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## UNH Professor Returns Influential Book to Shelves

By [Erika Mantz](#)  
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DURHAM, N.H. -- The complete text of the single most influential book in Tudor England on women and how they should live their lives is now available to readers thanks to the efforts of Elizabeth Hageman, professor of English at the University of New Hampshire, and two other members of the Folger Library Colloquium on Women in the Renaissance.

"The Instruction of a Christian Woman," Richard Hyrde's translation of the Latin handbook by Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives, was first published circa 1529. Before this new edition, the book was available only on microfilm or as a facsimile.

"This book is crucial to understanding the lives of early modern women," says Hageman. "Elizabeth I, for example, knew Vives's ideas -- and worked hard to establish herself as a woman who did not need to follow his strictures. And it is important to the study of literature, too, since writers like Shakespeare used Vives's ideas to create their characters."

Hageman says this edition includes an introduction that sets the book within its biographical and historical contexts. Spanning almost a century, the different editions reflect the social, religious and political changes of the time. Vives dedicated the book to Catherine of Aragon, the first wife of Henry VIII, presenting it as a model for the education of her daughter. After the divorce of Catherine and Henry, the book was reprinted and all references to her were omitted or changed. And in 1585, when it was first published by a Puritan printer, some vocabulary was altered, like "mass" to "divine service" and "priest" to "minister."

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