wider range of emotional response to everyday events and more awareness of concrete realities than their male counterparts."[14] It is perhaps in *their* work, the domestic autobiography, that one sees the parallel to the development of domestic poetry in the period, especially in the work of Anne Bradstreet.

God toward you, in making you men and placing you amongst the wise."[10]

Intellectually and emotionally, educated seventeenth-century women suffered from a massive inferiority complex, often unable to see themselves as anything more than virgin, wife, or mother. But there is nevertheless a significantly increasing number of literary works produced by women in the period. In the field of biblical interpretation, theology, and translation, one might instance More's daughter Margaret Roper, who translated Erasmus's *Treatise upon the Pater Noster* (1525), or the daughter of Sir Antony Cooke, Anne, who translated John Jewell's Apology for the Church of England from Latin and 14 sermons of Bernadino Ochino "for the enformacion of all that desyre to know the truthe."[11] It is perhaps apposite to mention that while the latter's father was deeply committed to the education of his promising family of daughters, he was still greatly concerned that their intellectual training should take second place to their skill in housewifery. Translation, in fact, provided the educated, earnestly religious woman especially among Protestants with an opportunity to overcome a sense of frustration and impotence. Anna Prowse translated a tract, published in 1609, by the Huguenot John Taffin. In her preface she makes the same point:

> because great things by reason of my sexe, I may not doe, I have according to my duetie, brought my poore basket of stones to the strengthening of the wals of Jerusalem.[12]

These women translators were almost uniformly defensive about their efforts in this way. It would suggest that their humility goes beyond the

usual limits of the *topos* and that they were encountering considerable male opposition, and felt the need to apologise for what one eager translator describes as their "boldnesse and rashnesse".[13]

To move, then, to woman's poetry: an increasing amount was published or privately circulated during the second half of the sixteenth century and first half of the seventeenth century. Often publication was not at the direct instigation of the author but rather through the efforts of friends or relatives. For instance, Anne Bradstreet's first volume was published unbeknown to her by an admiring friend during a visit to London. Her response to his efforts was mixed:

> Thou ill-formed offspring of my feeble brain,
> Who after birth didst by my side remain,
> Till snatched from thence by friends, less wise than true,
> Who thee abroad, exposed to view.[15]

Apart from the few original verse productions ascribed to Queen Elizabeth, the most important female poet of the sixteenth century was Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke. Her most important work was the metrical translation of the Psalms written in collaboration with her brother, which she completed after his death. Her contributions to this work show considerable experimentation in metre and form and deserve to be regarded as meritorious poems in their own right rather than mere examples of English Psalmody. She is the only woman poet of note in the sixteenth century whose work approaches either the bulk or quality of Anne Bradstreet's, and provides an interesting contrast to the latter, coming as she does from so different a social class and educational background. As well, the contrast is an interesting one considering Anne Bradstreet's admiration of Sir Philip Sidney.[16]

But there were other poetesses at the time. Isabella Whitney, sister of the Elizabethan minor poet Geoffrey Whitney, published a verse letter in 1566 expressing the feelings of an abandoned girl toward her lover, and in 1573 a small book of sententious verse, *A Sweet Nosgay, or pleasant Posye.* Hers is unremarkable work reflecting a timid reliance on rhetorical commonplaces expressed in jangling verse. Rachael Speight, mentioned earlier in connection with her defence of women, also wrote a commonplace poetical treatment of the theme of dying. Alice Sutcliffe, the wife of a junior member of the royal household, published a work upon similar lines in 1634. As well, many women wrote incidental poems which were circulated among admirers and

occasionally published, including Lucy, Countess of Beford and Anne Weamys.

By mid-century, the phenomenon of women writing and publishing verse was a well-established and often noted one. The 1650's saw the publication of several full-length poetical works. Anne Bradstreet's *The Tenth Muse, lately Sprung up in America* appeared in 1650, containing her quaternions, the poems on the parts of the world—the elements, humours, seasons, and ages of the world. There were also several poems on typical Renaissance commonplace topics—including the vanity of worldly joys, elegies on her favourite public figures, along with a 4000-line history of the four monarchies. The posthumous 1678 edition of her work entitled *Severall Poems* is of more interest. Many of the poems in this work were written concurrently with or immediately after those in the earlier work, but because of their private nature, were passed over by the author as only suitable for family reading. It is amongst these poems, however, that we find the first developments of a domestic strand of poetry in English. The rest of the work contains some significant examples of religious poems, strongly reflecting the habits of "drab" Elizabethan poetry.[17]

It is interesting to put the American poetess alongside three English woman poets whose works appeared about the same time. In 1653, encouraged by friends, Ann Collins published *Divine Songs and Meditations,* resembling Anne Bradstreet's work in theological influences and in attitude to composition. On another social level, Margaret Cavendish, known in Court circles as "Mad Madge"—partially because of her literary ambitions—published *Poems and Fancies* in 1652.[18] A much under-rated and misunderstood figure, the Duchess of Newcastle is in great need of a literary revaluation. Alongside Anne Bradstreet's homespun colonial verse, her poems are more sophisticated and secular in attitude, pointing up the provincialities in style and subject of Anne Bradstreet's work. The third and most important of these poets was Katherine Philips, praised by her circle of admiring gentlemen as "the Matchless Orinda".[19] She is perhaps the best known English woman poet of the century. Her work, written in the 1650's and 60's, provides an interesting contrast to Anne Bradstreet's work, the bulk of which was compsed only 10 years previously. While Katherine Philips' poetry shows the growing influence of neoclassicism which was taking hold of the metropolitan cultural establishment, Anne Bradstreet's poetry,

though almost contemporaneous, clearly follows Elizabethan and early Jacobean conventions and techniques, and more recognizably feminine and domestic interests. Katherine Philips attempts from a more sophisticated, less provincial, stance to enter a male perserve. Given the strong *mores* and limitations of the age, her poetry becomes a rather dilletantish and often trivial exploitation of a certain facility with language; it is society verse, produced to order for a rather uncritical circle of well-wishers—although it is fair to point out that her work was praised by, among others, Henry Vaughn and Jeremy Taylor.

These, then, are the more significant contributors to a "school"—if we may grace it with such a title—of women poets in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Without merely listing the characteristics of each, the point I wish to make is that they have in common several important characteristics which are also shared by and help our understanding of Anne Bradstreet. Again it is important to neither propagandize nor patronize: the increasing number of women poets is a significant literary and social phenomenon, even if it is only rarely that they are able to transcend their limitations or, only in Anne Bradstreet's case, able to utilize them to produce significantly original poems.

First, with the exception of Mary Sidney, they all display an obvious sense of inadequacy and unease in approaching a traditionally male preserve. Anne Bradstreet's determination to let her "tired Brain" leave "to some better pen" a task which "befits not women like to men"[20] is echoed by the other women poets. It is most obvious in the work of Ann Collins. Her book begins with six pages of apologies, after which she finally evaluates her own work:

> And as they are my own works, I do not find,
> But ranked with others, they may go behind.[21]

Even the more ambitious Duchess of Newcastle constantly reiterates the limitations of women's abilities, while Katherine Philips states that she sometimes thought the writing of poetry "so far above my reach and unfit for my sex, that I am going to resolve against it for ever."[22] Few are prepared to admit any professional claim to poetry. Anne Bradstreet's poetry is not mentioned in her spiritual diary. Margaret Cavendish denies herself the role of a serious poet: she is merely, she says, "a poetastress".[23] Even when their poetry reaches an acceptable

level of competence, each woman is uncannily uncertain of her role, finding it necessary to constantly apologize—indeed Anne Bradstreet's early work often stubmbles into silence at the very thought of her own inadequacies:

> They [i.e, the muses] took from me the scribbling pen I had,
> (I had to eased of the task was glad)...

Or, as inconclusively if more coherently:

> So Sidney's fame I leave to England's rolls,
> His bones do lie interred in stately Paul's.[24]

So ends her rather disjointed attempt to immortalise her great hero, Sir Philip Sidney. Admittedly like most similar poems written by men, her ambitious attempt to recount the events of pre-Christian history ended similarly apologetically:

> To finish what's begun, was my intent,
> My thoughts and my endeavours there to bent;
> Essays I many made but still gave out,
> The more I mused, the more I was in doubt;
> The subject large, my mind and body weak,
> With many more discouragements did speak.
> Though oft persuaded, I as oft denied...[25]

Closely connected with this sense of inadequacy is another characteristic which draws together seventeenth-century woman poets—the assumption of a largely suspicious audience. Anne Bradstreet is acutely aware that she is:

> ...obnoxious to each carping tongue
> Who says my hand a needle better fits,
> A poet's pen all scorn I should thus wrong,
> For such despite they cast on female wits:
> If what I do prove well, it won't advance,
> They'll say it's stolen, or else it was by chance.[26]

Similarly Margaret Cavendish writes defensively:

> I imagine I shall be censured by my own sex and men will cast a smile of scorn upon my book, because they think thereby women incroach too much upon their prerogatives.[27]

If a woman was content to allow poetry a significant role in her life she would run the danger of being surrounded by a group of critically indiscriminating admirers, if the commendatory poems before the works of Anne Bradstreet, Katherine Philips and Alice Sutcliffe are any

indication. Anne Bradstreet's admirers obviously saw in her being a woman poet as something of a curiosity. The commendatory poems prefixed to both the 1650 and 1678 editions of her poetry are occasionally patronizing, varying from a slightly amused fear that a woman "shod by Chaucer's boots, and Homer's furs" might "wear the spurs", to indiscriminate praise of her "golden splendent star...whose sublime brains" embrace "the synopsis of arts".[28] But if a woman took her intellectual pursuits more seriously she might well be greeted with hostility and riducle—Dorothy Osborne remarked of Margaret Cavendish: "Sure the poor woman is a little distracted, she could ever be so ridiculous as to venture at writing books and in verse too."[29]

Yet another distinguishing feature of the growing feminine tradition is a more than usually cautiously derivative and limited use of material closely related to their educational background. Thus Anne Bradstreet's early poetry is a selective versification of material closely related to a woman's role as found in medical or historical encyclopediae; Ann Collins, Isabella Whitney, Raechal Speight, and Alice Sutcliffe write religious sententiae; Katherine Philips versifies gossip; Margaret Cavendish produces erratic musings on nature and creates tapestry-like images of a fairy world. Only Mary Sidney's Psalms and parts of Anne Bradstreet's work transcend this limitation. No doubt this characteristic caution is a consequence of minor talent and not simply of being a woman, but it demonstrates nevertheless the effects of the limitation of women's education. This inhibiting quality is only overcome gradually by Anne Bradstreet as she finds increasing confidence to write in depth not of intellectually ambitious material but simply of her specifically domestic and religious experience. Before she could do so, however, she had to serve an apprenticeship of struggling with her muse and also with the burden of being a woman.

The women poets I have briefly discussed, with their common characteristics, do give us a useful and little-recognized perspective on Anne Bradstreet. The most important event of her life was, of course, her emigration to North America, and it was during the early years in New England, before 1650, that much of the work which appeared in *The Tenth Muse* was written. It is the American environment which both heightens her affinities with contemporary poetesses and brings out her uniqueness. The longer poems—the quaternions and the Four Monarchies—most especially demonstrate the concentration of her

educational experience, in their technical timidity and derivativeness. *The Four Monarchies* is little more than a verse paraphrase of Ralegh's history; the quaternions draw heavily upon Du Bartas's *Divine Weekes.* The derivativeness of these works allows us to see in detail how her narrow feminine experience affected her work. For example, she usually omits any passages of Du Bartas's which tend to become abstract or theoretical, and the poem noticeably strengthens when she can expand his material from her own experience—her adaptation of Du Bartas's description of infancy, for instance. Equally the effects of the restrictive prudishness of Elizabethan educational practice are revealed in her uneasy handling of the more doubtful incidents of the potentates' lives in *The Four Monarchies.*[30]

If this had been her only published volume, we might pass over it, as we now do Ann Collins' work, seeing it only of peripheral historical interest. But her second volume, partly prepared and revised by herself, contained some more interesting material. Ironically, she is at her best when she confines herself to the same restricted domestic environment that limited her more ambitous efforts. As a result her work grows in confidence. Discussing the development of the domestic novel, B.G. MacCarthy has suggested that so long as women persisted in following masculine literary fashions in the seventeenth century they were out of their depth—so it is with Anne Bradstreet's early work.[31] In the development of women writers it is perhaps regrettable but obviously inevitable that women writers could only gain originality and depth when they confined themselves to areas of experience they knew well—hence, we might say, the success of Jane Austen.

If we follow this argument through, it is not surprising that what is virtually the first developement of domestic verse in English should have come from a woman of the American puritan middle class rather than the more courtly bluestockings in England. Part of Anne Bradstreet's unique opportunity arose from her class and religious situation. Pious, middle-class and Protestant, she lived in an environment which encouraged her to feel supremely confident of the significance of her vocation as a wife and mother. She glories in this vocation and her enthusiasm is reflected in the confidence of her verse:

> I had eight birds hatched in one nest
> Four cocks there were, and hens the rest.
> I nursed them up with pain and care,

> Nor cost, nor labour did I spare,
> Till at last they felt their wing,
> Mounted trees and learned to sing.[32]

Oddly while the intellectual and social environment of provincial New England may have empaired or restricted the work of other writers, in a sense it assisted Anne Bradstreet. For it was a society that ostensibly was based on the very material of her poetry—the supreme importance of family life and religious commitment. Protestant theology had brought about a revaluation of marriage with a greater emphasis on the place of the family as the key to the health of the commonwealth and a practical concern with the woman's role as companion and helpmate in the marriage relationship—"a citie of refuge to flee to".[33]

A further point about Anne Bradstreet's environment is that her Protestant principles of love and marriage did not result in sentimentality and superficiality. Puritan theology frequently served to put the trivial incidents of domestic life into a stern theological perspective and helped her universalize her domestic experience. Her poem upon the burning of her home is such an example. Despite moments of superficial sententiousness, for the most part she maintains a balance between genuine grief, which might have become sentimentality, and a religious perspective, which might equally have become a wooden expression of theological commonplaces. Furthermore, the best of her poems show that the personal experiences of a woman in her situation are as worthy material for poetry, as those of a woman in a less limited environment. In the cycles of birth, death, sickness, parting and motherhood, she found ample material for her muse.

To briefly illustrate my contention and place Mistress Bradstreet in the tradition I have sketched, I will look briefly at one of three poems written during her husband's absence on official business, about 1640, entitled *Phoebus make haste.*[34] It looks back to stock Elizabethan rhetorical modes; it is built on a conventional apostrophe and depicts a conversation with the sun, the faithful yet itinerant lover of the earth. The opening lines show a bewildered lonely state; the poet is in two minds whether to admonish Phoebus to "make haste" so that she may mourn in the night's solitude or to plead with him to stay in order that she may share her loneliness and use him as a messenger to her husband. It is a neat conceit, and she grasps and extends the humour of the image. Ruefully she doubts whether he will even hear this mortal plea:

> And if the whirling of thy wheels don't drown'd
> The woeful accents of my doleful sound...
> I crave this boon.

This glimmer of humor also serves to illustrate her helplessness before the distance that separates her from her lover. When she was parted with what she describes elsewhere as "my magazine of earthly store", she looks at herself, impotent and unrefreshed in her domestic surroundings, amongst her "dumpish thoughts", "groans", and "brakish tears".

The poem's metaphorical strength is well maintained by means of the juxtaposition of such domestic imagery, which reflects her domestic environment, with the development of the initial sun image. The sun's movements away from her hemisphere produce somewhat undutiful thoughts for a Puritan wife:

> And if he love, how can he there abide?
> My interest's more than all the world beside.

But if she may for an instant rebelliously consider that he should regard all the world well lost for her, in her next lines the sun takes on the properties of the all-seeing God, providing a context for her momentary worries. But to resolve her problem intellectually is not to dismiss entirely the hardship of parting. She is still consigned to a month-long night—in the absence of her sun/husband. She is, however, able to convert the darkness of the polar night into the anticipated joy of the sun's return:

> But for one month I see no day (poor soul)
> Like those far situate under the pole,
> Which day by day long wait for thy arise
> O how they joy when thou dost light the skies.

Yet these momentary rays of light only serve to remind her of the social and emotional dislocation in the present. For a Puritan who sees chaos as an absence of God's order, no image could be more expressive of disorder than

> Behold a Chaos blacker than the first
> Tell him here's worse than a confused matter.

She, like the earth, becomes dependent on the "fervour of his ardent beams" to dry out the torrents of flood water—her own emotional disturbances. The image, of course, hints that her tears are rather like

the flood in Noah's time, sent by God as a punishment for man's shortcomings, and like Noah, she is dependent on her God/husband to restore the world to its original order:

> His little world's a fathom under water.
> Nought but the fervor of his ardent beams
> Hath power to dry the torrent of these streams.

"These streams" are produced by his absence, but they also reflect her responsibility: they are her tears, so that through her own emotional disorder, she has been responsible for the disorder in his "little world". The domestic and cosmic levels of the poem are neatly joined. Its final lines return the reader once again to the image of the messenger Sun:

> Now post with double speed, mark what I say,
> By all our loves conjure him not to stay.

The concluding section of this poem has been wrought with considerable skill, merging the persons of the sun, god, and husband, juxtaposing his power with her helpless aggravation of the situation, and then returning to the colloquial and intimate instruction to the messenger in the last lines.

iii.

The handful of domestic lyrics that constitute Mistress Bradstreet's claim to be rated above, say, John Wilson or Roger Williams in the tradition of early American verse can also be used to relate her to a wider tradition, which links women poets from Sappho through Sylvia Plath. A poem like "Phoebus make haste" demonstrates how she is able to develop interesting, if not remarkable, poetry from her domestic experience, and as I have suggested without the sentimentality or false sophistication of many English poetesses of the time. Indeed, it is in the way that her domestic poetry confines itself to the family environment of Ipswich and Andover as experienced specifically by a woman and successfully builds upon it that she stands aside from contemporary female poets writing in England. Yet the same preoccupations and stylistic features also serve to remind us that she remains limited by her assumptions and upbringing as a woman. They underline that although she may have had some aspiration to write poetry, and her attitude to her poetry is certainly one of deep commitment, it could never by described as "professional"—the chief commitments of her life remain firstly to her God and secondly to her husband and family. Alongside

the great poets of her age—Sidney or Herbert, let alone Shakespeare—she takes a very minor place, but her place as a woman poet is a special and important one.

Even if Anne Bradstreet is rightly regarded as the first American poet of any note, and a writer and symbolic figure admired by American poets from Taylor onwards, nevertheless her importance is a wider one. Something crucial to our understanding of both early New England and Mistress Bradstreet herself is revealed when her work is placed in the tradition I have sketched in this paper. Of course, to place her in this way is not to detract from her real merits. Although she would have been the first to agree with her detractors that "her hand a needle better fits", when she put her hand to a pen in the few spare hours of her New England day, she frequently sewed more than just a pretty line of verse.

Footnotes

1. *On the Poet and his Craft*, ed. Ralph J. Mill, Jr. (New York, 1965), pp. 133-134.
2. *A Tradition of Poetry* (London, 1967), p. 15.
3. Quotations from Mistress Bradstreet's works are taken from *The Works of Anne Bradstreet*, ed. Jeanine Hensley (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), hereafter cited as *Works*.
4. *Winthrop's Journal*, ed. J.K. Hosmer (New York, 1966), II, p. 225. Cf. Dorothy Osborne's similar comment on the Duchess of Newcastle's poetry in *The Letters of Dorothy Osborne*, ed. G.C. Moore-Smith (London, 1928), p. 37.
5. Nicholas Udall, Preface to *Paraphrase of Erasmus upon the Newe Testament* (London, 1548), quoted in Dorothy Gardiner, *English Girlhood at School* (London, 1929), p. 174; William Bercher, The Nobility of Woman (1559), p. 59; Bathusa Makin, *An Essay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen in Religion, Manners, Arts, & Tongues* (London, 1673), p. 11.
6. Richard Mulcaster, *Positions* (1581), e.g. pp. 132, 167, 170, 171, 176; *Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women*, ed. Foster Watson (London, 1912), pp. 54, 62, 86. For women's education in the Renaissance see Louis B. Wright, *Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill, 1934), pp. 43-44; Joan Simon, *Education and Society in Tudor England* (Cambridge England, 1966), p. 133.
7. Margaret Cavendish, *Philosophical and Physical Opinions* (1655), epistle.
8. *Mortalities Memorandum with a Dreame Prefixed...* (London, 1621), p. 5.
9. *Works*, p. 16.
10. *The Mothers Blessing* (London, 1630), pp. 15-17.
11. The daughters of Anthony Cooke were described by Henry Peachem in *The Compleat Gentleman* (London, 1622), p. 36, as "rare Poetesses, so skilful in Latin and Greeke..."
12. Anna Prowse, *The Markes of the Children of God and their Comforts in Afflictions* (London, 1609), Preface, sig. A4^{r}.
13. M.T., *The first of the mirrour of princely deedes* (London, 1599), sig. A iiii^{r-v}.

14. Paul Delany, *British Autobiography in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1969), p. 138. See e.g. *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe,* introd. Beatrice Marshall (London, 1905); *The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby,* introd. Dorothy M. Meads (London, 1930); Margaret Cavendish, *The Life of William Cavendish* ed., C.H. Firth, (London, n.d.); *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson written by his Widow Lucy,* introd. Francois P.G. Guizot (London, 1908).
15. Works, p. 221. Cf. An[n] Collins, *Divine Songs and Meditations* (London, 1653), p. 2, who apologizes for the poor quality of her work, excusing herself on the grounds that
    Unto the public view of everyone
    I did not purpose these lines to send,
    Which for my private use were made alone.
16. See J.C.A. Rathmell (ed.) *The Psalms of Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke* (New York, 1963). Recent criticism of the Countess of Pembroke includes J.C.A. Rathmell, "Hopkins, Ruskin and the Sidney Psalter," *Lon. Mag.* VI.ix (1959), 51-64; Robert Coogan, "Petrarch's *Trionfi* and the English Renaissance," *SP* LXVII (1970), 306-327; G.F. Waller, "Mary Sidney's 'Dialogue...' " *AN & Q.* IX (1971), 100-102, and " 'This Matching of Contraries;' Calvin, Bruno and the Sidney Circle," *Neophilologus,* LII (1972), 371-386.
17. The term is that of C.S. Lewis, in *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century excluding Drama* (London, 1955), Book II.
18. See H.T.E. Perry, *The First Duchess of Newcastle and her Husband as Figures in Literary History* (London, 1918), and Douglas Grant, *Margaret the First* (London, 1937).
19. Abraham Cowley, "To the most excellently accomplish'd, Mrs K.P. upon her Poems." Katherine Philips, *Poems by the Incomparable Mrs K.P.* (London, 1664), sig. $A3^{r}$.
20. *Works,* p. 172.
21. Collins, sig. $a4^{v}$.
22. See e.g. Margaret Cavendish, *Sociable Letters* (Menston, 1969), pp. 39-40; *Life of William Cavendish,* p. 186.
23. Cavendish, *Sociable Letters,* (London, 1664), p. 301.
24. *Works,* p. 191.
25. *Works,* p. 178.
26. *Works,* p. 17.
27. Cavendish, *Poems and Fancies,* Preface.
28. *Works,* pp. 4, 8, 5.
29. Osborne, *Letters,* p. 37.
30. I hope to develop these points in detail in further studies of Anne Bradstreet and her European influences. For some furthering of the argument, see my paper in the proceedings of the 14th *AULLA* Conference (1972).
31. *Women Writers: their Contribution to the English Novel 1621-1744* (Oxford, 1945), pp. 12-13.
32. *Works,* p. 232.
33. Henry Smith, *Sermons* (London, 1599), p. 12. For a discussion of New England attitudes to the family, see E.S. Morgan, *The Puritan Family* (Boston, 1956).
34. *Works,* pp. 227-228.