

Women In Medieval English Society New Studies In Economic And Social History

This collection brings together two flourishing areas of medieval scholarship: gender and religion. It examines gender-specific religious practices and contends that the pursuit of holiness can destabilise binary gender itself. Though saints may be classified as masculine or feminine, holiness may also cut across gender divisions and demand a break from normally gendered behaviour. This work of interdisciplinary cultural history includes contributions from historians, art historians and literary critics and will be of interest not only to medievalists, but also to students of religion and gender in any period.

Throughout her career as a medieval historian, Eileen Power was engaged on a book on women in the Middle Ages. She did not live to write the book but some of the material she collected found its way into her popular lectures on medieval women. These lectures were brought together and edited by M. M. Postan. They reveal the world in which women lived, were educated, worked, and worshipped. Power gives a vivid account of the worlds of the lady, the peasant, the townswoman, and the nun. The result is a historical yet intimate picture of a period gone by yet with resonances for today. An intimate portrait of the writer and social historian, by Maxine Berg, is also included.

This book examines the view of women held by medieval common lawyers and legislators, and considers medieval women's treatment by and participation in the processes of the common law. Surveying a wide range of points of contact between women and the common law, from their appearance (or not) in statutes, through their participation (or not) as witnesses, to their treatment as complainants or defendants, it argues for closer consideration of women within the standard narratives of classical legal history, and for re-examination of some previous conclusions on the relationship between women and the common law. It will appeal to scholars and students of medieval history, as well as those interested in legal history, gender studies and the history of women. A selection of Herlihy's essays compiled as a tribute to his influence. His particular interest in the nature of the family and the role of women within that unit is amply reflected in this volume. Articles include: Did women have a renaissance?; The Florentine Merchant family in the Middle Ages; Biology and History: Suggestions for a Dialogue.

The medieval landscape, as viewed through the eyes of scholars, was hardly populated by women. Particularly, young unmarried women or "maidens" have been paid little attention. This book aims to fill that gap by examining the meaning, experiences and voices of young womanhood. The life-phase of "adolescence" was different for maidens than for young men, and as such merits study in its own right. At the same time a study of young womanhood provides insights into ideals of feminine gender roles and identities at different social levels.

This is an important study of English women's participation in the market economy from 1300 to 1620.

Examination of the evidence and major issues and debates deciding the position of women in medieval society.

Examines the role of women in medieval law and society

The first comprehensive exploration of women's multifaceted experiences of forced and consensual ravishment in medieval England.

Looking at the responsibility of women in the household and their influence on the running of great estates, marriage and work and status, this volume looks at the role of women in medieval English society.

This history of medieval village life is told through the experiences of Cecilia Penifader, a peasant woman who lived on one English manor in the early fourteenth century. This truly unique book offers a wealth of insight into medieval peasant society, bringing many of the characteristics of a time and a people to life. Short and readable, it is an ideal text for undergraduate teaching, suitable for courses in Western civilization, medieval history, women's history, and English history.

This volume brings together specialists from different areas of medieval literary study to focus on the role of habits of thought in shaping attitudes toward women during the Middle Ages. The essays range from Old English literature to the Spanish Inquisition and encompass such genres as romance, chronicles, hagiography, and legal documents.

Determined and largely successful effort to read behind and alongside legal discourses to discover women's voices and women's feelings. It adds usefully to the wider debate on women's role in medieval society. ENGLISH HISTORICAL REVIEW What is really new here is the ways in which the authors approach the history of the law: they use some decidedly non-legal texts to examine legal history; they bring together historical and literary sources; and they debunk the view that medieval laws had little to say about women or that medieval women had little legal agency. ALBION The legal position of the late medieval woman has been much neglected, and it is this gap which the essays collected here seek to fill. They explore the ways in which women of all ages and stations during the late middle ages (c.1300-c.1500) could legally shift for themselves, and how and where they did so. Particular topics discussed include the making of wills, the age of consent, rights concerning marriage, care, custody and guardianship (with particular emphasis on the rights of a mother attempting to gain custody of her own children within the court system), women as traders, women as criminals, prostitution, the rights of battered women within the courts, the procedures women had to go through to gain legal redress and access, rape, and women within guilds. NOEL JAMES MENUGE gained her Ph.D. from the Centre of Medieval Studies at the University of York. Contributors: P.J.P. GOLDBERG, VICTORIA THOMPSON, JENNIFER SMITH, CORDELIA BEATTIE, KATHERINE J. LEWIS, NOEL JAMES MENUGE, CORINNE SAUNDERS, KIM M. PHILLIPS, EMMA HAWKES

(An) admirable collection. . For anyone interested in what Wogan-Browne calls "the historiography of female community", nuns' libraries and literacy, and Barking abbey itself, this first-class collection of essays is essential reading. CATHOLIC HISTORICAL REVIEW Essays on the texts produced at Barking Abbey - one of the most important centres for writings in the Middle Ages.

The study takes the received view among scholars that women in the Middle Ages were faced with sustained misogyny and that their voices were seldom heard in public and subjects it to a critical analysis. The ten chapters deal with various aspects of the question, and the voices of a variety of authors - both female and male - are heard. The study opens with an enquiry into violence against women, including in texts by male writers (Hartmann von Aue, Gottfried von Straßburg, Wolfram von Eschenbach) which indeed describe instances of violence, but adopt an extremely critical stance towards them. It then proceeds to show how women were able to develop an independent identity in various genres and could present themselves as authorities in the public eye. Mystic texts by Hildegard of Bingen, Marie de France and Margery Kempe, the medieval conduct poem known as Die Winsbeckin, the Devout Books of Sisters composed in convents in South-West Germany, but also quasi-historical documents such as the memoirs of Helene Kottaner or Anna Weckerin's cookery book, demonstrate that far more women were in the public gaze than had hitherto been assumed and that they possessed the self-confidence to establish their positions with their intellectual and their literary achievements.

In this engaging work, Bruce L. Venarde uncovers a largely unknown story of women's religious lives and puts female monasticism back in the mainstream of medieval ecclesiastical history. To chart the expansion of nunneries in France and England during the central Middle Ages, he presents statistics and narratives to describe growth in broad historical contexts, with special attention to social and economic change.

Venarde explains that in the years 1000-1300 the number of nunneries within Europe grew tenfold. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, religious institutions for women developed in a variety of ways, mostly outside the self-conscious reform movements that have been the traditional focus of monastic history. Not reforming monks but wandering preachers, bishops, and the women and men of local petty aristocracies made possible the foundation of new nunneries. In times of increased agrarian wealth, decentralization of power, and a shortage of potential spouses, many women decided to become nuns and proved especially adept at combining spiritual search with practical acumen. This era of expansion came to an end in the thirteenth century when forces of regulation and new economic realities reduced radically the number of new nunneries. Venarde argues that the factors encouraging and inhibiting monastic foundations for men and women were much more similar than scholars have previously assumed.

The non-judicial confinement of women is a common event in medieval European literature and hagiography. The literary image of the imprisoned woman, usually a noblewoman, has carried through into the quasi-medieval world of the fairy and folk tale, in which the 'maiden in the tower' is one of the archetypes. Yet the confinement of women outside of the judicial system was not simply a fiction in the medieval period. Men too were imprisoned without trial and sometimes on mere suspicion of an offence, yet evidence suggests that there were important differences in the circumstances under which men and women were incarcerated, and in their roles in relation to non-judicial captivity. This study of the confinement of women highlights the disparity in regulation concerning male and female imprisonment in the middle ages, and gives a useful perspective on the nature of medieval law, its scope and limitations, and its interaction with royal power and prerogative. Looking at England from 1170 to 1509, the book discusses: the situations in which women might be imprisoned without formal accusation of trial; how social status, national allegiance and stage of life affected the chances of imprisonment; the relevant legal rules and norms; the extent to which legal and constitutional developments in medieval England affected women's amenability to confinement; what can be known of the experiences of women so incarcerated; and how women were involved in situations of non-judicial imprisonment, aside from themselves being prisoners.

The essays gathered in this volume present multifaceted considerations of the intersection of objects and gender within the cultural contexts of late medieval France and England. Some take a material view of objects, showing buildings, books, and pictures as sites of gender negotiation and resistance and as extensions of women's bodies. Others reconsider the concept of objectification in the lives of fictional and historical medieval women by looking closely at their relation to gendered material objects, taken literally as women's possessions and as figurative manifestations of their desires. The opening section looks at how medieval authors imagined fictional and legendary women using particular objects in ways that reinforce or challenge gender roles. These women bring objects into the orbit of gender identity, employing and relating to them in a literal sense, while also taking advantage of their symbolic meanings. The second section focuses on the use of texts both as objects in their own right and as mechanisms by which other objects are defined. The possessors of objects in these essays lived in the world, their lives documented by historical records, yet like their fictional and legendary counterparts, they too used objects for instrumental ends and with symbolic resonances. The final section considers the objectification of medieval women's bodies as well as its limits. While this at times seems to allow for a trade in women, authorial attempts to give definitive shapes and boundaries to women's bodies either complicate the gender boundaries they try to contain or reduce gender to an ideological abstraction. This volume contributes to the ongoing effort to calibrate female agency in the late Middle Ages, honoring the groundbreaking work of Carolyn P. Collette.

Grieving women in early modern English drama, this study argues, recall not only those of Classical tragedy, but also, and more significantly, the lamenting women of medieval English drama, especially the Virgin Mary. Looking at the plays of Shakespeare, Kyd, and Webster, this book presents a new perspective on early modern drama grounded upon three original interrelated points. First, it explores how the motif of the mourning woman on the early modern stage embodies the cultural trauma of the Reformation in England. Second, the author here brings to light the extent to which the figures of early modern drama recall those of the recent medieval past. Finally, Goodland addresses how these representations embody actual mourning practices that were viewed as increasingly disturbing after the Reformation. *Female Mourning and Tragedy in Medieval and Renaissance English Drama* synthesizes and is relevant to several areas of recent scholarly interest, including the performance of gender, the history of emotion, studies of death and mourning, and the cultural trauma of the Reformation.

Early medieval women exercised public roles, rights, and responsibilities. Women contributed through their labor to the welfare of the community. Women played an important part in public affairs. They practiced birth control through abortion and infanticide. Women committed crimes and were indicted. They owned property and administered estates. The drive toward economic growth and expansion abroad rested on the capacity of women to staff and manage economic endeavors at home. In the later Middle Ages, the social position of women altered significantly, and the reasons why the role of women in society tended to become more restrictive are examined in these essays.

Women in Medieval Europe were expected to be submissive, but such a broad picture ignores great areas of female experience. Between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, women are found in the workplace as well as the home, and some women were numbered among the key rulers, saints and mystics of the medieval world. Opportunities and activities changed over time, and by 1500 the world of work was becoming increasingly restricted for women. Women of all social groups were primarily engaged with their families, looking after husband and children, and running the household. Patterns of work varied geographically. In the northern towns, women engaged in a wide range of crafts, with a small number becoming entrepreneurs. Many of the poor made a living as servants and labourers. Prostitution flourished in many medieval towns. Some women turned to the religious life, and here opportunities burgeoned in the thirteenth century. The Middle Ages are not remote from the twenty-first century; the lives of medieval women evoke a response today. The medieval mother faced similar problems to her modern counterpart. The sheer variety of women's

experience in the later Middle Ages is fully brought out in this book.

Superior Women examines the claims of abbesses of the abbey of Sainte-Croix in medieval Poitiers to authority from the abbey's foundation to its 1520 reform. These women claimed to hold authority over their own community, over dependent chapters of male canons, and over extensive properties in Poitou; male officials such as the king of France and the pope repeatedly supported these claims. To secure this support, the abbesses relied on two strategies that the abbey's founder, the sixth-century Saint Radegund, established: they documented support from a network of allies made up of powerful secular and ecclesiastical officials, and they used artefacts left from Radegund's life to shape her cult and win new patrons and allies. Abbesses across the 900 years of this study routinely turned to these strategies successfully when faced with conflict from dependents, or more local officials such as the bishop of Poitiers. Sainte-Croix's nuns proved adept at tailoring these strategies to shifting historical contexts, turning from Frankish bishops to the kings of Frankia, then to the Pope and finally to the King of France as former allies became unavailable to them. The book demonstrates respectful cooperation between men and monastic women, and more extensive respect for female monastic authority than scholars typically recognize. Chapters focus on the cult's manuscripts, church decoration, procession, jurisdictions between cult institutions, reform, and rebellion.

Reissued for the first time in decades, this ambitious work of Medieval scholarship by bestselling historians Frances and Joseph Gies traces the stories and fates of women in Medieval Europe over the course of a millennium. Medieval history is often written as a series of battles and territorial shifts. But the essential contributions of women during this period have been too often relegated to the dustbin of history. In *Women in the Middle Ages*, Frances and Joseph Gies reclaim this lost history, in a lively historical survey that charts the evolution of women's roles throughout the period, and profiles eight individual women in depth. We learn of Hildegard of Bingen, an abbess who was a noted composer and founded two monasteries; of Eleanor de Montfort, a 13th century Princess of Wales who was captured by Edward I and held as a political prisoner for three years; and women of somewhat more modest means, such as the spouse of an Italian merchant, and a peasant's wife. Drawing upon their various stories, talented historians Frances and Joseph Gies—whose books were used by George R.R. Martin in his research for *Game of Thrones*—offer a kaleidoscopic view of the lives of women throughout this tumultuous period. "A wealth of solid information." —*New York Times*

"Medieval English Nunneries" from Eileen Power. British economic historian and medievalist (1889-1940).

This is one of the first anthologies devoted to the writings of women in the Middle Ages. The fifteen women whose works are represented span seven centuries, eight languages, and ten regions or nationalities. Many are recognized, taught, and anthologized in their own countries but have been inaccessible to students in English. Others are little read today because their literary fortunes have paralleled fluctuations in literary taste and literary patronage. Katharina M. Wilson's introduction to the volume places these writers in historical context and explores the question of the female imagination and who these women were who were writing at a time when very few women were literate and most literature, sacred and secular, was penned by men. Each of the fifteen chapters has been written by a different scholar and includes a biographical and critical introduction to the writer, a representative selection of her works in translation, and a bibliography.

Praise for the first edition: 'It is difficult to imagine another book in which one could find all this diverse material, and no doubt Amt's collection, in its richness, and in its genuine clarity and simplicity will take prominent place in our expanded, diversified medieval curriculum, a curriculum that takes class, gender, and ethnicity as central to an understanding of world cultural history.' - *The Medieval Review* Long considered to be a definitive and truly groundbreaking collection of sources, *Women's Lives in Medieval Europe* uniquely presents the everyday lives and experiences of women in the Middle Ages. This indispensable text has now been thoroughly updated and expanded to reflect new research, and includes previously unavailable source material. This new edition includes expanded sections on marriage and sexuality, and on peasant women and townswomen, as well as a new section on women and the law. There are brief introductions both to the period and to the individual documents, study questions to accompany each reading, a glossary of terms and a fully updated bibliography. Working within a multi-cultural framework, the book focuses not just on the Christian majority, but also present material about women in minority groups in Europe, such as Jews, Muslims, and those considered to be heretics. Incorporating both the laws, regulations and religious texts that shaped the way women lived their lives, and personal narratives by and about medieval women, the book is unique in examining women's lives through the lens of daily activities, and in doing so as far as possible through the voices of women themselves.

Women in Medieval Europe explores the key areas of female experience in the later medieval period, from peasant women to Queens. It considers the women of the later Middle Ages in the context of their social relationships during a time of changing opportunities and activities, so that by 1500 the world of work was becoming increasingly restricted to women. The chapters are arranged thematically to show the varied roles and lives of women in and out of the home, covering topics such as marriage, religion, family and work. For the second edition a new chapter draws together recent work on Jewish and Muslim women, as well as those from other ethnic groups, showing the wide ranging experiences of women from different backgrounds. Particular attention is paid to women at work in the towns, and specifically urban topics such as trade, crafts, healthcare and prostitution. The latest research on women, gender and masculinity has also been incorporated, along with updated further reading recommendations. This fully revised new edition is a comprehensive yet accessible introduction to the topic, perfect for all those studying women in Europe in the later Middle Ages.

This fascinating book explores the status of women in medieval England, both before and after the Norman Conquest.

The history of medieval women has been transformed in recent years through the expansion of evidence and the application of innovative and provocative methodologies. The author draws on these research results to emphasize the resilience and achievements of medieval women, whilst recognizing the misogynistic constraints embedded in the structures of medieval society. *Women and Community in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia* draws on recent research to underscore the various ways Iberian women influenced and contributed to their communities, engaging with a broader academic discussion of women's agency and cultural impact in the Iberian Peninsula. By focusing on women from across the socioeconomic and religious spectrum—elite, bourgeois, and peasant Christian women, Jewish, Muslim, converso, and Morisco women, and married, widowed, and single women—this volume highlights the diversity of women's experiences, examining women's social, economic, political, and religious

ties to their families and communities in both urban and rural environments. Comprised of twelve essays from both established and new scholars, *Women and Community in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia* showcases groundbreaking work on premodern women, revealing the complex intersections between gender and community while highlighting not only relationships of support and inclusion but also the tensions that worked to marginalize and exclude women.

"Common women" in medieval England were prostitutes, whose distinguishing feature was not that they took money for sex but that they belonged to all men in common. *Common Women: Prostitution and Sexuality in Medieval England* tells the stories of these women's lives: their entrance into the trade because of poor job and marriage prospects or because of seduction or rape; their experiences as streetwalkers, brothel workers or the medieval equivalent of call girls; their customers, from poor apprentices to priests to wealthy foreign merchants; and their relations with those among whom they lived. *Common Women* crosses the boundary from social to cultural history by asking not only about the experiences of prostitutes but also about the meaning of prostitution in medieval culture. The teachings of the church attributed both lust and greed, in generous measure, to women as a group. Stories of repentant whores were popular among medieval preachers and writers because prostitutes were the epitome of feminine sin. Through a sensitive use of a wide variety of imaginative and didactic texts, Ruth Karras shows that while prostitutes as individuals were marginalized within medieval culture, prostitution as an institution was central to the medieval understanding of what it meant to be a woman. This important work will be of interest to scholars and students of history, women's studies, and the history of sexuality.

From women's medicine and the writings of Christine de Pizan to the lives of market and tradeswomen and the idealization of virginity, gender and social status dictated all aspects of women's lives during the middle ages. A cross-disciplinary resource, *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe* examines the daily reality of medieval women from all walks of life in Europe between 450 CE and 1500 CE, i.e., from the fall of the Roman Empire to the discovery of the Americas. Moving beyond biographies of famous noble women of the middle ages, the scope of this important reference work is vast and provides a comprehensive understanding of medieval women's lives and experiences. Masculinity in the middle ages is also addressed to provide important context for understanding women's roles. Entries that range from 250 words to 4,500 words in length thoroughly explore topics in the following areas: · Art and Architecture · Countries, Realms, and Regions · Daily Life · Documentary Sources · Economics · Education and Learning · Gender and Sexuality · Historiography · Law · Literature · Medicine and Science · Music and Dance · Persons · Philosophy · Politics · Political Figures · Religion and Theology · Religious Figures · Social Organization and Status

Written by renowned international scholars, *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe* is the latest in the Routledge Encyclopedias of the Middle Ages. Easily accessible in an A-to-Z format, students, researchers, and scholars will find this outstanding reference work to be an invaluable resource on women in Medieval Europe.

This book provides a detailed analysis of women's involvement in litigation and other legal actions within their local communities in late-medieval England. It draws upon the rich records of three English towns – Nottingham, Chester and Winchester – and their courts to bring to life the experiences of hundreds of women within the systems of local justice. Through comparison of the records of three towns, and of women's roles in different types of legal action, the book reveals the complex ways in which individual women's legal status could vary according to their marital status, different types of plea and the town that they lived in. At this lowest level of medieval law, women's status was malleable, making each woman's experience of justice unique.

Power in medieval society has traditionally been ascribed to figures of public authority--violent knights and conflicting sovereigns who altered the surface of civic life through the exercise of law and force. The wives and consorts of these powerful men have generally been viewed as decorative attendants, while common women were presumed to have had no power or consequence. Reassessing the conventional definition of power that has shaped such portrayals, *Women and Power in the Middle Ages* reveals the varied manifestations of female power in the medieval household and community--from the cultural power wielded by the wives of Venetian patriarchs to the economic power of English peasant women and the religious power of female saints. Among the specific topics addresses are Griselda's manipulation of silence as power in Chaucer's "The Clerk's Tale"; the extensive networks of influence devised by Lady Honor Lisle; and the role of medieval women book owners as arbiters of lay piety and ambassadors of culture. In every case, the essays seek to transcend simple polarities of public and private, male and female, in order to provide a more realistic analysis of the workings of power in feudal society.

This vivid and pioneering study illuminates the different roles played in late medieval society by noblewomen - the most substantial group of women to survive as individuals in medieval documents. They emerge (despite limited political opportunities) as figures of consequence themselves in a landowning society through estate management in their husbands' frequent absences, and through hospitality, patronage and affinity.

What have a deaf nun, the mother of the first baby born to Europeans in North America, and a condemned heretic to do with one another? They are among the virtuous virgins, marvelous maidens, and fierce feminists of the Middle Ages who trail-blazed paths for women today. Without those first courageous souls who worked in fields dominated by men, women might not have the presence they currently do in professions such as education, the law, and literature. Focusing on women from Western Europe between c. 300 and 1500 CE in the medieval period and richly carpeted with detail, *A Medieval Woman's Companion* offers a wealth of information about real medieval women who are now considered vital for understanding the Middle Ages in a full and nuanced way. Short biographies of 20 medieval women illustrate how they have anticipated and shaped current concerns, including access to education; creative emotional outlets such as art, theater, romantic fiction, and music; marriage and marital rights; fertility, pregnancy, childbirth, contraception and gynecology; sex trafficking and sexual violence; the balance of work and family; faith; and disability. Their legacy abides until today in attitudes to contemporary women that have their roots in the medieval period. The final chapter suggests how 20th and 21st century feminist and gender theories can be applied to and complicated by medieval women's lives and writings. Doubly marginalized due to gender and the remoteness of the time period, medieval women's accomplishments are acknowledged and presented in a way that readers can appreciate and find inspiring. Ideal for high school and college classroom use in courses ranging from history and literature to women's and gender studies, an accompanying website with educational links, images, downloadable curriculum guide, and interactive blog will be made available at the time of publication.

Crime is a matter of interpretation, and never was this truer than in the Middle Ages, when societies faced with new ideas and pressures were continually forced to rethink what a crime was -- and what was a crime. This collection undertakes a thorough exploration of shifting definitions of crime and changing attitudes toward social control in medieval Europe. These essays reveal how various forces in medieval society interacted and competed in interpreting and influencing mechanisms for social control. Drawing on a wide range of historical and literary sources -- legal treatises, court cases, statutes, poems, romances, and comic tales -- the contributors consider topics including fear of crime, rape and violence against women, revenge and condemnations of crime, learned dispute about crime and social control, and legal and political struggles over hunting rights.

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