# Creating a Commonplace Book (CPB) (20% of the Final Grade)

This semester, you will keep your own commonplace book (CPB). What is a commonplace book? (Figure 1)

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(FIGURE 1: Dr. KENNEDY'S COMMONPLACE BOOK. (TYPED TRANSCRIPTION CAN BE ACCESSED HERE.))

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, one of the most important tools of a reader or writer was a commonplace book. Peter Beal, leading expert on English manuscript studies, defines a **commonplace book** as "a manuscript book in which quotations or passages from reading matter, precepts, proverbs and aphorisms, useful rhetorical figures or exemplary phrasing, words and ideas, or other notes and memoranda are entered for ready reference under general subject headings."

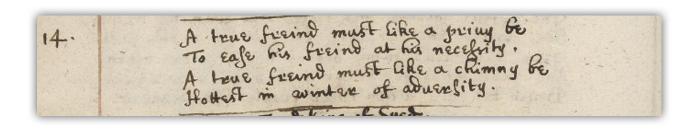
For example, here is a short poem copied into a Commonplace Book that we may file under the heading of "Friendship" (Figure 2):

A TRUE FRIEND MUST LIKE A PRIVY\*BE

TO EASE HIS FRIEND AT HIS NECESSITY.

A TRUE FRIEND MUST LIKE A CHIMNEY BE

HOTTEST IN WINTER OF ADVERSITY.



(FIGURE 2: AN (UNATTRIBUTED) EPIGRAM WRITTEN IN THE COMMONPLACE BOOK OF MATTHEW DAY (1574-1661, MAYOR OF WINDSOR) [MANUSCRIPT], CA. 1650. (FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY, V.A.160, 4||5).

The Renaissance commonplace book allowed readers to actively engage with their texts, choosing and curating passages that spoke to them, and to transcribe those passages into journals under organized headings. Early modern readers marked up their texts, underlining favorite lines, writing marginal notes (such as attribution tags), using asterisks and *manicules* (these cute little pointing hand signs (③)) to point out favorite passages, cross-listing page numbers, crossing out text they did not like, writing lists, practicing their signature, drawing obscene images, etc. (Figures 3, 4, and 5)

Commonplace books were something like diaries or journals, but writers recorded favorite quotations rather than daily events or emotions. This does not mean that they were impersonal in any sense. We learn so much about early modern readers by their choice of organizational headings, chosen passages, and other materials collected in their commonplace books. In addition, they were often circulated among friends and passed down in families, demonstrating that they were semi-public repositories of knowledge and self-improvement.

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A PRIVY IS A TOILET.

the strong special draws and	
ATT COL	The third Booke. 531
Jo disoblige homset ge	alwayes their house, that they may enter be ready to let vs enter. And whereas the hash
Hygias living of	willed our appetites should make apparant showe and declaration, she caused theirs to be advancant
\$imself 2 / 379	concealed and inward; and hath furnished them with parts wifit for oftensation; and energy the consistent for defence. Such prankes as this, we mult leave to the Amazonian libertie. Also add the
	orgat muching through Horavis That fluis Ouesname at also known and
TOO A VI'C	with three hundred lances of her fex, all wel mounted & compleatile a treathaving left the Dantiff and
A Sympathicity	refidue of a great armie, that followed hir beyond the neighbouring mountaines. And thus the too man as as aloud that all might heare the bespake him That the sume resoluting theme of his victories, defendant wet
frank sy	and matchlette valour, had brought his thither to fee him u and to offer him his means and
Physicions	forces, for the advancing and furthermo of his enterprises, and finding him for fire forces.
1 No drinke rome	and ffrong, the who was perfectly accomplished in all his qualities, achiefed from to lye with his trust to there might be borne of the most valiant woman in the world, and onely valiant.
Poward Or Jun 2000 and progenito	man then living some great and care creature for posteritie. Alexander thanked hir for the
Morall, Politike and Millitarie patients	reft; but to take leafine for hir laft demands accomplishment; he staide thirteene dayes in
TT II D 1: 1 and Militarie patientes	that place, during which, he reuelled with as much glee, and feafled with as great ioiline as possibly could be deuted, in honour and fauour of to couragious a Princes. We are wel-nigh.
Morall Politike and Ivilinearies	in all things partiall and corrupted ludges of their actions, as no doubt they are of ours. I
- C found way Survey	allowe of truth as well when it hurts me, as when it helpes me. It is a foule diforder, that
in the for whis the Discourses to the Assertation of your southers	fo often vrgeth them vnto change, and hinders them from fetling their affection on any one subject: as we fee in this Goddeffe, to whom they impute so many changes and seue-
m glace for whise they I II Courtes	rall friends. But withall, it is against the maure of law, not to be violent, and again it the condi-
there is a god owns	time of violence, to be constant. And those who wonder at it, exclaime against it, and in wo-
ipigrams tione textee	men fearch for the causes of this infirmitie, as incredible and vingatural 1: why see they not how often, without any amazement and exclaiming, themselves are possessed and interested
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Lo: Michaell de Montaigne, A weman tike	paffion meerely corporcall. If no end be found in concentration or limit in ambition, affire year left where is not end not limit in letchery, It yet continued after facility: nor can any man pre-
To walke the round line laugh and bees mayore 660. I home bester trained then	scribe it or end or constant satisfaction; it ever goot hon beyond it's possession, beyond it's
K night	boundes. And if constancie be peraduenture in some forte more pardonable in them then
Knight Knight a man will bring forth a Mone alige See of Themeson with out a man will bring forth a Mone alige See of Themeson	in vs.: They may readily alleadge against vs.; our ready inclination voto daylic variety and new ware: And secondly alleage without vs., that they buy a pigge in a poake. I not
Of the noble Order of So Michaell, and one of the	Cheene of Manus cauled Amareign her hith bisband to be firangled and hang'd out of the
Of the noble Order of S William, and on Henry lies fallow	barres of his window, with a corde of Silke and golde, wopen with her owne handes; be-
Gentlemen in Ordinary of the French King, Lieury	cause in bed-businesse should neither his members nor endecours, answerable the bone.  The had conceived of him, by viewing his stature, beauty, youth, and disposition, by which Catera non fuscunt
the third his Chamber. Hanger L	fine had formerly beene furprifed and abused. That action hath in it more violence then pose faring.
CHARLES AND A	from to that on their part at least necessitie is ever provided for to on our behalfe it may hap- pen otherwise. Therefore <i>Plans</i> by his lawes did very wisely establish, that before manager,
The God Books	the better to decide it's opportunitie, competent Judges might be appointed to take view
	of young men which pretended the fame, all naked; and of maidens but to the waffe; Iti
Tello W. Commission of the Com	making triall of vs, they happlie finde vs not worthy their choice: a such a worth and a such a sense is a such as a
The first flower Hospital Best on the south 25%	Inquita necessary of Inquita necessary are contra manua. To some or the property of Marti. 1. 7.
then a feet the se	It is not followed as will be a be a bould as a fact that the same to the same followed as a fact that the same to
That Water was life on French.	It is not fufficient, that will keepe a leuell courfe; weakeneffeand incapacitie may lawfulls lie breake wedlock;
First Written by man in . That watther	Es queres dans diande fores nernofaus ilud, 1000 Borbot in 2000 to more card, eleg.
The state of the s	Why not, and according to measure, an amorous intelligence more licenclous and more
who hatte on offerend after And	20 mg Si blando mquest fupereffe laborgui flom 1100 on 1200 of
formed heller, best langing English by sight	2 Stokendo suguiest faperoficialoris. How mo of 1579, 570-112 were continued to 1,577, 600.
now done into English	But is it not great impudencie, to bring our imperfections and weakenes, in place where we define to pleafe, and leave a good report and comendation behinde vs? for the little I now
The Attentions Not weart mouraing thethes the	of a but reverently & regularly, omits the barrand has been been been been been been been bee
their boys which was that in the	and if I did, I would raither excute my excutes then any faminage allo MC to excute my faminage
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(FIGURES 3 AND 4, TITLE PAGE AND P. 531 OF JOHN FLORIO'S 1603 TRANSLATION OF MONTAIGNE'S ESSAYS. EVEN ON THE TITLE PAGE, WE CAN SEE ANNOTATIONS IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT HANDS, INCLUDING THE CENTRAL SIGNATURE OF A FORMER OWNER EDWARD LUMSDON. ON THE TITLE PAGE, THE READER(S) HAVE CREATED THEIR OWN HEADINGS AND HAVE LISTED THE PAGE NUMBERS TO FIND MORE ON SOME OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS: "PHYSICIANS DRINK WINE AND PRESCRIBE SMALL BEER TO THEIR PATIENTS," "A WOMAN LIKE HONEY BETTER TASTED THAN EATEN," OR "TO WALK THE ROUND, LIVE, LAUGH, AND BE MERRY." ON P. 532, WE SEE A MANICULE (POINTING HAND) POINTING TO THE UNDERLINED PASSAGE. THE READER HAS REMARKED AT THE TOP MARGIN SOME SEX ADVICE: "IN COPULATION THE MAN IS PLAINTIFF AND THE WOMAN IS DEFENDANT YET SOMETIME THERE IS A CROSS SUIT" (FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY, V.B.327).

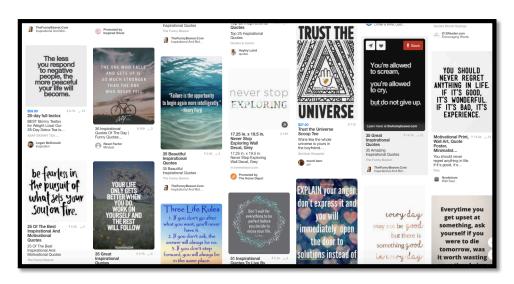
fo often vrgeth them vnto change, and hinders them from fetling their affection on any one fibiect: as we fee in this Goddeffe, to whom they impute so many changes and seuerall friends. But withall, it is against the nature of love, not to be violent, and against the condition of violence, to be constant. And those who wonder at it, exclaime against it, and in women search for the causes of this infirmitie, as incredible and vinnaturall: why see they not how often, without any amazement and exclaiming, themselves are possessed and insected

(FIGURE 5: DETAIL OF THE ABOVE MONTAIGNE TEXT. UNDERLINED PASSAGE: IT IS AGAINST THE NATURE OF LOVE, NOT TO BE VIOLENT, AND AGAINST THE CONDITION OF VIOLENCE TO BE CONSTANT. ACCOMPANYING MANICULE HIGHLIGHTS HOW MUCH THIS READER WANTED TO EMPHASIZE THIS PARTICULAR PASSAGE. P. 532 OF THE ABOVE COPY OF MONTAIGNE'S ESSAYS)

Tudor schoolboys were encouraged to keep commonplace books for their spiritual and rhetorical education, but they often practiced their handwriting skills, attempted their maths, and drew crude figures in their books as well. Renaissance women kept commonplace books, quoting from scripture and love poems, and adding recipes, medical cures, and more. While we will be compiling literary commonplace books, there were legal commonplace books (Thomas Jefferson famously compiled those, and used such writings when composing our major U.S. documents), philosophical (John Locke), medical, theological, artistic (think of Da Vinci's famous sketch journals), and scientific commonplace books as well.

Adam Smyth explains, "Commonplace books are, overwhelmingly, messier texts—messier in terms of the kinds of inclusions they present (everything from lines of Ovid to recipes to cure an ailing horse) – and in terms of their material form" (90). He suggests instead that scholars embrace this messiness—the actual use and (dis)organization of commonplace books as part of larger reading and writing cultural practices, or what he terms "Commonplace Book Culture" ("the sum of expectations, textual practices and approaches to language that the commonplace book—as theory, process and text – created or encouraged" (94)).

The commonplace book was (and is) a way of collecting and organizing knowledge for personal edification, improvement, and pleasure. We may think of Pinterest as a visual form of commonplacing, as people choose and curate images (and very often inspirational quotations) that they find motivating, educational, or idealistic (Figure 6). Whenever we choose a passage to cite while sharing an article on Facebook or Twitter, we are creating a very public commonplace book on social media. Every time we post favorite lyrics from a song or movie to social media or a blog, we are nearing the concept of Renaissance commonplace book culture.



(FIGURE 6: "INSPIRATIONAL" + "QUOTES" ON PINTEREST)

## Preparing to Commonplace

Before we begin our individual commonplace books, we will read and discuss a few essays about Commonplace Books, discuss commonplace book culture and its effects on *Q1 Hamlet*, practice low stakes commonplacing on index cards, and visit the library's rare books holdings of early modern English literature and commonplace book examples.

We will spend a day in the Rare Books Room (WEEK 2) to see early printed editions of Renaissance drama, examples of the sorts of books Shakespeare and his contemporaries were reading as schoolboys, and we will explore our libraries holdings of commonplace books. Our collections include several early printed commonplace books, a few eighteenth century manuscript miscellanies (a related genre we will discuss soon), and many 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century American manuscript and printed commonplace book examples.

Q1 Hamlet is an ideal text to introduce us to the Commonplace Book Project. Not only is the play almost infinitely quotable/commonplaceable (especially Corambis/Polonius!), but Q1 Hamlet was also printed with commonplace markers for Polonius/Corambis' two speeches of advice for his children (see figure 7).

Enter Corambis.

Cor. Yet here Leartes? aboord, aboord, for shame,
The winde sits in the shoulder of your saile,
And you are staid for, there my blessing with thee
And these sew precepts in thy memory.

"Be thou familiar, but by no meanes vulgares,
"Those friends thou hast, and their adoptions tried,
Graple them to thee with a hoope of steele,
"But do not dull the palme with entertaine,
"Of euery new vnsleg d courage,
"Beware of entrance into a quarrell, but being in,
"Beare it that the opposed may beware of thee,
"Costly thy apparrell, as thy purse can buy.
"But not express in fashion,
"For the apparell of proclaimes the man.
And they of France of the chiefe rancke and station
Are of a most select and generall chiefe in that:
"This aboue all, to thy owne selfe be true,
And it must follow as the night the day,

C 2

come to each class with two index cards with quotations of your choosing, and with possible headings for such a quotation. On certain class sessions, I may give you more of a prompt, such as: to choose a line or phrase that is part of our everyday speech that you encountered in *Hamlet*; or to cite a line from the major avengers of the scenes we discuss that day; etc. I will also be writing lines on index cards; we will share these in class, I will collect the cards, and return them

the following class session.

Each class session on the syllabus in which

we discuss Q1 Hamlet (WEEKS 2-3), please

(FIGURE 7: CORAMBIS' ADVICE TO LAERTES.)

We will focus on Hamlet's "Table of Memory" as his commonplace book. In *Q1*, Hamlet is reading from and commenting on a book at the beginning of his "To be or not to be" speech, so we will discuss what might be the words of the book and what were Hamlet's responses, and if he was reading from his own commonplace book. We will also be able to discuss the uncanniness of encountering unfamiliar variations of the major soliloquies and monologues ("To be or not to be. Ay, there's the point!").

We will read selections from Stallybrass and Lesser on the commonplace markers in Q1 Hamlet, and David Summers' essay on the epistemological crisis of Hamlet and the failure of commonplacing. As we will see, Summmers does not consider Q1 Hamlet, so we will consider how his overall argument changes when we read his work alongside Q1's commonplace markers and Hamlet's book for "To be."

#### Class Readings on Commonplace Books:

- (excerpts) Beal, Peter. Dictionary of English Manuscript Terminology: 1450 to 2000. Oxford, GB: OUP Oxford, 2007. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 19 December 2016.
- □ Lesser, Zachary and Peter Stallybrass. "The First Literary Hamlet and the Commonplacing of Professional Plays." Shakespeare Quarterly, (2008), 371–420.
- Smyth, Adam. "Commonplace Book Culture: A List of Sixteen Traits." Women and Writing, c.1340-c.1650: The Domestication of Print Culture. Manuscript Culture in the British Isles. Eds. Lawrence-Mathers, A. and Hardman, P. Rochester, U.S.: Boydell and Brewer, 90-110.
- Summers, David. "—the proverb is something musty: The Commonplace and Epistemic Crisis in Hamlet." Hamlet Studies 20.1-2 (1998): 9-34.

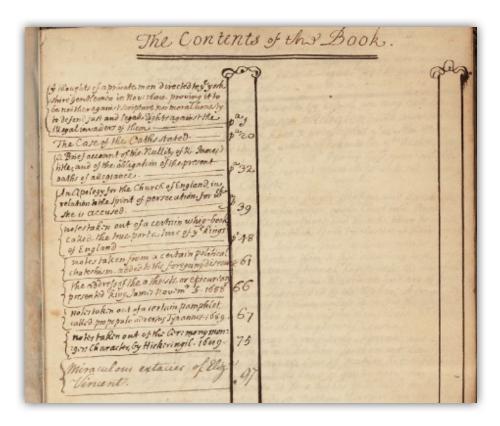
# **YOUR Commonplace Book**

Your sources can include, first and foremost, the assigned readings and supplementary materials, as well as any other useful texts you come across.

I encourage you to supplement CPB entries with extra-curricular material: quotations from readings for other classes, lyrics from songs, lines from movies, tweets with relevant hashtags, an occasional quotation from a classmate during discussion, etc. These extra-curricular commonplace passages, however, are in addition to and not in place of the required passages as described below.

## Your Commonplace Book requires the following, and in roughly this order:

- A title page. The title page should include your name, and a title unique to your book, i.e. *not Revenge!* (If you wish to make your own colophon or other embellishment, that is wonderful but not necessary)
- A table of contents (at the front of your Commonplace Book). Ideally, this would be in alphabetically order, but as you discover new areas of interest and inquiry (and reach dead ends or exhaust old ideas) your commonplace book will grow and change. (Figure 8)



(FIGURE 8: TABLE OF CONTENTS WITH COLUMN FLOURISHES FOR PAGE NUMBERS FOR JOSEPH BEACON'S COMMONPLACE BOOK. JOSEPH BEACON: HIS BOOKE. MANUSCRIPT, 1689. MS AM 528. HOUGHTON LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.)

- Approximately 50 or so Quotations (3-4 per week), arranged under 8-12 topical/thematic headings, each with a brief bibliographic reference (so that you may easily find the quotation again, in context). Make sure to number each entry.
  - Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus, the great Dutch humanist and theologian, extols the virtues of commonplacing in his rhetorical textbook, *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style. Copia* (or "abundance") covers the concepts of *imitatio*, or paraphrasing; *copia*, or the expansion and revision of pre-existing ideas; *rhetoric*, the study and use of various literary techniques and styles; and *inventio*, the recording, altering, and creation of new ideas and texts from others' materials. A notorious exercise from the book includes 150 stylistic variations of the phrase: "Your letter has delighted me very much" (*Tuae literae me magnopere delectarunt*). Unsurprisingly, the commonplace book is central to Erasmus' rhetorical exercises, and he offers a helpful section on commonplacing, and how to create headings and subheadings. (You may also consult the *indices* of your favorite academic books for suggestions.)

Prepare for yourself a sufficient number of headings and arrange them as you please, subdivide them into the appropriate sections, and under each section add your commonplace and maxims; and then whatever you come across in any author, particularly if it is rather striking, you will be able to note down immediately in the proper place, be it an anecdote or a fable or an illustrative example or a strange incident or a maxim or a witty remark or a remark notable for some other quality or a proverb or a metaphor or a simile. This has the double advantage of fixing what you have read more firmly in your mind, and getting you into the habit of using the riches supplied by your reading.

— Erasmus, De Ultraque Verborum ac Rerum Copia (1512)



An index (the final pages of the Commonplace Book) of at least 20 words. The index will be listed alphabetically (or thematically, then alphabetically) by your commonplace book headings with page numbers. You may decide to also add cross-references to authors, other frequently appearing terms that were not heading chapters, etc. (Figure 9)

(FIGURE 9: FIRST INDEX PAGE OF THOMAS SHEPPEY'S "A BOOK OF CHOICE RECEIPTS COLLECTED FROM SEVERAL FAMOUS AUTHORS A GREAT PART IN MONASTERIES AND OFTEN EXPERIMENTED AS TO A GREAT NUMBER OF THEM [MANUSCRIPT], CA. 1675." (FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY, V.A.452.)

Remember: Be diligent! You should be adding to your commonplace book every week!

## Further Information on your Quotations and Headings:

- Entries must be listed under a specific and clear heading. For example, I will be keeping my own Commonplace Book this semester, and because of my particular research interests I may include headings such as "Cosmetics," "Perfume," "Odors," and "Cannibalism." (These headings will all also appear in my Table of Contents and Index.)
- Entries might be as small as one line (See Figure 10) or as long as a full stanza or paragraph.
- You should have an average of 4 entries/quotations per week from course texts (so you will have about 50 entries by the end of the semester). However, you are *strongly* encouraged to add entries from varied sources—other readings, music lyrics, witty remarks by friends, quotable graffiti, etc.

Pont. Testis Apollinea Neptunia mania Teoia.
Coen galt. Turpe sini vultus mitidi vestregi decora.
Ovid Tingitur oceano custos Erymanthidos vesar Cleoph Talia billisono dederam responsa Poeta.
mant. Teiste nemus dira vetuit superesse rapina.
mart. Tantus veris honos et odora gloria Flora
ovid. Tale puellares festum duxere chorea.
Tale puellares festum duxere chorea.
Ovid. Talia jinguntur sucincta crura Diana.
Ausm. Tergemina est Hecak tria virginis ora Diana.
Tractat maurata consona sila lyra.
Tullius Ausonia gloria prima toga.

(FIGURE 10. DETAIL IMAGE OF THE COMMONPLACE BOOK (BEGAN C. 1605) OF SIR EDWARD DERING (1598-1644) SHOWING PITHY LINES AND PHRASES FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, LISTED BY AUTHOR IN THE LEFT-HAND COLUMN. FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY, M.S. X.D.530, FOLIO 29 VERSO. ACCORDING TO THEIR CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: LINES OF LATIN VERSE ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY BY THE FIRST LETTER OF THE LINE. POSSIBLY STARTED WHEN A BOY. THE AUTHORS, BOTH CLASSICAL AND MODERN, HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE LINES ENTERED IN LATER LIFE.)

- Please include *only* quotations, and a brief bibliographic reference. Do not add commentary explaining why you like or chose a particular quotation. (e.g. Hieronimo in *The Spanish Tragedy* 3.2.1-15, or Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy* 3.2.1-15).
- Each page must be numbered. You can decide whether you wish to write on both sides of a page—or only the verso or recto, depending on the quality or your chosen paper and ink. You may also wish to number each entry, as that will help me determine that you are on track.
- Exemplars of proper commonplace books are nearly impossible to find—more often than not, texts (literary or otherwise) appear alongside a diverse range of material, often with little or no relation to the texts collected. You will need to find your own method in the madness. Would you like to include a recipe for meat pasties while we are reading *Titus Andronicus?* Wonderful. Would you consider "He better call Becky with the good hair" (Beyoncé, "Sorry") a modern day aphorism that you would include under the heading of "Adultery"? Fantastic. Exploit this potential in order to find the practices of reading that work for you—in doing so, you will better understand the active and practical process of early modern reading.

- ☞ Indeed, you may need to expand the practice of commonplacing beyond its strict definition, in order to make this a useful process for the work we need to accomplish this semester.
  - As our first writing assignment is to analyze a short passage, including using *The Oxford English Dictionary* and *The Shakespeare Concordance* to consider etymologies, usage, frequency of use, etc. following a specific word—so you may wish to follow a major word or concept from our course theme, such as *Revenge, Vengeance, Forgiveness, Retribution*, etc.
  - © Our second major writing assignment for the course will be based on *your* Commonplace Book entries, so please be very aware of what you would like to focus on this semester.
- You will not simply choose a few topical headings of your own choice, and copy down brief and suitable quotations. This should instead be a more thoughtful process that adapts to *your* own interests and habits of thinking—so while you will want to be relatively consistent in your methodology, you will also need to be flexible.
  - Trial and error: You may begin a heading topic, and then discover that you are not finding as many quotable passages as you had wished. It is fine to only have a few entries and abandon that topic. Conversely, you may find so many quotable passages on another topic that you may need to create a continuing entry if you run out of room in your allotted space.

### e.g. "Women Scorned" (Con't. from page 17)

© Commonplace Books are personal, but not private: at times—and especially at the end of the semester—we will pass them around and let others view them.

#### Other criteria:

- Your Commonplace Books *must* be handwritten.
- Four Commonplace Book must be bound together—no looseleaf paper. The Commonplace Book can be a composition notebook, journal, or three ring binder, with lined or unlined paper. On the second floor of Prairie Lights Bookstore, there is a wonderful selection of various notebooks that would be ideal for this project, or you can always just buy a cheap marbled cover composition notebook. Others may invest in a Bullet Journal. You may also choose to make your own notebook of blank, lined, or colored papers folded in half and secured together with staples or stabstitch binding.
- Tou do not have to include any of the following, but may wish to add or alter in any way:
  - A personalized bookmark.
  - A decorative cover for your Commonplace Book. Maybe you wish to include movie posters from your favorite revenge-themed films, a page of *Hamlet* as redacted poetry, a knit or cross-

stitched cover (Figure 11), a collage of your favorite quotations, etc.





(FIGURE 11 (LEFT): THE WHOLE BOOKE OF PSALMES (1639), WITH AN EMBROIDERED BINDING FEATURING DAVID AND GOLIATH. (FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY. STC 2689, COPY 1) FIGURE 12 (RIGHT): CONTEMPORARY COMMONPLACE BOOK/MISCELLANY BY "Ellina from Russia" DEMONSTRATING THE USE OF DIFFERENT COLORED INKS AS ORGANIZATIONAL AID.)

Feel free to play with your own chosen handwriting styles, color of ink (Figure 12), size of letter, etc. I can provide early modern handwriting examples for those who wish to try their hand (all puns intended) at early modern paleography and calligraphy



- Reader's marks. Go back and re-read entries, and underline key words or create a new heading based on recurring subtopics you find interesting. You can add manicules to your favorite passages.
- ⇒ Especially for those of you who are taking classes in the Center for the Book, you may wish to incorporate any materials created or skills developed in those classes.
- An occasional illustration. Do you wish to design a costume for Revenge? Do you feel compelled to doodle a skull and crossbones? Would you like to try replicating the title illustration for *The Spanish Tragedy*? (Figure 13)

(FIGURES 13: Henry Tiffin Commonplace Book at the Phillips Library of the Peabody Essex Museum. Tiffin was a British sailor and included 78 water colors in his commonplace book, mostly notes on naval ships and quotations about the history of the Royal Navy. You can read more on the manuscript here at Conversant, the blog for the Phillips Library. MSS 322, Henry Tiffin Commonplace Book, 1748 – 1776.

Grading: You will be asked to submit your Commonplace Book on the following dates:

- W Feb. 8: Commonplace Book Check-In #1 DUE in class (10 entries+); short reflection DUE by 11:59 pm
- F. Mar. 3: Commonplace Book Check-In #2 DUE in class (20+ entries); short reflection DUE by 11:59 pm
- F Mar. 31: Commonplace Book Check-In #3 DUE in class (~30 entries); short reflection DUE by 11:59 pm
- Arr M May 1: FINAL Commonplace Book DUE in class ( $\sim$ 50 entries); short reflection DUE by 11:59 pm

#### Your commonplace book for the first three submissions will be marked:

- satisfactory (meeting the number of submissions with brief citations and adhering to the above criteria)
- unsatisfactory (not meeting the above criteria),
- or exemplary (a new Francis Bacon or John Locke in the making!)

You will also be asked to complete several short reflections throughout the semester about your commonplacing experience.

Overall, we are all working toward Renaissance reading, recording, rhetorical, and writing practices, so I will be looking for your conscious choice in your entry selections, dedicated organizational patterns and curation techniques, self-reflection and thoughtful responses in your short writing exercises, and as a whole, your engagement with and understanding of our various texts.

I want to thank the various Renaissance scholars who shared their Commonplace Book Assignments with me. My own prompt is beautified with others' feathers!: Sonya Brockman, Josh Calhoun, Joshua Eckhardt, Adam Hooks, Jennifer Higginbotham, Emily Isaacson, Elizabeth Kolkovich, Patti Taylor, and Katie Will. In addition, I want to thank Natalie Eschenbaum and Anya Bertolet from the Shakespeare Association of America session on "Alternatives to the Term Paper" for their feedback and suggestions.