

# Cambridge Elements<sup>≡</sup>

Elements on Women in the History of Philosophy

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## Lucrezia Marinella

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**Abstract:** Lucrezia Marinella's (1571–1653) most important contributions to philosophy were two polemical treatises: *The Nobility and Excellence of Women*, and *The Defects and Vices of Men*, and the *Exhortations to Women and to Others if They Please*. Marinella argues for the superiority of women over men in every respect: psychologically, physiologically, morally, and intellectually. She is particularly effective in using the resources of ancient philosophy to support her various arguments, in which she draws conclusions about the souls and the bodies of women, the nature and significance of women's beauty, the virtue of women, and the liberty to which women as well as men are entitled. This Element showcases that her claim of superiority is intended ultimately to justify the possibility of political rule by women.

**Keywords:** Lucrezia Marinella, Renaissance feminism, superiority and equality, beauty, liberty

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