



Course details

Course title

History: Women, Queenship and Power in Medieval England

Course code

Q00017922

Course date

Start: 05/04/25

End: 05/04/25

Number of classes

1 sessions

Timetable

Sat 5th Apr, 14:00 to 16:30

Branch

Grimsby

Tutor

Guest Speaker

Fee range

Free to £10.50

How you'll learn

You'll join a small group of fellow learners for classes at the venue indicated. Some materials may be provided in our virtual learning environment.

Got it!

In venue

Venue

The Minster (Grimsby)
St James Square
Grimsby
DN31 1EP

Level of study

Beginners

Course overview

In this talk, we will explore attitudes towards women in the Middle Ages, especially to women as rulers. In the Middle Ages, just one woman – the Empress Matilda, daughter of King Henry I – inherited a claim to the English throne. Yet, on her father's death, her cousin, Stephen, seized control of England, so that Matilda was never crowned as queen. For many medieval people, the idea of a woman ruling in her own right was foreign to contemporary minds. We will look at why this was and why queens consort, such as Matilda of Boulogne, King Stephen's wife, and Eleanor of Aquitaine, King Henry II's wife, represented more acceptable (if still occasionally controversial) figures of female political power.

Course description

This talk explores attitudes towards women in the Middle Ages, especially to women as rulers. In medieval England, just one woman – the Empress Matilda, daughter of King Henry I – inherited a claim to the throne in her own right. Yet, on her father's death, her cousin, Stephen of Blois, seized control of England, so that Matilda was never crowned as queen. For many medieval people, the idea of a woman ruling in her own right was foreign to contemporary minds. Drawing on 25 years of writing about medieval women, Louise Wilkinson will share the fruits of her research. We will look at why there were concerns about women exercising power as rulers, drawing upon ideas inherited from the ancient world and religious role models for women. We will then look at the vibrant roles played, instead, by Anglo-Norman and Plantagenet queens consort, such as Matilda of Flanders (wife of William the Conqueror), Matilda of Scotland (wife of Henry I), Matilda of Boulogne (wife of Stephen), Eleanor of Aquitaine (wife of Henry II), and Eleanor of Provence (wife of Henry III, and the first queen to summon Parliament), in the political, diplomatic and cultural affairs of the kingdom.

What financial support is available?

We don't want anything to stand in your way when it comes to bringing Adult learning within reach so if you need anything to support you to achieve your goals then speak to one of our education experts during your enrolment journey. Most of our courses are government funded but if you don't qualify or need alternative financial help to access them then let us know.

What other support is available?

All of our digital content, teaching and learning activities and assessments are designed to be accessible so if you need any additional support you can discuss this with the education experts during your enrolment journey and we will do all we can to make sure you have optimal access.

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