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## Introduction

Anyone glancing through the course reading lists at most universities, or browsing the bookshelves in an academic bookshop, might reasonably conclude that philosophy was something that had been written historically only by men. Its standard lists of great names, beginning with Plato and Aristotle, perhaps continuing with Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza and Locke, to Kant and Hegel, and into the last century with Russell, Wittgenstein and others, rarely contains a single woman. Indeed, many students often struggle to name even one woman philosopher before the mid-twentieth century and Simone de Beauvoir or Hannah Arendt. Yet women have been writing philosophy throughout this history. Not only has there been a surprising number of female philosophers but they often achieved considerable influence in their lifetimes. As well as Mary Wollstonecraft, others such as Hipparchia, Hypatia, Heloise d'Argenteuil, Hildegard von Bingen, Christine de Pizan, Gabrielle Suchon, Anne Conway, Margaret Cavendish, Emilie du Châtelet, Mary Astell, Catharine Macaulay, and Sophie de Grouchy, to name only a few, all had substantial and well-deserved reputations in their own time and engaged with contemporary debates at the highest level.<sup>1</sup>

The reasons that underpin the omission of women from the history of philosophy are many and complex. The processes by which the discipline of philosophy as we now understand it, and of establishing what is often taken to be its canon, took place in the

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<sup>1</sup> For an account of women's extensive contribution to philosophy from Antiquity to the twentieth century see Mary Ellen Waithe's (1987-1994), *A History of Women Philosophers*, four volumes. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>2</sup> These processes were controlled by men and there is no doubt that both sexism and ignorance have played a large part in obscuring women's contribution. Since philosophy is a discipline that in some sense focuses on the application of reason, then where the prevailing belief is that women were "created rather to feel than reason", as Wollstonecraft puts it, the idea of a woman philosopher just seemed wholly out of place.<sup>3</sup> There are, however, more subtle and less direct reasons why women came to be marginalised. Jonathan Ree, for example, argues that the paradigm through which philosophy is understood shifted markedly in the nineteenth century following Kant's transcendental revolution. Whereas earlier generations had accepted an eclectic and diverse range of influences and concerns, in the 'post-Kantian canon', only those whose work was considered to shed light on a narrowly-focused idea of the project of rational enquiry were accepted as 'true' philosophers.<sup>4</sup> While many important earlier thinkers were subsequently overlooked, women, whose lives and education were conducted almost entirely outside of the academic establishment (where such abstract ideas were mostly discussed) were especially vulnerable and became almost invisible.<sup>5</sup> Whatever the precise cause of their neglect, the situation is

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<sup>2</sup> See Jonathan Ree (2002), "Women Philosophers and the Canon", *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 10 (4), 641-52.

<sup>3</sup> Mary Wollstonecraft (1992), *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, London: Penguin, p. 155

<sup>4</sup> "The only philosophers who would need to be remembered in the post-Kantian canon were those who could provide instructive illustrations of the errancy of pure reason", Ree, "Women Philosophers", p. 651.

<sup>5</sup> This sometimes meant that they avoided signing their names to their work. As Marie-Jeanne Phlipon Roland wrote: "Never have I had the slightest temptation of becoming an author;

now changing. Intensive work is now being done to recover and restore the historic contribution that women have made to the pursuit of philosophy.<sup>6</sup> As the influence of feminist thinking has reshaped so much of academic philosophical enquiry, re-focusing its concerns beyond the confines of the post-Kantian project, so this has allowed us to reassess, as well as to rediscover, the considerable but forgotten input that women have made.

At the forefront of this revival is Mary Wollstonecraft. As the author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, she already has a prominent place in many people's minds as an inspirational early feminist. While this is has been an enormously influential book, it does not represent the whole of her thought. Wollstonecraft was a prolific writer whose interests

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very early, I saw that any woman who would earn this title lost much more than she gained. Men do not like her, and her own sex criticize her: if her works are bad, she is mocked, and quite rightly. If they are good, they are taken from her. If one is forced to recognize that she did produce the best part of it, her character, her morals, her behavior and her talents are dissected to the extent that her wit's repute can be balanced against the weight given to her weaknesses." Berville et Barriere (1827), *Mémoires de Madame Roland, avec une notice sur sa vie, des notes et des éclaircissements historiques*. Paris: Baudoin Frères, p. 178.

<sup>6</sup> Lisa Shapiro, "The Place of Women in Early Modern Philosophy," in *Feminist Reflections on the History of Philosophy*, ed. Lilli Alanen and Charlotte Witt, (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2004), Jacqueline Broad and Karen Green, *A History of Women's Political Thought in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), See also Green and Hagenhuber's introduction to a special issue of the *Monist* on women's historical contribution to philosophy ("Introduction", *The Monist*, 2015, 98, 1–6) as well as the papers they discuss.

covered subjects as diverse as education, politics, history, moral theory, philosophy, and religion. She was an activist, a novelist and a public intellectual who was fully engaged with the issues of her time. Wollstonecraft's analysis of the nature and causes of women's subjection is understandably seen as her outstanding contribution to the history of ideas. Nevertheless, this analysis is embedded within her own wider conceptual framework which she brought to bear on the issues she addressed. The premise of our volume is that this wider philosophy is deserving of serious study, no less than her feminist legacy.

Wollstonecraft's influence in her own time is undeniable. She often engaged with her contemporaries – such as Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, and Catharine Macaulay – and she participated in some of the philosophical debates that went on to shape the world – spending time, for example, in Paris during the Terror to document the effects of the revolution. Nevertheless, if it is true that women philosophers have been written out of history, it is strikingly so in her case. Moreover, her fall from grace happened almost immediately after her death when her husband, William Godwin, decided to publicise intimate details about her life including the fact that she had her first child out of wedlock, that she was in love with a married man, and that she twice attempted suicide. Wollstonecraft was immediately shunned as an immoral writer, and her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* was not reprinted after 1796, so that by the mid-nineteenth century, George Eliot tells us that it was 'rather scarce'.<sup>7</sup>

It would not be fair to say that Wollstonecraft made no impact after her death but we do have to work harder to find evidence of it. For example, in spite of her tarnished reputation, Wollstonecraft did have an influence on nineteenth century political philosophy.

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<sup>7</sup> George Eliot's review essay "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft" was first published in *The Leader* in 1855.

Harriet Taylor had read her, so had John Stuart Mill, and the arguments of their *Subjection of Women* were profoundly influenced by the *Vindication*.<sup>8</sup> It is striking, however, that neither refers to her. In “The Enfranchisement of Women”, published in the *Westminster Review* in July 1851, Taylor writes “Great thinkers indeed, at different times, from Plato to Condorcet, besides some of the most eminent names of the present age, have made emphatic protests in favour of the equality of women”.<sup>9</sup> Her failure to acknowledge Wollstonecraft, whose arguments she follows very closely, is perhaps not surprising. Claiming an alliance with Plato and Condorcet (even with the latter’s associations with the French Revolution) was a better tactic than referring to Wollstonecraft, the fallen woman.

Wollstonecraft remained mostly forgotten by the time of the first wave of feminism. By the latter part of the twentieth century as feminism entered its second wave, although her work was becoming more widely read, its proponents did not see her as a good role model, finding her too bourgeois, and a slave to notions of femininity. She was accused of ‘feminist

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<sup>8</sup>There is evidence that Mill was at least made aware of Wollstonecraft, as Auguste Comte mentioned having read her to Mill in correspondence (Oscar Haac (1995), *The Correspondence of John Stuart Mill and Auguste Comte*, New Brunswick: Transaction, p. 188). However, Mill says nothing in his reply that suggests he has or wishes to read the *Vindication*. Helen Taylor reports having read the *Vindication* as a teenager, and that the book was a gift from her mother. But this tells us nothing about when Harriett read it, nor whether she made anything of it philosophically.

<sup>9</sup> Andrew Pyle (1995), *The Subjection of Women: Contemporary Responses to John Stuart Mill*. London: Continuum, p. 16

misogyny', of measuring women's worth in masculine terms, and finding them wanting.<sup>10</sup> Part of this assessment was born, paradoxically, of her admiration for Rousseau, and her insistence that girls should be educated in the way that he had determined boys should be. For Wollstonecraft, treating women as differently abled than men, and failing to offer them the same means of self-improvement was the prime cause of gender inequality and of consequent social ills. But this could too easily be read as saying that women ought to be treated like men in order to be considered equally worthy members of society, and hence the accusations of misogyny. This charge was perhaps tied up with a more general suspicion by feminists of this period of eighteenth century, or Enlightenment, thinking which was seen to assert the pre-eminence of abstract reason over emotion, where reason was understood as the preserve of men and was associated with concepts such as universalism and autonomy that privileged a male-centred view of the world and made the female perspective more difficult to articulate.<sup>11</sup> While Wollstonecraft is most definitely a product of this time, it is now widely accepted both that attitudes to reason and the emotions were far more diverse and nuanced than this

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<sup>10</sup> Susan Gubar, (1994), "Feminist Misogyny: Mary Wollstonecraft and the Paradox of 'It Takes One to Know One'" *Feminist Studies* 20 (3):453-73, p. 454. Thomas H. Ford (2009), "Mary Wollstonecraft and the Motherhood of Feminism" *Women's Studies Quarterly* 37 3&4, 189-205.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Genevieve Lloyd (1984), *The Man of Reason: 'Male' and 'Female' in the Western World* (London: Routledge), Joan Landes (1988), *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press); Carole Pateman (1989), *The Disorder of Women* (Cambridge: Polity); Moira Gatens (1991), *Feminism and Philosophy: Perspectives on Difference and Equality*, (Cambridge: Polity).

simplified sketch allows, and that Wollstonecraft herself engaged confidently with its debates rather than merely being shaped by them.<sup>12</sup>

Until very recently Wollstonecraft's work was rarely read outside of gender studies and literature courses. This began to change in the 1990s. Virginia Sapiro's excellent study of Wollstonecraft's political theory, *A Vindication of Political Virtue*, was particularly influential in bringing her work to the attention of a more general audience of political scientists. The last two and a half decades have witnessed an intense scholarly attention on Wollstonecraft from many disciplines. Janet Todd's biography in 2000 and Barbara Taylor's examination of *Wollstonecraft and the Feminist Imagination* in 2003 were only two amongst several major books that increased awareness of Wollstonecraft's significance as a thinker to be engaged with.<sup>13</sup> Philosophers themselves, however, have come late to recognise the importance of Wollstonecraft within their own field. It is salutary to note, for example, that while there are a number of very good collections of essays written on Wollstonecraft, as far

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<sup>12</sup> These re-evaluations were made possible in no small measure thanks to the pioneering work done by the earlier feminists such as those listed above.

<sup>13</sup> Also of note is Wendy Gunther-Canada (2001), *Rebel Writer: Mary Wollstonecraft and Enlightenment Politics*, Northern Illinois University Press. More recent treatments include Susan Laird (2014), *Mary Wollstonecraft, Philosophical Mother of Co-Education*, London: Bloomsbury; and Lena Halldenius (2015), *Mary Wollstonecraft and Feminist Republicanism*. London: Pickering and Chatto. There has also been a wealth of journal articles written in the last ten years. Many are listed in the bibliography.



as we are aware, ours is the first to position itself specifically as a philosophical collection directed at themes within that discipline.<sup>14</sup>

Just as Wollstonecraft had many interests and engaged in numerous pursuits, from writing fiction to taking part in political debate, so she can be studied from many perspectives. While philosophical examination of her work is not the only way to capture her thought, it remains very much under-researched, and we believe it will prove to be a very fruitful means of bringing out some of the subtleties, tensions, and innovations we find in her writing. In adopting this approach, however, we are not simply ‘opening up the philosophical canon’ as it currently exists and inserting a woman. Rather, just as the work of feminists have altered philosophy as a discipline, thereby enabling women like Wollstonecraft to be recognised for their philosophical contribution, so Wollstonecraft’s recognition will, we hope, further broaden our understanding of the role women have played in the history of philosophy.

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<sup>14</sup> We do not mean to make too much of this claim. The superb *Feminist Interpretations of Mary Wollstonecraft* in the *Re-reading the Canon* series (1996, ed. Mary Falco, University Park, PA: University of Penn State Press), for example, orientates itself in the preface as a political science collection written by people in that field, while the *Cambridge Companion to Mary Wollstonecraft* (ed. Claudia Johnson, 2002, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) is in the *Companions to Literature* series. The division between disciplines such as philosophy, political science and literature is by no means rigid, of course. We are not making any specific claims about the content of these volumes so much as their positioning with relation to others working within those areas. Most of the contributors to this volume would identify as philosophers or are located in philosophy departments.

## **The Papers**

Our aim is to bring together a collection of essays that reflect the breadth of current leading philosophical research in Wollstonecraft's work. In just one volume, of course, we cannot hope to present a comprehensive account of her overall philosophy from a single standpoint. Instead, our contributors write from a variety of perspectives that demonstrate something of the diverse interest that there is in her thought. Regrettably, there is a great deal that we have had to leave out. With any historical philosopher, those who study her face the dilemma of deciding to what extent they examine her work contextually, as it engages with her own intellectual environment, compared with treating her ideas as freestanding contributions to a larger conversation that spans the generations and that may be applied to current issues. Our authors strike the balance between these two aspirations at different points.

The subjects addressed in this collection include the role played by Wollstonecraft's understanding of love and respect in her arguments on inequality (Sylvana Tomaselli), the conceptual relationship between friendship and marriage (Nancy Kendrick), the place of the emotions in the development of civic virtue (Martina Reuter), the relational nature of her conception of independence (Catriona Mackenzie), the application of her views on rights and duties to children and animals (Eileen Hunt Botting), and the influence of the abolitionist movement on her views on women as property (Laura Brace). Five of the contributors focus on one particular aspect of Wollstonecraft's political philosophy, namely her contribution to republican theory and, in particular, her use of its central ideal of freedom conceived of as the absence of domination or dependence. Philip Pettit gives a short introduction to Republicanism. This is followed by an examination of a specifically republican derivation of the concepts of rights in Wollstonecraft's discourse as powers to act (Susan James). The third article shows how we may derive a view of representation from her views on freedom and independence (Lena Halldenius), while the fourth looks at the role of public reason in

bringing about and maintaining individual and collective freedom (Alan Coffee). Sandrine Bergès then tackles Wollstonecraft's attempt to resolve the tensions between her conceptions of the duties of a republican woman as mother and as citizen. The volume is conclude by an afterword that provides a perspective on the previous five papers, reminding us that despite its clear contemporary relevance, Wollstonecraft's republicanism is very much a product of her times (Barbara Taylor).

We briefly introduce the volume's papers and themes below under three headings corresponding to Wollstonecraft's influences, her social and political philosophy generally, and finally her republicanism specifically.

## **1. Influences**

In-depth study of past philosophers often requires that we have some grasp of what their influences were. With male writers this task is often straightforward: we ask where they studied or who their mentors were, we look at records of their home libraries. But with writers like Wollstonecraft who had no access to formal higher education, and no family home in which she could house a large number of books, it is much harder. We must hunt for clues, such as in letters in which she comments on what she is currently reading, in the references she makes in her published works, and in the reviews she wrote for Johnson's *Analytical Review*. We may also make certain deductions about her education. We can assume, for instance that she did not read Greek as this was not generally taught to middle class girls and since she makes no reference to learning it herself. Nevertheless, it is clear that, in one way or another, the classics did influence her.

Although Plato's works were not translated into English until after her death, Wollstonecraft's friend and mentor Richard Price was a noted Platonist and others with

whom she engaged in debate were often trained classicists. Sylvana Tomaselli makes a convincing case for reading Wollstonecraft, not as an isolated crusader for equality, but as a writer who was very much part of her contemporary philosophical debates. While focussing on her intellectual relationships with Price and Burke, she makes it apparent that Wollstonecraft was in fact familiar with classical debates and arguments, tracing Wollstonecraft's famous attack on servility in relationships to Plato's *Symposium*. Tomaselli also suggests that the strong religious streak in Wollstonecraft's works, and the complex relationship between human love and divine love, are also a product of the pervasive presence of Platonism in her circle. The idea that the abstract form of love is somehow more important than actual instances of love goes some way towards explaining some of her attitudes to marriage, but as Tomaselli argues, it is also significant in her rejection of social models based on servility.

If we can be confident that Wollstonecraft only knew Plato at second hand, there is at least a possibility that she had read some Aristotle. *The Politics* had been translated into French in the late Middle-Ages and there was at least one English translation (attributed to the poet John Donne). There is also some evidence that she had read the *Politics*, as she criticises Burke for misinterpreting part of it.<sup>15</sup> Nancy Kendrick's chapter offers an Aristotelian interpretation of Wollstonecraft's conception of the virtues, and argues further that Wollstonecraft's discussion of marriage is best understood in terms of Aristotle's analysis of friendship. Kendrick shows that the capacity to develop Aristotelian virtue friendships has implications that go beyond marriage and into other kinds of relationships, such as the female friendships depicted in Wollstonecraft's novels. Ultimately, Kendrick

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<sup>15</sup> Nathalie .F. Taylor (2007), *The Rights of Woman as Chimera: The Political Philosophy of Mary Wollstonecraft*. New York and London: Routledge, p. 8.

argues, virtue friendship is the clue to women's development as full moral agents, thereby showing that Wollstonecraft's emphasis on marriage is not simply a worthwhile philosophical discussion in itself but an angle from which to approach more traditional questions in political philosophy.

Unlike Plato – who could only be read in Greek and perhaps Latin – and Aristotle – for whom only scarce and old translations could be found – the Stoics enjoyed a fair amount of popularity amongst the non-classically trained readers of the late eighteenth century. This was due in great part to Elizabeth Carter's best-selling translation of Epictetus' works into English. Though we have no direct evidence that Wollstonecraft had read this translation, it is not unlikely as one of the authors she regarded as a model, Catharine Macaulay, wrote approvingly of the Stoics, especially concerning their educational models. Martina Reuter examines Wollstonecraft's position on the relationship between reason and virtue. She works through eighteenth century discussions of stoicism, in particular Jonathan Swift's literary depiction of Stoic philosophy in *Gulliver's Travels*, arguing that Wollstonecraft Wollstonecraft's own analysis of the relationship between reason and the emotions (or passions), in which both are together necessary and sufficient for the development of virtue, shows a subtler take on Stoicism.

## **2. Social and Political Philosophy**

Until relatively recently, Wollstonecraft was most often read within a liberal framework of either as one of its representatives or as rebelling against some of the strictures it imposes.<sup>16</sup> So, where an earlier generation of feminists was especially critical of liberalism for its

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<sup>16</sup> Penny Weiss (2009), *Canon Fodder: Historical Women Political Thinkers*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, pp. 84-90.

perceived individualism, this concern was often read into Wollstonecraft's work.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, Wollstonecraft's evident emphasis on both individual liberty and strong values of egalitarian community built on mutual trust and commitment seemed difficult to reconcile. This has led commentators such as Penny Weiss to conclude that Wollstonecraft was struggling to "redefine liberalism itself."<sup>18</sup> Catriona Mackenzie's contribution takes on this challenge. Drawing on the ideal of freedom as independence, she shows how Wollstonecraft prefigures current debates in the field of relational autonomy. Mackenzie maps Wollstonecraft's analysis onto her own distinction in which two aspects to freedom are required, these being what she calls self-determination (the civic opportunity to determine the direction of one's own life) and self-government (the independence of mind to exercise competent and authentic critical self-reflection). Entwined with these, Mackenzie identifies a critical third element of self-authorisation, through which individuals are able to regard themselves as agents capable of self-determination and self-government. As Wollstonecraft shows, self-authorisation cannot be had without the authorisation of others through having sufficient social standing. To bring this about would require more than a mere set of political

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<sup>17</sup> For critical feminist accounts of liberalism that includes Wollstonecraft amongst its targets, see Alison Jaggar (1983), *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield; and Ruth Abbey (2009), "Back to the future: Marriage as Friendship in the Thought of Mary Wollstonecraft." *Hypatia*, 14 (3): 78–95. The relationship between the different varieties of feminism and liberalism is, of course, a complex one. In recent years there has been a fruitful dialogue between these approaches (For a helpful collection, see Amy Baehr (2004), *Varieties of Feminist Liberalism*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield).

<sup>18</sup> Penny Weiss, *Canon Fodder*, p. 90.

rights, for example. What would be needed is a comprehensive reworking of the systems of norms and practices that have entrenched their position of inequality.

Eileen Hunt Botting takes on less widely discussed aspects of Wollstonecraft's thought (children and animals) and present them in a contemporary context, arguing that we should look at Wollstonecraft's discussion of children and animal's rights in relationship not only to her contemporaries Immanuel Kant and Jeremy Bentham, but also to Onora O'Neill's classification of duties. Her resulting analysis of Wollstonecraft's discussion of rights and duties, and in particular of the indivisibility of sets of rights, casts light on recent debates in international human rights laws. This paper is a prime example of how discussing the themes presented in her works can have applications that reach beyond what Wollstonecraft originally intended.

If Wollstonecraft is partly ahead of her time in raising the issues of children and animals rights, references to slavery place her squarely within the republican debates of the eighteenth century. Political subjection, such as to an absolute monarch, was routinely described in the very same terms as the formal state of legal bondage, a position that had been adopted by advocates of women's rights since at least Astell.<sup>19</sup> This rhetoric is prominent in Wollstonecraft's work and pervades her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and the claim that women are always slaves in virtue of their inevitable social subordination to men's arbitrary power provides one of its central organising principles. Laura Brace explores this image, placing it in the context of the abolitionist debates of Wollstonecraft's own time

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<sup>19</sup> Astell famously asked why "if all men are born free, how is it that all women are born slaves?" (Patricia Springborg (ed.) (1996), "Reflections upon Marriage" in *Astell: Political Writings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 18).

concerning the legitimacy of owning property in a person. While slavery was viewed as a usurping of a person's natural right to freedom, freedom in turn was understood to make moral demands which neither women nor chattel slaves were capable of fulfilling. Brace shows how Wollstonecraft dissolves the tension between these strands through a radical view of property as having the potential to corrupt the moral and rational capacities not just of the victims of domination but of the whole of bourgeois society.

### 3. Republicanism

A significant development in the study of Wollstonecraft in recent years has been the growing appreciation of the impact her republican commitments had on her thinking. Although still often described as undergoing a revival, interest in republicanism as a field of political inquiry has become well established over the last two decades or more. Nevertheless, in the context of Wollstonecraft studies, it remains something of a newcomer. What the last five papers included in this volume show is that the philosophical implications of reading Wollstonecraft through a republican lens turn out to be far-reaching.

There has been no shortage of women described as republicans, especially in the eighteenth century. Women as intellectually and politically diverse as Mary Astell, Catharine Macaulay, Olympe de Gouges, and Sophie de Grouchy have, in different ways, drawn on that tradition's resources.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, the pool of sources from which today's neo-republican

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<sup>20</sup> As a committed royalist and High Church Tory, Astell would of course be horrified to be classed alongside republicans. She does, however, make extensive appeal to the principle of freedom as independence from arbitrary power, or domination, and in that sense she can be said to draw on a republican resource (Patricia Springborg (2005), *Mary Astell: Theorist of Freedom from Domination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). On the other writers



theorists draw has been resolutely male. From Livy to Machiavelli, and Harrington to Price, men exclusively have provided the authoritative voices that help define the core republican concepts. An obvious consequence of this has been to deprive republican theory of an alternative internal perspective to challenge and broaden its principles and focus. This not only leaves republican thinking impoverished but by excluding their voices and perspectives, exposes marginalised and minority group members to the very domination that it seeks to reduce. Especially vulnerable, of course, have been women who for so long were systematically excluded from the benefits of citizenship, deprived of any effective voice, and placed in a state of dependence on men. Given this patriarchal history and its traditionally masculine imagery and language in which citizenship has been seen in terms of hardy, self-reliant individuals capable of defending their country and unencumbered by the ties or cares of domestic life, it is not surprising that many feminists have been noticeably reticent about the republican project.<sup>21</sup>

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listed, see Karen Green, (2012) “Liberty and Virtue in Catherine Macaulay's Enlightenment Philosophy”. *Intellectual History Review*, 22 (3): 411-426; Sandrine Bergès (2015), “Sophie de Grouchy on the Cost of Domination in the *Letters on Sympathy* and *Two Anonymous Articles in Le Républicain*”. *Monist*, 98: 102-112; Karen Green discusses Olympe de Gouges in her (2015), *Political Ideas of Enlightenment Women*, chapter 9, “Anticipating and experiencing the Revolution in France”, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, especially pp. 374-84).

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Anne Phillips (2000), “Feminism and Republicanism: Is this a Plausible Alliance?” *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 8 (2): 279–93 and Carole Pateman (2007), “Why Republicanism?” *Basic Income Studies*, 2 (2): 1–6. In recent years, there has been the beginning of a rapprochement between feminism and republicanism. In addition to several of

Wollstonecraft herself was forthright in her criticism of these patriarchal and masculinist characteristics. If they were essential aspects of republican theory, then it would indeed be difficult to count her amongst its number. But they are not. What is at stake when the term ‘republican’ is applied in this volume is not a set of practices or cultural values, but rather a structure of political argument based around a distinctive notion of what it means to be free. In today’s language, Republicans understand freedom as ‘non-domination’ following Philip Pettit, although most of the contributors here describe this as ‘independence’, following Wollstonecraft’s own use. Non-domination, or independence, represents a condition of full membership of a community in which one enjoys an equal protection against threats of domination understood as the arbitrary exercise of power. Domination, or dependence, is considered slavery. Since freedom is a fundamental moral and political concept, once its meaning has been established the effects will ripple through the way that a range of other concepts and values are understood such as equality, virtue, the nature of rights, meaning of citizenship, and the relationship between individual and society.

The last five contributors of this volume all discuss aspects of historical republicanism. Philip Pettit outlines the philosophical idea of non-domination as it is used in present-day discourse, detailing some of the issues at stake and showing how that idea differs from the more widely-understood notion of freedom as an absence of intentional interference. Pettit’s contribution thus helps show how the discussions of Wollstonecraft as a republican thinker fit within more recent debates. Susan James then takes up the question of what Wollstonecraft understands by rights within a republican context. Although best known for her book entitled *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, rights themselves appear noticeably

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the contributors to this volume, see Cécile Laborde (2008), *Critical Republicanism: The Hijab Controversy and Political Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

absent from its actual concerns. James shows this appearance to be misleading by reconnecting Wollstonecraft with an older strand of republican tradition that views rights as effective powers to act. While this thought is prominent in the Dutch republicanism of Spinoza, for example, it has rarely if ever been discussed in Wollstonecraft whose heritage is typically seen as the English natural law republicans, such as Algernon Sidney and John Locke. James acknowledges the influence of both and works through the tensions that emerge as a result.

However they are defined, rights are always exercised within the context of a system of law. Republicans consider the law to be properly formulated, and therefore legitimate, only where it is required always to operate for the common good. Implicit in this concept is an idea of representation in which each of our interests can be said to be reflected and embodied in the structures and institutions of society as a whole. Wollstonecraft nowhere sets out a view of what she understands 'representation' to entail and so Lena Halldenius pieces her uses together. This reveals a critical position that is trenchantly opposed to defining a unified representative interest of a population based on the perspectives of its elite. Taking 'political society as it is', rather than in a state of idealised harmony, Wollstonecraft argues for an inclusive and egalitarian approach in which it is with the common people rather than the elite that we start. There is no assumed unity of interests but rather each group, including women and the working classes, add their perspective directly in the deliberations of government.

There remains the question of how the interests, values, and ideas of all citizens can be heard and fairly considered. Alan Coffee shows that at least part of Wollstonecraft's answer lies in the spirit in which public debate is conducted. We can only be sure of being represented adequately in a virtuous society, which at the minimum requires a collective capacity and commitment to act rationally according to the best reasons. Where individuals are not represented politically or in the laws and institutions of the society, they are

dependent. According to Wollstonecraft, dependence is a corrosive state that corrupts the virtue of both dominator and dominated alike. Once it gains a foothold, this corruption has a tendency to spread, weakening everyone's freedom alike. Equal political representation for all, then, is not only a moral imperative but is also a practical one, being one of the necessary conditions of a free state.

In her contribution, Sandrine Bergès draws links between Wollstonecraft's thought and that of a French contemporary whom Wollstonecraft almost certainly did not read (although the two may have met), the republican thinker Sophie de Grouchy. Bergès argues that together, these writers help reconcile republican ideals of motherhood with political participation for women. Her contribution focuses on one aspect of female participation that historically has often been associated with women: caring for infants and children. Bergès shows that, while Wollstonecraft denies that women should be mothers in order to achieve citizenship (because citizenship is based on civic virtue and virtue is gender-neutral), she explicitly affirms that mothers who do not nurse do not deserve the title of citizen. Even on our best reading, it is not clear that these strands can be reconciled. Bergès looks for a solution in de Grouchy's writings on sympathy, and particularly in the claim that all that is needed to give infants the moral impetus they need to become virtuous citizens is physical closeness with one individual, but not necessarily a mother.

In highlighting Wollstonecraft's republican background, it is not the intention of any of the contributors to label Wollstonecraft, or to attempt to place artificial limits on her philosophy. In her paper, for example, Susan James shows Wollstonecraft to be drawing on both classical republican ideas and a natural law tradition characteristic of liberal thought in developing her own arguments about rights. While Barbara Taylor is appreciative of the benefits of reading Wollstonecraft in republican terms, she offers a reminder against the temptation to freeze any writer into any particular canon. Representing Wollstonecraft as a

‘modern philosopher’ with diverse and shifting interests inspired by numerous sources, Taylor highlights two other influences that should not be neglected: her womanhood and her strong religious commitment. Religion and republicanism are not easily separated in the eighteenth century, of course. Many of Wollstonecraft own dissenting sect, such as Richard Price, can rightly be regarded as Protestants and republicans in equal measure even if philosophers today have often tended to downplay the theological dimension. This much said, it is the unique appreciation of the female experience that Wollstonecraft brought to the male-dominated debates she entered for which she is most celebrated. In aligning her with the masculinist tradition of republicanism, great care must be taken not to overshadow her feminist concerns, or the feminist tradition that was to follow. As Taylor reminds us, “feminism is not like other sorts of politics; it’s the personal made political, it’s politics with a sexual difference”, something she asks us to keep in mind “when we read Mary Wollstonecraft, and hear the echoes of her ideas in twenty-first century Britain”.