Women's History Today

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Special Issue - Focus on Undergraduate Research

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Spotlight on Research
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In Profile
From the Archives

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Call for Papers

Women's History Network Annual Conference 'Addressing the Nation' 2-3 September 2022 (Online)

Autumn 2022 marks the centenary of the BBC. From almost the very start, women worked in many capacities including behind the scenes, making programmes and speaking on air. This conference will explore how women across the world were 'addressing the nation' and other political and social communities. Not just as broadcasters but also, for example, as activists, actors, journalists, writers, cartoonists, orators, storytellers and public figures. It encompasses all places and time periods.

We invite submissions of 150 – 200-word abstracts for 15 -minute papers which take a critical look at these areas of history. Proposals are welcomed from scholars working at all levels including those without an institutional affiliation. *We also welcome proposals from non-academics working in, for example, heritage or other areas of public or community history.*

As part of WHN's mission to support postgraduate scholars, we also welcome and encourage participation from post-graduate researchers interested in any other areas of Women's History to the Open Strand. Contributors to this strand are asked to propose a 10-minute lightning talk only.

All submissions must be on the downloadable form available at:
https://womenshistorynetwork.org/the-womens-history-network-annual-conference/
Please email to: whnconference2022@gmail.com by 22 May 2022

EDITORIAL

Writing and research can be challenging. However, they afford one of the greatest satisfactions – the ability to share your labours through publication. As historians, this is an expected part of our chosen profession, but the process can be daunting. Since 2020, the Women's History Network has showcased undergraduate research through its Undergraduate Dissertation Prize and many of the winners and runners-up have published blog posts on our website. The suggestion to go further and give undergraduate students a chance to publish their first academic articles was proposed by our former Chair, Maggie Andrews. This special issue is the first iteration of this effort. In addition to dissertation prize winners, contributors also include participants from the Women's History Network Student Conference 2021: 'Studying Herstories'. Alongside the main articles, the *In Profile*, *From the Archive* and *Spotlight on Research* sections also feature undergraduate researchers and prize winners.

While the subjects covered cut across a wide time span, from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, there are similar themes of bodily autonomy and identity. Frances Norman's, '"She comitted that abominable act of uncleaness": Locating Female Sexual Agency in Presbyterian Ireland, c. 1690–1750', begins by looking at sexual agency as mediated through religious discipline in eighteenth-century Ireland. Her research highlights the ways that women submitted to or resisted church discipline through the Presbyterian church courts. Women were found both to conform to social norms, but also demonstrated flexibility in defining sexual sin. This was accomplished by either refusing to submit to church discipline or dispensed by the courts for their own ends such as - employing these eccleiastical tribunals to determine paternity, win financial support or gain access to baptisms, for children born out of wedlock.

Esther Bennett's, '*A Harlot's Progress*: Examining perceptions of prostitution through printed literature and visual satire in Eighteenth-Century England', also considers social conventions and sexual sin, this time through the lens of print and visual satire in eighteenth-century London. Prostitution is celebrated, satirised and condemned through 'whore' biographies and popular prints, giving a nuanced look at eighteenth-century social mores that were more ambiguous than, and occasionally more tolerant than, attitudes towards prostitution apparent in later eras.

Visual manifestation of womanhood through clothing is the theme of Olivia Terry's article, 'Worn in the Words: Women's Relationship with Clothing and Textiles in the American West, 1836-1900'. Taking inspiration from her great-great-grandmother's autobiography, Terry charts the ways in which women used dress to maintain their femininity and respectability during the often-arduous journey westward. While clothing became symbolic of the lives women left behind, attire also served as cultural signifiers that maintained class and race-based feelings of social superiority over Native Americans, particularly Native American women.

Moving on to the twentieth century, Amy Joyce, '"Our Bodies, Our Lives, Our Choice": a study of the women's movements and pro-choice campaigns in the Maritime Provinces of Canada and Scotland, 1970-80s', again turns to women's control of their bodies and political activism. Joyce posits that the shared cultural heritage between Scotland and Canada provides a useful lens through which to compare tactics and evaluate the success of women's activism. Joyce further concludes that Scotland's more successful campaigns were rooted in both its international linkages and networks, and a more muted influence of religious organisations.

Finally, Amal Malik's exploration of women of South Asian heritage in Britain, 'Storytelling as protest: how did South Asian women forge solidarity and create spaces for their community in Britain?', combines the topics of political activism and sexuality with the use of cultural signifiers. Her examination of the 1980s activist group the Sari Squad and the 1990s London South Asian LGBTQ+ dance club, Club Kali, uses oral history interviews and documentaries to trace how these groups

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Cover Image: Harris's List or Cupid's London Directory

used traditional iconography to highlight their different initiatives. Fighting against unequal immigration legislation, the Sari Squad used clothing as a symbol for their protest group. Club Kali also embraced traditional South Asian motifs and music to create a safe space for LGBTQ+ South Asians in the burgeoning London club scene of the 1990s.

These themes extend into our regular features. *In Profile*, our 2021 Dissertation Prize winner, Olivia Terry, discusses how clothing and her passion for history have intersected. In *From the Archives* Elissa Stoddard, 2021 Dissertation Prize runner-up, explores the way COVID-19 impacted her research journey into the 1990s rave scene through fashion and photography. *Spotlight on Research* reflects on undergraduate experiences of learning about the history of feminism at Queen Mary University of London. Sophie Ballinger, Emily Clements, Saffron Kricha, Phoebe Storch and their lecturer, Lyndsey Jenkins, discuss the currents of the Women's Liberation Movement, its lasting legacy and the fights still underway.

We would like to thank everyone who made this issue possible, particularly the hard-working students who revised their dissertations for publication and also our peer reviewers. We hope you enjoy it.

Kate Terkanian and Angela Platt, Special Issue editors

'She comitted that abominable act of uncleaness': Locating Female Sexual Agency in Presbyterian Ireland, c. 1690–1750

Frances Norman

In 1704 reports reached the Kirk-Session (or Session) of Aghadowey, County Derry, of the misbehaviour of a woman named Jean Cargil. In addition to a rumour that there was 'some foul appearance of scandal' between Jean and a man named William McAulay, she was further accused of 'unseemly … carriage' with another man named Daniel McAlester.[1] Jean appeared twice before the Session 'denying these presumptions alledgd, ag[ains]t her' but refused to swear an oath of her innocence.[2] Jean's actions suggest that female sexuality was neither constrained to courting or marital relationships, nor always to one partner. Moreover, a previous rebuke before the Session did not necessarily deter women from sexual activity. Jean's relapse into sexual sin, and her subsequent denial of that sin before the Session, is representative of a woman's ability to retain her sexual agency. This article then re-examines the role of sex in the daily lived experiences of Irish women across the long eighteenth century. Drawing on cases involving women (like Jean) who appeared before the Irish Presbyterian church courts, it examines women's interactions with sex outside of the narratives that relegate sexual activity solely to the formation of courtship and marital relationships. It considers sexual agency, not as an opposition to patriarchy, but as the ability of women to make choices about their sexuality, influence the narrative surrounding their sexual actions, and take an active role in ecclesiastical sexual discipline.

The eighteenth century provides a rich background of varied change against which to frame the study of sex. It is regarded as a turning point in the history of sex, with Karen Harvey citing it as 'the century of sex and the body'.[3] This period witnessed changes not only to physiological understandings of sex and the body, but also to the sexual practices in which people participated. However, the study of sex in the eighteenth century brings its own challenges. The concept of sexuality is a modern one, with Kim Phillips and Barry Reay arguing that the application of modern terms and concepts of sexuality to the study of premodern sex serves only to hinder the historian's understanding.[4] The most notable of the premodern conceptions of sex is outlined by Thomas Laqueur, who writes of the pre-Enlightenment 'one-sex' model of sex and the post-Enlightenment opposing 'two-sex' model.[5] The one-sex model saw men and women as physiologically the same, with women's genitals internally mirroring men's and the sexes separated humourally rather than biologically. Laqueur argues that over the eighteenth century, the two-sex model of biologically opposing sexes emerged, placing men and women as distinct sexual opposites with clear biological delineations. Whilst Laqueur's dating of the two-sex model has been disputed, his link between this sexual model and Enlightenment ideals, and the subsequent effect this had on female sexuality, still holds.[6]

These changes affected the perceived sexual role of women. As the supposed physiological boundaries between men and women became more clear-cut, women were re-imagined as characteristically oppositional to men and relegated to the realms of sexual passivity and domesticity.[7] In order to study female sexuality therefore, it must first be viewed and defined through this premodern framework. Phillips and Reay argue that all sexuality that positions sexual desire as an aspect of the inner self is a modern construction.[8] Whilst acknowledging that the history of sexuality has been heavily influenced by modern ideas of sexual identity and politics, Tim Hitchcock suggests that the absence of modern understandings of sexuality do not make early modern sexualities any less complex.[9] Examining public sexual discourse, Hitchcock reveals the influence of cultural context on sexual desire, concluding that most eighteenth-century English ribaldry and pornography reinforced, rather than opposed, social sexual norms.[10] Phillips and Reay also assert that 'Sex … must be seen in the context of power'.[11] Katie Barclay asserts that eighteenth-century Scottish bedding rituals acted partially 'to define the nature of the marital relationship that followed',

framing sexual intimacy in relation to patriarchal power.[12] Premodern female sexuality therefore, can be defined not as an external expression of innate, internal desire, but as women's interactions with sex and the meaning put onto sex acts as a result of the wider cultural context of sexual relationships and the inextricable relationship between power, patriarchy and sex.

While a rich body of scholarship exists on eighteenth-century sexuality in Britain and Europe, historical research on the gendered dimensions of sexuality in Ireland is much less extensive. This is due, in part, to the survival of primary sources and archival material; the records of the ecclesiastical courts, which underpin much of the work on English and Scottish sexualities, do not survive in great numbers in Ireland. Of those that do, Presbyterian church court records are largely neglected in Irish historical research. Scholarship on Irish sexuality predominantly focuses on the Catholic population, emphasising the country's low illegitimacy rates, the apparent modesty of Irish women and the shame and stigma of sexual deviance and illegitimacy. These views leave no space for the Ulster Presbyterian population, who are singled out for high rates of illegitimacy and are therefore regarded as being unrepresentative of the country as a whole.[13] Maria Luddy and Mary O'Dowd however, note that the surviving records suggest that pre-marital sex was not uncommon across all primary denominations in Ireland, not just within Presbyterianism.[14] Whilst in Irish Presbyterian communities sexual activity did not play a formal role in the formation of marital relationships, it was not uncommon for courting couples to engage in sexual behaviour.[15] Although the parish of Carnmoney had lower illegitimacy rates than England, the percentage of female congregants who had been pregnant before their marriage was found to be 25%.[16] Extramarital fornication may not have been uncommon, but it was still largely restricted to relationships where marriage was the expected outcome. Moreover, it was still seen and treated by the church as a deviant behaviour that needed to be controlled and punished.

The Presbyterian church courts were formed at three levels: the Kirk-Session, Presbytery, and Synod. This article draws on a database of 314 cases of sexual offences that were recorded across three Kirk-Session minute books—Aghadowey, Carnmoney, and Templepatrick. The Kirk-Session was the lowest level court, formed at a congregational level and governed by the minister and selected parish members, referred to as 'Elders'.[17] The Session minutes represent a cross-section of the daily concerns and disputes within Presbyterian communities and therefore, are a key resource in constructing understandings of everyday sexuality.[18] As the Presbyterian church held no legal authority over its congregants, it relied on social control and the community nature of discipline in order to function. The community was involved in sexual discipline every step of the way, from reporting gossip and suspicion of sexual deviance to the Session, to the atonement of sexual sin in the form of public rebuke before the congregation. Andrew Blaikie and Paul Gray have suggested that the community role in the absolution of sexual sin aided the purge of social, as well as religious, shame for sexual deviance.[19] In Presbyterian communities in rural Scotland, defiance of church discipline, in the form of refusal to appear publicly before the congregation, was not uncommon. Despite the Session's lack of legal control over their congregants, the utilisation of social and community control ensured the relevance of the church courts within Presbyterian communities and the policing of sexuality.[20] Church and community involvement in sexual discipline remained strong throughout the period studied in this article. Scottish examples suggest that church control over non-sexual aspects of discipline declined before that of sexual discipline, with church interference in premarital pregnancy becoming less common from the 1760s.[21] Moreover, community involvement in sexual discipline began to decline towards the end of the century. Accordingly by the early nineteenth century Presbyteries were advising local parishes to confine sexual discipline to private rebuke before the Session, rather than publicly before the congregation.[22]

Whilst it is important to acknowledge the gendered aspect of the church courts, which were staffed entirely by men, the nature of church discipline was nonetheless relatively egalitarian.[23] It is generally agreed by historians, in both Ireland and Scotland, that women were not unfairly targeted by Presbyterian church discipline. Whilst women have been found more likely to appear for relapses into sexual sin, this is largely attributed to their ability to show visible signs of sin – i.e. pregnancy – rather than evidence of a targeted condemnation of female sexuality.[24] In a gendered analysis of cases of sexual deviance before the Presbytery, Blaikie and Gray found the majority of defendants to be men.[25] The cases that make up the primary research of this article did not suggest a gender bias in those appearing before the Session for sexual offences. Of the 314 cases catalogued for this article, 285 of these offences named a female offender and 289 a male offender. Furthermore, although women were found to be 29% more likely to appear for repeat sexual offences than men, the number of unique offenders who appeared before the Session was 247 women and 245 men. The way church discipline for sexual deviance was enacted suggests that, despite the authorial power of the church being male, it created a space where female voices could be heard and women could have input into their sexuality and its discipline.

Although the difficulty of locating women's voices within legal records, that were neither written by them nor for them, must be considered, it is still possible to read women's agency within church court records of sexual discipline. Malcolm Gaskill argues that legal records offer as much insight into historical mentalities and experience as they do the history of crime and that administrative sources, such as regional legal records, perhaps best reflect the attitudes of ordinary people.[26] Laura Gowing has suggested that women's stories of their sexual experiences, as told in courts, tended to emphasise their passivity and that this was partially due to women putting forth a specific narrative of themselves as sexually vulnerable and compliant to men.[27] This article draws on cases that reject the mainstream narrative of female sexual passivity and the relegation of female sexuality to the formation of marital relationships. Women's voices in

these documents therefore, are much more likely to reveal their true attitudes towards their sexuality than to present a false narrative designed to reduce their discipline and manage their social shame.

This article does not define women's agency as oppositional to patriarchy. Therefore, it does not draw only on actions that appear to defy mainstream patriarchal power, but on any response to authority that allows women to retain control over their sexual actions. Indeed, writing on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France, Julie Hardwick notes that paternity suits are often interpreted by historians as evidence of the state's efforts to control female sexuality, even though the women who made these claims were using the state's legal system 'as a means to control their reproductive and sexual lives and discipline their male partners'.[28] Women's rejection, subversion and redefinition of ecclesiastical discipline allowed for numerous expressions of their agentic control over their sexual actions, some of which will be examined in this article.

The following discussion aims to investigate women's interactions with sex and sexual discipline in a way that has previously been overlooked. By reading these sources against the grain, this article intends to uncover avenues through which women's sexual agency and independence can be located. This was accomplished by not only defying ecclesiastical control, but also by submitting to – or even seeking out – sexual discipline. In doing so, it contributes to an emerging body of work focusing on women, sexuality and Presbyterianism in Ireland – following that of Leanne Calvert, Maria Luddy and Mary O'Dowd. Drawing on Presbyterian sources, it likewise engages in the drive to connect studies of Irish sexuality to the wider eighteenth-century world.[29] The argument of this article is organised into two parts. The first explores women's sexual agency through their response to church discipline, including cases of women refusing to submit to church discipline, denying accusations of sin, and committing repeat sexual offences despite previous rebuke. The second locates agency in illegitimate motherhood and within the confines of church discipline. It examines how illegitimate mothers were able to hold putative fathers to account through their submission to church discipline and to use this discipline to their fiscal and social advantage.

She 'appears … obstinate in denyall of guilt': Sexual Agency & Female Resistance

The Presbyterian church court minutes demonstrate how women engaged in sexual relationships, despite the wider cultural discourses that relegated them to sexual passivity, often acting against the advice of the Session. A good example is the case of Sarah Campbell, who appeared before the Session of Carnmoney, County Antrim, in 1710 for the sin of adultery, alongside John Wilson, a married man. Sarah had given birth to a baby boy and the couple desired that he could be baptised.[30] Sarah was instructed by the Session not to visit John's marital home, a command she appears to have ignored. Following her second public rebuke for adultery, the Session 'askt whether she frequents John Wilson's house … which she could not deny'.[31] The Session warned Sarah that they could not take further steps in her absolution if she continued to see John however, come March, Sarah was still often seen at John's house. Sarah quit the parish from May 1711 to January 1712 to act as a wet nurse in Belfast. Following her return, she was again called before the Session and admitted that she had been to John's house 'two or three times, the reason of her going (as she says), that she was sent for by Wilson's wife who has that child begot in Adultery to nurse … but says she never went but when sent for'.[32] That the child was cared for by John and his wife and not Sarah is remarkable in itself. Barclay has observed within Scottish Presbyterian communities that the mother was seen as the natural guardian of an illegitimate child, with the father expected to provide financial support.[33] Whilst some fathers did request custody of their illegitimate children, this was rare and, thus far, there is no evidence of such within Irish Presbyterian court records. Although the mother was generally the legal parent of an illegitimate child, she was not always the primary carer, and Barclay notes that mothers sometimes left their child in the care of another in order to return to work.[34] Sarah's work as a wet nurse may have led to John and his wife taking on the child's care. Nonetheless, this custody arrangement was enforced by the church, as they asked Sarah to stay away from the Wilson household. The following year, Sarah's disregard for the Session's advisement was overshadowed by a 'fama clamosa (i.e. a rumour) of [her] … being again with child', which she later confirmed to be John Wilson's.[35]

Sarah's relapse into sexual sin exemplifies one way that women were able to exercise agency over their sexuality. Despite the Session's warnings that Sarah and John should remain apart after their initial sin, and even following the introduction by the Session of repercussions for further interaction, Sarah continued to frequent John's home and subsequently fell pregnant with their second child. Although she defied their orders to stay away from John, Sarah submitted to the church's discipline for her sexual deviance. She appeared both before the Session and publicly for her first pregnancy and submitted to both the Kirk-Session and Presbytery for her second. The typical punishment for sexual deviance was to forgo the church ordinances of infant baptism and communion, which could only be restored by submitting to public rebuke before the congregation on at least two consecutive sabbaths.[36] It is possible therefore, that Sarah's submission to the Session was born not out of a sense of guilt, but instead to satisfy the Session and secure baptism for her child. Sarah engaged in church discipline for her own ends.

Sarah's refusal to follow the Kirk's advisement that she no longer visit John, and subsequent relapse into sexual sin, also stands testament to her expression of individuality and independence within the bounds of sexual discipline. Analysing the content of adulterous love letters, Kate Gibson and Sally Holloway have found that women who engaged in extra-marital affairs often articulated their understandings of sexual desire and love to suit their circumstances.[37] Barclay has argued for a hierarchy of sexual sin within the Presbyterian church,

wherein both the church and the congregation saw some offences as lesser than others, notably pre-marital fornication and scandalous carriage.[38] Similarly, Irish Presbyterian women engaging in extra-marital sex, or even fornication, may have reimagined their perceptions of sexual sin in such a way that their sexual actions no longer fell into this category, or became lesser offences. Barclay further questioned by what means the Scottish Presbyterian population were able to reconcile their faith with the not uncommon practice of irregular sexual activity, suggesting that one way this was managed was through their submission to church discipline and additionally, that congregants were willing to negotiate not only the terms of their punishment, but also the boundaries of sexual sin.[39] Sarah's submission to church discipline, her simultaneous continued interaction with John and a second illegitimate pregnancy suggest that she formed her own definition of sexual sin corresponding with her actions. Further, through her submission to church discipline, she was able to reconcile this expression of her sexuality with its expected role within the confines of ecclesiastical control.

The refusal to submit to church discipline allowed women to maintain their sexual agency in a variety of ways. In June 1703, Mary Morison appeared before Carnmoney Session for her sin of fornication 'but declin'd to stand publickly and confess'.[40] Over the following months, Mary was called before the Session multiple times; twice she did not appear and on three more occasions she further declined to confess her sin before the congregation.[41] Janet Forest appeared before the same Session in April 1705 and acknowledged her sin of pre-marital fornication with her now-husband, Sam Gordon.[42] Upon appearing a second time before the Session, Janet proved herself to be 'unwilling to appear before the congregation'.[43] Mary and Janet likely saw their sexual 'sin' in differing manners – whereas Janet subsequently married her sexual partner, Mary did not. Mary appeared before the Session and 'acknowledg'd guilt of fornication' and, upon conversing with an Elder, was 'asham'd of what she hath done', but declined to appear publicly.[44] Janet, however, acknowledged her sin to the Session but not her guilt and appeared to the Session to be insensible of said sin. Mary's acknowledgement of guilt and shame suggests that while she viewed her fornication as a sin, she did not believe it warranted public penance or she, at least, was not willing to endure that punishment. Janet, on the other hand, appears not to view her actions with the same guilt as Mary.

In a more extreme example in February 1731, Mary Stewart 'Refus[ed] so much as to speak' to Aghadowey Session after it was brought to their attention that she had brought forth an illegitimate child.[45] Despite clear evidence of her sin, i.e. the birth of her child, Mary's refusal to submit to church discipline reveals that women did not necessarily see their sexual actions as sinful and were willing to push back against the church courts in these situations. Such actions enabled Mary to reclaim her sexuality rather than be shamed by it. These women retained agency over their sexuality by refusing to submit to discipline, which they saw as unnecessary and inappropriate. This agency is recovered in differing ways. Mary Morison's agency arose from her assertion of control over the public or private spheres in which she confessed to her sin and sought reproval for her actions. Janet Forest's and Mary Stewart's agency, on the other hand, was derived from their refusal to see their actions as sinful and to allow them to be treated as such by the community and, in Mary's case, by the church.

Rather than refuse to submit to church discipline, some women denied the occurrence of sexual sin altogether. In December 1698, Isabel Young 'absolutely den[ied]' the charge of fornication. In January 1699, she appeared before Carnmoney Session for a second time 'obstinate in denyall of guilt'.[46] Reflecting the findings of Leah Leneman and Rosalind Mitchison, that if the woman was not pregnant nor the couple caught '*in flagrante delicto*' (in the act) it was difficult for a court to prove a sin had been committed. Isabel's denial forced the Session to conclude that they 'could not proceed judicially' with her case.[47] Women like Isabel were able to steadfastly deny their alleged wrongdoing and, in some cases, avoid punishment for a sin that could not be proven. Similarly, Eupham Thomson, despite being caught by her master 'in an indecent posture, lying naked in bed' with William McCraken, a fellow servant, 'den[ied] that they were guilty of the act of uncleanness'.[48] Eupham appeared again in October, affirming that 'no wickedness [was] committed by them'.[49] The Session 'rebukt [Eupham] for her immodesty in lying down in bed with a man' but being unable to prove 'any other guilt than … unbecoming carriage' referred the incident to 'see what some … time may produce', namely to see if Eupham was pregnant.[50] This case did not appear again in the minute book, suggesting that through her continued denial of uncleanness, Eupham was able to avoid punishment for any sexual sin that may have occurred. The denial of sexual sin, if we accept the church's viewpoint that uncleanness did occur, created agency in allowing women to avoid punishment for sexual deviance and, much like the refusal to appear before the Session or congregation, create their own definition of sexual sin and the actions that deserved punishment from the church courts.

'Haveing obtain'd a warrand to apprehend him': Holding Men to Account

Kirk-Session minutes offer insights into how some women found agency through illegitimate motherhood. Rather than being victims of circumstance, some women exhibited a large degree of resilience, holding men accountable for paternity. One such example can be found in the case of Mary Main, who appeared before Templepatrick Session on 25 January 1704 and confessed to adultery with Michael Paul, a married man. Mary was pregnant and named Michael as the father, further claiming that he had offered her ten shillings to put the child on another man named John Johnstone, as 'not [to] trouble him with it'.[51] Various witnesses appeared before the Session attesting to instances of Mary and Michael being alone together and Mary appeared on six separate dates between May and July 1704, confessing both before the Session and the congregation to her 'fall

in adulterie with Mich[a]el Paul'.[52] Despite the growing evidence against him, Michael continued to persist in his denial and offered to swear an oath to his innocence that August.[53] In a further show of strength, Mary offered 'to wait upon the Session when ever she shall be call'd and give her voluntary oath yt Mich[a]el Paul is the father of her childe', emphasising her commitment to holding Michael up in front of the Session and community for his actions.[54] Mary's refusal to take Michael's offered ten shillings to lay the child on another, further underpins the fact that her main goal was to seek accountability from Michael. Financial support does not appear to have been the overriding motive.

In an analysis of paternity cases in late eighteenth-century Leiden, Griet Vermeesch observes that unwed mothers often sought out legal aid as a means of applying pressure to the putative father.[55] Similarly, Mary utilised the church courts and community aspect of sexual discipline to hold Michael accountable for his role in her illegitimate pregnancy. Mary's perseverance paid off; in 1712 Michael came before the Session 'confessing his sin of Adultery commited … in the year 1703'. Whilst Michael attributed his confession to the 'terror of his conscience, from the remarkable judgements of God upon his family' rather than the pressure of Mary's enduring accusation, her continued affirmation that he was the father of her child is no small feat.[56] In a small community, for Mary to name Michael as the father of her child and for him to concurrently deny this for eight years, must have created tension within the parish. Moreover, that Mary did not withdraw her accusations, considering Michael's continued denial, emphasises her determination to hold Michael accountable for his actions, especially as she would not have been receiving financial support during this period.

Elizabeth Morton similarly used the threat of legal action, as well as employing her understanding of the legality of paternity cases, to apply pressure against her former master, William Johnston, when she named him as the father of her illegitimate child in 1706.[57] Although William 'utterly deny'd' her accusations, Elizabeth 'obtain'd a warrand to apprehend him' from the consistorial court – a court operating with legal authority under the Church of Ireland.[58] Moreover, upon appearing before Carnmoney Session in 1710, Elizabeth's mother testified that she heard her daughter 'not only name but also swear to the midwife', during her labour, that William Johnston was the father of her child.[59] The mother's declaration of the father during birthing, and the testimony of midwives were commonly used tools in settling paternity cases, as labouring mothers were thought unlikely or unable to lie. Elizabeth utilised the pressure of legal proceedings, as well as her understanding of the way paternity cases were customarily settled, to hold William accountable for his role in her illegitimate pregnancy. Unlike Mary Main however, Elizabeth's primary goal does not seem to have been William's moral accountability, but instead securing financial support for herself and her child. In his initial denial before the Session, William called Elizabeth's accusations malicious, 'whereby to defraud him of some money'.[60] He went on to bring several witnesses before the Session to discredit Elizabeth, including John Murray, who recounted a conversation between Agnes Russell (William's wife) and Elizabeth where:

> he heard Agnes advise Eliz[abeth] to be warry in charging her husband with that child for he absolutely denyed it … Eliz[abeth] said give me twenty shilling & I'll never trouble him with it. Murray said Eliz[abeth] I'll give [it] out of my own pocket if thou will give it the right father; she said again give me the twenty shill[ings] I'll never trouble him with it.[61]

Elizabeth's demand of twenty shillings suggests that her main aim in bringing forth a paternity case against William was to procure financial support for her child. Despite her desire for financial support, Elizabeth appears to have been unwilling to name a false father for her child, evident in that she agreed to drop the charge in exchange for twenty shillings but not to name another father for the same sum.[62]

Some women had no such qualms about making false paternity claims and manipulated the Session's dedication to sexual discipline to their benefit. In February 1705, Adam Dougall and Marion Steinson appeared before Aghadowey Session after she named him the father of her unborn child.[63] Despite Adam's denial, Marion 'positively affirm[ed]' that 'the child she now goes [with] is Adam Dougalls and [that] she never had to do [with] any other to Father her child'.[64] The Session judged Marion guilty of fornication with Adam and that he was the father of her child. Adam however, continued to deny the charge. Following this judgement, the Session later heard from James Nickel, who was informed by James Pagan of Caheny, that he was 'in the moss', where Marion alleged the child was conceived, at the same time as Marion and Adam and 'did not perceive any signs of uncleanness between them'.[65] Adam Dougall also appeared again bringing evidence from four women of the parish who:

> Declare[d] that [the] foresd Marion Steinson confessed to them before she brought forth her child [that] she had nothing to do [with] Adam Dougall in the moss and [that] if she were [with] child she would lay it to some body's charge [that] were able to maintain it.[66]

The Session subsequently concluded Marion was further guilty of contradicting her own story and had previously been found guilty of lying on several occasions. The Session therefore, judged that she had wrongfully accused Adam Dougall and referred the case to the Presbytery.[67]

Mary Mitchel and Andrew Gray similarly appeared before Aghadowey Session in 1723, almost ten years after they confessed to fornication together in 1715, when Archibald McFurran presented new evidence to the Session that Jon McNeil 'often own'd to him yt ye child [which] Mary Mitchel charge[d] Andr[ew] Gray with, was not Grays but his own'.[68] The Session further heard that Jon had been willing to take custody of the child if Mary would have allowed it, and that 'Mitchell declar'd if she had a hundr'd bastards she wou'd give ym no father but Andrew Gray.'[69] Mary appeared before the Session

again in December 1723, 'Confidently fixing [the] child upon Andrew Gray' and was referred to the Presbytery.[70] In April 1724, it is recorded that she had acknowledged that Jon McNeil was the true father of her child.[71] Unlike England, Ireland did not have a poor law system in place until 1838, meaning that the financial responsibility fell on the community or to the mother, if a father could not be named.[72] Therefore, whilst Mary did not say as much, her reason for putting her child upon Andrew Gray, rather than Jon McNeil, was likely to have been financially motivated.

Conclusion

As the examples in this article have shown, women were able to exert agency over their sexuality in a multitude of ways. Women were not sexually passive, nor did they confine their sexuality to the relative legitimacy of courtship and marriage. Women engaged in sexual intimacy with a range of men and did so, in spite of church discipline for sexual deviance. Women exerted control over their sexuality by refusing to appear publicly, or even at all, for their sexual deviance, thus enabling them to create their own definition of sexual sin and maintain control over their sexual narrative. Such women actively resisted the censure of the church, challenging punishments that they believed were unwarranted, while also negotiating the boundaries of their submission according to their own reasons and inclinations. Whereas some women submitted to church discipline out of a genuine feeling of shame, others paid lip service to the Session in pursuit of an end goal. Gaining baptism for a child or receiving a testimonial of good conduct acted as strong incentives for women to submit to discipline. Similarly, through the denial of sexual deviance for which the Session had no concrete proof, women were able to sidestep punishment for sexual deviance and retain control and independence over these sexual choices. Despite its policing by the Session, female sexuality did not belong to the church – women accused of sexual deviance each saw their 'sin' in differing ways and interacted with church discipline to varying extents and for a range of reasons. Female sexuality was individual, not collective, and women exercised control over it as they saw fit.

Moreover, women were able to locate agency within illegitimate motherhood. Rather than present themselves as victims of male sexuality, unmarried mothers utilised the church courts to secure accountability, financial support, or both, from putative fathers. In a similar way that legal aid acted as a bargaining chip for unmarried women in Leiden in the late eighteenth century, unmarried mothers in early eighteenth-century Presbyterian Ireland used the authority of the church courts to exert control over putative fathers. Additionally, some women capitalised on the Session's dedication to sexual discipline and named a false father for their child in the interest of financial gain. Unmarried mothers would have had to submit to church discipline for their sexual deviance in any case, due to the nature of their situation; however, these women did not have to simply submit to church discipline, but could also use the Session to create accountability surrounding male sexuality and thus utilise sexuality to exert power and control over men.

These findings further the study of sexuality in two ways. Firstly, this discussion examines the role of female sexuality separate from the frameworks that emphasise marriage and courtship as the main reasons for sexual activity. In doing so, it adds to our understanding of the lived experiences of female sexuality in the eighteenth century, where the boundaries between licit and illicit sexual activity were not so clear cut as marital and pre-marital sex. Whilst historians such as Leanne Calvert, Maria Luddy and Mary O'Dowd have established the role of sexual activity in the formation of legitimate relationships, this article establishes the attitudes of women towards their sexuality, relative to a range of relationship types.[73] Moreover, the idea that women were able to negotiate the boundaries of sexual sin – both on a personal level and with the church courts – suggests that sinful behaviour, as defined by the church, was not always sinful in the eyes of those who engaged in such behaviour.[74] The boundaries therefore, between licit and 'illicit' sexual activity are more complex and blurred than historians have previously assumed. Even more so, this article expands the study of sexuality in Ireland and uses understudied sources to do so. Whilst Gibson notes that women have not benefitted from the narratives that explore the 'sexual revolution' of the eighteenth century, this is especially true for Ireland, where the gendered aspects of sexuality, especially the study of women's sexuality, remain vastly unexplored.[75] Although historians often dismiss Presbyterian sources as not being representative of the wider study of sexuality in Ireland, more recent studies reflect that this is not the case.[76] Indeed, Calvert has suggested that 'the tropes of the chaste and pure (Catholic) Irish … exist more firmly in the recent cultural imagination than in reality'.[77] Thus, studies of Irish sexuality employing Presbyterian sources should not be dismissed as unrepresentative or inapplicable to the scholarship of Irish sexuality as a whole.

Secondly, this article connects Ireland to the wider study of British and European sexuality. Comparisons can be made between Scotland and Ireland and the negotiation of church discipline. Women's refusals to submit blindly to the Session and thus their negotiation of punishment for their 'deviance', mirrors the findings of Katie Barclay's study of non-conformity in Scotland.[78] Moreover, the discussion of unwed mothers reflects Griet Vermeesch's research into illegitimate motherhood in eighteenth-century Leiden, as there are parallels between the weaponisation of the church courts and that of the Dutch legal system by unwed Dutch mothers.[79] With this in mind, it is clear that the analysis of Presbyterian communities is reflective of the wider European historiography. Critically however, this fresh examination of both the similarities and differences between Irish Presbyterian sexuality and British and European sexuality, can only deepen our understanding of the history of sexuality.

Notes

1. Leanne Calvert (ed.), 'Aghadowey Kirk-Session minute book, 1702-1732' (unpublished transcript of original in Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland), 7.
2. Ibid., 7–9.

3. Karen Harvey, 'The Century of Sex? Gender, Bodies, and Sexuality in the Long Eighteenth Century', *The Historical Journal*, 45/4 (2002), 899–916, 899.
For further work on the history of sexuality see Tim Hitchcock, *English Sexualities, 1700-1800* (London: Macmillan, 1997); Sarah Toulalan and Kate Fisher, eds, *The Routledge History of Sex and the Body: 1500 to the Present* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).
4. Kim M. Phillips and Barry Reay, *Sex before Sexuality: A Premodern History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011), 15.
5. Ibid., 72; Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (London: Harvard University Press, 1st ed. 1990).
6. Michael Stolberg, in 'A woman down to her bones: The Anatomy of Sexual Difference in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', *Isis*, 94/2 (2003), 274–99, argues for the acknowledgement of physiological differences between men and women as early as 1600, but acknowledges that these differences were emphasised during the Enlightenment to reinforce ideals of male superiority and dominance.
See also Winfried Schleiner, 'Early Modern Controversies about the One-Sex Model', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 53/1 (2000), 180–91; Karen Harvey, 'The Substance of Sexual Difference: Change and Persistence in Representations of the Body in Eighteenth-Century England', *Gender & History*, 14/2 (2002), 202–23.
7. Harvey, 'The Century of Sex?', 903.
8. Phillips and Reay, *Sex before Sexuality*, 14.
9. Hitchcock, *English Sexualities*, 2–7.
10. Ibid., 23.
11. Phillips and Reay, *Sex before Sexuality*, 74.
12. Katie Barclay, 'Intimacy, Community and Power: Bedding Rituals in Eighteenth-Century Scotland', in *Emotion, Ritual and Power in Europe, 1200-1920: Family, State and Church*, ed. Merridee L. Bailey and Katie Barclay (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 43–62, 45.
13. S. J. Connolly, *Priests and People in Pre-Famine Ireland, 1780-1845* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1982); Dympna McLoughlin, 'Women and Sexuality in Nineteenth Century Ireland', *The Irish Journal of Psychology*, 15/2–3 (1994), 266–75; Tom Inglis, 'Origins and Legacies of Irish Prudery: Sexuality and Social Control in Modern Ireland', Éire-Ireland, 40/3–4 (2005), 9–37.
14. Maria Luddy and Mary O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland, 1660-1925* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 149.
15. Leanne Calvert, '"He came to her bed pretending courtship": Sex, Courtship and the Making of Marriage in Ulster, 1750-1844', *Irish Historical Studies*, 42 (2018), 244–64.
16. Andrew Blaikie and Paul Gray, 'Archives of Abuse and Discontent? Presbyterianism and Sexual Behaviour during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', in *Ireland and Scotland: Order and Disorder, 1600-2000*, ed. R. J. Morris and Liam Kennedy (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2005), 61–84, 69.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., 70.
20. Leah Leneman and Rosalind Mitchison, *Sexuality & Social Control: Scotland 1660-1780* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 222.
21. Ibid., 76.
22. Ibid.
23. Andrew R. Holmes, *The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, 1770-1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 224.
24. Blaikie and Gray, 'Archives of Abuse and Discontent?', 67; Holmes, *Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice*, 224; Leah Leneman and Rosalind Mitchison, *Sin in the City: Sexuality and Social Control in Urban Scotland 1660-1780* (Edinburgh: Scottish Cultural Press, 1998), 77.
25. These would have been more serious cases or cases referred by the Kirk-Session where they were unable to resolve them.
26. Malcolm Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 20–1.
27. Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-Century England* (London: Yale University Press, 2003), 86.
28. Julie Hardwick, *Sex in an Old Regime City: Young Workers and Intimacy in France, 1660-1789* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 25.
29. Luddy and O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland*; Holmes, *Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice*; Calvert, 'Making of Marriage'; Leanne Calvert, '"Her husband went away some time agoe": Marriage Breakdown in Presbyterian Ulster, c. 1690-1830', *Women's History*, 15 (2020), 6–13; Leanne Calvert, '"Do not forget your bit wife": Love, Marriage and the Negotiation of Patriarchy in Irish Presbyterian Marriages, c. 1780-1850', *Women's History Review*, 26/3 (2017), 433–54; Leanne Calvert, '"I am friends wt you & do Entertain no malice": Discord, Disputes and Defamation in Ulster Presbyterian Church Courts, c. 1700-1838', in *Law and Religion in Ireland, 1700-1970*, ed. Niamh Howlin and Kevin Costello (Dublin: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021).
30. Leanne Calvert (ed.), 'Carnmoney Kirk-Session minute book, 1686-1745' (unpublished transcript of microfilm copy in Public Record Office of Northern Ireland), 37–8.
31. Ibid., 38.
32. Ibid., 44.
33. Katie Barclay, 'Love, Care and the Illegitimate Child in Eighteenth-Century Scotland', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 29 (2019), 105–25, 120.
34. Ibid., 121.
35. Calvert (ed.), 'Carnmoney Kirk-Session minute book', 45.
36. Blaikie and Gray, 'Archives of Abuse and Discontent?', 73; Calvert, 'Making of Marriage'.
37. Kate Gibson, '"I Am Not on the Footing of Kept Women": Extra-Marital Love in Eighteenth-Century England', *Cultural and Social History*, 17/3 (2020), 355–73; Sally Holloway, '"You know I am all on fire": Writing the Adulterous Affair in England, c.1740-1830', *Historical Research*, 89/244 (2016), 317–39.
38. Katie Barclay, 'Marriage, Sex, and the Church of Scotland: Exploring Non-Conformity Amongst the Lower Orders', *Journal of Religious History*, 43/2 (2019), 163–79.

39. Ibid., 171–3.
40. Calvert (ed.), 'Carnmoney Kirk-Session minute book', 18.
41. Ibid., 18–20.
42. Ibid., 22.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid., 17.
45. Calvert (ed.), 'Aghadowey Kirk-Session minute book', 34.
46. Calvert (ed.), 'Carnmoney Kirk-Session minute book', 7.
47. Ibid.; Leneman and Mitchison, *Sin in the City*, 170.
48. Calvert (ed.), 'Carnmoney Kirk-Session minute book', 41–2.
49. Ibid., 42.
50. Ibid.
51. Leanne Calvert (ed.), 'Templepatrick Kirk-Session minute book, 1700-1743' (unpublished transcript of manuscript held in Public Record Office of Northern Ireland), 15.
52. Ibid., 17–9. This case is explored further in Leanne Calvert, '"To recover his reputation among the people of God": Reassessing the Sexual Double Standard in Presbyterian Ulster, 1700-1838' (forthcoming, 2022).
53. Calvert (ed.), 'Templepatrick Kirk-Session minute book', 20.
54. Ibid., 29.
55. Griet Vermeesch, 'The Legal Agency of Single Mothers: Lawsuits over Illegitimate Children and the Uses of Legal Aid to the Poor in the Dutch Town of Leiden (1750-1810)', *Journal of Social History*, 50/1 (2016), 51–73.
56. Calvert (ed.), 'Templepatrick Kirk-Session minute book', 42.
57. Calvert (ed.), 'Carnmoney Kirk-Session minute book', 26.
58. Ibid., 27.
59. Ibid., 35.
60. Ibid., 27.
61. Ibid., 31.
62. This, of course, assumes that Elizabeth's accusation of William was legitimate. Whilst defamation cases were brought before the Session, they did not make up the majority of church business. See Calvert, 'Discord, Disputes and Defamation'. Paternity claims not found to be false by the Session can perhaps be considered legitimate. William offered to swear an oath of his innocence in January 1707, but the Session would not allow him to do so suggesting that they did not fully believe in his innocence. Calvert (ed.), 'Carnmoney Kirk-Session minute book', 27.
63. Calvert (ed.), 'Aghadowey Kirk-Session minute book', 12–13.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid., 13.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid., 26–30.
69. Ibid., 30.
70. Ibid., 31.
71. Ibid.
72. Calvert 'Reassessing the Sexual Double Standard'.
73. Calvert, 'Making of Marriage'; Luddy and O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland*.
74. Gibson, 'Extra-Marital Love'; Barclay, 'Exploring Non-Conformity'.
75. Gibson, 'Extra-Marital Love', 356.
76. Luddy and O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland*, 149.
77. Calvert, 'Making of Marriage', 263; Leanne Calvert, '"From a woman's point of view": The Presbyterian Archive as a Source for Women's and Gender History in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Ireland' (forthcoming paper).
78. Barclay, 'Exploring Non-Conformity'.
79. Vermeesch, 'The Legal Agency of Single Mothers'.

'A HARLOT'S PROGRESS': EXAMINING PERCEPTIONS OF PROSTITUTION THROUGH PRINTED LITERATURE AND VISUAL SATIRE IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

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Sex is central to our understanding of the eighteenth century due to Enlightenment ideas surrounding the body and its liberation and it is difficult to separate this from wider societal considerations during this period.[1] Perceptions of prostitutes fluctuated at this time; although there were many negative representations of the sex industry, positive representations also grew. The period was preceded and succeeded by centuries that were characterised by staunch Protestant values which branded prostitution as a social and moral evil. In the eighteenth century, however, prostitution thrived under the rise of commercialism and consumerism; the increased urbanisation of England offered sex workers greater opportunities, especially in cities and port towns. This created the opportunity to commodify women's – and to a lesser extent, men's – bodies. In London alone, the sex industry generated an estimated gross turnover of £20 million per annum.[2] Contemporaries commented that prostitution was central to the social and economic fabric of London, and it was claimed that half of the city's population relied on the sex industry for subsistence.[3] By examining printed literature and visual satire, this article enhances our understanding of how prostitutes lived, were treated and were represented during this time.

Through a focus on documents that represent three key satirical genres, it is possible to analyse different perceptions of prostitution both from social commentators and from those who were directly involved or partook in the activities of the sex industry. The first category, 'whore biographies', were often fictitious writings about the lives of prostitutes who were used as 'unfortunate heroines' to comment on and critique the author's perceptions of their contemporary society. These biographies combined sympathy, admiration and social commentary through 'truth-based fiction' and became one of the most popular literary genres in the eighteenth century.[4] The second genre is represented by *Harris' List of Covent Garden Ladies, or Man of Pleasure's Kalendar for the Year*.[5] A satire, thought to be written by Samuel Derrick, this publication was a catalogue of 'harlots' in central London and showed how the sex trade permeated every social stratum, even illuminating a hierarchical class-like system for prostitutes themselves. The third group, visual satire, is embodied by William Hogarth's series of engravings, *A Harlot's Progress* (1731), which is one of the most popular examples of this genre and depicts prostitution and the sex industry in this period. These visualisations also show more detailed dimensions of the types of people involved in the criminal underworld of London and England. The extensive amount of satirical source material from this era cannot be covered in one article but the primary sources chosen for this research show a broad sample of perceptions. These perceptions cannot easily be categorised as they constantly fluctuated across all social levels as well as on a personal level.

To understand the multitude of primary sources that display perceptions of prostitution, this article is organised into 'positive', 'negative' and 'middling' representations. Daniel Defoe and Samuel Derrick had differing opinions of prostitutes but in some of their writings, they portray these women in a seemingly 'positive' light. These 'positive' perceptions were also seen in the works of many anonymous commentators, including Fanny Murray's *Memoirs* (1759) and the 1784 print *A St James's Beauty.* Negative representations, as seen in the works of Defoe and Hogarth, were used as critiques of contemporary society; the two were more interested in condemning social institutions and the existence of the sex trade than attacking the individual prostitute. In some cases, prostitution was seen as a necessary evil of society; commentators like Bernard Mandeville and Mary Wollstonecraft are evidence of this. This article then, by using the selected sources, critically analyses the idea of gender in this period through the scope of prostitution and explores how prostitutes diverged from the societal norms of the eighteenth century.

INTRODUCTION

Hallie Rubenhold and Sophie Carter have used a multitude of source materials to interrogate the perceptions and representations of prostitutes in this period. Through their research we can better understand the spectrum of these perceptions and how they weighed in on debates regarding women, femininity and gender. Carter's book *Purchasing Power: Representing Prostitution in Eighteenth-Century English Popular Print Culture* (2004) is an important work in the representation of prostitutes in print media. Where other works have focused on the practice of prostitution itself, Carter has compiled a vast repository of visual and satirical material including art, satire and literature. Her work has encouraged historians to look further than the representation of these women as a cultural relic and to begin to understand how they were perceived and treated by society. Tony Henderson's *Disorderly Women in Eighteenth-Century London* (1999) is a significant study of the history of gender and sexuality through the scope of prostitution. Henderson argues that changes in attitudes towards prostitution and prostitutes came about with a strong sense of reluctance by commentators, but these changes inevitably came to pass.[6] As we will see, Henderson also argues that attitudes surrounding prostitution and its workers were ever-changing, with some views being 'momentarily fashionable', while others maintained a more 'permanent presence'.[7] In Jessica Steinberg's essay on the perceptions

of prostitution in the eighteenth century, she counters Henderson's argument that there was an overall shift in perceptions in this period. However, this argument is only made about the perceptions of lower-class female prostitutes and does not include all those who worked in the sex trade.[8] She goes on to argue that prostitutes were not 'othered' from their gender by commentators because of their profession and that in the eighteenth century 'gender norms' were being challenged by most people in society, including men.[9] This article will show that whilst there was a restructuring of gender stereotypes, prostitutes were 'othered' by middle-class male commentators through their perceptions and through stereotypes of femininity in this period.

Sex, prostitutes and prostitution were constantly debated in eighteenth-century periodicals, broadsheets, novels and art, and in some ways this discussion appears more open and tolerant than in the modern day where aspects of sex and the sex industry are commonly viewed as taboo. Georgian Britons, certainly Londoners, were comfortable with the presence of this profession as it was ubiquitous to everyday life.[10] Animosity was shown towards the profession and its participants through slander and violence, but many accepted it as a necessary evil of society.[11] Prostitutes were admired, vilified and pitied; there was never one popular opinion about these women or prostitution itself. Perceptions in this period included a variety of attitudes and emotions.

The perceptions of prostitutes and their vocation not only show us the variety of opinions that separated a narrow demography of commentators but also the conflicts of attitudes to gender ideals more broadly. The century saw the consolidation of a 'polite society' in which both men and women had different roles to fulfil, stereotypes to adhere to, and social 'spheres' to exist in.[12] At first glance, prostitutes did not fit into this binary gendered system. We can see throughout the source material that they were forced into their own 'gender', so to speak, by male commentators. In 'whore biographies', prostitutes were often used as the antithesis to the emerging ideal of domestic feminine virtue and Sharon Smith argues that Defoe even used prostitutes as an economic model for the middle-class tradesman.[13] In short, prostitutes were too manly to be women and too womanly to be men. Commentators of the period used this idea of an 'othered' gender to shame men and women who did not fit into their accepted gender stereotypes. Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire, for example, was compared to a 'harlot' after her success canvassing for Charles James Fox's parliamentary campaign in 1784.[14] The existence of prostitutes in the eighteenth century shows gender could be ambiguous; people were aware and conscious of those who did not conform to gender norms.

The 'Long Eighteenth Century' was characterised by the rise of wealth, a consumer society and luxury. As more money was invested into the urbanisation and development of London, spaces in which prostitutes could operate flourished. London played a major role in the fabric of the nation with one in six adults in England having a direct experience of living in London.[15] In the primary sources examined for this article, there is an emphasis on London as a setting and theme that connects these perceptions. This is not to say prostitution only existed in the metropolis, but sources on provincial prostitution are few and rare.[16] The service industry grew exponentially and bagnios (a brothel in a bath-house), coffee houses and clubs became the stage for hedonism and harlotry. The toleration of prostitution grew in this period and was viewed less commonly as a 'sin'.[17] The growth of wealth caused intense anxiety, especially with the 'first international financial crisis' in 1720.[18] Prostitutes were viewed as both victims of consumerism and urbanisation as well as facilitators of excessive spending. Whilst most prostitutes were not wealthy and existed in slums like St Giles, there were a select few who rose through the social ranks of London and became celebrities of their day. Fanny Murray (1729-78) was viewed as a 'fashion icon' and Fanny Barton (1737-1815) – also known as Mrs Abingdon – became an actress in the West End.[19] These were notable women in their profession and their social and economic rise demonstrates a social awareness of prostitution, seeing its infiltration into more areas of society and culture than ever before.[20]

'POSITIVE' PERCEPTIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

When exploring the perceptions of prostitution, it is not possible to simply argue that these were positive or negative. Most representations were ambivalent. Some sources show their love and admiration, others pity, and in some cases even resentment. Within representations of prostitution there are multiple feelings towards these women along with a completely different set of feelings towards the profession of prostitution, and the sex industry more broadly. While many commentators deplored prostitution, they had sympathy for the women who were, in their opinion, victims of poverty and the evils of the metropolis. An example of this is in Defoe's novel *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders* (1722). Defoe is sympathetic towards Moll and paints her as a victim of her own circumstance being born into a life of crime:

> Had this been the Custom in our Country, I had not been left a poor desolate Girl without Friends, without Cloaths [*sic*], without Help or Helper in the World, ass my Fate; … my Mother was convicted of Felony for a certain petty Theft, … 'tis enough to mention, that as I was born in such an unhappy Place, I had no Parish to have Recourse to.[21]

Yet his views towards the practice of prostitution are filled with disdain and contempt; in his treatise *Some Considerations Upon Street-walkers* (1726), he made suggestions for the eradication of this profession. Defoe brands prostitutes as 'impudent' and 'audacious' which contrasts greatly to his fictional heroine Moll.[22] As will be shown, prostitutes and the sex industry sparked a variety of debates, attitudes and perceptions in their commentators and critics.

Harris' List, which was first published in 1787, was an 'almanac of London sex workers' that detailed the name, location, price and a short description of the prostitutes in

Figure 1: Harris's list; or, Cupid's London Directory, before 1794, Library of Congress, lcweb2.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3b00000/3b07000/3b07300/3b07365r.jpg (accessed 11 Mar. 2022)

the Covent Garden area.[23] This publication could make or break the career of a prostitute and it helped bolster the career of some of London's most revered 'harlots' such as Fanny Murray, Lucy Cooper and Charlotte Hayes. Fanny Murray's memoirs reveal that she paid 'poundage' to Samuel Derrick, who is thought to be the author of the *List*, to be included; this exposure meant she could charge clients larger sums of money, never 'receiving fewer than two guineas' for her services – approximately £215 in today's money.[24] Some entries, however, were not flattering for 'harlots' like Pol Forrester who was:

> … disagreeable, ugly and ill-behaved. She has an entrance to the palace of pleasure as wide as a church door; and a breath worse than a Welch bagpipe. She drinks like a fish, eats like a horse, and swears like a trooper. -An errant drab.[25]

This sort of entry is rare. In the many volumes of the *List*, entries commonly included tones of flattery and admiration, with some salacious comments to entertain the reader. The general tone through these publications – even the later editions where the motivation of the authors diverged from Derrick's – was light-hearted and jovial.[26] Derrick was selling a sexual fantasy and an opportunity for men to act on their desires. Derrick began his literary career as a Grub Street writer where he was surrounded by sex workers; he saw these women as 'Volunteer[s] of Venus' and used his love for them and sex to create a satirical work on the bawdy scenes of Covent Garden.[27]

This *List* shows prostitution had entered the public sphere; it was no longer viewed as a criminal activity reserved for London's underworld. Prostitution became a cultural phenomenon in the mid-century and some contemporaries celebrated their existence.[28] The mid-century was probably the most tolerant few decades in the eighteenth century where many men in the elite and middling social orders supported and invested in these women. Fanny Murray's *Memoirs* display the highlights of her career in the sex trade.[29] This 'whore biography' was a fictional retelling of the 'harlot's' career in London and her exploits with the city's elite. Whilst many details were drawn from fiction, the author of the memoirs included snippets of life as a prostitute in the West End that would 'amuse' readers; only aspects of Fanny's life that were entertaining were included. Fanny was included in *Harris' List* and was presented as a high-class prostitute and 'a good side box piece' who would be a gracious companion.[30] The memoir as a sub-genre of 'whore biographies' included 'voyeurism and bawdy' humour but also challenged ideas of economic and social mobility.[31]

The use of a real woman's experience in the sex trade illuminates entertaining details about this lifestyle. Although it does not include the darker aspects of the sex trade, we can begin to interpret why women became prostitutes. In most cases, women were not 'full-time' prostitutes and only turned to the sex industry when in need of money. Fanny Murray is an example of a prostitute who made a career through selling her body for sex and rose up the social ladder. In terms of the eighteenth century, Fanny was a success and evidenced the 'benefits' of prostitution. From this we can see positive perceptions of prostitution did exist and were used as sources of entertainment in the eighteenth century.

Another flattering representation of prostitutes was displayed in the anonymous print *A St James's Beauty* (1784). This print depicts a 'kept mistress' or 'courtesan' who lived in the wealthy neighbourhood of St. James's.[32] The courtesan is dressed in luxurious and expensive fashions in a well-kept room, showing the success a prostitute could achieve. The term 'beauty' gives an air of admiration and shows us a glimpse of the lifestyle a higher class of prostitute could enjoy. Prostitution thrived because of the growth of wealth and capitalism, so prostitutes were often used to promote ideas of luxury and expense.[33] All of these examples show a tolerance and an admiration for not only the women in the sex trade but the profession of prostitution itself. While positive perceptions existed, they were also challenged by negative and critical attitudes by other commentators in the eighteenth century.

'NEGATIVE' PERCEPTIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

Negative perceptions of prostitution were ever-present in eighteenth-century social commentaries. In most cases, these women were portrayed as victims of their own circumstances and naivety; in the context of London, they were shown as too 'innocent' to fight off the corrupting forces of the metropolis. In Hogarth's *A*

Figure 2: William Hogarth, A Harlot's Progress, Plate 4, 1732, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/399547 (accessed 11 Mar. 2022).

Harlot's Progress, we are introduced to the tragic story of Moll Hackabout. The selection of a prostitute as the subject of this series whose environment was seen as sleazy and perverse – as well as fascinating to the public – gave Hogarth, as Christine Riding argued, 'unlimited satirical possibilities' to comment upon and critique the metropolis.[34] This series was released after an official 'crackdown' on prostitution in Covent Garden by Justice John Gonson. Hogarth abhorred the treatment of prostitutes in London and blamed traditional institutions like the Church and legal system for the misfortunes of those involved in the sex trade.[35]

Throughout the series Hogarth showed that 'powerful' men had the means and ability to protect Moll from the corruption of London's underworld but turned a 'blind-eye' to her plight. In these six engravings, Hogarth included figures well-known to contemporary audiences: Mother Needham, a notorious 'bawd' and procuress, and Colonel Francis Charteris, a convicted rapist. Justice Gonson is portrayed in the third plate of the series where he apprehends Moll in her lodgings but becomes aroused by her state of undress. Gonson was a leading member of the Reformation of Manners movement and became known as the 'harlot-hunting justice'.[36] In 1708, the Society for the Reformation of Manners pursued the prosecution of 1,255 women – and some men – for lewd and disorderly behaviour.[37]

The protagonist of the series, Moll, entered the sex trade and became the mistress of a wealthy Jewish merchant.[38] After having an affair, she falls on hard times as displayed in the state of her lodgings. It is there where Justice Gonson apprehends her and sends her to Bridewell Prison.[39] Once released, we can see that Moll begins to succumb to her syphilitic infection that likely began in the second plate of the series.[40] The final plate depicts Moll's funeral; she is surrounded by fellow prostitutes, her bawd and a priest.[41] Throughout Moll's life in this series, Hogarth subtly shows that the traditional moral institutions of the period failed her. In Plate One, when Moll was procured by Mother Needham, a priest ignores the exchange. In Plate Four, Gonson sends her to Bridewell where she was punished – not 'reformed'. She then re-enters the sex trade after her release. At her funeral in Plate Six, the priest present is preoccupied with another 'harlot' showing the corruption of these institutions. Hogarth believed that these women, like his character Moll, needed help from 'above' to save them from a life of poverty and disease. In 1758, Hogarth and other reformers created the Magdalen Hospital to help heal and reform prostitutes rather than subject them to the punishments of hard labour and flogging at Bridewell Prison.[42]

A Harlot's Progress invokes many perceptions about prostitution. Firstly, Hogarth's sympathy towards women who fell into this career. He portrayed his protagonist Moll as innocent and naïve; she easily became victim to the corrupt and immoral life waiting for her and many other young women in the metropolis. Moll's rise and fall was fated; Moll never truly had a choice in her progress and was merely led to her death by a cruel and unfeeling Church and justice system. Secondly, Hogarth showed his contempt towards these institutions. The two priests and Justice Gonson were portrayed as uncaring to Moll's plight; Hogarth showed their corruption through their arousal by Moll and other women in the sex trade in Plates Three and Six. Hogarth seems to paint these men as hypocrites; he achieves this by painting them in a state of arousal or being sexually involved with a prostitute.

'MIDDLING' PERCEPTIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

Whilst Defoe faulted individual prostitutes, and Hogarth social institutions, other commentators saw the profession as a necessary evil. Some commentators,

Figure 3: William Hogarth, A Harlot's Progress, Plate 6, 1732, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/399551 (accessed 11 Mar. 2022).

like Defoe, had negative perceptions of prostitutes themselves, but more often they deplored the profession of prostitution rather than the individual prostitutes. Prostitution has frequently been viewed negatively; however, in this period more social commentators began showing pity towards prostitutes and tolerated the sex trade's existence.

Bernard Mandeville viewed prostitution as a necessity of society. In his radical work *A Modest Defence of Publick Stews* (1724), Mandeville laid out a plan for state-organised brothels and prostitution. He argued 'publick whoring is neither so criminal, nor so detrimental to the society, as private whoring'.[43] This corroborates the argument that some did not see prostitution as immoral or 'evil', rather prostitution was an 'inevitable consequence of metropolitan culture'.[44] Mandeville suggested the establishment of 'a hundred or more' brothels in order to eliminate venereal disease, bastardy and excessive expenditure.[45] In his concluding statement, Mandeville believed his suggestions '[would] not encourage Men to be lewd, but they will encourage them to exercise lewdness in the proper Place, without disturbing the Peace of the Society'.[46] For Mandeville, prostitution was integral for social order, and he categorised society into three groups: men, women and prostitutes. Unlike other representations of these women, this treatise is solely concerned with the practice of prostitution and its bearing on society. *Publick Stews* suggests prostitution was a key part of society even in the early decades of the eighteenth century. Whilst there were calls for the eradication of prostitution, Mandeville believed this would be far more detrimental to society.

Mary Wollstonecraft also discussed the necessity of prostitution in her authorship. Wollstonecraft included a 'whore biography' in her final work *The Wrongs of Woman: Or, Maria, A Fragment* (1789), using it to comment on the situation and treatment of women in eighteenth-century society. Wollstonecraft used a feminist eye to interrogate the treatment of women involved in the sex industry.[47] Smith argues these biographies 'served a variety of purposes during the eighteenth century, depending not only on who produced them, but also on the cultural, social, political and economic contexts in which they were produced'.[48] Wollstonecraft exemplifies this through her frequent exploration of the feminine ideal in the eighteenth century, whilst also exploring ideas surrounding prostitution, labour and the commodification of female bodies.[49] Wollstonecraft's 'whore biography' followed the story of a prostitute called Jemima. Jemima's story is one of survival, as prostitution was her livelihood.

Unlike other 'whore biographies', Wollstonecraft included explicit details of rape and corruption. Miriam Borham-Puyal argues that Jemima did not view her body as an economic opportunity, but she did understand that her body was not her own; it was a commodity controlled by men.[50] Wollstonecraft portrayed Jemima as 'a slave, a bastard, a common property', showing that the prostitute existed on the fringes of society and seemingly outside of traditional gender roles.[51] This genre was used by Wollstonecraft to expose the injustices of the patriarchal society in which she lived. The biography was not a morality tale, nor a bawdy story used for entertainment. This representation created feelings of pity in the reader, as did other representations of prostitution, but this pity was not tainted by Wollstonecraft blaming the profession of prostitution like other commentators. In Wollstonecraft's opinion, all women in society were victims of the patriarchal society and Jemima's story emphasised this and challenged the treatment of women in late eighteenth-century England more generally.

PROSTITUTION AND GENDER

In this period, prostitutes challenged the 'middle-class' ideas of femininity, domesticity and gender roles. A common theme seen throughout many of the

representations of prostitutes is that of greed. The idea of a 'greedy woman' directly challenged the polite and feminine eighteenth-century ideal. In Defoe's 'whore biography' *Moll Flanders,* the protagonist was described as a 'very sober, modest, and vertuous [virtuous] young woman' until she was corrupted by her own greed.[52] In her first sexual encounter, where she was paid by the man who supposedly loved her, this greed was fostered and Moll understood sex could be an economic transaction.[53] In *Harris' List,* greed can be seen in his 'harlots' with Derrick explaining to his readers that they would receive better services when the 'harlots' were 'well paid'.[54] In his entry for Miss Sims of 'No.82, Queen Anne Street East', we can see that 'harlots' knew their economic worth and Miss Sims would 'seldom accept less than two guineas' for her services.[55] Maxine Berg has argued that this greed in prostitutes saw them seduce consumers away from productive labour into 'un(re)productive spending'.[56]

In Defoe's essay *Street-walkers,* he suggested the encouragement of 'matrimony' would stop the 'improper sale' of women's bodies.[57] For Defoe, the idea of domesticity, marriage and creating a family was the goal for all 'proper' women to strive for; this was the feminine ideal of the eighteenth century.[58] Defoe's suggestion of marriage to tackle the issue of prostitution is rather telling of how people viewed gender stereotypes and those who would not conform to their bounds. For Defoe, prostitutes were inherently masculine and did not fit into his idea of what a woman should be due to their economic ability and autonomy. The economic autonomy of prostitutes was a common theme in his works and Smith has argued that they were models for his middle-class masculine ideal.[59]

In Defoe's novel *Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress* (1724), the prostitute Roxana exhibits economic success and self-mastery and shows masculine traits. When she retreats from this life, marries and seeks to support her children, Roxana's downfall ensues, and her economic shrewdness is lost—'after some few Years of flourishing […] I fell into a dreadful Course of Calamities'.[60] As previously discussed, we see the female prostitute being separated and 'othered' from their traditional idea of gender. Kate Lister has argued that in history the word 'whore' and the negative connotations associated with it have been used to demean women that threatened men. 'Whore' would be used by men to reassert their power over women who challenged the status quo, in an attempt to shame and humiliate these women back into submission.[61] This is evidenced by the treatment of the Duchess of Devonshire in 1784.

Whilst canvassing for the 1784 election, the Duchess used the popular strategy of 'Kisses for Votes' which had been employed by both men and women in multiple political campaigns.[62] The tactic worked in favour of the Whig party and Georgiana's success opened her up to criticism. Thomas Rowlandson's print *Two Patriotic Duchess's on Their Canvass* (1784) depicted her in a lewd embrace with a butcher.[63] Consequently, Sir Cecil Wray said he would rather kiss a prostitute than the Duchess; in a sense she had been 'othered'.[64] These criticisms of the Duchess resulted in her comparison with the other autonomous women of her time: prostitutes. Prostitution and other aspects of the sex trade were regularly used to defame and insult women who did not conform to traditional gender roles.[65] The use of this inflammatory discourse in the late eighteenth century began to solidify negative perceptions of prostitution that would continue into the nineteenth century.

CONCLUSION

The volume and variety of perceptions held by eighteenth-century society about prostitutes is evident in this article. These perceptions were not fixed or stagnant but constantly fluctuated throughout the century. Prostitution was linked with ideas of consumerism, excess, luxury and urbanisation which gave cause for social commentators to use prostitution as a focus of their work. Prostitution had been viewed as a social evil, but in the eighteenth century the practice was widely discussed and, in some cases, seen as a necessary part of society. Supporters and admirers of 'harlots' were open about their feelings towards these women and the sex trade as a whole. *Harris' List* and the memoirs of Fanny Murray show the celebration of prostitution in mid-century. Defoe and Hogarth broke away from the seventeenth-century consensus of prostitution being practised by 'lustful' and immoral women. 'Harlots' began to be viewed as victims in the early eighteenth century. The growing sympathy encouraged by commentators opened up debates about the women involved in the sex trade and not just the trade itself. However, the 'praise' prostitutes received mid-century would not last into the nineteenth century, with their increasing vilification.

Each type of representation explored in this article had its own variation within the genre. 'Whore biographies' developed across the period from morality tales, to scandalous entertainment, to social commentary. These fictional stories gave authors the opportunity to use the character of a prostitute to explore different aspects of society, whether this be urbanisation and consumerism, or the treatment of women and gender roles. This spectrum of perceptions can also be applied to written and visual satire. While 'whore biographies' had the aim of entertainment, satirical works showed the unadulterated opinions of social commentators. Prostitutes were used to comment on any aspect of society the author chose, and this could be in either a positive or negative way. Representations of prostitution did not have to conform to a set view of the sex industry as depictions varied so drastically.

The exploration of perceptions of eighteenth-century prostitution also opened up debates surrounding gender relations and roles, ideas of femininity and masculinity, and the broader issue of the treatment of women in eighteenth-century England. The study of sex and gender has meant that we can use representations of prostitution not only to analyse the sex trade of this period, but also the opinions of gender stereotypes and theories. Throughout this article we have seen the implied creation of a separate gender, in the eyes of male, middle-class satirists and commentators. Prostitutes did not belong to either the male or female gender and as a result were 'othered'. This 'othering' shows that debates on women and gender were a growing issue in this period,

as evidenced in Wollstonecraft's *The Wrongs of Woman*. As most of the source material used in this article shows, the perceptions of men and the study of women and gender can become complicated.

For a future study of eighteenth-century English prostitution more primary source material would need to be explored. While the emphasis here is on London, there are opportunities to explore prostitution in metropolitan areas outside of the capital. This article has only explored satirical writings and images while depictions of prostitution were also present in theatre, music, portraiture and magazines. A study of perceptions could also be complimented by the exploration of real 'harlots' like Charlotte Hayes, Lucy Cooper and Kitty Fisher. By going further than studying just attitudes towards the profession, the sex trade could be explored from the perspective of these women. Excluding Mary Wollstonecraft's work, there are limited descriptions of prostitution by women. Eighteenth-century prostitution was dominated by women and it would be interesting to explore this through a woman's lens, as well as by researching the relationships of these women with other women in their society.

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3. Johann Wilhelm von Archenholz, *A Picture of England: Containing a Description of the Laws, Customs and Manners of England* (London, 1789), 89.

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8. Jessica Steinberg, 'For lust or gain: perceptions of prostitutes in eighteenth-century London', *Journal of Gender Studies*, 26/6 (2017), 702-13.

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14. Elaine Chalus, 'Kisses for Votes: The Kiss and Corruption in Eighteenth-century English Elections', in *The Kiss in History*, ed. Karen Harvey (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2005), 122-47.

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19. Laura J. Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce: Prostitution in Eighteenth-Century British Literature and Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 103.

20. Cruickshank, *The Secret History of Georgian Britain*, 359.

21. Daniel Defoe, *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders* (1722), 8.

22. Daniel Defoe, *Some Considerations Upon Street-walkers. With a Proposal for Lessening the Present Number of them. In Two Letters to a Member of Parliament. To Which is Added, A Letter from One of those Unhappy Persons, when in Newgate, and Who was Afterwards Executed, for Picking a Gentleman's Pocket, to Mrs.—in Great Putney Street* (London, 1726), 2.

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25. Hallie Rubenhold, *The Covent Garden Ladies: The Extraordinary Story of Harris' List* (London: Penguin Random House, 2005), 172.

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36. Henry Benjamin Wheatley, *Hogarth's London: Pictures of the Manners of the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 387.
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38. William Hogarth, 'Plate One', *A Harlot's Progress* (1731), Royal Collection Trust; William Hogarth, 'Plate Two', *A Harlot's Progress* (1731), Royal Collection Trust.
39. William Hogarth, 'Plate Three', *A Harlot's Progress* (1731), Royal Collection Trust.
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51. Mary Wollstonecraft, *The Wrongs of Woman: or, Maria. A Fragment, In Two Volumes* (London, 1798).
52. Defoe, *Moll Flanders,* 8.
53. Cruickshank, *The Secret History of Georgian Britain,* 4.
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Worn in the Words: Women's Relationship with Clothing and Textiles in the American West, 1836-1900

Olivia Terry

The fabric of American life changed drastically in the middle years of the nineteenth century during the period of Westward Expansion. Families packed up their lives in the East and headed West for land, gold, and above all, opportunity. The middle of the nineteenth century is also arguably the time in America where gender roles and differences were at their most rigid.[1] During the 1830s and 1840s, the Industrial Revolution sent shockwaves throughout American society, as the differences between men and women's roles became more distinct. Men increasingly began to leave the home for the public sphere, selling their time rather than goods to make money for their families, while women largely remained home. As a result, women's roles also changed. Her responsibility was to shape the home into a refuge for men after daily struggles in the public sphere, and to raise morally pure children. The distinct separateness of the spheres was most likely a result of growing pressures of modernity, and Victorian society clung to traditional values, through social cues. One indication of this was clothing. Contrasts between men and women's dress had never been more stark and countless domestic manuals and forms of media were published on the topic of the 'True Woman'.[2]

As the West opened up to white American society, women were encouraged to go West as the 'purveyors of culture', tasked with spreading Christian principles and the civility of the society they had left behind.[3] The attempt to transplant gender roles to an environment that fundamentally challenged them forced western travellers to acknowledge the impracticality of men and women's separate and distinct roles. Yet, for white middle- and upper-class Christian women, their ideological motivations and their intent on expanding their customs caused many to strengthen their devotion towards fulfilling gender roles, often forgoing feasible solutions to recurring challenges prompted by the nature of the land. For women, clothing was a primary tool in asserting gender. Upon the journey west, growing anxieties surrounding their gender and social responsibilities prompted women to cling to high standards of dress, allowing them to maintain some control over the unpredictable environment. They employed clothing as an identifier, asserting racial differences between themselves and Native Americans.[4] Furthermore, journal entries suggest women perceived the clothing of lost loved ones as emotional objects, embedding them with sentimental significance.

These women, though 'pioneers', would have seen themselves as ordinary. Yet today, this notion is gone. Rather, the women who went to the West are represented as 'extraordinary': the outlaw, the sexually aberrant 'soiled dove', or the sharpshooter.[5] This emphasis on the female deviant, while entertaining, is problematic because it perpetuates legend over fact, and gives the notion that it was these women who were the norm rather than the exception. Additionally, it ignores the important role that ordinary pioneer women played in the larger picture of the West, in American ideology relating to gender roles, and in attitudes towards Native Americans.

Some women travelled to the West as missionaries, with the intent of converting Native Americans to Christianity, believing that Indigenous populations were suffering from their own pagan views. Julie Roy Jeffrey notes that publications like *The Missionary Herald* attracted women like the well-known missionary Narcissa Whitman to the cause. By printing papers with headlines like 'SIX HUNDRED MILLIONS [sic] OF HEATHENS … miserable, and perishing in sin… [require] *immediate* help', Christian missionary organisations emphasised the common belief amongst nineteenth-century Euro-Americans that their duty was to bring Christian civilization to Native Americans. In doing so, they communicated a sense of urgency and need for volunteers.[6] Women's, especially married women's nature, was thought to be purer than their male counterparts, and their ability not only to teach Native populations how to read and write, but also to exemplify the domestic virtues of the Christian family was considered an invaluable resource to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM).[7]

While the 'extraordinary' woman is valuable for her historical insight, an imbalance has been created in understanding women's roles in the West. By attaching higher merit to women who rejected traditional femininity and assigning more historical value to those who embodied more masculine roles, we diminish our own ability to comprehensively interpret the past. When I was given an autobiography written by my great-great grandmother Beatrice 'Mitten' Terry, I discovered a tangible connection between Westward Expansion, and how it is remembered today. The autobiography, *When the Chips Were Down*, provided first-hand insight into Beatrice's life, while growing up in Nebraska at the end of the nineteenth century.[8] However, this vision was fragmented. Throughout the entire book, Beatrice never names her mother, and as a consequence, it seems her name has disappeared from my family's living memory. However, Beatrice made it clear that her mother created a life for her and her siblings that was meaningful. The crude sod house became a home when her mother put geraniums in its windows, and the children's toad was only saved from a snake when her mother forced the creature to release the pet with a broom.[9] The daily tasks completed by women similar to Beatrice's mother appear monotonous to history and our modern eyes, because they lack the obvious danger, violence, and drama so associated with the West.

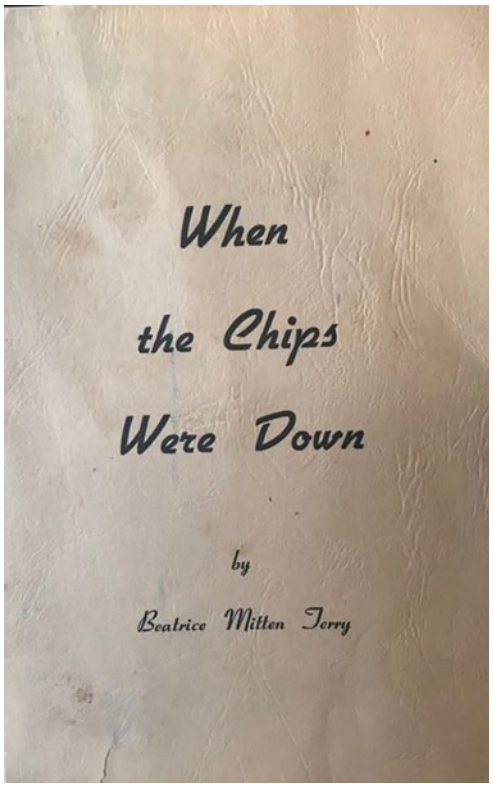

Figure 1: When the Chips Were Down cover, Boise, Idaho, author's private collection, 14 Jan 2021.

History has extensively restricted women in its retelling of their stories as a result of gender prejudice, both in the largely male-centric retelling of the West and in today's preference for women who rejected traditional femininity. Consequently, I feel it is only fitting to re-appropriate this limitation by exploring the reality that many women found themselves in, during and after their journey west, by examining their relationship with a largely gendered realm: that of sewing and textile production, clothing, and fashion. Clothing as a whole offers a unique and relevant perspective on women's changing roles and responsibilities because of its capacity to be a deeply personal object, its association with 'women's work', and fashion being symbolic of culture and the 'civilised' in global Western thought.

This article draws heavily on entries from pioneer women's diaries, accessed through published collections. Lillian Schliessel's work informs this research, as it aims to expand her hypothesis on gender as it relates to the mention of sewing and dress in women's journals.[10] Glenda Riley, author of *Women and Indians on the Frontier, 1825-1915*, examines white settler women's views and relationships with Native Americans.[11] This article works to further explore how white women used clothing to emphasise racial barriers between themselves and Indigenous women. Additionally, Igor Kopytoff's theory that objects, like people, have biographies, as outlined in his essay 'The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process', is utilised. Applying Kopytoff's theory, this research argues that as a result of emotive events, women along the trail promoted pieces of clothing to sacred status through the process of 'singularisation', by noting the garments in their journals.[12] In their ordinary fashion, the women of the West become extraordinary when their underestimated contributions are rightfully considered in relation to the American story. Their use of clothing can be interpreted as agency over unfamiliar situations, giving them a means to safeguard their cultural beliefs in an environment that challenged the ideas they believed to be fundamentally true. Their clothing was an emblem for the distinct differences between men and women's roles in the land they had left behind, and women employed clothing as a means to disseminate Euro-American gender values to the people that occupied the unfamiliar land.

> Left the Missouri river for our long journey across the wild uncultivated plains and uninhabited except by the red man … In front of us as far as vision could reach extended the green hills covered with fine grass … Behind us lay the Missouri with its muddy water hurrying past as if in a great haste to reach some destined point ahead all unheeding the impatient emigrants.[13]
>
> Lydia Allen Rudd, 6 May, 1852

When Lydia Allen Rudd left the East in 1852 for Oregon with the intention of filing for shares of land under the Donation Act, much had led up to that moment. Her diary alludes to the great awe of the West felt by many Americans during the nineteenth century. Ahead, a vision of a thrilling tomorrow, behind was a society that was showing the growing pains of industrialisation. The opportunity to culturally shape the landscape and to expand their growing industrialised society drew many pioneers like Narcissa Whitman and Lydia Rudd.

The practice of people traveling in family units like Rudd's did not begin until the early 1840s, when economic depression, the spread of slavery and religious disagreement prompted many to try their luck west.[14] Much of the land had been acquired in 1803, when the Louisiana Purchase was bought from France. Following the 1804 Lewis and Clark expedition to chart this territory, further westward expansion was initiated when the Oregon territory proved to be extremely lucrative for fur trading.[15] Despite Britain's prior claims to the area, the United States believed it was their right to extend their rule all the way to the Pacific Ocean. In order to increase its power over the territory, the U.S saw it as imperative to fill the land with its people.[16] Women played a role in bringing middle-class, Euro-American culture to the West, and through their dress and comportment they reinforced their societal ideals.

Slowly, families began making the overland journey. In 1843, nearly 900 people made the trip, and between 1844 and 1846, the number grew exponentially when 5,000 people completed the journey. Between 1841 and 1884, the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center estimate that between 300,000 and 500,000 people travelled overland. In 1849, the discovery of gold led to an explosion of emigrants travelling to California in hopes of finding fortunes. Many of the pioneers travelled along the wagon road known as the Oregon Trail, with an average travel time of four to six months.[17] Disease, thirst, exposure and freak accidents were ever present on the journey, and at least 20,000 people are estimated to have perished *en route*.[18] Rudd's diary expresses that her own wagon train was impacted by a cholera epidemic, as well as measles, mountain fever and dysentery.[19]

The demographic of women who went west was

diverse. Women of all social classes, relationship statuses, ages and ethnic backgrounds all became frontierswomen. Glenda Riley makes the point that depictions of Western women falsely lead us to believe that 'frontierswomen were ... young, of no particular social class, but definitely of white American stock'. [20] As a result of history's own biases, primary source material of women of other ethnic backgrounds has largely been lost to the past as a consequence.

During the period of westward migration, women were considered guardians of the home, family and 'purveyors of culture', instilling virtue and piety into children and the society that surrounded them.[21] *American Woman's Home,* an 1869 domestic science manual, states:

> The family state then, is the aptest earthly illustration of the heavenly kingdom, and in it woman is its chief minister. Her great mission is self-denial, in training its members to self-sacrificing labors for the ignorant and weak: if not her own children, then the neglected children of her Father in heaven.[22]

As the passage suggests, women were valued for their sentimental role within the home, in contrast to men's more public duties relating to industrial growth. As the country opened west, the desire to expand industrial power increased, and the social expectations of women similarly grew. The region's land and people were increasingly emphasised as subjects at the mercy of women's moral and compassionate guidance. For women, the land was not positioned so much as a place to seize economic opportunity, but as a terrain in dire need of women's presence as the 'carriers of Christian civilisation'.[23]

The decision to move west uprooted the lives of every member of a family. For women, the actual journey west, prior to the comforts of railroad travel, was perhaps the most tumultuous period.[24] For months, families lived out of wagons at the mercy of the elements, where dwindling resources created daily challenges and disease, tales of conflict with Native Americans and freak accidents which prompted anxiety in all members of a wagon team.[25] However, women's travel diaries imply that the absence of the home as a whole was the most deep-rooted source of distress. They reveal that without the presence and protection of a physical home, women still attempted to maintain their household role and equate their current circumstances to the domestic life they had back East. On her way to Idaho in 1864, Clarissa Elvira Shipley described finishing her chores as having her 'house all in order', despite being 'surrounded by mountains'.[26]

Women often actively fought against compromising with their new environment; most significantly, this was through their clothing.[27] On the trail, many women continued to wear round dresses, just as they had back East. A 'round dress' indicates a dress sewn together at the waist, joining the bodice and skirt together (Figure 2). These dresses did not have trains and were often opened through closures in the front.[28] Round dresses allowed women to remain within the bounds of socially acceptable clothing for their gender, without the frivolity of extra décor. Yet, repeated entries make it clear that their long skirts occasionally posed danger to their wearers when

Figure 2: Cotton Muslin Round Dress from Burdick family, c. 1850-1869, personal photograph of the author, 18 April 2021 (National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, garment 80.1).

they prohibited full movement or caught onto things around camp. Catherine Sager recollected 'the hem of my dress caught on an axle-handle, precipitating me under the wheels ... badly crushing the left leg'.[29] Ruth Shackleford similarly noted that on a particularly windy day, the women were forced to sit still rather than complete their chores, as their windswept dresses interfered with their modesty.[30]

Through clothing, women also aggressively clung to eastern standards of cleanliness. Catherine Haun, who travelled to California in 1849, remembers she was 'never without an apron and a three-cornered kerchief', presenting 'a comfortable, neat appearance'.[31] Other women describe the time they dedicated to caring for their family's clothing by mending, washing and even ironing while camped.[32] Disapproval was cast on those who did not uphold such levels of neatness as evident by another one of Shackleford's entries, when she wrote: 'There are some of the roughest-looking people camped here I ever did see – women with short dresses and barefooted'.[33]

An essential attribute to women's frontier dress were sunbonnets, which provided a practical purpose by shielding wearers from the sun.[34] Yet young girls, with a somewhat carefree nature, showed some resistance to wearing them to their mother's dismay. Adrietta Hixon wrote:

> Mother was particular about Louvina and me wearing sunbonnets ... to protect our

> complexions, hair and hands. Much of the time I should like to have gone without the long bonnet ... but mother pointed out to me some girls who did not wear bonnets and as I did not want to look as they did, I stuck to my bonnet finally growing used to it.[35]

Hixon's mother was strict about her wearing a sunbonnet, despite the oppositional advice written in *The Mother's Book*, an 1831 advice guide on child rearing. Mrs. Child wrote 'I would ... avoid constantly urging a child to put on a bonnet, lest she should be tanned ... I would rather a girl ... have her face tanned and freckled ... than have her mind tanned and freckled by vanity'.[36]

Hixon's mother's insistence on her wearing a sunbonnet takes on another meaning, when one considers the implications of what tanned skin might represent in the West. The sunbonnet was employed as a tool to prevent the further softening of boundaries between Native American women and white settler women. The parallels between this scenario surrounding the sunbonnet and Ariel Beaujot's British metanarrative of 'barbarism/nature versus civility', that was represented by the parasol, becomes apparent. Beaujot, author of *Victorian Fashion Accessories*, notes that 'partially, via umbrella narratives, Victorians were urged to see themselves as imperial masters who had a mission to civilise, enlighten, and liberate the rest of the world from the tyranny of their despotive ... kings'.[37] Parasols were used to protect the light skin of British colonists on voyages to India, as the whiteness of the skin was 'carefully constructed ... to emphasise racial difference'.[38] Sunbonnets (Figure 3) can be likened to the parasol, and the discourse in women's diaries follow a similar metanarrative specific to America, that of *Manifest Destiny*.[39] Women's resistance to practical clothing was most likely a result of their efforts to fulfil their assigned responsibilities as moral guardians of the West, as they did not make the journey to live in 'primitive' conditions, but rather to replicate the civilisation they came from.[40] The importance of distinction between 'civilised' and 'primitive' comes sharply into focus when a common diary topic is considered – Native Americans. In the minds of most white Americans, Indigenous people, who represented a 'depraved and inferior culture', were the population most in need of redemption; thus, as the purveyors of 'morality' and 'civility', the concept of women as their main liberators was a widely accepted one.[41] Many women travelled to the frontier, not just as settlers, but as missionaries. For women reformers, many were called west for the purpose of implementing the removal and institutionalisation of Indigenous children, as children and motherhood were part of the feminine domain.[42] Margaret Jacobs explains that the act of removing children was particularly targeted at Indigenous women, claiming that 'government authorities and reformers relied not only on racial representation, but also on gendered images of indigenous people, particularly regarding motherhood, as a justification for intervening in the intimate spaces of indigenous communities'.[43]

The most common representation of Native American women was the 'squaw', an 'unfortunate, inferior, exploited female', who performed the majority of work while males in her family engaged in hunting and fishing. Eurocentric views clouded the settler's understanding of the importance of such affairs in Native culture, leading them to ignorantly mistake such activities for leisure.[44] Narcissa Whitman, the famed missionary, exemplifies this view, writing 'they do all of the work, such as getting the wood, preparing food, pitching their lodges, packing their animals, the complete slaves of their husbands'.[45] The disapproval of Native American women and their treatment may have been a result of white women's feelings of insecurity within their own social role, as their circumstances had them largely engaged in hard manual labour typically associated with men's work. Aware that the boundaries between their living conditions and those of Indigenous people were becoming exceedingly blurred, pioneer women clung to any distinction between themselves and Native American women, primarily through dress. The writings of white women indicate that the general opinion of Native

Figure 3: Black Cotton Quilted Sunbonnet, c. 19th century, personal photograph of the author, 18 April 2021 (National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, garment 90.2). ***This sunbonnet was likely not worn on the trail because of its dark colour and lace edging.***

Americans' clothing was that it was gaudy, dirty and unchaste.[46] Therefore, maintaining well-laundered and clean-looking clothing through daily washings created an important distinction, in their eyes, between themselves and Native American women.

Many women's relationship with clothing reflects an anxiety regarding the unknown future that lay before them and their unfamiliar surroundings. Their initial refusal to adapt their dress to better accommodate them in the rough environment alludes to their own insecurities regarding the gender roles they were expected to maintain on the trail. Their fears of falling outside of social acceptance were revealed in journal entries that monotonously listed daily chores involving clothing. Furthermore, it is significant that they used attire as a means to assert cultural and racial difference between themselves and Native American women.

Lillian Schlissel argues in *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey* that the journals of men and women differed in the events, themes and attitudes in each entry. While both expressed the stunning nature of the landscape and travel challenges, women were concerned with 'family and relational values', while men wrote of 'fight, conflict ... competition and ... hunting'.[47] Women's entries are typically brief and often without much emotion; thus, it is essential to thoughtfully consider the underlying significance of each concise account.[48] The journals obviously allude to women's roles within nineteenth-century America, as many mention topics of children, cooking and caring for the sick. This suggests many attempted to continually fulfil their position as 'chief master' within the family state, as discussed in *The American Woman's Home*.[49] However, the repetitive nature of such remarks on domestic matters allude to an unspoken and urgent trepidation. The women's unwillingness to renegotiate their roles with the uncompromising authority of nature initially prevented them from adapting to their new environment in a maximally effective manner.

In her article *Desperately Seeking Mary,* Jennifer Thigpen writes about the unspoken significance that Mary Walker's clothing and belongings played in interpreting her life and character.[50] Mary Richardson Walker travelled to Oregon Territory in 1836, leaving on the afternoon of her wedding to pursue her goal to be a missionary. According to Thigpen, Walker presented herself as an opiniated and ambitious woman in her private writings, leading Thigpen initially to believe that perhaps Walker felt less hindered by the constraints of traditional nineteenth-century femininity.[51] However, when Thigpen discovered the Washington State University Elkanah and Mary Richardson Walker Collection, she was surprised by some of the articles of clothing, at first believing that items like a black taffeta dress, a green wool cape, and an expansive collection of ribbons seemed 'totally inappropriate for the environment she (Walker) encountered in the West and for the tasks she undertook there'.[52]

Thigpen emphasised the importance of cross analysis of Walker's written accounts and her surviving objects. What they reveal is that although Mary believed that she was made for bigger and 'better' things than domestic life and went all the way to Oregon Territory to do the work she deemed important, the objects make clear that she never quite escaped the duties and obligations that came with being a woman in the nineteenth century.[53] Walker's material objects most likely encapsulate a similar tension between circumstance and culture that women like Haun, Shackleford, and Shipley faced on a regular basis in the West.

In *When the Chips Were Down*, Beatrice shared a story about when some cowboys left several hundred cows unguarded, and they wandered pushing against Beatrice's family's fence. Beatrice wrote, '[m]y mother did not cower in the house', instead she went outside and protected her garden from the stampede by flipping her apron at the animals.[54] Alone, she protected her family's source of food. Her use of an apron suggests she was in the middle of cooking or performing other domestic duties prior to the disruption. Conforming to outward gender expectation through clothing invites an assumption of ordinariness and therefore historical insignificance. The complexities of nineteenth-century American culture as experienced by women, are left to be interpreted through written word and surviving material garments.

Outside the physical boundaries of the civilisation they were accustomed to, women clung to their deeply embedded social beliefs as a way of dealing with uncertain circumstances. Ordinary Euro-American women's use of clothing metaphorically blinded them to the reality of their surroundings but provided comfort in familiarity. In this setting, women were regularly assisting in tasks typically associated with men's work and were living in an environment that lacked the civility offered by the established society they left behind. As Schliessel suggests, dress is culturally charged with gender roles and the act of clinging to high standards of clothing indicates that the frontier 'in a profound manner, threatened their sense of social role and sexual identity'.[55] As Thigpen has shown, Mary Richardson Walker was a self-assured woman who regularly completed difficult tasks as she worked as a missionary in the Oregon Territory. Yet it appears that Walker upheld traditional feminine roles, and that her clothing 'offered an important reminder of the power of culture and the almost irresistible pull of convention'.[56]

For pioneer women, clothing could also become emblematic of the hardships they encountered on the way west. The account of Celinda Hines's father Obadiah's death by drowning on 26 August 1853 provides an apt example. The day began unusually joyful, but quickly changed.[57]

> Crossed the wagon in safety. But in swimming the cattle we soon found our troubles had but now commenced ... [Pa] went too far down the river ... but being on the lower side the current took him down ... he soon sank. [A search party scoured the river making] every possible exertion to get the body.

However, their efforts proved fruitless. The only evidence of the tragedy was a hat belonging to Celinda's father, retrieved by her uncle Gustavus.[58]

In that moment, Obadiah's hat was symbolically transformed. When the day had begun, the hat had sat upon the man's head; its worth determined by its utility.

By the end of the day, the hat's significance had grown two-fold. The object was now a tangible representation of the deceased, as the crown would probably have smelled of Obadiah's sweat, and a few stray hairs caught in the felt may have reminded Celinda of her father's presence. Following the particularly tragic circumstances of the day, it now held the weight of his death, acting as a substitute for the body of Obadiah.

Journals which were seemingly restrained from sentiment surrounding events of high emotion often noted some article of clothing. Amelia Hadley recorded that on 15 August 1851, shortly before crossing the Deschutes River, her group learned 'the sad intelligence that those that went down in a canoe had drowned … their canoe was found bottom side up, with a pair of boots tied in the captern (sic)'.[59] While Hadley had never met the drowned party before, her mention of boots adds an eerie element to the description, where the boots symbolised an existence of life that was no longer there.

Ruth Shackleford painstakingly described the clothing her seven-year-old daughter Mary was buried in after she passed away from mountain fever. Shackleford wrote, 'she was dressed in solid green merino, a white collar and gloves, black belt and net. They said she looked very natural'. Shackleford provided this vivid description, despite not being present at her daughter's burial. Her statement that 'Mrs. Kirkland, Sue and Mary Ryhne dressed her', implies that it was too painful to view the child after her death.[60] The decision to record burial clothing suggests that the writers often associated intense feeling with the clothing they chose to include in journal entries.

Lou Taylor acknowledges the importance of emotional responses to clothing in journals in *The Study of Dress History,* but points out the void caused by dress historians' failure to consider their contributions seriously.[61] Ingrid Mida and Alexandra Kim emphasise the value of the contemporary observer's emotional response to clothing by including its consideration in their method for object analysis outlined in *The Dress Detective.* They write 'clothing is a form of material memory, carrying the imprints of its intimate relationship to the body. In performing a close analysis of a garment, we attempt to unpack the object biography to reveal the stories locked therein'.[62] If consideration of our own sentiment is valuable in the analysis of historical clothing, then examining the emotion associated with the object's original context is necessary to complete such an investigation. Taylor, Kim and Mida all refer to cultural anthropologist Igor Kopytoff's phrase 'biography of an object', noting that, like people, objects – specifically dress – have lives.[63]

In Kopytoff's 'The Cultural Biography of Things', he argues that an object's value changes depending on the passage of time, focusing on the concept of 'singularisation' where in response to growing commoditisation, society feels a need to 'set apart a certain portion of their environment, marking it as "sacred"'. The items set aside and promoted to the category of 'sacred' are thus singularised, resisting commoditisation, reinstating them back into the sphere of culture – in opposition to excessive commercialism.[64] As a reaction to 'complex societies', individuals promote items to singularisation status, often in the case of heirlooms, because the tactile and immortal properties of objects provide a perceived connection to passed loved ones.[65] To Celinda Hines, the biography of her father's hat changed significantly. It had begun as a commodity, but by the end of that day, the hat had become socially and personally endowed with memorial worth. Celinda's inclusion of it in her diary furthered its singularisation. While Ruth Shackleford did not actually keep the clothing she described, as it was buried with her daughter Mary, she clearly found some comfort in carefully listing it.

The 'complex society' Kopytoff refers to can be reinterpreted in the context of the western frontier. While Kopytoff's 'complex society' most likely stems from industrial America, the settlers' new surroundings made women long for the comfort rooted in tradition and sentimentality, as opposed to their new unpredictable and erratic circumstances. Clothing was singled out because it provided a familiar solace not only to their lost loved ones, but also to the life left behind in the East.

For ordinary nineteenth-century women, their lives largely revolved around the creation and care of clothing for themselves and their family. It was an integral part of their gender role as the facilitators of the domestic home. By fostering a deep sense of sentimentality attached to the clothing of a deceased loved one, women were able to maintain what agency they could over their situation. Women were the moral guardians of the home, tasked with raising virtuous children and creating a refuge for the family. The loss of a family member ripped apart women's carefully constructed haven and the social fabric of the family. As clothing was something women typically had ample control over, it would have provided some comfort in familiarity, just as wearing seemingly inappropriate clothing in the rough environment had. By promoting an article of clothing to 'sacred status', women found a further way to reassert a sense of control over a dire situation. The act of keeping or recording the existence of a lost loved one's clothes suggests the woman may have made and tended to it prior to death. The clothing may have offered a way to soften the loss and brought forth good memories of creating the garment or presenting it to the loved one.

Fear, disgust, and cultural prejudice also threaded their way into women's diaries. White settlers' prejudice saw Native Americans as devilish, violent savages, who simultaneously suffered in their uncivilised, unintelligent ways.[66] When their attempts to reform Native populations were met with resistance, many settlers believed that 'eventual extermination' was a viable solution to culture clashes. Violence justified by assumed moral superiority was a common motif in pioneer thought.[67] Fear of rape weighed heavily on many white women's minds, spurred by frightening accounts of such occurrences in the press or penny dreadfuls, creating the nineteenth-century euphemism 'passed over the prairie'.[68] Torn clothing belonging to white women became associated with sexual assault or abduction by Native Americans, as alluded to by Catherine Haun's entry:

> Here we also found fragments of a woman's cotton dress tied to bushes and small pieces

> were scattered along the road. Whether this had been intended as a decoy to lead some of our men into a trap should they essay a possible rescue we did not know, and the risk was too great to be taken.[69]

Glenda Riley points out in *Women and Indians on the Frontier* that it was the clothing of Native Americans that settler women first noted during their interactions. Coming from a culture that advocated covering the body with layers and complex types of apparel, these women were often shocked by these '"barbaric" people—[who] wore little to no clothing'.[70] A young woman described her first encounter with Native Americans in 1848, writing that to her 'frightened vision, dressed in their long mackinaw blankets, with eagle feathers in their hair, they looked ten feet high'.[71] Similarly, Emeline L. Fuller first noticed the clothing of the men she believed were responsible for the attack on her family. She recorded that the assumed leader of the group of Native Americans, a white man, clearly had his face painted and was wearing an 'old white hat with the top of the crown gone'.[72]

It is essential to note that women's remarks towards Indigenous people speak more to their own deeply rooted racial biases, rather than to an accurate portrayal of what Native Americans actually wore and how they behaved. Returning to Taylor, she explains in reference to similar journal entries, 'what such comments do interestingly reveal ... are the deeply felt social anxieties and stresses of each period. These views exemplify ingrained social/gender fears and prejudices of their day'.[73] Adverse reactions to Native American culture reflects women's own gender fears, embedded in racial bias. References to women's torn clothing at the supposed hands of Native Americans suggest that there was not only a fear that Native men would tarnish the chasteness of white women, but of Native men infiltrating the white race and interrupting a family bloodline.[74] When considering the role clothing plays in representing and distinguishing one group from another, the act of tearing up such an item can be interpreted at a larger scale as piercing the very fabric of a society.

As the guardians of home and hearth, women were designated with the responsibility of passing down Euro-American ideals to the youngest members of society. The Christian family was the central refuge during the country's tumultuous period of industrialisation, with women being the purest representation of it. The implications of middle-class, Euro-American women specifically being affected in this manner by Native American men was seen as an attack on the fundamentals of American society. The implication is that by devaluing the cultural significance stitched into the clothing of Indigenous people—white settlers created a hierarchy through clothing, in which they placed themselves superiorly. This judgement is apparent in wider writings than just women's diaries, as many sent letters home to their families with similar language.[75] Even when they discovered Indigenous people were not nearly as big a threat as stories back home had led them to believe, their need to participate in the cultural myth enticed them to maintain the legend of the West.

As families migrated, conflicts between culture and land left a forceful impression on American history. Meanwhile, women were engaged in a much more inward struggle. They worked tirelessly to negotiate their cultural roles within their new unruly surroundings, and did so through the making, wearing and caring for clothes, as well as through their attitudes towards clothing. Clothing was an understated tool used to communicate consequential values on race, gender, and class. Women found themselves engaged in chores typically associated with 'men's work' on the overland journey. Teamed with an unfamiliar environment populated with unfamiliar people, white women clung to high standards of dress, even when it created obstacles to everyday activities. They used clothing as an identifier, asserting racial differences between themselves and Native Americans. For some, the many tragedies that resulted on the journey were bleak reminders of the authority of nature. Kopytoff's theory applied to clothing in journal entries as the marking of a disastrous event, suggest the garments were infused with new biographical meaning, as they became representations of a lost loved one. Women also transferred their own racist opinions towards the clothing of Indigenous people, as if the clothing itself was inherently 'barbaric'.[76]

Today, the retelling of the American West intertwines opportunity into its rhetoric. It emphasises grand narratives of the common man who came west to take advantage of the boundless possibilities the land provided. However, while the common man has been promoted almost to national icon status, the common woman has been side-stepped.[77] Returning to my great-great grandmother's *When the Chips Were Down*, Beatrice momentarily provided a rare insight on her mother's character, writing:

> My mother was a small compact package of dominating will power. She never considered anything beyond her abilities. When she formed her opinions she was as adamant as the U.S. Supreme Court. That is, unless you agreed with her too strongly. She then reversed her decision ... She has become almost a legend in Thedford and the surrounding area. Many stories are told of her, some of which are true.[78]

Surprisingly, Beatrice assigned her mother with traits typically associated with masculinity: stubbornness, strong will and defiance. The contradiction becomes obvious when one realises that these traits were commonly affiliated with representations of the American West as a whole.[79] Yet, Beatrice's descriptions of the everyday role her mother played suggest that she felt obligated to retain the traditional gender roles in a white American society. She, like many other women, continued to embody traditional femininity. These women constructed the landscape of the American West in an understated manner, while simultaneously emulating the characteristics embedded in its rhetoric. By examining ordinary women's relationships to clothing and textiles in the West, an uncommon lens is utilised. It is often the mundane that provides the most authentic understanding of the truth.

Notes

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57. Harvey Hines, *Personal Diary 1853*, quoted in *Seven Months to Oregon: 1853: Diaries, Letters, and Reminiscent Accounts*, ed. Harold J. Peters (Tooele: The Patrice Press, 2008), 242.
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61. Lou Taylor, *The Study of Dress History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 102.
62. Mida and Kim, *The Dress Detective*, 62.
63. Mida and Kim, *The Dress Detective*, 84, 99-100; Taylor, *The Study of Dress History*, 15, 73
64. Kopytoff, 'The Cultural Biography of Things', 80.
65. Ibid.
66. Erin Blakemore, 'How 19th Century Women Were Taught to Think About Native Americans', *JSTOR*, 2 Oct. 2017.
67. Riley, *Women and Indians on the Frontier*, 100.
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69. Catherine Haun, Personal Diary 1849, quoted in Schliessel, *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey*, 178.
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75. Ibid., 112.
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78. Terry, *When the Chips Were Down*, 20.
79. Hampsten, *Read This Only to Yourself*, 2.

'OUR BODIES, OUR LIVES, OUR CHOICE': A STUDY OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND PRO-CHOICE CAMPAIGNS IN THE MARITIME PROVINCES OF CANADA AND SCOTLAND, 1970-80s.

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> One person will see a death where another sees only an exercise of rights. One position will see a pregnant woman where another sees a mother. How we define and describe the subjects and events involved in the act of abortion are intricately connected to our moral evaluation of it.[1]

The word abortion has many connotations that vary from person to person and the rich medical jargon, used by both sides, in arguments adds to the complexity. For many, the issue of abortion goes deeper than a medical procedure or a question of women's rights: it becomes a question of one's morals, the rights to one's privacy, and the rights of the 'unborn'.[2] One of the biggest questions in the abortion debate is who decides the rules, if any, and who enforces them. There have been many groups involved in the question of abortion including, but not limited to, politicians, academics, religious groups, the women's movement and the medical community. Each community has different opinions, but for many in the women's movement, abortion became part of a broader campaign to gain control of their bodies.[3] Throughout second-wave feminism, reproductive control was one of the main demands. Those fighting for abortion rights saw it as a symbol against the patriarchal society and an issue that could be resolved through legislative change to restore the control of women's bodies to women—thus the slogan, 'Our Bodies, Our Lives, Our Choice'.[4] In the Canadian Maritime Provinces and Scotland, the two regions of focus for this article, specialised pro-choice movements formed as a branch from the larger movements, campaigning to improve access and facilities. In both regions, these movements encountered opposition from pro-life campaigns.

Historically, Canada and the United Kingdom have had strong ties politically and culturally which creates a strong foundation for a comparative study. There has been a long trend of emigration and Scottish influence in the region of Canada under consideration here. Furthermore, both the Maritime Provinces and Scotland have devolved

powers and are also ruled by larger governing bodies, which means that they have some autonomy, but not complete jurisdiction. A comparative study of pro-choice campaigns is therefore an effective way to analyse the history of abortion. By comparing two places, it is possible to determine similarities and differences in the way that the women's movement fought for abortion rights. Following the height of the campaigns in the 1980s, the two regions had very different outcomes. While Scotland became more liberalised, the Maritime Provinces maintained conservative attitudes towards abortion and the procedure has continued to be strictly regulated. By comparing two pro-choice movements, one can discern their impact on the abortion debate and how influential the movements were.

INTRODUCTION

The two places of study in this article historically have strong links and both have been overlooked in favour of wider studies about the United Kingdom and the United States. However, the cultural and political links between these two regions allow for a better understanding of pro-choice movements within the context of second-wave feminism. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Maritime Provinces and Scotland had comparable cultural contexts. They both had highly religious and conservative populations and extensive emigration from the Highlands of Scotland to Nova Scotia in the nineteenth century, had created a crucial bond between the regions. Marjory Harper and Michael E. Vance, in *Myth, Migration and the Making of Memory: Scotia and Nova Scotia c. 1700-1990*, explore the cultural and historical links between the two places. Furthermore, poetic literature has been abundant on the topic of Scottish emigration, with standards such as Henry Erskine's *The Emigrant*, Robert Burns' *Address of Beezlebub*, and more recently The Proclaimers' 'poetic rendering of Highland emigration' in Letter from America.[5] This literature identifies the cultural and emotional links between these two places. Cape Breton is still renowned for its Scottish influence and preservation of Gaelic culture.[6]

This trend of Scottish emigration and influence has continued with a considerable number of Scots recorded in the Canadian censuses of 1961 and 1981. The 1961 census reported high levels of Scots living in Canada; almost 300,000 identified as Scottish in the Maritime Provinces.[7] Similar numbers were maintained into the 1980s.[8] Historically, Canada and the United Kingdom have been tied politically. Canada was a pivotal part of the British Commonwealth, and Canada did not gain full autonomy until the UK parliament passed the Canada Act in 1982.[9] As previously mentioned, both the Maritime Provinces and Scotland have devolved powers with some legal autonomy, but not complete jurisdiction. Their close relationship, historical ties and the undeniable Scottish influence on the Maritime Provinces creates a unique bond between the regions and constructs a suitable base for comparison.

This study takes place in the period most commonly associated with second-wave feminism. The new women's movement or second-wave feminism began in the 1960s and continued to grow throughout the 1970s and 1980s.[10] David Bouchier argues that reproductive control was one of the main demands during this movement, however, this view does not mean that all women were in favour of abortion on demand.[11] Those who were fighting for abortion rights saw it as a symbol against the patriarchal society and an issue which could be resolved through legislation.[12] The Canadian Maritime Provinces and Scotland followed the trends of the larger women's movements in the United Kingdom and the United States, but had more localised approaches. In these regions, specialised pro-choice groups, formed as branches of the larger movements, campaigned to improve access and facilities for abortion.

The historiography of abortion and the women's movement is broad and diverse. As this article focuses on the pro-choice perspective, the literature is predominantly from scholars who have written from this viewpoint. The field is often split into pro-choice/pro-life, religious/non-religious groups and by the perspectives of other professions, such as those in the field of politics or medical studies. This makes it a complex field to study. Despite the range of scholarship after the historic *R. vs. Morgentaler* case in Canada in 1988, there has been little subsequently that focused on the actions of the women's movement. Katrina Ackerman has conducted pivotal research in this field through her PhD, 'A Region at Odds: Abortion Politics in the Maritime Provinces, 1969-1988', which focussed on the barriers and the reasons for strong opposition to abortion in the region.[13] Ackerman's study on the abortion debate in New Brunswick also provided valuable insight into the strong pro-life community and lack of pro-choice organisations.[14] Kate McKenna's *No Choice: The 30-year Fight for Abortion on Prince Edward Island*, examined the women's movement and the fierce opposition it encountered.[15]

From the Scottish perspective, historians such as JD Young have been critical of the women's movement campaigns in Scotland and regarded them as significantly weaker than their counterparts in England.[16] Others, like Elspeth King, have been quick to criticise this argument, suggesting that Young overlooked the tactics of the Scottish women's movement because these differed from other movements, such as the one in England.[17] Sarah Browne's unique and ground-breaking study *The Women's Liberation Movement in Scotland* analyses the neglected scene of the women's movement in Scotland. Browne identified a gap in the literature and created a study that both praised and critiqued the campaign culture on many issues, such as abortion.[18]

With a focus on the second-wave feminist movement in the 1970s and 1980s, this article will explore the pro-choice campaigns in Scotland and the Maritime Provinces and their influence on the abortion debate. To maintain historical accuracy as far as possible, it refers to those fighting for abortion rights as 'pro-choice' and those fighting to enhance regulations on abortion procedures as 'pro-life'. Each region will be examined individually and then compared to distinguish the similarities and differences between their abortion campaigns, so identifying the success of these tactics and how this affected the future of abortion care.

THE MARITIME PROVINCES

The Maritime Provinces are a small corner of Canada that have a unique and intriguing history. They consist of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island (PEI).[19] Although Canada has a federal government, provincial law is very influential. With regards to abortion, these provinces have an extremely different history to the rest of the country and one needs to understand the federal law, in order to understand the situation regarding abortion. In 1969 the Criminal Law Amendment Act proposed an array of changes, including the decriminalisation of abortion. Theoretically, the 1969 bill legalised abortion, but there were many restrictions and abortions were not accessible throughout the whole of the country. To receive an abortion, women had to appear before a Therapeutic Abortion Committee (TAC), consisting of a minimum of three doctors, who either approved or denied the procedure. In most cases, it would only be approved if the woman's life or health was in danger, as determined by a physician. The procedure also had to take place in an accredited hospital.[20] The control over the TACs and hospital facilities were at the discretion of the provinces, hence abortion access varied significantly. Due to the unsatisfactory nature of the 1969 bill, activism, both for and against abortion, grew. It came to a head in the 1988 *R. vs Morgentaler* case, which denounced the legitimacy of the 1969 bill because it restricted women's rights under section seven of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom.[21] Despite this historical change, the court ruling left a void in abortion procedures because it was not protected or regulated under federal law. This meant provincial governments had flexibility when creating abortion policies.[22] For example, in PEI, abortion was not accessible from the 1980s until 2017.[23] Both the pro-choice and pro-life groups found this law insufficient: pro-choice wanted restrictions relaxed whereas pro-life groups wanted these tightened.

Within the Maritime Provinces, the pro-choice movement was limited and did not have a strong public presence or following. The Nova Scotia Women's Action Committee (NSWAC), founded in 1975, was arguably the strongest pro-choice group in this region. It was a voluntary organisation, 'working towards the full and equal participation of women in all aspects of Nova Scotian society – politically, economically, educationally, culturally and socially'.[24] The NSWAC had a dedicated abortion task force, focusing on improving abortion access in the province and they defined their stance as a woman's right to choose. One of the main tactics employed by the NSWAC was to build relationships with local medical professionals.[25] The NSWAC wrote to local doctors requesting information around their procedures, wait times and support for women. The NSWAC committee also ensured that extra restrictions were not being enforced at the hospital. For example, one of the rules stated that a woman seeking an abortion needed her husband's approval, unless there was 'clear evidence of separation'.[26] Although the NSWAC had limited influence in the political sphere, they worked locally to ensure that women in the province were respected and held the hospital accountable as per the law. While their impact here was on a small scale, it would have made a significant difference for many women going through this procedure.

The Canadian Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws (CARAL) was set up in 1974 and later changed its name to the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League in 1980.[27] The organisation was committed to fighting for safe, legal abortions, improved access to birth control and campaigned to challenge the 1969 abortion law. To instigate change across Canada, the CARAL participated in protests, pressured the government and conducted studies. The CARAL was committed to back Dr Morgentaler, a pivotal figure in the fight for abortion rights.[28] Due to the vast geography of Canada, the CARAL had various branches across the provinces with the Halifax branch being founded in 1982. One of the most critical actions taken by the CARAL in Halifax was the production of the *Telling Our Secrets: Abortion Stories from Nova Scotia* study. This study aimed to assess the quality of care received during the abortion process across Nova Scotia. Abortion was a taboo subject in Nova Scotia and the study wanted to highlight the reasons women chose this procedure. The study also highlighted the difficulties women faced when trying to receive this procedure and the discrimination they received from medical professionals.[29] The CARAL decided to take a different approach to the NSWAC and created a public profile. By publishing their study and creating public events, such as plays, they were starting the conversation about abortion, involving the women who had been affected and educating others in the community.

PEI had an extremely complicated relationship with abortion from the 1960s to the 1980s. Due to the prominent pro-life culture, there is limited information regarding pro-choice campaigns. Kate McKenna's 'No Choice', published in 2018, is one of the most informative. For this, she interviewed women from the Island and also searched through newspaper articles.[30] There was a distinct lack of an organised women's movement during this period, as only a few individuals worked hard to promote its goals and help those who sought an abortion. With the lack of a pro-choice movement, or an organisation sympathetic to abortion, it was challenging to find help or advice on the Island. Before the 1980s, TACs did exist in PEI; nonetheless, women opted to go further afield due to the discrimination from doctors. Alice Crook was one of the few individuals who tried to organise a cohesive women's movement on the Island. Alice had been a member of the CARAL previously but had never been active; however, after learning about the strong influence of the pro-life groups, she decided to set up the PEI branch of the CARAL.[31] The group slowly started to gain more members and spread the word. They endeavoured to shift public opinion by speaking at large community events, but were often overpowered by the pro-life movement.[32] Nevertheless, a poll conducted on the Island in 1988 found that eighty percent of women supported limited access to abortion and further showed that only sixteen percent of people asked were outright opposed to abortion.[33] This reveals that some progress was made by the campaigns and messages from the pro-choice movement. Yet, despite this progress, many people

would not show their support publicly and the women's movement never grew to match the power and influence of the pro-life movement.

New Brunswick, alongside PEI, had the most stringent abortion restrictions in Canada.[34] After 1969, the hospitals in New Brunswick were not required to set up a TAC or to accept requests for abortion.[35] In addition, certified hospital abortions became a crime in 1985 under Bill 92, 'An Act to Amend an Act Respecting the New Brunswick Medical Society and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick'. This Act came into force after Dr Morgentaler enquired about opening an abortion clinic in the province.[36] The few scholars who have researched the abortion debate in New Brunswick have commented on the conservative nature of society and the impenetrability of the pro-life movement. It has been argued in New Brunswick abortion literature, that the dominant pro-life culture was embedded in provincial identity, an identity that was linked to their religious views and which immediately categorised pro-choice supporters as outsiders.[37] Katrina Ackerman's research on the pro-life movement in New Brunswick reveals much about the culture of the province, but there is limited information regarding the pro-choice movement.[38] Canadian organisations and even international organisations such as Planned Parenthood did attempt to fight for abortion access in the province, however, Ackerman argues that they failed to convince their religious audience that abortion was a 'morally justifiable act'.[39]

The Maritime Provinces have, and continue to have, an unstable relationship with the pro-choice campaign. It is evident that there was some successful activism; however, in all three provinces, there was strong opposition to their campaigns which restricted their impact.

SCOTLAND

On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, women faced similar struggles to those in the Maritime Provinces. Prior to 1967, the law regarding abortion in Scotland allowed medical freedom to a certain degree. The law regarded abortion as a common law offence without defined limits.[40] Medical discretion could be used, and doctors could perform abortions without any fear of being charged with a crime, unless a patient brought forward a formal complaint.[41] Even with a formal complaint, it was hard to prosecute under the common offence law.[42] The medical freedoms, that doctors were granted within this law, were not exercised equally throughout Scotland. The 1967 Abortion Act made abortion legal in many cases but had certain restrictions, such as gaining approval from two doctors, often preventing women from accessing abortion.[43] Despite these limitations, one of the positives about this law was the awareness that abortion was a legal procedure and women could seek a safe abortion. There have been numerous attempts to amend this law, but only the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 was successful. This Act introduced a cap of twenty-four weeks.[44] Campaigning on both sides has persisted, but no further changes have been made. The women's movement in Scotland regarded policy changes to abortion and birth control as 'a political struggle that strongly reflected the

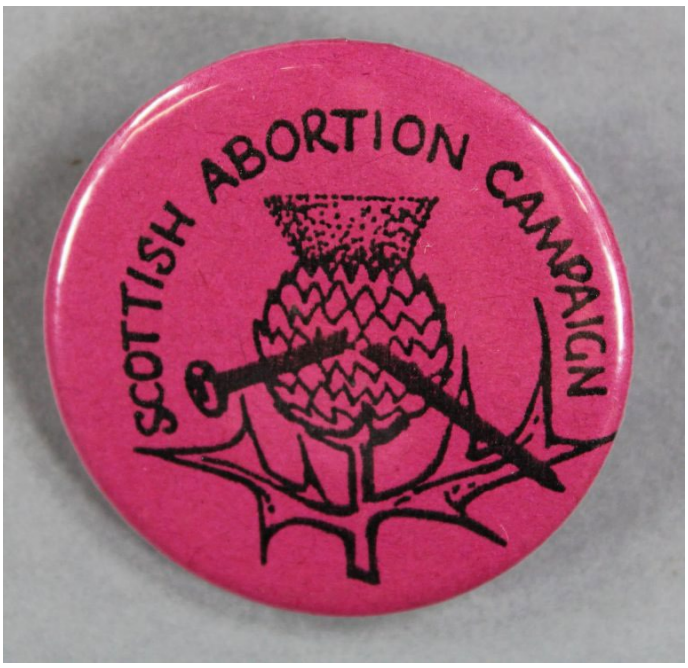

Figure 1: Scottish Abortion Campaign Badge, c.1980, courtesy of the Glasgow Women's Library collection (HC-C9.6-SAC), https://womenslibrary.org.uk/collection-item/scottish-abortion-campaign-badge/ (accessed 17 Mar. 2022).

ideological prejudices of a patriarchal society'.[45] These restrictions and the geographical disparity of provision across Scotland inspired national organisations such as the Scottish Abortion Campaign (SAC) and smaller local organisations (Figure 1).

The SAC was founded in 1980 'to give Scottish women a focus for discussion and campaigning work, which could reflect the legal and cultural differences in Scotland'.[46] One of the main motivations for the SAC was the introduction of bills to restrict abortion access, two of which were led by Scottish MPs.[47] The proposals by Scottish MPs spurred the need to fight a localised campaign on Scottish soil, distinguishing themselves from the National Abortion Campaign (NAC). One of the main tactics used by the SAC was to facilitate and participate in public protests against amendment bills. Those in the women's movement argued that the most vulnerable groups were targeted and that NHS cuts and waiting lists made accessing an abortion difficult.[48] It was extremely rare to have an abortion past twenty weeks, with the largest group being those with an exceptionally deformed foetus.[49] The Corrie Bill 1979, which proposed to cut the upper time limit to twenty-four weeks, was widely protested.[50] There were protests all over Britain including Glasgow, Newcastle, Manchester and Birmingham during 1979 and 1980. In Glasgow, over 1,500 marched from several organisations against the bill. The Scottish Trades Union joined this protest, which was significant as it was extremely beneficial to have a male-dominated ally.[51] The Alton Bill, proposed in 1987, was another attempt by a politician to reduce the time limit on abortion access from 28 weeks to 18 weeks.[52]

The SAC was not only dedicated to campaigning in their own country, but they also provided support to international campaigns. For example, and extremely fitting to this comparative study, the SAC provided

support to the CARAL and the Morgentaler Clinic in Winnipeg. Due to the illegality of abortion clinics in Canada, the CARAL urged for letters of support to the Manitoba Minister of Health to keep the clinic open and to oppose the prosecution of those involved.[53] The SAC also received a request to provide solidarity with campaigners in Spain in the early 1980s, after an abortionist received a sentence of twelve years in prison.[54] The plea urged them to send letters of support for those convicted to the Minister of Justice.[55] By involving themselves in international campaigns, the SAC was making vital allies and was creating a union of movements across the world.

The NAC was a pivotal organisation for mobilising a pro-choice movement throughout Britain. The NAC was founded in 1975 after a demonstration organised by the Working Women's Charter against the James White Abortion Amendment Bill in February 1975. This bill wanted to restrict the legitimate reasons for an abortion and to severely restrict which doctors could perform them.[56] The SAC supported national campaigns and regularly contributed to their newsletters. By contributing to the national newsletters, the SAC was highlighting the issues facing Scottish women, such as the geographical disparity of abortion access and the lack of private facilities, an issue not relevant to English women. An NHS Health inquiry into the implementation of the 1967 Abortion Act assessed the reasons for disparity across the country. Amongst the influences listed were 'the professional and public attitudes to abortion'.[57] The influence of medical professionals in Scotland was evident through the examples of Dr Dugald Baird in Aberdeen and Dr Ian Donald in Glasgow. Baird created a liberal abortion regime in Aberdeen, whereas Donald worked to restrict abortion facilities. Donald was the Regius Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Glasgow from 1945-76, he worked in the west of Scotland to mobilise Catholic medical professionals, which created the lowest abortion rate in Britain after 1967.[58] This was in stark contrast to Baird's work in Aberdeen. This example illustrates the significance of medical professionals in the accessibility of abortion during this time. There were also inequalities between Scotland and the rest of Britain. The abortion rate was lower in Scotland (in 1984, the abortion rate per 1000 women aged 15-44 was 8.9; in England and Wales, it was 12.8).[59] The SAC explained this disparity on the difficulty of being approved for an NHS abortion, long waiting lists and the lack of private facilities in Scotland.[60] To foster change in Westminster, a significant movement was needed to pressure the government and MPs to support their causes, thus the affiliation between the SAC and NAC was pivotal.

Despite the best efforts of the SAC and other British campaign groups, they were often overshadowed by the effective campaigning of pro-life groups. In response to the Corrie Bill, the pro-choice movement was reported to have sent around 200 letters to Parliament, but was overshadowed by the thousands of letters sent in support of the Bill.[61] The same scenario happened when James White proposed to restrict the upper time limit of abortion. For this proposal, he received over 22,000 letters in support of his Bill. The majority of these letters came from religious groups and followers, but they far exceeded the number of letters recorded that were sent against the bill, predominantly from pro-choice organisations.[62] The feminist magazine, *Spare Rib*, criticised this lack of action exclaiming that 'the women's movement [had] a lot to learn from Catholic activism'.[63] The efforts of the women's movement were commendable, but the pro-life movement was often one step ahead.

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill 1990 was successful in restricting the upper time limit on abortion, despite the best efforts of the women's movement.[64] By establishing a time limit on the abortion procedure, those in the women's movement felt it created more problems; for example, some women faced obstacles setting appointments.[65] Despite this failure for the SAC, they were dedicated to using politics as a means of achieving their goals and were successful in other ways. One of the most significant achievements for the SAC was the support from the Labour Party. At the 1985 Labour Party Conference, the Reproductive Rights Resolution was passed, which was regarded by the SAC as 'a huge step forward for women's rights'.[66] Support from a mainstream political party was critical for the women's movement to widen their support base, particularly within Parliament.

From this brief insight into the tactics of the Scottish women's movement and the SAC, one can see that they were a dedicated and effective force. With regards to their organisation, the SAC kept a detailed record of their work and honoured their constitution to ensure they retained clarity regarding their goals. This organisation helped keep members and supporters informed and built-up interest from external and international allies. Despite the various setbacks when trying to achieve their political goals, the SAC was persistent and explored all avenues of help. They did make some significant gains, but mainly prevented restrictive bills. The pro-choice movement encountered strong opposition, especially from the religious community, but they were a formidable force that left a lasting impact on society.

A COMPARISON OF CAMPAIGNS

The women's movement has been – and continues to be – at the core of the abortion debate. Across the world, women's groups have fought and campaigned for abortion rights with many movements fracturing into specialised groups, especially in the 1970s to the 1980s. These groups focused on different issues, for example, reducing restrictions and improving access to abortion. In the Maritime Provinces and Scotland, the law decriminalised abortion, but neither region had the access and facilities that the women's movements desired, hence the need for abortion campaigns. In both areas, the organisations fought many battles, politically, morally and medically, all impacting their tactics and aims. The levels of opposition and support were quite similar. Both regions fought against strong religious opposition, lacked political backing and, in some cases, encountered robust medical opposition. All these factors and groups affected the success of the abortion campaigners in reaching their goals. Despite employing similar techniques, the groups diverged in some respects, resulting in different outcomes.

From the evidence provided and the comparison between Scotland and the Maritime Provinces of Canada, one can identify distinct similarities and differences between the two movements. Both movements understood the importance of working with medical professionals to increase access to abortions and worked to achieve this in their areas, both reaching some degree of success. In addition, the movements used their localised organisations to reach their community, but continued to collaborate with national organisations to maximise their impact. With both regions having strong religious communities, they came up against opposition, which mobilised to further restrict abortion access. The main difference, and potentially the most important factor, was the organisation's public and political activity. In Scotland, the movement had a well-developed political and public presence by lobbying MPs, protesting and working with international campaigns. Whereas in the Maritime Provinces, the movement did not have as strong a political engagement or public presence, and this could be the reason it was largely unsuccessful in the region.

By comparing these two movements, one can assess the impact the women's movement can have on the abortion debate. Despite making little progress in updating the laws in Scotland, the movement played a crucial role in blocking Bills in Parliament and retained abortion rights throughout the country. Furthermore, their presence and activism helped reduce the stigma surrounding abortion and the country has since become more liberal. In the Maritime Provinces, and particularly in PEI, the women's movement failed to achieve its goals and the Island became known as a 'life sanctuary'. The geographical disparity in Scotland lessened as access to abortions increased; in the Maritimes this disparity remained as abortion was restricted in PEI until 2017. From this evidence, it can be deduced that the women's movement had a significant impact on the abortion debate. Their most distinct differences had a consequential impact on the legacy that these groups left in their respective areas. This divergence in tactics demonstrates the need for a tenacious and cohesive movement, as there were several other actors (pro-life, politics, medics) working against them to varying degrees. Political movements, such as protesting bills and public protests, had a significant impact on gathering public support and increasing pressure on politicians. Since the height of these movements, Scotland has continuously become more progressive and the Maritime Provinces have stayed culturally conservative.

The lack of a united women's movement in the Maritime Provinces allowed other actors to take control of the abortion debate and shape it to their views. This shift was particularly evident in PEI, where the pro-life movement outlawed abortions. This situation arguably proves that the women's movement was pivotal to improving access to abortion. The absence of a cohesive group advocating for abortion access allowed an already dominant pro-life movement to control the debate. Despite their failure to change the law, they were successful in defeating the pro-choice movement and restricted abortion access as far as they could. It is possible that the opposition to the women's movement was too strong and this was the reason for their failure. The influence of the other actors needs to be considered for context, but an in-depth analysis of these groups would be a subject for further study. The women's movement had a tremendous impact in Canada and if it had been stronger in the 1970s and 1980s, it had the potential to change the abortion debate and stigma surrounding abortions in the Maritime Provinces—as it had in Scotland. The women's movement, therefore, played an influential role in the abortion debate, despite it being dominated by the political and medical communities.

A comparison between these two regions has highlighted the need for a dynamic and public women's movement to liberalise abortion access. In the Maritime Provinces, a region understudied, it has been identified that there were distinct cultural factors that played a central role. The strong religious culture and the small communities created an atmosphere hostile to change, particularly in the case of abortion rights. The comparison with Scotland, an area that has received more attention from scholars, has identified flaws in the tactics used by the women's movements, such as their lack of power and influence in comparison to the religious opposition. However, as religion has become less prevalent in Scottish society, this opposition has lessened to a degree. For both movements, this study has demonstrated that the women's movements were always fighting the defensive. The primary points of contention regarding abortion have changed little over time, the only differentiation being in language. For example, religion and religious groups are still at the forefront of the debate and anti-abortion campaigns. Politicians still have the power to decide the laws, usually in a male-dominated setting, and medical professionals are often restricted under these laws that have not been updated in many years. Women are still having to fight for the right to control their own bodies, with many of these groups not listening to them. These movements were an ocean apart, but the foundation of the campaigns remained the same.

One can argue that the women's abortion campaign in the Maritime Provinces was slightly weaker and the lack of a strong women's movement in the 1970s and 1980s has had a profound impact on the area, as today the provinces are still conservative and much pro-life material is visible. Whereas in Scotland, society has become more liberal and the culture is more accepting towards abortion than their counterparts across the Atlantic. There was a strong and cohesive pro-choice campaign in Scotland in the 1970s and 1980s, and their fight has altered the abortion culture and has, arguably, been the difference between the two regions. In Scotland, the pro-choice movement indeed advocated for 'Our Bodies, Our Lives, Our Choice', whereas, in the Maritime Provinces, the women's movement was overruled and did not gain control of the abortion rights they so desired.

Notes

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STORYTELLING AS PROTEST: HOW DID SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN FORGE SOLIDARITY AND CREATE SPACES FOR THEIR COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN?

Amal Habib Malik

Introduction

Objection and action against injustice – these terms exemplify South Asian women's mobilisation from the late 1970s to the 2000s using the power of storytelling amongst acts of protest. This article will consider how South Asian women created sites of safety to enable them to share their experiences of marginality. The interpersonal nature of the experiences in this article is a celebration of a community who faced widespread racism, misogyny, homophobia and isolation condoned by the state. As a young British South Asian woman, my research also serves as a form of self-reflection, memorialising a living history that will impact generations to come.

The article maps out different forms of mobilisation and the creation of physical spaces of solidarity. The first section focuses on the work of the Sari Squad, a collective of South Asian women battling against hostile immigration policies and police brutality in the 1980s. This is against a backdrop of Britain's hostile immigration policies and the precarity of their citizenship. The second section considers how London's Club Kali, founded in 1995, one of the world's biggest LGBTQ+ clubs that featured South Asian musical remixes, created a safe space for South Asian LGBTQ+ communities by subverting traditional cultural practices through the lens of Queerness.[1] These topics will uncover some of the experiences of South Asian women and the diversity of their marginalisation in Britain.

The primary sources used in this article centre on the lived experiences of South Asian women, as academic scholarship can depersonalise the history of marginalised individuals through objective practices. Utilising stories of the Sari Squad's actions and the flyers of Club Kali helps to visualise the experiences of South Asian women, treating people's stories with respect, and avoiding exploiting their memories for the sake of a narrative. Facts and frameworks may further illuminate the source's context but, the perspective of the women whose stories are being told is the most important aspect. The interview with Heidi Mirza was collected to document and reflect upon the concerns of minority women in the 1980s.[2] The interview is intimately tied with my contemporary concerns as a young South Asian woman. It provides a history that is representative of my identity, one that is radical in the way it shows the practices of solidarity, and it is an inspiration to continue to build upon Mirza's work. My research is also a critical reflection on the shortcomings of the era, especially the neglect of Queerness within the South Asian community, a gap in historiography that continues to fail the LGBTQ+ community. Mirza's interview and reflections also provided a helpful way to analyse contemporary comment on the concerns of South Asian women, drawing upon the themes of class, social welfare, and racism that continue to plague Asian communities in Britain.

Historiography of South Asian Women in Britain

Ambalavaner Sivanandan's *From Resistance to Rebellion*, provides essential historical background to the anti-racist movements in Britain in this period. It reaffirms how the scholarship on South Asian women features recurring themes. These focus mainly on the work of the Southall Black Sisters and OWAAD (Organisation of Women of African and Asian descent), looking at the battle against hostile immigration policies and trade union solidarity.[3] While addressing the 'parallel histories of common racism', only four pages from the forty-page text reflect Asian and Afro-Caribbean women's struggle in Britain.[4] While the text notes that 'it was the black women that helped keep the names' of women suffering deportation threats within the public consciousness, there is limited information on methods of mobilisation used by women-led immigration campaigns.[5] Whilst immigration concerns were one of the primary areas of feminist organising for Black and Asian women, there is no mention of the Sari Squad in the text, despite this group's extensive campaigns.

Academic scholarship has neglected areas of South Asian women's mobilisation, and through the interviews explored in both sections of this article, the realities of their experiences can be heard. Margaretta Jolly has argued that the relationship between oral history and the recording of feminist history rescues the women 'hidden from history'.[6] Amrit Wilson's 1978 book *Finding a Voice: Asian Women in*

Britain was one of the first oral studies into the experiences of Asian women within Britain; its methods reinforced the unsurprising nature of how 'activist historians turn to oral history'.[7] Wilson's interview, recorded by Jolly, is featured in the first section of this article and provides an insight into 'reflexive' approaches to oral history, rooted in a more empathetic style of listening rather than a 'traditional distant' format, through building a relationship of openness.[8] The interview with Mirza follows this framework by considering relative themes of commonality to explore how oral history captures lived experiences within academic research.[9]

In the second section, the exploration of Club Kali, established in 1995 as a site of safety created by Queer women, aims to look at how fringe communities' experiences have been kept hidden due to racialised homophobia. For example, the reflections of the authors of *Black Lesbian Discussions* show that fear of outward visibility for Black lesbians created a silence surrounding their experiences.[10] The 'myth' that Black communities were more homophobic than white British communities in this period was seen to further ostracise Queer marginalised people.[11] Discussing the 'hostility' to coming out at the OWAAD 1981 Conference, Pratibha Parmar, one of the authors of the book, showed how anxieties surrounding Black lesbians persisted within feminist organisations, revealing a need to establish Queer-focused spaces.[12] Commenting on Asian women's desire, Gail Lewis, another of the authors, posited that 'Asian women were able to come out but, come out in what?'.[13] The cultural climate of the time lacked visible advertising of Queer spaces, limiting accessibility to such environments. In their 2021 research project *Cross Border Queers: the Story of South Asian Migrants in the UK*, authors Churnjeet Mahn and Rohit K Dasgupta aim to challenge the 'heterowashing' of immigration stories of South Asian communities in Britain.[14] The project seeks to address the gap in historical literature surrounding Queer Asian communities.[15] The contemporary nature of their research, which is intended to conclude in 2023, reflects how exploration into LGBTQ+ Asian lives is a relatively recent initiative.[16]

The whitewashing of Queer history in Britain reinforced both racial and gendered limitations in our understanding of migrant history in Britain.[17] Representations of South Asians are homogenised within the parameters of heteronormativity.[18] Gayatri Gopinath argued that the last decades of the twentieth century focused on two aspects of South Asian identity, the formation of Bhangras in the 1980s and the 'Post-Bhangra' Asian underground of the 1990s, both exclusively centred on young South Asian men.[19] Bhangra music as a genre was primarily produced and performed by South Asian men.[20] Rather than complete cultural absolutism, these manifestations of Bollywood and Bhangra in Asian Music scenes allowed second-generation immigrants a new language for their ethnic identities in Britain.[21] Within this historiography, Club Kali serves to challenge preconceptions of the existing literature surrounding the Asian Underground Scene as largely male-dominated through the pioneering work of South Asian Queer women.

The Hostile Territories

To understand how South Asian women in Britain employed storytelling as a mechanism of protest, the precarity of their socio-political position as citizens must be considered. An article from 21 January 1984 by the anti-imperialist feminist newspaper *Outwrite*, announced: 'SARI SQUAD WINS–the European Court next!'.[22] It pictured Rehzia Begum, a member of the Sari Squad, speaking at the House of Commons in her fight to stop the deportation of Afia Begum and her daughter Asma.[23] In 1982, the young widow from Bangladesh discovered that, despite holding a valid visa on her arrival to the UK, immigration officers revoked her visa and ruled Begum had no legal right to remain.[24] This revocation was due to the death of Begum's husband in London's Brick Lane.

In a 1984 House of Commons sitting, Labour MP Harry Cohen accused the Home Office of forcing Begum and her child into hiding, commending the Sari Squad as a 'courageous group of Asian Women'.[25] Begum was deported, despite her elderly father maintaining residence in the UK, reflecting the racialised Government immigration system.[26] The Minister of State, David Waddington, displayed hostility and a lack of sympathy, arguing that Begum, 'by taking the advice of the Sari Squad … and going into hiding, … had not improved her case'.[27] Waddington explained that there was a privilege for the wives and children of migrants in Britain to be afforded residency.[28] However, as Begum had lost her husband and was no longer a dependent, there was 'no possible basis for her to come here for settlement'.[29]

In 1985, the Sari Squad, an activist group of thirty women of Indian and Pakistani origin, hired a bus to travel to the EU Parliament in Strasbourg to present an emergency proposal to prevent the deportation of Begum.[30] The European Commission of Human Rights (ECHR) carried a motion on the case of Begum by seventy votes to sixty-seven, condemning 'this act as callous and showing the racist and sexist nature of the United Kingdom immigration laws'.[31] By 1985, the ECHR ruled that the British government had enforced a sexist immigration policy, leading to further adjustment of the UK migration policies.[32] The subsequent adjustment by the British government meant to equalise the policy for women and men made it equally challenging for a man to sponsor his wife, enacting further means to limit Asian immigration in Britain.[33]

The 'patriarchal racism' experienced by Asian women demonstrates how state immigration intentionally sought to undermine Asian women's rights within Britain.[34] The first wave of migrants in the post-Second World War period were women who came as 'dependents of husbands or fathers', their mobility was rooted in their relationship to men.[35] The language of viewing women as 'dependents' according to the then-current immigration system singled out Asian women specifically as passive.[36] Immigration rules from 1969 to 1983 were consistently revised to exclude Asian women who had migrated to Britain from sponsoring spouses from abroad.[37] The 1984 British Nationality Act gave equal civic rights to subjects of the British Commonwealth States.[38] However, following the 1962, 1968 and 1971 Immigration Acts

and the 1981 British Nationality Act, attempts to curb immigration and limit the status of commonwealth citizens shifted.[39] Asian women were viewed as exploiting the 'Asian arranged-marriage system' to trick immigration controls. By preventing their husbands from joining them, the government sought to restrict the increased flow of migrants.[40] The post-war mass migration of South Asian populations to Britain, to work in industry, created a link between citizenship, physical abilities and economic value.[41] When reflecting upon the hostility towards women migrants and the precarity of their citizenship status, the issuance of immigration status to Asian migrants was evidently centred around their benefit to the British state.

The Sari Squad's attempts to mobilise to defend Begum show the use of storytelling as a tool of protest. The Sari Squad chained themselves to the railings of the Home Secretary's house and won a court appeal overturning the '£1000 bind-overs' to which they had initially been sentenced.[42] The court ruling indicated that the police had been unclear on what charge to arrest the women and, as a result, had accused them of 'breach of peace'.[43] In a direct quote in *Outwrite*, Rehzia Begum stated, 'We knew all along that the police had slapped on the charge to try and justify why they had to keep us in custody overnight'.[44] A clear outcry against police behaviour, the reports show the positive efforts of anti-racist mobilising against police tactics. The source shows that Begum took official action against the Metropolitan Police as 'she had been forced to strip down to her petticoat in front of male police officers'.[45]

These humiliation tactics show a culture of violence by the police in response to the Sari Squad's peaceful protest. This is further evidenced in a campaign video produced by the Afia Begum Centre. The clips collected for the video were from 1984, capturing images of protests in support of the Afia Begum campaign, with the interviews showing elements of storytelling.[46] The secretary of the Afia Begum Campaign is interviewed, discussing the new Afia Begum Centre opened at 114a Brick Lane.[47] The images shown in the video are similar to the striking picture of Rehzia Begum featured in the *Outwrite* newspaper.[48] A young South Asian man in the video argues, 'every time the government harasses and terrorises Asian women like Afia Begum, it's a message to the extreme racists, and a message to the National Front'.[49] The campaign video reflected the ongoing circumstances within East London, with rising attacks on the Asian community, alongside increasing government neglect. The justice system enforced by the British government had created an environment where self-defence and suspicion of the state were running high, forcing communities to defend themselves. However, they took little or no account of 'racial provocation'.[50]

A March 1979 magazine *Campaign Against Racism and Fascism* (CARF) shows the relationship between the South Asian community of Brick Lane and the police.[51] In June 1978, a mob of 150 National Front members led a rampage through Brick Lane, attacking community members and vandalising shops.[52] Though the owner of a local sari shop had called the police, they did not arrive until after the attacks.[53] For members of the community, the article emphasised the need to practise self-defence.[54] Without a police force they could rely on, there was a vulnerability to racial violence in the community. Thus, the reliance on self-defence by South Asian communities reflected the sentiment that 'the forces of law and order do not operate for them'.[55] Additionally, police presence in Brick Lane involved Home Office raids for illegal immigrants and was a pretext for the surveillance of the South Asian community.[56] The Sari Squad had also used physicality in their mobilisation. They were trained in numerous mixed martial arts and sang at protest rallies against racist attackers.[57] Thus, the Sari Squad was seen as an inspiration for mobilisation within the politically violent climate of the era and challenged perceptions of South Asian women in Britain.[58] The CARF article poses essential questions that ring true in the case of Afia Begum. When looking at the functions of British society, 'where is the justice in a law that ordains some of us inferior? How effective… is a law that is enforced lawlessly?'[59]

These cultural signifiers were intentionally used by the Sari Squad to mark out their Asian-ness and their womanhood. In the campaign video, an unnamed member of the Sari Squad retells the stripping down of Rehzia to 'just an underskirt and a bra and a short blouse in front of some male police officers' as a way to degrade the women.[60] Removing Rehzia's clothing became a signifier for the stripping away of her identity, notably as her sari marked her membership with the group. This physical ripping away of identity, is but one act of many that painted a larger picture of racialised attitudes. For example, the legacy of the pre-partition British Raj and its manipulation of Indian identity as part of the civilising missions enacted in the colonial takeover in India.[61] By viewing Indian culture as inferior, Indian women were seen as 'oppressed creatures who must be saved from their degradation'.[62] Colonial British authorities viewed themselves as a liberating force, but this imperial discourse permeated across borders, through migration patterns and into perceptions of South Asian women in Britain.[63] These archaic ideals created an image of South Asian women that viewed them through this imperialist lens.[64] Many women in the Sari Squad had never been arrested and this was their first time protesting.[65] This is remarkable in a period where British society's perception of Asian women was one of backwardness that viewed them as docile.

The orientalist ideologies that have shaped Asian women as 'passive' have also played into their oppression by state authorities.[66] Within this framework, the work of the Sari Squad, in utilising cultural motifs and leading the charge in public demonstrations, challenged the existing western narrative. For example, in a 2011 interview with the founder of AWAZ ('Voice'), Amrit Wilson recalled significant criticism of her wearing a sari when she first moved to the UK.[67] Wilson recounted that when she first migrated in the 1960s, 'the first couple of years I did wear saris. And they used to be appalled by the fact that you're showing more midriff, a lot of women … they used to ask me questions like about the Karma Sutra and things like that'.[68] Wilson's lived experience sheds light on the Sari Squad's active clothing choice, as it represented a reclaiming of their heritage and identity to tell a story of their political-cultural background.

The campaign's aim to offer 'practical campaigning activities' is evidenced by the establishment of the Afia Begum Centre in Brick Lane.[69] The video, *Sari Squad – the Afia Begum Campaign*, shows members of the Squad smiling, waving, and holding the poster of the Afia Begum campaign, with the secretary stating that it should not be up to any government to 'tell women where they can go to have a family'.[70] A member of the Sari Squad says the intention is to continue to put pressure on the Home Office to support the Afia Begum case.[71] The clip ends with a title card that states 'Afia Begum HAS BEEN DEPORTED, BUT THE FIGHT CONTINUES', and includes the contact details of the Afia Begum Centre in Brick Lane.[72] The Sari Squad was a product of detrimental immigration policies against women. Thus, their mobilisation becomes part of the story of manifestations of protest by South Asian women in Britain.

Pictures from the Sari Squad at the 1983 Tory Party Conference produced powerful iconographic material on the visibility of South Asian women in the public sphere.[73] In an interview with Granada TV in January 1978, soon after she became Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher asserted that the population were fearful of 'being rather swamped by people with a different culture'.[74] Thatcher presented foreign cultures as an 'alien' threat to the 'British way of life'; within the broader discourse of the period, Asian women remained the 'other'.[75] Heidi Mirza, in her interview, considered neoliberalist ideologies:

> in the 1980s, through Maggy Thatcher, who was the prime minister, she declared there was no such thing as community anymore. There is only the individual … that whole movement has moved us away from collective action which is strength in numbers.[76]

When reflecting upon this growth of individualism and how Asian identity was treated as a symptom of a backward culture, South Asian feminism in Britain threatened the progressive image of British society. Rather than pursuing Britishness, the Sari Squad instead created a space that preserved the place of Asian women in Britain by highlighting their cultural background, not that of British ideals. As a result, there was a 'renaissance' of cultural values that had been initially whittled away by colonialist interventions.[77]

In 1984, Marxist historian C.L.R. James believed, 'belonging is not something that somebody gives to you; it's something that you fight for and something that you insist upon'.[78] In removing ideas of being a 'British Asian', one can view how the desire for Asian women to establish solidarity was rooted in not simply being legitimised as a British citizen in itself, but in gaining legitimate human rights that would allow for cultural preservation and identity.[79] The visual point of wearing decorative saris and the language of 'Squad' created a uniform of identity and collectivism that sought to advocate for anti-racism.[80] One of their banners also depicted an image of a British passport next to the slogan 'NO MORE DEPORTATIONS Afia Will Stay Sari Squad'.[81] The group commanded a presence with their repetition of 'Afia Will Stay', and their banner shows a committed narrative of support.[82]

The Sari Squad's continuous campaigning from 1983 were not just public acts of demonstration, but also a challenge to the British government.[83] Their presence at the Tory Party Conference in 1983 sent a clear message of their determination not to back down against racist immigration policies. Living in a state hostile to immigration, such as the UK, physical markers of identity become imbued with an effort not only to preserve heritage but an attempt to establish their right to live in the UK. They tell a visual story of how South Asian women could mobilise.

In this section, analysing immigration policies is essential to understanding the reception of South Asian communities in Britain and the effort of immigrant communities to establish their positions. By indicating the political hostility South Asian women faced, the Sari Squad told a story of struggle faced by countless other South Asian women in Britain. By articulating their experiences, South Asian women repeatedly utilised their visibility in British society as an act of rebellion. Their mobilisation efforts belied perceptions of South Asian women as passive victims.

Transgressive Sexualities

Modelled as a progressive imitation of a South Asian home and led by Queer women, Club Kali is viewed as a place of cultural practice and a safe space. First established in 1995, it continues to be one of the biggest LGBTQ+ Asian music clubs.[84] The combination of music styles led by DJ Ritu has varied from 'Hollywood, Bhangra, Arabic, R&B and dance classics', with a South Asian twist.[85] Club Kali not only rooted traditional South Asian cultural heritage within the space, but challenged their gendered roots for a progressive cause. This section will show how historiographical neglect of South Asian Queer communities led their history to be primarily transcribed through personal archiving and oral history. When discussing Queerness in the 1980s, Mirza states that 'gay and lesbian women would really disrupt the normative idea', particularly for conservative expectations of South Asian communities.[86] Thus, this history should not be undervalued because of the limited academic literature that has focused upon the relationship of male youth culture to the underground Asian scene. Nightlife and its subcultures produced histories that may not be as prominent. In addition, the temporality of physical spaces leads to a lack of physical evidence and traceable history.[87] Breaking down oral history as a methodology and highlighting its importance as a source provides a platform for marginalised communities whose histories have been lost. The less audible and visible archive of Queer communities is especially apparent in reference to South Asian LGBTQ+ communities.[88] Both LGBTQ+ and Queer will be used interchangeably in this section to ensure inclusive identifiers.

In 1988, the founding of the South Asian Gay and Lesbian group Shakti was a pioneering movement that would lead to the cofounding of Club Kali by DJ Ritu.[89] Led by DJ Ritu as a committee member, Shakti established their club nights to raise money to set up housing groups for LGBTQ+ South Asians who were being forced out of their homes.[90] Acknowledging the intersections of

sexuality through both culture and race allowed Shakti to be a space that recognised the racialised homophobia faced by LGBTQ+ South Asians.[91] Their collaboration with the predominantly white London Lesbian and Gay Centre (LLGC) allowed them to hold one of their first disco Bhangra nights, which was intended to raise funds for the organisations.[92] A poster for a 1990 Bhangra disco event advertised an open space for 'all Asian lesbians, gay men and their friends', with DJ Ritu leading the music for the event.[93] The poster also featured traditional South Asian cultural motifs of peacocks and a map of India, reiterating Shakti as a visibly LGBTQ+ Asian-focused space.[94] Also, it increased their visibility within LGBTQ+ activism circles.[95]

The LLGC was one of the first LGBTQ+ community and club spaces funded by the GLC, existing as a 'breathing group' for the community to feel protected.[96] With this in mind, Club Kali can be seen as a space that challenged dominant traditions of sexual and gender hierarchies that existed in South Asian cultures, subverting the norms of cultural production.[97] Within the broader contextual desire for safe LGBTQ+ spaces to be established, Club Kali played into this by providing a sense of community service through the medium of music. Club Kali was intended to allow everyone to feel safe there, it was 'crucial' to their mission.[98] As considered by Anjali Gera Roy, these spaces connect the 'ethnolinguistic and ethno-cultural exclusions of South Asian youth' from white LGBTQ+ spaces.[99] Club Kali explicitly opposed the racialised homophobia faced by South Asians within their communities and the broader white British society. Though their existence was constantly denied, the establishment of Club Kali was a demand for their right to exist. For Queer Asians, visibility was not a privilege they were given.[100]

To keep communities safe, these South Asian spaces could not make most of their media accessible.[101] With its 1988 Local Government Act, Section 28, the Conservative government banned local authorities from publishing 'material with the intention of promoting homosexuality'. This meant the cultural suppression of openly LGBTQ+ spaces.[102] Even within LGBTQ+ magazines or newspapers, the limitation in advertising shows how the primary sources used in this section are unique in their preservation. For DJ Ritu, Queer South Asians were 'so busy struggling to survive… that we forgot that we were making history'.[103] This illuminates how the limitation of archival material surrounding Queer South Asian lives was not simply through historiographical neglect. By being visible, they would be further vulnerable to homophobic violence. As a result, Club Kali had a 'protectionist policy', maintaining a no-camera rule to ensure the privacy of attendees.[104] For the South Asians who attended, at 'least 50 percent are not out…we are still in a position of protecting anonymity'.[105] These spaces allowed South Asian lesbians to 'enjoy each other's company', to ensure safety and remain exclusive.[106]

Club Kali offered spaces of safety that were rooted in not just cultural preservation, but in a reimagining of traditional values. Through Josh Kun's theory of 'Audiotopias', Club Kali can be shown as a microcosm of Queer subcultures.[107] This framework considers the 'utopian longings where several sites normally deemed incompatible are brought together … in the production of social space' through musical subcultures.[108] It creates a

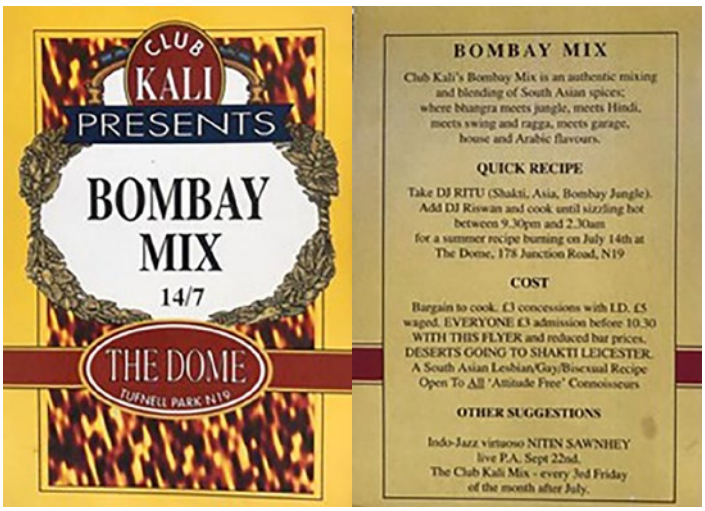

Figure 1: Club Kali Presents Bombay Mix, c.1995-2000, courtesy of DJ Ritu

community of music through a public culture that draws on historical, social struggles.[109] This is apparent in the co-founders attesting to the creation of South Asian hospitality through the space of Club Kali. DJ Ritu says that when you enter Club Kali, 'it is like you've been welcomed into my home, it is good old fashioned Asian hospitality ... no one is not offered food or drink'. The aspect of food is notable, when looking at figure 1 through the themes of comfort and cultural familiarity.[110] Mirza recalled an interview with a woman who saw that 'food and the smell of food brings her back to who she is … and all of this reminds her of home'.[111] Figure 1 plays upon the popular Indian snack 'Bombay Mix', calling for a 'summer recipe' of entertaining South Asian flavours.[112] Figure 1 also lists another club, 'Asia'. Asia was one of the first world music LGBTQ+ venues in Britain. It was established in 1988, alongside Shakti and Bombay Jungle, where DJ Ritu was resident DJ, with the aim of raising funds for the Leicester branch of Shakti.[113] To come to Club Kali as a South Asian Queer person, to find that they were not the only one, but part of a collective, reiterates the space as a site of safety and familiarity.[114] Co-founder Rita H similarly recalls that 'through music, to putting out fresh flowers and food on the table … that's part of our culture!' this familiarity is reiterated.[115]

Growing up in western cultures, many marginalised communities rejected their culture in living in mainstream white societies.[116] Club Kali was for those who felt rejected, bringing 'elements of our culture, elements we grew up with … to make a connection'.[117] The mid-1980s led to an emergence of a specific site of cultural identity for South Asian diasporas—'new Asian dance music'.[118] The hybridity of this music genre combined traditional Punjabi folk music and Bollywood music with new remixes that began to be popular in British club scenes.[119] The convergence of Bhangra Punjabi music with the western sounds of the 1980s is an example of 'diasporic production', creating transnational connections that created spaces for the broader South Asian British community.[120] The role of Bollywood and the popularisation of its film music is interesting when noting how they have been perceived as an amalgamation

Figure 2: Club Kali Summer Mixes, c.1995-2000, courtesy of DJ Ritu

Figure 3: Club Kali Presents Spring Mixes, c.1995-2000, courtesy of DJ Ritu

of Punjabi folk, Hindi classical music, mixed with western influence.[121] It was only in the 1990s that this was translated into western media as a legitimate category of music, 'Bollywood dance', that targeted second-generation South Asians in the club scenes of Britain.[122] The cultural reception of Bollywood music was seen as promiscuous and alien to Indian cultural sensibilities, and can position British Asian Bhangra music as challenging traditional cultural practices.[123] This is apparent in figure 2, with the title of the advert 'ASIAN FLAVOURS WITH A WESTERN TWIST', a blending of 'South Asian Spices' showing an authentic mixing of multiple genres. With 'food making, you are rooting yourself, you're saying a statement about who you are', and Club Kali's reiteration of these cultural motifs reinforced a sense of home.[124]

At Club Kali, they aimed to tackle the widespread homophobia in the South Asian British community. DJ Ritu recalls the memories of 'Chutney Queens' drag performers who would take traditional colourful saris and jewellery to perform on stage by emulating popular Bollywood actresses or singers.[125] The striking flyer (Figure 3) features an artistic rendition of the Goddess Kali who, in traditional Bengali folk music, is described transitioning to becoming a God, Krishna.[126] This element of gender fluidity, emphasised on the cover of the flyer with the 'recipe' of the evening to feature a performance of the Chutney Queens, stays true to the Club's utilisation of cultural motifs through a liberatory maner.[127] The jewelled image of Kali, with the Chutney Queens being recorded wearing extravagant jewellery and decorated Saris, shows a visible embrace of physical markers of feminine and gender-fluid beauty.[128] These can be seen as a proud display of ethno-cultural identifiers, with elements of Bollywood, to present 'an undisguised deployment of style and fashion in the performance of identity'.[129] The level of expression in liberation practices as an Asian Queer individual was a desire to live freely, without shame in their identity. Ethnomusicologist Peter Manuel observed 'typically at Punjabi weddings a few men may dance excitedly around the drummers, and occasionally a woman will dance a few steps, to applause and cheer'.[130] The celebratory aspect of Bhangra is very much apparent in the work of Club Kali, as the space existed to transform South Asian practices for the joy of LGBTQ+ Asians.

The hyper-masculinity in the traditional Punjabi associations with Bhangra shows how it could be used within the broader South Asian diaspora to perform masculinity and assert traditional cultural identity.[131] After the mid-1980s, the revival of Bhangra across shows and clubs became popular, but were limited to male participants.[132] Queer diasporic circles formed South Asian subcultures that absorbed mainstream musical practices, with a rejection of the masculine heteronormativity.[133] The monthly events of Club Kali allowed for expressions of Queer desires in club nights that historically have been dominated by men.[134] Club Kali would open earlier for some of the Chutney Queens to utilise the toilets to get ready, as their homes were not spaces where they could prepare.[135] As some Queens were married with children, many would get ready in the Club and 'defrock' at the night's end.[136] The underground and 'fleeting' nature of these spaces, made these sites somewhat contingent to the popularity of the 1990s club scenes.[137] However, they still provided a safe space, in spite of the traditional conservatism of the era, disrupting the 'status quo'.[138] The vulnerability to 'expose' yourself to your community, based on religion or culture, necessitated the existence of Club Kali.[139] In some ways, as the Sari Squad had their saris stripped away from them by the police, the stripping away of clothing by the Chutney Queens was a necessity for a community that would police their identity. Club Kali also supported those Queens who were transgender in their transition process, providing guidance and material support.[140] The space not only spoke to the celebration of South Asian Queer culture but to the heart-breaking stories of so many who were unsafe because of their sexuality. Club Kali, as for many Queer Asians, was the only space they could turn to.

From the reinterpretation of gendered cultural heritage associated with women and domesticity, in the use of food, to traditional saris, Club Kali reconfigured traditional norms within a progressive space. Created by Queer women, they have used traditional South

Asian cultural motifs in a liberatory manner to create an environment for the LGBTQ+ South Asian community that still exists today. It is a claim to space as Queer individuals and the practice of their Queerness that provides inclusivity, regardless of the location.[141] The loss of an 'ephemera of Queer life' is part of the failures of heteronormative public cultural practices and historical archiving. The dominant narrative has left histories to be lost and a diasporic identity to be erased.[142] Queer oral history allows us to grasp the generational struggle for LGBTQ+ rights, the role of cultural perceptions and the isolation as a migrant in Britain.[143]

Conclusion

Rooting these sources within their historical context casts a bleak perspective on the state of Britain in this period towards South Asian women, exemplified by the mobilisation of the Sari Squad in the first section. This focus on the actions of South Asian women, however, offers glimpses of hope for the transformative potential of women-centred action. From public to private demonstrations, protest is part of South Asian women's existence in Britain. With the ability to distance yourself from your research comes privilege, and historical approaches remaining within the space of supposed neutrality are a Eurocentric practice which often neglects the lived experiences of marginalised communities. Focussing on interviews with Heidi Safia, DJ Ritu and Rita H, exemplifies how their lived experiences shaped their work. With much of South Asian women's history neglected in Britain, this article aims to make their history publicly accessible. The intimate ties between cultural preservation and Queerness are noted in the second section, telling the story of how Queer women operated within the parameters of the racialised homophobia of their backgrounds and wider British society. The LGBTQ+ South Asian community's existence has been pivotal to the expressions of transgressive acts of solidarity within conservative spaces.

This article raises questions of what histories are deemed worthwhile recording, and those which are not. When looking at the Queer history of South Asians, it is apparent that the difficulties of outward visibility made them vulnerable to abuse, resulting in a loss of historical knowledge. As Brah noted, the work of South Asian mobilisation in Britain can be characterised by 'memories of blood on the street, excitement of political mobilisation, and optimism that comes in the wake of daring to imagine futures of hope when confronted with despair'.[144] The tendency of immigrant stories to be romanticised in Britain must be further challenged in future research, as the work of women's organisations such as the Sari Squad and Club Kali, were all part of the battle against a violently prejudiced British society. Within the discourse of the South Asian feminist movement, this article shows the absence of less-mainstream mobilisations, exploring fringe groups which sought to share their lived experiences, giving life to the histories that may be lost.

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From the Archive

Elissa Stoddart, University of Sussex 2021 graduate. Runner-Up for the Women's History Network Undergraduate Dissertation Prize for 2021 for her dissertation 'Risky Pleasures? An exploration of female experiences of the 1990s rave scene'.

In September 2020, I began the final year of my history degree at the University of Sussex. Within the first few months of this academic year, government COVID-19 rules and regulations had flittered between the rule of six, national lock downs and tiered methods of social restriction. Within this turbulent period, I started my dissertation research which examined the risky pleasures that female ravers experienced during the 1990s rave scene.

From the very beginning of my history degree, I had almost romanticised the final dissertation project as I imagined myself looking particularly important in the University library with my huge selection of books and spending days hopping off the 25 bus with a coffee in hand, waltzing over to The Keep. The Keep is an archive located on the periphery of Brighton and just a stone throws away from the University of Sussex Campus. However, the pandemic was still rampant at this time and social gatherings and spaces were limited, which in turn forced archives across the country to close. This, therefore, denied me the opportunity to carry out this geeky fantasy of researching in an archive and looking like a 'proper historian', whatever that may be. Instead, my research was forced online.

To research the experiences of women during the 1990s rave scene I turned predominantly to the Museum of Youth Culture Online archive for images that encapsulated the 1990s rave scene. I used Peter Walsh's and Lucy McCarthy's photography to gain a greater understanding of the varying female fashion choices that were associated with this subculture. These images were of great value, as they provided an 'insiders' view of this subcultural scene, often producing pieces of photography from the heart of the dance floor which demonstrated female fashion in movement. The art of doing this research online, however, did pose its limitations. Being denied the opportunity to touch, smell and visually interrogate these fashion items, inhibited a focus on intricate details, as I could only examine female fashion through the lens of an edited image projected onto a laptop screen. Without being able to smell the possible cigarette smoke that may have lingered on old raving attire, or examine the worn-out soles of trainers, after being subjected to hours of dancing in abandoned warehouses, I felt like I had not done justice to the sources that I was examining. I felt as though I had neglected the subtilities that these sources may have offered, highlighting the challenges that I incurred when researching fashion history online.

As well as examining photographs, conducting oral interviews was another method used to capture female experiences of the 1990s rave scene. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the interview that I organised with a female Hacienda regular was conducted via Zoom. During this online interview, various challenges arose. For Zoom interviews to be a success, they rely heavily on a strong internet connection, something that cannot always be guaranteed when on the cheapest possible Wi-Fi tariff in a student house. A stable internet connection, in my experience is a necessity to ensure that the interview can be a success, by creating an online environment where the interviewee is able to express their thoughts and opinions without interruption.

However, even with a stable internet, there were other challenges that I encountered when using online interviews for my research. When on Zoom both cameras were turned on, meaning that the interviewees face was the central image on my laptop screen, however, in the corner of my screen was my tiny face, glaring back at me and reacting to everything my interviewee was saying.

However, being aware of myself and my facial reactions did pose its own issues. Watching yourself talk can be distracting and leads to an unconscious censorship, as I became increasingly self-aware and started to question and over analyse my responses. This is an issue that would not have arisen in a face-to-face setting, highlighting the unique challenges that occur when interviewing participants online.

Turning on our cameras during this Zoom interview was clearly an attempt to emulate a face-to-face interaction and to try to make the interview feel more personal. When communicating with people online, the notion of distance and detachment is prominent, as we are unable to shake hands, hold eye contact and even chat over a cup of tea which would have helped to ease the rigid sense of professionalism that can arise during online interviews and meetings. However, whilst this interview did feel impersonal and stilted at times, there was also something strangely personal about this Zoom interview, possibly, too personal. The nature of working from home with Zoom cameras turned on allows both interview participants and the interviewer to have an insight into something deeply personal: your home. Whether this be your living room, kitchen, bedroom, or wherever the best internet connection may be if you lived in my university house, you are unintentionally giving away aspects of your personal life during this interview, as the other person is transported into your home. Conversely, gaining an insight into the home of my interviewee allowed me to not only gather evidence about her experience of the 1990s rave scene, but I also could gain information about her life in the present. In the background of her screen, I could see how her subcultural legacy had been imprinted into her home décor with the adoption of vibrant colours and a swathe of subcultural posters adorning walls, signalling that this subcultural scene was still a fundamental part of her life thirty years on. However, my inferences were not based on information that interviewee willingly gave away. This therefore highlights the ethical issues that surround conducting Zoom interviews from the comfort of our own homes. In doing this interview, we both possibly revealed more of ourselves and our personal lives than we initially bargained for.

It is evident that there were many obstacles experienced when researching online, however, there was something gained in being plunged into using only online researching platforms. In using online sources, I became both historian and archivist as I liked, saved and screenshotted online articles to preserve my sources, as websites can be easily removed without notice. On reflection, the process of screenshotting was a personalised way of researching and archiving the past. When screenshotting online sources, the images produced were automatically saved onto my camera roll which curated a personal archive as my devices placed my chosen documents into a timeline, recording the location and exact time that my images were archived. The sources I collected instantly became a part of my personal life, as my primary sources were intermingled with private

Elissa outside the one and only Berghain in Berlin

images of friends and family on my camera roll. This unintentionally narrowed the gap between myself and the history that I was studying, as unlike the physical archive where nothing but you, your paper and pencil can be left, the online sources that I had screenshotted were intricately woven within my personal life.

This process of screenshotting, in turn, forged my own digital archive as this experience induced an emotional and physical closeness to the sources I was collecting. The emotional process of locating and collecting my sources fostered a deep connection between myself and the female ravers that I examined within my dissertation, thus bridging the gap between myself and the history that I study. This demonstrates that while there are many obstacles that historians encounter when researching online without the use of archives, much can still be gained.

The process of researching female experiences of rave only online clearly posed many issues as I was forced to navigate online archives and Zoom interviews which at times felt alien and rather clunky. While this experience was challenging, much was gained from this method of researching. I was still able to foster a deep connection with the female ravers that I studied, demonstrating that despite the distance that had been created when researching from home, I could still work in collaboration with my sources. However, now the world begins to reopen, I have begun to enter the museums and rave venues that were out of reach during lockdown. My recent trip to Berlin found me taking a cheesy picture outside of Berghain and it feel good to be back in person, touching, smelling and simply embracing our subcultural past. While I learnt a lot from researching on online platforms, I am now grateful for the screen break as COVID-19 restrictions ease.

Learning their Legacy: Student Reflections on Studying the Women's Liberation Movement

Sophie Ballinger, Emily Clements, Saffron Kricha and Phoebe Storch with an introduction by Lyndsey Jenkins

Introduction

The Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) was one of the most influential and imaginative forms of activism ever witnessed in Britain, and one which has particular resonance in our own historical moment. This year, I established a new module for final year students at Queen Mary University of London, aiming to introduce them to this history. *Searching for Sisterhood: Feminist Activism in Britain 1968-1988* explored activists' urgent and creative demands for change in all aspects of their lives through their insistence that the personal was political.

We analysed how factors such as geography, class, race, sexuality and disability shaped women's demands and campaigns. We investigated efforts to gain equal pay and receive 'wages for housework', examined protests which attempted to 'Reclaim the Night' and abolish virginity testing, and considered women's involvement in protest movements against racism and nuclear power. Throughout, we used women's own testimonies to help us understand their ideas – including magazines, artwork and oral histories – and considered the importance of women's history itself.

The digitisation of source material – particularly periodical literature – was invaluable, while the 'Sisterhood and After' archive and associated outputs offered us many more resources. There was a clear sense we were working on cutting edge historical scholarship. It was great to be able to introduce new articles hot off the press, and to benefit from the insights of emerging scholars like Francesca Chappell, Hayley Kavanagh and Becky Rutherford through guest contributions.

Students too brought their own insights and priorities to the course. There were passionate discussions over the validity of wages for housework and the approaches of revolutionary feminists. Outrage over male violence against women and a concern for women's basic rights and safety was an ongoing theme. Students also brought a desire for an inclusive, intersectional analysis of feminist politics to the classroom, and sought to assess the successes of the Women's Liberation Movement while also being mindful of the limitations. Here, some of the students reflect on their experiences of studying feminist activism at a time of renewed feminist energy.

Thoughts on the Legacy of the Women's Liberation Movement

Women's history has been the defining backbone of our module choices and subsequently, our overall degrees. For many of us, aspects of the WLM that we learnt about week after week were inspirational. As young women, feminism is such a significant part of our lives. Women's history proves incredibly personal and relatable in a way that other fields of history do not. This module offered an exciting exploration of second wave feminism. We were struck by the lack of autonomy women held within so many aspects of their lives and wanted to explore and understand the experiences of women in Britain as they fought for change. The movement gave so many women the chance to express their words, whilst giving them a platform to have their ideas heard and shared between like-minded people. The sisterhood that developed and bonded these women is inspirational and something that modern-day feminists can take note of.

The WLM drew on and strengthened the bond between women, which manifested in educating and supporting one another in identifying how they could harness their own ideas and resources to achieve their own liberation. The feminism of the WLM worked towards true liberation, but yet there were aspects of gender inequality which were left untouched by the movement. Nonetheless, the WLM was characterised by its capacity to adapt and represent the ideals, aims and unique needs of women from different backgrounds. The movement developed an approach whereby smaller organisations sprang up to represent women's disparate needs at a local level.

The string of laws passed in the 1970s, such as the Equal Pay Act (1970), the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), and the Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act (1976), were highly significant. Though these laws have not ensured that no woman ever experiences sex discrimination, and equal pay has still not been achieved in its entirety, the WLM at least started the process. How much longer would the issue of equal pay have been ignored had the WLM and its allies not lobbied for the Equal Pay Act? Therefore, the view of the WLM as having had few real and lasting successes is unfairly pessimistic. The WLM could not, over the course of a few years, utterly dismantle the patriarchy. It did, however, affect the process of change in numerous key areas, and women today enjoy many of these advancements.

The WLM also forced women's rights into mainstream conversation. It brought awareness to issues that some had never considered before. Consciousness-raising groups gave women the opportunity to voice their personal thoughts and opinions in a safe and welcoming environment. It gave women the knowledge that their issues were valid. The tagline of the WLM – 'the personal is political' – encompassed this transformation where women's issues were thrust into public discourse. Much of the freedom women find in talking about their personal issues and experiences today is owed to the WLM for starting this conversation.

Women's Rights and Women's Bodies

One aspect of *Searching for Sisterhood* we found interesting was the role of the body. Although the objectification of the female body under the male gaze was not a new concept for us, it was interesting to see how women actually experienced the impact of permissive legislation. Many feminists rejected the idea that the 1960s were a time of sexual liberation for women, and we discussed why this was the case. For instance, the introduction of the pill, which has been used to mark the start of an era of sexual freedom and autonomy for women, contributed further to the regulation of women's bodies and sexual expression by the medical establishment. Ultimately, men were the beneficiaries of this greater permissiveness and their control over women denied female sexual autonomy. This seemed to be a recurring theme within *Searching for Sisterhood* that the promise of liberation often seemed divorced from the social realities that women continued to experience.

Women's bodies were also the subject of feminist debate in other ways. Susie Orbach's work, especially in *Fat is a Feminist Issue* (1978), highlighted how the female body is fundamentally political, and the subject of social and economic influences.[1] The idea that disordered eating functions as an act of resistance against the patriarchy speaks volumes in regard to the preoccupation women had with their bodies as a result of being the subject of the male gaze. Sexual objectification of the female body by men makes it unsurprising that there were pressures for that body to be pleasing to the eye or to conform to the beauty standards women were urged to uphold. The detrimental impact that this male objectification has on a woman's self-worth and ultimately, health, continues to be a pervasive issue.

Perhaps one of the most prevalent issues we continued to identify in today's society was the fight for women's rights to control their own bodies. This was encapsulated in a chapter from Ann Oakley that we analysed in which she argued that 'in order to fully take command over their destinies, women must have the prior right of determining when (or if) and how, they become mothers'.[2] Even with the political success of the 1967 Abortion Act in England which enabled women to access free and safe abortions, this was not solely their choice. A woman's ability to have an abortion rested upon the medical opinion of two different doctors and was never extended to Northern Ireland. Whilst groups such as the National Abortion Campaign (NAC) rallied under the slogan 'A Woman's Right to Choose' and sought to defend and enhance the provisions made by the 1967 Act, to this day a woman's choice to have an abortion is subject to medical scrutiny.[3]

We also discussed at length the considerable divisions the topic of abortion still creates in society. Recently, for example, Jacob Rees-Mogg, as then-Leader of the House of Commons, made misleading comments in Parliament about the morning after pill, demonstrating the lack of autonomy women still experience over a personal choice.[4] Given that women still do not possess 'full command' over their decision to have an abortion, we as feminists in today's society truly appreciated how much further the fight for abortion rights has to go. We must also consider the fact that women in Northern Ireland were only granted safe access to abortions during the COVID-19 pandemic through provisions made by the British government, as Stormont faced challenges over abortion laws as recently as October 2021.[5]

Sexuality and Sexual Politics

We found the divisiveness of sexuality within the movement of particular interest. A concept which we hadn't explored in depth before was the idea of political lesbianism. Lilian Mohin's statement: 'it's crucial that we assert the necessity for lesbianism as a means of freeing all women from the oppression of all men', offered an interesting perspective on how some feminists felt about the mobilisation of sexuality as a tool for the feminist cause.[6] Arguments put forward in articles by the Leeds Revolutionary Feminist Group were especially forthright. The general rhetoric of these types of articles was that any sexual engagement with men reinforced their superiority, and made women targets for their oppression. Indeed, political lesbianism would go so far as to consider the act of sexual intercourse as 'the oppressor entering the body of the oppressed'.[7] The strength of belief that some women felt regarding the necessity of lesbianism in order for women to be freed from the oppression of men may have been felt amongst a minority, but their argument is compelling, nonetheless. This concept that women who chose to have sex with men were deemed to be colluding in their own oppression can still be seen today in debates surrounding rough sex and BDSM. With the ever-expanding permissiveness of discussions around sex or kinks, whether this be in mainstream media outlets such as *Cosmopolitan* or exhibited on the silver screen in films such as *Fifty Shades of Grey*, there remains much debate over how liberating some sexual practices can truly be.

'Reclaim the Night'

One week of our course focused on violence against women, covering the Yorkshire Ripper murders and the subsequent campaign, 'Reclaim the Night'. We found this week particularly poignant, given violence against women has been a contentious issue in 2021, after the deaths of women such as Sarah Everard and Sabina Nessa. The fear that many women had in the 1970s of walking alone after dark is a fear that almost all women still have today. We drew parallels between the police response to the Yorkshire Ripper murders and their response today. In 1977 the police told women to stay at home after dark. In 2021 women were told to challenge lone plain-clothes police officers if they were approached, or 'wave down a bus' if they felt unsafe.[8] It was disheartening to see such similarities between the police response in the 1970s and today and to know that after fifty years the fear of being alone at night as a woman is still very much present. The 'Reclaim the Night' campaign continues to march in London highlighting the significance of violence against women today.[9] In fact, the 2021 'Reclaim the Night' march took place in London the very weekend after our class on violence against women, and some of our

Grace Oram and Lizzie Knott participate in the Reclaim the Night March, 2021, courtesy of Grace Oram

classmates took part in it. Though learning about violence against women during second-wave feminism and seeing little improvement today was rather demoralizing, it was important to know that women continue to march and fight against this. As we admire the steps women took in the 1970s to protest for women's safety, we will endeavour to continue their legacy.

Domestic Labour

When considering the concept of domestic labour, we discussed at length the double shift of paid employment and the management of a household and family. Whilst many of us are too young to have experienced this first-hand, it was something some of us were able to identify with as having witnessed within our own family lives. The historiography we discussed for this particular week focused on whether domestic labour should be considered work, culminating in the international Wages for Housework movement. We also explored the difficulties faced by the women who attempted to maintain their status in the workplace, whilst juggling the needs of their children. This is an issue that is still experienced today, perhaps on a larger scale considering the increases in women's employment.[10]

The issue of discrimination faced by working mothers can be seen on a national level through the experience of MP Stella Creasy. The MP for Walthamstow, Dr Creasy was reprimanded by email for bringing her three-month-old son, whom she was breastfeeding, into the Commons chamber during a debate. Despite the Speaker of the House assuring another MP, Alex Davies-Jones, that she could breastfeed her child in the chamber if she needed to, as well as MP Jo Swinson being permitted to cradle her baby during a debate in 2018, this is not a practice codified by the Commons rulebook.[11] The absence of supportive maternity measures amongst the highest offices in the UK demonstrates that the burden for providing domestic support for their families still rests upon the shoulders of women.

Intersectionality – Gender and Race

During this time, there was a greater recognition of the relationship between gender and race and how this diversified the experience of gender-based oppression and influenced the demands for liberation. The connection between gender and race during the WLM has been widely explored. Recent historiography by scholars like Natalie Thomlinson has offered accounts of larger organised movements.[12] This includes the anti-virginity testing protests at Heathrow airport that were organised by OWAAD and Awaz. However, one thing to note here is how the historiography, for the most part, has manifested into an exploration into the different experience between white and black women. We felt there is scope for far more work here: for example, Arab women's experiences have been overshadowed. It is important that when referring to women of colour, this categorisation encompasses women from all ethnicities and races. The experiences of women of colour are so diverse and so there needs to be more rigorous investigation into how these women were involved in the WLM and how the actions of the movement impacted their lives. The historiography must live up to the multi-faceted nature of the movement and explore the different experiences of women, which means looking at a broader understanding of race beyond the distinction between White and Black.

The presence of male feminist allies within the movement should not be ignored. Some men played roles in supporting these new changes for women. Many trade union men demonstrated their alliance with the aims of the WLM, such as joining protests in support for equal pay. Others took on new domestic roles, had conversations about gender equality and supported women at demonstrations and so supported women's quest for liberation in both the public and private sphere. It is important not to ignore how some men supported these great strides for women and acknowledge the examples of male feminists. Male allyship continues to be significant today, with many men speaking out on issues such as sexual harassment or assault as a way to prompt social as well as individual change.

Greenham Common

For one of us at least, the week on the 1981 Greenham Common protest proved to be of personal interest. I had never heard of it, yet it was the largest female-led protest since the suffrage movement. I was even more surprised to realise that Greenham Common was just outside Newbury – not far from where I grew up, in Reading. Noting this local connection, I asked my father whether he remembered the protests happening when he was younger (he grew up in a small village near Reading and would have been a teenager at the time of

the protests). He said he did remember them, as well as their court appearances over the years, but he told me to contact my grandmother as he thought she had briefly stayed with the protestors. So that's what I did, and my grandmother was happy to tell me about her experience. She explained that she 'wasn't very political' but ended up at Greenham because her friend was dying of cancer and expressed that she'd like to visit the protest before it was too late. My grandmother was happy to oblige, and her first thought was to 'make a big fruit cake' because 'that's what you were told to do when visiting Greenham' – there wasn't an excessive amount of food and so the women appreciated any edible gifts they were given. Some of the things my grandmother noted were the smell (decent showers were obviously hard to come by) and the fact that many of the women were old. She had expected to see young women protesting but Greenham was intergenerational. Though my grandmother would not have visited Greenham without the prompting of her friend, she sympathised with the aims of the movement and was even more sympathetic after seeing the women there first-hand. I was greatly interested and inspired to hear of her involvement, however small, in the movement, and I would not have known about it were it not for this module.

Final Reflections

Reflecting on the issues raised throughout this course sharpened us not only as historians, but also as feminists. We owe our more nuanced, intersectional, and personal understanding of feminism and its activism to the inspirational women of the WLM. The movement aimed to work towards full liberation, which meant pushing an agenda encompassing new ideas. The sheer volume of different protest movements, Greenham Common, the movement against virginity testing and the 'Reclaim the Night' campaign, to name a few, provides a physical embodiment of the mobilising power of these new ideas. As well as this, the WLM worked towards establishing a greater understanding of the interlinked oppressive relationships between gender, race and sexuality. It also highlights just how important it is to hold casual conversations surrounding feminism with friends, family and colleagues. This form of consciousness raising spreads awareness for the issues still faced by women today and furthers social change at a grassroots level.

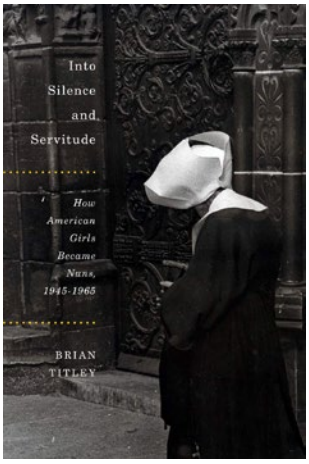
Of course, the second wave of feminism experienced during the WLM did not eradicate all the issues faced by women. It is abundantly clear therefore, that issues such as work and motherhood, sexual freedoms and rights to abortion that were faced by those of the WLM are still heavily prevalent in today's society. Feminist historians of today share in their desire to see a truly equal standing between the sexes on such issues and can truly appreciate how much further there is for us to go until this is achieved. Today's feminists can reflect upon and appreciate the steps and actions of those before us, and carry on their legacy.

Notes

1. Susie Orbach, *Fat is a Feminist Issue,* (New York: Berkeley Books, 1978).
2. Ann Oakley, 'Wisewoman and Medical Man' in Ann Oakley and Juliet Mitchell, *The Rights and Wrongs of Women* (London: Penguin, 1976), 55.
3. Olivia Dee, *The Anti-Abortion Campaign in England, 1966-1989* (New York: Routledge, 2020), 139.
4. World Health Organization, 'Emergency Contraception' (9 Nov. 2021), https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/emergency-contraception (accessed 17 Feb. 2022).
5. 'Abortion in NI: Timeline of key events', https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-politics-56041849 (accessed 13 Feb. 2022).
6. Lilian Mohin, 'Letters: Lesbian Radical Feminism: The Only Radical Feminism', *Trouble and Strife,* 3 (1984), 8.
7. Leeds Revolutionary Feminist Group, 'Love your enemy? The debate between heterosexual feminism and political lesbianism', *Political Lesbianism: The Case Against Heterosexuality* (1979), 6.
8. Jamie Grierson, 'Sarah Everard case: people stopped by lone officer could 'wave down a bus', says Met', *The Guardian*, 1 Oct. 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/oct/01/police-must-win-back-public-confidence-after-sarah-everard-case-says-minister (accessed 6 Feb. 2022).
9. 'Reclaim the Night' homepage, www.reclaimthenight.co.uk/ (accessed 6 Feb. 2022).
10. 'Female employment rate (aged 16-64, seasonally adjusted), Office for National Statistics, https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/timeseries/lf25/lms (accessed 4 Feb. 2022).
11. George Bowden, 'No babies allowed in Commons, MP Stella Creasy told', BBC News, 24 Nov. 2021, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-59396801 (accessed 4 Feb. 2022).
12. For example, Natalie Thomlinson, *Race and ethnicity in the women's movement in England, 1968-1993* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

Brian Titley, *Into Silence and Servitude: How American Girls Became Nuns, 1945-1965*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017. £27.99, ISBN-10: 0773551417, pp.xvi + 281

Reviewed by Rose Luminiello
University of Aberdeen



Into Silence and Servitude is an interesting volume which intends to explain how and why mid-century American Catholic women chose to become women religious, and their experience in doing so. The method through which the author attempts to answer these questions, however, is often problematic. The scheme of the book is quite comprehensive; it begins with a very generalized summary of Catholic female religious life using a bibliography that often feels selective, and then moves on to discuss the process of becoming a woman religious up through the novitiate.

The scope of the chapters could present an enlightening study of the experience of becoming a woman religious in mid-twentieth century Catholic America. The author tends to focus, however, primarily on themes of control, sexual repression, and what can only be described as a form of brain-washing, leaving the reader questioning if nothing else happened in a convent besides menial work and forms of spiritual and mental hazing. The methodology behind the chapters – combining oral history, history, and sociology – does sometimes produce interesting conclusions, but these are often too generalised. This impression is further strengthened by the sources, which consist primarily of some memoirs of 'ex-nuns', five congregational archives (for reasons of inaccessibility), and contemporary writers whose real influence is never fully established. Can these really stand in for the experience of all American Catholic women religious? The source base is further problematised throughout the text by the failure to account for the problem of using memoirs written about personal experiences which occurred twenty-five years or so prior to publication. The only explanation offered for the sources comes far too late in the volume, in an afterward which does not inform the rest of the book's generalised conclusions, firmly presented as indisputable fact in American convents.

The text also suffers from a significant lack of historical and theological context. Most strikingly throughout are the author's criticisms of the poor sexual education of young entrants, discussed in tandem with the vow of chastity viewed primarily as a means of sexual repression. Though there is truth to this reading, there is no clear explanation proffered of the traditional theological understanding of chastity and sexual education within and outside the religious life. Neither of these paradigms are contextualised as occurring within a society which largely viewed sex as something secret – profane and yet still somehow sacred. Rather, sexual education and chastity in the convent are discussed throughout the book from a starting point which assumes as normative post-1970s sexual thought on sexual freedom. The author's criticism of a restriction on masturbation in convents, for example, fails to mention that this prohibition applied not only to a vow of chastity behind convent walls, but indeed to every Catholic male or female – married, single, or within religious life. Another example of inadequate contextualisation is found in the author's criticism that women religious were wageless labour, part of 'female labour exploitation' (p.208). There was certainly such an economic function for women religious as unwaged employees in the church, but it would have been interesting to know how this compared to the unpaid labour offered by male religious orders such as the Christian Brothers, and how this was framed within a discourse of grace and salvific merit within the Church.

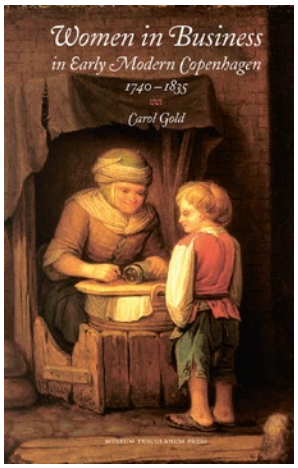
The lack of contextualisation in this volume is also found in the form of disjointed conclusions by the author which should contextualise each other. In chapter 1, for example, the author sets up Catholic schools as the primary locus of vocation recruiting, emphasizing that those who attended Catholic schools were middle-class and typically of the same ethnicity as the parish and the religious order staffing the schools. In chapter 3, where the 'call' to a vocation is juxtaposed to active recruitment of vocations in schools run by women religious, the author uses the experience of Claire Perkins, who attended Our Lady of Mount Carmel Elementary School in Bayonne, New Jersey in the late 1940s and early 1950s to illustrate a point about recruitment with her memories of projects intended to educate young girls on the religious vocation. This example would be unremarkable without the comments from chapter 1 on the ethnicity and economic class of students in Catholic schools. However, with those previous conclusions in mind, a few questions arise from Claire's example. Our Lady of Mount Carmel, both the parish and school, served Bayonne's Polish community and was staffed by the Polish Felician Sisters – was Claire also Polish? Was she at risk of recruitment if she were not Polish? Our Lady of Mount Carmel, like its Italian counterpart Our Lady of the Assumption, offered free education to lower-class and impoverished Catholic children in Bayonne – were these children also sought for recruitment, even as lay sisters? Or were the middle-class the only recruitment targets of the sisters?

In all, *Into Silence and Servitude* raises many more questions than it answers. While the author does offer some interesting insight into internal church discourse on vocation, the conclusions made for the whole of the American Catholic experience, and particularly

those of convent life, provide at best starting points for future research which is more theologically informed, contextualised, and alert to individual female agency.

Carol Gold, *Women in Business in Early Modern Copenhagen 1740-1835,* Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2018. 248 DKK/54 euro, 978 87 635 4597 6 (paperback), pp.181

Reviewed by Amy Louise Erickson
University of Cambridge



This important contribution to the growing scholarship on early modern urban women's work examines women who worked 'on their own', identified as those who were licensed or taxed, in occupations that required permits or warranted taxation. These are the occupations which can be traced in the records available; women comprised about 10% of Copenhagen's licensed workforce and 7% of the taxpayers. The tax in question here was a 'self-employment tax', only levied on the wealthiest quarter or third of the self-employed. The women examined here were the entrepreneurs (in its original meaning of employers and self-employed), rather than the much larger group of employees.

The last twenty years has seen considerable research on women running businesses in other parts of Europe, but this is the first such study of Denmark. Copenhagen was heavily oriented towards the service sector in 1800; nearly one third of its population of 100,000 were military personnel or civil servants, and perhaps as a result the largest group of taxpayers (many more men than women) was the beer-sellers.

Gold's database of 3000 named women does not include all the women who were licensed or who paid tax in Copenhagen over the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries; as the records are patchy, only the surviving tax records have been sampled. The complexity of the various records is well explained. The historian can only be grateful to any civic corporation which licensed its street sellers as well as its schoolteachers, which allows us to see that in Copenhagen, women engaged in all of the same trades that men did, albeit in different proportions. The businesses that can be identified by these means inevitably leave out some significant sectors of the urban economy. Occupations that did not require a licence or were not liable to tax are absent. There are no laundresses or washerwomen, although this work must have employed a substantial proportion of the city's female population, and to judge from other cities it was often run on an industrial rather than a self-employed basis.

Copenhagen's guilds excluded women as full members but allowed widows to continue their husbands' workshops – the most common form of guild organisation, as can be seen in Sheilagh Ogilvie's *European Guilds* (2019) – which meant they were licensed and taxed by the city. Crucially, Danish property law entitled a widow to retain control of all family property until her remarriage or death, although subject to children's consent. Gold gives several examples of adult sons not inheriting a business until their mother's death.

Previous characterisations of women's work have focussed on the 'economies of makeshift', in Olwen Hufton's phrase, and the great majority of women, like the great majority of men, worked as servants or low-paid employees, or made ends meet with work of borderline legality. The entrepreneurs studied here, while a tiny minority of working women, are important because they show the extent to which women of the middle classes were engaged in business.

Gold stresses the agency of these women, noting 'women have always worked', as Alice Kessler-Harris's 1981 book title put it. She highlights the limitations of the idea of the 'family economy' – which was proposed in the 1970s as a way to recover the hidden work of women in a household enterprise – in a city in which a large proportion of married women followed different businesses from their husbands. Nearly three quarters of the Copenhagen businesswomen whose marital status could be identified were married. Carol Loats made the same point for sixteenth-century Paris in 1981. Gold proposes an early modern 'two-income family', similar to the 'two supporter model' elucidated by Maria Ågren in *Making a Living, Making a Difference* (2017) and in *Early Modern Women* (vol. 13, no. 1, 2018).

Unfortunately, the literature on businesswomen in other European capitals, or on women's work more broadly over the past two decades, is not integrated here. It will fall to other historians seeking to answer broader questions to employ this valuable and detailed case study of Copenhagen.

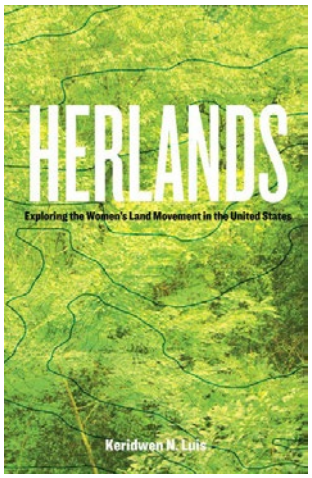
Keridwen N. Luis, *Herlands: Exploring the Women's Land Movement in the United States,* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018. $28.00, 978-0-8166-9825-7 (paperback), pp.302

Reviewed by Rose Debenham
University of Birmingham

Since their inception, women's lands have acted as sites of resistance operating outside of dominant systems of oppression. Developing out of the second feminist wave of the early 1970s women's music festivals, peace camps, lesbian identity and political consciousness, and the 'hippie commune', women's lands are independent living communities composed entirely of women residents. For Keridwen N. Luis, they represent an important, and under-researched, part of North American feminist history. More significantly, they also offer an opportunity to examine the ways in which small communities both resist and incorporate larger cultural ideas.

Using the anthropological methodology of

participant observation, Luis visited four women's lands, based in Massachusetts, Tennessee, New Mexico, and Ohio, as well as the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival and two Landdyke gatherings. She also conducted thirty-two formal interviews with land-women in the United States. During her visits, Luis fully participated in the typical women's-land activities, 'from weeding the garden to being part of consciousness-raising groups to playing Rummikub' (p.5). Whilst practical and financial constraints prevented Luis from living at a women's land on a long-term basis, her research methodology allowed for an examination of several microcultures which contribute to the interlocking network of women's-land cultures across the United States.



Luis investigates 'matrix cultures' as a set of practices, values, and tangible artifacts that exert cultural pressure on smaller 'nested cultures', such as the women's lands examined in *Herlands*. Luis effectively demonstrates that, whilst land-women actively and openly question strands of matrix culture, they also engage in the preservation of dominant ideas about class, capitalism, racism, transphobia, and fatphobia. This is not intended to highlight hypocrisy or to undermine the revolutionary potential of women's lands. Instead, it offers a complex examination of the interactions between larger cultural ideas and the theory and practice of women's lands.

Chapter 1 begins with an overview of the history of the women's land movement. It explores the roots of the movements in women's music festivals and the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice in Seneca Falls, as well as fictional portrayals of the 'women's commune' in popular culture. The following chapters examine various cultural aspects of women's lands, exploring their development, their interactions with matrix cultures, and the lived experiences of land-women. Chapter 4 looks at the issue of race and racism by investigating how aspects of women's-land culture rely on and reinforce assumed whiteness whilst simultaneously constructing racism as something which is done by and to other people. Chapter 3 uses the concepts of community, commensality, and 'feminist aesthetics of practice' to examine the feminist consciousness that runs through women's lands.

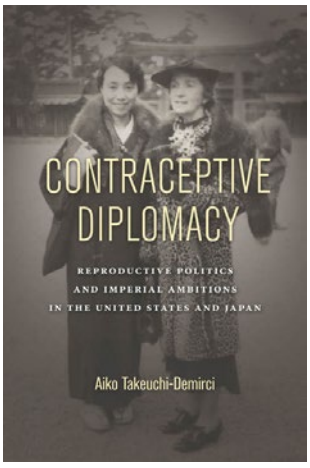
Chapter 4 examines the economics of women's lands by interrogating how systems of 'generalized reciprocity' exist both in opposition to and enmeshed within capitalism. This offers a rich understanding of how land-women actively subvert capitalism, a key feature of US matrix cultures, through the creation of alternative modes of transaction whilst providing the means for particular women to accrue power in turn replicating the culture they are trying to resist. Chapter 5 looks at how the environment of women's lands are themselves gendered, shaping women's physical and emotional interactions with the landscape. The multiple ways in which everyday body practices both replicate and challenge matrix ideas about gender is explored in chapter 6 through the themes of clothing and self-presentation, nudity and toilet practices, and food and the fat body.

Chapter 7 addresses transphobia within the women's land movement. This has become a crucial question for researchers of both historic and contemporary women's only spaces, and Luis handles the topic well. Without overstating the prevalence of transphobic views amongst land-women, she explains how the issue of trans exclusion is demonstrative of her overarching thesis. Whilst women's land allows women to take on the full range of human activity, roles, and abilities, the rejection of trans people from these spaces leads to the adoption of a restrictive body-based essentialism drawn from the matrix culture. Chapter 8 focuses on how women's lands deal with their ageing populations and how they attempt to provide access for disabled women highlighting the reciprocal impact of bodies and places.

Although rich in personal anecdote, *Herlands* is not a comprehensive guide to the past or present of women's lands in the United States. At times, you are left wanting to know more about the daily life, the residents, and the particulars of the communities Luis visited. However, women's lands are shown to be an effective frame for investigating the relationship between matrix and nested cultures. Luis demonstrates how communities that exist to resist and dismantle continue to be enmeshed in dominant systems of power. By allowing women's lands to be understood in all their complexities, *Herlands* offers a model for investigating movements that seek to re-think ways of living.

Aiko Takeuchi-Demirci, *Contraceptive Diplomacy: Reproductive Politics and Imperial Ambitions in the United States and Japan*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2018. £21.27, 978-1-5036-0440-7 (paperback), pp.xv + 318

Reviewed by Rachel Alexandra Chua
University College London



Through the prism of transnational feminism and imperial intellectual connections, Aiko Takeuchi-Demirci in *Contraceptive Diplomacy* provides a compelling and much-needed perspective on the transpacific history of birth control, imperial eugenics and reproductive politics in the first half of the twentieth century. By tracing the activism of Margaret Sanger, one of the forerunners of the birth control movement in the United States, and her Japanese counterpart, Ishimoto Shizue, the book 'situates

the history of reproductive politics at the intersection of transnational feminist activism and US-Japanese relations…[narrating] the development of contraceptive knowledge and technologies from a transnational standpoint, specifically, a transpacific one, closely examining how international politics affected domestic conversations on race, gender, and sexuality' (p.5).

Over the course of six substantive chapters, Takeuchi-Demirci outlines the trajectory of the birth control movement in the United States and Japan as spearheaded by Sanger and Shizue, from its more radical origins to its co-optation by state and imperial agendas around the broader issues of population control, patriarchal anxieties, class divides and racial concerns. Using extensive primary source material from Japanese and largely American archives, Takeuchi-Demirci weaves her narrative from the personal correspondence, autobiographies and publications of her two anchor women, alongside material from government publications, society pamphlets, newspapers and the writings of intellectual contemporaries of the early twentieth century.

The first two chapters chart the origins and growth of the birth control movements across Japan and the United States, hinting as well at the wider and more problematic issues of orientalism, racial eugenics and militarist nationalism that would rear its head down the line. Chapter 1 centres itself around Sanger's first visit to Japan in April 1922, exploring how, despite its transpacific beginnings and links to a network of transnational feminists, the 'introduction of Sanger's birth control movement beyond national borders simultaneously underscored the use of birth control as a eugenic tool to reify national identity' (p.20). Chapter 2, focusing on the interwar period, 'examines how Margaret Sanger and Ishimoto Shizue each incorporated ideals of maternalist pacifism and liberal internationalism into their birth control activism abroad' (p.56). Ultimately, however, the birth control movement had its limitations, and failed to gain traction and unite mainstream women's movements.

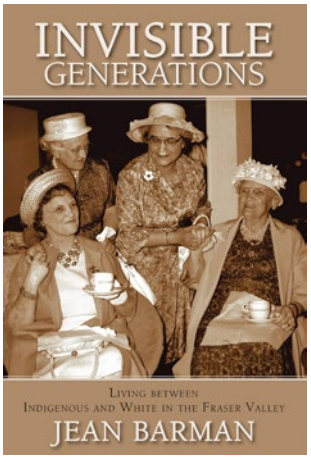
Chapter 3 explosively delves into the issues of eugenics, racial anxieties, and population control that chapters 1 and 2 only begin to raise. The chapter critically outlines the work of the 'new generation of scholars in "population studies" [that] emerged in the 1930s as practitioners in a legitimate academic field to study the problems of differential fertility among races and nations across the world' (p.84). While positioning themselves as critics of earlier 'mainline eugenics' (p.84), Takeuchi-Demirci demonstrates that they 'reiterated many of the same political concerns regarding race, class, and fertility…[agreeing] that it was imperative to spread the practice of birth control to those deemed as undesirable elements of human society, domestically or internationally' (p.84). Eager to avail herself of the rising interest in birth control, Takeuchi-Demirci also shows that Margaret Sanger distanced herself and her movement from its 'radical, feminist, and antiauthoritarian associations' at the broader cost of sacrificing its 'original spirit of feminist rebellion and women's liberation worldwide' (p.85). By far the book's most compelling chapter, it deals with issues around the 'race suicide' by white Anglo-Saxons due to low fertility, fears around the rising 'Yellow Peril', the reproductive rate of 'low-standard immigrants' (p.87) embodied by the fertile female immigrant body, racial fitness, and anxieties around the 'inevitable clash between races' (p.97).

Chapter 4 sets itself within the context of US-occupied Japan in the postwar years. It 'analyses the tactics and rhetoric that American population control advocates used during the immediate aftermath of war to promote birth control programmes in Occupied Japan' (p.119), leading neatly into an examination of the birth control movements in Japan and the United States in chapters 5 and 6. Continuing to probe the themes of eugenics and 'population explosion', Takeuchi-Demirci explores this through the reconstitution of the female national body, the development of the oral contraceptive pill and the establishment of organisations such as Planned Parenthood in America.

The epilogue moves the narrative closer to the modern day, discussing the legacies of Sanger's and Shizue's movements and the challenges that remain in reproductive healthcare and women's bodily autonomy across the globe. Takeuchi-Demirci's book is doubtlessly a tour de force in the field of reproductive politics, forcing her reader to reexamine and confront uncomfortable themes in the face of modernity narratives. There is some criticism to be had concerning her lack of engagement with the intellectual theory and history surrounding many of the ideologies espoused by the women and movements at the heart of her work – despite explicitly referring to 'biopolitics' (p.13), for example, Foucault is never mentioned – but this omission can be excused, given the scope of her task at hand. *Contraceptive Diplomacy* should prove an essential addition to courses on gender history, imperial connections and US-Japan relations, and is an immensely valuable contribution to the historiography.

Jean Barman, *Invisible Generations: Living Between Indigenous and White in the Fraser Valley*, Halfmoon Bay, BC: Caitlin Press, 2019. $24.95, ISBN 9781773860053 (paperback), pp.176

Reviewed by Gillian Beattie-Smith
The Open University



Irene Kelleher was a teacher for over forty years in British Columbia, Canada. Born in 1901, she lived and worked mainly around the Fraser Valley, where her parents and grandparents had lived. Irene's heritage was in the nineteenth-century gold rush to Canada. Hers was from white grandfathers, one Irish and one English, who had partnered with Indigenous women. The book's author, Jean Barman, spent six years with Irene, in the 1990s, recording her life, and those of her parents and maternal and paternal, grandparents.

Barman considers she was trusted with Irene's Kelleher's personal narrative because Irene had trained at the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia, where Barman worked with Indigenous students. The record remained unpublished until 2019.

The history of Indigenous peoples in Canada is not a comfortable one to read. Indeed, in recent times evidence of genocide has come to light through the finding of mass and unmarked graves of hundreds of Indigenous children in the grounds of former schools, run by the Roman Catholic church, and funded by the government.

Irene's life story, and the evidence of her father, Cornelius Kelleher, tell a harsh tale. On the death of Mortimer Kelleher, Irene's paternal grandfather, Cornelius and his sister, Maria Theresa, were taken by St Mary's Mission, and their mother married off to an Indigenous man. The 160-acre pre-empted land the family had inherited from their father was also taken by the mission. When Cornelius finally left at the age of 16, he was given 80 acres of land. Irene commented, 'This deed of land was "change" so to speak from his father's sold estate, less his room and board' (p.43). Kelleher's land was later subdivided as the town of Mission.

Irene insisted to Barman, 'You have to tell what we told you' (p.13), and Barman has not only recorded Irene's oral history, but she has also provided further evidence in a set of notes, each of which is fully referenced. Barman draws on additional records from women's institutes, scrapbooks, mission school archives, the nuns' records, and transcriptions from people who were subject to the policy of cultural assimilation enforced by the *Indian Act* (1876). In exploring Irene's family heritage, Barman shows the reader 'British Columbia's culture of racism' (p.91) and the attitudes families with Indigenous heritage had to bear. For example, she reproduces the language used to refer to people, such as, 'full-blooded Indian' (p.101), 'half breed' (p.100), '1/4 breed' (p.96), and the mission nuns' references to 'sauvages et metisse' (p.71) or 'Siwash' (p.100) – a French derived derogatory term meaning wild or savage, which is still applied to identify geographical places in Canada. She records how Indigenous women lost their identities, and were renamed in marriage records, for example, Catherine Indian woman, or Julia Indian woman (p.51).

The book reveals men's and women's histories, the interweaving of families forming communities of support, and records of Indigenous culture. The coming of the Canadian Pacific Railway is explored through Cornelius Kelleher's life at the Mission school. Through Irene's heritage we see that, although some Indigenous women taught their children their languages, most lost language, culture and inheritance through the government policy of cultural assimilation. The education of Indigenous girls to become a 'lady' (p.61) was seen by some to be beneficial to the girls.

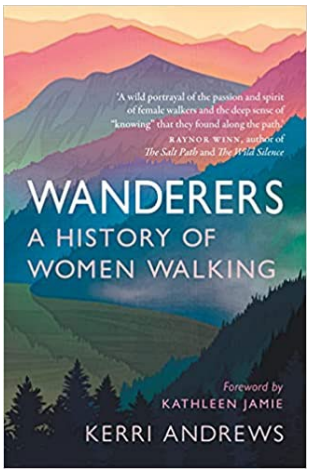
Irene's teacher training and professional experience also illustrate responses by New Canadians of the twentieth century to the British Columbian government's policy of mandatory schooling. From 1930, Irene taught children in schools in Doukhobor communities. Doukhobor communities identified schools as places of assimilation away from their chosen austere Russian culture and, in rejection of the policy, they burned the schools. The initial government response was to remove the children from their families. Irene taught Doukhobor children for five years. In spite of the challenging and changing conditions, for the first twenty years of her career, Irene's starting salary of $1050 p.a. was 'unchanged' (p.130).

Invisible Generations is illustrated with photographs of the people whose lives are told. Their gaze, directly into the camera and into the reader's eyes, cannot be evaded and that gaze often seems like a challenge to us the reader not to forget, to remember them, and to continue to tell their stories.

Irene died in 2004 at the age of 103, having given 44 years of her life to teaching. Irene Kelleher, and her father and mother, Cornelius and Julia Mathilda, established educational scholarship funds during their lives and the royalties from *Invisible Generations* are being assigned, in Irene's name, to those endowments.

Kerri Andrews, *Wanderers: A History of Women Walking*, London: Reaktion Books, 2020. £14.99' ISBN 9781789143423 (hardback), pp.304

Reviewed by Emma Gattey,
University of Cambridge



Spanning three centuries, *Wanderers* pays homage to ten women who have embraced the identity-afirming, transformative power of walking. Specifically, Kerri Andrews surveys women 'walker-writers': cerebral types who committed their striding to paper for posterity; women who have 'found walking essential to their sense of themselves as women, writers and people' (pp.16-7). The motive is an admirably revisionist, restorative one. Assumptions about women's limitations, Andrews writes, have too often 'been used to justify a continued failure ... to even *look* for women's accounts' of walking, assumptions and omissions which 'can no longer be justified' (p.263). Her rallying call is: 'To deny the existence of their accounts is to deny ourselves our own history' (p.263). This may be true, but Andrews' own contribution also assumes, omits, and thus denies a great deal.

Andrews writes that '[t]he history of walking has always been women's history, though you would not know it from what has been published on the subject' (p.17). Men look back to preceding 'male walker-writers', largely ignoring the women who walked alongside them. Thus criticising men writing in this mobile space, Andrews claims that her analysis 'offer[s] new insights into the role played by walking in human creativity' (p.32). But this is no intersectional study of women writer-walkers. What of protest marches? Pilgrimage? (In)voluntary migration? The involuntary peripatetic? Women of colour? Queer

women? (They exist beyond Virginia Woolf.) While acknowledging the historicity and relativity of walking — its proclivity to change meaning throughout time, to play different roles for different women — Andrews heeds only a certain calibre of woman. All her subjects are white Euro-American women, from a very narrow sliver of the globe. Of the women listed in the appendix as springboards for futher reading, only one, Jean Rhys, is a woman of colour. Disability is scarcely dealt with; queerness is glossed over as peripheral; migration does not feature, nor religious pilgrimage, nor the act of walking or marching as protest, as powerful means for women, especially women of colour, of challenging and transforming the world around them.

Thus, although Andrews frames this as a revisionist history, it does not go nearly far enough in extending our frame of reference. Like the earlier literature Andrews criticises, the implication is that these types of women are the main cerebral walkers, and this simply is not true. Responding to men's writing, and offering 'an alternative view of the literary history of walking' which focuses on women, Andrews offers up something wonderful, but with its own limitations (p.35). Andrews asks excellent questions about how we ought to analyse women's walking — setting a research agenda for future scholars — but only partially de-universalises men's walking experience, for white women remain her tacit normative subject, and thus implicitly the only extension required for a truly universal study of walking. As corrective, then, *Wanderers* is a partial victory.

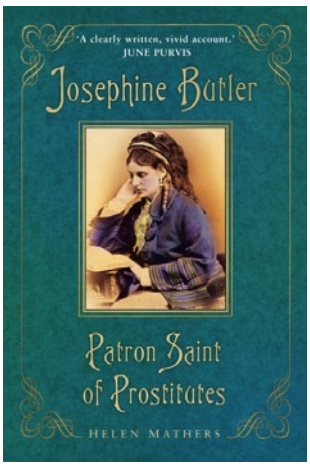
For all this criticism, Andrews beautifully salvages her selected walker-writers, through intimate close readings of their journals, correspondence, and published works. With rewarding excerpts, the voices of Dorothy Wordsworth, Sarah Stoddart Hazlitt, Nan Shepherd and Harriet Martineau are particularly well amplified, their physical and literary achivements magnified. The chapter on Martineau is especially strong, tracing her oscillation from opiate dependency and bed-ridden confinement to warrior-walker and 'pedestrian sociologist', and back to illness. And there is delightful contrast here, because Martineau's desire for omniscient mastery of the Lake District, a knowledge to be acquired through walking (p.139), could not be more distant from the reverent 'mountain-love' of Shepherd, who walked not to conquer, but for a sense of oneness and 'quasi-mystic' intimacy with mountainscapes (pp.180-1).

Highly attuned to the lay of the land, Andrews works fluently with geological features, 'the muscular angularity of the Gaelic' names of Munros (p.11), the 'symphony of hill sound' (p.57), and threats of male violence. Walking is depicted as curative, as a necessary precursor to writing, and a means of self-knowledge. Autobiographical slivers close each chapter, with Andrews' personal testimonies to the panacea of walking and — playing centrally with the notion of 'walking imaginatively' with other women — of coming closer to these predecessors through retracing their steps.

Ultimately, Andrews shows pedestrianism to be anything but pedestrian. A valuable addition to recent celebrations of women's walking, flâneuses, and mountains, this work reinjects women's experiences of rural and urban walking into literary studies. And with some brio. There is, indeed, an established tradition of women walking, but they are not quite as insular, or as culturally, ethnically, and geographically limited as Andrews' selection would have readers believe. The 'literary map we carry of walking's history' remains incomplete, its edges charred with omission and silences too large to ignore. There are more powerful ways of placing one foot — or thousands — in front of the other.

Helen Mathers *Josephine Butler, Patron Saint of Prostitutes*, Dublin, The History Press, 2021. £14.99, ISBN 9780750996570, paperback, pp.1-272

Reviewed by Paula Bartley
Independent Scholar



Many books have already been published about Josephine Butler, the rescue of prostitutes and the Contagious Diseases Acts and I feared that Helen Mathers' *Josephine Butler, Patron Saint of Prostitutes* biography would be a rehash of some of this. I was wrong. From the moment I started reading her book I was gripped; Mathers' biography is a rich, complex, multi-layered account of a remarkable nineteenth-century feminist.

Josephine's family were social reformers, fired by a religious zeal to fight injustice. Mathers points out how their deeply held Christian beliefs led them to attack evil, particularly that of slavery. As with other nineteenth century female activists, Josephine was introduced to the shocking details of slavery by her parents. When she met William Lloyd Garrison and other anti-slavery campaigners her social and political journey began. Josephine's marriage to the cleric George Butler cemented her religious convictions. The couple had four children, the last of whom was named after Evangeline Mary in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the anti-slavery novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe. From the outset, Josephine Butler's Christian impulse led her to care for the most vulnerable – she put up destitute and distressed women in their family home. When Evangeline died in a frightful accident, Josephine Butler's faith wobbled, only to re-emerge as a fully-fledged devotion to Christ's message of caring for the sick, the needy and the outcasts of society.

Josephine Butler's life-long commitment was to women. She helped set up the North of England Council for Promoting the Higher Education of Women, campaigned for married women's property rights and wrote pamphlets and books about women's rights. In 1869 Butler focused on a cause that was 'so dreadful, so difficult, so disgusting' – the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts (p.78). As is well known, the Contagious Diseases Acts (1864, 1866,

BOOKS RECEIVED AND CALLS FOR REVIEWERS

The following titles are available for review, so if you like to review any of the titles listed below, please email Helen Glew, Book Reviews Editor, at bookreviews@womenshistorynetwork.org

You don't have to be an expert to review, if you have a general interest and knowledge of the relevant historical period or territory then that will count for a lot. The ability to summarise a work (within the word limit!) and write interestingly about it is the most important thing. Any suggestions for books to review are also welcome - just email the book reviews editor as above.

Norena Shopland, *A History of Women in Men's Clothes: From Cross-Dressing to Empowerment* (Pen & Sword, 2021)

Joanna Martin, *Georgina Weldon: The Fearless Wife of a Victorian Celebrity* (Boydell Press, 2021)

Helen Antrobus and Andrew Simcock, *First in the Fight: 20 Women Who Made Manchester* (iNostalgia, 2019)

Lisa Sigel, *The People's Porn: A History of Handmade Pornography in America* (Reaktion, 2020)

Henrietta Heald, *Magnificent Women and their Revolutionary Machines* (Unbound, 2019)

Stephen Williams and Tony Chandler (eds), *Letters from England, 1895: Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling* (Lawrence Wishart, 2020)

Alexandra J. Finley, *An Intimate Economy: Enslaved Women, Work, and America's Domestic Slave Trade* (University of North Carolina Press, 2020)

Cassia Roth, *A Miscarriage of Justice: Women's Reproductive Lives and the Law in Early Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Stanford University Press, 2020)

Barbara Jones, John Fagg, Melissa Wolfe and Tom Wolf, *Simple Pleasures: The Art of Doris Lee* (D. Giles, 2020)

Roberta J.M. Olson, *Artist in Exile: The Visual Diary of Baroness Hyde de Neville* (D Giles, 2019)

Louise Ryan and Margaret Ward (eds), *Irish Women and the Vote*, new edition (Irish Academic Press, 2018)

Brianna Leavitt-Alcantara, *Alone at the Altar: Single Women & Devotion in Guatemala, 1670-1870* (Stanford University Press, 2018)

Martin Sheppard (ed.), *Love on Inishcoo, 1787: A Donegal Romance* (Matador, 2018)

Helen Wilson, *From 'Lady Woodcarvers' to Professionals: The Remarkable Pinwill Sisters*, (Willow Productions, 2021)

Alexandra Hughes-Johnson and Lyndsey Jenkins (eds.), *The Politics of Women's Suffrage*: *Local, National and International Dimensions* (University of London Press, 2021)

1869) gave police powers to arrest women suspected of being a 'common prostitute' in British garrison towns and naval ports. Once apprehended, women were forced to undergo an internal examination at a certified hospital. If found diseased, women were detained for treatment for up to three months. Mathers argues that Butler's entire life had been leading to this, 'magnetically drawn to them by the conviction that these women were her suffering sisters' (p.79). Moreover, she sought to do God's work. Just as Jesus Christ had liberated the 'woman in the city', so Josephine Butler wanted to free the prostitute from life's injustices. Helen Mathers' religious insights shed new light on the National Vigilance Association campaign that ensued.

For someone who suffered from debilitating chronic problems in her one working lung, Butler's energy was phenomenal. During 1870 alone she travelled 3,700 miles and addressed ninty-nine meetings. It was a preaching tour in all but name. For many women, Butler was a religious leader, 'a woman Christ' whose crusade against the darkness of sexual evil they could support (p.85). Butler's deeply held faith gave her the courage to face personal danger from hostile crowds, to visit brothels and withstand vicious attacks by journalists, one of whom called her 'an indecent maenad, a shrieking sister, frenzied, unsexed, and utterly without shame' (p.92). Helen Mather skilfully brings into sharp relief Josephine Butler's feelings about breaking conventional norms, and the pain she felt when people disapproved of her actions. One of the most fascinating insights of Mather' biography is the author's deep understanding of how Christianity shaped Butler's politics.

Mathers certainly analyses Butler's religiousness with great acuity but what is so valuable about this biography is the way in which Mathers both understands and historically contextualises her subject. I very much enjoyed reading the 'interludes', chapters which describe a little more of the historical background, or explain a little more about Butler's beliefs and personality. I found the 'interlude' of Catherine of Siena fascinating, where Butler compares herself to the Roman-Catholic saint, 'another woman called by God to exercise leadership and influence the highest levels of government' (p.133).

Mather provides a detailed, scrupulous and excellently researched story of Butler's life and works. Her book is impeccable in its historical detail; Butler's fights against child sexual slavery, her concerns about the sexual age of consent and her efforts to protect young women from unwanted advances come vividly to life. *Josephine Butler, Patron Saint of Prostitutes* is a compelling read. It is not an academic text written in inaccessible prose, but an engagingly thoughtful reconsideration of one of feminism's historical heroines.

THE WOMEN'S HISTORY NETWORK

SUMMER SEMINAR SERIES 2022

women's HISTORY NETWORK

An online series dedicated to women's and gender history

4 May 2022
Dr Katie Taylor
Professionalising Women's American Football: A Historical Perspective

Dr Lydia Furse
Women's Rugby World Cups as Media Flashpoints: Femininity, Feminism, and Women's Sport in the UK in the 1990s

11 May 2022
Montaz Marche, Dr Duncan Hay, Dr Leah Lovett
Reimagining Space and Gender Histories: Creating the City of Women London

25 May 2022
Genevieve Caulfield
Styles of Seeing and Constructing Female Sanctity in the Late Middle Ages

Dr Katherine Weikert
Translating Between the Lines: Sexual Assault in Writing Medieval Warfare

8 June 2022
Dr Tanya Harmer
Navigating Revolution in A Man's World: Beatriz Allende in Chile and Cuba during the 1960s and 1970s

22 June 2022
Dr Hannah Telling
"Villainous Harpies": Women, Everyday Violence and the Law in Scotland, 1850-1914

6 July 2022
Academic Fellows Roundtable Talks:
Women's History Network Independent Research Fellows

20 July 2022
Academic Fellows Roundtable Talks:
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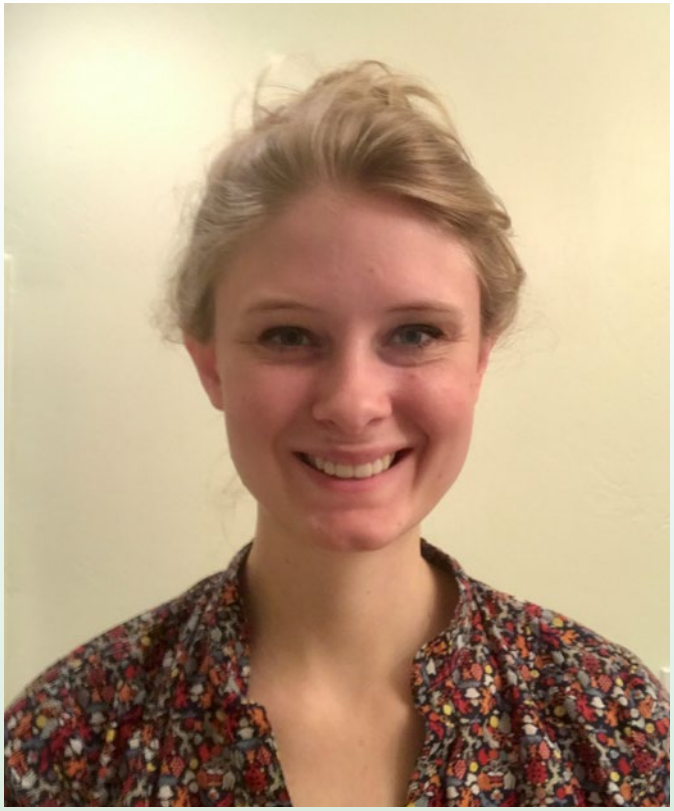
For further details and information on how to sign up please visit
https://womenshistorynetwork.org/category/conferences/seminars
or follow us on twitter at **@WomensHistNet**

In Profile



Olivia Terry is the winner of the Women's History Network Undergraduate Dissertation Prize for 2021 for her dissertation 'Worn in the Words: Women's Relationship with Clothing and Textiles in the American West, 1836-1900'.

Tell us about your current post-university position?

Since graduating from the University of Brighton, I returned home to Idaho and now work as the Regional History Museum Librarian at the Community Library in Ketchum. The Sun Valley ski lodge, Ernest Hemingway, mining and sheep ranching history are central to the regional history department's focus. I have the pleasure of cataloguing the library's regional history museum's collection, collaborating on and installing exhibits, and working with the public on research requests. Lately, I've been going through the museum's extensive collection of ski clothing.

What motivated you to study history?

When I was younger, I found my love of history through my love of sewing and dress. Sepia tinted photographs of women in big dresses inspired many of my sewing projects, and as I grew older, I became interested in contextualizing these dresses in the past. I love looking at history through the lens of clothing, and that ultimately drove me to go to England and study dress history.

What achievement are you most proud of?

While I was in Brighton, I assisted in the Brighton Museum's community curated 2020 exhibit *Queer the Pier*. I joined a team and alongside them, I got to mount some fabulous drag costumes by local artists by tailoring each mannequin to specific garments. That was the first time I realized that my love of sewing could intersect with my love of museum work.

What book about women's history has most inspired you?

There are a lot of books that tremendously impacted my relationship with women's history, but a short autobiography, *When the Chips Were Down* written by my great-great grandmother Beatrice "Mitten" Terry had the biggest and earliest impact on me. My grandfather gave it to me when I was in fourth grade while I was learning about the American Western Frontier. The book was about Beatrice's experience moving west. Years later, when it came time to pick a topic for my undergraduate dissertation, I found it. It was the starting point for all of my research for my dissertation, and the article featured in this issue.

What important piece of advice would you impart to a budding historian/ archivist/ activist/ librarian?

I'm in the extremely early stages of being a 'historian', so I'm not sure I'm qualified to offer advice yet. However, reflecting on how I got to where I am today, I'd say that getting involved in extra-curricular activities benefitted me the most. One opportunity always led to the next, and through that, I developed transferable skills, and made valuable connections.

WHN Committee Meeting Report

The most recent meeting of the Women's History Network's Steering Committee was on Saturday 26 February. Since the pandemic began, the Committee has been trying to make the most of the opportunities presented by the online pivot. Members have put together a thriving seminar series and virtual writing retreats that have brought in a number of attendees from across the UK and the globe. The Steering Committee meeting was on Zoom and we used the opportunity in February to think about how we could continue building on this robust engagement with our online programme of events and content.

The WHN blog features fascinating new research by students, early career researchers, and scholars inside and outside the academy, and is looking to diversify representation and showcase voices from underrepresented backgrounds. We have just had a series of blogs on LGBTQ+ history and are looking forward to Women's History Month.

We are also pleased to announce a new WHN Photographic License Grant to cover the cost of illustrative material in academic publications. Our ECR

Women's History Network Prizes and Grants

MA Prize

We were delighted to receive twenty entries for the WHN MA Dissertation Prize this year. The entries covered a wide range of geographical areas and time periods, which speaks to the diversity of women's history within current postgraduate scholarship. The judging committee have been enormously impressed with the quality of research undertaken, not least as the dissertations were completed during the COVID-19 lockdowns of 2021. We look forward to sharing students' research through our blog and in future editions of *Women's History Today*.

We are pleased to announce the results as follows:

Winner: Olivia Wyatt (Leeds) '"Painting Our Own Portraits": African-Caribbean women and the construction of community in Leeds'
Runners up: Ruby Ekkel (St Andrews) 'Vegetarians, vivisectors and violationism: gender and the non-human animal in Anna Kingsford's life and writing' and Beth Price (Edinburgh) 'How Far Can Pan Yuliang's Nudes Be Considered "Feminist" Art?'
Highly Commended: Anna Dearden (Leicester) '"Damned Sapphists": the experiences of sexually transgressive women, c. 1740-1840' and Emma Gattey (Oxford) 'Forgotten "Insider" and Revisionist Anthropology at Oxford: Makereti and Māori Agency in the Construction of European Knowledge'.

WHN Photographic License Grant:

The Women's History Network is pleased to announce a new grant to cover the cost of illustrative material in academic publications. Small grants are available to cover the costs of reproducing images in monographs or journal articles, for research which is focused on women's history, or gender history which is substantially focused on women. We invite applications from researchers working on any period or place, but particularly welcome applications from those working on topics outside the modern period and/or Western world.

Applicants must be a current member of the WHN and based in the UK. We welcome applications from scholars at all career stages, including those currently without an institutional affiliation, as well as those working outside the academy in, for example, the heritage sector. However, in making decisions, we will prioritise those in precarious employment. Permanently employed scholars must have exhausted institutional funds (if these exist within their institution), before approaching the WHN.

We anticipate providing up to four individual grants. We would be happy to support the licencing of more than one image within a project, however applicants should note that it is unlikely that any individual award would exceed £500 and bear this in mind when making their application.

Successful applicants will receive the grant on receipt of confirmation of acceptance of publication, and of an invoice by the licensing authority. They will also be asked to write a blog post for the WHN about their research. The WHN should be acknowledged in the final published article/book and we reserve the right to ask to view an in-progress draft. Applications are due by 30 April 2022.

BA Prize 2022:

Our prize for an undergraduate dissertation on women's history will run again in 2022. The prize will launch in early May, so if you have written or supervised an undergraduate dissertation this year, please do enter. The winner will receive £250 and the opportunity to be published in the WHN journal.
To keep up to date with our prizes, grants and fellowships, keep an eye on the WHN website and Twitter feed. Alternatively, please contact our prizes and grants coordinator, at prizesandawards@womenshistorynetwork.org

ECR and Independent Fellowships:

The WHN each year supports a number of Early Career Researchers and Independent Researchers. This year's Fellows have been making excellent progress with their projects and we are delighted to see their innovative and exciting research coming to fruition. We look forward to hearing more at the Fellows Roundtable as part of our Seminar Series, later this year.

The ECR and Independent Fellowships will run again during the academic year 2022/23. Applications will open in early June, with applications due by 1 August. ECR Fellows will be awarded £1,500 each, and Independent Fellows may apply for up to £750.

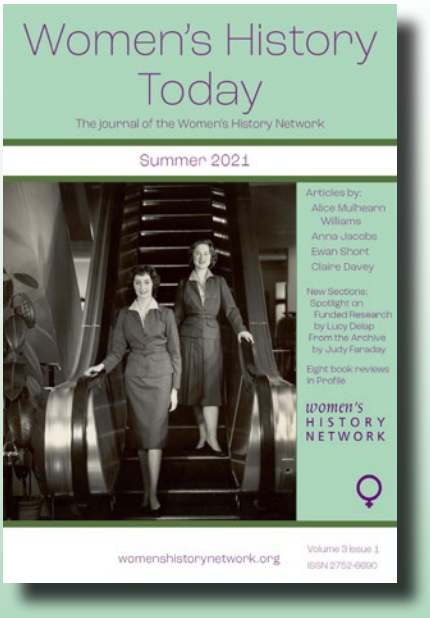
and Independent Fellows are progressing well with their projects, despite ongoing research difficulties. Our Midlands regional branch is hoping to promote work on women's history within academic institutions, the heritage sector and community history.

We have an upcoming School's Prize and a full summer calendar for our seminar series. We have over 7,000 followers on Twitter and our newsletter continues to do well, with good engagement levels. The February newsletter going out to its highest number of subscribers to date.

The winter issue of our journal was a resounding success and future issues, including a broadcasting special and another on diversity, are underway. We are excited about our virtual conference, which will take place on Zoom on 2 and 3 September on the theme 'Addressing the Nation'. It will explore how women, including broadcasters, activists, writers, cartoonists, public figures and others were 'addressing the nation' and other political and social communities across time and space.

Publishing in *Women's History Today*

Women's History Today 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:
https://womenshistorynetwork.org/womens-history-today/
Please email your submission, as a word attachment, to the editors at
editor@womenshistorynetwork.org



Women's History Network National Steering Committee and Other Contacts—2021

Chair—Sarah Richardson

Charity Rep—Hazel Perry

Social Media and Blog Editors— Vicky Iglikowski-Broad, Lyndsey Jenkins and Kat Perry

Membership Secretary—Susan Cohen

Treasurer—Becki Hines

(Archive) Secretary—Urvi Khaitan

Conference support role—Alexandra Hughes-Johnson

Website and publicity—Nancy Highcock

Prizes and Grants—Anna Muggeridge

Journal—Kate Murphy, Angela Platt, Laurel Forster, Helen Glew, Kate Terkanian and Samantha Hughes-Johnson

Newsletter Editor—Catia Rodrigues

Community Liaison Anne Logan and Helen Antrobus

Diversity Officer—Norena Shepherd

Schools Liaison—Tahaney Alghrani

Seminar Organisers Erin Newman, Sarah Hellawell and Rachel Chua

Co-opted Members of the Committee

WHN Book Prize Panel Chair —Krista Cowan
bookprize@womenshistorynetwork.org

Community History Prize Chair —Anne Logan
communityhistoryprize@womenshistorynetwork.org

IFRWH rep—Gillian Murphy

To join the WHN just go to
***womenshistorynetwork.org/join-us/** and follow the instructions.*
Donations and Gift-Aid declarations can all be
accessed online as well

Why not join the Women's History Network?

The **Women's History Network** is a national association and charity for the promotion of women's history and the encouragement of women and men interested in women's history. Following our establishment in 1991 we have grown year by year and today we are a UK national charity with members including working historians, researchers, independent scholars, teachers, librarians, and many other individuals both within academia and beyond. Indeed, the network reaches out to welcome women and men from any background who share a passion for women's history. The WHN is controlled by its members who elect a national steering committee who manage our activities and business.

Conference

The annual WHN conference, which is held each September, is a highlight for most of our members. It is known for being a very friendly and welcoming event, providing an exciting forum where people from the UK and beyond can meet and share research and interests. Each year well known historians are invited as plenary speakers and bursaries are offered to enable postgraduate students or those on a low income to attend.

Prizes and Grants

The WHN offers annual community history and book prizes, grants for conferences and ECR and independent researcher fellowships.

Networking

Of course, talking to each other is essential to the work and culture of the Women's History Network. We run a members' email list and try to provide support for members or groups who organise local conferences or other events connected to women's history that bring people together.

Publication

WHN members receive three copies of our peer reviewed journal, *Women's History Today*, each year. The content of the journal is wide ranging from articles discussing research, sources and applications of women's history, to reviews of books, conferences, meetings and exhibitions, as well as information on calls for papers, prizes and competitions, and publication opportunities. The journal is delivered electronically in PDF form to all members via email, but members, can elect to receive a printed hardcopy of Women's History for an increased membership fee.

WHN membership

Annual Membership Rates September 2021 / with journal hardcopy / with journal overseas delivery

Community Group member	£15 / £25 / £35
Student or unwaged member	£15 / £25 / £35
Low income member (*under £20,000 pa)	£25 / £35 / £45
Standard member	£40 / £50 / £60

Life Membership (includes journal hardcopy)	£375
Retired Life Membership(includes journal hardcopy)	£195

The easiest way to join the Women's History Network is online – via our website – go to
https://womenshistorynetwork.org/join-us/

Charity Number: 1118201. Membership application/renewal, Gift Aid Declaration are all available at
https://womenshistorynetwork.org