



REVIEW BOOK, *JUST ANGER: REPRESENTING WOMEN'S ANGER IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND* BY GWYNNE KENNEDY

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: February 28 th 2021 Accepted: March 11 th 2021 Published: March 30 th 2021	Professor Gwynne Kennedy, The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, is the first researcher to carefully analyze women's rage in early modern England. She uses a wide range of outstanding scholarly works on the study of human emotions and expressions to provide cohesive information to support her claim on anger in women in early modern England, starting with the quality and structure of the book for her analysis
Keywords: Professor Gwynne Kennedy, Modern England	

Professor Gwynne Kennedy, The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, is the first researcher to carefully analyze women's rage in early modern England. She uses a wide range of outstanding scholarly works on the study of human emotions and expressions to provide cohesive information to support her claim on anger in women in early modern England, starting with the quality and structure of the book for her analysis.

In her first chapter, Kennedy examines how printed texts from the era that purport to be produced by women represent ideas on women's rage. Her books mostly portray the fury that developed in response to the widespread early modern assumption that women are inherently inferior to males (Kennedy, 2000).

Kennedy draws on modern critiques of emotion by speaking with historians, literary academics, philosophers, and psychologists. She also consults cultural anthropologists who have conducted comparative examinations of emotions. Indeed, Kennedy makes the case that psychological theories of anger and early modern discourse on emotions play a key role in the construction of female subjectivity and These historical representations of women's rage demonstrate how emotions and emotion theories can be used to justify and combat injustice. (Kennedy, 2000). She drew analogies and suggested that early modern English women's rage was both akin to and distinct from that of twentieth-century American women. She argues that early modern English culture made the assumption that women were less able to control their anger and were more likely to become furious than males. She believes that as a result, a woman who was angry had to simultaneously justify both her character and her anger because one indicated the other. This is true even though the idea of women's anger is seen as irrational in both eras (Kennedy, 2000). Because of this, early modern England's patriarchal society saw women who showed rage as being illogical, inferior, and lacking in self-control. As a result, rage started to serve as a gauge of women's worth. It adhered to the patriarchal culture's presumption that women are less capable and unreasonable in their rage. Kennedy describes the effects of this supposition by saying that, in the first place, every instance of female fury strengthens the idea that women are weaker than men. Second, the association between anger and inferiority can be utilized to deprive a woman of her ability to speak authoritatively and to either minimize or disregard the reasons for her anger. Third, a woman's rage is seen by her superior as a kind of resistance or rebellion against authority and order because divine, natural, and social rules all presume women's subservient status and their need for male control. (Kennedy, 2000)

Kennedy also extensively investigates a number of male-authored writings that are found in sermons, conduct literature, philosophy, rhetoric, and medicine in order to better illustrate the idea of women's rage in early modern England. Indeed, the names of these male authors from that time period (Edward Reynolds, Thomas Wright Erasmus, and Juan Luis Vives). She then used their works to demonstrate how patriarchal culture viewed women's rage as either insignificant and harmless or dangerous and aggressive. Kennedy claims that the passages she has chosen to highlight fire a much-needed salvo at the status quo. Collectively, these pieces reject the dismissive categorization of women's fury as "simply rage" or "merely anger," and instead, they vigorously defend women's justified anger in response to claims that women are inherently weak and inferior (Kennedy, 2000).

Kennedy also concentrated on representations of women's rage in published writings in England from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that were signed with women's names. She discusses how these works or textual analyses appear to reconfigure, contradict, or conform to existing ideas about women's rage.

Kennedy discusses women's anger, which is most visibly exhibited in texts that are involved in the debate about women, in the second chapter of her book, *Anger Readers*. She interacts with numerous current genres at the same time. She looks at how women express their rage in literary works. She examines works of literature such as *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania* by Mary Wroth, the first work of fiction written by an Englishwoman, *The Tragedy of Mariam* by Elizabeth Cary, the first surviving drama written in English by a woman, and *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* by Aemilia Lanier. She also explores Elizabeth Cary's history of Edward II and the religious writings of Protestant martyr Anne Askew (Kennedy, 2000).

Kennedy examines how various writers of the periods challenges the assumptions, reimagining and rehabilitating the figure of anger in women.

Furthermore, although these women's attitudes regarding the anger and their strategies followed in its portrayal vary, all of the Kennedy's texts considers responding with the anger to the notion of the women's innate inferiority to men. Kennedy contends that Cary's work is distinctive in that it depicts Isabel as a more fully realized figure, a shrewd, skilled political actress who works to improve Edward's performance as a husband and ruler (Kennedy, 2000).

Kennedy notes that Elizabeth Cary portrays her fury as wholly consistent with morality and reason, not as the result of female weakness or inferiority. In fact, compared to other female artists, like Anne Askew, some of Elizabeth Cary's and Lady Mary Wroth's paintings exhibit a larger dualism regarding women's freedom to express their rage at male supremacy. Kennedy identifies a larger conflict between defiance and submission in Mary Wroth's *Urania*, which is filled with a high number of abandoned women who attempt the heroic constancy by repressing their rage toward the men who have abandoned them. (Kennedy, 2000).

Kennedy makes a compelling case that Wroth creates a moral hierarchy, similar to Cary, in which women from aristocratic houses are better able to control their anger than women from lower strata or other women. Kennedy connects *Urania's* encouragement of female consistency and emotional restraint to its support for submitting to the king.

Via last chapter named *Anger for God*, Kennedy explores the strategies used by Anne Askew in the Examinations to convey her feelings of deserved fury and desire for retaliation. By showing how frequently Bale's commentary downplays or denies them, giving Askew a more stereotypically feminine aspect, Kennedy draws attention to Askew's anger and arrogance (Kennedy, 2000).

In conclusion, Kennedy demonstrates how early modern theories about women's anger might help to create or exaggerate other disparities between women. Her study on female inferiority-related rage highlights the critical role that emotions play in forming self-worth and identity. In addition, Kennedy thinks that emotions – generally speaking – and anger – in particular – are entirely influenced by the surroundings. Instead of seeing them as universal psychobiological occurrences or essences, she sees them as assemblages of historically and culturally malleable values, ideas, and behaviors (Kennedy, 2000). Despite the early modern era, which saw fury as the result of severely defective and, to use their preferred terminology, fallen human nature rather than just a reaction to external stimuli; for them, the reason was not only in the stars but also in themselves (Kennedy, 2000).

Finally, Kennedy provides vital information and a new perspective about women's anger, which is useful for any researcher in this field.

WORK CITED

1. Kennedy, G. (2000). *Just Anger Representing Women's Anger in Early Modern England* Carbondale, Ill: Southern Illinois University Press.