

# *Women's History* **MAGAZINE**

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*Gaby Mahlberg on  
The Politics of Patriarchalism in 17th Century Pamphlet  
Literature*

*Yosanne Vella on  
Women, Religion and Magic in 18th Century Malta*



Plus

*Five Book  
Reviews*

*Conference  
Reports*

*Calls for Papers*

*Conference  
Notices*

women's  
HISTORY  
NETWORK



*The 13<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Women's History Network  
Quality Hotel Royal, Hull, 3-5 September, 2004*

## ***WOMEN, WEALTH AND POWER***



The Duchess of Newcastle from, *The World's Olio* (1655)

Proposals for papers and all queries should be sent to Dr Amanda Capern ([A.L.Capern@hull.ac.uk](mailto:A.L.Capern@hull.ac.uk)) or Dr Judith Spicksley ([J.M.Spicksley@hull.ac.uk](mailto:J.M.Spicksley@hull.ac.uk))

Proposals for papers of 200 words should be sent with a brief *curriculum vitae* and should fit into one or more of the following themes

- Women and wealth/poverty/global economies
- Women and political thought/power
- Women and knowledge
- Sexual politics

Proposals for papers and panels have come in from all over the world. The theme of the conference has attracted papers on subjects as diverse as literary empowerment of women in the Philippines and kleptomania in 19th century America. The organisers will arrange posting of the draft programme as soon as practicable. If any members of the Women's History Network have a later change of mind about offering a paper they should contact the organisers at [conference2004@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:conference2004@womenshistorynetwork.org). We would particularly welcome papers on medieval and early-modern subjects to strengthen further the already fascinating contingent we have on medieval and early-modern women and political power, prescription and political thought. Papers offered on 19th Century and 20th Century women and gender are broad-ranging and include offers on philanthropy, property, poverty, professions, reproductive medicine, sport and literary culture.

We look forward to seeing members of the WHN in Hull in September.

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Welcome to the Spring issue of *Women's History Magazine*. The editorial team would like to offer sincere apologies for the somewhat delayed appearance of this issue. Although some circumstances are beyond our control, we would like to request that contributors send up to date contact details with articles submitted for consideration and, given the length of time it can take to publish an issue, to notify us of any changes of address/email as soon as possible.

This issue of the *Magazine* has an early modern theme and features articles by Gaby Mahlberg on seventeenth-century political satires of female parliaments and Yosanne Vella on the role of religion and magic in the lives of eighteenth-century Maltese women. In 'The Politics of Patriarchalism in Seventeenth-Century Pamphlet Literature', Mahlberg shows how gendered images of 'the world turned upside down' embodied in the idea of a female parliament were deployed by both royalists and parliamentarians to address anxieties about disruption to dominant political and social hierarchies. By contrast, in 'Women, Religion and Magic in Eighteenth-Century Malta', Vella discusses how folk beliefs and superstition could be incorporated into religious beliefs and rituals to provide alternatives to the more traditional gender roles of wife and mother. In addition we have a specially extended section of book reviews covering a wide range of subjects including medieval women, marital breakdown in eighteenth-century England, the development of pornography in that period, Bloomsbury and the First World War, and the Abdication of Edward VIII.

Organisation of the 2004 conference on 'Women, Wealth and Power' to be held in Hull is now well under way and paper proposals are rolling in on a diverse and interesting range of subjects. Scholars from Budapest to the Philippines are hoping to attend and give papers. The final deadline for paper proposals was 19 April, but as the *Magazine* is slightly later than usual, proposals from WHN members may be considered after that date. It is hoped that a special issue of *Women's History Review* will emerge from the conference and all

paper-givers will be issued with style guidelines in case they wish to present their paper as an article for consideration by the journal. As in previous years the *Magazine* will also be looking for submissions from papers presented at the conference, so if you are interested please consult the website ([www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org)) to view our 'Notes for Contributors'. On the subject of deadlines, please note that the closing date of 31 May for the Clare Evans Prize is also drawing near for those wishing to submit essays to the competition.

On a more personal note the steering committee and editors would like to offer a huge vote of thanks to Elaine Chalus, who retires from the editorial team at the end of this year. For those of you who are unaware, Elaine works tirelessly at copy-editing *all* the articles submitted to the *Magazine* and her talents will be greatly missed! We would also like to send congratulations to steering committee member Yvonne Brown, on the birth of her baby daughter, Polly, in April. To our readers, we wish you a productive spring and summer and urge you to keep sending us your articles, views and reviews.

*The WHN's Editorial Team:*

Elaine Chalus, Claire Jones, Jane Potter, Niki Pullin and Debbi Simonton

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# The Politics of Patriarchalism in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Pamphlet Literature

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The image of ‘the world turned upside down’ was a common trope of Civil War literature. The title page of the pamphlet after which this strand of writings has been named announced *A brief description of the ridiculous Fashions of these distracted Times* and depicted a man standing on his hands, legs in the air, a horse driving its cart, a church standing on its head, a fish flying in the air, and a number of other inversions of normality.<sup>1</sup> Part of this Civil War imagery of social chaos was also the depiction of a subverted gender order with women wearing men’s clothes, beating their husbands and dominating them — all images we know from popular carnivals, such as charivaris, ridings, and rough music, which were intended to reinforce a prescriptive order in the village or neighbourhood by mocking the unnatural. This imagery of an inverted world was now used to describe the social and political chaos caused by the Civil Wars, and the upsetting of natural gender hierarchies in the family was frequently equated with the upsetting of political hierarchies in the state.<sup>2</sup>

This essay explores the particular sub-genre of ‘world-turned-upside-down’ pamphlets dealing with women in Parliament. On the one hand, *The Parliament-of-Women* pamphlets might be considered a continuation of popular culture and part of a common early modern misogyny, yet, on the other hand, this common misogyny was entering political discourse with its ‘language of gendered abuse’.<sup>3</sup> By examining some examples from 17<sup>th</sup>-century pamphlets, it is possible to show how this language worked in practice and to whom it might have appealed.

The Puritan Root and Branch Petition of December 1640 condemned among other things the ‘swarming of lascivious, idle, and unprofitable books and pamphlets, play-books and ballads; as namely, Ovid’s “Fits of Love,” [and] “The

Parliament of Women,” which came out at the dissolving of the last Parliament’. In order to understand why petitioners against Church hierarchies and ‘the government of archbishops and lord bishops, deans and archdeacons ... with their courts and ministrations’ would be upset about a pamphlet dealing with women in Parliament it is important to look at its contents.<sup>4</sup>

*The Parliament of Women* uses a classical text from *Attic Nights* by Aulus Gellius to convey a patriarchal message. A Roman boy, Papirius Praetextatus, has been to the senate with his father. Back home, his mother asks him what the men had talked about, but, not being allowed to reveal the senate’s business, Papirius invents a tale: the senators had decreed one man should be allowed to have two wives.<sup>5</sup> Upset, Papirius’s mother gathers a number of Roman women together to discuss how to prevent the law. They complain about their husbands, who fail in their businesses and sexual duties, and treat their wives badly. After long debates, the women agree that one woman should have two husbands, for ‘it is good to have two strings to ones Bow, if one break the other may hold’.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, they turn the gender hierarchy upside down, demanding that ‘whosoever shal hereafter take a Wife, shall ... please her, serve her, and obey her ... and ... place her at the upper end of the Table’.<sup>7</sup> Then they bring their laws before the ‘real’ male senate. But the men see through the game: Papirius’s white lie is revealed; the women are laughed at; their ‘levity and inconstancy’ are ‘greatly condemned’; and order is restored.<sup>8</sup>

Given the context of its publication, *The Parliament of Women* must be read first as an attack on parliament, which is depicted as an assembly of silly gossips who are ignorant about politics and make laws only for their own benefit and pleasure. Yet, the female parliament’s rule does not last long, for the male senate interferes and restores order. In comparing parliament itself to an assembly of naïve and self-serving women, the royalist author could justify Charles’s dissolution of the Short Parliament after a session of only three weeks. Besides, the pamphlet could be republished in 1646 to defend the royalist cause towards the end of the first Civil War.

Apart from the struggle for power between king and parliament, the pamphlet addresses contemporary fears of a breakdown of social hierarchies and the

invasion of parliament by the lower social orders. It deals with issues of gender as well as class.<sup>9</sup> The senator's wife, for instance, first calls together 'the chief Matrons in Rome', thereby upsetting the gender order. However, once she has challenged one hierarchy, a chain reaction follows:

[this] was no sooner noised in the City, but it was present[ly] bruted in the Subburbs, and before they could [p]ropose any thing to be concluded, ... there were a great many of Trades[m]ens wives, who ... desired to have their voices in [th]e Councell, alleaging withal, that though [th]e Matrons were noble, and they but Mecha[n]icks, and poore Trades-mens Wives, yet [n]o Parliament could bee held, but there must [b]e a lower House as well as a higher ...: and further, that nothing could [b]e concluded in the higher, but it must first bee debated in the lower.<sup>10</sup>

The fear of a dissolution of existing hierarchies in state and church is also depicted very graphically in a royalist piece of 1648, where 'Mistris Parliament' is shown as having 'prostituted her body to a very *Eunuch* ... and ... turn'd up her tayle to every lowsy *Ill-dependent* Rascall in the Army; Sir Thomas himself, and king Cromwell too'. After seven years of labour, or civil war, she is, 'delivered of a Monstrous Childe of Reformation ... of a deformed shape, without a head, great goggle eyes, [and] bloody hands', with the help of '*Mistris* London, *Mrs.* Synod ..., *Mrs.* Schisme, *Mrs.* Priviledge, *Mrs.* Ordinance, *Mrs.* Universall Toleration, and *Mrs.* Leveller' — embodying all Royalist nightmares.<sup>11</sup>

Parliament is ridiculed as prostituting itself to various religious and political factions, and being delivered of a deformed child standing for the new state, arisen from civil war, division and reform. Using the Aristotelian image of the body politic, the author, Melancholicus, shows the new state as headless after the King's defeat, and with the bloody hands of a murderer. Among the midwives are London, as a parliamentary stronghold; 'Universall Toleration', as the creator of religious dissent; and the Levellers, as advocates of political and legal reform. The evils are female: the transgressions of Parliament cast in sexual terms.

Sexual transgressions threatened the order of a society built on the hierarchies and dependencies of the family. For early-modern England was a patriarchal society in more than one sense:

The basic social unit was the family, and the head of that unit was the father... Servants, women and children were "subsumed" into the personalities of their fathers and masters. Obedience was seen as the principal duty of children and it was instilled in them by all the religious, emotional and social pressures available.<sup>12</sup>

Yet, patriarchalism did not only establish the power of fathers over their children, and of social superiors over their social inferiors, but also the power of men over women. The gender hierarchy was incorporated in a wider patriarchal theory, which supported a complex hierarchical world picture in which the king was joined to the 'humblest labourer' in a 'chain of reciprocal authority and obedience', establishing 'the authority of clergy over laity, of gentry over dependants, of kings over subjects'.<sup>13</sup>

The power of patriarchal imagery lies in its simplicity. Everyone was familiar with power relations between fathers and children, and men and women in the household. As the family was the smallest building block of society — 'a little commonwealth' — order in the household was seen as constituting order in the state.<sup>14</sup> Disorder in the household was a threat to social as well as political stability. Therefore, the image of a female parliament was more than just a trope: it linked political theory to everyday life. In seeing the patriarchal rule of the king as an extension of the father's rule in the family and assigning to parliament the subordinate role of his wife, royalists presented monarchy as the one natural form of government. The image of a disobedient female parliament shows how this 'natural' order had become upset.

Yet, Parliamentarian pamphleteers also used the image. Their female parliament, however, was much stronger and much more threatening, making the royalists look weak and effeminate under the rule of women. Around April 1647, *An Exact Diurnall of the Parliament of Ladyes* appeared. It has a number

of Ladies, sitting as a court at Oxford — ironically, a royalist stronghold and the seat of a royalist parliament from 1644. The women accuse delinquents such as Prince Rupert and Lords Digby, Capell and Cottington of cowardliness and treason in the Civil War, and of creating ‘divisions, between the *Ladies* and (*sic*) their *Husbands*’.<sup>15</sup> They spend a week judging and sentencing the men, only to pardon and release them in the end. Unlike the earlier publication, this pamphlet attacks the royalists, ridiculing a number of their leaders at the mercy of an arbitrary female court. Both pamphlets possibly inspired the republican, Henry Neville, to present his own version of a female parliament.

Neville’s women appear both strong and threatening, but also silly. They upset the patriarchal order, but they do little good, having taken over political power only out of greed and lust. They act in the most arbitrary way. Their nonsensical activities allude to real political issues from the aftermath of the first Civil War to the first year of the new Commonwealth. Neville’s *The Ladies Parliament* of 1647, republished as *The Parliament of Ladies*, depicts the upper house of a divided female assembly of ‘rattle-headed’ and ‘round head’ ladies — royalists and parliamentarians. They reflect the division of the ‘real’ Parliament: one half being with the King at Oxford and the other remaining in Westminster.<sup>16</sup> Shortly after beginning the parliamentary session at Kate’s in Covent Garden — a well-known place for prostitutes — the royalist half of the Ladies’ Parliament is delegitimized as ‘an unlawful Assembly’ and a ‘Mungrill Parliament’ (an expression the King is said to have used) and the focus is put on the assembly of ‘wel-affected’ ladies and their nonsensical debates.<sup>17</sup> The dismissal of the first assembly shows Neville’s rejection of the Oxford parliament. But he is also critical of the parliamentarians at Westminster, for the decisions of the ‘Ladyes wel-affected’ are no more rational than those of the ‘shee-Cavilliers’. They are equally guided only by ‘adulterous possibilities’.<sup>18</sup>

Neville’s Ladies consider serious issues of the day, such as a ‘Committee for composition’ for ‘Malignants and Delinquents’.<sup>19</sup> They deal with pay for the army, the disbandment of forces or ‘the

relief of maimed Souldiers’, all of which which Neville mixes with sexual allusions and puns. The Ladies appoint ‘the Lady *Midlesex*, Mistris *Dunch*, the Lady *Foster*, and the Lady *Anne Waller*’ — probably all wives of parliamentary commanders and soldiers— by reason of their great experience in Soldiery in this Kingdome, to be a Committee of Tryers’ to find men ‘of extraordinary abilities and parts’ to command ‘the standing forces of this Kingdome’.<sup>20</sup>

Neville’s sympathies are often with the army. Thus he uses the Ladies’ nonsensical order, ‘that all such forces as shall be disbanded, shal be sent for *Ireland*, or otherwise disposed out of this Kingdome’ to criticize parliament’s attempt to disband part of the army and send the other remaining part to Ireland without paying or indemnifying the soldiers.<sup>21</sup> Otherwise, the Ladies aim to negotiate peace, appointing female Commissioners, ‘to move His Majesties heart to give a reall assent, that so an happy union may follow’.<sup>22</sup> In making the Ladies move the king’s ‘heart’ not his ‘mind’, Neville invokes typically feminine characteristics and moves the negotiations to an emotional rather than a rational level. The ‘happy union’ turns into a *double entendre*, denoting both a successful peace treaty and a sexual union, thus presenting even the peace process as a self-serving act.

When Neville has the legitimate and ‘well-affected’ half of *The Ladies, a Second Time, Assembled in Parliament* (1647), they deal with the sale of Church lands and revenues belonging to those sees whose bishops were ‘nothing well affected to the desires of the House’.<sup>23</sup> They also appoint a committee for ‘compounding of Delinquents for their estates’: delinquency meaning not being at the House’s service.<sup>24</sup> Finally, they ask the synod to account for some ‘sexual irregularities in the Old Testament’, which contemporaries might have found blasphemous.<sup>25</sup>

Parliament in *The Parliament of Ladies* seems to act in incoherent, illogical and random ways, guided simply by lust. Only allusions to the sale of church lands, compounding for delinquency or peace negotiations make clear that Neville is dealing with ‘serious’ politics. The Ladies’ sexual lust might stand for the politicians’ lust for power, which becomes their only discernible motivation. Neville

implies that the political dynamics during and after the Civil Wars did not reflect a greater scheme with clear ideological positions, but that alliances were formed and dissolved on the spur of the moment. For Neville, the Parliamentary side sold out. The acquisition of power made them lose sight of their original aims and Neville criticizes their loss of direction and internal divisions. His frustration seems to have grown over time. He goes so far as to wish the pre-Civil War order could be restored. Political freedom and the rule of the Ladies, or parliament and army, had gone too far. In the last tract of the series, *Newes from the New Exchange* (1650), Neville nostalgically looks back to ‘a time in England, when men wore the Breeches, and debar’d women of their Liberty’; however, now:

the Ladies Rampant ... in their last Parliament, knowing themselves to be a part of the *free people* of this Nation, unanimously resolved to assert their own freedoms; and casting off the intolerable yoke of their Lords and Husbands, have voted themselves the *Supreme Authority* both at home and abroad, and settled themselves in the posture of a *Free-State*, as may appear by their *Practices*.<sup>26</sup>

The imagery of the female parliament survived the Civil War period. *Now or Never: or, a new Parliament of women assembled* (1656), provides an example of a weak and silly female assembly during the Interregnum, when parliament was again reduced to a cipher. Another, considerably stronger and more confident female parliament, reappears in *Parliament of Women ... With a design to alter the Government of the World* (1684), when Charles II feared an attack on his prerogative powers so much that he failed to call parliament, ignoring the Triennial Act. In fact, an argument could be made that the representation of women in parliament changes when the status of parliament changes.

As these examples demonstrate, the image of the female parliament could be used by different political camps. By turning to the nature of the language itself and how it connected to popular culture, it becomes clear that this was possible because it was part of a common ‘language of gendered abuse’, which had its origins outside politics in the day-to-day lives of ordinary men and

women. Laura Gowing has found a similar language used by women in court cases, in which they depicted their opponents as adulterers, or otherwise sexually disreputable, in order to diminish their credibility. ‘Cursory or excessively detailed, the descriptions of whores, queans, bawds, and cuckolds’ in the courts, however, ‘were understood to be related only opaquely to actual sex’. The ‘language of gendered abuse’:

differentiated persistently and profoundly between the sexual morals and sexual honour of women and men, and one in which gendered insults marked off the outlines of gender roles in sexual, marital, and social relations. Slander was the linguistic exposition of a model of gender, sex, and morals whose principles governed a much wider sphere.<sup>27</sup>

The language of gendered abuse or ‘sexual slander’ played on notions of honour, reputation and credit, crucial for a person’s standing within a moral community. As part of this concern with reputation, sexual deviance was subject to public scrutiny in the microcosms of urban and rural communities and punished in various forms of popular ridicule such as charivaris, ridings and rough music. This was not only true for sexual slander between private persons, but also for those in public life, such as members of parliament, the army or the court. Thus, Ladies who got involved with political figures, cuckolded their husbands and governed the country not only brought themselves into disrepute, but they also embarrassed the men they betrayed and disempowered. However, in those political macrocosms popular ridicule works on a different level.

The Parliament-of-Women pamphlets exemplify the reciprocal relationship between political ideas and social realities, because they take their language from the people they were addressing and reflect something of those people. This becomes clearer when considering how far those satirical libels were ‘popular literature’.

Since they were collected and preserved by gentlemen scholars, booksellers and antiquarians such as Elias Ashmole, George Thomason, Anthony Wood and Samuel Pepys, it is hard to prove that these pamphlets were read by ordinary men and

women. We can, however, show strong similarities to ‘a more demonstrably plebeian genre’ of ‘extempore rhymes, verses and ballads which ordinary men and women frequently composed themselves and sang or recited among their neighbours’, and which ‘were occasionally preserved amid legal records’.<sup>28</sup> The ballad on the unfaithful Ladies at the end of *The Ladies Parliament* is very similar to some examples found by Adam Fox in his study of Jacobean ballads, libels and popular ridicule. Compare these verses by Neville, on the Captain general of the parliamentary forces, with the following lines, drawn up at an inn in Evesham, Worcs. in 1605 on behalf of some townspeople who wanted to ‘blacken the name’ of a local Squire ‘alleged to have fathered a bastard child’. Thus:

Essex & Southcot a child would have,  
before her Lord is in the grave;  
for a General he had ill luck,  
that other men his wife should —

And:

I canne noe more  
This is the whore,  
Of cowardye George Hawkins. He  
gott with childe,  
In a place most wilde,  
Which for to name yt is a shame.<sup>29</sup>

The men in Evesham ‘balladed’ George Hawkins, as pamphleteers balladed politicians. Shaming ballads were ‘well-known at all social levels’, and while locally produced handwritten ballads might draw on published printed materials, printed ballads might draw on extempore material.<sup>30</sup>

The Parliament-of-Women pamphlets use commonplace themes and forms, examples of which can also be found in Samuel Pepys’s collection of ballads under headings such as ‘Love Pleasant’ and ‘Love Unfortunate’.<sup>31</sup> In these ballads about deception and betrayal assertive women make fools of men by acting against prescriptive roles. Stories of female parliamentarians and adultery accuse those in power of their irresponsible behaviour, damaging the order in the commonwealth.

## Conclusion

What is particular about the Parliament-of-Women theme is that it draws on popular and oral culture while at the same time connecting to classical models and political ideas, reflecting the fluidity between orality, literacy, high and low literature and culture. The gendered imagery and the language of sexual slander were universally understood and transcended ideological boundaries. Despite differences in the royalist and parliamentary use of the image, both sides go back to the same assumptions about the sexes and gender relations. The examples given here indicate that we need to pay more attention to political ephemera and potentially popular literature to understand the elevated ideas of political thinkers and to get a comprehensive picture of the use of gendered language and patriarchal thinking in seventeenth-century England.

## ENDNOTES

1 [T.J.] *The World turn’d upside down: or, A briefe description of the ridiculous Fashions of these distracted times.* By T. J. a well-willer to King, Parliament and Kingdom (1647).

2 Elizabeth Foyster, ‘A Laughing Matter? Marital Discord and Gender Control in Seventeenth-Century England’, *Rural Hist.*, iv (1993), 5–21; Martin Ingram, ‘Ridings, Rough Music and Mocking Rhymes in Early Modern England’, in Barry Reay (ed.), *Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (London, 1988), 166–97; also his, ‘Ridings, Rough Music and the “Reform of Popular Culture” in Early Modern England’, *Past and Present*, no. 105 (1984), 78–113; David Underdown, ‘The Taming of the Scold: The Enforcement of Patriarchal Authority in Early Modern England’, in Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson (eds), *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1985), 116–36; Adam Fox, ‘Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion in Elizabethan and early Stuart England’ *Historical Journal*, 40 (1997), 597–620, 601; J. A. Sharpe, *Crime in Early Modern England, 1550–1750* (London, 1999), 123–4; Faramerz Dabhoiwala, ‘Sex, Social Relations and the Law in Seventeenth-Century London’, in Michael J. Braddick and John Walter (eds), *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy, and Subordination in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2001), 85–101; Laura Gowing, ‘Ordering the Body: Illegitimacy and Female Authority in





# Women, Religion and Magic in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Malta\*

**Yosanne Vella**

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The Roman Catholic faith and its values have been highly influential in Maltese society; even, to this day, divorce and abortion are illegal. This article makes use of primary historical sources from the Inquisitorial Archives at the Cathedral Museum Mdina, as well as various miscellaneous manuscripts from the Notarial Archives, Valletta, in an attempt to touch upon the various facets which somehow involved women and religion. As the work for this article progressed it became evident that magic was also part of this. The cases I studied involving women and religion sometimes also mentioned magic and eighteenth-century Maltese women intertwined Catholic religious practice with magical rituals.

By the eighteenth century, apart from Moslem and Jewish slaves, and any visiting sailors, Malta was strongly Roman Catholic. All evidence goes to show that, at this point in time, Maltese women were very similar to their counterparts in other South European Catholic countries. Their lives showed no Islamic influence; there is no evidence of any form of *pardah*; severe veiling and seclusion were not imposed upon them. One visitor to Malta in the late sixteenth century described them as wearing a fine white smock, 'plaited at the neck ... but leaving their shoulders and breasts entirely exposed to the view of the ravished beholder'.<sup>1</sup>

In church affairs, women occupied a subordinate level, and, in many ways, women's situation in society mirrored their religious status. Legislation reflects the moral assumptions of the legislator and the law in eighteenth-century Malta, with regard to women matched the Roman Catholic values by barring women from filling any public office or serving as a soldier, judge, doctor or lawyer.

According to the Roman Catholic faith, both men and women can go to heaven — their sex is

irrelevant — but in Church affairs, things were (and are) very different. Women occupied (and occupy) a low and subordinate position. St Paul, the patron saint of Malta who, according to the Acts of the Apostles (chs 27– 8), established the Christian Church in Malta during his three-month stay on the island after being shipwrecked on his way to Rome to stand trial around 60 AD, is a very influential figure in Maltese spiritual tradition. His view of women's place in the church is clear: 'Women should be silent during Church meetings. They are not to take part in the discussion, for they are subordinate to men as the Scriptures declare. If they have any questions to ask, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is improper for women to express their opinions in church meetings'.<sup>2</sup>

One way women could attain religious status was to join religious orders and become nuns. This article attempts to uncover the lives of these Maltese women and those who did not take monastic vows yet chose to live ascetic lives as lay sisters or members of Tertiary Orders. However, in eighteenth century Malta, the belief in magic and its power was also quite widespread and Christianity never succeeded in uprooting it entirely. This article cites various cases where Maltese women were brought in front of the Maltese Inquisitor's tribunal accused of dabbling in the occult. By focusing on these two very different trajectories for women — one where women entered formal religious life and the other where women utilized magic as part of religious ritual — it is hoped that some initial indications of how women fared within a strong Catholic society will come to light.

Up until now the lives of Maltese nuns have not attracted much attention from historians and little if anything has been written about them in contemporary history books. The holy life of Sister Maria Crocefissa, a Carmelite nun, is in fact recorded in quite some detail in manuscripts written by an eighteenth-century writer, Giovanni Pietro Agius De Soldanis. He gave an account of her saintly life, claiming that she truly lived up to her name — Crocefissa — for she bore her great sufferings just like the Crucified Christ. Agius De Soldanis was writing with the clear intention that his writings would be read by the educated Maltese classes of his time. He was the official librarian nominated in 1763 by the state — that is, by the

Order of St John. His writings cover a variety of topics, ranging from general information on Gozo (Malta's sister island, where he was born), through the Maltese language to Maltese churches and culture, thus including people who lived exemplary Christian lives. Besides recording facts of historic interest, his objective was clearly the moral and religious education of his reader. Whereas his other writings have been extensively analysed by historians, his writing on the lives of these holy women have up until now been largely ignored.

Agius DeSoldanis says that Sister Maria was born 15 August 1696 and died at the age of forty-five after a long illness. Most of the time she could eat nothing but soup and she suffered from atrocious spasms. One of these attacks left her out of her senses with agony, making those around her think that she had died. But she survived and recalled a vision: Mary, the Mother of God, had appeared to her and assured her that death would not occur for another four days. Soldanis says that this is what in fact happened and that Crocefissa died on the 19 March 1741, 'going straight to her reward in heaven'.<sup>3</sup> According to Soldanis, the story does not end here. In 1743, two years after her death, a pregnant woman came forward to say how her arm had been healed by the intervention of the dead Crocefissa and, later on, Sister Maria Crocefissa was said to have appeared to another Carmelite nun.

Female saintliness was not only the prerogative of the nun, however; there were also other ways women could attain the same religious status. In Malta, religious women also included those who did not take monastic vows but lived ascetic lives in the shadow of one of the monastic orders, as lay sisters or as members of Tertiary Orders sometimes referred to in Maltese as *Bizoche*. One such woman, also mentioned by Soldanis, was Teresa Muscat.<sup>4</sup> In order to follow the wishes of her brother and her parents, she married Francesco Cagnuolo in the parish of Attard in 1681. Soldanis relates that, despite the good example of his wife, her husband led a loose life and left her a widow after just a few years. The widowed Teresa took the dress of St Francis and accompanied by two *bizoche* tertiary sisters, Sister Giacobba and Sister Rosa *tal-Ktell*, she dedicated her life to penance and solitude. Soldanis notes that she was always to be seen alone or in the company of the *bizoche*. They never slept long,

spending much of their nights in prayer and contemplation. Teresa was constantly and solely occupied with praying and housework. In her house, she had a small room filled with saintly pictures. She fed on bread and water three or four times a week; on the other days, she ate vegetables. She frequently visited the parish church of St Rocco in Attard, to which she became devoted. If anyone stopped to talk to her, she would reply that she was absorbed mentally with the presence of God and could not answer. She often made the pilgrimage to Mellieha, a village in the northern part of the island which would have been considered quite remote in the eighteenth century. From her village of Attard, Teresa would have needed to leave very early in the morning. She would have travelled by horse or ox and cart for a whole day, probably only arriving very late in the evening. Soldanis does not tell us how she travelled, for, if she had walked, it would have taken her several days. All he says is that during these travels she used to fill her pockets with heavy stones as a form of sacrifice, suggesting that in fact she probably did walk for at least the last part of the journey. She lived till the age of 83, receiving Holy Communion every day. Soldanis ends his account in his usual way, informing the reader that she died on 12 August 1726, 'and went to heaven'.

De Soldanis's accounts provide one official recording of early-modern religious women who were thought to be praiseworthy. At the other end of the spectrum, however, there is evidence of religious women who were condemned for their activities. A picture emerges from the archival records of the Inquisitors. In 1730, a Carmelite nun, Sister Catarina,<sup>5</sup> who lived in the Conservatorio of Bormla, got into serious trouble. She was in charge of accompanying visitors to the door when they were leaving and this is how she met a certain doctor from Zabbar who frequented the Convent. They started a relationship and when, eventually, she became pregnant and tried to have an abortion, her confessor obliged her to go to the Inquisitor. Unfortunately, despite Sister Catarina's detailed account of the affair, there is no record of how the case was concluded or what her punishment was for such serious offences in the eyes of the church.

In 1765, a group of nuns from the monastery of St Scolastica in Vittoriosa<sup>6</sup> were accused of committing scandalous and pagan behaviour, alone or together,

at times in front of the image of Christ or those of the Holy Virgin and the Saints. Twenty-six-year-old Sister Rosalta Mifsud testified that she had been informed by Sister Beatrice Muscat that Sister Leonora Muscat had had sexual intercourse with the Devil. The Devil had appeared to her in human form and together they had enjoyed sex. Sister Leonora was also known to keep certain strange cards. As the nuns talked about their deeds, they confessed that they were not certain whether these cards had been made by Leonora with the Devil's help or whether he had given them to her as a gift. Apparently, all of this was believed and taken quite seriously, for Leonora was obliged to undertake an examination to see whether an abortion had taken place.

De Soldanis's eighteenth-century holy women were praised and recorded for their religious devotion; conversely, Sister Catarina and the nuns from St Scholastica were condemned for devil worship. In the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century witch hunts conducted in Europe and North America, one of the charges brought against women was precisely that of copulating with the Devil. The case of Sister Leonora seems a remnant of this: perhaps an example of the staying power of such a serious accusation. It is not the only case where the Devil and women are mentioned. In 1749, Andrea Schembri from Naxxar reported a woman who had been to his house to cure his sick wife. Andrea said that he had heard the widow, Maria Gusman, whisper three times 'Devil, cure the body and take the soul'.<sup>7</sup> Later that year Maria Gusman went herself to the Inquisitor to confess that ten years earlier as a young girl she had invoked the Devil.

Numerous cases exist which cite various incidents where Maltese women dabbled with magic spells, but the above-mentioned cases are particularly special because of their mention of the Devil. In the eyes of the church, this was very serious: complicity with the Devil could not be easily ignored or dismissed as superstition. Theologically, the Devil exists and can use people to mock God.

The Inquisitor's archives are saturated with examples of women who were brought in front of the Inquisitor because their activities involved

magic. Magic attempts to influence events by the occult control of nature and the records indicate that Maltese women were engaged in several types of sorcery. In particular, they prepared love potions, made magic perfumes and practised healing by magic. Much has already been written about them;<sup>8</sup> they were clearly very much involved where magic was concerned. The following are examples of cases involving women from the Inquisitors' archives previously unrecorded by other historians.

In 1710, Beatrice,<sup>9</sup> who was married to a Neapolitan, threw a paper packet in the face of a Maltese woman. This packet was found to contain white powder, olive twigs and birds' feathers. Beatrice did this to put a curse on her victim's family after the other woman's brother, Francesco, a barber, had ended his love affair with her and was about to marry a certain Elizabetta. In an example from 1721, two sisters, Maddalena and Anna,<sup>10</sup> together with their friend Catharina, confessed that they had collaborated with an older woman, Grattia, in the making of a magic potion with salt, charcoal, palm leaves, olive leaves, fire and water. This mixture was supposed to make them charming and attractive. They explained that at the time, Grattia, a sixty-year-old woman from Zebbug, who lived in the Manderaggio of Valletta, had assured them that she had the approval of the Church Tribunal.

In addition to making potions, Maltese women also made and wore various amulets and objects on their body to protect them from evil influences. In 1734, Magdalena Sammut<sup>11</sup> reported that her mother, Laurica, who had died fifteen years earlier, had given her a strange silver chain. She had made Magdalena wear it whenever she was pregnant because it was supposed to have magic powers which prevented miscarriage.

In researching eighteenth-century court cases for this article, I was immediately struck by the frequency of Inquisitorial court cases involving women and magic. Of approximately fifty cases, more than two-thirds of the women were in trouble precisely because of magic. Some were accused by neighbours or relatives who had asked for their help, but had been scared of the consequences; others were accused of using sorcery for their own purposes; and yet others were accused of doing so for others for a fee. Many of the chants recorded in these cases

mention the saints, the Blessed Virgin and the Holy Trinity, asking them to intervene to make the magic spells successful. For example, a clear case of crossing the boundaries between religion and magic takes place in 1742, when Anna Maria<sup>12</sup> tried to cure a twelve-year-old girl of fever by burning blessed olive leaves. While holding a crucifix and reciting the *Salve Regina*, *Our Father* and the *Credo*, she drew crosses on the girl's body with the ashes. Magical and popular beliefs are here intersecting with religious beliefs, and, in a way, inverting our standard assumptions about women's exclusion from power in religious affairs.

In another case in 1715, Grattia Farrugia<sup>13</sup> from Qormi was asked by Anna Grech's family to cure Anna of a pain in her neck caused by a tumor. Grattia was well known for her ability in curing such pains. She boiled together in water olive and palm leaves and pieces of wood from a broom. She then created a mixture which she placed on Anna. As she did this, she recalled Christ's Passion and the Holy Trinity. Before throwing away the liquid, she asked Anna's aunt, Francesca, to look deeply into it to see if she could see the face of anyone she knew. She then threw the liquid into the fire. She explained this was a symbolic gesture: as the fire was extinguished by the liquid, so would the liquid extinguish Anna's pain. Grattia was warned several times by the Inquisitor to stop using her magical cures, but she carried on with her activities and never turned away anyone coming to her house for her help. Finally, in 1749, the Bishop's Court imprisoned her for continuing to practice magic healing.<sup>14</sup>

It is difficult to say whether such Maltese women as Grattia Farrugia practised any valid medical cures besides their magic spells and potions. However, by this time, various women, although not themselves doctors, were in fact employed with the medical services in Malta in various branches, including the Holy Infirmary, at the Hospital for Women and in the District Medical Services. These women could at times be quite specialized and efficient, and undoubtedly they contributed a great deal to the nation's health services offered by the Knights of the Order of St John.<sup>15</sup>

The publication of *Malleus Maleficarum* in 1486 by two Dominican priests had proclaimed that women who cured without having studied were witches and

must die, and, since women could not enter universities, this automatically condemned most women healers. During the seventeenth century, at the time of the Inquisitor Mgr Antonio Pignatelli (1646-9), there were no less than 209 denunciations of supposed witches.<sup>16</sup> Although all Maltese women practicing magic were condemned, great witch hunts like those which occurred in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries never took place in Malta. This was mainly because of the small size of the island: unacceptable behaviour was noted immediately and puritanical values never took hold in the population which was completely Catholic. Also it was the Roman not the Spanish Inquisition which operated in Malta and the penalties imposed by the ecclesiastical courts upon those who had been found guilty of sorcery were generally nothing more than penances. Only after persistently ignoring warnings were women imprisoned. Moreover, by the eighteenth century, the initial urgent objective of the Inquisition — to crush Protestantism — had long gone. Frans Ciappara has described the Roman Inquisition in Malta as, 'more lenient than the Spanish Holy Office and the courts of the secular government. The Tribunal started to take action only after it was reasonably sure of the facts. Its watchwords were prudence and caution ... In matters of witchcraft the Holy Office proceeded with special circumspection and slowness...'.<sup>17</sup>

## Conclusion

Admittedly, this is a very brief look at a very complex issue; however, a picture starts to emerge about the influence exerted by the interaction of these two strong forces — religion and magic — on Maltese women in the eighteenth century. It could be argued that religion was largely responsible for upholding strict limitations and female stereotypes and that magic was in fact one way that women could exert some kind of control. This explanation tallies with that offered by Carmel Cassar, an anthropologist, who describes the effects of the Catholic Reformation after the council of Trent on women by saying that, 'while on the one hand they "officially" accepted the limitations imposed on them by the authorities, at the same time, they continued to resort to various forms of "illicit" behaviour, at times individually, and at times collectively, as a form of unconscious protest to male

hegemony'.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, from the cases mentioned in this article, I would like to put forward another interpretation. It is clear that in fact these women were not rejecting religion in favour of magic, but rather that folk beliefs and superstitions were incorporated into religious beliefs and rituals. Like two faces of the same coin, both religion and magic appealed to women because they could offer an alternative to the limited mother/wife role imposed on them by their society. So, whether it was Sister Maria recalling visions, surrounded by followers as she suffered her spasms, or *Bizoche* Teresa Muscat, who after enduring a bad marriage dedicated her life to penance and pilgrimage, or whether it was the scores of women offering curses, love potions or magical spells, they were all women who felt important and significant in their society because of religion or magic. Both these roles were alternatives to traditional gendered roles of women and in fact in some ways served to empower women.

## ENDNOTES

\* Malta is situated in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea and historically this strategic position has meant that Malta has fallen into the possession of various nations and groups, including the Phoenicians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Angevins, Aragonese, the Order of the Knights of St. John, the French and finally the British. As far as religion is concerned, the local population gradually adapted and converted their faith to accommodate the conquerors: Malta became Moslem after the Arab conquest of the ninth century and slowly reverted to Christianity when the Normans took over in 1091. These conversions were naturally slow and historical evidence indicates that, as late as the middle of the thirteenth century, a third of Malta's population was in fact still Moslem. In post-Islamic times, Byzantine-style wall paintings are evidence of the eventual re-emergence of Christianity under the Greek rite, only to be superseded later by the Latin rite.

1. S. Du Mont, *A New Voyage to the Levant*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London, 1696), 132–8.
2. Corinthians 14, 34–6.
3. Biblioteca Library, Valletta, MS 142, vol. 5, p. 65, Agius de Soldanis.

4. Ibid., 25.
5. Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Inquisitor's Archive, Processi 118b, fol. 854.
6. Ibid., Processi 127a, fol. 251.
7. Ibid., Processi 121c, fol. 1127.
8. See, for example, A. Bonnici, *Il-Gzejjer ta' Malta Mahkumin mill-Qawwa tas-Superstizzjoni* (Malta, 1968); C. Cassar, *Witchcraft, Sorcery and the Inquisition: A Study of Cultural Values in Early-Modern Malta* (Malta, 1996); F. Ciappara, *Society and the Inquisition in Early Modern Malta* (Malta, 2000).
9. Ibid., Processi 102b, fol. 216.
10. Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Inquisitor's Archive, Processi 108b, fol. 564.
11. Ibid., Processi 113b, fol. 404.
12. Ibid., Processi 118b, fol. 816.
13. Ibid., Processi 103b, fol. 490.
14. Ibid., Processi 121c, fol. 1176.
15. Paul Cassar, 'Female Employees in the Medical Services of the Order of St. John in Malta', *Melita Historica*, vii, no. 3 (1978), 225-33.
16. A. Bonnici, 'Superstitions in Malta', *Melita Historica*, no. 4 (1966), 148-66.
17. Frans Ciappara, *Society and the Inquisition* (Malta, 2000), 505.
18. Carmel Cassar, *Daughters of Eve: Women, Gender Roles, and the Impact of the Council of Trent in Catholic Malta* (Malta, 2002), 249.

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***The Modern Woman Revisited: Paris Between the Wars***, edited by Whitney Chadwick & Tirza True Latimer, Rutgers University Press, 2003

***Public Lives: Women, Family & Society in Victorian Britain, c.1840-1914*** by Eleanor Gordon & Gwyneth Nair, Yale University Press, 2003

***The Women's Century: A Celebration of Changing Roles, 1900-2000***, Mary Turner, The National Archives, 2003

Jonathan Atkin, *A War of Individuals: Bloomsbury Attitudes to the Great War*

Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002. Paperback, £15.99, 250pp. ISBN 0 7190 6071 0

*Review by Carol Acton  
Dept of English, St Jerome's University*

Using what he terms 'Bloomsbury attitudes' as his model, Atkin sets out to show that 'humanistic anti-war reaction existed . . . through a far more widespread variety of individual experiences than was generally assumed to be the case.'(p.5) Ranging over a hugely broad terrain, Atkin discusses such reaction to the war from literary giants like Virginia Woolf to unknown writers of letters and memoirs housed in archives. The breadth of the study is therefore impressive and reminds us of the multiplicity of responses in a society at war. Atkin sets out to challenge the notion that British civilian culture primarily supported the war and he succeeds at this level.

The first chapter provides a useful overview of the major Bloomsbury figures and their varying reactions to the war and the second offers some interesting discussion of Bertrand Russell and the Cambridge context. However, from this point onwards the need to cover multiple perspectives leads to superficial readings of important individuals such as D.H. Lawrence. The reader is hurried through personality after personality, sometimes to the point where the brevity of the discussion is misleading or where the hurried tone of the text spills over into factual errors in the notes. Moreover, a good deal of what Atkin covers is not new terrain, as in the cases of Sassoon and Owen. The broad scope of the book also leads to the cutting short of potentially interesting discussion. Depth of analysis is subordinated to the need to bring in as many names as possible; so, for example, there is little attempt to address the important differences between anti-war reaction from combatants and civilians. In some instances this lack of depth becomes a major concern, as in

Atkin's attempt to cover reactions to the war by Forster, Carpenter, James, Shaw, Bennett, Hardy, Masfield, Galsworthy, Wells, and Lawrence in a single chapter.

The chapter 'Women on the War' introduces some potentially fruitful analysis of the range of women's responses to the war, from antiwar activists, to participants such as nurses whose pacifism was a direct response to their witnessing of death and mutilation. However, the difference in the ideology between those who opposed the war on moral and ethical grounds from the beginning and those who rejected it because of their direct experience is not explored. Neither does Atkin connect these responses with those of women such as Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell that he addresses earlier in the book. It would have been useful, for example, to compare the context within which a woman like Woolf, whose husband, Leonard Woolf was exempted from military service on medical grounds as Atkin notes earlier, arrived at her anti-war ideology, with that of Vera Brittain, whose brother and fiancé were at the front.

While the book can act as a quick review for a general reader wanting to be reminded of the range of responses to the war, of interesting connections between the individuals discussed and of the further potential for work in this area, scholars of the Great War will find little to deepen or challenge their understanding of the period.

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Carolyn Dinshaw and David Wallace, eds.  
***The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Women's Writing***

Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003.  
£45 ISBN: 0 521 79188 X (hardback), £16.99 0 521 79638 5 (paperback). pp. xix + 289.

*Review by Margaret Connolly  
University College Cork*

It is disappointing that after two decades of sustained interest in feminist criticism, women's writing still struggles to find a niche on medieval

literature courses. In this context women are most frequently represented via the fictional creations of male authors, especially Chaucer. Part of the problem is that editions of primary texts are hard to come by and appropriate critical reading is in short supply. *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Women's Writing* usefully supplements existing literature in this area and will immediately become a staple of secondary reading lists.

After a succinct introduction by the editors, and a chronology which compresses a thousand years of medieval history and literature into ten pages, the volume is divided into three sections. These chart those aspects of medieval life experienced by the majority of women before moving on to appraise the achievements of the tiny minority who became writers. The first section covers the familiar estates of virginity, marriage and widowhood. Ruth Evans writes about the all-pervasive model of virginity, surveying works directed at nuns but also noting the popularity of tales of virgin martyrs amongst lay readers. Dyan Elliott shows how primary sources on marriage correspond to literary analogues, covering issues of consent, coercion, the married woman's legal position, and the conjugal 'debt' (always puzzling to students). Finally Barbara Hanawalt summarizes the varied options open to medieval widows, inscribing Chaucer's merry widows in a historian's essay which is full of legal detail. Two further essays cover childhood and what is euphemistically termed relations 'between women'. Daniel T. Kline arranges his discussion of female childhood according to the seven-year segments (*infantia*, *pueritia*, *adolescentia*) recognised in the Middle Ages; this essay is heavily dependent upon literary examples drawn (predictably) from *Pearl* and the *Canterbury Tales*, with nods to a few other texts. Karma Lochrie gives an account of 'female fellowship, community, and even love' stopping short of using the term 'lesbianism', though allowing 'lesbian-like' (p. 70). Overall these opening essays achieve a good balance between literary and historical concerns and are mostly readable and informative.

A better heading for the second section ('Texts and Other Spaces'), might have been 'Authority and Experience', since these would seem to be its defining concepts. This section begins with Jennifer Summit's account of authorship. Her reminder that



the modern notion of the author as an original self-expressive individual is not an appropriate template for medieval women writers will be helpful to students, as will her definition of *auctoritas*, since the classic statements on this topic are beyond the reach of beginners. She discusses the categories of *scriptor* and *compilator* but ignores that of *commentator*, and elides that of *auctor* by questioning whether it was possible for medieval women to fulfil this role. Despite the fact that so many mystical texts by women were translated between vernaculars, little attention is paid to translation; a figure such as Eleanor Hull surely deserved some mention here. The question of ecclesiastical authority is tackled by Alcuin Blamires in the section's final essay. Alert to women's representation in both literary and instructional texts, Blamires offers a survey filled with interesting facts. Whilst medievalists cannot fail to be aware of clerical misogyny, how many know about the 'privileges' that were ascribed to women? Thus Mary conceived Christ, and is ranked above all angels in heaven; Mary Magdalene was the first to see Christ after his resurrection; and - most pleasingly - even Eve's creation (of bone, within Paradise, and as the last piece of God's handiwork), could be construed as superior to Adam's. Sandwiched between these discussions of authority are two essays which embrace the notion of space more wholeheartedly.

Christopher Cannon's contribution on 'Enclosure' includes an excellent description of the circumscribed life of the anchoress and draws some neat parallels between medieval anchoritic texts and the writings of modern philosophers such as Nietzsche, in particular between Hegel's *Phenomenology of Perception* and the *Showings* of Julian of Norwich. Sarah Salih considers the difference between public and private spaces and examines what constituted 'women's work' in the Middle Ages. Like Blamires she interrogates both literary and didactic texts, noting astutely that 'the very existence of conduct books implies the presence of women who need their instruction because they are not already obedient to it.' (p. 136).

The final section of the book comprises eight discussions of individual writers, texts, and genres, the variety reflecting the range of women's writing in verse and prose. The essays have the merit of being generally informative about topics which are well-

known but not necessarily well understood. Christopher Baswell gives a detailed appraisal of the letters of Heloise and suggests ways in which the small corpus of literature associated with her might be expanded. Hampered by the historical silence surrounding Marie de France, Roberta L. Krueger confines herself to an account of the three very diverse works attributed to her subject: the *Lais*, the *Fables*, and the *Espurgatoire seint Patriz*. David F. Hult gives a succinct summary of the *Roman de la Rose* covering the text's authorship, import, and dissemination, and contrives to give a clear explanation of the *querelle des femmes* and an account of Christine de Pizan's career and works, all within minimum space.

Sarah McNamer's chapter covers lyrics and romances, two genres that are often lumped together. Noting thirty lyrics (virtually all love poems), which might be by women, she surveys the strategies which have been used to recover anonymous lyrics for women and suggests further avenues which might be explored. Nicholas Watson helpfully devotes most of his essay on Julian of Norwich to explaining her difficult thinking. Carolyn Dinshaw takes one segment of Margery Kempe's book and uses it to further understanding of Margery's world and the place of her writing in our own time. Julian and Margery appear again in Alexandra Barratt's contribution 'Continental women mystics and English readers' which also covers Hildegard of Bingen, Marguerite Porete, and Elizabeth of Hungary, amongst others. Finally Nadia Margolis offers a study of the letters and trial testimony of Joan of Arc.

All of the essays exercise admirable restraint in terms of annotation, and the collection concludes with some helpful pointers for further reading. Dinshaw and Wallace are to be congratulated for achieving excellent coverage of the subject, and for producing a volume which more than meets the high standards set by others in this series.

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(Reviews continued overleaf)

Joanne Bailey, *Unquiet Lives: Marriage and Marriage Breakdown in England, 1660-1800*

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. £40, ISBN 0-52181-058-2 (hardback), pp.xii + 244

*Review by Philip Carter*  
*University of Oxford*

There is a welcome trend among recent monographs on early modern gender. This sees a number of subject areas, first historicized by a previous generation of cultural and literary historians, now subjected to more detailed scrutiny using social and legal historical research methods. In *Unquiet Lives*, Joanne Bailey contributes to this trend with a study on marriage, or more precisely on what being married meant to the middle and labouring ranks during the long eighteenth century. Often a subject studied at one remove (through literary texts) or by reference to its landmarks (proposal, ceremony, separation, divorce), marriage is here identified more as a complex, variable and, above, all enduring state of being.

For Bailey, therefore, the subject's significance to eighteenth-century social history is as a route to the quotidian which was itself expressive of a vitality and competition obscured in existing histories too preoccupied with the language of roles and spheres. Bailey is keen to fuse what she identifies as the two principal historiographies concerning marriage, and women's experiences of marriage in particular. The first, developed by medievalists, has focused on its implication for women's work; the second, popular among early modernists, is more concerned with marriage as an emotional event in which the shared historical interest in women's status places greater emphasis on changing attitudes to love, familiarity and family organization. In Bailey's study, work and emotion bleed into, and shape, one another. Seen in the round (Bailey's 'marriage as it was lived'), the relationships of her middling and labouring subjects emerge as a series of attitudinal, practical and material interconnections which cumulatively determined whether individual participants enjoyed quiet or unquiet lives.

In line with the current trend for detailed

reappraisal, Bailey's source base is impressively wide-ranging and considered. Good use is made of court material which, in addition to information on marriage breakdown, also offers insight into the difficulties that periodically affected most relationships, but which were mediated through personal reform and negotiation. Seeking a nationally and economically representative picture, Bailey extends her survey from church courts to those of the quarter sessions of Northumberland, Newcastle, Durham, North Yorkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, and supplements these with petitions published in regional newspapers, as well as the more traditional (elite) sources of correspondence, autobiography, and middling behavioural literature. It is inevitable that a study drawing on quarter session records comes to marriage through the events—acts of cruelty, adultery or desertion—which prompted a spouse to take the exceptional recourse to legal action. But in reading these sources, Bailey also searches for the social, and especially economic, contexts that were used to substantiate or deny such recorded historical episodes. These contexts she identifies as 'secondary complaints': a body of grievances perpetrated by both husbands and wives through which the reader is taken beyond the headline and shown the day-to-day experience of an unquiet marriage.

The book's core is a consideration of the numerous practical ties which bound partners together and, notwithstanding the airing of secondary and primary grievances, kept them together. Bailey identifies a world given over to negotiation and reconciliation in which wives proved more active and influential than a literature of separate spheres might suggest. Certainly there were roles to be performed. Spousal identity owed much to an explicit non-intervention in aspects of a partner's domestic territory. But, as Bailey makes clear, functional demarcations did not exclude women from providing for their family or complementing husbands' economic and social standing by gaining a local reputation as honest and trustworthy consumers.

In two of the book's most striking sections, Bailey develops this theme to reconsider (albeit limited) instances of female violence against husbands, and women's motivation for participating in adulterous relationships. In contrast to current theories—in which female adultery is often linked to a husband's

social or professional advance—Bailey’s work on correction cases and separation suits suggests a range of explanations in which age, family size or length of an existing separation undercut the importance of coercion or reckless pleasure as prompts for extra-marital relations. Further evidence suggests that in negotiable, and often co-dependent, marriages the presence of an abstract sexual double standard proved less of a bar to female rehabilitation and influence once episodes of female adultery came to light. Of course, Bailey’s presentation of marriage as more negotiated partnership than predetermined display of power also has important implications for how we view male roles, both in and outside the home. By seeing men’s success as husbands, and therefore as men at work and play, as contingent on the marital relationship, Bailey advances the work of scholars like Alexandra Shepard into the eighteenth century. In so doing, she contributes to an increasingly cohesive and commonsensical picture of the conditional, and often precarious, nature of male ‘success’ between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.

*Unquiet Lives* is a book concerned with pushing the study of marriage beyond existing boundaries, whether these be boundaries of source material, class focus or regional coverage—with Bailey especially keen to present a national picture and to compare metropolitan and provincial practice. It is perhaps therefore unfair to have wanted the book to make more of marital relations within the context of wider family networks and, in particular, of children whose influence recurs in the book but is not addressed head on. Bailey’s is also a largely static picture of the eighteenth century with little engagement in the social, cultural or religious changes of the period. Where there is a narrative element, its principal engine is a mid to late-century ‘culture of sensibility’ with its obvious implications for changing attitudes to adultery and the earlier association of women with sexual voracity. But breadth and narrative is an exceedingly difficult combination. Instead, Joanne Bailey’s is a panorama composed, with remarkable caution and judiciousness, from hundreds of miniatures. The result is a subtle, rich and humane picture of the realities and practicalities of marriage as lived.

## Julie Peakman *Mighty Lewd Books: The Development of Pornography in Eighteenth Century England*

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003 pp.xii + 263, ISBN 1-4039-1500-8

*Review by Stephanie Spencer,  
King Alfred’s College, Winchester*

The multitude of resources which Julie Peakman has drawn on for this study demonstrates that the lack of internet does not seem to have substantially hindered the production and circulation of all manner of erotic / pornographic material over two hundred years ago. This wide ranging book charts the development of erotica against the background of the Enlightenment and increasing interest in all things scientific. Through poems, prints, medical advice journals, obscene fictions and salacious memoirs it is possible to identify contemporary attitudes to sexual behaviour and the ever problematic issue of religion. The main chapters of the book focus on the development of the erotic book trade, bodily fluids, erotica and science, sexual utopias in erotica, anti-catholic erotica and flagellation. Generously illustrated throughout, the book is a lively and scholarly consideration of the genre.

The place of pornography / erotica within women’s studies has been a contentious issue and the visual portrayal of the female as either passive victim or sexually voracious harpy does not sit easily with the feminist project. *Mighty Lewd Books* focuses on representations of heterosexual behaviours, and it is this representational aspect of the material which is significant for the academic reader interested in the gender frameworks. Erotica forms part of the history of ideas / sexual mentalities, far more than offering a grand narrative of sexual degeneracy before the advent of the Victorian moral codes (whatever they may have been). Representations of sexual hierarchies perhaps throw light on the contemporary proto-feminist Mary Wollstonecraft’s plea that women should learn to have power not necessarily over men but over themselves.

That erotica found a ready market is beyond doubt. Perhaps the most familiar publication from this time is *Fanny Hill* and Peakman places this within

a wider context and discussion of the possible female readership of this material. There is a timelessness about the apparent appeal of erotica; evidently girls' schools provided a ready market for obscene prints and one bookseller threw pornographic books over the walls of girls' schools to boost later sales! Female booksellers were also purveyors of this material. *Aristotle's Master-Piece* was considered an appropriate read for engaged couples. In addition to its appeal to all ages and sexes it is clear that erotica/ pornography reached all social classes with some material drawing on scientific discourses and intellectual knowledge and cheaper chap books available for the lower classes.

Peakman concludes that a specifically English erotica developed during the eighteenth century, encompassing everything from the slightly risqué to the blatantly obscene. Erotica was also included with the non erotic, integrating a variety of religious, scientific and cultural discourses and crossing the boundary between the public and the private. Multiple representations of the erotic body offer an insight into the cultural pre-occupations of the day; the humoural body, landscaped body, reproductive body, botanical body, electric body, religious body and the secular flagellant are all discussed in relation to their contemporary non-erotic representations.

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Susan Williams *The People's King: The True Story of the Abdication*

London: Allen Lane, 2003. £16.99, ISBN 0-71399-573-4, pp. xxiv +375, illus.

Review by Lesley A. Hall  
Wellcome Library for the History and Understanding of Medicine, London

The Abdication is not a new story, and has been extensively worked over by historians both academic and popular, but Susan Williams's approach will be of particular interest to historians of women and gender. She has done detailed work in the archival sources, including materials

scarcely touched by others, and brings a perspective to her interpretation informed by women's history and history from below. One of her major discoveries was the copious files of letters sent to Edward VIII by members of the general public, most of them highly sympathetic to his predicament and urging him to follow his heart. This study is a vignette of a society in change, in which elements of tradition and modernity were at war, with more widespread sympathy for modernity than the 'establishment' recognised or was prepared to admit.

Edward himself forms a fascinating study in changing paradigms of masculinity. His popularity as Prince of Wales was based on his persona of a modern young man with informal, rather than hidebound and staid, manners and attitudes, approachable and concerned for the people of the country he was (everyone assumed) destined to govern. However, as Williams points out, he had been brought up to have an overpowering sense of duty, inculcated through 'the strict sense of discipline drummed into him during his years at school'. She concurs with A. J. P. Taylor's judgement that Edward 'was not the man to shatter the establishment' (p. 157). But given his 'extreme manifestation of chivalry', he was not prepared to do what the establishment thought appropriate and set up the woman he loved as a mistress, while marrying elsewhere and suitably. It is arguable that this choice was also driven by a different sense of sexual morals (influenced by social changes more generally) from those famously manifested in his grandfather Edward VII. The response of the public indicates that they read the situation in these terms: that he was not 'Victorian'.

The response of the political establishment and social elite towards Wallis Simpson was a painful manifestation of misogyny and anti-Americanism. While she had initially been welcomed in the highest circles in London, her relationship with Edward led to ostracism and stigmatisation. Williams has found no evidence at all to support the often-repeated tale of Simpson's alleged exotic erotic skills. Indeed, the gossip about these seems driven by an upper-class male misogyny for which the default assumption was that all women were the same in the dark, and that the only reason for preferring a particular one would be on the grounds of some such dubious expertise. How pervasive the rumours of something sexually problematic or perverse were - even coming to the

ears of Virginia Woolf (p. 40) - is indicated by the letter sent by sex-guru Marie Stopes to Edward, suggesting that a talk with her might be helpful, given that she had been consulted on 'every imaginable problem of marriage' (p.136). Williams also debunks the 'Nazi sympathies' claim - far from being a friend of Ribbentrop Wallis Simpson had only met him twice at large parties at Emerald Cunard's - as just one element in the miasmatic whispering campaign about her and the effects of her influence on Edward. Networks of prurient and malicious speculation and the transmission of things that 'everyone knows' but which are hard to find any evidence for, played a significant role.

It would have been interesting to analyse the Abdication crisis and the response to it in terms of contemporary tropes in the popular media, in particular Ruritanian romances. These were prevalent at the time, in popular fiction, stage musicals and film, and privileged the romance between royal and commoner over dutiful dynastic marriage. They also tended to position the romance as associated with modernity and reform against cruel tradition and dictatorship. Popular attitudes toward Edward and Wallis seem to have been strongly influenced by these motifs.

This is an extremely readable 'thick' history of the Crisis and of its resonance not only throughout all levels of British society but worldwide.



## CONFERENCE REPORTS

### **Report on Consecrated Women: Towards the History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland, 10-11 October 2003**

Sixty-five delegates from academic institutions and religious congregations attended the second History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland conference held at Birkbeck College, University of London. It was a truly international gathering with representatives from the UK, Ireland, USA, Belgium, the Netherlands and Canada. The plenary paper was given by Dr Margaret MacCurtain a distinguished scholar from Dublin who, in her own right, brings together diverse experiences of religious and academic life. She combined inspiration and a practical overview of writing the history of women religious. By focusing on four key areas, Dr MacCurtain spoke of the importance of developing methodologies to meet the challenges posed by the particular experience of the religious life; the need to question received versions of the past; the importance of the role of convent archives and the archivist and the importance of preserving the heritage of the past for the future. She also

spoke of the need to deal with controversial issues and figures as part of a comprehensive history of women religious to be undertaken by scholars.

The sessions included papers on wide-ranging topics from the medieval period to the middle of the twentieth century and geographically from Bermondsey in south London as far as Glasgow on the mainland; Ireland; Flanders, France and Spain; to the Midwest of the United States. While most of the papers presented were based on a historical perspective there were several papers from literary scholars on a variety of topics including women religious as translators and obituary writers in the seventeenth century and the reading of saints' lives as exemplary figures in the Saxon period. The roles of women religious in nursing care in the Crimea and United States, among the inner city poor and as educators were part of the discussion on the more recent past. Papers were presented on individual founders and on the members of the convents as a group. Comparative papers focusing on women religious from the Anglican church provided some basis for discussion of the wider context. Almost half the presenters were in the process of completing doctoral theses: the high standard of these papers bodes well for the future of history of women religious.

Work in progress included reports on new research initiatives and archival collaboration for Ireland based on Maynooth and the proposal to establish at Douai Abbey a central archive for religious houses in England which are no longer able to manage their own holdings. The conference concluded with a business meeting which decided to maintain the network in its present format based on the list organized by [ruth.manning@univ.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ruth.manning@univ.ox.ac.uk). Please send her an email if you wish to join the online list of scholars interested in the history of women religious of Britain and Ireland. Ruth Manning and Dr Susan O'Brien volunteered to organize the third conference. Notices about this will be posted shortly.

*Caroline Bowden and Carmen Mangion  
Royal Holloway Birkbeck College  
University of London  
October 2003*

## **The Women's Political and Social Union Centenary Conference, 11th. October 2003**

Both 'deeds and words' contributed to the centenary celebrations of the founding of the Women's Social and Political Union. A conference, held at Portsmouth University on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2003, culminated in a choral rendition by the (50) delegates of Ethel Smyth's *March of the Women* – in its entirety. This was a fitting end to a day that had seen WSPU members and ideologies brought to the forefront of debate in a series of illuminating papers.

**June Purvis** spoke on the friendship networks of Emmeline Pankhurst, illustrating how the leader of the WSPU relied on the personal support of her political colleagues to sustain her during an itinerant lifestyle necessitated by the growth of militancy and government attempts to negate her leadership. **Linda Martz** gave 'An AIDS-era Reassessment of Christabel Pankhurst's *The Great Scourge and How to End It*', underlining how the text played a key role in the construction of contemporary feminist discourses challenging the sexual 'double standard'. Martz argued that criticism of Pankhurst's work in the 1960s and 1970s should be reassessed in the light of discourses on the current Aids epidemic.

**Hilda Kean's** paper on militant suffrage argued that the image of the suffragette in popular memory is one of a 'transgressive' woman, rarely celebrated with public memorials. Depictions of the suffragette in cinema (such as Mrs. Banks in *Mary Poppins*) often exaggerate the militant over the ideological perspectives of the suffrage movement, giving the wider public a misleading impression. **John Mercer** illustrated that the growth of WSPU propaganda was linked to the growth of militancy and reflected the increasingly commercial nature of a developing consumer society. As militancy escalated, and the WSPU found itself increasingly an 'underground' group, so the role of propaganda declined. Lunch was celebrated at this point, and toasts to the WSPU, Emmeline Pankhurst (and other distinguished suffragettes/suffragists) were proposed.

Conference reconvened to papers by **Maroula Joannou** and **Mitzi Auchterlonie**. Joannou examined the stance of Mary Augusta Ward, anti-suffragist author of *Delia Blanchflower*, arguing that similar rhetoric informed both suffrage and anti-

suffrage ideologies. Auchterlonie spoke on 'The uneasy relationship between Conservative suffragists and the WSPU'. Sympathising with the aims of the WSPU, Conservative suffragists found themselves not always able to condone their tactics. However they took the view that the fault lay more with the Government than the militants – for whom they always held a residual private sympathy and admiration.

Owing to time constraints conference then ran along parallel lines. **Estelle Cohen** spoke on 'The Scientific Case for Women's Rights in the Work of Frances Hoggan. M.D', **Kate Addington** analysed 'The Suffragette Sense of Humour', and **Kathryn Laing** re-interpreted Rebecca West's *The Sentinel* in the light of recent discoveries that link the work with Russian revolutionary activism. The WSPU's Mary Gawthorpe was the subject of **Krista Cowman** who, following a recent archival discovery, reassessed the position of Gawthorpe's relations with Sylvia Pankhurst in the light of the publication of *The Suffragette Movement*.

The day concluded with papers by **Elizabeth Crawford** on the relationship between the WSPU and the Irish suffragists and by **Katherine Cockin** on 'Inventing the Suffragettes'. Parallel to this **June Hannam** spoke on 'International Dimensions of Women's Suffrage', detailing the suffrage experience in countries as diverse as Greece, Egypt and France. **Lorna Gibson** concluded the day with an exploration of 'The Women's Institute and *Jerusalem's* suffrage past', a study of how the hymn was adapted by members of the organisation into an iconic form of musical association with the suffragette movement.

Then it was the turn of the delegates to add a 'Deed' to the 'Words' of the speakers by rejoicing in the music of Smyth and her stirring marching tempo. Shoulder to shoulder we wended our way homeward.....in my own case still humming!

*Maureen Wright*  
*University of Portsmouth.*

## GENERAL NOTICES

### Mastermind

The BBC TV quiz programme Mastermind (despite its gendered title) is keen to recruit female contestants who are underrepresented on the programme. They have contacted WHN as part of their efforts to attract more women for the forthcoming series. If you are tempted, details can be found at [www.bbc.co.uk/whatson/beonashow/shows/mastermind.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/whatson/beonashow/shows/mastermind.shtml) or by emailing [mastermind2004@bbc.co.uk](mailto:mastermind2004@bbc.co.uk) or by writing to Mastermind Applications, Room 4031, New Broadcasting House, Oxford Road, Manchester M60 1SJ.

### The Royal College of Nursing Archive

The Royal College of Nursing Archive is located in Edinburgh, and offers a variety of archival services. They can be contacted at: RCN Archive, 42 South Oswald Road, Edinburgh EH9 2HH, Tel 01301 662 6122/3, or email them on [archives@rcn.org.uk](mailto:archives@rcn.org.uk)

Their website includes an online catalogue, as well as full details of current charges, opening hours and other useful information: [www.rcn.org.uk/archives](http://www.rcn.org.uk/archives)

For anyone researching the history of nursing, this is an invaluable resource. An 'Educational User' discount of 10% applies.

## Education

### **M.A in Women, Gender, Culture Histories 1500 to the Present**

Full Time 1 yr /Part Time 2 yrs

In 1990 the M.A. in women's history at Royal Holloway was the first such degree course to be established in the U.K. Students have gone on to win national essay prizes and graduates have pursued careers in academia, museums, the BBC, journalism, teaching, marketing and PR, but many have joined primarily to share the intellectual excitement and forge new friendships with those who share their interests.

The M.A. offers a firm grounding in history and historical method and is designed to address a range of methodological issues, from the application of gender theory to the use of historical sources. Students take a core course covering gender and society in Britain and Europe 1500-1980, plus two options from a selection offered in History, English, Classics and Social Policy departments covering every period from classical antiquity and the middle ages to the present day. Students are also given the opportunity to visit major London museums and archives, and to utilise the resources of the Bedford Centre for Research in the History of Women, which houses the college archives and organises regular interdisciplinary gender related conferences and seminars.

Recognised by the AHRB. Many of our students are funded by AHRB awards.

**For more information or an informal discussion please contact:**

**Dr Nicola Pullin, The History Department,  
Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham,  
Surrey TW20 0EX.**

**Tel: 01784 443748.**

**Email: [Nicola.Pullin@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:Nicola.Pullin@rhul.ac.uk)**

*We positively welcome applications from all sections of the community.*

## Conference Notices/Calls for papers

Consecrated Women: Towards a History of  
Women Religious of Britain and Ireland

**SEPTEMBER 16-17 2004**

**To be held in Cambridge**

in conjunction with

The Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology

Themes include:

Women Religious in the Community:  
assessing social and pastoral activism

Authority and Governance

Writing Biography: challenges, issues and  
approaches

For more information please contact:

Ruth Manning, University College, Oxford,  
OX1 4BH. [ruth.manning@univ.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ruth.manning@univ.ox.ac.uk)

or

Dr. Susan O'Brien, 26 Emery Street,  
Cambridge, CB1 2AX.

[susan.obrien4@btopenworld.com](mailto:susan.obrien4@btopenworld.com)

### **Women and Material Culture, 1660-1830 14-15 July 2004**

A conference co-organised by Chawton House  
Library and the University of Southampton

Plenary Speakers: Susan Staves (Brandeis University)  
and Marcia Pointon (University of Manchester)

The two-day interdisciplinary conference will explore the relationship between gender and the object world across the long eighteenth century. Over the last two decades woman's role as producer and consumer of goods has become a leading issue in the cultural and social history of the period, as well as in studies of literature, art and fashion. This body of work has collectively pointed not only to woman's increasingly central role to the burgeoning consumer revolution,



but to the complex ways in which the material world mediated the construction of gender in the period. This conference aims to push forward this field of study with an exciting programme of over 70 speakers.

For further information on the programme and how to register for this event as a non-speaker, please visit the conference website:

<http://www.soton.ac.uk/~wmc2004>  
or email [conference@chawton.net](mailto:conference@chawton.net)

### **Migration in Historical Perspective**

#### **The Economic History Society's Women's Committee 15th Annual Workshop IHR, London, 12-13 November 2004**

This workshop will take place on 12-13th November at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London. The theme is 'Migration in Historical Perspective'

Details and a programme can be found on the WHN website at  
[http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org/conferences\\_&\\_papers.htm](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org/conferences_&_papers.htm)

## **SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HISTORY NETWORK**

### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

#### **'Making Cloth(es): Women, Dress and Textiles'**

The SWHN Autumn Conference 2004

**Saturday 23 October**

Royal Scottish Academy for Music and Drama,  
Glasgow.

Proposals for papers on all aspects of gender and textile and clothing production and design are invited, but preference may be given to those which address issues of gender in Scotland.

The conference will address questions regarding the role of gender in the production and design of textiles of all kinds (from tweeds to lace), and will also be concerned with the marketing and sale of clothing and textiles. Scotland has a high profile as a producer of distinctive textiles and clothing, from Shetland hosiery and Harris tweeds to Borders cashmere, Paisley patterns and Ayrshire lace. Urban Scotland was also a centre for the mass production and sale of ready-to-wear clothes and as such depended heavily on female labour.

The conference will take place at the newly refurbished Royal Scottish Academy for Music and Drama in the centre of Glasgow. This conference provides an excellent opportunity to consider the wider historical issues concerning women, men and clothing in the context of Glasgow's reputation as a centre of fashion and design.

Offers of papers (200 word extract by 28 May 2004) to: Debbi Simonton, Key Learning Opportunities, King's College, University of Aberdeen, AB24 3FX or email: [d.l.simonton@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:d.l.simonton@abdn.ac.uk).

Details will appear on the Scottish Women's History Website: [www.swhn.org.uk](http://www.swhn.org.uk)

## STEERING COMMITTEE NEWS

### COMMITTEE NEWS

Thank you to all the members who voted on our constitutional ballot contained in the last issue of the magazine. It was unanimously decided by those who voted that:

The WHN Steering Committee quorum shall be half plus one of the Steering Committee membership for that year.

Membership of the WHN Steering Committee requires that Committee members attend a minimum of 3 meetings each year or they may be considered to have stepped down from the Committee.

At the last Steering Committee meeting it was decided to award a grant of £1000 to support the publication of the Biographic Dictionary of Scottish Women and the production of an accompanying website. Originated by the Scottish Women's History Network, the BDSW is a major project which is nearing completion and will be published by Edinburgh University Press in 2005. Any member requiring more information about the project can contact one of the editors, Susie Innes, email: [sus.innes@btopenworld.com](mailto:sus.innes@btopenworld.com)

*Reminder* - WHN Members are welcome at Steering Committee meetings which are held approximately 4 times a year at the Institute of Historical Research in London. Details can be found on the Steering Committee pages of the web: [www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org)

A new tradition was started after our last meeting - Steering Committee members, old and new, met for dinner at the Old Spaghetti House, close to the IHR. This will be a regular feature of Steering Committee life - all WHN members are also invited, and everyone will be warmly welcomed.

Finally we want to send good wishes to Steering Committee member Yvonne Brown who is stepping down temporarily while she takes maternity leave - best of luck Yvonne!

As a rider to the last paragraph above, our warmest congratulations and good wishes go to Yvonne Brown on the birth of her daughter, Polly, on April 3rd, 2004.



women's  
HISTORY  
NETWORK



# **SUBMISSION DEADLINES FOR ARTICLES FOR INCLUSION IN WHN MAGAZINE**

**Deadlines as follows:**

**Autumn 2004: 1 August**  
**Spring 2005: 1 November**  
**Summer 2005: 1 April**

**Submissions by e-mail please to the addresses  
below.**

## **Our Publicity Officers**

The following people should be contacted on matters relating to publicity:

**Claire Jones**, who concentrates on academic groups and peer reviewed material. She can be contacted by email: [claire@jones5.com](mailto:claire@jones5.com) or at 16 Manor Farm Close, Mickle Trafford, Chester CH2 4EZ. Tel: 01244 300550; Fax: 08700 524592.

**Lissy Klaar**, who concentrates on the amateur and local historical groups and journals. Her contact is [elisabethklaar@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:elisabethklaar@yahoo.co.uk)

**WHN Regional Organisers** can request current and back numbers of this magazine (plus WHN T-shirts!) to sell at conferences on a sale or return basis. Please contact Joyce Walker by e-mail: ([admin@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:admin@womenshistorynetwork.org)) or c/o History Dept., University of Aberdeen, Meston Walk, Old Aberdeen AB24 3FX.

## **WHN CONTACTS**

To submit articles or news for the WHN magazine, please contact any of the editors at the addresses below:

**Elaine Chalus**, School of Historical and Cultural Studies, Bath Spa University College, Newton Park, Bath BA2 9BN. Email: [e.chalus@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:e.chalus@bathspa.ac.uk)

**Deborah Simonton**, KEY Learning Opportunities, University of Aberdeen, King's College, Aberdeen AB24 3FX. Email: [d.l.simonton@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:d.l.simonton@abdn.ac.uk)

**Nicola Pullin**, Dept. of History, Royal Holloway University of London, Egham, Surrey, TW20 0EX  
Email: [Nicola.Pullin@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:Nicola.Pullin@rhul.ac.uk)

For book reviews, please contact **Jane Potter**, Wolfson College, Oxford, OX2 6UD.  
Email: [jpotter@wolfson.ox.ac.uk](mailto:jpotter@wolfson.ox.ac.uk)

**To update contact details, or for any membership inquiries (including subscriptions), please contact Amanda Capern, at the following address: History Department, University of Hull, Hull, HU6 7RX**  
Email [A.L.Capern@hull.ac.uk](mailto:A.L.Capern@hull.ac.uk)

## What is the Women's History Network?

The WHN was founded in July 1991. It is a national association concerned with promoting women's history and encouraging women interested in history. WHN business is carried out by the National Steering Committee, which is elected by the membership and meets regularly several times each year. It organises the annual conference, manages the finance and membership, and co-ordinates activities in pursuit of the aims of the WHN.

### Aims of the WHN

1. To encourage contact between all people interested in women's history—in education, the media or in private research
2. To collect and publish information relating to women's history
3. To identify and comment upon all issues relating to women's history
4. To promote research into all areas of women's history
5. To establish a database of the research, teaching and study-interests of the members and other related organisations and individuals

### What does the WHN do?

#### Annual Conference

Each year the WHN holds a national conference for WHN members and other. The conference provides everyone interested in women's history with a chance to meet and an exciting forum where new research can be aired and recent developments in the field can be shared. The Annual General Meeting of the Network takes place at the conference. The AGM discusses issues of policy and elects the National Steering Committee.

#### WHN Publications

WHN members receive three copies per year of the *Magazine*, which contains: articles discussing research, sources and applications of women's history; reviews of books, conferences, meetings and exhibitions; and information on calls for papers, prizes and competitions, and publication opportunities.

### Joining the WHN

#### Annual Membership Rates

Student/unwaged	£10	Overseas minimum	£30
Low income (*under £16,000 pa)	£15	UK Institutions	£35
High income	£30	Institutions overseas	£40

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### Membership Application

I would like to join / renew\* my subscription to the Women's History Network. I enclose a cheque payable to Women's History Network for £ \_\_\_\_\_ (\* delete as applicable)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel (work): \_\_\_\_\_

Tick this box if you DO NOT want your name made available to publishers/conference organisers for publicity:

Detach and return this form with your cheque to **Amanda Capern, at: History Department, University of Hull, Hull, HU6 7RX, UK.**