

# Women's History MAGAZINE

7½p

**SHREW**  
vol. 3 no. 4 may 1971



**THE FAMILY**

**Issue 68**  
**Spring 2012**  
Issn 1476-6760

**Nina Koefoed** on Cross  
Cultural Discussions in  
the Virtual Classroom

**Marion Pluskota** on  
Prostitution and Police during  
the French Revolution

**Åsa Karlsson Sjögren** on  
Suffrage and Married Women's  
Rights in Sweden, 1870-1920

**Celia Hughes** on Activist  
Women of the 1960's and  
1970's

**Laura Seddon** on Women's  
Music Development and  
Patronage in the Early 20th C.

**Galiana-Sánchez, Bernabeu-  
Mestre and García-Paramio**  
on Nurses for a new Fatherland  
in Spain, 1938-1942

Plus

Six book reviews

Committee news

Prize announcements

women's  
HISTORY  
NETWORK



[www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org)



# Women, State and Nation: Creating Gendered Identities

Cardiff University  
7 – 9 September 2012

Plenary speakers:

Dr Padma Anagol (Cardiff University)

Professor Elsa Barkley-Brown (University of Maryland)

Professor Mineke Bosch (University of Groningen)

Call for papers deadline  
extended until  
23 April 2012

For further information please contact Dr Fiona Reid  
[freid1@glam.ac.uk](mailto:freid1@glam.ac.uk) or Dr Stephanie Ward  
[WardSJ2@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:WardSJ2@cardiff.ac.uk)

<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/share/newsandevents/events/history/womens-history-network.html>

Welcome to the spring issue of *Women's History Magazine*. In this issue we present an eclectic collection of articles ranging over subjects, time periods and geographic locations. There are articles from Danish, English, French, Spanish and Swedish scholars.

In the first article, Marion Pluskota makes a strong case for the use of local archives in understanding how attitudes to prostitution shifted in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century France. She takes the port city of Nantes as her case study, but argues that the regulation and eventual criminalisation of prostitutes observed in this French city echoed similar changes across the western world in the nineteenth century. As she points out, it is only by the study of local officials and of their influence on districts that such questions can be addressed.

Moving on to late nineteenth-century Sweden, Asa Sjogren's article examines the links between women's suffrage and married women's rights in that country. Drawing comparisons with the UK, she asks why married women in Sweden were so slow to obtain legal rights within marriage compared to their British sisters, and how the campaign for married women's rights was intertwined with the suffrage question at both local and national levels.

On a different subject, in a different country, Laura Seddon examines the role of patronage in the development of women's music in Britain in the early twentieth century and, in particular, the importance of the Society of Women Musicians (SWM). The article explores the contribution of wealthy individuals (both male and female) in the early 1900s, and then examines how collective patronage supported women who wanted to move away from traditional female forms of music. She concludes that, in a period considered to be one of the most fertile for British women's music, female musicians benefited from the interaction between the different forms of patronage flourishing at that time.

Maria Eugenia Galiana-Sanchez and her co-authors take us into darker times, and the role of the visiting nurse in Franco's Spain. The importance of public health and the training of health visitors had taken on a new imperative under the Second Republic in the early 1930s, and great strides had been made in establishing training schools for public health nurses. After the civil war, however, a new ideology emerged from Franco's regime, which saw in these health visitors an opportunity to educate and indoctrinate the masses in Francoist ideology. The article explores the sometimes sinister role public health nurses played in Franco's Spain and how this was related to the regime's view of women in general.

Our final article from Celia Hughes uses oral testimony to uncover some of the challenges which the 'new politics' of the 1960s posed for members of early English feminist groups; in particular the implications for women who had previously been involved in leftist-activist networks alongside male comrades, husbands and lovers. The article examines how membership of such groups forced women to examine anew their relationships with

other women and with their male colleagues and partners.

In a new departure, this issue includes a report from Denmark on an initiative which enabled young women from four countries (Denmark, the Philippines, Sudan and the USA) to participate in a cross-cultural exploration of gender, culture, prosperity, well-being, work, poverty and wealth. Initiated in the shadow of the global financial crisis, the project was intended to give these young women the chance to share their experiences of the crisis. The result is a heartwarming exposition of the hopes and fears of young women from very different cultures and economies.

As usual, the *Magazine* contains a collection of book reviews and announcements about WHN prizes. This year's conference, 'Women, State and Nation: Creating Gendered Identities', will be hosted by Cardiff University on 7-9 September. Registration details will be published soon so keep an eye on the website and newsletter for details.

Don't forget that paying your membership fees by standing order is very helpful to the Network (as is ticking the Gift Aid box, if appropriate), but do check that your subscription fee is correct. Details are on the back cover of the *Magazine*. We also encourage members to register for the new 'Members Only' feature on the website ([www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org)). This is your space, and we welcome suggestions for how it could be improved or extended. Finally, this is your magazine and we welcome articles, both long and short, that help us to explore women's history.

Editorial Team: Katie Barclay, Sue Hawkins, Ann Kettle, Anne Logan, Juliette Pattinson and Emma Robertson.

## Contents

Young women speaking the economy: exploring the possibilities offered by virtual and cross-cultural dialogue in the classroom .....	4
Prostitution and police in a port city during the French Revolution. ....	7
Suffrage and married women's rights. Political strategies within the Swedish women's movement 1870-1920 .....	13
Realigning political and personal selfhood: narratives of activist women in the late 1960s and 1970s .....	22
Patronage and the development of women's music in the early twentieth century .....	28
Nurses for a new fatherland: gender and ideology in the health policies of the early Franco regime in Spain (1938-1942).....	33
Book Reviews.....	42
Membership Announcements.....	48
Committee News .....	50

Cover: Image reproduced courtesy of Mica Nava.

# Young women speaking the economy: exploring the possibilities offered by virtual and cross-cultural dialogue in the classroom

Nina Koefoed

Aarhus University, Denmark

On April 21, 2011, the International Museum of Women launched a new exhibition titled *Young Women Speaking the Economy*. For half a year prior to the exhibition forty-four young women from four different countries had participated in a cross-cultural exploration of gender, culture, prosperity, well-being, work, poverty and wealth. The knowledge and insights stemming from this exploration contributed to the exhibition still showing at [www.imow.org](http://www.imow.org).

In the shade of the global financial crisis, the project was funded in 2010 by the American Association of Museums grant programme, 'Museums and Community Collaborations Abroad', to give young women from the participating countries a chance to illustrate and examine the obstacles and opportunities that they were experiencing as a result of the crisis. The International Museum of Women in San Francisco, California, worked in partnership with three other museums – the Ayala Museum in Manila, The Philippines, the Sudanese Women's Museum and the Women's Museum in Aarhus, Denmark – and four corresponding women's colleges or programmes: Mills College, Miriam College, Ahfad University for Women and the Research Center for Gender Studies at Aarhus University.

The aim of the project was to encourage young women to engage with each other, with their communities and with other nations through the arts, multimedia, blogging, public presentations and both face-to-face and virtual conversations. They explored three main topics: 1) preparing for and entering the work force in this historical moment, 2) generational differences in economic participation, and 3) shifts in gender roles due to changes in job availability and individual economic participation. In many ways, the young women explored the effect of the global financial crisis on society and individual lives through cross-cultural discussions and virtual media and spaces.

The international and cross-cultural dimension of the project has been important, but cross-cultural dialogue on this scale is not easy. Just the effort of coordinating four different academic systems and four different schedules proved almost impossible. But the value of the cross-cultural dimension in the project as well as the modes of communication also made it a unique learning experience for all participants. From the very beginning, the project had the clear objective of producing a virtual exhibition at the International Museum of Women. The exhibition was intended to present the participants' understanding of cultural similarities and differences and to provide experience with working across cultures. Finally, both the

mode of communication and the preparation of the media strengthened the participants' abilities to work with virtual communication and virtual media, another goal of the project.

## Communication through social media

All participants were selected in each of the four countries during fall 2010, and the project was launched at the end of November the same year. From the very beginning of the project, the social media Facebook was the main tool used for the participants' cross-cultural communication. In a closed group, all participants introduced themselves to each other, and later they contributed to the debates posted by the American manager of the project, Raeshma Razvi.

Most participants used Facebook as a way of communicating on a daily basis before the project began. In this way, technology served as a familiar and common framework for communication, enabling more direct contact and fewer cultural barriers, and became an important non-human actor in the global network created during the project. Technology supported the global aspect of the project, not only as a means of communication and knowledge sharing, but also as a non-human actor underpinning the dialogue between the participants and making it more personal because the social rules for the network were known to the participants.

The following reflections on the cross-cultural dialogue in the special space and network created by the project stem from the Danish participants.<sup>1</sup>

## Stereotypes

Identity and culture were recurring themes of the discussions and the creative products on Facebook. The students were first asked to relate to how the rest of the world saw their country, which stereotypes and identity markers were linked to, for instance, Denmark. Some of the markers the Danish participants pointed out were the royal family, Lego, Hans Christian Andersen and Denmark's reputation as the happiest nation in the world. At the same time, they all emphasized that Denmark is regarded as a welfare society (even a socialist society) where women have the opportunity to pursue higher education and to combine work and family life. There is no doubt that the Danish students at times found it quite difficult to tell the other participants about the systems of free public health care, education, student grants and so forth in Denmark. A feeling quickly arose in the Danish group of being very

spoiled and actually coming from the fairyland that many pointed out as the stereotype of Denmark.

Adapting to the feeling of being very privileged had a significant effect on the Danish media projects. Many of them reflect positive and negative aspects of the welfare goods, of their costs and benefits on both a personal and a societal level. And poverty among immigrants and the Danish public's highly divided attitude towards immigration were underlined in the discussions on Facebook, as if to say that there were also sides of Danish society not to be proud of.

## **Generations and identity**

Another subject which the students were asked to reflect upon was the relationship between the different generations of women in their own families and how their choices in connection with work and education differed from or were similar to the students' own choices. With this, as with the other discussions, the goal of the project was for each student to take her own personal history as a starting point. Presenting the conditions in each country from a personal angle made them easier to relate to. This central idea gave the personal story a prominent place in the discussions throughout the project and in the media for the exhibition. The personal story became one of the means of cross-cultural communication, but also a basis for understanding cultural similarities and differences.

## **Insights into other countries**

Certain aspects of the dialogue and contributions on Facebook made a special impression on the Danish group, in some ways reflecting both lack of knowledge and the stereotypes held about the other participating countries, but thereby also the value of the project and the exhibition. For example, the Sudanese students' accounts of their field work in rural Sudan, where they taught and educated young women about women's issues such as circumcision, AIDS, education, family planning, health, hygiene, age at marriage and microfinance, and their descriptions of the very large cultural differences in Sudan made a significant impression on the Danes.

It was also eye-opening to hear about the plans and goals of the Sudanese girls for their futures. In their dialogues with the Sudanese students, the Danish students were easily able to identify with the Sudanese students' dreams about completing an education, going abroad while studying, positioning themselves in the labour market and having a family with only a few children. The Sudanese students' way of life and their reliance on technical tools such as computers, cameras and cell phones were also recognisable.

The Philippine students contributed greatly to varying and personifying the stereotype of (especially young) Philippine women working overseas. The financial crisis has intensified the tendency of Filipinos to seek a better economic future abroad. But even though the overseas workers typically work as nannies or other kinds of domestic workers – in other words, doing traditional

feminine jobs – the dialogue between the students left no doubt that to a large extent it is the young and well-educated section of the population who are leaving the country. The students in the project also doubted their own possibilities for entering their national labour market. The dialogue showed how these overseas workers were considered 'modern-day heroes' by the political elite because of their economic contribution to the nation. However, not surprisingly, the personal stories from the participants focused equally on the personal sacrifices made by these women leaving their families behind for insecure positions as domestic workers abroad.

Most surprising may have been the meeting between the Danish and American cultures, especially concerning the conditions in the educational systems and the young women's dreams and expectations for a future with family and work. The dream articulated by the American students often included the desire to raise a family and stay at home with the children. This was very alien to the plans of the Danish students, which involved combining work and family life. It was also contradicted to some extent by the reality of the financial crisis, which has led to an increasing number of women in the US being the only or most important breadwinners in families.

Even during their studies, the American students felt the financial crisis much more directly than the Danish students. Due to the cost of US higher education, the American students felt very vulnerable during the crisis, as they were dependent on their parents and on having a job. In general, many American students feared that if their parents lost their jobs they would not be able to finish their degrees. This constitutes a very clear contrast to the system of free education in Denmark, which encouraged more students to seek higher education during the financial crisis.

## **Global impression**

The project group in Denmark also spent time building their knowledge about the more general effects of the financial crisis. The Danish students' point of view on the subject was distinct in two ways: they did not see many signs of the crisis in their everyday lives and they did not think about its consequences in terms of gender. As this was a global project, they started out by exploring the global impact of the financial crisis, and a number of aspects of this impact surprised the group and contributed to changing their conception of the financial crisis as gender-neutral.

In contrast to the gender-neutral Danish welfare system, it made an impression on the Danish students to learn that, in other countries at times of crisis, girls are often the first to be pulled out of the education system, just as medical aid and healthcare for girls and women are negatively affected first. This has major consequences not only for the individual girl or woman but for the economy in general. Well-educated women contribute more to a country's economy, plan their family lives differently and have fewer children, which results in a better quality of life for both themselves and their families. When the



healthcare system experiences cutbacks, infant as well as maternal mortality rates rise. These are not only personal tragedies but also economic problems.

The financial focus of the project offered a welcome and challenging perspective on many of the problems, which were also often very emotional. The financial consequences of falling levels of education and the flaws in healthcare systems are evident. But to learn that violence against women rises in a financially challenged world and constitutes a financial problem in itself provides another perspective on how society is influenced by a financial crisis. Women subjected to violence tend to be more poorly educated and to contribute less to the work force than others. The increasing violence against women as a consequence of the financial crisis is a global problem. It points to the ambivalence of the gender-unequal global effect of the financial crisis – in other words, that the crisis may also be deepened by the fact that women are hit the hardest in many areas. Among other things, women are more likely to invest money in the health and education of their children, and so there are major consequences when women are pushed out of the labour market. Women's role as the primary caregivers makes them more vulnerable in a time of crisis, the dual focus on work and family making it harder for them to manoeuvre. The more traditional a society is in its gender roles, the more exposed women are in times of crisis. The financial crisis is therefore also an opportunity to use equality politics actively to contribute to economic development in a positive way.

## Denmark

The Danish group also spent considerable time debating whether the crisis has a more gender-neutral expression in Denmark and why it may not have meant much in the lives of the young female students at first. When they searched the national newspapers for coverage of the debate, it became very clear that the issues of gender and the financial crisis were not linked in the Danish public's mind. To the extent that the problems of the financial crisis had a gender bias in the media, it was about the unskilled male worker from the outskirts of Denmark and about the lack of women in senior management roles: both typical gender problems which are enhanced in times of financial crisis.

This brings us back to what was at the center of the Danish students' views on Denmark: the welfare state and its services, along with women's traditional role as the primary caregiver. In Denmark as well, we see that the financial crisis puts welfare services such as childcare under pressure and that this in its turn particularly puts women's job situations under pressure. The high participation rate of women is dependent on them having their children taken care of while they themselves work.

One of the recurring themes in the debates was the unique way in which the Danish system allows women to have both a job and a family. This gave rise to some reflections on whether having a job and a family is the same as having a career and a family, or whether the

disparity between the large number of working women and the small group of women at the top of the career ladder in Denmark could be explained by the very fact that Danish women do not have to choose between family and work.

*Young Women Speaking the Economy* offered a unique opportunity for university students to contribute to the social debate about the financial crisis and the challenges facing women; to enter into a dialogue with the surrounding world, present insights and give people food for thought through the museums and exhibitions. The project has given young women from the four participating countries a voice that will be heard globally in a debate about among other things - their futures. As a learning experience it has not only shown the value of cross-cultural dialogue as a learning tool, but also the possibilities offered by this network created with the help of technology and social media.

## Notes

1. Thanks to all my Danish students for sharing their thoughts on this with me.

## Women's History Magazine Back issues

Back issues of *Women's History Magazine* are available to buy for

£4.50 inc postage (UK)

£5.00 inc postage (Overseas)

Most issues are available, from Spring 2002 to the present. Discover the contents of each issue at  
**[www.magazine.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.magazine.womenshistorynetwork.org)**

Order and pay online or email  
**[editor@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:editor@womenshistorynetwork.org)**



# Prostitution and police in a port city during the French Revolution

Marion Pluskota

*Centre of Urban History, University of Leicester*

In 1761, Jean Moreau, master currier and neighbour of La Couilliaud, a single woman who was living in rue du Bois-Tortu in St Nicolas parish, complained to the Nantes magistrates about the behaviour of the young woman.<sup>1</sup> He explained that she behaved in a 'very disorderly manner', receiving 'men and other lewd women' in the apartment she shared with her mother and father. As he and the other neighbours were constantly in fear for their lives, he requested that the magistrates should order her expulsion from the building. In response to this plea, the procurer of the King asked the *commissaire* Bar to look into the situation and the latter interviewed her neighbours. It quickly became apparent that La Couilliaud had already been evicted from other places for the same reason: she had formerly lived in the Cour des Richards, rue du Puits d'Argent, rue du Moulin, rue des Petits Capucins, near the Hôtel de Ville 'and in other places' in the preceding years. Each time she was ordered to leave by a *commissaire* and each time the same complaints were made by her new neighbours. But it was only on 13 August 1761 that she was finally sentenced to three months imprisonment in the *hôpital général*, a type of workhouse.

This anecdote highlights two important aspects of prostitution in a port city: rarely in eighteenth-century Nantes did prostitutes openly confront the authority of the *commissaires*, the main figures of law enforcement in the districts of the city. Relations between the young women and the police never reached the point of 'open war', and they easily complied with the order of expulsion of the *commissaires*. On the other hand, eighteenth-century *commissaires* did not actively pursue prostitutes: they mainly limited their sentences to eviction from their apartments, if complaints against them were too numerous. But this attitude of complacency would change towards the end of the century: the Revolution and more importantly the beginning of the Chouans Riot in Vendée and parts of Brittany in 1793 were the starting point in Nantes for a campaign of suspicion against prostitutes, which would eventually lead to the first lists of prostitutes in 1804-1806.<sup>2</sup>

Historians interested in French port cities in the early modern period, such as Poussou for Bordeaux, considered prostitutes as part of the 'vagrant category' and did not distinguish them from the study of the poor and/or criminals of these cities, expecting them to be treated as such by the police.<sup>3</sup> In parallel, historians' works on prostitution in France usually centred on Paris in the eighteenth century, leaving the study of prostitution in the specific environment of a port city untouched. However some of their arguments resonate with the situation in Nantes: both Benabou and Conner argue in favour of a change of mentality leading to the criminalisation of prostitutes during the eighteenth

century.<sup>4</sup> Conner in particular articulates her arguments about the revolutionary period and claims that the national government avoided dealing with the issues linked with prostitution and, that in response, the police decided to 'eliminate its visibility'. But her arguments can only be applied with restrictions to the city of Nantes, as there was much less direct surveillance of prostitutes, and no large purpose-built institutions to deal with them. This article will therefore analyse and underline the evolution of the attitudes of the police and especially the *commissaires* towards prostitutes after the start of the Revolution and demonstrate how changes at a local/district level led to a city-wide listing of prostitutes at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This shift in attitudes towards prostitutes is not only perceptible in Nantes; it announces the regulation and eventually criminalisation of prostitutes in western countries in the nineteenth century.

## Prostitutes and their relations with the law in the eighteenth century

Nantes prostitutes in the eighteenth century were on average twenty-five years old and single. Usually coming from a poor background, they received very little training in their youth and described themselves as seamstresses, thread and needle makers or laundresses.<sup>5</sup> They received their customers in their own rooms or met them in inns and taverns: they mostly lived in districts near the port and the plebeian suburbs of the Marchix. In each of these districts lived a *commissaire* who was under the supervision of the *lieutenant général*. Eventually this office of *lieutenant général* was taken over by Nantes city council or the Bureau de la Ville in 1776. *Commissaires* were the most important officers on the beat as they had the right to arrest and detain culprits, take fines and use mediation and summary justice.<sup>6</sup> They were assisted in their daily patrols by the militia or *garde bourgeoise*. Vincent Danet showed that *commissaires* were generally appointed for more than a year and therefore, as they lived in the district they patrolled, they had close connections and relationships with the inhabitants and a detailed knowledge of the various public houses and inns as well as their tenants and customers.<sup>7</sup> These continual interactions, it may be argued, must have eased the judicial process by encouraging mediation and summary justice, reducing the number of affairs going to court.<sup>8</sup>

The relations between *commissaires* and prostitutes were structured around two different categories of prosecutions. The *commissaires* responded to complaints from neighbours or family about the women's behaviour as well as carrying out routine patrols that brought them into direct contact with prostitutes. They targeted women

responsible for disturbing the peace, for example by screaming, partying, receiving noisy people or generally behaving in a disorderly manner (being noisy or throwing stones or garbage in the street or insulting neighbours and passer-bys) once they had received a complaint. They would then attempt to verify the allegations by interviewing the women's neighbours and recording their testimonies. Only after having carried out these investigations, and finding the prostitutes guilty, did the *commissaires* take the women into custody (a rare occurrence) or give them twenty-four hours to leave their place of abode. At the same time, patrols were made daily in order to check that the gates of alleys were shut, that taverns and inns closed on time, that no alcohol was served during Mass and that lodging-keepers kept their books up to date.<sup>9</sup> The reports of these patrols offer an interesting insight into the attitude of the *commissaires* towards prostitutes: even when meeting prostitutes and their customers in their homes, or in a tavern, *commissaires* simply reported their presence but did not take any action against them.<sup>10</sup> In most cases they did not even take their names.

These attitudes reveal two characteristics of the mentality of Nantes *commissaires* in the eighteenth century. Firstly, it appears that prostitution was not considered a crime if no one was offended by it or, in other words, if no complaint was filed. *Commissaires*' duties concerned public order and, by definition, if the order was not disturbed their action was not required. Secondly, their attitude towards prostitutes did not reveal any 'unprofessionalism'. Of course their reports recorded only one side of the story, and it is possible that they behaved differently on the spot, but it remains interesting to note that they did not blame or stigmatise prostitutes for having received money for sexual intercourse. The reports of their patrols were read by the clerk and possibly by a magistrate if the affair was to go to court and it is plausible that these people from the upper middle-class would have been sympathetic to the condemnation of immorality. *Commissaires* nevertheless limited their writings to expressions like '*femmes du monde*' or '*filles publiques*' and no derogatory term was recorded.<sup>11</sup> Admittedly, the expression '*femme du monde*' did not carry positive connotations and it implied lewd and disorderly behaviour,<sup>12</sup> but rather than targeting the women for such behaviour, the reports underlined the fact that the neighbours had rather been disturbed by noises and drunken visitors.

Only when the plaintiff was a member of the family did the *commissaires* stress the lewd behaviour of the woman. However between 1747 and 1760, only eleven legal actions were initiated by families in an attempt to sentence a 'promiscuous' woman to jail.<sup>13</sup> These women were all jailed in the *hôpital général* for a minimum of six months, but sentences of such duration were invariably the result of families' complaints. The limited number of convictions for more than six months clearly shows that *commissaires* were not actively looking to convict and imprison prostitutes. More importantly, prostitutes' places of lodgings or meeting were not recorded in their reports against lodging-keepers or their reports about gate-closure, which further demonstrates that they were not considered inherently troublesome by the *commissaires*.

## Changes in legislature and impacts on prostitution

The upheavals of the Revolution led to the reform of the municipal institutions and the reorganisation of the police from 1789 onwards.<sup>14</sup> On 28 July 1789, a committee of thirty-one members 'whose duties refer to order, security and public peace' was created in Nantes.<sup>15</sup> The new spatial division of the city into districts, instead of parishes, and an increase in the number of *commissaires*, from four up to eighteen before 1800, allowed the police to control the various districts more thoroughly, under the general supervision of an inspector; the police were meant to follow the orders of the mayor.<sup>16</sup> On 22 July 1791, the King and the Assemblée Nationale promulgated a law on the organisation of the *police municipale* and *police correctionnelle*: this law defined the role and functions of the *commissaires* and officers of justice, notably the new *juge de paix*, who acted to some degree as a justice of the peace.<sup>17</sup> *Commissaires* were ordered to keep records of the inhabitants of the city and to maintain public order; they had therefore, as indicated in Article X of the law, free access at any time '*dans les lieux livrés notoirement à la débauche*', implying that common knowledge of debauchery gave them access to private houses.

Overall, their duties, according to this law, changed little from what they had formerly been; however in Nantes, the city council seems to have put an emphasis on the control and supervision of 'foreigners' and beggars, highlighting the atmosphere of suspicion which reigned in the port city. Indeed, whereas the early years of the Revolution did not bring any new regulation of prostitution, diverse police regulations were to have an impact on it and gradually changed the attitudes of the police towards prostitutes. On 19 October 1790, an *ordonnance de police concernant les mendiants* was published by the Bureau: passports for poor foreigners and non-native people living in Nantes for less than six months or a year, whether from the kingdom or not, had to be collected from an officer and the beggars had to follow a specific route to go back to their place of birth.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, the poor held in the *hôpital général*, called the Sanitat (a type of workhouse) who were of another nationality or had lived in Nantes for less than six months before being sent to the Sanitat were to be excluded from the hospital and sent back home. Because of the harshness of this *ordonnance*, it is likely that the women who did not want to be sent away from Nantes lied about their profession and means of living: lists of poor sent back to their parish of origin can be found in the archives, and included those arrested for begging and vagrancy but none confessed being a prostitute.<sup>19</sup> In addition, on 27 June 1792, the *Convention Nationale* proclaimed some '*mesures pour l'extinction de la mendicité*' which forbade begging in the streets, under the sentence of being arrested and jailed.<sup>20</sup> Again in August 1791, the municipality, following the example of Paris, lamented the fact that the city 'notices an important increase in foreigners. Nantes sees on a daily basis coming into her bosom a vast number of unknown faces. This would not be an issue if, at these moving times, they would not disappear from the police administration.'<sup>21</sup>



Landlords had to keep a register of their lodgers and they had to declare them to the *commissaire* within twenty-four hours; however, it seems that, according to the same document, some people chose not to stay more than twenty-four hours in one place in order to avoid being registered. The municipality claimed that they feared these people would prepare some '*secousses contre-révolutionnaires*' or in other words, 'anti-revolutionary troubles', and targeted these 'foreigners' as a potential danger. In order to solve this problem, *commissaires* had to check the registry of the lodging-keepers twice a day, and if the latter had not conformed to the law, they were fined and sentenced to prison for twenty-four hours. The Bureau also encouraged denunciations under Article VI of this *ordonnance*: citizens were encouraged to come and give the name or description of anyone who 'did not look like' an inhabitant of the city and they were not asked to give or sign their name in doing so. These regulations were published again in 1797 (An V), insisting on the necessity for the *commissaires* to look for suspicious people, when the last upheaval of the Chouans riot occurred.<sup>22</sup>

Even though *commissaires* and magistrates often complained of their lack of time, or of the inefficiency of the people working under their supervision, some lists of '*brigands*' (or so assumed) linked with the riot have survived, as well as lists of prisoners jailed for being nobles and nuns.<sup>23</sup> Admittedly, these lists have little to do with the prosecution of prostitutes, as not enough information has been recorded against these labourers or seamstresses who were jailed as '*brigands*', or, in other words, rioters. But the significant number of women jailed in the prisons of Nantes during the first five years of the Revolution shows how dramatic the situation was and how easy it was to be arrested: in 1793, there were up to seven hundred women in the prison of the Bon Pasteur alone, whereas in normal times it would accommodate only two hundred people.<sup>24</sup>

On 29 Prairial An II, the municipality decided to open a house of correction for prostitutes only, in an attempt to 're-educate' these women to be good citizens and 'to remind them of morality and good manners'.<sup>25</sup> A replica of the model of the workhouse or *hôpital général*, proposed by the city council, it seemed to be an attempt to rationalise the work of the monarchy by confining prostitutes and making them work. The citizens, Bridon and Gautier, were sent to find a house to accommodate Nantes prostitutes and on 8 Thermidor An II provided the city council with an ancient nunnery, the *Maison des Pénitentes*, which at that time had already been converted into a prison.<sup>26</sup> The city council seems to have anticipated a large number of prostitutes, as initially it raised the possibility of 'one or many houses' in which to jail these women. However, it appears that despite the fact that the *Maison des Pénitentes* had originally been inhabited by twenty-four ex-prostitutes,<sup>27</sup> it never received prostitutes only. Indeed on 30 Vendémiaire An VIII (1799), the Bureau ordered the *commissaires* to send to the Bouffay prison any woman 'who would be seen soliciting in the streets or behaving in a disorderly manner'.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately the registers of the prison, although still available, do not give any information on the reason why the prisoners were jailed; therefore it has not been possible to identify

the prostitutes or to produce statistics on the number of prostitutes incarcerated as a result of this order.<sup>29</sup>

## The role of the commissaires in prosecutions

*Commissaires* in charge after 1789 were not always new officials.<sup>30</sup> A certain structural continuity was maintained: out of six *commissaires* in 1792, two had been in charge before 1789 and Louis-Charles Bar (junior), who supervised the *police municipale*, was appointed *commissaire-inspecteur* in 1790, after a career of twenty years as a *commissaire*.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, despite the attempts of the Revolution to sweep away the monarchical organisation, it appears that there was continuity in the administration of the police. But despite this continuity in police personnel, the pace quickened and the number of arrests, or at least of interrogations, of prostitutes increased during the first years of the Revolution. Firstly, the number of women who were arrested and interrogated for vagrancy and accused at the same time of living in debauchery rose compared to the situation before the Revolution. Indeed before 1789, prostitutes recorded in the archives were usually found in their lodgings, therefore were not arrested for vagrancy. It is true that they were asked to leave the city if they were accused of being disorderly and were not born in Nantes, however it seems that this sanction was rarely respected. Nevertheless, because of the risks of vagrants coming into Nantes to foment a riot after 1789-92, at least according to the municipality, any person who was not an inhabitant of Nantes could be targeted as suspect.<sup>32</sup> In consequence, twelve prostitutes appeared in the records alongside vagrants and were recorded not only as beggars, but also as 'lewd women' and were sent back to their parish of origin. Viard and her daughter, Victoire Denis, and Guyard, were among the women jailed as vagrants and lewd women and sent back to their parishes for vagrancy and debauchery between 1792 and 1804.<sup>33</sup> This is interesting as it shows that being a prostitute was superimposed onto the charge of vagrancy, whereas before the Revolution, women were arrested and sent to the Sanitat under the sole category of 'vagrant'.<sup>34</sup> Although J. Peuchet claimed in 1789 that prostitution was a 'blight very similar to begging', in the prosecution archives these two denominations were often dissimilar.<sup>35</sup>

In parallel with the designation of some of the female beggars as prostitutes, the *commissaires* recorded the names and details of foreigners lodging in inns and rented rooms in some parts of Nantes. The duty of checking the '*déclarations des logeurs*' by the *commissaires* was not an innovation of the Revolution; however, instead of limiting their job to fining the lodging-keepers who did not update their books, the *commissaires* made two lists: one in 1791 and one in 1795, not just of the lodging-keepers but also of the lodgers. It is this latter requirement which should be considered an innovation.<sup>36</sup> However the shortness of the lists underlined the inefficiency of this system. Indeed in this important register, only a hundred names were recorded and mainly over just one month (Ventôse). It becomes clear that the task asked of the *commissaires* was soon viewed as impossible by the officers and therefore forgotten. Nevertheless on the short list of fifty-six names

in 1791, twenty-three were female and seventeen of these were prostitutes. For example, at 87 rue Bignon Lestard, in Jeanne Uriolle's house, lodged Renée Mommier, Perrine Ugost, Anne Pélagie Vion, Jeanne Landell and Jeanne Prou, all of them registered as '*femme du monde*'.<sup>37</sup> These lists are particularly interesting as no official attempt had been made at this time to record prostitutes. Despite the fact that this list does not reflect the reality of the number of prostitutes in Nantes, nor their location, it highlights the fact that prostitutes were beginning to be seen as suspects: indeed, five of them were recorded in this register as foreigners, whereas they claimed to be natives of Nantes.

In addition to this register, some prostitutes were recorded in an *Etat sommaire des jugements portant condamnations*, a report of condemnations printed by the Assizes of the department of Loire-Atlantique, An VII.<sup>38</sup> Fourteen women between the age of nineteen and twenty-eight were condemned to pay fifty francs and were sentenced for three to six months in jail 'for having publicly behaved in an indecent manner ... in more or less serious conditions'. This is an unusual document: indeed it is the first time in the municipal archives that prostitutes' names appear printed on what seems to be a summary of the condemnations of the Assizes.<sup>39</sup> It is explained that the Criminal Tribunal confirmed the judgement of the correctional police of Nantes for disorderly behaviour. This is in contrast to the former way of dealing with prostitutes and disorderly behaviour. Whereas *commissaires* used to write a report for the clerk only and dealt with the problem themselves, making the outcome of the affairs difficult to ascertain, the sentences of this tribunal for disorderly behaviour were publicised, at an identical level as condemnations for murder or violent robbery.<sup>40</sup>

## Towards the process of *mise en carte*

Overall, the condemnation of prostitutes for disorderly behaviour intensified and the need for their control was made more and more explicit. The inspector's registers on *commissaires*' daily routine accumulated observations on the behaviour of prostitutes: between 29 January and 17 July 1806, eight women were described as '*femmes du monde*' and were ordered to leave the city or to respect the peace.<sup>41</sup> The duty of the inspector was to supervise the *commissaries*, but by getting involved in daily tasks, the inspector's attitude highlights the importance put on controlling prostitutes' behaviour. In another example, on 8 July 1806, the inspector wrote to the *commissaire* of section 14 to order him to arrest prostitutes who were not declared in the book of two female tenants, Catton and La Boure.<sup>42</sup> These two women were considered by the inspector to have 'no right to have your trust, nor that of the city council', as they were known to be disorderly and without any respect for the police or the law. He concluded by saying that 'it is with this firmness, which will be enforced with the establishment of a watch in rue Rubens, that we will be able to stop these infringements tolerated for too long in section 14'.<sup>43</sup> In addition to this advice given to the *commissaires*, supervision of prostitutes was gradually implemented. The evolution of the *mise en carte*

corresponded with an increasingly suspicious attitude but also a more methodical approach, generally, to the control of the population by the administration and the police.<sup>44</sup>

Even though the project to build a house of correction only for prostitutes in Nantes was abortive, local supervision and control increased. In 1804, the first attempt to list prostitutes by districts was made. Only the lists for the sections 13 and 14 survive, sections which were located along the right side of the Loire, in the busy port district of La Fosse.<sup>45</sup> In these tables twenty-one names for section 13 and forty-seven for section 14 are recorded, and can be compared to the 139 names reported two years later, in 1806, given to the inspectors by eight *commissaires*.<sup>46</sup> According to these reports, almost half of the prostitutes were lodging in sections 13 and 14, while the other half was dispersed throughout the city. But *commissaires* clearly explained that many occasional prostitutes were not registered in these lists, because these women tried to keep their trade a secret.

Soon after the listing of their place of abode, prostitutes were asked to undergo a medical examination each month. On 19 December 1806, an *arrêté concernant les femmes publiques* was published, stipulating:

*La Mairie de Nantes*, considering that one of the most powerful causes of the degeneration of the human species is without any doubt the syphilis, so common amongst the *filles dites publiques* ... decides what follows: from the 1st of January 1807, any common woman, without any distinction, will have to submit once per month to a medical visit to a designated surgeon.<sup>47</sup>

The reasons for implementing this new rule are unclear. Admittedly, the Empire was at war and constantly needed soldiers and sailors in good health: the general major of Nantes had, in 1793, already complained that the soldiers were infected with venereal diseases by prostitutes, and he asked the lieutenant general to report and treat the infected women.<sup>48</sup> However, these complaints had been reiterated by officials since the appearance of syphilis in Europe in the sixteenth century and the spread of the disease in and by the army.<sup>49</sup> In 1764, Choiseul, *secrétaire d'état à la guerre*, ordered infected prostitutes to be locked in the *dépôts de mendicité* opened in provincial cities (in Nantes, the Sanitat took this responsibility) and, to encourage officials to comply with the new legislation, he affirmed that the *Extraordinaire de Guerre* would pay for the lodging and treatment of these women.<sup>50</sup> But nothing in Nantes archives supports the claim that the new legislation had an impact on the imprisonment of prostitutes in the *hôpital général*. On the contrary, the only mention of rules specifically for prostitutes in the Sanitat dates from 1723, for women who wished to 'repent' and be part of the Refuge.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, at a local level, military surgeons and *chefs d'état major* in Brittany were concerned about the spread of venereal diseases more than thirty years before the first law was passed in Nantes to order medical visits. In Brest, the Count of Langeron claimed, in 1779, that prostitutes were being jailed only for a few days, therefore they could quickly start again to infect 'all troops

in the surrounding countryside'.<sup>52</sup> As Goubert shows, the mortality due to venereal diseases was very low: only one death occurred out of 195 infected between January 1785 and July 1785 in Brest. Nevertheless, military officials remained worried about the state of health of their soldiers even though no legislation was passed to counteract the spread of the disease.<sup>53</sup> Despite numerous complaints and new legislation in the eighteenth century against infected men and women, the Bureau de la Ville did not respond to these changes before 1806.<sup>54</sup>

It seems therefore unlikely that prevention of venereal diseases was the main reason why the prostitutes were summoned to medical visits. In 1805, local visits, probably ordered by the inspector, had to be stopped because the two surgeons, Hubert and Olivier, who were employed to examine the prostitutes, were behaving in an indecent manner and were therefore fired.<sup>55</sup> In May 1807, six months after the *arrêté* was published, a *commissaire* complained about the irregularity of the examinations and the difficulty in 'forcing' women to go to the surgeon.<sup>56</sup> It seems that the *arrêté* was considered a means for the *commissaires* to keep an eye on the women and to be informed of their change of location if necessary. Despite a difficult start, these compulsory visits to the surgeon became a powerful tool of control, in spite of the large numbers of occasional prostitutes who were not on their lists. As Walkowitz explained with regard to the Contagious Disease Acts in England, the implementation of monthly visits to the surgeon became part of a politics of supervision and control of women.<sup>57</sup> However the specific experience in Nantes was that the momentum was given by the inspector and the *commissaires* themselves, without any official or recorded incentives from the municipality, or from the national government (neither the Empire nor the Restoration).<sup>58</sup>

## Conclusion

This article has tried to address the evolution of the attitude towards prostitution to highlight how the personal concerns of the *commissaires* had a specific influence on the development of the *mise en carte* at a time when national and local legislation remained silent on the topic. Whereas before the Revolution relationships between police and prostitutes were limited to cases of disturbance of the peace, the upheavals of the Revolution, the atmosphere of suspicion that can be 'felt' when looking at the archives and the pressure put on the police to conform to the new system led to a new approach to prostitution. Indeed, making a living from sexual intercourse became suspicious to *commissaires*, as the multiplication of mentions of prostitutes in the archives show. It was not prostitution itself that became a problem in the eyes of the *commissaires*, concerns about venereal diseases existed for centuries, but the fact that prostitutes could be in contact with *brigands*. Therefore, supervising them, being aware of their location and possible encounters, was perceived as a necessity for the police in Nantes.

Susan Conner shows how, in Paris, 'revolutionary government had remained unable or unwilling to deal with the grim ties between poverty and prostitution

and ... the policing of prostitution became increasingly harassing and arbitrary', but she fails to explain who the persons responsible for policing prostitution were.<sup>59</sup> As historians like Hufton and Benabou said, the legislation about prostitution always remained unclear and did not enable the characteristics of a prostitute to be defined.<sup>60</sup> Therefore changes of attitude towards prostitution and their explanations have to be found in the study of local officials and of their influence on districts. By looking at Nantes *commissaires* and prostitutes, this article also aimed to focus on the history of the *commissaires*, their role and influence, a field of research in French history which is still little developed. Indeed, as Milliot explains, a systematic perusal of their archives, notably in Paris where the system was well-developed, is needed.<sup>61</sup> The study of the *commissaires'* archives goes further than the history of crime. They were the first agents of the law in contact with the plebeian world and their archives often offer much more than just short reports on prosecutions and crimes: they show how networks were built between the different communities of one district and how through mediation, the problems of a district were dealt with on a daily basis.

## Notes

1. Archives Municipales de Nantes, FF 272.
2. About the riots in Vendée see: Jean-Claude Martin, *La Vendée et la Révolution: Accepter la Mémoire pour Écrire l'histoire* (Paris, Perrin, 2007); Alain Gérard, *Par Principe d'humanité: la Terreur et la Vendée* (Paris, Fayard, 1999); Roger Dupuy, *La Bretagne sous la Révolution et l'Empire (1789-1815)* (Rennes, Editions Ouest-France, 2004).
3. Jean-Pierre Poussou, *Bordeaux et le Sud-Ouest au XVIIIème Siècle: Croissance Économique et Attraction Urbaine* (Paris, Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1983), 151-81.
4. Erica-Marie Benabou, *La Prostitution et la Police des Mœurs à Paris au XVIIIème Siècle* (Paris, Perrin, 1987); Susan Conner, 'Politics, Prostitution, and the Pox in Revolutionary Paris, 1789-1799', *Journal of Social History*, 22/4 (1989), 713-34 and 729.
5. See Marion Pluskota, 'Prostitution in Bristol and Nantes, 1750-1815: a Comparative Study' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leicester, 2011) for a more comprehensive study of prostitutes' origins.
6. Studies on *commissaires* in France are still to be done. However, Steven Kaplan and Vincent Milliot offer very interesting comments on Parisian police: Steven Kaplan, 'Note sur les Commissaires de Police de Paris au XVIIIème Siècle', *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 28/4 (1981), 669-86; Vincent Milliot, 'Saisir l'espace Urbain: Mobilité des Commissaires et Contrôle des Quartiers de Police à Paris au XVIIIème Siècle', *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 50/1 (2003), 54-80; Vincent Milliot (dir.), *Les Mémoires Policiers, 1750-1850. Écriture et Pratiques Policières du Siècle des Lumières au Second Empire* (Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2006).
7. Vincent Danet, 'Les Commissaires de Police de la Ville de Nantes au XVIIIème Siècle (1720-1792)', *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest*, 116/4 (2009), 39-72 and 57-8.

8. Kaplan, 'Notes sur les Commissaires de Police de Paris au XVIIIe Siècle', 679.
9. AMN, FF 216-220; the gates had to be closed for security reasons to prevent beggars and vagrants from sleeping in these alleys but also to prevent criminals in general to withdraw into these places and be out of sight after dark.
10. AMN, FF 216-220.
11. '*Femmes du monde*' and '*filles publiques*' are synonyms for 'common women'.
12. Robert B. Shoemaker, 'Print and the Female Voice: Representations of Women's Crime in London, 1690–1735', *Gender and History*, 22/1 (2010), 75–91 and 77.
13. AMN, FF 269; 272: only ten women were sentenced to jail, as Pierre Rolland twice intended an action in justice against his wife, in 1747 and 1752. In both cases she was sentenced to the house of correction for six months.
14. The Carrier episode, from September 1793 to February 1794, which saw the massacre of thousands of people from Nantes and its surroundings, will not be considered in this section as a parenthesis from the rest of the decade. This can be explained by the fact that the *tribunal révolutionnaire* instituted by Carrier, which condemned potential traitors of the Republic, quickly stopped keeping records and used summary justice, making it impossible to know the names, professions or circumstances in which people were arrested. Therefore, rather than looking closely at this violent period, it is the atmosphere of the decade that will be taken into account to explain the change of attitudes towards prostitutes. On Carrier's actions in Nantes see: Alfred Lallié, *Etudes sur le Terreur à Nantes* (Cholet, Editions Pays & Terroirs, 2009); Jean-Joël Brégeon, *Carrier et la Terreur Nantaise* (Paris, Perrin, 1987).
15. AMN, BB 112.
16. Danet, 'Les Commissaires de Police de la Ville de Nantes', 54.
17. AMN, I1 C1 D1; on the new role of the *juges de paix*, see Jean-Guy Petit (dir.), *Une Justice de Proximité: la Justice de Paix 1790 1958* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2003).
18. AMN, I1 C68 D1.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*
21. AMN, I2 C6 D1.
22. AMN, I2 C2 D11.
23. Archives du Département de Loire-Atlantique, 2 Y Registre des prisonniers du Bon Pasteur et du Sanitat; AMN, I2 C2 D11.
24. Alfred Lallié, *Les Prisons de Nantes pendant la Révolution* (Nantes, Grimaud, 1883), 45.
25. AMN, I1 C61 D5.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Twelve of them initially chose to become nuns and the other twelve were imprisoned there because of their families; Pierre Grégoire, *Etat du Diocèse de Nantes en 1790* (Nantes, Grimaud, 1882), 68.
28. AMN, I1 C61 D5; this declaration by the Bureau is very similar to the English Contagious Disease Act of 1864–67 as it gave to the police the possibility to arrest almost any woman if they judged her behaviour immoral.
29. ADLA, 2 Y Registre d'érou de la prison du Bouffay.
30. Danet, 'Les Commissaires de Police de la Ville de Nantes', 57–8.
31. *Ibid.*, 57–8.
32. AMN, I1 C68 D1.
33. AMN, I1 C68 D4; I1 C68 D5.
34. Similarly, Benabou's study on Parisian prostitutes does not include vagrancy as a crime commonly linked with prostitution when recording the reason why prostitutes were jailed: Erica-Marie Benabou, *La Prostitution*, 30–9 and 65–72. See also Jacques Lorgnier, 'Malheureuses et Importunes à Renfermer. Les Femmes dans les Premières Procédures Administratives de Mendicité Diligentes par la Maréchaussée à Lille (1768–1772)', *Histoire, Economie et Société*, 24/3 (2005), 399–410, who recorded only five begging women out of 136 arrested for being *femme de mauvaise vie* between 1768 and 1772.
35. Quoted in Sabine Juratic, 'Solitude Féminine et Travail des Femmes à Paris à la Fin du XVIIIe Siècle', *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome. Moyen-Age, Temps Modernes*, 99/2 (1987), 879–900 and 897.
36. AMN, I2 R31.
37. AMN, I2 R31.
38. AMN, 3I 118.
39. The dimensions of the document are similar to a page of newspaper, which suggests that it was stuck at the entrance of the tribunal to be seen by the public.
40. See: Virginie Despres, 'Femmes et Filles Envoyées en Prison par la Cour d'assises du Nord durant la Première moitié du XIXe Siècle (1822–1850)', *Histoire, Economie et Société*, 24/3 (2005), 411–20; there is a possibility that these women who appealed against these sanctions understood the legal system in a way that allowed them to use judicial tools to lessen their sentences.
41. AMN, I2 R55.
42. AMN, I2 R55.
43. *Ibid.*
44. On the evolution of the administration under the Revolution and Empire: Jean-Louis Mestre, 'Administration, Justice et Droit Administratif', *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 328 (2002), 61–75; Robert Badinter (dir.), *Une Autre Justice : Contributions à l'histoire de la Justice sous la Révolution* (Paris, Fayard, 1989); Emmanuel Berger, *La Justice Pénale sous la Révolution: les Enjeux d'un Modèle Judiciaire Libéral* (Rennes, PUR, 2008); Jacqueline Lafon, *La Révolution Française Face au Système Judiciaire d'Ancien Régime* (Genève, Droz, 2001).
45. It is unclear if only the *commissaires* of these two districts of the city had to do it or each *commissaires* was asked to do so, but their lists subsequently went missing. Sections 13 and 14 of Nantes were close to the port and were known to be very populated and with many lodging-houses.
46. AMN, I1 C62 D1.
47. AMN, I1 C61 D5.
48. *Ibid.*
49. On venereal diseases and political actions see Stanislaw Andreski, *Syphilis, Puritanism and Witch Hunts* (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 1989); Henri Quézel, 'Syphilis et Politiques de anté à l'époque



# Suffrage and married women's rights. Political strategies within the Swedish women's movement 1870-1920

Åsa Karlsson Sjögren

Umeå University, Sweden

In 1870, the liberal politician Lars Johan Hierta received a question from England about the legal position of married women in Sweden. His daughter, Anna Hierta, who had been visiting leading liberals in England, and her friend Ellen Anckarsvärd, soon started to act.<sup>1</sup> The Association for Married Women's Rights to Ownership was established in Sweden in February 1873, while there was already an on-going debate of reforming the Marriage Code among leading liberal women, jurists and politicians.<sup>2</sup> The main target of the Association was to abolish legalised male superiority within marriage, and especially to challenge power relations concerning ownership and guardianship. In order to protect wives some reforms were gradually introduced through legislation, but it was still difficult to challenge male superiority within marriage.

Political resistance to change in Swedish marital law was fierce, and arguments related to fundamental ideas about social hierarchy were presented in the debate.<sup>3</sup> The nature of the organisations within the women's movement and their own arguments and strategies also need to be analysed in order to understand the relative slowness of Marriage Code reform. For example, husbands only lost guardianship of their wives in 1920. The suffrage question emerged some decades later than the question of married women's property rights. Women were enfranchised in national elections in 1921, while universal national suffrage for Swedish men was introduced in 1909.

The aim of this article is to analyse the strategies that were used to improve married women's legal rights, and to investigate how the questions of power relations

within marriage interacted with the suffrage question in the women's movement both at local and national levels between 1870-1920.<sup>4</sup> During a formative period around 1900, political and civil citizenship interacted with and strengthened the political impact of the women's movement. The reason for this was both the character of the issues and the chosen political strategies of the organisations and their rhetoric.

There is extensive international feminist and gender research that has studied the so-called 'first wave' of the women's movement from different perspectives. The suffrage movements and their actions for political suffrage have been the primary focus of these studies. Political, social and economic differences between various regions have led to different directions in research interests. For example, issues of race and ethnicity have been very important in the interpretations of the movements' strategies and impact within the North American and Pacific contexts, whereas these aspects have not been of any importance in the Swedish perspective.<sup>5</sup> Another significant result of comparative perspectives concerns the chronology of the 'peripheries' and the fact that women in countries like New Zealand, Australia and Finland gained suffrage considerably earlier than other older nations, including those with established women's movements.<sup>6</sup> Compared to the situation in other Nordic countries, Swedish women had to wait much longer for suffrage.<sup>7</sup> When Norway and Finland gained national self-government, women could show themselves as competent citizens in the political process. Norwegian women, who

---

Continued from page 12

Moderne', *Histoire, Economie et Société*, 4/3 (1984), 543-56; Ariste Potton, *De la Prostitution et de la Syphilis dans les Grandes Villes et dans la Ville de Lyon en Particulier* (Paris, J.-B. Baillière, 1842); Olivier Dutour (dir), *L'origine de la Syphilis en Europe avant ou après 1493?* (Paris, Errance, 1994).

50. Quétel, 'Syphilis et Politiques de Santé à l'époque Moderne', 551.

51. ADLA, C 633.

52. Jean-Pierre Goubert, 'Le Phénomène Épidémique en Bretagne à la fin du XVIIIe Siècle', *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 24/6 (1969), 1562-88 and 1577-8.

53. *Ibid.*, 1578. See also: Jean-Noël Biraben, 'Le Rôle des Maladies Sexuellement Transmissibles en Démographie Historique', *Population*, 51/4-5 (1996), 1041-57 and 1051-3.

54. Bicêtre hospital in Paris remains an example of an attempt to seclude patients infected with venereal diseases.

55. AMN, I2 R57; I have been unable to locate an official

arrêté for the whole city that ordered visits on prostitutes before 1806, it seems to have been restricted to a specific area.

56. AMN, I1 C61 D5.

57. Judith Walkowitz and Daniel Walkowitz, "'We Are Not Beasts of the Field': Prostitution and the Poor in Plymouth and Southampton under the Contagious Diseases Acts', *Feminist Studies*, 1/3-4 (1973), 73-106.

58. See Michel Vincineau, *Proxénétisme, Débauche ou Prostitution depuis 1810* (Bruxelles, Emile Bruylant, 2006) for an analysis of the Code Penal of 1810 and its impact on prostitution.

59. Susan Conner, 'Politics, Prostitution, and the Pox in Revolutionary Paris, 1789-1799', 730.

60. Olwen Hufton, *The Poor in Eighteenth-Century France* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1974), 306; Benabou, *La Prostitution*, 21.

61. Milliot, 'Saisir l'espace Urbain', 80.

gained suffrage in 1913, were very active when the Swedish-Norwegian union under the Swedish king ended in 1905. In Finland, women gained suffrage in 1906, when the country received extended self-government under the Russian Empire.<sup>8</sup>

There was a long-standing close connection between taxpaying and franchise in Sweden. Women had actually used their votes in many different kinds of elections in the eighteenth century, but they were gradually excluded from most of them. After the reforms of the 1860s, the foundations of the right to vote differed considerably between national and local elections. Men who could vote in national elections had to fulfil property and/or income qualifications, but irrespective of the size of their property or income, there was one vote per capita. The Local Government Act of 1862 described the entitled voter in gender-neutral terms. Votes were counted according to a graduated scale, and the most affluent men and women could use up to a hundred votes each. The principle that anyone who made a contribution through paying taxes also should have political influence once more paved the way for female polling in the Swedish municipalities. This meant that some women with legal entitlement were allowed to vote long before national suffrage for women was introduced. Women with legal capacity were generally widows, but also unmarried women had been declared legally independent in the early 1860s, and were therefore entitled to vote in local elections if they paid taxes.<sup>9</sup>

The suffrage movement in the early 1900s ignited the issue of whether married women who paid taxes had the right to vote.<sup>10</sup> After municipal reforms in 1909, it was obvious that married women were eligible to vote as well as stand in local elections, even if they were still, according to the Marriage Code, under their husband's *målsmanskap* (spokesmanship).<sup>11</sup> These regulations challenged the fundamental ideas of *målsmanskap* i.e. the husband's right to speak for his wife and his position as dominant administrator of the common goods and the wife's separate property. In 1918, universal suffrage in local elections for both men and women was introduced, which in turn meant that married women no longer needed income of their own to be entitled to vote.

Previous research has shown that women in countries other than Sweden could vote in local or regional elections on the basis of, for example, paying taxes, but it cannot be taken for granted that women's local or regional franchise could be used as a strong argument for national suffrage. Women in local politics could be perceived as being too powerful to gain access to parliament, as in Iceland, or they were defined as belonging to a suitable municipal sphere that was separated from national affairs as in England.<sup>12</sup> The fact that women in the USA gained suffrage early in some states did not strengthen the nationwide suffrage movement either.<sup>13</sup>

Research has also noted that there was interaction between the demand for married women's rights and suffrage, but that the two issues were divided for strategic decisions. For example, in both England and the USA the women's movement decided to begin working on marriage reform before solving the suffrage issue.<sup>14</sup> One reason for

this was that the more conservative politicians supported the reform of property relations within marriage, but not the suffrage question. Another reason was because the growing financial market needed clearer rules for lending capital.<sup>15</sup> The chronology of the Swedish women's movement's strategic decisions followed the same pattern as in England and the USA, but at a later date. It was obvious that the English development influenced the Swedish debate as to when the issue of married women's rights entered the political arena.<sup>16</sup> Later, when men in general were gaining democratic rights, it was the suffrage question that united women on a much broader basis than any other radical political issue. This unity was not only evident in a Swedish national context, but also at international and transnational levels.<sup>17</sup>

Three organisations are of special interest in this study: *Föreningen för gift kvinnas eganderätt* (the Association for Married Women's Rights to Ownership, established in 1873), *Fredrika Bremer-Förbundets lagkommitté* (the Committee on Questions of Law of the Fredrika Bremer Association, FBF, formed in 1884) and *Landsföreningen för kvinnans politiska rösträtt* (the National Association for Women's Suffrage, founded in 1903).<sup>18</sup> The second and third associations have been the main focus of most research in this area.<sup>19</sup>

The term 'women's movement' reflects the fact that these organisations worked to improve women's rights, but actually only the suffrage association consisted of female members only. While the Association for Married Women's Rights to Ownership was a small Stockholm-based elite organisation, the National Association for Women's Suffrage, even though it was led by elite women, had a much larger group of activists who were spread all over the country, and had a broader set of social and political affiliations. The male supporters of these associations were scholars, publishers, capitalists and politicians, and they were often married to leading female activists. These activists often worked within several political and social organisations and therefore established contacts with a large number of people; altogether there was a dense network of activists who worked to improve women's rights, which also extended across national borders.<sup>20</sup> The middle- and upper-class character of the leading bodies in these organisations influenced their strategies, and certainly those regarding class interests. This was probably most evident at the beginning, before the political influence of the working class increased.

## **Married Women's Rights to Ownership: strategies and arguments**

Both men and women, many of whom were married couples, joined the Association for Married Women's Rights to Ownership. The board consisted of both sexes, with a male chairperson.<sup>21</sup> At the first meeting in February 1873, there were many different strategic approaches as to how radical they should be in supporting different proposals, for example, whether it was better 'to get something rather than nothing'. There were also differences of opinion as to how the ownership of property within marriage should be

arranged. Arguments against the suggestion that property should be held separate were put forward: 'It doesn't look good to see spouses as litigants against each other'. It was not uncommon that one spouse brought much less to the marriage than the other, and usually the one bringing less was the woman. The imbalance then continued because the wife often worked within the household, while her husband brought in the money. It was argued that the Marriage Code should instead highlight those issues of love, trust and harmony by stating that everything each spouse brought to the house, the other one should share. Property should be held jointly, and there should be 'full equality' between husband and wife.<sup>22</sup> These tensions, between joint and separate property, would become a recurring theme in the debates over the years to come.<sup>23</sup>

However, the most pertinent argument was the one that foregrounded the working-class drunkard whose wife needed to have her small earnings protected in order to support her children and herself. This argument also connected to the debate in England, where the situation for working-class women under common law was much more vulnerable compared to more affluent wives, who could protect their property under equity.<sup>24</sup>

The Association insisted that married women should be able to dispose of their own incomes. This demand was not necessarily for the sake of the working-class woman. If the 'poor woman's right to dispose of her own income from work became law, then the contrast between her and the wealthy woman's position would be so acute' that it could be an argument for the whole issue: 'it would thus gain ground on a broad base, and then the pyramid could be built up to the tip'.<sup>25</sup> The significance of the working-class wife was unproblematic and she figured extensively in the debate: she not only brought income to the family, but also her husband's behaviour was dependant on her own. New legislation should support her power to bring her husband home from the pub. However, middle-class men's behaviour was not problematized, apart from implicit arguments about their participation in an ideal marriage, based on love and trust. Middle-class women were more problematic under existing legislation. Those who did not have legal rights to dispose of their own property were thought to be 'superficial' and 'eroticised'.<sup>26</sup>

The strategy was successful so that a new ordinance in the Marriage Code of 1874 stated that, 'if the wife could acquire something through her own work, she may also dispose of it'.<sup>27</sup> Importantly, the strategy could therefore be dangerous, because middle-class men could claim that they had done enough by supporting poor women's rights, which, in turn, was much easier because there was no threat to themselves.<sup>28</sup> The fact that husbands kept their legal authority in families that were supposed to be built on ideals of complementary and harmonised relations was not regarded as a problem in the debate. This supposition is one of the major reasons why the question of the wife's right to dispose of her property was so difficult to achieve.

It soon became obvious that the statement of the wife's income did not have any practical meaning. The goods that the wife had brought into the household and paid for with her own income would be seen as joint

property, and according to the law, this joint property was under the husband's guardianship and administration.<sup>29</sup>

Since the wife was under her husband's guardianship, it was he who had the right to control and dispose of the jointly-held property and the wife had the same rights as the husband to gain half the estate, but only in the case of divorce or widowhood. As long as the married couple was seen as an entity with the husband as the wife's guardian and spokesman, the wife was dependant on her husband's actions. However, the 1874 ordinance did broaden the possibilities to make arrangements in order to protect the wife. It was now possible to exclude the husband's guardianship over the wife's property in marriage settlements. The groom or the bride, or the bride's guardian, could make a marriage settlement before marriage.<sup>30</sup>

The debate continued after 1874, and there were discussions and suggestions with different technical solutions during the following years, but nothing happened.<sup>31</sup> The decision of the British parliament in 1882 which gave the wife almost limitless rights to dispose of her own property raised the question once more in the Swedish *Riksdag*. Motions dealt with how marriage settlements could become more common and cede more rights to wives, but the reformation of the Marriage Code did not succeed.<sup>32</sup> The disorderly middle-class man who wasted his wife's property and income was mentioned in the debate as one of the problems that the new legislation needed to deal with. However, this argument met with disagreement: the description of the middle-class man was an exception and not the rule, and it was argued that if wives won extended rights, their husbands would have trouble managing their work and business.<sup>33</sup>

Political resistance against married women's rights was obviously intense, and no doubt the idea about joint property as a ground for love and harmony within marriage made it difficult to introduce new legislation. In May 1886, when the Association had its annual meeting, the issue of separated property, as newly enshrined in English law, was discussed. But there were counterarguments. It was said that separate property was against 'the heart and feeling' and that in Sweden, 'we [were much more] sentimental' than in other countries.<sup>34</sup>

## Searching for a new question – Suffrage!

Enfranchising women was not on the political agenda in the 1870s. The leading female activists of the time did not discuss suffrage, but demanded access to education and professions, primarily for unmarried women. In 1862 and 1866, constitutional reforms had changed the basis for suffrage in Sweden. During early nineteenth century debates on this issue, there were actually some comments made that inferred that women could be seen as political citizens. These more radical thoughts eventually faded away and in the 1860s women had been excluded as political citizens. Development thus went in different directions at municipal and national levels. The rules in the municipal reforms of 1862 were gender neutral and women could participate in local elections on

the basis of their legal rights to disposal of property and their liability to pay taxes.<sup>35</sup>

In the 1880s, it seems as if the Association for Married Women's Rights to Ownership had to search for a new question, or had to find a new approach to the question of wives' property ownership. They did both. They started to focus more on the possibilities of improving wives' rights within existing legal limits.<sup>36</sup> As the Association discussed the slowness of the decision-making process with marked resignation, in 1886 they decided to put the suffrage question on the agenda. Two years earlier, in 1884, the liberal politician Fredrik Borg had proposed a motion about women's suffrage to the *Riksdag*, but it was neglected because of the argument that women themselves had neither demanded the right to vote nor to be elected. As it was now formulated, the suffrage question was concerned with local elections only. The target of the Association was to arouse interest in voting among the women who already had the right to vote.<sup>37</sup>

This new interest in suffrage did not refer to married women. But it was a strategy of the organisation to try to survive, by both broadening its topics and changing its mode of work. A new organisation had been established two years earlier, the Fredrika Bremer Association (FBF), which, from the start, had a competing and somewhat different role. Instead of only trying to influence the decision-making process in the *Riksdag*, the new organisation also worked to empower women themselves.<sup>38</sup>

## Reforms of marriage, actions for suffrage and married women's rights

However, the suffrage issue raised questions concerning the rights of married women. At the annual meeting in 1887, the liberal politician Adolf Hedin made a speech in which he called attention to the fact that many married women should be entitled to vote, but could not because of the practice of taxation: 'the wife is put on the same tax form as her husband, even when she has her own earnings or is paying taxes for her own property'.<sup>39</sup>

The Association for Married Women's Rights to Ownership continued as a separate organisation until 1896 when it became a part of the FBF, and some of its members constituted the Committee on Questions of Law.<sup>40</sup> However, the Committee did continue the work they had started earlier: the goal of abolishing the husband's guardianship role, and then, some years later, worked to frame the suffrage question.

When the Committee discussed relations of property between husband and wife in May 1899, they debated whether they should start a campaign to show how 'pernicious' the legal conditions were for married women. However, there were concerns about whether the timing was right, as the Committee could not count on much interest from 'the women themselves'. Some of the suggestions from the marriage debate had recently been written into the law. In 1898, there were three new regulations that made the wife's legal situation less vulnerable. It would be easier to get a judicial division of

the estate of husband and wife, the wife would no longer have any responsibilities to pay her husband's private debts and real estate in the towns would no longer belong to the joint estate.<sup>41</sup>

The liberal politician Carl Lindhagen then raised the suffrage question. He thought that the time was right: 'National suffrage was now on the agenda', and the question of women's rights to vote in national elections had not 'worn out the minds', as was the case with the question of married women's rights. This question would in fact 'immediately be stimulated' through a 'suffrage movement'.<sup>42</sup>

After a long strategic discussion about whether it would be better to solve the married women's issues before the suffrage question, the Committee finally and unanimously decided to start to work for women's national suffrage.<sup>43</sup> The board of the FBF decided to give the Committee a commission to write an official letter to the government.<sup>44</sup> Lindhagen was the main author of the petition. The present legal situation of women in local elections was put forward. Women's local suffrage, and the fact that women had influence in local communities, and consequently had influence over the constitution of the first chamber in the *Riksdag*, was said to 'connect to' national suffrage. The question was especially important for unmarried women: 'These self-supporting mature women have received local suffrage as well as the men, they are likewise obliged to pay taxes, and they have, as a consequence of their work or business, their own interests to look after.' Suffrage for married women was not of 'immediate interest', since the law had, 'in principle', not given them 'full legal capacity'. In conclusion, the letter asked for the government to initiate female suffrage in the second chamber of the *Riksdag*, 'with full consciousness that female suffrage sooner or later [anyway] will be the consequence of the social development of today'.<sup>45</sup>

The Committee did not act in a vacuum. During the 1890s there were many political movements for universal suffrage, especially through the so-called 'People's *Riksdags*' (*Folkriksdagar*). Some female activists tried to gain admission to these meetings and also arranged their own meetings for female suffrage, but it soon became clear that the talk of 'universal' meant 'male' for many male politicians. However, only some of these men were openly against female participation. More moderate men simply excluded women through arguments that placed the emphasis on women themselves, arguing that there had to be broader support for it among women before their demands could be taken under consideration.<sup>46</sup>

In 1902, a government bill not only added fuel to the work of the Committee on Questions of Law, but also launched the suffrage question into a much broader political context. In fact, the bill suggested that married men should have two votes each. According to the Committee, that would have enormous consequences for women's rights. It would prevent married women from their right to vote in the future. The Committee discussed strategies to stop the bill and decided to persuade *Riksdag* members to submit motions to the *Riksdag* – this was the usual strategy.<sup>47</sup>



One suggestion that emerged was whether it was the right time for women themselves to start up an organisation for suffrage, and another was whether the Committee should transform itself into a committee for suffrage. The suggestions were postponed, and it was soon clear to both the Committee and the FBF as a whole, that broader forces in society had been awakened.<sup>48</sup> In fact, this government bill was an important catalyst. First, an association for women's suffrage was established in Stockholm and subsequently, local associations were established in other cities and towns throughout Sweden. In 1903, the nationwide organisation for women's suffrage was established: the National Association for Women's Suffrage (*Landsföreningen för kvinnans politiska rösträtt*, LKPR).<sup>49</sup>

The Committee, together with the LKPR, was involved in action which helped increase the number of women who used their votes in local elections. However, the issue of married women's subordination remained and the Committee continued its work on many fronts. Pamphlets, leaflets and other publications were produced, speeches were made, work continued in order to change legislation and women were enlightened about what they could do within the existing legislation, for example, by printing forms for marriage settlements. Besides the usual focus on guardianship and wives' property and income, the Committee now laid more emphasis on the husband's role as *målsman* and the wife as an individual.<sup>50</sup>

In December 1902, the Committee decided to circulate questions to jurists to ask if married women should be seen as mature human beings or not, and whether they should gain local as well as national suffrage.<sup>51</sup> Motions that demanded the abolition of the husband's *målsmanskap* were submitted to the *Riksdag*, but did not lead to any decisions being taken. However, in 1903, it was decided that it was necessary to make the legal status of the wife clearer. Neither the existing legislation nor the husband's guardianship were challenged, but it was decided that the legislation should be clearer on the points where married women's legal capacity was not restricted by her husband's *målsmanskap*. It was said that as the law did not explicitly state that the wife was declared incapacitated through marriage, she could, at least when she was not restricted by her husband's guardianship, be seen as having legal majority.<sup>52</sup> This interpretation opened up married women's rights and could, in theory, result in national suffrage for a woman whose property was under her husband's guardianship.

Married women's rights to vote in local elections were, however, unclear, and some wives in Stockholm tried to gain clarity concerning the limits of their rights. These women had been denied places on the electoral register, but with the support of the LKPR, they appealed against the decision to the town council. And they won. Married women, who paid taxes on their own income or property to the value of 800 crowns or more, had the right to vote.<sup>53</sup> This made it possible for the LKPR to include married women in their exhortations for women to use their rights to vote in local elections, and also use it as a strategic argument in demands for national suffrage.<sup>54</sup>

Soon after, the LKPR began to engage with the Marriage Code, especially in areas where women could improve their legal rights within existing legalisation in, for example, marriage settlements.<sup>55</sup>

## Taxes, suffrage and eligibility

When the new municipal law (1909) was analysed in the FBF's paper *Dagny*, married women with income were encouraged to pay taxes in their own names so that they could use their votes. Suffrage was now for the first time clearly connected to eligibility, and also married women could now stand for election to local councils. Because only those who had the right to vote could be given commissions of trust, it had previously led to 'a ridiculous unfairness that married women, who in many cases are specially suitable for these kinds of work, have been excluded, while unmarried women with the right to vote had been eligible'.<sup>56</sup> In 1889, women had become eligible to sit on boards that dealt with issues such as poor relief and children's education. Anna Bugge Wicksell, one of the leading suffragists, also argued that eligibility was the most important issue: 'Once married women were elected side by side with men and unmarried women, they could demonstrate their capabilities in practice, and therefore prove themselves to be competent citizens. As a consequence of these changes, the husband's *målsmanskap* would be of secondary importance'.<sup>57</sup>

However, the LKPR's emphasis on eligibility vanished over the following years because of two political changes. One change concerned a hardening of conservative resistance against women's suffrage at national level. This led to a split in the women's movement as the LKPR decided to support only those parties in the local elections that supported female suffrage. Therefore, complicated questions concerning whether a female voter should support a right-wing female candidate or a women-friendly male left-wing politician arose. The second change was the proportional election system, introduced at local level, which helped to strengthen the political parties. This development also forced female activists to show the (male) politicians where their loyalties lay.<sup>58</sup>

The suffrage movement started to give lectures and educate women in local politics. On the eve of the local elections in 1910 and 1911, they acted to spread information about the grounds for local suffrage, to encourage married women to fill in their income-tax return form and to exhort entitled female voters to make use of their municipal franchise. In January 1910, Bugge Wicksell discovered that the rules would benefit wives with a very small income. These wives could pay their taxes in their own names and therefore have at least one vote.<sup>59</sup> If the husband and wife had an income of 500 crowns, it was enough if the wife earned ten crowns. If the husband's income was larger than 1800 crowns, it was enough with one crown.<sup>60</sup> Taxed income could come from three different sources: the wife's own work; a sum of money in a savings book in the wife's own name; or a marriage settlement or a judicial division of the marital estate, with an explicit statement that the wife's property was hers to

dispose of.<sup>61</sup> These rules were probably too advantageous for wives and they were soon changed. The new taxation rules from 1911 did not support women with a low income as before. The wife's minimum income needed to be 100 crowns from a total income of 500 crowns, or ten crowns from a total of 1800.

## Reform of the Marriage Code and the suffrage issue

Work on the reform of the legislation of the Marriage Code was coordinated in 1909 by a Scandinavian commission with delegates from Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Representatives from different parts of the women's movement were invited to comment on suggestions, and soon each national committee had a female delegate. One of Sweden's leading female activists, the liberal Emilia Broomé, was a delegate. In 1911 a meeting took place where the representatives demanded full equity for married women with men and the abolition of the husband's guardianship.<sup>62</sup>

A new marriage code was then established in 1915. The code introduced changes in engagement and divorce, but failed to change the legalised subordination of wives. According to Bugge Wicksell, this could not be blamed on the government, 'as long as we have more reasons to blame ourselves'.<sup>63</sup> The argument that women themselves should work for their own rights if they wanted changes was a common one. Despite the fact that women from different parts of the women's movement were engaged in the question, the statement probably also reflected the notion that their engagement in this question was not at the same level as that in the question of suffrage. Historian Ulla Manns has compared the slowness of the reform process of marriage law to the question of suffrage: 'It was easier for the state to accept women as political activists, than to interfere too much in the private relations in marriage'.<sup>64</sup> This is probably true, but it could also be seen from the women's position. It was easier to engage women from broader groups in demands directed toward the state, than to engage them in issues that challenged their own private situation. Another aspect of these discussions is the fact that within the international women's movement the suffrage issue unified female activists from different countries, with different political preferences and agendas.<sup>65</sup>

Broomé then suggested that a meeting between women from different classes and political parties should be arranged in order to discuss a new 'principal system'. This would include whether the general rule in marriage should relate to joint or separate property and how it should be disposed. After a number of meetings and a great deal of discussions a broad agreement crystallised.<sup>66</sup> In 1918, the legal committee presented its report on a new Marriage Code. Firstly, the husband's guardianship and his right to be his wife's spokesman were abolished. This meant that each spouse had the right to half of the marital property, both joint and personal, in the event of divorce or inheritance. Therefore, even when each spouse possessed property that they brought into the marriage, this became 'marital' property, and in cases of divorce or

inheritance, the other spouse had a right to half of it.

The LKPR's comments to the proposed Marriage Code were overwhelmingly positive, especially where the wife's work in the household could now be seen as a real contribution to the family economy. Nevertheless, the organisation pointed out the fact that the legal committee had not dealt with the suffrage issue: 'The question of citizenship remains ... There is still no equality, the woman as a citizen of the nation comes last'.<sup>67</sup>

Universal suffrage in local elections was introduced in 1918, which, according to the social democrat Signe Wessman, meant an end to 'manipulations with taxations' for married women who intended to vote. It also meant that, 'all of us, whose only income comes from good housekeeping with our husband's wages, have become equal with the rest of humanity'.<sup>68</sup> This statement may have reflected many a wife's reality, but it also mirrored the dominant bread-winner ideology. National suffrage for women would, however, have to wait a little longer.

When Broomé commented on the new Marriage Code, she claimed that the idea of separate property opposed the idea of marriage as an economic community, which implied that both the breadwinning husband and the wife should commit to the common weal. Both the husband and wife should support each other and be obliged to give each other information about their economic situation. The new legislation concerning spouses' obligations to consult each other focused on the independence of and consideration between both husband and wife. However, it was still possible to keep personal property separated from joint property. The new legislation meant that both spouses could dispose of their own property, which would then be divided in the case of divorce. Spouses should preserve their own property in order to maintain the other spouse's wealth. It was possible for the wife to give the husband the right to dispose of her property and *vice versa*.<sup>69</sup>

Even though discussions in the years preceding the new legislation of 1920 had a much broader political and social base than before, it is striking that the connections between the suffrage issue and married women's rights to ownership were not articulated in the sources of the Committee on Questions of Law of the FBF from the 1910s, and never in the Scandinavian Commission on Family Law. Discussions concerning the new marital legislation dealt more with technical solutions than the basic question of the husband's *målsmanskap*.<sup>70</sup> It seems as if the women's movement felt somehow that, despite all previous disappointments, they were about to win the whole issue, that is, suffrage and married women's rights. Another plausible explanation is the tendency for the women's movement to split along party political lines, especially between the LKPR and the FBF in 1911. The LKPR had urged suffragists to vote only for those political parties that supported women's suffrage. Despite declarations of being 'neutral', this decision made it clear that the organisation was left wing. Therefore, any organized cooperation between the suffragists and the FBF came to an end.<sup>71</sup>

## Conclusion: Married Women's Rights, Suffrage and Political Strategies 1870-1920

At the beginning of the period, neither suffrage for women nor women's eligibility were on the political agenda. The reason for this is probably that the leading female activists chose to concentrate on more immediate needs: education and maintenance. Another plausible explanation is that women had been erased from their potential roles as political citizens in the process of reform during the 1860s in the *Riksdag* and the municipalities. Elite men and women who worked for married women's property rights never received support for their most radical proposals concerning separate property within marriage, which, in practice, only seemed to benefit a small number of married couples. There was a reluctance to question middle-class men's superiority within marriage, which led to vagueness in any political strategy that aimed at improving married women's rights. By using the well-known picture of a lower-class drunkard as a main argument against male superiority in general, it was impossible to take the question any further. Some legal reforms were carried out during the last decades of the nineteenth century, but they failed to challenge the grounds for male superiority within marriage and their *målsmanskap*.

With democratisation and the demands for universal suffrage, political reformers saw the question of suffrage, and especially local suffrage, as a way to improve women's legal conditions. This strategy met broad support in the growing women's suffrage movement, and the connection between economic capacity for wives and their political citizenship in municipalities became evident in practice. There were close connections between legal capacity, ownership, taxpaying and the local franchise. Despite the fact that there were different grounds for suffrage at local and national level, the women's movement used the local franchise as a lever to gain national suffrage. Women who paid taxes in their own names could actually prove themselves to be competent citizens by using their votes in local elections. The connection between suffrage and rights for married women is thus not only a question of abstract arguments about gender equity but is also a consequence of social and political processes in which certain given structures, for example, the right to vote in local elections, are used as a strategy by the women's movement.

If the strategies of the women's movement are considered in a broad perspective, they can be analysed in three stages. Firstly, the rights to income and property lead to franchise in local elections and then to eligibility. When these are practiced together, they demonstrate that women are both economic and political citizens, and therefore, in the third stage, can improve their rights within marriage as well as gaining suffrage in national elections.

The reality was, of course, more complicated and the issues of married women's rights, suffrage and eligibility became increasingly separate issues during the 1910s. There are many reasons for this. There were differences between political commitment from the women themselves. The question of married women's rights was

treated mainly by judicial experts. Furthermore, it was probably easier for each woman to articulate political demands from the state than to challenge her own private relationships. Even if the legal conditions within marriage were of critical importance for many wives, the question of married women's rights never met the same broad political support and certainly did not attain the same level of political action as the suffrage question.

Another possible explanation for why the two main questions concerning women's citizenship seem to be separated at the end of the investigated period is the democratization of local elections and the power of the breadwinner ideology. The criterion that determined the right to vote in municipal elections, which had been so closely connected to taxpaying and ownership, changed from ownership to the individual in 1918, when universal suffrage for men and women was introduced in the municipalities. There had been a closer link in national elections between individuals as political citizens and the state than in local elections for decades. Therefore, the interaction between ownership rights of disposal and suffrage never had the same impact in discussions concerning female suffrage at national level. It was still very important for women to use their votes in the municipalities in the local elections of 1918-19, in order to show themselves as competent citizens who were ready to take their responsibility at national level as well. However, the connection between civil, economic and political citizenship as a political strategy was temporally weakened. Despite the fact that women were now in the majority in those first democratic elections, their actions were not as empowering as one would expect. The use of proxies was probably very common among female voters and certainly almost all of those married women who used proxies gave them to their husbands.<sup>72</sup> The breadwinner ideology suited the new grounds for suffrage very well. Married women did not need their own income to be enfranchised; they were supposed to be supported by their husbands.

By the early 1920s, Swedish women had reached their goals concerning civil and political citizenship. Of course, there were many remaining obstacles that were either structured around ideas of men's and women's proper place in society, in the gendered division of labour, or institutionalised in political organizations. Issues that concerned different aspects of citizenship were of great importance in the following century, and the focus centred on economic and social citizenship as well as political citizenship.

## Notes

1. Ulf Boëthius, *Strindberg och kvinnofrågan till och med Giftras I* (Stockholm, Prisma, 1969), 35-6.
2. Kari Melby, Anu Pylkkänen, Bente Rosenbeck, Christina Carlsson Wetterberg, *Inte ett ord om kärlek: Äktenskap och politik i Norden ca 1850-1893* (Lund, Makadam, 2006), 62, 171.
3. Lars Johan Hierta, *Riksdagsmotioner och anföranden IV* (Stockholm, 1917), 339.

4. The article was written within the research project Marriage, Property and Citizenship 1870-1920, financed by the Swedish Research Council.
5. Ellen Carol duBois, *Woman suffrage and Women's rights* (New York, New York University Press, 1998), 54-65; Patricia Grimshaw, 'Reading the Silences: Suffrage Activists and Race in Nineteenth-Century Settler Societies', in *Women's Rights and Human Rights*, ed. Patricia Grimshaw, et al. (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 31-48; Patricia Grimshaw, 'Colonialism, Power and Women's Political Citizenship in Australia 1894-1908', in *Suffrage, Gender and Citizenship*, ed. Irma Sulkunen et al. (Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 34-55. Religious motifs and differences have also been examined, see Karen Offen, 'Rethinking feminist action in religious and denominational contexts: Introductory remarks', in *Globalizing Feminisms 1789-1945*, ed. Karen Offen (New York, Routledge, 2010), 63-5.
6. Patricia Grimshaw, 'Women's Suffrage in New Zealand Revisited: Writing from the Margins', in *Suffrage and Beyond*, ed. Caroline Daley and Melanie Nolan (New York, New York University Press, 1994), 34-40; Charlotte McDonald, 'Suffrage, Gender and Sovereignty in New Zealand', 14-33, and Irma Sulkunen, 'Suffrage, Nation and Citizenship – The Finnish Case in an International Context', 83-105, both in *Suffrage, Gender and Citizenship*, ed. Sulkunen.
7. Josefin Rönnbäck, *Politikens genusgränser: Den kvinnliga rösträttsrörelsen och kampen för kvinnors politiska medborgarskap 1902-1921* (Stockholm, Atlas akademi, 2004), 223.
8. Gro Hageman, 'To Become a Political Subject: Enfranchisement of Women in Norway', in *Suffrage, Gender and Citizenship*, ed. Sulkunen, 137-8.
9. Åsa Karlsson Sjögren, *Männen, kvinnorna och rösträtten: Medborgarskap och representation 1723-1866* (Stockholm, Carlssons, 2006).
10. Rönnbäck, *Politikens genusgränser*.
11. In Swedish legislation, the word *målsman* means spokesman. Married women were not under guardianship, and the husband is never called guardian (*förmyndare*) in Swedish. This concept includes both property and personal aspects.
12. Patricia Hollis, *Ladies Elect: Women in English Local Government, 1865-1914* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1987); Sandra S Holton, *Suffrage Days: Stories from the Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, 1865-1918* (London, Routledge, 1996); Auður Styrkársdóttir, *From feminism to class politics: the rise and decline of women's politics in Reykjavik 1908-1922* (Umeå, University Press, 1998).
13. Rebecca J Mead, *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868-1914* (New York, London, New York University Press, 2004); Alison Sneider, 'Woman Suffrage in Congress: American Expansion and the Politics of Federalism, 1870-1890', in *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited*, ed. Jean H Baker (New York, Oxford University Press, 2002), 78; Rebecca Edwards, 'Pioneer at the Polls: Woman Suffrage in the West', in *Votes for Women*, ed. Baker, 94-98.
14. Norma Basch, *In the Eyes of the Law: Women, Marriage and Property in Nineteenth-Century New York* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1982); Mary Lyndon Shanley, *Feminism, Marriage and the Law in Victorian England, 1850-1895* (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1989); Holton, *Suffrage Days*; Jean H Baker, 'Introduction', in *Votes for Women*, ed. Baker; Nancy F Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2002).
15. Patricia Lucie, 'Marriage and Law Reform in Nineteenth-Century America', in *Marriage and Property*, ed. Elisabeth M Craik (Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Press, 1984). See also Ben Griffin, 'Class, Gender, and Liberalism in Parliament, 1868-1882: The Case of the Married Women's Property Act', *The Historical Journal*, 46/1 (2003), 59-87.
16. Boëthius, *Strindberg och kvinnofrågan*.
17. Ulla Wikander, 'Suffrage and the Labour Market: European Women at International Congresses in London and Berlin, 1899 and 1904', in *Crossing Boundaries: Women Organizing in Europe and the Americas, 1880s-1940s*, ed. Pernilla Jonsson, et al, (Uppsala, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2007).
18. The primary sources analysed in this study are: 1) Minutes, annual reports, journals, leaflets and other propaganda material from the Women's Associations, 2) Debates, motions, and government bills in the parliament, and 3) Legislation concerning marriage.
19. Ulla Manns, *Den sanna frigörelsen: Fredrika-Bremerförbundet 1884-1921* (Stockholm/Stehag, Symposium, 1997); Bertil Björkenlid, *Kvinnokrav i manssamhälle* (Uppsala, 1982); Josefin Rönnbäck, *Politikens genusgränser*.
20. Christina Florin, *Kvinnor får röst: kön, känslor och politisk kultur i kvinnornas rösträttsrörelse* (Stockholm, Atlas akademi, 2006); Melby, *Inte ett ord om kärlek*; Holton, *Suffrage Days*; Offen, ed., *Globalizing Feminisms 1789-1945*.
21. Ulla Manns, *Upp systrar, väpnar er! Kön och politik i svensk 1800-talsfeminism* (Stockholm, Atlas akademi, 2005), 93-6.
22. Riksarkivet (RA) (The National Archives, Stockholm), The Fredrika Bremer Association (FBF), Föreningen för gift kvinnas eganderätt (FGE) (The Association for Married Women's Rights to Ownership), Vol. 1, Minutes, 6 February 1873.
23. Melby, *Inte ett ord om kärlek*, 198-9, 209.
24. Shanley, *Feminism, Marriage and the Law*, 60.
25. NA, FBF, FGE, Vol. 1, Minutes, 6 February 1873.
26. The association started a periodical with the title *Om den gifta kvinnans eganderätt* (*About married woman's ownership*), which contained the same kind of arguments as presented in the text above.
27. SFS 1874, No 109, 9 Kap 1§.
28. See also Griffin, 'Class, Gender and Liberalism', 61.
29. Karl Staaff, '"Hufvudpunkterna af den svenska lagstiftningen om Qvinnan"', *Om den gifta Qvinnans eganderätt*, NF 4 (Stockholm, 1892), 3.



30. SFS 1874, No 109, 8 kap. 1 §, 9 Kap. 1§ and 11 kap 6 §.
31. Boëthius, *Strindberg och kvinnofrågan*, 42-3.
32. *Ibid.*, 45-6.
33. FK protokoll No 34, 8, AK protokoll No 41, 9, Riksdagens skrivelse No 139, 3. (The Swedish Parliament, first and second chambers: Minutes and Letters)
34. RA, FBF, FGE, Vol. 1, Annual meeting 31 May 1886.
35. Karlsson Sjögren, *Männen, kvinnorna och rösträtten*.
36. The association printed a form with instructions on how to make settlements and spread it through the FBF and its journal Dagny. RA, FBF, FGE, Vol. 1, Annual report 1892, Committee meeting 1893.
37. RA, FBF, FGE Vol. 1, Committee meeting 17 October 1886, 7 November 1886, 9 January 1887, February 1887, 3 April 1887.
38. Manns, *Upp systrar, väpnen er!*, 95-96.
39. RA, FBF, FGE, Vol. 1, Annual meeting 29 April 1887.
40. Manns, *Upp systrar, väpnen er!*, 96.
41. Matilda Staël von Holstein, *Målsmanskapet och kvinnans ställning inom äktenskapet enligt gällande svensk rätt* (centralstyrelsen i LKPR, Stockholm, 1908), 33.
42. RA, FBF, Komité för lagfrågor, Vol. 1, Minutes 30 May 1899.
43. *Ibid.*
44. RA, FBF, Minutes A2, Vol. 2. 5 June 1899, 21 November 1899.
45. RA, FBF, Komité för lagfrågor, Vol. 1, "En rösträtts petition", 30 December 1899, added to minutes 17 October 1899. The strategic choice to focus on unmarried women did not cause the same serious disputes as among the British suffragists. Holton, *Suffrage Days*, 20.
46. Björkenlid, *Kvinnokrav i manssamhälle*, 57-8; Christina Carlsson, *Kvinnosyn och kvinnopolitik: En studie i svensk socialdemokrati 1880-1910* (Lund, Arkiv, 1986), 152, 179, 200, 205; Torbjörn Vallinder, *I kamp för demokratin: Rösträttsrörelsen i Sverige 1886-1900* (Stockholm, Natur o Kultur, 1962), 124, 134; Rönnbäck, *Politikens genusgränser*, 57.
47. RA, FBF, Komité för lagfrågor, Vol. 1, minutes 24 March and 19 June 1902; Rönnbäck, *Politikens genusgränser*, 58.
48. RA, FBF, Komité för lagfrågor, Vol. 1, minutes 7 April 1902 (meeting with the board of FBF), minutes 19 June 1902.
49. Rönnbäck, *Politikens genusgränser*, 58-59.
50. RA, FBF, Komité för lagfrågor, Vol. 1, minutes 17 May, 19 May 1900, 2 February 1901, 19 June 1901, 16 January 1903, 30 January 1903, 26 May 1907, 6 June 1907.
51. RA, FBF, Komité för lagfrågor, Vol. 1, minutes 16 December 1902.
52. Staël von Holstein, *Målsmanskapet och kvinnans ställning*, 7, 35.
53. Dagny 1902:20, 1903:5, 1903:27. See also Rönnbäck, *Politikens genusgränser*, 115; Ebba Berling Åselius, *Rösträtt med förhinder* (Stockholm, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 2005), 179.
54. *Hvilka svenska kvinnor äga kommunal rösträtt?* (centralstyrelsen i LKPR. Nr 2, 1907).
55. Staël von Holstein, *Målsmanskapet och kvinnans ställning*.
56. Dagny, 1909:7.
57. *Ibid.*, see also Åselius, *Rösträtt för kvinnor*, 1913:11
58. Rönnbäck, *Politikens genusgränser*, 116-7, 125-7.
59. Åselius, *Rösträtt för kvinnor*, 1913:4.
60. RA, FBF, FKPR, Vol. 1, leaflet.
61. Åselius, *Rösträtt för kvinnor*, 1912: 17.
62. Melby, *Inte ett ord om kärlek*, 17; Ulla Manns, 'Den gifta kvinnans frigörelse', in *The Nordic Model of Marriage and the Welfare State*, ed. Kari Melby et al. (Copenhagen, Nordic Councils of Ministers, 2000), 141.
63. Åselius, *Rösträtt för kvinnor*, 1915: 5.
64. Manns, 'Den gifta kvinnans frigörelse', 143.
65. Wikander, 'Suffrage and the Labour Market', 40, 47-8.
66. RA, FBF, Komité för lagfrågor, Vol. 1, Minutes 1915 (nd), 25 January 1916, etc. Åselius, *Rösträtt för kvinnor*, 1918:14.
67. *Ibid.*, 1918: 1.
68. Signe Wessman, *Kvinnorna inför den kommunala nyorienteringen 1919*, (socialdemokratiska kvinnornas centralstyrelse, 1919), 3.
69. Emilia Broomé, *Hustruns ställning enligt förslaget till ny giftermålsbalk* (LKPR, Stockholm 1919). Melby, *Inte ett ord om kärlek*, 184, 387.
70. RA, FBF, Komité för lagfrågor, Vol. 1, 'strödda papper ang. Äktenskapslagstiftningen 1912-1958'.
71. Rönnbäck, *Politikens genusgränser*, 129-32.
72. Åsa Karlsson Sjögren, 'Kvinnors röst i sekelskiftets städer', *Att göra historia: Vänbok till Christina Florin*, ed. Maria Sjöberg et al. (Stockholm, Institutet för framtidsstudier, 2008), 147-9.

### Conferences, Calls for Papers, Events, Prizes, News, Notices, Publishing Opportunities ...

All of the above can be found in the WHN  
electronic

## Newsletter

The WHN *Newsletter*, which will be emailed to members monthly, enables us to keep you up-to-date with news, conferences and other events concerning women's history.

The *Newsletter* also provides a more frequent forum for publicising your events and informing members about other activities and projects.

To advertise in the WHN *Newsletter*, please email its editor, Jane Berney, at:

[newsletter@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:newsletter@womenshistorynetwork.org)

To download current and back issues visit the  
Newsletter pages at

[www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org)

# Realigning political and personal selfhood: narratives of activist women in the late 1960s and 1970s

Celia Hughes

Warwick University

In January 1969 the radical journal *Black Dwarf* contained an article by Sheila Rowbotham in which she dared to envisage previously hidden thoughts and feelings taking on a political expression.<sup>1</sup> The 'new politics', she anticipated, would transcend the harsh sectarianism of far left Trotskyism and allow for more open, multi-dimensional political spaces.<sup>2</sup> Rowbotham drew attention to the divisions between internal and external ways of being that existed on the left, especially in relation to women. The terms 'internal' and 'external' related to her observation that the revolutionary left expected activists to act in a removed manner whilst in the public political sphere. All too often activists lost themselves in intellectual abstractions concerned with examining external social and economic frameworks, and removed themselves from their internal emotional core, from personal life experiences where, she felt, women were more inclined to locate their politics. As a result Rowbotham believed that women could make a unique contribution to radical thinking about behaviour, responses, everyday existence and consciousness.<sup>3</sup>

The small consciousness-raising groups that characterised the early Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) underlined the political and psychological importance socialist feminists attached to process and affect when it came to redefining the concept of politics.<sup>4</sup> Instead of a left politics that was situated externally to members' personal lives, defined in terms of effect, external structural theory, paper sales and mass demonstration tactics, Women's Liberation called upon women to understand their relationship to the group and the movement in psychological terms of internal attachment and change.<sup>5</sup> This revised concept of revolution called upon members to participate politically by changing the way they lived as well as how they conducted themselves in the political arena.

This article will examine the oral narratives of a selection of women who joined three of Britain's first Women's Liberation groups in 1968 and 1970 respectively: the first and second Tufnell Park groups and the Belsize Lane group. These groups emerged within a non-aligned left milieu whose ideas for a 'new politics' emerged out of the political upheavals of 1968: the demise of Britain's anti-war movement, the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC), and the growth of an activist network encompassing radical cultural groups, grass-roots community groups and Women's Liberation groups on the one hand and Trotskyist organisations on the other. The intention is to consider some of the political, social, and psychic challenges which the 'new politics' posed for members of these early Women's Liberation groups, and its particular implications for women who, prior to joining, had been involved in non-aligned left activist circles alongside male

comrades, husbands and lovers.

The interviews were conducted as part of a project that examines the relationship between activist subjectivities and the shaping of Britain's late sixties extra-parliamentary left culture. Based on the oral narratives of ninety men and women, it traces the activist trajectory from child to adulthood to understand the social, psychological and cultural processes informing the political and personal transformation of young adults within the new left cultures that emerged in the wake of the VSC. An important aspect of these changes involved the political and emotional impact Women's Liberation made upon male and female activists. The oral narratives reveal how the reception and integration of the 'new politics' resulted from activists' engagement with sociological discourses on the family, from their own experiences of family life and from relational experiences inside the activist enclaves around the VSC, as individually and collectively they shaped their own understanding of personal politics. Non-aligned men and women, actively embracing the 'new politics', explored 'the internal experience – inside the home, inside the head, inside the bed – as well as the external, verifiable experience'.<sup>6</sup> This dual attention to 'external' and 'internal' meanings of politics realigned conceptions of personal and political, public and private in ways that sought to reshape radically how they lived and felt as social citizens as well as private internal beings.

In this article I argue that revisiting accounts of women who joined some of Britain's earliest consciousness-raising groups reveals a more complex picture of subjectivity than the straight-forward cultural script of social and emotional re-birth, often presented in relation to the beginnings of Women's Liberation.<sup>7</sup> Through detailed attention to the women's stories this article will show how experience within the Tufnell Park and Belsize Lane groups was shaped by demands for women to negotiate two competing external, social and political forces: mainstream post-war society and the new political culture where activists sought to embrace libertarian social and political patterns. The women's narratives reveal how individual and collective experience within the Tufnell Park milieu was profoundly shaped by the internal imprint each member brought from their upbringing, from their relationship to the external social world and the activist scene in which many had come of age. Above all, the accounts highlight the unstable psychological roots on which the women's early understandings of liberation rested. As they embarked upon collective and individual efforts to incorporate the 'new politics' into their personal lives and political activities, not only did they question familiar contradictions about their social situation and cultural engagement as women, they also met

unanticipated psychic challenges that arose from within themselves and between each other.

The women's narratives highlighted the value of the oral history interview as a methodology that allowed access to the public and private spheres where the multilayered selves of the female activist often existed in tension. Based on the life-history model, the interviews were conducted in the women's homes during 2009-10. Mica Nava and Sue Crockford had previously published and recorded personal accounts of feminist activities, but all respondents remained faithful to the movement's empowering legacy, eager to support my project.<sup>8</sup> The women's openness to the importance of preserving the history of the WLM contributed to honest personal reflections that testified to the enduring impact of their consciousness-raising experiences. As an interviewer I found myself drawn into a psycho-therapeutic forum where both respondent and oral historian embarked on a search for the self, and, in so doing, uncovered past and present narratives of women struggling to reconcile the internal voice with the external social and political landscape.

It was a struggle to find an appropriate interpretative framework for the women's narratives. Within the structures of feeling underlying the accounts the connections between the women seemed to be everywhere. Even stories that told of individual dislocation from the groups acquired a certain collective existence, when considered alongside other women's narratives. But I worried that imbuing the textural existence of their voices with such collectivity would be to betray the inner experiences the women had confided. In her account of the second Tufnell Park group, for example, Ann Hunt emphasised her isolation and insecurity as a working-class woman in the company of middle-class, university-educated members.<sup>9</sup> She had joined the group in 1970 after returning to London from New Zealand with her husband, VSC assistant secretary, David Robinson. The couple had rented an upstairs flat from Tufnell Park member Angela Melamed, who persuaded Hunt to attend the weekly WL meetings, held in her living room. Hunt remembered how 'some of the women would bring along a paper to discuss, either an already published one, or one they had written themselves'. She was also conscious that 'some of the women had been to Cambridge and I think Oxford'.<sup>10</sup> Class and educational barriers defined her memories of feeling 'tongue-tied' and 'out of my depth'.<sup>11</sup> She exuded disappointment that feelings of ignorance and inferiority she had felt alongside VSC men had continued in a WL group she had looked to for support, as mother to a small child and wife to a full-time activist.<sup>12</sup> Unable to access the personal, exploratory space the group had provided other members, for Hunt the Tufnell Park group provoked but privately contained her hopes for individual change. Amidst the discursive orientation of the group she had felt reduced to a passive member, denied 'the opportunity to fulfil an activist role' she had sought to reclaim from her husband.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, Hunt's earnestness to detail her experiences as accurately as possible seemed to confirm the importance of locating the women's stories within

a collective framework. The cadence of her narrative resonated with that grounding of self in shared personal and political struggle, which, as Lynne Segal has written, was the *raison d'être* of women's liberation.<sup>14</sup> It was as if through mediating her story through me Hunt might find the collectivity that had eluded her in Tufnell Park. In our shared correspondence she recounted her delight upon discovering the sixties female anthology *Very Heaven*.<sup>15</sup> The women's voices she heard resonated with how she herself had felt as a young woman on the cusp of individual transformation amidst the changing 1960s societies of Britain and New Zealand. By situating herself within these public representations of female selfhood, Hunt came closer to achieving the composure she had sought within the collective space of the Tufnell Park group.

Part of the problem of finding an appropriate framework was that I had become distracted by the multiple fields of conversation occurring simultaneously within different spheres. At work within the narratives was the transferential dialectic between respondent and oral historian, the past and present selves each woman sought to situate, the collective and the individual. The identities under construction could be located within various spheres of existence: the real and the imagined, public and private, personal and political, external and internal. No single identity occupied one sphere at any time. I retreated and listened to my own internal voice. At the time of interviewing I was undergoing psycho-therapy, struggling to reconcile the dislocation between my repressive, self-disciplined facade and crippling inner anxiety. Each time I immersed myself back into the narratives all I could hear was the tension between the women's inner and outer selves. Luisa Passerini offered a possible avenue to pursue. In *Autobiography of a Generation* she used her own psychoanalysis to identify collective patterns in oral accounts from the Turin student unrest of 1968.<sup>16</sup> Passerini's method highlighted the importance of considering the overall experience of remembering by analysing impressionistic unconscious articulations. She wrote of the contradictions on which identity is constructed, located not only in the private sphere, but often translated into the external locus of society.<sup>17</sup> I trusted my instincts and began listening to the symbiosis between my own self and the structures of feeling within the narratives. In *Woman's Consciousness, Man's World*, Rowbotham had recorded the inner exploration that had facilitated a conscious recognition of her femaleness. Surrounded by distorting external mirrors, she had to re-enter herself, 'to go into the world of personal experience'.<sup>18</sup> The collective voice I repeatedly heard was the dislocation women had carried over from their time in the VSC alongside male comrades between how they felt inwardly when in the early days of the new left women's groups, and how they behaved in the presence of other members and in wider post-war society as mothers, wives and workers.

The struggle my respondents underwent to find a voice and to equip it with a language capable of public and private representation spoke of the enduring psychological impact of their efforts to realign inner and outer selves. Efforts to achieve greater fluidity between

the public and private, for the personal to inform and become political, were often highly challenging for young women raised within the conservative landscape of post-war Britain where the two spheres existed separately. Sue Crockford spoke on behalf of Belsize Lane members when she considered how they had been raised never to question the notion that private matters were not for public discussion outside the family. She felt it was often hard to start talking about intimate affairs even with other women.<sup>19</sup> The narratives signalled the enduring dislocations women had identified in the Movement, but which they could not so readily overcome even after immersing themselves within it. Part of the difficulty respondents found in articulating their memories derived from the absence of representations of the Movement which could allow space for this tension. Public discourses have been shown to be an important constituent in the composition of stories about the self.<sup>20</sup> Penny Summerfield has discussed the difficulties cultural silences around gender can create for women to achieve 'composure', a psychic state oral respondents are understood to achieve when they compose a version of the self that coheres with the social world around them.<sup>21</sup> Echoing the tenets of Lynne Segal, the women I interviewed spoke fluidly and comfortably when able to situate their experiences against stories of feminist freedom already in the public domain. Mica Nava and Sue Crockford repeatedly retreated from the private 'I' to the collective 'we'. The point at which their narratives became disjointed was when they were called upon to isolate the internal voice and to talk about the pressures Women's Liberation had placed on their personal lives. Their difficulties echoed feminists' laments for the demise of this once secure collective identity. Sally Alexander has reflected about the psychic challenge of resituating herself from the collective to the individual: 'I found strength in having a collective identity. I find it hard without one, which doesn't mean that it was better then. I also found it very painful being part of a movement, always trying to put it first.'<sup>22</sup>

The dislocations between inner and outer life and women's sense of themselves within political and private spheres seem to have been particularly acute in the initial years after joining a Women's Liberation group. Sue Crockford's testimony illustrated how the process of remembering tensions shaped the construction of her narrative. Crockford was a member of the first Tufnell Park Women's Liberation group, set up in 1968. Previously, she had been a core member of a North London branch of the VSC, the Camden Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (CVSC). Alongside her Australian partner, Tony Wickert, she had taken responsibility for a radical film collective, Angry Arts, linked to the group and was active within both this and her women's groups until the couple separated in 1971. After the first Women's Liberation Conference at Oxford, in February 1970, the rapid growth of the WLM had prompted the decision for the original Tufnell Park group to disband; Crockford was one of a number of members who subsequently joined the Belsize Lane group.

From the start of the interview Crockford repeatedly shifted backwards and forwards from one topic to another,

from one experience to the next, never answering any single question at any time. She continuously repositioned herself between the collective 'we' and the private 'I': from the public arena of political activity, from details of campaigning in Camden against the Vietnam War, and activity inside the WLM, before returning suddenly to occupy the private personal core. Her reluctance to concentrate on her private life during her dual activity in Angry Arts and Women's Liberation pointed to tensions that had arisen from efforts to incorporate her politics into her private life and to reconcile conflicting political and personal loyalties between the two groups. Central to her conflict was the trope of the scholarship boy, the figure several female respondents had conjured to denote articulate left men whose dominant intellectual and active presence in the VSC networks had created an invisible inner gulf between them and female comrades. In 'Writing the Self: The End of the Scholarship Girl', Carolyn Steedman explains how, through their textual existence and young women's debate with the 'Scholarship Boys' of their 'imagination', post-war secondary educated women like Judith Grossman understood themselves and the history that had made them.<sup>23</sup> The trope of the scholarship boy performed a similar function for the women in my study. In non-aligned left milieus around CVSC and Tufnell Park political and personal relations between young men and women rested upon bonds of mutual respect, friendship, and love, cemented within optimistic political values that spoke of belief in the possibility of changing oneself and others through political action. The difficulty that Sue Crockford and other women found in being able to identify their political and personal sense of place alongside male partners and comrades told of the political and psychic tensions that Women's Liberation had created for these close relations. The perception of difference was often highly subtle and subjective, underlining the difficulty for



*Sally Fraser (Belsize Lane member) and CVSC member Rita Vaudrey (from left to right) and their children during a Sunday gathering on Parliament Hill Fields, c. 1969-1970. Source: Private Archive of Geoff Richman. Image reproduced courtesy of Mica Nava.*



early members to see the relevance Women's Liberation held for their own lives as women.

Crockford's testimony played out this tension, as she struggled to reconcile her enduring loyalty to Wickert and other CVSC male comrades with the inner connection she also felt to the politics of Women's Liberation and to fellow Tufnell Park and Belsize Lane members. At the time of the interview she remained active in the Belsize Lane group whose members continued to meet monthly. On the one hand Crockford believed that people's roles and contributions to CVSC had been shaped less by gender than by age and political experience.<sup>24</sup> The leading CVSC core was composed of three couples who came from a background of Communist Party, national VSC and American New Left politics. Although regarding herself as part of a core couple, Crockford's reticence to define the emotional space the group had provided seemed related to her loyalty to the close personal relations she had formed within CVSC. Her relationship with Wickert was highly integrated into the political and cultural life of the group; CVSC, in turn, vital to their relationship, 'the grit that makes the pearl in the oyster'.<sup>25</sup> Intensive activism against the Vietnam War had served as a crucial reminder of important world issues beyond the couple's personal feelings for each other. With left identity and group experience shaped in such intimate terms, Crockford's decision to join the Tufnell Park Women's Liberation group had posited her not only between her women's group and her partner, but between two different concepts of new left personal politics, each variously associated with CVSC and Women's Liberation.

The public and the private, the personal and political existed in relentless tension throughout Crockford's narrative. Her inability to comfortably situate her account within either sphere spoke of torn loyalties between her partner, CVSC politics, and the private world they represented, and the newfound collective identity she had found inside Women's Liberation. Initially, when discussing her thoughts about the meaning of personal politics, she explained that it had never crossed her mind not to consciously strive to live out her politics in her personal life. She also spoke positively of the ability Women's Liberation gave her to examine all areas of her life, to feel suddenly able to put all manner of issues on the table for discussion and to feel that the group provided an appropriate, permissible place for exploring, for example, the meaning of relationships.<sup>26</sup> Then I asked Crockford for her opinion about Rita Vaudrey's unease as a woman in CVSC. A shy nineteen-year-old undergraduate, Vaudrey had attended CVSC as the girlfriend of core member, Geoffrey Crossick. At the time, she had intimated to Crockford how intimidated she felt by the powerful intellectual presence of some of the CVSC men.<sup>27</sup> Acknowledging Vaudrey's insecurity, Crockford defended the intellectual rigour of CVSC and the need for clear distinctions between political issues in relation to personal life: 'You had things to get through; so some of the things that might have been worrying you, you would have censored as not being important enough ... We were there for a reason, Vietnam, that was above our lives.'<sup>28</sup> Crockford's views were surprising because

she had deferred to the very sentiments she and other women had reacted against within Women's Liberation where direct experience had a relevant bearing on every aspect of political and social life. She echoed the views of a couple of CVSC men; her partner, she admitted, had seen Women's Liberation as self-indulgent and a distraction from serious politics.<sup>29</sup>

Crockford's opinions reflected the tension Women's Liberation had created for her relationship with Wickert; the personal and political division of loyalty she had confronted. She explained his jealousy of her women's groups: 'I had come back from a meeting and me and Tony might have been having a row, and he said "I suppose you have been discussing me", and I said, "well yes, actually I was", and one of the things I had an issue with, and still do, is loyalty.'<sup>30</sup> Her partner had perceived the women as giving Crockford 'mindless support' to move away from him. In the interview Crockford denied this accusation, contradicting her earlier reflections on personal politics, as she explained that 'what the women's movement did was, you could put all of your issues on the table and learn that this little bunch was absolutely primarily yours ... you learned which of these were for society to do something about' and which were not.<sup>31</sup> In emphasising the distinctions between the personal and the social that Women's Liberation had taught its members, Crockford signalled how she had reconciled her loyalty to CVSC, her partner, and to Women's Liberation; in her mind she had created space for a hidden private world that was better kept out of the public arena for group discussion. She later confided her guilt for discussing her relationship with Wickert within the Belsize Lane group.<sup>32</sup> This internally negotiated position stands in contrast to the release women are traditionally shown to have found in therapeutic forums of consciousness-raising groups where no private issues were out of bounds.<sup>33</sup>

Collectively, with the political ideas of Women's Liberation behind them, and with the emotional solidarity of their groups guiding them, left-thinking women embarked on trying to dissolve the divisions between their adherence to a set of ideas and how they lived their private lives. The tensions came not only from objections



*Sue Crockford and Mica Nava taken during the 1970 first Women's Liberation conference at Oxford. First published in Spare Rib. Image reproduced here courtesy of Mica Nava.*

male partners voiced to taking a greater share of childcare and domestic tasks, but often the most profound psychic challenges the women encountered emerged from deep within themselves. Mica Nava revealed how fragile women like her were during the initial tentative steps of realignment. She had joined the Tufnell Park Women's Liberation group in the summer of 1969 after David Slaney, VSC activist and husband of her friend and group initiator, Karen, had encouraged her to attend. Married to a Mexican photographer, José Nava, the couple had lived in Netherall Gardens, Camden Town; situated on the edge of the VSC network, their house filled with men and women from across London's activist and underground 'sixties scene'.<sup>34</sup>

Nava's story of entry to Tufnell Park told of an inner conflict between middle-class maternal identity, a domestic life that was familiar and comfortable, and her search for the intellectual and political identity she envied in her husband, but felt unable to reconcile with her background and maternal life. Upon joining Tufnell Park, she explained that often it would be the personal comments made by other members that could cut the most deeply. Nava recalled how, in the first Tufnell Park group, core CVSC member Sheli Wortis had made her feel guilty and awkward when she employed the term 'bourgeois solutions' to describe members' use of au pairs. Having previously resisted joining a left group, fearing accusations of hypocrisy, Wortis' comments struck Nava acutely because of how strongly she admired her intellectual and political self-assertion. Carrying into Tufnell Park a history of anti-war and feminist activism from San Francisco, Wortis seemed to embody the intellectual leftist identity Nava increasingly sought.<sup>35</sup>

Nava's connection to Women's Liberation had been strongly shaped by Wortis' writings on childcare and maternal attachment, which countered John Bowlby's influential hypothesis about the harmful effects of mother-child separation. As a self-proscribed 'earth mother', she was torn between the image of contented motherhood as an embodiment of post-war female selfhood, and suppressed desire for an identity beyond maternal life.<sup>36</sup> In these circumstances Wortis' call for society to support increased paternal-led childcare made sense. Yet, early group discussions addressing these feelings added further layers of division between the collective political identity she discovered in Tufnell Park, and the feelings of members who interpreted her maternal image as a cultural product of the post-war 'glorification of motherhood': 'I had invested a great deal of energy in bearing children over the previous six years, and was very ready to completely restructure the process of childcare, but I could not bear to concede that the sometimes rich and sensual feelings of pregnancy and babies were a mere illusion.'<sup>37</sup>

The accounts of Sue Crockford and Mica Nava highlight the internal divisions Tufnell Park and Belsize Lane members confronted between older identities as activists, wives and mothers and a new, collective left identity, bound up in Women's Liberation. Commitment to the small Women's Liberation group challenged every aspect of personal and political identity, as membership

began to reframe women's loyalties and relations as well as their understanding of what a new left feminist selfhood meant for them as individuals. The guilt women felt as they tried to change the patterns of their domestic situations and personal relations resulted from loyalties torn between loving male partners and the new intimacy and attachment to political women that consciousness-raising invited. Nava's narrative shows how implicit criticisms from other women greatly exacerbated this psychic tension between public and private, collective and individual, because they cut so sharply across both spheres.

This article has sought to reflect on the experiences of three women who negotiated social, political and psychic obstacles that resulted from realigning personal and political spheres. The narratives reveal that by the early 1970s the possibility of imagining alternative ways of being was no longer relegated to the imagination of '68, to political hopes women, like male comrades, had invested in global movements for self-determination on the part of students, workers, and Third World revolutionaries. Yet the divisions between internal and external ways of being political as women proved more enduring on the left than the interviewees had hoped when they joined the Tufnell Park consciousness-raising groups. Attention to the structures of feeling underlying the women's narratives reveals a complex picture of the political, social, and psychic impact the 'new politics' made upon women who joined a Women's Liberation group out of a background of left activity. Drawing upon the concepts, 'internal' and 'external' as precise terms of the 'new politics', illustrates the high expectations these women held of Women's Liberation to transform their own lives and relations as well as those of other women and men. As a medium of personal as well as social transformation the new politics concerned itself with the subjective. The aim was that by analysing the personal roots of oppression women in a small group could learn to relate to each other in new ways, discovering in each other a collective strength in relation to capitalist society. The terms highlight, above all, the utopian impulse of the 'new politics', the hopes for realising a more human form of socialism that could be translated to wider social relations beyond the left.

The narratives examined here suggest the multiple layers the women had to negotiate in efforts to re-situate themselves as activists and women, identities which occupied and had been profoundly shaped by the wider post-war landscape as well as the VSC activist sphere. They and others felt torn between loyalty to existing relationships and value systems, to selves they had hitherto inhabited, and desire to realise richer, freer lives. The terms 'internal' and 'external' also provide a sensitive framework to accord the narratives the collectivity that was integral to the women's politics as well as to their self understanding.

An important aspect of the article has been to highlight the valuable role the oral history interview fulfilled in aiding the construction of the interpretative framework. Alessandro Portelli has argued that oral history undermines the position of the historian as an external, 'omniscient' narrator, pulling them inside the

narration.<sup>38</sup> My experience of becoming psychologically immersed within these women's narratives has borne out this view. The process of transference and counter-transference which I encountered allowed me deeper access to the narratives, aiding the women to find a voice for the 'unsaid, the implicit, the imaginary', and what Sally Alexander terms 'that shifting sense of self which is represented through speech'.<sup>39</sup> The oral history interview enabled me to realise the psychological importance these women attached to their collective identity, to preserve it, yet simultaneously, to present a richer picture of the individual subjectivities within the narratives, and of the struggles and contradictions underlying the personal politics.

## Notes

1. Sheila Rowbotham, 'Women: the struggle for freedom', *Black Dwarf*, 13/ 9 (1969), 4-5.
2. Sheila Rowbotham, 'Women's Liberation and the New Politics', in Sheila Rowbotham, *Dreams and Dilemmas: Collected Writings* (London, Virago, 1983), 5-31.
3. Sheila Rowbotham, *Promise of a Dream: Remembering the Sixties* (London, Verso, 2000), 230.
4. For details of the practice of consciousness-raising in the Women's Liberation Movement, see Sue Bruley, 'From Women Awake, the Experience of Consciousness-Raising', in *No Turning-Back: Writings from the Women's Liberation Movement, 1975-80*, ed. Feminist Anthology Collective (London, Women's Press, 1981), 60-66; Sarah F. Browne, 'The Women's Liberation Movement in Scotland, c. 1968-1979' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Dundee, September 2009), 87-95; Eve Setch, 'The Women's Liberation Movement in Britain, 1969-1979: Organisation, Creativity and Debate' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, Royal Holloway, July 2000), 36.
5. See Sheila Rowbotham, 'The Beginnings of Women's Liberation in Britain', in *Dreams and Dilemmas: Collected Writings* (London, Virago, 1983), 35; 'Bringing the Revolution Back Home', *Shrew*, (May 1970), 19.
6. Michelene Wandor, 'The Small Group', in *The Body Politic: Writings from the Women's Liberation Movement in Britain 1969-1972*, ed. Michelene Wandor (London, Stage 1, 1972), 114.
7. Anna Coote and Beatrix Campbell, *Sweet Freedom* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1987), 5-18; David Bouchier, *The Feminist Challenge: The Movement for Women's Liberation in Britain and the United States* (London, Macmillan, 1983), 73-75; Lynne Segal, *Making Trouble: Life and Politics* (London, Serpent's Tail, 2007); Barbara Caine, *English Feminism: 1780-1980* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997), 266.
8. Mica Nava, *Changing Cultures: Feminism, Youth and Consumerism* (London, Sage, 1992); 'Nine Years Together: A History of a Women's Liberation Group', *Spare Rib*, 69 (April 1978), 41-6.
9. Correspondence between Ann Hunt and the author, 31 January (2010), 4.
10. Correspondence between Ann Hunt and the author, 30 December (2009), 1.
11. *Ibid.*, 2.
12. Correspondence between Ann Hunt and the author, 31 January (2010), 4.
13. *Ibid.*, 4.
14. Lynne Segal, 'Who do you think you are? Feminist Memoir Writing', *New Formations*, 67 (Summer 2009), 127.
15. Sara Maitland, ed, *Very Heaven: Looking Back at the 1960s* (London, Virago, 1988).
16. Luisa Passerini, *Autobiography of a Generation. Italy, 1968* (New Hampshire, University Press of New England, 1996), 23.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Sheila Rowbotham, *Woman's Consciousness, Man's World* (London, Penguin, 1973), 20.
19. Interview with Sue Crockford, London, 30 September (2009).
20. Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London, Routledge, 1994), 25.
21. Penny Summerfield, 'Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History Interviews', *Cultural and Social History*, 1 (2004), 65-93.
22. Cited in Segal, *Making Trouble*, 135.
23. *Ibid.*, 119.
24. Interview with Sue Crockford, London, 30 September (2009).
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*
27. Interview with Rita Vaudrey, London, 2 September (2009).
28. *Ibid.*
29. Interview with Sue Crockford, London, 30 September (2009).
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.*
33. Coote and Campbell, *Sweet Freedom*, 6.
34. Interview with Michaela Nava, London, 20 November (2009).
35. *Ibid.*
36. Michaela Nava, 'Rough Notes for the Belsize Lane', *Spare Rib* (c. 1977), 3, from the Private Archive of Michaela Nava.
37. *Ibid.*, 4.
38. Alessandro Portelli, 'The Peculiarities of Oral History', *History Workshop Journal*, 12 (Autumn 1981), 96.
39. Cited in Luisa Passerini, 'Memory', *History Workshop Journal*, 15 (Spring 1983), 195.

# Patronage and the development of women's music in the early twentieth century<sup>1</sup>

Laura Seddon

*City University*

In early twentieth-century Britain, before the First World War and the subsequent economic depression, the wealthy individual patron, who either had a private income or had made their money from industry, was still an important figure in British musical society.<sup>2</sup> Financial support was often vital for a composer's career and many British male composers benefited from extended periods of patronage. Some British women composers also profited from arrangements with patrons. Particularly for the generation born before 1870, support from wealthy female friends could be vital for performance opportunities and publication costs. Ethel Smyth (1858-1944) is perhaps the most prominent case: her aristocratic friends significantly helped further her career.<sup>3</sup> She presented her music to Queen Victoria and received financial support from Empress Eugenie and the wealthy American heiress to the Singer fortune, the Princesse de Polignac, as did Adela Maddison (1866-1929).<sup>4</sup> Mabel Batten (1856-1916), a singer and lover of the writer, Radclyffe Hall (1880-1943), was asked to provide financial support for her friend, Maddison, when she had to return destitute to England from Germany at the beginning of the First World War.<sup>5</sup> Even though both Smyth and Maddison were from fairly wealthy backgrounds, their careers probably would not have flourished without the support of such women.

The tradition of the aristocrat or industrialist providing resources for the 'impoverished composer' in return for a multitude of favours was not always a simple exchange, as Marjorie Garber explains, 'Inevitably these relationships have been loaded: fraught with over-, and underestimation, with pettiness as well as generosity, with disdain as well as desire.'<sup>6</sup> However dysfunctional these relationships, it seems they were also inadequate to support the emerging population of conservatoire-educated women composers in the early twentieth century.

Financial patronage of 'mainstream' (i.e. male) composers continued to flourish: Edward Elgar was supported by Lady Mary Lygon and Frank Schuster, while Frank Bridge was championed by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, after meeting her in 1922.<sup>7</sup> However, patrons both male and female were not so willing to enter into such established relationships with women composers. Thus, an increasing number of alternatives gradually emerged for them. As Linda Whitesitt comments, '[B]y transcending the myth of the great artist and looking at systems rather than individuals as architects of art, women become visible as starring actors in the institutional creation of musical culture.'<sup>8</sup> In this spirit, this article will consider if and how, in this period, a collective patronage was established for a generation of women moving away from a tradition of writing songs and piano works towards larger instrumental forms.

Two British patrons whose style of beneficence moved beyond individual support are Marion Margaret Scott (1877-1953)<sup>9</sup> and Walter Wilson Cobbett (1847-1937),<sup>10</sup> who were well known to each other, in some ways worked together to promote British music and were especially concerned with women's music. They will be considered particularly in relation to the Society of Women Musicians (SWM), which was set up in London in 1911 to promote women's position in musical society and encourage women to compose.<sup>11</sup> Marion Scott was a violinist, composer, music critic and journalist who had studied violin and composition with Charles Stanford at the Royal College of Music (RCM), preceding Rebecca Clarke who is often cited as Stanford's first female pupil. Scott was from a wealthy family, her father being a lawyer; indeed, at the time of her death, her estate was worth £30,401.2.11.<sup>12</sup> She recalled her parents' support of emerging RCM composers through 'college parties' held at their home, providing food and performance opportunities for young composers. As she remembered:

The programme was that first there would be dinner; then an evening of chamber music with special attention devoted to new compositions by the guests, then a nice stand-up dinner, and finally a scamper by said guests to get the last train home. I have records now of one evening when William Hurlstone, Frank Bridge, Tom Morris, Haydn Wood, Ivor James, Arthur Trew, Muriel Osborn and Sybil Maturin were there.<sup>13</sup>

Scott went on to form her own string quartet to promote British music as well as to help establish the RCM Union for students and was one of the founding members, along with Gertrude Eaton (1861-1939) and Katherine Eggar (1874-1961), of the SWM in 1911. She first met the younger composer Ivor Gurney (1890-1937) through her role at the RCM Union.<sup>14</sup> They had a close relationship; she provided for him financially and while they often discussed Gurney's work, he was one of the few to whom she had the courage to show her own compositions. He came to rely on her increasingly as his behaviour became more erratic and destructive, most Gurney scholars now agree he probably suffered from some kind of bi-polar disorder.

Walter Wilson Cobbett was a businessman who had made his money in shipping and whose lifelong passion for chamber music was prompted on hearing the Joachim string quartet play Beethoven at St James's Hall. He announced, 'It is not an exaggeration to say there opened up before me an enchanted world to which I longed to gain an entrance.'<sup>15</sup> After Cobbett retired from the City he became chamber music's most influential

patron, founding the Cobbett competitions for composing phantasies, in 1905, editing the first journal dedicated solely to chamber music as a supplement to the *Music Student* magazine, and, in the 1920s, establishing prizes for composition at the RCM and Royal Academy of Music. In 1924 Cobbett also founded a medal for services to chamber music whose recipients included composer Thomas Dunhill (1877-1946) and the American chamber music patron Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge (1864-1953).<sup>16</sup> Cobbett had no ambitions as a composer himself but was a keen amateur violinist organising his own private string quartet, in which the prolific composer Susan Spain-Dunk (1880-1962), played viola. Spain-Dunk was described by Scott and Eggar as 'a composer of real promise, and one who ought to count for something in the progress of women chamber music writers'.<sup>17</sup>

Cobbett had a specific influence on the chamber music written by women as he was not only closely involved with the SWM but, from his writings in *Chamber Music* and the *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, he appears to have encouraged women to compose and perform instrumental chamber music such as string quartets.<sup>18</sup> Cobbett comments:

Those unacquainted with the subject may not be aware that woman is a factor of increasing importance in the world of chamber music, both on the creative and executive side. Indeed on the latter she bids fair to outnumber Man, a piece of good news for the feminists which none will grudge them.<sup>19</sup>

The Society of Women Musicians held its inaugural meeting, organised by Scott, Eggar and Eaton at the headquarters of the Women's Institute at 92, Victoria

Street, London, on 15 July 1911, followed by its first full meeting on 11 November 1911. Katherine Eggar studied composition with Frederick Corder at the Royal Academy.<sup>20</sup> She was also a pianist, having studied in Berlin and Brussels and London. She exerted considerable influence in the early years of the SWM, giving an inflammatory speech at the inaugural meeting, sitting on the council of the SWM throughout this period and becoming president of the SWM, 1914-15. Gertrude Eaton was a graduate of the RCM and was for a time Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of the RCM Union. She was involved with the Women's Institute (WI) and the suffrage movement, and later was vocal on prison reform. She was a key player in the practical organisation of the SWM in its early years, particularly in negotiating with the Women's Institute to allow the SWM access to meeting rooms and storage space.<sup>21</sup>

In the period between 1911 and 1920, the organisation included approximately 423 female members and 49 male associates. There were amateurs as well as professional performers and composers; many had studied together, were part of the same social circle, and played together in various ensembles. The objectives of the SWM were stated in the constitution of 1911, to be:

- To supply a centre where women musicians can meet to discuss and criticise musical matters.
- To afford members the benefits of co-operation and also when desired of advice with regard to the business side of their professional work.
- To bring composers and executants into touch with each other and to afford practical opportunities to composers for trying over compositions.



Fig 1: First Meeting of the SWM at The Women's Institute, *Daily Graphic*, 11 November 1911.

Reproduced with permission from SWM Archive, RCM, London.



- To promote such other subjects as may be deemed desirable by the council for the advancement and extension of the Society's interests generally.<sup>22</sup>

The language used in the constitution illuminates the social objectives of the SWM council. They clearly felt there was no suitable forum for academic and critical discussion of the professional and amateur woman musician. They were also keen to promote a sense of community between women musicians. Women composers were given a special focus; the constitution refers specifically to services for them. The last objective quoted above, however, indicates the SWM was (understandably) more concerned with its own survival and interests than with that of individual members or specific groups. It should be noted that the objectives were set out in neutral language, for example there is no overt statement of aims to increase the status of women musicians or to promote compositions by women, even though, in later speeches by and activities of its members, this was clearly enunciated.<sup>23</sup>

While patronage by women in France and America has been discussed by scholars, British women have been somewhat less explored, probably due to the fact that salon culture was not as prevalent in London as it was in Paris and American women's musical societies were much more widespread in this period.<sup>24</sup> London, however, had a combination of these forms of patronage and this produced a melting pot of locations and support structures in which women's music could flourish. In America the women's musical club was a phenomenon, some having memberships in the thousands: Ella May Smith for example led the Music Club of Columbus between 1903 and 1916 which had a membership of approximately 4000 women.<sup>25</sup> One significant difference between the Society of Women Musicians in London with its 400 members and the American clubs was that the SWM held music composed by its members as a priority; this was very unusual in America where they were more concerned with organising concerts of well-known artists. As Linda Whitesitt comments:

[H]owever much success [American women] had at cultivating a reliable platoon of art-music followers, however much money they themselves contributed and coaxed from others, however many halls they constructed, however much they shaped the repertoire, they rarely played a part in the ritual itself, whether as composers, conductors or even instrumentalists.<sup>26</sup>

While these kinds of contributions to music should not be undervalued, the SWM was more isolationist in its outlook, being less concerned with shaping public taste and more interested in supporting its members. There is evidence, therefore, that a collection of works produced by SWM composers through the composition group, and independently, which were disseminated at SWM concerts, would not have existed if it were not for the organisational

efforts of Marion Scott and the support of Katherine Eggar, who led the composition group. Scott describes an SWM concert of new works in her notebooks:

[O]f the new works down for performance, two had been expressly composed for the occasion at the invitation of the council. These were the Sonata for violin and pianoforte by Fiona McCleary and a trio, a Rhapsodic Impression for violin, viola and pianoforte by Katherine Eggar.<sup>27</sup>

Other composers such as Ethel Smyth, who is probably the best-known British female composer, had individual movements of works played initially at SWM concerts before further performance and publication, as was the case with Smyth's String Quartet in E Minor, which was written at the height of her suffrage activities.

Yet when the amount and nature of the music produced by women in this era is considered, an initial assessment would indicate that Cobbett had greater influence over the development of women's music than Scott. He chose to fund composition competitions and commissioned publications rather than personally-chosen individuals and, due to his efforts, we have work by Ethel Barns (1880-1948), Susan Spain-Dunk, Alice Verne-Bredt (1868-1958) and many others.<sup>28</sup> But this is perhaps too obvious a conclusion for several reasons. Works produced under his patronage were published and are, therefore, much more visible to researchers today and he was extremely wealthy with much greater funds than Scott to distribute (he left £200,000 in 1929).<sup>29</sup> Although Cobbett was very much concerned with British composers and in some ways had a nationalistic and parochial outlook, his wealth, business connections and gender meant he had considerable influence in society in general as well as London's musical society. Yet, aside from the purely financial aspects of patronage, it can be argued that women composers benefited as much from the activities of Marion Scott with Katherine Eggar through the SWM. In any case, their contributions were complementary; Scott and Eggar's promotion of instrumental chamber music as a medium in which women could and should excel was both endorsed by Cobbett and proved a springboard for women composers towards participation and success in activities supported by Cobbett.

Scott and Eggar's column on women's music in Cobbett's journal, *Chamber Music*, raised the profile of women musicians in general and meant its authors reached an audience beyond the members of the SWM. Their influence on Cobbett is highlighted in the number of female judges present for the 1914-15 Phantasy competition, where out of forty-nine judges, eighteen were women.<sup>30</sup> Without the advocacy work of Scott and Eggar, therefore, women composers may not have embraced instrumental chamber music to such an extent.

The evident influence of patrons on the musical repertoire and women patrons' particular concerns to elevate the status of female composers leads to the thorny question of why Scott did not lavish the same levels of finance and support on a woman composer as she did

on Ivor Gurney and even Herbert Howells (1892-1983)? It should be acknowledged that this question does not only apply to Scott. Many other female patrons did not support female artists extensively; these include Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge and later Betty Freeman (1921-2009).<sup>31</sup> One of the reasons for this may be the sexual nature of individual patronage, which in the case of women patrons cannot simply be dismissed as a maternal instinct. The case of Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840-1924), an extremely wealthy widow who inherited a fortune made through the East India Company, highlights this.<sup>32</sup> She famously did not support Amy Beach (1867-1944), the most high-profile American woman composer of this period. The composer and performer Clara Kathleen Rogers (1844-1931) describes Isabella as surrounding herself with young male artists 'eager and proud to hold her wrap'.<sup>33</sup> Ralph P. Locke argues that 'These well-turned young men functioned, it has often been suggested, as surrogate sons, but a flirtatious narcissism was also involved'.<sup>34</sup>

In the case of Ivor Gurney and Marion Scott, despite speculation, there is no evidence that they had a sexual or even romantic relationship, although it is clear that she felt very deeply about him in a way she did not about Howells. She was the only friend who visited him regularly in the asylum in which he spent his final years before his untimely death in 1937.<sup>35</sup> His care and publications were paid for in the main by Scott and it seems likely that she saw herself as far more than a patron and advocate for Gurney; she certainly never set down the conditions of her support in the way that other women patrons did. For example in Paris, as Jeanice Brooks has shown, the Princesse de Polignac (1865-1943) would issue composers with contracts with conditions, including first performance rights, dedication, signed autograph manuscript and reduction for piano or voice and piano.<sup>36</sup> The payment of musicians' fees did not include parts for players and the payment of the commission fee would be in instalments. Polignac gave permission to sell to publishers but other performances were only allowed six months after performance in her salon. In this sense Scott was not a 'traditional and commissioning patron' towards Gurney, which explains why at best she has not been considered an important figure and at worst was described by Gerald Finzi as a 'mulish old maid'.<sup>37</sup>

The fact remains, however, that Scott supported women composers only through the collective patronage of the SWM. Part of the reason for this may have been that she struggled throughout the early years of the SWM with her own identity as a composer and whether she should be more dedicated to this aspect of her creative output rather than the literary one. The most immediate suggestion may be that powerful women are unwilling to help other women for fear of a reduction of their own power or adoration in the eyes of men, and there is some justification for this position not only in the arts but in many other areas up to the present day. Scott was perceived by other members of the SWM as powerful and somewhat aloof, as the pianist Kathleen Dale remembers:

As long ago as 1916 I had met Marion Scott

at the Society of Women Musicians, but in those early days a wide distance separated us – not only her seniority in years ... [D]uring the five years from 1921 onwards that I served under her on the council of the Society of Women Musicians I learned to admire both the acute sense of judgement which she blended with unusual gentleness of manner, and the remarkable aptitude she showed for carrying through difficult business negotiations. But I stood in awe of her.<sup>38</sup>

Katherine Eggar describes women musicians at this time as having a selfish attitude to each other, but Scott believed that, with support, the woman composer of genius would be created.<sup>39</sup> Kathleen D. McCarthy, when writing about women's patronage in the visual arts in America, divides women patrons into three categories: separatists (women's clubs and societies), assimilationists (women working with men on boards/societies) and individualists (wealthy women working independently).<sup>40</sup>

Scott spread her patronage across each category. In this era the SWM was building a base from which to launch women's music and Scott may have felt that a collective form of patronage was the most effective means of support, one woman composer for another. This argument is consistent with the ideology expressed in Scott's journalism and also with the fact that she did not make large financial contributions to the SWM.

Collective patronage, including the complementary ideologies of Cobbett, Scott and the SWM, can therefore be regarded as having a more complex but significant role in music production. The financial aspect of patronage has an implicit power but other aspects of patronage need further consideration, especially in the cases of many female patrons. The interaction between different patrons, different kinds of patronage and women's societies certainly made a significant contribution to one of the most fertile periods so far for British women's music.

## Notes

1. This article is based on research for the author's doctoral thesis: Laura Seddon, 'The Instrumental Chamber Music of British Women Composers in the Early Twentieth Century' (Unpublished PhD thesis, City University, 2011).
2. Ralph P. Locke and Cyrilla Barr, eds, *Cultivating Music in America: Women Patrons and Activists since 1860* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 1997); Paula Gillett, *Musical Women in England 1870-1914: Encroaching on all Man's Privileges* (London: Macmillan, 2000) and Linda Whitesitt, 'Women's Support and Encouragement of Music and Musicians', in *Women and Music: A History*, ed. Karin Pendle (Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1991).
3. See Christopher St. John, *Ethel Smyth: A Biography* (London, Longmans Green and Co., 1959); Elizabeth Wood, 'Performing Rights: A Sonography of Women's Suffrage', *MQ*, 79/4 (Winter 1995), 606-43 and Ethel

Smyth's seven volumes of memoirs (1919-1940).

4. The most significant research on Adela Maddison has been by Sophie Fuller, 'Women Composers During the British Musical Renaissance 1880-1918' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Kings College, University of London, 1998), 299-325 and 'Devoted Attention: Looking for Lesbian Musicians in Fin-de-Siècle Britain', in *Queer Episodes in Music and Modern Identity*, ed. Sophie Fuller and Lloyd Whitesell, (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2002).

5. Correspondence between Adela Maddison and Mabel Batten, and Mabel Batten and Cara Lancaster, Lancaster Family Collection, London.

6. Marjorie Garber, *Patronizing the Arts* (Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2008), 1.

7. Byron Adams, 'The "Dark Saying" of the Enigma: Homoeroticism and the Elgarian Paradox', *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music*, 23/3 (Spring 2000), 218-35; Cyrilla Barr, *Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge: American Patron of Music* (London, Prentice Hall, 1998).

8. Linda Whitesitt, 'Women's Support and Encouragement of Music and Musicians', 301.

9. See Pamela Blevins, *Ivor Gurney and Marion Scott: Song of Pain and Beauty* (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2008) and Katherine Emily Eggar and Marion Margaret Scott, 'Women's Doings in Chamber Music: Chamber Music Clubs', *Chamber Music: A Supplement to the Music Student*, 1 (June 1913), 10.

10. For further information on Cobbett see: Christina Bashford, 'Chamber Music', *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol.15 (London, Macmillan, 2001), 434-48 and Betsi Hodges, 'W. W. Cobbett's Phantasy: A Legacy of Chamber Music in the British Musical Renaissance' (Unpublished Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) dissertation, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2008).

11. The SWM is discussed at length in relation to women's compositions in Laura Seddon, 'The Instrumental Chamber Music of British Women'.

12. Will and probate of Marion Margaret Scott.

13. Marion Scott, 'William Hurlstone', in *William Hurlstone Musician: Memories and Records by his Friends*, ed. Katharine Hurlstone (London, Cary and Co, 1947), 90.

14. For biographical information on Gurney see Michael Hurd, *The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney* (London, Faber and Faber, 2008). The Ivor Gurney Society has developed a bibliography see [www.ivorgurney.org.uk/bibliography.htm](http://www.ivorgurney.org.uk/bibliography.htm).

15. He is quoted as stating this in the BBC Radio 3 programme, *Music Weekly*, G. Sheffield and A. Lyle producers, 2/8/1987, National Sound Archive, British Library, London, 1CDR0018474 BD2-7 NS.

16. Bashford, 'Chamber Music'.

17. Katherine Eggar and Marion Scott, 'Women's Doings in Chamber Music: Women as Composers of Chamber Music Third Paper', *Chamber Music*, 8 (July 1914), 98.

18. Walter Willson Cobbett, *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music Vol I and II* (London, Oxford University Press, 1930).

19. Walter Willson Cobbett, 'Foreword', *Chamber Music*, 1 (June 1913), 1.

20. See Sophie Fuller, 'Eggar, Katherine Emily',

*Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online* <[www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com)> [accessed 14 October 2009]. Extensive information on Eggar's role in the SWM is contained in the SWM Archive, Royal College of Music, London.

21. For further information on the connections between the SWM and the WI see Lorna Gibson, *Beyond Jerusalem: Music in the Women's Institute 1919-1969* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008), 38-41 and 189-91. Eaton's relationship with the WI cooled following the decision for the SWM to move to more suitable headquarters in 1920 (Letters between Gertrude Eaton and Mrs Roskill, SWM Archive, RCM, London).

22. Quoted from SWM Constitution and Rules, 1911, SWM Archive, RCM, London.

23. Gillett, *Musical Women in England*, 219-22.

24. Christina Bashford, *In Pursuit of High Culture: John Ella and Chamber Music in Victorian London* (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2007); Fuller, 'Devoted Attention', 79-101; Linda Whitesitt, 'Women as Keepers of Culture: Music Clubs, Community Concert Series and Symphony Orchestra' in *Cultivating Music in America*, 65-86.

25. Gillett, *Musical Women in England*, 69.

26. Whitesitt, 'Women as Keepers of Culture', 80.

27. Marion Scott Notebooks, Marion Scott Archive, RCM, London.

28. See Walter Willson Cobbett, 'Ethel Barns' in *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*, ed. W. W. Cobbett (London, Oxford University Press, 1930, 2 vols) I, 60 and Mathilde Verne, *Chords of Remembrance* (London, Hutchinson and Co., 1936).

29. Will and probate of Walter Willson Cobbett.

30. *Chamber Music*, 15 (July 1915).

31. See Barr, *Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge* and Paul Levy, 'Betty Freeman: Arts patron and champion of modern classical music', *The Independent* [Available online. [www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/betty-freeman-arts-patron-and-champion-of-modern-classical-music-1301591.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/betty-freeman-arts-patron-and-champion-of-modern-classical-music-1301591.html), Accessed 24 March 2011].

32. Ralph P. Locke, 'Living with Music Isabella Stewart Gardiner', in Locke and Barr, *Cultivating Music in America*, 90-121.

33. *Ibid.*, 107.

34. *Ibid.*

35. See Blevins, *Ivor Gurney and Marion Scott*.

36. Brooks, 'Nadia Boulanger and the Salon of the Princesse de Polignac', 454.

37. Blevins, *Ivor Gurney and Marion Scott*, 45.

38. Kathleen Dale, 'Memories of Marion Scott', *Music and Letters*, 35/3 (July 1954), 236.

39. SWM Archive, RCM, London.

40. Kathleen D. McCarthy, *Women's Culture: American Philanthropy and Art 1830-1930* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991).

# Nurses for a new fatherland: gender and ideology in the health policies of the early Franco regime in Spain (1938-1942)<sup>1</sup>

M<sup>a</sup> Eugenia Galiana-Sánchez, Josep Bernabeu-Mestre,  
and M<sup>a</sup> Pilar García-Paramio

University of Alicante

During the early years of the Franco regime, the process of professionalisation of Spanish nursing suffered a significant setback as a result of the political and socio-cultural conditions which defined the new regime.<sup>2</sup> The totalitarian system advocated by the Franco dictatorship and its only official party, *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista* (also known as *FET y de las JONS* or simply *Falange*), based most of their political actions on their opposition to the former regime, which meant a change of direction in most of the previous republican initiatives. After the Second World War, the original *Falange* evolved and some sections changed. In the early days of the dictatorship, the party had played a significant role, but after the defeat of fascist Axis powers it became a secondary player, and the Church and the military hierarchy increased their influence in the new state. This, however, did not occur with the Women's Section of *Falange*, which preserved its original structures, ideology and programmes until the end of Franco's dictatorship. The Women's Section transmitted the regime's moral and political values: it was through social, political, sanitary and domestic education that the regime intended to shape and encourage its female citizens to accept a deeply traditional female role. Its relationship with the general body of nurses was strong, since nursing was considered a proper way to channel women's energies.<sup>3</sup> An example of this was the creation of the *Falange Nurse* who undertook the indoctrination of the Spanish female population through a discourse which linked hygiene and healthcare to ideas on maternity

and maternal duties, filled with political, ideological and religious connotations. The effect of this discourse, during the early years of the Franco regime, was to set back significantly the process of professionalisation of Spanish nursing.<sup>4</sup>

The evolution of nursing in this period was determined by two significant categories: gender and ideology. In the case of gender, the development of professional nursing cannot be dissociated from the legal, ideological and educational policies which had adverse effects on the female population. The second category refers to the control exercised by the political and religious institutions on the public and private life of the citizens, through certain specific groups such as nurses. The Francoist concepts of fatherland, nation and religion shaped the ideology that was embedded in the training and practice of Spanish nursing in those years.<sup>5</sup>

In this study, we intend to analyse the influence of gender and ideology on shaping the new role of the nurse, and particularly that of the childcare nurse, during the early Franco years, through the *Falange* nurses and in particular those known as social nurses, social visitors and childcare nurses. As the main study source, we used the text *Formación de Enfermeras Sociales de Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS* (*Training of Social Nurses of the Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS*) published in 1938. Aimed at visiting nurses working in the area of childcare, this manual includes the contents of a training course organised by the party's Technical Section. Other texts were also consulted, such



*Fatherland, nation and religion shaped the ideology that was embedded in the training of Spanish nursing.*

*Reproduced courtesy of the Public Health and Hygiene Museum of the National School Health in Madrid.*

as *Estudios Sociales y de Puericultura para Visitadoras y Enfermeras* (*Social and Childcare Studies for Visitors and Nurses*), published in 1942 by Joaquín Valenzuela, Head of the Childcare Service of the Social Relief National Delegation, and the *Manual de la enfermera puericultora y sanitaria escolar* (*Manual of childcare nursing and school health*) published in 1945 by Faustino Zapatero and Fernando Cirajas. In addition we used the text, *El primer semestre de la vida en el niño español* (*The first six months of life in the Spanish child*), which appeared in 1941, the monograph, *Bases Fundamentales para la lucha contra la Mortalidad Infantil en Nuestro Medio Rural* (*Fundamental basis for the fight against Infant Mortality in our Rural Environment*) of 1945, and *La Enfermera y la Escuela Nacional de Instructoras Sanitarias* (*The Nurse and the National School of Healthcare Instructors*), of 1953. We also referred to sources related to the health policy criteria defended by the regime, such as *Política Sanitaria* (*Health Policy*) published in 1943<sup>6</sup> and written by Alfonso de la Fuente, National Health Secretary of *Falange* and National Head of the 'Obra 18 de Julio'.

In order to provide a context for the action of the *Falange* nurses, we will first describe the main milestones that marked the start of the professionalisation of community nursing in Spain and, in particular, its contribution to childcare. We hope to trace the conceptual and professional framework in which the various types of nursing promoted by the *Falange* arose. Next, we will summarise the main ideological lines that defined the health policy of the early Franco years, which provide insight into the basic coordinates of the regime's social-healthcare project. In order to highlight the importance of gender in the professional development of nurses, we will analyse the main characteristics of models of womanhood and motherhood that dominated the Franco period, and the changes they brought about in the nurse ideal in comparison with the models of the early decades of the twentieth century. Finally, the last section will analyse the determining role of ideology on the professional development of the *Falange* nurse and the indoctrination and social control which accompanied their social-healthcare actions.

## Nursing, childcare and public health in Spain in the early decades of the twentieth century

In Spain, the development of public health nursing occurred later than in other Western European countries, and with some qualitative differences. The reasons for this are varied. The most notable may be the late institutionalisation of public health in Spain, the socioeconomic level of the country and the non-existence of a healthcare movement, such as that found in Britain.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, in Spain there was a long and rich professional tradition of nursing in the hospital setting, and this fact contributed to the idea that outpatient nursing was not understood as a duty of the professional nurse.<sup>8</sup>

The contribution of nurses to the fulfilment of community health goals and the development of state interest in childcare date back to the 1920s, although the

earliest reference to the origin of state community nursing is probably the *Instrucción General de Sanidad Pública* (*General Instruction in Public Health*) of January 1904.<sup>9</sup> This regulation led to the creation of Provincial Health Boards and suggested that each Board should set up a commission of ladies for purposes such as surveying outpatient care for poor patients, promoting hygiene during breastfeeding and childhood, protecting pregnant women and poor women who had given birth recently, and a number of similar care activities. The commission was to be chaired by a health inspector whose duties could be considered a precedent for the tasks of the visiting nurse of later years. Yet, in spite of the relatively abundant legislation for midwives and other health professionals during the period, there was no regulation of the training or instruction given to ladies who were to be members of the commissions carrying out home visits; and when, in 1915, nursing studies were regulated by law, this aspect of nursing was completely ignored.<sup>10</sup>

By the 1920s, however, public health nursing in Spain attained a significant degree of professionalisation. Early initiatives consisted of health visitor training programmes run by the Red Cross (1923),<sup>11</sup> courses provided by the National School of Paediatrics and Childcare (*Escuela Nacional de Puericultura*), set up in 1923<sup>12</sup> and programmes of the National School of Public Health (1925).<sup>13</sup> Among the nurse categories trained by these schools were Red Cross visiting nurses, childcare visitors and health visitors. The Red Cross visiting nurses took care of the sick in their homes and carried out regular visits aimed at raising standards in hygiene, home economics and childcare. In turn, childcare visitors were trained to provide social assistance and health education; special attention being paid to home visits. These professionals built bridges between the health system and children within their families. Finally, health visitors were trained in conceptual and methodological aspects of modern public health. Their professionalisation was consolidated through the creation of a Professional Society of Health Visitors and the publication, *La Visitadora Sanitaria Boletín de la Asociación* (*Health Visitor Bulletin of the Association*).<sup>14</sup>

These new professional figures were trained to play a key role in the development of the reformist health policy which gradually emerged in the first three decades of the century, but their integration into the health system had to wait until the arrival of the Second Republic.<sup>15</sup> Although the late 19th/early 20th centuries had witnessed the beginnings of a transformation in demography and healthcare in Spain, characterised by a new style of public administration with wider-ranging healthcare responsibilities, this process, which was accompanied by a strong commitment to institutional modernisation, did not reach its climax until the democratic period of the Second Republic (1931–1939), when great advances were made in public health. Reforms driven by the republican-socialist government of the first two-year period, placed a new focus on public health and mother-child healthcare.<sup>16</sup> An example of this was the publication, on 31 December 1931, of the Decree on the Creation of the Children's Hygiene Section, which



announced the formation of a new section answerable to the Inspector General for Health Institutions. The purpose of the Section was to fight child mortality and mortality-related issues. It was composed of several departments: maternal mortality, perinatal mortality, prenatal hygiene and preschool hygiene. In addition, a ministerial order, dated 30 March 1932, decreed that children's hygiene services should be set up in all provincial hygiene institutes, to include clinics for prenatal hygiene, nursing babies and schoolchildren. This healthcare proposal was also applied to secondary health centres and rural hygiene departments. Community nurses, who were included in the process and in some cases were even considered key elements in the achievement of the hygiene objectives,

were active participants in this new healthcare structure.<sup>17</sup>

Within this context, another relevant initiative was an agreement, signed in 1931, between Spain and the International Health Board of the Rockefeller Foundation. Under the terms of the agreement the Foundation would meet the costs of building and commissioning a school for health visitors and would also fund via scholarships the postgraduate education in public health for teachers at the new institution. Fourteen nurses participated in the programme between 1931 and 1934. They completed studies in the US for an average of two years, to prepare them for teaching at the school in Madrid, scheduled to be officially opened in 1936.<sup>18</sup>

*Characteristics of Nursing in Public and Child Health in Spain 1904-1942<sup>31</sup>*

Appearance	Name	Function	Institution on which they depend
1904	Home assistance ladies	Patient care, maternal and child hygiene propaganda	Juntas Provinciales de Sanidad (Provincial Health Boards)
1923	Children's nurse	Child welfare	Sanidad Nacional. Dirección General de Sanidad. Ministerio de Gobernación (National Health. Directorate General for Health. Ministry of the Interior)
1927	Home health visitors	Education in childcare	Damas protectoras del obrero (Ladies for the protection of workers)
1928	Spanish Red Cross health visitors	Family welfare	Cruz Roja Española (Spanish Red Cross)
1932	Public health visitor	Family welfare	Sanidad Nacional.(Dirección General de Sanidad. Ministerio de Gobernación) (National Health. Directorate General for Health. Ministry of the Interior)
1938	Social nurses	Education in childcare	Sección Femenina de F.E.T. y de las JONS ( <i>Falange</i> ) (Womens' Section)
1941	Health educators	-	Servicio de Información Social (Department of Social Information)
1940	Rural health advisors	Health advisory services for families	Sección Femenina de <i>Falange</i> (Womens' Section)
1941	Health instructor	Family welfare	Sanidad Nacional. Dirección General de Sanidad. Ministerio de Gobernación. (National Health. Directorate General for Health. Ministry of the Interior)
1942	<i>Falange</i> nurses: Social health visitors	Moral and physical improvement of the individual for the benefit of their health	Sección Femenina de <i>Falange</i> (Womens' Section)
1942	Children's Nurses	Education in childcare	Auxilio Social (Welfare service)

## Health policies in the early Franco years

The *coup d'état* of 1936, and the civil struggle that it triggered, cut short the development of the welfare model developed during the Second Republic. In the field of maternal-child health, the new Franco regime set as a priority objective the reduction of child and maternal mortality<sup>19</sup> through the programme *Al Servicio de España y del Niño Español* (In the Service of Spain and the Spanish Child).<sup>20</sup> Although on the surface this appeared to be a continuation of the Republic's programme, the new regime operated under different ideological assumptions and within the framework of pro-natal policies typical of fascist regimes.<sup>21</sup> In the opinion of the *Falange's* health authorities, each neonatal death was a soldier lost to the empire.<sup>22</sup> The first initiatives in health policy that were carried out by the *Falange* during the civil war and early post-war years were conditioned, from an ideological point of view, by their ideal of a National-Syndicalist State. In the words of Dr. Alfonso de la Fuente, the *Falange's* first National Secretary for Health, the *Falange's* great social-health project, National-Syndicalism, was to be considered as the perfect combination of the 'social' with the 'national', under the rule of the 'spiritual'.<sup>23</sup> 'Social' was to be understood as 'fulfilling man's needs as a natural being'; 'national' as 'the community of men who undertake a common historical project'; and 'spiritual' as 'that which surpasses the natural and the national 'to find the way to God in the eternal truths'. All three dimensions should be present in every national-syndicalist health practitioner.<sup>24</sup> As De La Fuente himself argued, the aim was to have 'doctors (and by extension nurses and other professionals) who would fulfil their historical destiny at the service of the Fatherland, taking God as their only guide'<sup>25</sup>; and to attain a 'political-religious union best symbolised by our health crusade'.<sup>26</sup>

Thus healthcare became a social mission rather than a professional activity.<sup>27</sup> In fact, for the *Falange*, the main mission of healthcare workers was much more political than health related, since their principal aim was to produce a healthy population for the empire.<sup>28</sup> As the *Falange* National Secretary for Health indicated at the 6<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Women's Section, held in Granada in January 1942, all health professions were to achieve unity in pursuit of the same end: 'to perfect the health mission in Spain endowing it with social content'.<sup>29</sup> The *Falange* endowed health with a sense of mission and the need for a vocation:

All we Falangists must see in the doctor or nurse, the person to whom the State has entrusted the task of producing a healthy people physically able to carry out the tremendous tests to which we must subject ourselves ... it is from this *Falange*, ongoing custodian of the Fatherland's eternal values, that the people - disciplined, united and ordered - elevate the State, and it is the *Falange* that spreads the virtues of Service, Brotherhood and Hierarchy among the people.<sup>30</sup>

In this political context, the *Falange's* health programme evolved and enabled a Falangist definition of nursing to be developed, defined by Falangist gender-based ideology. The result of this was to divert the professional development of nurses towards activities related to indoctrination and social control. Table 1 summarises the characteristics of the various figures in nursing in the field of public health and child health in Spain and its evolution in the early decades of the twentieth century.

## Gender and nursing in social-healthcare of the early Franco years

At the end of the nineteenth century, what some authors have called the '*Movimiento Puericultor*' (Childcare Movement) began to develop in Spain.<sup>32</sup> Part of the hygienist movement which was immersed in a process of the regeneration of health and Spanish society, the Childcare Movement gave rise to plans for hygiene reform. The dual physical and moral dimension of the Movement made it the best instrument for health and social regulation.<sup>33</sup> The institution of the family, with the woman-mother as a reference point, represented the ideal locus for spreading a hygienic lifestyle, and provided the best opportunity to test precepts of child health. As early as 1885, Aguirre y Barrio argued under the slogan 'regulating and watching as much as possible', that childcare was a discipline focused on hygienic intervention.<sup>34</sup> Although in this context, the mother figure was conceived as a fundamental element in the great regeneration project, a new model of modern motherhood ensuring health and family order was required. Not all women responded to this model, so the first aim of the Childcare Movement was to perfect the role of the mother, adjusting it to the needs of health work.<sup>35</sup> This model extended throughout the entire first third of the twentieth century, tempered somewhat by the changes incorporated in the proclamation of the Second Republic, and the approval in December 1931 of the republican constitution in which women obtained the same electoral rights as men, as well as the new law on divorce. This legislation created significant expectations and symbolised the identification of some women's issues with the feminist cause.<sup>36</sup>

But, after the Spanish civil war, under the Franco dictatorship, Spanish women faced a reality in which traditional social and family structures were reintroduced. With little possibility of personal autonomy, women came increasingly under pressure exercised by political and religious institutions such as the Women's Section of the *Falange*, Social Aid and Catholic Action. All of these institutions were responsible for promoting and maintaining the traditional model of womanhood: an ideal which barely changed throughout the Franco dictatorship. The Women's Section, whose fundamental mission was moral education and transmission of the social and political doctrine to the female population, maintained strict loyalty to *Falangist* principles throughout its entire existence. Its position, throughout the years was immovable, even when facing contradiction as new approaches emerged elsewhere in society.<sup>37</sup>



*Laboratory of Nutrition  
and Dietary Practices.*

*Reproduced courtesy of  
the Public Health and  
Hygiene Museum of the  
National School Health  
in Madrid.*

It should also be pointed out that the Women's Section suffered from its own contradictions. On the one hand, it remained loyal to a utopian view of Falangist revolution, as opposed to other *Falange* sections, whose ideologies evolved and changed under the Franco regime. On the other hand, the social mobilisation of women fostered by the Women's Section, even though in line with the most conservative parameters, was not particularly welcome by non-Falangist supporters such as the army, the monarchists and the Church. Formal instruction by Women's Section officers resulted in well trained women who were prepared to hold positions of great responsibility, and these effectively constituted an elite within the corresponding workforce. To some extent, their activities projected an image of women characterised by modernity, youth and vitality that was unacceptable to the most reactionary elements of the Regime.<sup>38</sup>

The collaboration between the Women's Section and the health and educational authorities was strong, facilitating intervention with, and social control of, the female population, in areas as diverse as rural instruction of rural populations, nurse education, employment, religion and general education. All school girls were required to study home economics, politics and physical education on a compulsory basis, their textbooks published by the Women's Section. The training of nurses, seen as important in the implementation of these policies, became a *Falange* monopoly with the creation of the figure of the *Falange* Nurse. In the various manuals used for training women, emphasis is clearly on domesticity and on their confinement to maternal and domestic duties, and they reflect the gender philosophy typical of the Franco regime.<sup>39</sup>

The characteristics that were considered desirable in all Spanish women came together and were amplified in the figure of the *Falange* nurse. As argued by Carmen Sarasúa and Carme Molinero, fascist regimes considered female subordination and dependence as a key facet of family and political authoritarian structures and constituted the centre of their population and moralist politics. These authors continued, quoting from the Italian fascist magazine, *Gerarchia*: 'Why not talk about the restitution of

women's subordination to men if the aim we pursue is to return mothers to the home, more men to work and more children to the motherland?'<sup>40</sup>

The component of gender in nursing in this period was evident in various ways. On the one hand, there was the generalised idea that only women could carry out nursing work. Female virtues, coloured by male prejudices, were an essential requirement for the archetype nurse. As Dr Najera said in his work on the social significance of the nurse: 'there is the paradox of it being the woman, for whom the word frivolity appears to have been invented, who carries out the most serious healthcare work that could be imagined, for which we men are completely incompetent'.<sup>41</sup>

On the other hand, the inverse relationship also occurred. The best nurse is the mother, wife or sister herself. The 1937 text *Normas y Orientaciones para Delegados Provinciales*, reads as follows:

(The woman) Flies the Flag with a smile.  
She Flies the Flag with a gesture. She Flies  
the Flag first of all within her family, which  
is the pillar of the National-Syndicalist State.  
She Flies the Flag as daughter, as wife,  
as companion, aid, spiritual and material  
collaborator of man.<sup>42</sup>

The 1953 text *La Enfermera y la Escuela Nacional de Instructoras Sanitarias* (The Nurse and the National School of Health Instructors) adds: 'Women, in their far-reaching actions, are always effective collaborators in men's activities, and the nurse's vocation is born with women themselves'.<sup>43</sup>

Possibilities did not abound for women to work outside the home during this period. Some female authors have identified significant barriers against the integration of women into the labour market, and only some vocational roles were encouraged. Indeed, only professions linked to what was considered women's natural inclination were deemed acceptable. As Carolina Fernández-Salinero and Teresa Rabazas reflected in their text on vocational guidance for women during the Franco regime such roles included: 'those whose immediate aim demands



*The National School of  
Health Instructors.*

*Reproduced courtesy of the  
Public Health and Hygiene  
Museum of the National  
School Health in Madrid.*

abnegation, tenderness, generosity, help, an insight into people and circumstances, as happens with teaching children or teaching teachers, pedagogy, nursing, and the abundant and varied range of social professions that are being created.<sup>44</sup>

Another aspect of this relationship can be seen in *Falange* publications during the civil war. Nurses are shown as weapons in the hygiene battle, a metaphor for their dissemination activities but one which showed the ideological background of their work: 'Our fighting knights are on the front line... these are lessons for you, [nurse] students, the arms and ammunition that you must gather, so that afterwards, quietly and cheerfully, from your posts, you can fire them against your enemies'.<sup>45</sup>

The nurses' mission was to support the patriotic cause from their position as women. They were to apply their feminine qualities, but only in the way accepted by the regime, which required them to adjust their behaviour to new standards. They were to distance themselves from the female model of their grandmothers, who, according to the *Falange*, had practiced 'excessive feminism, conspiring, even with politicians and generals', and equally they were to flee from the 'ridiculous style of the English suffragette, who loudly demanded equal rights with men' and who even claimed a place in society or an act in Congress.<sup>46</sup> The Spanish Falange nurses had to be vocational, discreet, with a spirit of discipline, loyal, diligent, caring, patient, tough and, especially, with an awareness of their subordination.<sup>47</sup> Their new role was defined as much more noble, their mission higher: it was about making a new Fatherland a reality.<sup>48</sup>

### **The *Falange* nurses as an ideological vehicle and instrument of social control**

In a social and political context (in which some authors find a genuinely fascist pedagogical model and in which the Church and the *Falange* competed to control education),<sup>49</sup> the prospect of having a group of women available who could channel the regime's instructions for health and life habits was most attractive to policymakers. An analysis of the nurse training materials from the period

provides information on the expectations of ideological intervention to be undertaken by this professional group. The training courses for *Falange* social nurses were designed to instil in students the patriotic responsibility of educating mothers and caring for children, who would sustain the Spanish Empire in the future. The task of '*españolización*' (making something Spanish), in the words of the prelate of the Diocese of Segovia,<sup>50</sup> formed part of the nurse's duties, especially with regard to the moral restoration and social renewal of the country. This was probably the most representative characteristic of public health nursing in the Franco period: the work of the social nurses transcended individual or collective healthcare, and was transformed into an instrument to restore the spirit of the old Spain, in order to make a new Spain.

One of the most widely developed aspects of community care was the gathering of social information on Spanish families. The emphasis put on the compilation of data through registers of social research reports and questionnaires, which centred on aspects specific to the family or social situation, is revealing.<sup>51</sup> For example, there were questionnaires on vagrants,<sup>52</sup> on single mothers,<sup>53</sup> for cases of marital separation,<sup>54</sup> or for widows and orphans,<sup>55</sup> which paid meticulous attention to the private sphere of families and which in the repressive context of Spanish society provided compromising personal information. In addition to the healthcare data, abundant information was collected through these questionnaires on religious, political and moral issues. The religious (parish) authorities, union or political institutions were then informed.<sup>56</sup> This development, combined with the existence of new professional figures such as the Social Informers, generated new types of data which could be used by totalitarian regimes (Franco's in particular) in the vigilance and control of the population.

Nevertheless, despite this ideological turn, health visitors made a significant contribution to community health in general and to childcare in particular, especially during the Republic and the early years of the dictatorship. Health professionals were traditionally characterised by their closeness to the population they served,

establishing important links with people in the community, especially with mothers who were on the front line of the regenerative fight. In the Franco period, social control and indoctrination were combined with social-healthcare activities by the *Falange* nurses, producing notable improvement in the health of children. In one example, the campaign against the endemic trachoma, which was present in Spain from the beginning of the century to the 1960s, health visitors played a crucial role in attempts to break the chain of infection. They acted as links between the school population, health institutions and families, and carried out wide-spread social campaigns accomplishing mass social action, from the trachoma clinics.<sup>57</sup> Through home visits, nurses whose training had been aimed specifically at the study of endemic trachoma, compiled family records,<sup>58</sup> which allowed them to diagnose the condition and to set up public education interventions on hygiene and mechanisms to control and prevent the spread of the disease. The visiting nurses were advisors and mentors in the everyday life of the families. Their contribution to community health was most relevant. Their work was characterised by their closeness to the families, strong bonds being forged with the sick and with the whole of the community:

The visiting nurse... is the key to all social and hygienic tasks. ... So delicate is her role as an advisor in intimate little things... and mothers put so much trust in her instructions and welcome her home visits so much that, unknowingly, she has become a mentor to the everyday life of humble families. Any thorough campaign would need her valuable cooperation ... Her social role is attached to a type of trust that can only be generated through continuous contact and friendship.<sup>59</sup>

Their role as mediators and their closeness with the families has remained invisible in some ways, and it would be interesting to reflect upon questions which would help to clarify the relationship. For example: did the nurses apply a model closer to that used by other professionals who worked in child health? Were they partners in the scientific proposals of their medical colleagues? Did nurses contribute, in a sense, to the symbiosis between scientific health culture and popular health culture referred to by some authors?<sup>60</sup> And was a professional who would reach the mothers 'woman to woman' necessary, given that the population was averse to medical and scientific intervention?

## Conclusions

Within the framework of institutional responses aimed at improving the population's health, the contribution of health visitors to the achievement of health objectives and the development of Hygiene and Public Health in contemporary Spain began in the 1920s and reached a significant degree of professionalisation during the Second Republic. Their work concentrated on taking care of families at home and paying regular visits in order to

spread hygiene standards, home economics, or childcare; they were considered as a link between the health system and families.

During the Franco years, the professionalisation process of Spanish community nursing suffered a significant setback. The incipient professional body and the first professional achievements during the republican period were affected by the political, social-cultural and ideological principles that defined the new regime. Specifically, the number of public posts available in public health nursing fell, and wage discrimination emerged with respect to hospital nursing. During this period, there was a great proliferation of professional figures related to public health nursing care. With duplication of effort, the health objectives became blurred and other issues related to the political sphere and social control came to the fore. Inequalities in health and regional variation in the improvement in child mortality, which occurred at the time, were aggravated by this blurring of responsibility.<sup>61</sup>

Gender determined the evolution of nursing in this period. Femininity, understood only in terms considered acceptable by Franco's regime, was a requirement and, to a certain extent, a guarantee of the good work of nurses. *Falange* nurses, from their position as women, had a mission to help support and engender patriotism. They were required to apply their feminine qualities, but only in the way accepted by the dictatorial political regime.

The ideological control that the political and religious institutions exercised on the public and private life of the population was also reflected in nursing. The work of the social nurses transcended individual or collective healthcare. Through their intervention on child health, they were assigned the mission of moral restoration and social renewal of the country. Consequently, it was a requirement to observe Christian and feminine virtues which, in the opinion of the healthcare leaders, were essential for nursing work, to sustain the empire and build a new Fatherland.

Nonetheless, the health visitors, at least during the first Franco period, managed to maintain their identity and they continued to be key participants in the hygiene fight. Their position as mediators between popular culture and health culture should be stressed. The health visitors were advisors and mentors in the everyday life of the families. With their work they helped to improve the living and health conditions of the population.

## Notes

1. This paper is an extended and revised version of: M<sup>a</sup> Eugenia Galiana-Sánchez, Josep Bernabeu-Mestre and Pilar García-Paramio, 'Enfermeras para una nueva patria: género e ideología en la enfermería de *Falange*', in *La transformación de la enfermería. Nuevas miradas para la historia*, ed. Carmen González Canalejo and Fernando Martínez López (Granada, Editorial Comares, 2010), 101-11.

2. For public health nursing in the first Franco period, see Josep Bernabeu-Mestre and Encarna Gascón-Pérez, 'De visitadoras a instructoras: la enfermera de salud



pública durante el primer franquismo', in *La medicina en el Siglo XX: estudios históricos sobre medicina, sociedad y estado*, ed. Jesús Castellanos et al. (Málaga, Sociedad Española de Historia de la Medicina, 1998), 167-172 and Josep Bernabeu-Mestre and Encarna Gascón-Pérez, *Historia de la enfermería de Salud pública en España (1860-1977)* (Alicante, Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alicante, 1999).

3. For information on Franco's intervention as regards women's conditions and lifestyles, see: Kathleen Richmond, *Las mujeres en el fascismo español. La sección femenina de la Falange, 1935-1959* (Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 2004) and Carmen Sarasua and Carme Molinero, 'Trabajo y niveles de vida en el franquismo', in *La Historia de las Mujeres: perspectivas actuales*, ed. Cristina Borderías (Barcelona, Icaria editorial, 2009), 309-54.

4. Some of the elements of this process can be seen in M<sup>a</sup> Eugenia Galiana-Sánchez, M<sup>a</sup> Pilar García-Paramio and Josep Bernabeu-Mestre 'Luchando por la supervivencia: Primera Asamblea Nacional de Enfermeras (Madrid, 1959)', *Temperamentvm*, (2008), 8 and 'La frustración de una profesión: la enfermería de salud pública en la V Reunión de Sanitarios, 1959'. *Temperamentvm*, (2009), 9 [Both available online. <[www.index-f.com/temperamentum](http://www.index-f.com/temperamentum). Viewed 28 December 2011].

5. For the implications of dictatorial regimes in the nursing profession, see: Stefania Bartoloni, 'Da una guerra all'altra: le infermiere della croce rossa fra il 1911 e il 1945', in *Guerra e pace nell'Italia del novecento*, ed. Luigi Goglia et al. (Bologna, Il Mulino, 2006), 149-174; Hilde Steppe, 'Nursing under totalitarian regimes: the case of National Socialism' in *Nursing History and the Politics of Welfare*, ed. Anne Marie Rafferty et al. (London, Routledge, 2004), 10-27.

6. *Formación de Enfermeras Sociales de Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS*, Segovia, 'Delegación Provincial de Sanidad', 1938. Joaquín Valenzuela, *Estudios Sociales y de Puericultura para Visitadoras y Enfermeras* (Madrid, Editorial Pueyo, 1942); Faustino Zapatero Ballesteros and Fernando Cirajas Labajo, *Manual de la enfermera puericultora y sanitaria escolar* (Barcelona, Salvat Editores, 1945).

7. In Britain, the reform of the Poor Law in 1834, headed by Edwin Chadwick, was the first step in the new sanitary movement which gave the medical profession a key influence on public policy.

8. Encarna Gascón-Pérez, M<sup>a</sup> Eugenia Galiana-Sánchez and Josep Bernabeu-Mestre, 'La acción social de las visitadoras e instructoras sanitarias', *Revista de Trabajo Social y Salud*, 43 (2002), 149-74.

9. Apart from this regulatory initiative, a clear historical precedent for the health visitor can be found in Concepción Arenal, an important figure whose relationship with community nursing has already been described by different authors. See, for example: Josep Bernabeu-Mestre and Encarna Gascón-Pérez, *Historia de la enfermería*, 9-23.

10. For information on the regulatory development of nurse education in Spain in the first third of the twentieth century, see Josep Bernabeu-Mestre and Sonia Cotanda Sancho,

'Antecedentes históricos del proceso de socialización de la enfermería española. Desarrollo normativo (1904/1935)', *Enfermería Científica*, 111 (1991), 28-36 and Carmen Domínguez Alcón, *Los cuidados y la profesión de enfermería en España* (Madrid, Ed. Pirámide, 1986).

11. Carmen Chamizo, *Historia de la enfermería en Asturias: la Cruz Roja*. Unpublished Dissertation, 2004.

12. Bernabeu-Mestre and Gascón-Pérez, *Historia de la enfermería*, 61-74.

13. *Ibid.*, 75-92. Josep Lluís Barona and Josep Bernabeu-Mestre, *La salud y el Estado. El movimiento sanitario internacional y la administración española (1851-1945)* (Valencia, PUV, 2008), 185-94.

14. *La visitadora sanitaria. Boletín de la Asociación de la Asociación Profesional de Visitadoras Sanitarias*, 1934-1935; Bernabeu-Mestre and Gascón-Pérez, *Historia de la enfermería*; Gascón-Pérez, Galiana-Sánchez and Bernabeu-Mestre, 'La acción social'.

15. See: Rodríguez Ocaña and Martínez Navarro, *Salud Pública en España*, 52-86.

16. Josep Bernabeu-Mestre, 'La utopía reformadora de la Segunda República: la labor de Marcelino Pascua al frente de la Dirección General de Sanidad, 1931-193', *Revista Española de Salud Pública*, 74 (2000), 1-13; Josep Bernabeu-Mestre, *La salud pública que no va poder ser. José Estellés Salarich (1896-1990): una aportación valenciana a la sanitat española contemporània* (Valencia, Consell Valencià de Cultura, 2007).

17. Josep Bernabeu-Mestre, Enrique Perdiguero and Josep Luis Barona, 'Determinanti della mortalità infantile e transizione sanitaria. Una riflessione a partire dall'esperienza spagnola', in *Salute, malattia e sopravvivenza in Italia fra '800 e '900*, ed. Marco Breschi and Luccia Pozzi (Udine, Forum, 2007), 175-93.

18. Encarna Gascón-Pérez, M<sup>a</sup> Eugenia Galiana-Sánchez and Josep Bernabeu-Mestre, 'La aportación de las Enfermeras Visitadoras Sanitarias al desarrollo de la enfermería venezolana' in *Ciencia, Salud Pública y exilio. España (1875-1939)*, ed. Josep Lluís Barona (Valencia, Seminari d'Estudis sobre la Ciència, 2003), 99-129.

19. Rosa Gómez Redondo, *La mortalidad infantil española en el siglo XX* (Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1992) and Josep Bernabeu-Mestre, Pablo Caballero Pérez, M<sup>a</sup> Eugenia Galiana-Sánchez and Andreu Nolasco Bonmatí, 'Niveles de vida y salud en la España del primer franquismo: las desigualdades en la mortalidad infantil', *Revista de Demografía Histórica*, 24 (1/2, 2005), 173-93.

20. Josep Bernabeu-Mestre and Enrique Perdiguero Gil, 'At the service of Spain and spanish children: mother and child healthcare in Spain during the first two decades of Franco's regime (1939-1963)', in *Images of Disease. Science, Public Policy and Health in Post-war Europe*, ed. Ilana Löwy and John Krige (Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2001), 167-86; Josep Bernabeu-Mestre, 'Madres y enfermeras. Demografía y salud en la política poblacionista del primer franquismo, 1939-1950', *Revista de Demografía Histórica*, 20/1 (2002), 123-43.

21. Josep Bernabeu-Mestre, 'Madres y enfermeras'.

22. De la Fuente, *Política Sanitaria*, 18.
23. National syndicalism is a Spanish expression of fascist ideology.
24. De La Fuente, *Política Sanitaria*, 188.
25. *Ibid.*, 197.
26. *Ibid.*, 59.
27. *Ibid.*, 54.
28. *Ibid.*, 17.
29. *Ibid.*, 139.
30. *Ibid.*, 139.
31. The table was constructed from the following sources: Carmen Domínguez Alcón, *Los cuidados y la profesión*; Bernabeu-Mestre and Gascón-Pérez, *Historia de la enfermería*; Chamizo, *Historia de la enfermería en Asturias*; *Formación de Enfermeras Sociales*; Valenzuela, *Estudios Sociales*; Richmond, *Las mujeres en el fascismo español*.
32. Esteban Rodríguez Ocaña, 'La construcción de la salud infantil. Ciencia, Medicina y Educación en la transición sanitaria en España' *Historia Contemporánea*, 18 (1998), 19-52.
33. Esteban Rodríguez Ocaña, *Salud Pública en España. Ciencia, profesión y política, siglos XVIII-XX* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2005); Carmen Barona, *Las políticas de salud. La sanidad valenciana entre 1855 y 1936* (Valencia: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Valencia, 2006).
34. Rodríguez Ocaña, 'La construcción de la salud infantil', 24.
35. Josette Borderies, 'El higienismo como conformador de la mentalidad femenina, (1865-1915)' in *VII Jornadas de investigación interdisciplinaria* (Madrid, 1989), 299-309; Eva Morata, 'La imagen de la maternidad en la España de finales del XIX y principios del XX', *Arenal*, 10/2 (2003), 163-90.
36. Richmond, *Las mujeres en el fascismo español*.
37. Juan Carlos Manrique, Víctor Manuel López, Luis Mariano Torrego and Roberto Mongas, 'La labor formativa desarrollada por la Sección Femenina de la *Falange* en la preparación de sus mandos e instructoras durante el periodo franquista', *Historia de la educación*, 27 (2008), 347-65. In this respect, Richmond describes the Women's Section as the 'ideological reserve' of *Falange*.
38. Richmond, *Las mujeres en el fascismo español*.
39. Enrique Perdigüero Gil and Ramón Castejón-Bolea, 'Popularising right food and feeding practices in Spain (1847-1950). The handbooks of domestic economy', *Dynamis*, 30 (2010), 141-65.
40. Sarasua and Molinero, 'Trabajo y niveles de vida', 314, quoting from 'Istituto familiare e fascismo', *Gerarchia*, May 1939.
41. 'Delegación Provincial de Sanidad', 12. Dr Najera was the editor in chief of the Spanish *Journal of Public Health and Hygiene* (*Revista de Sanidad e Higiene Pública*), Professor of the National School Health in Madrid and Director of the Sigüenza Hygiene Centre.
42. Irene Palacio Lis, *Mujeres Ignorantes: madres culpables. Adoctrinamiento y divulgación materno-infantil en la primera mitad del siglo XX*. (Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 2003), 176.
43. José Turegano, *La Enfermera y la Escuela Nacional de Instructoras Sanitarias* (Madrid, Dirección General de Sanidad, 1953), 4.
44. Carolina Fernández-Salinero and Teresa Rabazas, 'La orientación vocacional de las mujeres en el Franquismo', in *XIII Coloquio Internacional de la Asociación Española de Investigación de Historia de las Mujeres, Barcelona*, 19-21 October (2006) CD-ROM.
45. 'Delegación Provincial de Sanidad', 2.
46. For discussion of Francoist ideologies and the feminist movement, see Sarasua and Molinero, 'Trabajo y niveles de vida', 313.
47. 'Delegación Provincial de Sanidad', 13.
48. 'Delegación Provincial de Sanidad', 3.
49. See: Sofía Rodríguez Lopez, 'Referentes históricos de la mujer falangista', in *Usos Públicos de la Historia. VI Congreso de la Asociación de Historia Contemporánea* (Vols. 1-2), ed. Carlos Forcadell et al. (Zaragoza: Asociación de Historia Contemporánea, 2002), 565-81.
50. 'Delegación Provincial de Sanidad', 4.
51. Joaquín Valenzuela, *Estudios Sociales*, 39.
52. *Ibid.*, 41.
53. *Ibid.*, 44.
54. *Ibid.*, 46.
55. *Ibid.*, 47.
56. *Ibid.*, 19.
57. Enrique Selfa Martínez, 'Consideraciones sobre la lucha contra las causas de ceguera', *Revista de Sanidad e Higiene Pública* (1940), 163-77; Josep Bernabeu-Mestre, M<sup>a</sup> Eugenia-Galiana Sánchez and Angela Cremades, 'Epidemiological factors, community health, social action and childhood in contemporary endemic trachoma in Spain 1900-1960' in *8th European Social Science History Conference, Network: Family and Demography*, (Ghent Belgium, 2010).
58. Arnaldo Socias and José Delgado, 'Estudio de los factores epidémicos en la endemia tracomatosa', *Revista de Sanidad e Higiene Pública*, 13/11-12 (1939), 3-31.
59. Domingo Martín Yumar and Ernesto Huertas Múgica, 'La mortalidad infantil en el ambiente rural', *Revista de Sanidad e Higiene Pública*, 193 (1933), 482.
60. Esteban Rodríguez Ocaña and Enrique Perdigüero, 'Ciencia y persuasión social en la medicalización de la infancia en España, siglos XIX-XX', *História, Ciências, Saúde- Manguinhos*, 13 (2006), 309.
61. Bernabeu-Mestre, Caballero, Galiana-Sánchez and Nolasco, 'Niveles de vida y salud'.

## Book Reviews

### **Annmarie Hughes, *Gender and Political Identities in Scotland, 1919-1939***

Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010.  
£45.00, 978 0748639816 (hardback), pp. vii + 235

Reviewed by Katie Barclay  
*University of Adelaide*



Responding to the premise of much modern historiography that Scottish labour politics in the early decades of the twentieth century were dominated by men and, moreover, that working-class women were not involved because they were either apolitical, or, worse, voted against their class interest, *Gender and Political Identities in Scotland* places women back into the

history of Scottish labour politics. Drawing on newspaper and governmental reports, the minutes of political and charitable committees and organisations, and oral histories of those who lived through the period, Hughes builds a picture both of women's participation in political organisations and the ways that they were politicised through their experiences as wives, mothers, workers and activists. In doing so, she engages in the ongoing debate around the nature of feminism and feminist identity, amongst groups who did not use or, even eschewed, that label. The story she presents is complex, highlighting the competing values, beliefs, desires and activities of the Scottish working class.

The first chapter explores women's participation in the interwar labour force in a context of high male unemployment and the increasing ideological significance of a breadwinner model for family life amongst the lower classes. In it, Hughes demonstrates that while women were often blamed for usurping men's jobs, they were mostly clustered in traditional female employments or in new industries, which were often not represented by trade unions. She follows this with a chapter on women's involvement in the labour movement, particularly the ILP where women were well represented, highlighting their levels and scale of participation. Hughes then moves on to explore the women who chose to vote Conservative, or otherwise rejected the labour movement, demonstrating that their reasons were complex and not simply an inability to perceive their class interest. She notes that the Conservatives and Liberals had policies, particularly around housing, that appealed to many lower-class women, and that the popularity of the idea of 'respectability' amongst the upper ranks of the working class, as well as the rejection of the labour movement by the mainstream churches (due to its association with communism and

atheism), led both men and women to reject labour politics.

Having provided the context of women's work and formal political involvement, Hughes then discusses how work shaped women's political identities, directly engaging with the historiography that saw women as 'docile' and politically 'apathetic'. She argues that even where women were formally represented by trade unions, their interests were given little space in formal discussions and, if acknowledged at all, were left to 'women's committees'. Despite this, many women were politically engaged, involved in their unions, and spread political messages amongst their fellow workers. They also, and most interestingly, engaged in everyday resistances or 'weapons of the weak'. Women workers confessed to slowing down work, talking too much, completing fellow workers targets to allow them time off, theft, and deliberately making mistakes. Hughes follows this discussion with an exploration of women as socialists and feminists. While there were feminist socialists, many working-class women were excluded from formal feminist organisations due to their middle-class leadership and priorities. As a result, many lower-class women did not identify as feminists, yet, many socialist women were often driven by the 'politics of the kitchen', bringing 'women's' and 'feminist' issues into mainstream socialism.

The 'politics of the kitchen' drives the rest of this book, with chapters on marriages of conflict, and motherhood and housework. These chapters demonstrate that women who lived with economic insecurity, high unemployment, and domestic violence were politicised through their everyday lives. She demonstrates not only that ideals such as 'companionate marriage' had little impact on the lives of lower-class women in Scotland, but also the numerous coping strategies women had to survive in a difficult environment. These included female support networks, female violence, resistance to models of femininity based around an unachievable domesticity, manipulation of charities and state support, and finding power and self-legitimation in their roles as competent, capable housewives in a complex world. These chapters provide fascinating detail into the ways a group with very little formal power negotiated, manipulated and found places of strength and authority. Hughes, then takes this to its logical conclusion, and in a final chapter demonstrates the ways that this politicisation in the kitchen brought women into formal political protests, as actors in rent strikes and housing campaigns, and as pickets, fundraisers and demonstrators during strike actions over men's wages and working conditions.

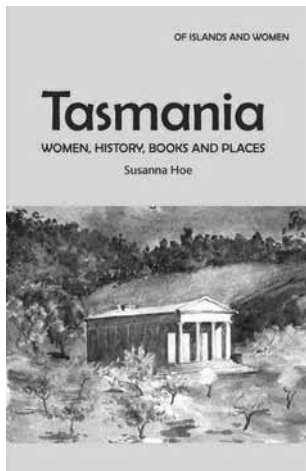
This is a work with a wealth of detail and complexity of experience, showing particular sensitivity to the interaction between gender and class in the formation of political identities. Drawing directly on the stories of the historical actors themselves, it is at places both inspiring and moving. Indeed, at times, the reader is left wanting more of the oral testimonies that make this book so colourful, but it would be difficult to see what else could be left out to allow the extra space! Overall, it provides a

fascinating contribution to the history of Scottish labour politics, to the history of working-class women's lives, and to discussions of power relationships both within and beyond working-class communities.

**Susanna Hoe, *Tasmania: Women, History, Books and Places***

Oxford: Holo Books, The Women's History Press, 2010. £19.99, 978-0954405663 (paperback), pp. 391

Reviewed by Geraldine Perriam  
*University of Glasgow*



Islands and women are central to much of Susanna Hoe's work and this volume examines in extensive detail the lives of women in Tasmania, post-European settlement, from 1792 to 2010. Tasmania, the island to the south of mainland Australia, is often overlooked or merits only brief treatment in many histories of Australia and even in those specifically related to women. The author's comprehensive treatment of the lives of women, both

indigenous and immigrant, addresses this lack through a comprehensive account that draws on numerous archival sources. The book is divided into two distinct sections. The first is a chronological account in four parts. The second is a series of itineraries based around particular locations in Tasmania into which are woven historical sidelights on individual women and collective activity by women.

The book adds to the collective project of uncovering and narrating the lives of women in the Australian post-colonial context. Given the depth and breadth of the sources consulted by the author for this work, one can hardly describe these lives as 'hidden', more ignored. The colonial project in Australia effectively sidelined, excluded (and in some cases, terminated) women and indigenous people from written histories. In the case of Tasmania, it perpetuated particular narratives and myths that contributed to a wider culture of frontier, white, masculinist prominence that continues to be played out, particularly in the sporting arena. In this work, the author gives names and voices to the women through quoting narrative accounts, official documents and fiction.

One of the features of this work is the number of women held effectively in slavery by men. The convict women had very little choice, since to leave their 'masters' was akin to escape and a matter for flogging and in some cases, hanging. Indigenous women who were held captive for seal hunting were treated brutally, both

in captivity and as a result of attempts to escape. The geographical location, Tasmania's isolation from the mainland left captive women with no options and very little opportunity for redress.

The breadth of this work ensures that the diverse experiences of women are explored, including their agency. Women's attempts to develop networks, groups and other formations, including those of warrior women, are documented here. The complexities of isolation and colonisation produced resistance and complicity but the extensive development in this work of the individual narrative means that the women are not mere footnotes but named and given identity. One woman, Enid (mistakenly called 'Edith' in the index) Lyons, was married to the state premier. Her attempts to enter parliament were rewarded after his death when she became a member of the Federal House of Representatives and later, a member of cabinet. With eleven children, this single mother, whose achievement was significant, came in for some criticism but there was also a good deal of support.

Other women, such as Jessie A. Ackermann, became activists, campaigning for women's working and living conditions and ensuring that their voices were heard. What is obvious from this book is that women were actively engaged in a number of spheres in Tasmania, as their own words and those of the author show. The detailed itineraries enable one to 'move about' the island, identifying the geography of each woman and the spaces they inhabited. Although the 'books' of the title appear irregularly, there are numerous sources that have been identified with and for women. The tendency for the text to jump about does make it an uneven read but with such a vast subject and number of sources, this is perhaps understandable.

The collective and individual narratives are told with humanity and humour, bringing a vivid set of portraits into view. Nobody can now ask, "Where are the women?" in the history of Tasmania. Susanna Hoe has told us very clearly where they are and how to find them.

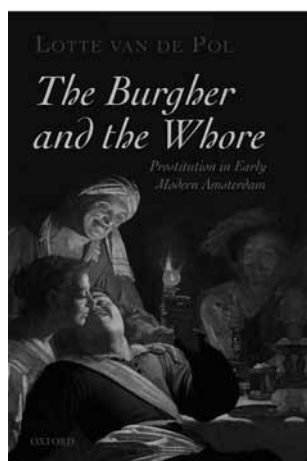
**Lotte van de Pol, *The Burgher and the Whore: Prostitution in Early Modern Amsterdam***

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. £30.00, 978 0199211401 (hardback), pp. 269

Reviewed by Catherine Lee  
*University of Kent/The Open University*

*The Burgher and the Whore* is a detailed and meticulously researched investigation of prostitution in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Amsterdam. In a field where prostitution in the Victorian period has tended to receive most attention from historians, this book's focus on the pre-industrial period provides a valuable counterpoint.

Using a stimulating combination of archival and literary sources, van de Pol is interested in the relationship



between reality and the myths and narratives that grew up around prostitution. She reminds us that the documented court-room interrogations of over 8,000 prosecution cases that took place between 1650 and 1750, which constitute her principal archival source, are just as much constructions as the impressive array of popular literary sources that are mustered to illuminate, support and clarify the court

records. Eschewing sharp distinctions between so-called factual or fictional sources of information, the result is a richly evocative and illuminating approach to the period and to the subject matter.

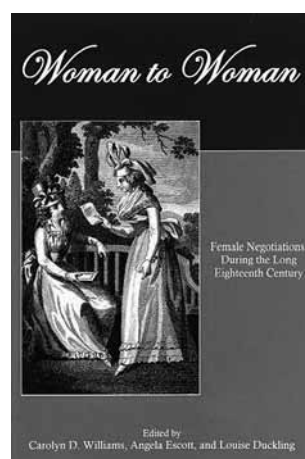
*The Burgher and the Whore* is structured thematically. The discussion ranges widely over, for example, Amsterdam's reputation as a centre for prostitution, prosecution policy, police corruption, the influence of Christian thought and Church teachings on attitudes towards prostitution, and the relationship between prostitution and seafaring. The 'Burgher' of the title refers to the concept of honour which underpinned Amsterdam's societal relationships, and which stood in contrast to the perceived lack of respectability of those at the margins, including both the women who practised prostitution and those who profited from it. It is a central argument of the book that there are no simple dichotomies to be made between rich and poor, respectable and dishonourable, when examining the local economics of prostitution, but that it was embedded in Amsterdam society. Van de Pol argues persuasively that the organisation of prostitution is best understood in the context of the wider mainstream economy; that is to say, that the intricate supply and demand relationships between wealth, criminality and prostitution, immigration and poverty, mercantile endeavour and war meant that those at the wealthy and respectable centre of society were as economically dependent upon those who lived at the margins as the reverse was true.

The early modern focus of this book throws up a number of interesting areas of discussion, which serve to illuminate the more familiar Victorian debates. Historical context is provided, for example, to account for the opposing policing policies of regulation and suppression that preoccupied nineteenth century discourse. The origins of this divergence, it is argued, lie in the Reformation and in the subsequent change in emphasis from Catholic forgiveness of sin, to Protestant damnation. Similarly, the period under examination here witnessed a notable shift from condemnation of immorality in the widest sense (sexual acts conducted outside of marriage) towards a more narrow focus on the sale of sexual services as a livelihood. This change in understanding, it is demonstrated, was accompanied by one of terminology, with the replacement of 'whore' by 'prostitute'.

The current edition is an English translation of a revised version, aimed at the general reader, of a much longer original work. It is interesting to speculate (though some brief mention is made of this) what was omitted in the editing process, but it may explain, for example, the lack of reference to the work of other historians in this field. As a result, the theoretical underpinnings of the book are implicit rather than explicit, and wider debates in the field are not addressed. *The Burgher and the Whore* is, nevertheless, a valuable contribution to scholarship as it stands, and its combined qualitative and quantitative methodological approach provides a rich and detailed investigation of prostitution in the period, suitable both for the student as well as for the general reader.

**Carolyn D. Williams, Angela Escott, and Louise Duckling, eds, *Woman to Woman: Female Negotiations During the Long Eighteenth Century***

Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2010.  
£53.50, ISBN 978 0874130881 (hardback), pp. 258 + 4 illustrations  
Reviewed by Julie Day  
*Independent Researcher*



The aim of this collection of ten multi-disciplinary essays is to explore how 'collaboration enabled eighteenth-century women to intervene in military and political affairs, achieve literary success, experience religious fulfilment, and engage in philanthropic projects' (p. 28). The collection is in memory of Mary Waldron, a founding member of the Women's Studies Group whose own area of scholarship is

presented in the first chapter. Given Waldron's extensive academic network and her support and generous encouragement of other specialists in feminist studies, *Woman to Woman* appropriately brings together the collaborative works of twelve leading women academics. The term 'negotiation' in the title implies the practical methods or literary references made by these women which enabled their active participation through their domestic, economic and intellectual alliances with other women. This is done effectively by compartmentalising the book into three sections; the first examines family alliances, the second friendships and female sociability, and the third looks at unconventional and adventurous women. Such a technique allows for a great variety of women to be explored and the more recognisable names include Jane Austen, Lady Hamilton and Mary Shelley. The collection covers women from a wide range of social



backgrounds, including royalty, aristocracy, the daughters of clergymen, and prostitutes.

The introductory chapter places these essays within a historiographical context and suggests that positive female collaboration and cooperation has been a neglected part of women's history writing. By utilising previously unexplored archival material the initial framework for the collection sets out to discredit eighteenth-century 'contemptuous representation of chaotic female communities' and instead 'provide evidence of productive and constructive co-operation' (p. 19). In most of the essays it is clear that 'negotiation' arises from the influence of the immediate social circle, be it family, friends, religious groupings or mentors. In becoming the negotiator, these women united in several ways; through the use of public or private space, through literature or print, and through letters and lengthy correspondence. Moreover, 'women were not only capable of efficient cooperation, but also of working together to improve the situation of women in general' (p. 41).

In Waldron's essay on Jane Austen in the first section, we see how the supportive familial network could be reflected in literary works. Through this medium, Austen was able to voice her opinion and negotiate her way through the tired patriarchal views on childbirth and childrearing. In Julie Peakman's essay on Emma Hamilton in the third section, it is the lack of a supportive familial network that provides the trigger for later sociability and the strength of character which unites two women from vastly different backgrounds. For women as a collective group, for example in Betty Hagglund's essay on late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Scottish Quaker women in the second section, it is the printed word which provides reassurance and the common ground through which a connection could be made to like-minded women elsewhere. Similarly, Tanis Hinchcliffe, in her essay on the founding mothers of religious communities in Canada, offers discussion on how mutual interpretation of older values of religious enclosure spurred women into adapting to a new way of life.

There is little to disappoint the reader in this collection. The only criticism is that the term 'negotiation' was often over analysed so that the central theme of an essay was lost amidst heavy comparative discussion. However, this may be more to do with the authors' awareness of how their subject matter rests within this field of scholarly women's history writing. The collection overall is otherwise clear and well-written, with each different piece formulating refreshing ideas and successfully complementing the existing historiography. Research into female companionship and collaboration is in its infancy and this book highlights the fields of study of several academics that are pivotal in encouraging better insight into this subject matter.

**Jean Garner & Kate Foster, eds, *Letters to Grace. Writing Home from Colonial New Zealand***

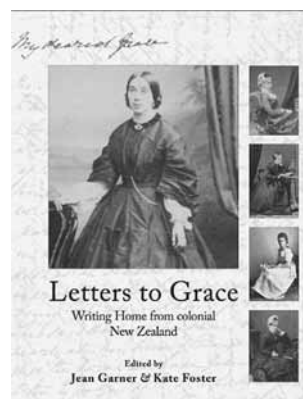
Christchurch, New Zealand: Canterbury University Press, 2011. NZ\$40, 978 1877 257988 (paperback), pp. 203

**Alistair Thomson, *Moving Stories. An Intimate History of Four Women across Two Countries***

Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2011. £18.95, 978 0719 076466 (hardback), pp. xiii + 344

Reviewed by Jane Berney

*The Open University*



I love receiving letters from friends and relatives, but how valuable are personal letters to historians? This is the question that these two books seek to address. Both use letters written home to England by a number of women who, for a variety of reasons, were living in Australia and New Zealand for some part of their adult lives. The editors

of both volumes argue that letters can provide an invaluable insight into how women perceived their role in society as well as how society viewed them.

*Letters to Grace* features letters from four members of the middle-class Hall family living in or around Canterbury, New Zealand, in the 1860s to Grace, who lived in England. Three of the writers, Sarah, Agnes Emma and Rose, were married to Grace's brothers, Thomas, George and John Hall. The fourth writer was Agnes Mildred, daughter of Agnes Emma and George Hall, written when she was a teenager and had returned to New Zealand after her schooling in England. Grace's replies have not survived.

The vast majority of the letters written by three elder women concern details of the minutiae of their lives, such as worries over their children's health, or their own or each other's pregnancies. This is both their charm and their limitation. For example, Rose's husband was a leading politician in New Zealand but we hear nothing of the political events of the period from any of the women. Rose merely comments that John was about to make, or had made, an important speech or attend an official function, without divulging details of the speech or event. In her excellent introduction, Jean Garner explains that this lack of detail was less likely to be due to indifference than a perception by the women themselves that such issues were beyond the domestic sphere of middle-class women. Many of the letters, it

has to be said, are fairly tedious - which is probably an accurate reflection of middle-class women's lives in the mid nineteenth century - but some are heartbreaking as they describe their own and their husband's grief following the death of their babies. By the time the letters were written, the three elder women had lived in New Zealand for several years, so the letters contain few details of the differences between their lives in England and New Zealand; differences are hinted at, most notably in the request for seemingly everyday items such as tablecloths, which, apparently, could not be purchased in New Zealand. Another frequent request was for 'likenesses', a poignant reminder of the vast distance between the women.

The liveliest letters are those written by Agnes Mildred who frequently complains about the

backwardness of New Zealand society and that her Aunt Rose is unkind towards her mother. The letters of the latter contain no such complaints and this demonstrates the pitfalls of using letters as historical evidence: even such personal letters as these are written with an audience in mind. Agnes Emma is beholden to both Rose and Grace so cannot complain about either of them in her letters but her daughter is free to express her own opinion.

The issue of 'audience' is also to the fore in *Moving Stories*, a selection of letters written by four

## Shop Online and Raise Money!

Have you heard about easyfundraising yet? It's the easiest way to help raise money for The Women's History Network! If you already shop online with retailers such as Amazon, Argos, John Lewis, Comet, iTunes, eBay or HMV, then we need you to sign up for free to raise money while you shop!

### So how does it work?

You shop directly with the retailer as you would normally, but if you sign up to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/whn](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/whn) for free and use the links on the easyfundraising site to take you to the retailer, then a percentage of whatever you spend comes directly to us at no extra cost to yourself.

### How much can you raise?

Spend £100 with M&S online or Amazon and you raise £2.50 for us. £100 with WH Smith puts £2.00 in our pocket and so on. There's over 2,000 retailers on their site, and some of the donations can be as much as 15% of your purchase.

### Save money too!

easyfundraising is FREE to use plus you'll get access to hundreds of exclusive discounts and voucher codes, so not only will you be helping us, you'll be saving money yourself.

We've raised over £24.56 with easyfundraising so far but we need your help to keep donations coming in. Sign up at [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/whn](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/whn) and start making a difference ... simply by shopping.

**easyfundraising**  
.org.uk

## BOOKS RECEIVED & CALL FOR REVIEWERS

If you would like to review any of the titles listed below, please email Anne Logan: [bookreviews@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:bookreviews@womenshistorynetwork.org)

Jodi A. Campbell, Elizabeth Ewan, Heather Parker, *The Shaping of Scottish Identities* (Centre for Scottish Studies)

Sue Hawkins, *Nursing and Women's Labour in the Nineteenth Century* (Routledge)

Sophie Heywood, *Catholicism and Children's Literature in France: the Comtesse de Ségur (1799-1874)* (Manchester University Press)

Christina Howells, *Mortal Subjects: Passions of the Soul in late 20<sup>th</sup> century French Thought* (Polity Press)

Rene Kollar, *A Foreign and Wicked Institution? The Campaign against Convents in Victorian England* (James Clarke)

Ann Kramer, *Women Wartime Spies* (Pen and Sword)

David Loades, *The Boleyns: the Rise and Fall of a Tudor Family* (Amberley)

Jennifer Newby, *Women's Lives: Researching Women's Social History 1800-1939* (Pen and Sword)

Elizabeth Norton, *Margaret Beaufort: Mother of a Tudor Dynasty* (Amberley)

Cliona Rattigan, *'What Else Could I do?' Single Mothers and Infanticide, Ireland 1900-1950* (Irish Academic Press)

Margaret Tranovitch, *Melisende of Jerusalem: the World of a Forgotten Crusader Queen* (East and West)

Amy N. Vines, *Women's Power in Late Medieval Romance* (D. S. Brewer)

There are also some titles left from the list published in Issue 67 (Autumn 2011) of the magazine. If you are interested in any of these please email [bookreviews@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:bookreviews@womenshistorynetwork.org)



women who moved to Australia in the 1950s and '60s. Although the letters continually emphasise how happy the women were in their new lives, all did return to England eventually. The letters were written as much to reassure as to inform the family back home. As such there is plenty of detail on the domestic arrangements - the size of their house, garden

and fridge, space to dry clothes and the abundance of cheap food – highlighting the difficulties they had encountered as housewives in post-war Britain. Unlike the Hall women, the women in this volume were all working or lower middle-class girls who did not have servants, so it is not surprising that they comment on how much easier life was in Australia.

*Moving Stories* also includes interviews with the women in which they were asked to reflect on their life choices. All four women had attended grammar schools, but none of them had gone onto university or sought a professional career, as the assumption was that they would all marry and then stay at home to look after their children. All four seemingly accepted this without rancour yet one of the things they loved about Australia was the increased opportunities that were available to them. That they all seized these opportunities is suggestive of how powerful societal norms are on a person's lifestyle choices and expectations. In this respect the book offers a fascinating insight into how women's expectations have changed in the last fifty years.

The books contain many details about the everyday lives of ordinary women and how they represented their lives to their friends and families, and for this reason alone they are both very enjoyable. But can they offer anything more than anecdotal evidence to the historian? If letters are used to illustrate how lives and perceptions have changed then they are very useful tools. For example, many of the letters written by the Hall family refer to the dangers of childbirth and the risk of infant mortality. As all four women lost babies in infancy this was a very real fear, but is not a concern expressed by the women in *Moving Stories*. This is a neat illustration of a very significant difference between the lives of women of the nineteenth century and those of the twentieth, but it can only be inferred from the letters.

## **Betty Hagglund, *Tourist and Travellers: Women's Non-fictional Writing about Scotland, 1770-1830***

Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2010.

£49.95, 978 10845411183 (hardback), pp. viii + 181

Reviewed by Katie Barclay  
*University of Adelaide*



*Tourist and Travellers* explores women's roles in early Scottish tourism at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, discussing the intersection between gender, writing and travel. Hagglund begins with a general chapter of the development of English tourism in Scotland, and the move from 'adventure travellers', exploring the

raw awesomeness of 'undiscovered' nature, to tourists, following set routes and experiences, and the history and development of travel writing in this context. Then, through a discussion of the work of five women (Sarah Murray, Dorothy Wordsworth, Sarah Hazlitt, Anne Grant and the anonymous author of *A Journey to the Highlands of Scotland*), she uncovers how women fitted into this context, as travellers and as authors. Between the earliest writing by the anonymous author of *A Journey* in the 1770s to Sarah Hazlitt in the 1820s, Hagglund highlights both the continuities and changes in elite women's experiences of travel as Scotland moved from an undiscovered territory to a popular tourist destination. The book is complemented by a number of appendices, providing details of the extant travel writings by women during the period, the published guides available before 1826, and more.

The early writers, Anonymous and Sarah Murray, came to Scotland when it was relatively unknown to the English public and with few formal guidebooks to aid them on their journey. Anonymous was responding to Samuel Johnson's *Journey to the Western Isles*, attempting to rehabilitate Scotland from his faint praise, while Sarah Murray was a professional travel writer. Anna Grant, writing at the turn of the century, had married a Highland minister and was integrated into Gaelic culture. She wrote of her travels as a widow, attempting to make a living through her work. In contrast, Dorothy Wordsworth was an early tourist, travelling initially with her brother, William, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and latterly with a female companion. She had read the available tourist guides, followed popular trails, and wrote her memoirs on her return. Sarah Hazlitt came to Scotland to afford

herself of a cheap Scottish divorce, travelling around the country in her spare time, following written guides and writing of her travels, alongside the journey of her divorce, in her diary.

As Hagglund demonstrates, writers, like Anonymous, Murray and Grant, used their writing to give them social authority. Each built up pictures of themselves as competent and knowledgeable, with detailed descriptions of items to pack, appropriate clothing, advice on transportation and accommodation, and the best sights and experiences along the way. They emphasised wearing practical clothing, even at the expense of looking ridiculous, and encouraged their readers to join them in often extremely physical activities, challenging any suggestion that women were too weak or domesticated for travel. Even, Hazlitt, writing in a private diary, took a certain pride in how she was viewed when travelling, suggesting that, even as they tried to normalise it, they recognised the transgressive nature of their behaviour. At the same time, reflecting their social status and their engagement with Romantic discourse, these women participated in colonising the landscape, critiquing its charms for their audience. They also engaged with 'the locals' in patronising ways, either dismissing them as lacking civility, admiring them as noble savages, or paternalistically sympathising with their hardships. Through reflecting on these common motifs, Hagglund highlights the operation of travel writing as a genre, shaping the style, structure and potential impact of their narratives. At the same time, she carefully unpicks how these genre conventions were shaped by the geographic and historical context. Despite this, whether it was Grant whose writing established her as a member of her adopted Highland community, or Hazlitt who used travel and travel writing to cope with the trauma of divorce, these women brought themselves to their narratives, allowing their own voices and agendas to be realised.

At just over 180 pages and in an A5 format, this feels like a 'wee' book, but it is carefully crafted and nicely nuanced. Hagglund weaves together the competing strands of geography, genre and personality to provide insightful perspectives on these writings and to reflect on how an understanding of women as writers aids us in our interpretation of the power dynamics inherent in travel literature. With useful appendices that place these works in their broader context, this book contributes to our understanding of women as writers, as travellers, and as tourists.

## Membership Announcements

You can now manage your WHN membership, update your details, pay your subscription, add your research interests/books and make a donation by logging into the **Members' Area** at [www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org)

### Do you pay your subscription by standing order?

If so, can you check that the payment details reflect the 2012 rates. Don't forget, we have different rates to reflect different personal circumstances, so it is worth checking that you are paying the correct rate for you. Details of the 2012 rates for all categories of members can be found on the inside back cover of the magazine or by logging in to your account at [www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org).

**Why not switch to standing order for your subscription?** It could reduce the cost of your membership fee and certainly helps the Network, by reducing administrative overheads. Please be sure to ask your bank to use your *WHN reference number*, which can be found by logging in to your account at [www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org).

**Has your email address changed?** If we don't have your current details, you may not receive the monthly e-newsletter, included in your membership fee. If you have changed email addresses since joining, or recently acquired a new email address, please update your details by logging into your account at [www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org) OR by emailing the membership secretary.

**All information (or queries) about membership, including requests to set up a payment by standing order and changes to personal details, can be arranged by logging in to your account at [www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org) OR by emailing [membership@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:membership@womenshistorynetwork.org) OR by mail to Dr Henrice Altink, WHN Membership Secretary, Dept of History, University of York, Heslington, York YO10 5DD.**

## WHN Book Prize

**An annual £500 prize for a first book in women's or gender history**

The Women's History Network (UK) Book Prize is awarded for an author's first single-authored monograph which makes a significant contribution to women's history or gender history and is written in an accessible style. The book must be written in English and be published the year prior to the award being made. To be eligible for the award, the author should be a member of the Women's History Network (UK) and be normally resident in the UK. The prize will be awarded in September 2012.

Entries (books published during 2011) should be submitted by 31 March 2012.

For further information please contact Ann Kettle, chair of the panel of judges, Mediaeval History, School of History, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, Fife KY16 9QW  
Email: [bookprize@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:bookprize@womenshistorynetwork.org)

## Carol Adams Prize

*An annual £100 prize for the best AS, A2 or Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers essay on women's history*

The Women's History Network will award a £100 prize for the best AS, A2 or Scottish Highers or Advanced Highers essay on women's history. This award was set up in honour of the late Carol Adams (first Chief Executive of the GTC) who helped pioneer women's history in schools.

### Essays

- can focus on any aspect of women's history
- should be no longer than 1,500 words
- should include a bibliography
- be word processed
- the front page should include your name, the name of your school and the title of the essay

If you require any further information please contact Dr Paula Bartley at [drpauladudley@hotmail.com](mailto:drpauladudley@hotmail.com). Essays should be sent to this email address.

**Deadline:** The deadline for submission is 31 May 2012. The prize will be awarded in September 2012.



## Clare Evans Prize

*An annual £500 prize for a new essay in the field of GENDER AND HISTORY*

In memory of Dr Clare Evans, a national prize worth £500 is offered annually for an original essay in the field of women's history or gender and history. Essays are considered by a panel of judges set up by the Women's History Network and the Trustees of the Clare Evans Memorial Fund. Subject to the normal refereeing criteria, the winning essay is published in *Women's History Review*.

Clare Evans was an outstanding woman who died tragically of cervical cancer on 30 November 1997, aged just 37. Born in Bath, she read history at the University of Manchester, graduating in 1982. She continued her studies, registering for a PhD at the University whilst preparing and delivering seminars on feminist history, creating the first feminist historiography course in collaboration with Kersten England and Ann Hughes. Clare would have approved of an award which helped women to publish for the first time, giving them the confidence to further develop their ideas.

To be eligible for the award, the candidate must be a) a woman who has not yet had a publication in a major academic journal, b) not in a permanent academic position, and c) normally resident in the UK.

The article should be in English and of 6,000 to 8,000 words in length including footnotes. We welcome submissions from any area of women's history or gender and history.

Please send completed essays to Ann Hughes by 31 May 2012. Please also include brief biographical details (education, current job or other circumstances) and include a cover sheet with title only (not name) to facilitate anonymous judging.

Those wishing to apply for the prize should first email or write for further details to:

Ann Hughes, Department of History and Classics, University of Keele, Keele, Staffs, ST5 5BG.  
Email: [hia21@keele.ac.uk](mailto:hia21@keele.ac.uk).





## Committee News

The Steering Committee met on Saturday 19 November at the Institute of Historical Research, London. Four new members who were elected at the conference joined us and volunteered for committee roles: Kate Murphy is joining the magazine team, taking over from Sue Hawkins who is coming to the end of her term, as well as the publicity team; Linsey Robb will be monitoring the website and fielding enquiries, a role that Claire Jones, our publisher, has done to date; Laura Sandy will be dealing with all enquiries about back issues of the magazine; and Jocelynn Scutt will take over the blog from Katie Barclay.

The Treasurer, Grainne Goodwin, reported that the finances are in a good condition and that Anne Logan, the Gift Aid representative, has secured gift aid relief through HMRC. Henrice Altink, the Membership Secretary, who was unable to attend the meeting, sent a report noting that numbers are healthy and that she is continuing to follow up outstanding subscriptions. Fiona Reid, co-organiser of the next conference 'Women, State, Nation – Creating Gendered Identities', attended to report on progress. Claire Midgely, President of the IFRWH (International Federation for Research in Women's History), reported on the combined WHN-IFRWH conference to be held in Sheffield in 2013 entitled 'Women's Histories – Local & Global'.

All WHN members are invited to attend steering committee meetings; these take place on nominated Saturdays at 11.30am at the Institute of Historical Research. Please consult the WHN web for the date of the next meeting or email [convenor@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:convenor@womenshistorynetwork.org).

## Publishing in *Women's History Magazine*

*Women's History Magazine* welcomes contributions from experienced scholars and those at an earlier stage in their research careers. We aim to be inclusive and fully recognise that women's history is not only lodged in the academy. All submissions are subject to the usual peer review process.

Articles should be 3000-8000 words in length. Contributors are requested to submit articles in final form, carefully following the style guidelines available at:

**[www.womenshistorynetwork.org.uk/whnmagazine/authorguide.html](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org.uk/whnmagazine/authorguide.html)**

Please email your submission, as a word attachment, to the editors at

**[editor@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:editor@womenshistorynetwork.org)**





# What is the Women's History Network?

The WHN was founded in July 1991. It is a national charity 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

## What does the WHN do?

### Annual Conference

Each year the WHN holds a national conference for WHN members and others. The conference provides everyone interested in women's history with a chance to meet and it has become 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 *Women's History 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	£15*	Overseas minimum	£40
Low income (*under £20,000 pa)	£25*	UK Institutions	£45
High income	£40*	Institutions overseas	£55
Life Membership	£350		

\* £5 reduction when paying by standing order.

Charity Number: 1118201. Membership application/renewal, Gift Aid Declaration and Banker's Order forms are available on the back cover or join online at [www.womenshistorynetwork.org](http://www.womenshistorynetwork.org)

# Women's History Network Contacts

## Steering Committee Officers:

*Membership, subscriptions*

**membership@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*or write to Dr Henrice Altink, WHN Membership Secretary, Department of History, University of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD*

*Finance, Dr Gráinne Goodwin:*

**treasurer@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*Committee Convenor, Professor Barbara Bush:*

**convenor@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*Web Team:*

**web@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*WHN Book Prize, Chair, Ms Ann Kettle:*

**bookprize@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*UK Representative for International Federation for Research into Women's History, Professor Krista Cowman:*

**ifrwh@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*Charity Representative, Dr Anne Logan:*

**charityrep@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*Newsletter Editor, Ms Jane Berney:*

**newsletter@womenshistorynetwork.org**

## Magazine Team:

*Editors: Dr Katie Barclay, Dr Sue Hawkins, Ms Ann Kettle, Dr Anne Logan, Dr Juliette Pattinson, Dr Emma Robertson:*

**editor@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*For magazine submissions, steering committee and peer review:*

**editor@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*For Book Reviews: Dr Anne Logan:*

**bookreviews@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*or send books to her at University of Kent, Gillingham Building, Chatham Maritime, Kent, ME4 4AG.*

*Advertising, Ms Ann Kettle:*

**advertising@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*Steering Committee Liaison, Dr Juliette Pattinson:*

**liaison@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*For magazine back issues and queries please email:*

**editor@womenshistorynetwork.org**

*You may now join the WHN online – just go to  
**www.womenshistorynetwork.org** and follow the instructions.  
Payments, standing-order mandates and Gift-Aid declarations can all be  
accessed online as well – see panel on page 48 for further details*

## 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 / have filled out & returned to my bank the Banker's Order Form / 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, if applicable, your cheque to Dr Henrice Altink, WHN Membership Secretary, Department of History,  
University of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD  
Email: [membership@womenshistorynetwork.org](mailto:membership@womenshistorynetwork.org)

---

## Gift aid declaration

Name of Charity: Women's History Network

Name : .....

Address: .....

..... Post Code: .....

I am a UK taxpayer and I want the charity to treat all donations (including membership subscriptions) I have made since 6 April 2000, and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date ...../...../.....

### Notes

1. If your declaration covers donations you may make in the future:

- Please notify the charity if you change your name or address while the declaration is still in force
- You can cancel the declaration at any time by notifying the charity—it will then not apply to donations you make on or after the date of cancellation or such later date as you specify.

2. You must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the tax year (currently 28p for each £1 you give).

3. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and capital gains equal to the tax that the charity reclaims, you can cancel your declaration (see note 1).

4. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment tax return.

If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, ask the charity. Or you can ask your local tax office for leaflet IR113 Gift Aid.

---

### Banker's Order

To (bank) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Account no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Pay to the account of the Women's History Network, Account No. 91325692 at the National Westminster Bank, Stuckeys Branch, Bath (sort code 60—02—05), on \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_, and annually thereafter, on the same date, the sum of

(in figures) £ \_\_\_\_\_ (in words) \_\_\_\_\_.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_