



27 February 2022

Dear Members of the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women and Gender,

It is customary for the President to update the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women and Gender membership in early January, so this is a bit late, but at least it's still February! As we all know, the last two years have been marked by considerable uncertainty, and that has continued.

Last year was by no means a normal year, but the move of everything online allowed everyone to attend the plenary lecture by Professor Marie Louise Coolahan at the virtual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America (RSA). It also enabled us to have a virtual annual meeting and recognize winners of our prizes, and present Lifetime Achievement Awards to Natalie Zemon Davis and Mary Garrard with far larger audiences than usual. Of course it did not allow us to have the reception that usually follows such events, so we missed the chance to chat with each other and catch up informally, but it was a pleasure to see so many celebrate these amazing scholars.

The big event for SSEMWG in 2021 was taking ownership of *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, which is now the official journal of the Society, published by the University of Chicago Press. I speak for many of us when I express gratitude to those at the University of Chicago Press who have made this move painless. One result of this development is that a digital subscription to *EMW* is now a benefit of membership. We are delighted that the current editors, Bernadette Andrea, Julie Campbell, and Allyson Poska, have agreed to stay on for three more years. If your membership has just given you access to *EMW*, I know you will appreciate the breadth of exciting scholarship it presents.

SSEMWG runs its terms of office on the calendar year basis, and so the end of December saw a changing of the guard. Perhaps the biggest thanks is due to our departing treasurer, Deborah Uman (Weber State University) who served for an extraordinary 10 years. We are extremely grateful for her long and excellent service. Those leaving their committees are María Carrion (Emory University) and Elizabeth Lehfeldt (Cleveland State University) on the Executive Committee; Elisa Oh (Howard University), Pamela Allen Brown (University of Connecticut) and Jessica Goethals (University of Alabama) on the Awards Committee; and Meghan Roberts (Bowdoin College) and Bernadette Andrea (UC Santa Barbara) on the Nominating Committee. I want to particularly thank Elisa and Meghan for chairing their committees this past year. Tanya Schmidt (NYU) has stepped down after

two years as the Graduate Student representative on the Executive Committee, and has done an outstanding job of creating programs that serve graduate students.

We are delighted to welcome new people to our committees. Maria DePrano (UC Merced) is now treasurer, after shadowing Deborah for 18 months. In the elections held in November, we elected Sarah Moran (University of Utrecht) and Sarah Owens (College of Charleston) to the Executive Committee. We also elected Alison Klairmont Lingo (UC Berkeley), Sara Morrison (William Jewel College), and Jessica Weiss (Metropolitan State University, Denver) to the Awards Committee; and Alison Margaret Bigelow (University of Virginia) and Unn Falkeid (University of Oslo) to the Nominating Committee. We are very grateful for their willingness to serve! In addition, Mindy Williams (Purdue University) will join the Executive Committee as Graduate Student Representative. I am delighted that our leadership is not just interdisciplinary, but international, and represents many different types of institution. And I am deeply grateful to the nominating committee for their work in maintaining the diversity of our committees.

While some of the guard is changing, many of those who serve the organization [are continuing](#). I want to call out especially those whose work is vital but less visible. Pia Jakobsson (University of Texas at Dallas), who maintains our website, was responding to emails on her phone when her home lacked power for a week. Anna Wainwright (University of New Hampshire) maintains both our twitter feed and Facebook page; Katherine McKenna (Oberlin College) maintains our blog.

As conferences have resumed, under the leadership of Vice President Andrea Pearson we have resumed awarding grants for travel to conferences. When we paused these during COVID lockdowns, we agreed that we would extend eligibility to recent Ph.D.s who may have lost the opportunity to present in the previous 18 months.

As many of you know, “Attending to Pre-modern Women 1100-1800”, will be held at the [Newberry Library](#) September 30-October 1 2022. The theme is “Performance”, and the program showcases the capacious vision SSEMWG strives for. As is our custom, SSEMWG will hold its annual meeting during the “Attending” conference. More information on that will follow.

Though we are sponsoring several sessions, we will not have any formal events at RSA in Dublin—everything was uncertain, and receptions are out. However, we *are* sponsoring goodies at the coffee break on March 31 at 4 PM. Please stop by and say hello if you are there!

We are beginning work on an update of our website, [ssemwg.org](#) (for the first time in 10 years) to make it more user friendly, and to make more clearly visible the range of work we support. You will already see a new image in the header. That work will be helped by a long and lively thread of suggestions for images to include on the website that took place on the listserv last year; our vice-president, Andrea Pearson, and Lyndan Warner (St. Mary’s University) have worked from it in the first phase of planning. We hope to have a redesigned website by the summer. This is part of a

long- term effort to ensure that everything we do reflects the full range of global approaches to the study of early modern women and gender.

When SSEMWG changed its name several years ago, one impetus was to emphasize our openness to new approaches to the study of women and gender, and to be a more visibly inclusive organization. Our work to become what we want to be is ongoing, as it is for all scholarly organizations. The past several years have offered regular reminders that those of us who study the distant past have much to offer the present. I know I am not the only one who has been able to offer students perspective on this moment rooted in aspects of early modern history. I have been helped in doing this by the wide range of research represented by SSEMWG's members, not just on Europe, but on the whole world. I am grateful for that work.

Thank you for all you do, as scholars, teachers, and colleagues. I look forward to seeing you— maybe at RSA, or at Attending to Pre-Modern Women, or some other conference or library in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Susan D. Amussen