
The Lady's Museum Project, a Digital Critical and Teaching Edition of Charlotte Lennox's *Lady's Museum* (1760-61), Completes Phase Two of its Three-Phase Development Schedule

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Abstract

The *Lady's Museum* (1760–61) was among the most important early periodicals largely written by one of the most important eighteenth-century authors, Charlotte Lennox, whose multigenre, proto-feminist writing is beginning to receive the critical and pedagogical attention it deserves. Yet no modern edition of the text has existed—until now. Launched in 2021, the Lady's Museum Project is presenting the first critical edition of—and learning community around—Lennox's *Museum* in three open-access formats to encourage the widest possible readership: a non-specialist digital, interactive edition of the text and LibriVox audiobook intended for public and undergraduate-student audiences, and a specialist digital edition intended for scholars' use—and participation (forthcoming). 2023 brought the completion of the teaching edition, which has been used in a variety of institutions across the U.S. and Canada, from 1000-level undergraduate to 5000-level graduate courses, and in undergraduate- and graduate-level internships designed to prepare interns for careers in editing and publishing, with a focus on transcending traditional teaching, editing, publishing, and disciplinary hierarchies and conventions.

Keywords

Lady's Museum, pedagogy, open access, open educational resource, OER, DH, Digital Humanities, Charlotte Lennox, Susan Carlile

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Cover Page Footnote

I would like to thank Dr. Kelly Plante as the co-editor and co-creator of Lady's Museum Project. It has been a pleasure to be co-creator and co-editor with her for these past three years. I would also like to thank Dr. Susan Carlile for her mentorship and her work in co-creating the curriculum for the project. Finally, I would like to thank all *ABO* and the 2020 Write With Aphra program that made all of this possible with introductions and many writing sessions!

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In the summer 2022 issue of *ABO*, two articles launched the Lady's Museum Project website, a digital critical and teaching edition of Charlotte Lennox's influential at the time, but too long neglected, magazine, the *Lady's Museum* (1760–61). The co-editors of the Lady's Museum Project, Kelly Plante and Karenza Sutton-Bennett, are pleased to announce the completion of phase 2 of the project's three-phase development cycle as of November 2023. In the summer of 2021, Kelly and Karenza (then PhD Candidates) began work on creating an open-access digital modern edition of Charlotte Lennox's influential at the time, but too-long neglected periodical, the *Lady's Museum* (1760—61). [The Lady's Museum Project](#) was conceived out of Susan Carlile's and Karenza's article "[Teaching the Lady's Museum and Sophia: Imperialism, Early Feminism, and Beyond](#)" published in *ABO*, vol. 12 (2022). Karenza and Susan, along with Kelly, saw the need for an open-access edition of Lennox's pivotal periodical so that instructors and students could read the important proto-feminist work of one of four known British women periodicalists of the eighteenth century.¹

Development work on the project began in the fall of 2021, using the Oxford University Text Creation Partnership (TCP) (volumes 1 and 2) as the base text. They made the full text of both volumes available on www.ladysmuseum.com, categorizing the articles by genre, series, and chronologically, to enable multiple reading methods. The [curriculum](#) (initially developed by Karenza and Susan) now includes reading prompts, assignments, and a course reader that teachers can use in their classroom. The expanded curriculum has been used in several classrooms in Canada and the United States. Since 2021, the site has been populated with content from students including [infographics](#), and [letters to the Trifler](#). Students have glossed all the articles in the [course reader](#), as well the complete serialized novel [The History of Harriot & Sophia](#) with helpful annotations from [Samuel Johnson's Dictionary](#) and the *Oxford English Dictionary* with historical definitions and cultural context to the articles. The edition also includes several other teaching aids, including [critical introductions](#) written by our Wayne State University funded MA student intern, Bailey Meyerhoff, and an accessible audiobook of the first volume of periodical, [Lady's Librivox](#), thanks to many volunteers including our Brandeis University-funded intern PhD Candidate Jenny Factor. You can read more about our fantastic [contributors](#) on the website.

The teaching edition and the whole website has been made possible by volunteers—instructors, undergraduate and graduate students—and through the generosity of the academic community. Lady's Museum Project was awarded the Canadian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies

¹ Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Nonsense of Common Sense* (1733-34); Eliza Haywood, *The Female Spectator* (1744-46); Frances Brooke, *The Old Maid* (1755-56); Charlotte Lennox, *The Lady's Museum* (1760-61).

(CSECS) [D.W. Smith Research Fellowship](#) in 2021 and the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) [Women’s Caucus Editing and Translation Prize](#) in 2023. These awards allowed Kelly and Karenza to purchase the domain name, establish the website, and mentor and pay editorial interns. Moreover, thanks to the generosity of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the site is able to include all the original images from the periodical in high resolution, and users can view both volumes of the periodical on the Beinecke’s website ([volume 1](#), [volume 2](#)).

With the modernized teaching edition now complete, Kelly and Karenza have also both completed their PhDs, and are launching the next phase of the project. Phase 3 will create the un-modernized scholarly edition of the magazine. The completed edition will include side by side comparisons of the original text to the scholarly glossed version of the text. Please reach out to us if you are interested in contributing to the scholarly glosses and/or scholarly essays, or if you would like to teach with the Lady’s Museum Project in your classroom.

You can read more about our project in our reflection for *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* “‘A Numerous and Powerful Generation of Triflers’: The Social Edition as Counterpublic in Charlotte Lennox’s the Lady’s Museum (1760–61) and the Lady’s Museum Project (2021–)” (ECF 35, no. 2 April 2023), in our [18th-Century Common article](#) or in our forthcoming chapter in *Twenty-First Century Digital Editing & Publishing*, edited by James O’Sullivan: “‘The present therefore seems improbable, the future most uncertain’: Transcending Academia through Charlotte Lennox’s *Lady’s Museum* (1760–61)” (Scottish Universities Press, 2024).