



# Declamation on the Nobility and Preeminence of the Female Sex (The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe)

Henricus Cornelius Agrippa

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Originally published in 1529, the Declamation on the Preeminence and Nobility of the Female Sex argues that women are more than equal to men in all things that really matter, including the public spheres from which they had long been excluded.

Rather than directly refuting prevailing wisdom, Agrippa uses women's superiority as a rhetorical device and overturns the misogynistic interpretations of the female body in Greek medicine, in the Bible, in Roman and canon law, in theology and moral philosophy, and in politics. He raised the question of why women were excluded and provided answers based not on sex but on social conditioning, education, and the prejudices of their more powerful oppressors. His declamation, disseminated through the printing press, illustrated the power of that new medium, soon to be used to generate a larger reformation of religion.



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