

Anne Bradstreet

* 1st Best-Selling poet in America

--didn't intend for her poetry to be shared or published (taboo for women to write)

*Eight children (4 boys & 4 girls)

***writing focused on personal experience, like hardships:**

--death of children (2)

--house burns down

--loss of crops, etc...

***also wrote about personal joy:**

--birth of grandchildren

--love for husband

***Bradstreet's writing was based on her experiences in everyday life .**

***Accepted the traditional assumptions about gender roles of Pre-Colonial women and men.**

***American writer Oliver Wendell Holmes was a direct descendant of Anne Bradstreet.**

Puritan Plain Style:

Writing style reflects the plain style of their lives: simple and strait forward

Short words, direct statements, related to ordinary, everyday tasks, objects, and experiences

Puritans believed that poetry should serve God by clearly expressing only useful or religious ideas.

Puritan Society:

- Religious ("purify"): Pure in thoughts, deeds
- Theocracy: No separation between church, state
- "Survivor Mode" **EVERYTHING** they needed had to come from them; they had to produce it
 - Forced Unity
 - You don't go against the "norm"

-- Men are in charge. That's just the way it is. No argument.

-- If a woman (or anybody, for that matter) challenged the "status quo" she was looked upon as a rebel, crazy, "a witch"

-- They believed in and feared the possibility of being possessed by the devil

Titles:

Most of Bradstreet's poems had "plain" titles--

"In Reverence to my Children"

"For Deliverance from a Fever"

Diction:

Need to consider word connotation

ex: "pelf" = pirate booty

What does this tell you about the value she places on her worldly possessions?

Tone: ("Burning" poem--handout)

First section-- **The Fire**

panic
fear
hopelessness

Second section-- **It's just "stuff"**

acceptance
resignation

Third section-- ...**But it was MY "stuff"**

remorse

resentment

Fourth section-- **My true treasure is in Heaven**

resoulution

revelation