

Women and Dictionary Making

Dictionaries are a powerful genre, perceived as authoritative and objective records of the language, impervious to personal bias. But who makes dictionaries shapes both how they are constructed and how they are used. Tracing the craft of dictionary making from the fifteenth century to the present day, this book explores the vital but little-known significance of women and gender in the creation of English language dictionaries. Women worked as dictionary patrons, collaborators, readers, compilers, and critics, while gender ideologies served, at turns, to prevent, secure, and veil women's involvements and innovations in dictionary making. Combining historical, rhetorical, and feminist methods, this is a monumental recovery of six centuries of women's participation in dictionary making and a robust investigation of how the social life of the genre is influenced by the social expectations of gender.

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Women and Dictionary Making

*Gender, Genre, and English Language
Lexicography*

Lindsay Rose Russell



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*for my sister
thanks for saving my life – that one time and all the others*

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A note on quotations

To provide a fuller sense of the dictionaries and historical documents described in this book, quotations and titles largely reproduce original spelling, punctuation, and initial capitalization. I have, for example, retained early modern distinctions between *i/j*, *s/f*, *u/v*, and *vv/w* as well as early modern punctuation marks such as the virgule [/]. Italics and boldface have been used to represent the emphases created by different typefaces in historical to contemporary dictionaries. Square brackets ([]) enclose any material added, deleted, or otherwise altered by me. To facilitate future research of these primary materials, the list of references modernizes spelling and punctuation in accordance with standard library cataloguing practice, and indicates where titles have been shortened.