



# Women, Identities and Communities in Early Modern Europe

Edited by Stephanie Tarbin, The University of Western Australia and Susan Broomhall, The University of Western Australia

Women and Gender in the Early Modern World

May 2008  
260 pages  
978-0-7546-6184-9  
Includes 12 b&w illustrations

234 x 156 mm  
Hardback  
\$114.95



Addressing a key challenge facing feminist scholars today, this volume explores the tensions between shared gender identity and the myriad social differences structuring women's lives. By examining historical experiences of early modern women, the authors of these essays consider the possibilities for commonalities and the forces dividing women. They analyse individual and collective identities of early modern women, tracing the web of power relations emerging from women's social interactions and contemporary understandings of femininity. Essays range from the late medieval period to the eighteenth century, study women in England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, and Sweden, and locate women in a variety of social environments, from household, neighbourhood and parish, to city, court and nation. Despite differing local contexts, the volume highlights continuities in women's experiences and the gendering of power relations across the early modern world.

Recognizing the critical power of gender to structure identities and experiences, this collection responds to the challenge of the complexity of early modern women's lives. In paying attention to the contexts in which women identified with other women, or were seen by others to identify, contributors add new depth to our understanding of early modern women's senses of exclusion and belonging.

## Contents

Preface; Introduction, Stephanie Tarbin and Susan Broomhall; Part 1 Reading Communities in History: Real and imagined communities in the lives of women in 17th-century Ireland: identity and gender, Anne Laurence; The abuse of history? Identity politics, disordered identity and the 'really real' in French cases of demonic possession, Sarah Ferber. Part 2 Domestic Politics: 'In my own house': the troubled connections between servant marriages, late-medieval English household communities, and early modern historiography, Philippa Maddern; Recusants, daughters, and sisters in Christ: English nuns and their communities in the 17th century, Claire Walker. Part 3 Social Networks: 'Charity is worth it when it looks that good': rural women and bequests of clothing in early modern England, Dolly MacKinnon; Female magic and women's social relations in 18th-century Sweden, Jacqueline van Gent. Part 4 Negotiating the City: The gorgon of Augsburg, Lyndal Roper; Giving birth at the magistrate's gate: single mothers in the early modern city, Laura Gowing. Part 5 Gentry communities: Neighbourhood as female community in the life of Anne Dormer, Sara Mendelson; A revolution correspondence: Elizabeth Packer Geddes and Elizabeth Burnet, Frances Harris. Part 6 Queens and Court: Gendering the culture of honour at the 15th-century Burgundian court, Susan Broomhall; Public identity and public memory: case studies of 2 Tudor women, Judith M. Richards; In praise of queens: the public presentation of the virtuous consort in 17th-century Britain, Sybil Jack; Select bibliography; Index.

## About the Editor

Stephanie Tarbin is Research Fellow and Susan Broomhall is Associate Professor both in the School of Humanities at The University of Western Australia.

[www.ashgate.com/isbn/9780754661849](http://www.ashgate.com/isbn/9780754661849)

# ASHGATE

To order this book please visit [www.ashgate.com](http://www.ashgate.com), or email [orders@ashgate.com](mailto:orders@ashgate.com)  
A 10% discount applies to orders placed through [www.ashgate.com](http://www.ashgate.com)