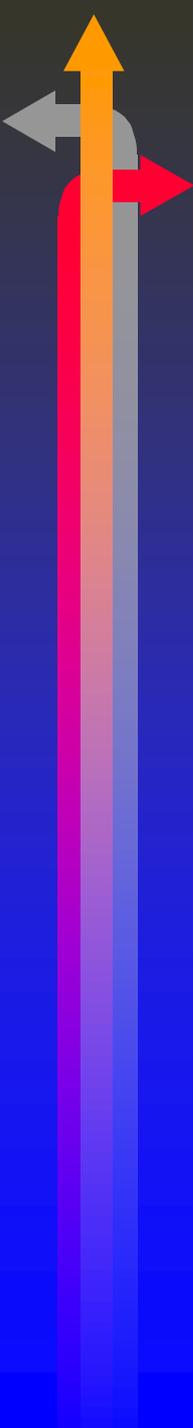


The Puritan Plain Style

Huswifery

To My Dear and Loving Husband



Edward Taylor

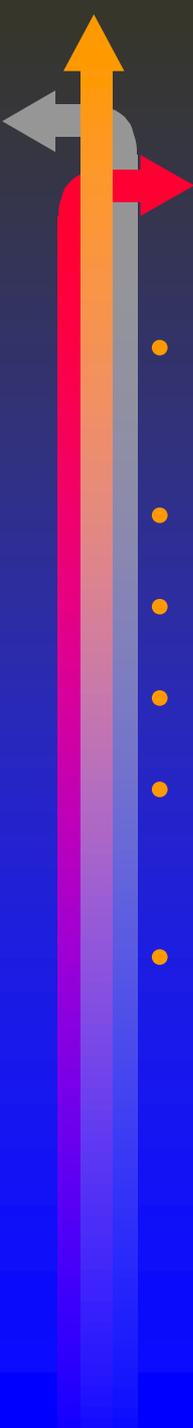
1642 - 1729

- Edward Taylor had worked as a teacher in England.
- Graduated from Harvard in 1671.
- Was a minister and physician in the small frontier farming community of Westfield, Massachusetts
- Five of his eight children died in infancy.
- His wife died when she was still a young woman.
- He remarried and had five or six more children.
(Biographies differ on the number).



Edward Taylor

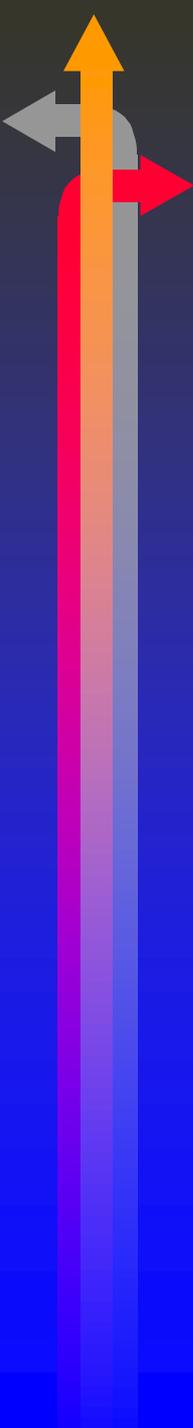
- Regarded as the best of the North American colonial poets.
- Because he thought of his poetry as a form of personal worship, he allowed only two stanzas to be published during his lifetime.
- In 1833, one of his descendants gave Taylor's writings to Yale University, and in 1939, *The Political Works of Edward Taylor* was published.
- Most of Taylor's poetry, including "Huswifery," uses extravagant comparisons, intellectual wit, and subtle argument to explore religious faith and affection.



Anne Bradstreet

1612-1672

- Arrived with her husband in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630 when she was only eighteen.
- Raised eight children.
- Wrote for herself, not for publication.
- Family had to defend her desire to write poetry
- In 1650, her brother-in-law, arranged for the publication in England of a collection of her poems.
- Her poetry was the first collection of original poetry written in colonial America.



Anne Bradstreet

- Bradstreet's later poems, such as "To My Dear and Loving Husband," are more personal, expressing her feelings about the joys and difficulties of everyday Puritan life.
 - In one she wrote about her thoughts before giving birth.
 - In another, she wrote about the death of a grandchild.
- Bradstreet's poetry reflects the Puritan's knowledge of the stories and language of the Bible, as well as their concern for the relationship between earthly and heavenly life.
- Her work also exhibits some of the characteristics of the French and English poetry of her day.

SEVERAL
P O E M S

Compiled with great variety of Wit and Learning, full of Delight; Wherein especially is contained a compleat Discourse, and Description of

The Four { ELEMENTS,
CONSTITUTIONS,
AGES of Man,
SEASONS of the Year.

Together with an exact Epitome of the three first Monarchyes

Viz. The { ASSYRIAN,
PERSIAN,
GRECIAN.

And beginning of the Romane Common-wealth to the end of their last King :

With diverse other pleasant & serious Poems,

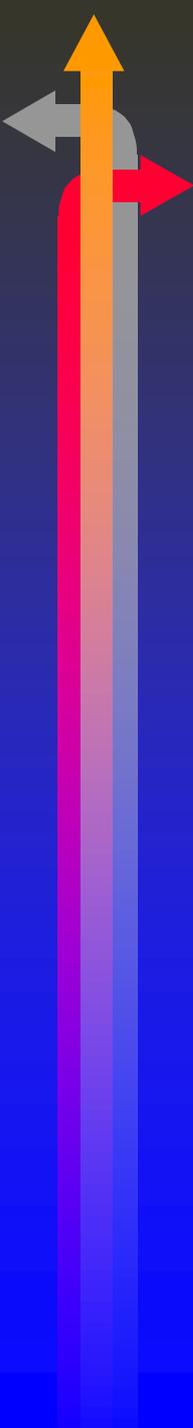
By a Gentlewoman in New-England.

The second Edition, Corrected by the Author, and enlarged by an Addition of several other Poems found amongst her Papers after her Death.

Boston, Printed by John Foster, 1678.

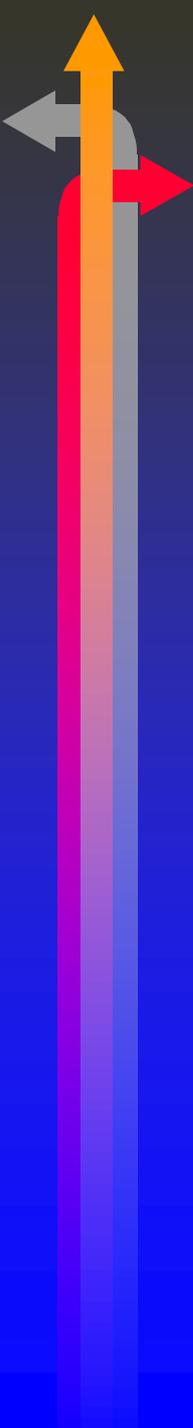
To be a woman

- Bradstreet, as other Puritan women, believed that men were superior to women
- She felt it improper for a woman to appear in print
- Ironically, she is considered the 1st American poet 😊



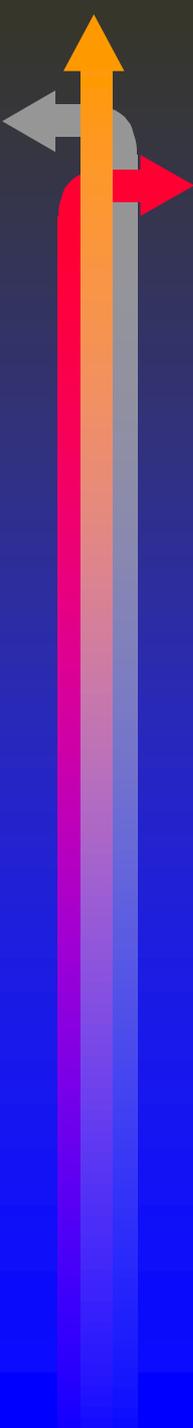
Puritans

- Unlike most of us today, the Puritans had few possessions, dressed uniformly, and frowned on creative expression.
- Because they left so few personal belongings behind, they remain a mystery.
- These poems provide us with glimpses into the poets' inner lives
- They show the universal emotions individual Puritans experienced within the confines of their culture.



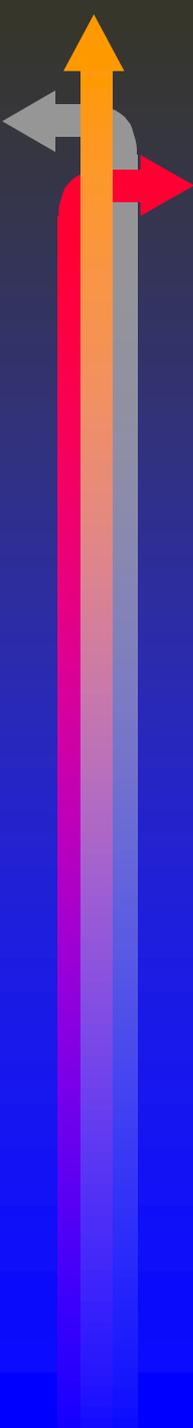
Puritan Plain Style

- Writing style reflects the plain style of their lives – spare, simple, straightforward.
- The Puritan Plain Style is characterized by short words, direct statements, and references to ordinary, everyday objects.
- Puritans believed that poetry should serve God by clearly expressing only useful or religious ideas.
- Poetry appealing to the senses or emotions was viewed as dangerous.



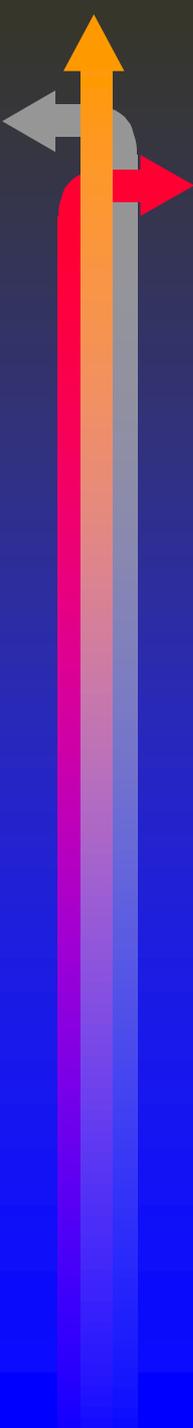
Comparing Literary Works

- The poems by Taylor and Bradstreet are both expressions of devotion, but they are very different in the way they address the beloved.
 - Taylor use **apostrophe**- a figure of speech in which a speaker directly addresses a person who is dead or not physically present, a personified object, or non-human thing, or an abstract quality or idea.
 - **Line 1: Make me, O Lord, Thy spinning wheel complete.**



Comparing Literary Works

- By contrast, the title of Bradstreet's poem indicates that the speaker is addressing her husband, but the poem contains no **apostrophe**.
- As you read, look for ways in which each poem reflects a distinct relationship between the speaker and his or her object of affection.



Reading Strategy

Paraphrasing

- Although these poems capture the simplicity of Puritan life, they are not necessarily simple to understand.
- To help you better absorb the meaning of each poem, take time to paraphrase, or restate in your own words, the ideas expressed by each poet.