

**Carleton University  
Winter 2017  
Department of English**

**ENGL 4301A/HUMS 4902: Studies in Renaissance Literature  
Tudor Queens**

**Day/Time: Tuesday 8:35-11:25**

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I do not read or respond to email between Friday 4:30 PM and Monday 9:00 AM.

**Office Hours: TBA**

*\*Preliminary Outline: subject to change*

**Tudor Queens: Sex, Power, and Writing in the Lives of Katherine Parr, Elizabeth I, and Mary Queen of Scots**

Renaissance queens have long fascinated the reading public, but their political power and literary writings have only recently become the objects of academic study. In this seminar, students will develop an in-depth understanding of three Renaissance queens who made the most of their unusual social status and made lasting contributions to English culture. This course will involve modern critical editions of the queens' writing and contemporary film and TV programs.

Katherine Parr (1512-1548) was the final wife of Henry VIII. Although she is often depicted in popular culture as the woman who nursed Henry in his old age, she was actually a literary powerhouse and one of the most influential religious activists of the 1540s. We will examine her three published literary texts, her narrow escape from being arrested and executed, and her scandalous marriage to Thomas Seymour after Henry's death.

Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) was Parr's beloved step-daughter and is one of the most famous British monarchs. As a queen regnant, Elizabeth obviously wielded extraordinary agency and yet her status as an unmarried woman was an on-going concern throughout her reign. Through an examination of her public speeches, private letters, portraits, poems and prayers we will consider how she brilliantly managed her public image and how she contributed to important political and literary developments. The representation of Elizabeth in recent movies (1998, 2007) will be addressed.

Mary Stuart (1542-1587) acceded to the Scottish throne when she was only six days old and

lived a life plagued with political assassinations, political rebellion, and political intrigue. During her sixteen years of house arrest in England, Mary used poems and tapestries to attempt to negotiate with her cousin, Elizabeth I; we will consider Mary's failed political strategizing and its afterlife in film.

### Requirements:

1. **Two** oral seminars presentations (20 minutes each) 10% each = **20 %**.  
If you use a powerpoint presentation, you are free to share it on our course eportfolio site.
2. **Two** 400 word abstracts summarizing the thesis of your oral presentations. To be posted to the eportfolio group by 6:00 PM the day BEFORE your presentation. Your peers will read it before coming to class. 5% each = **10%**
3. **Two** seminar papers based on your oral presentations. (2000 words each) = 25% x 2= **50 %**
4. **One** 300 word post about the queen that you do not present on. = 5%
5. Attendance and contributions to the discussion = **15%**

### Required Texts, Movies, and TV:

*Katherine Parr: Complete Works and Correspondence*, ed. Janel Mueller. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011. Available on reserve or through a book store of your choice.

*Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, eds. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. Available on reserve or through a book store of your choice.

*Reading Monarch's Writing: the Poetry of Henry VIII, Mary Stuart, Elizabeth I, and James VI/I*, ed. Peter C. Herman. Tempe, Ariz.:Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002. On reserve.

Selections from *The Tudors* (Showtime, 2007-2010). Rent on iTunes for 2.99 each.

*Elizabeth* (directed by Shekhar Kapur, 1998). rent on iTunes for 5.00

*Elizabeth: The Golden Years* (directed by Shekhar Kapur, 2011). rent on iTunes for 5.00

### Optional Texts:

Philippa Gregory's *The Taming of a Queen* (August 2015)