

Catalog of Arguments

- I. Argument from Names
 - a. donna (dominion) [46]
 - b. femina (fetus/fire) [49]
 - c. Eva (life) [50]
 - d. Ischia (divine fire) [50]
 - e. mulier (soft body, gentle soul) [51]

- II. Argument from Causes
 - a. Efficient: God's superior ideas (cf. Descartes' 3rd Meditation) [52]
 - b. Material: Adam's rib [54]

- III. Argument from Nature
 - a. Diversity of souls within a species [55]
 - b. Beautiful body as evidence of the more divine soul [57, 63]
 - c. Vs. E. Tasso on act, form, being [132, 134]
 - d. Vs. E. Tasso on self-contained being [132, 134]
 - e. Vs. E. Tasso on monstrosity/nature [132, 134, 135]
 - f. Vs. E. Tasso on defective workings of nature [132, 135]

- IV. Arguments from Operations
 - a. Compound of superior body and soul [77]
 - b. Temperature [77, 130]
 - c. Examples of virtues and vices
 - i. Intelligence and skill – philosophy, science, arithmetic, poetry, letters, etc. [83]
 - ii. Temperance and continence – in maintaining chastity against men [93]
 - iii. Moral fortitude and bravery – preferring death to shame and servitude [105]
 - iv. Prudence – expert advice, management of household, military and peacetime administration [114], *vs. T. Tasso* [140]
 - v. Physical strength [131], *vs. T. Tasso* [139]
 - vi. Stability and diligence [143]
 - vii. Not dishonest, but restore honor with dowries, *vs. Boccaccio* [143]
 - viii. Not murderous, but gentle and compassionate, *vs. Boccaccio* [143]
 - ix. Not avaricious, *vs. Boccaccio* [143]
 - x. Not stubborn, but stable and obedient, *vs. Boccaccio* [143]
 - xi. Not petty, but good intellect and memory, *vs. Boccaccio* [144]
 - xii. Not gluttonous, but moderate, *vs. Boccaccio* [144]
 - xiii. *vs. T. Tasso*, against female versions of “obedient” strength and prudence [139]
 - d. Purpose of women is not to serve men
 - i. *Vs. Tasso* [132, 134]
 - ii. *Vs. Sperone* through appeal to Aristotle [136]
 - iii. *Vs. Boccaccio* through evidence of ambition [142]
 - e. *Vs. E. Tasso* on influence of the moon [132, 134]

- V. Arguments from What Men Say
 - a. Men compelled to honor women [69]

- i. Signs of honor: etiquette [69], ornaments [70]
 - ii. Aristotle's positive descriptions of women [72]
 - iii. Political/economic rights in France, Spain, England, Germany to ascend to the monarchy, inherit estates, and control business [74, 118]
- b. Bad motivations that undermine authority
 - i. Aristotle's anger, self-love, envy [119]
 - ii. Bocaccio's rage, spite, rejection [144]
 - iii. Hypocrisy [120, 124]
 - iv. Too much philosophizing in solitude [134]
 - v. Strange and false attitude toward divine laws and popular opinion [134]
 - vi. Timid and cowardly [134]
 - vii. Inconsistency [68, 72, 134, 136, 144]
- c. False generalization [121, 123, 124, 127]
 - i. Some slander is justly applied only to the worst women [121, 122, 124]
- d. Men are the source of women's bad actions
 - i. Bad examples [128]
 - ii. Persuade women to bad action [128]
 - iii. *Vs. E. Tasso* – husbands' vices/inferiority cause women to complain [135]
 - iv. *Vs. Bocaccio* – men cause women's passions [142]
- e. Men are the cause of women's lack
 - i. Few study military arts because education is forbidden to them, even though women would govern empires better [79]
 - ii. Women do not show their skills in "arms and letters" because men do not allow them to practice [80]
 - iii. (quoting Moderata Fonte) Women are socialized into different tasks [80]
 - iv. Thought experiment: train a boy and girl of equal age and intelligence [80]
 - v. *Vs. E. Tasso* on exclusion from official posts [132, 135]
 - vi. *Vs. T. Tasso* on exclusion from speculation [140]
- f. *Vs. E. Tasso* on woman's (lack of) desire to be man [40, 132, 134]

Further Questions

- VI. Analyses of oppression? (Non-)political demands?
 - a. See V.a.iii. and V.e above
 - b. "What marvelous feats we should see, the like of which were never heard, in maintaining and expanding kingdoms" [80]
 - i. Dido as founder and queen of Carthage [97]
 - c. "[Strength] is why the female sex...being less accustomed to heavy work, is tyrannized and trampled upon by insolent and unfair men. But if women, as I hope, wake themselves from the long sleep that oppresses them, how meek and humble will those proud and ungrateful men become" [132]
 - d. "I say it is false that every woman would wish to be a man, and that if she did wish it, it would only be in order to free her neck from the yoke of men's tyrannical dominion and make her rare virtues, which lie hidden within the walls of houses, better known" [135]
 - e. "Men make the laws, and thus, like tyrants, exclude women from official posts, even though they know that they would be good and perfectly capable of governing" [135]

- f. “we would find thousands more [acts of fortitude] if women practiced and exercised them in public affairs as men do” [140]
- g. “I would say speculation is as much of service to woman as it is to men” [140]
- h. “women cannot be called avaricious...because men unjustly usurp all that they have, so they cannot spend it on anything, however small” [143]

VII. An esoteric text? Parody? Irony?

- a. Goal: “I hope to demonstrate this with arguments and examples, so that *every man, no matter how stubborn* [emphasis mine], will be compelled to confirm it with his own mouth” [40]
- b. Counts herself as desiring that truth be known, but explicitly describes specious reasoning, which displays noble wit and “should not be wholly condemned” [39] – perhaps useful against stubborn men?
- c. Distancing from Aristotelianism
 - i. “like a man of small intelligence (pardon me, you Aristotelians who are reading this; Timon also called him foolish)” [120]
 - ii. “If we wish to adhere to the principles of Aristotle...” [137]
- d. Highly exaggerated tone? “I would wish to exalt and praise you, but I lack the words, and the more I spread the wings of my too audacious thoughts, the more there remain...I can even say that I diminish beauty’s praises by speaking them, and that it is better therefore to be silent and bow before it and gaze at it and worship it while it stupefies me” [68]
- e. *Essortatiani alle donne* (Exhortations to Women) – an apparent recantation
 - i. Kolsky pp. 982-984, *utramque partem* = “rhetorically charged negative parallel”
 - ii. Ross p. 296-298
 - 1. *Paignon* = “propositions are meant to be understood as both serious and ironic”
 - 2. Warning in Marinella’s preface to ignore the “bark” for the “pulp”
 - 3. Same publisher as that of Accademia degli Incogniti, an “infamous sodality that delighted (at the least) in layered discourses”; references to Gorgias; etc.
- f. Christine de Pizan, who kicked off the *querelle* in responding to Jean de Meun’s *Roman de la Rose*, also employed antiphrasis, i.e. irony in which it is obvious that the author means the opposite of what she literally says