

Though Barbour does pay brief attention to incidents of violence, on the whole, Winnipeg Beach is surrounded by a rather romantic wistfulness for the “good old days.” Indeed for many whose histories are told in *Winnipeg Beach*, it will forever remain the place where summer romances blossomed into marriages, lifelong friendships were forged, and familial ties were solidified. This study will find readers from across historical fields. Historians of travel, tourism, and leisure, as well as those who study gender, sexuality, and the environment will discover much about the social and cultural histories of Winnipeg Beach.

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CONWAY, Alison – *The Protestant Whore: Courtesan Narrative and Religious Controversy in England, 1680-1750*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010. Pp. 291.

Alison Conway’s study shows the figure of the royal courtesan to be a primary cultural signifier in England’s efforts to resolve the political and religious instabilities that manifested in the late seventeenth century. The “Protestant Whore,” in addition to being Nell Gwyn’s self-appointed moniker, is a conceptual social category through which writers imagined an ethical system separate from the interests that corrupted most other subject positions. The legacy of the Protest Whore maintains this self-sufficient integrity, Conway argues, throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, where we see literary texts and cultural debates invoke the English royal courtesan as an entity with a special capacity to opt out of the passionate discourses of throne and Church, the corruptions of aristocratic masculinity, and the normativity of domestic ideology. The great many strengths of this study include Conway’s innovative approach to period distinctions between “Restoration” and “eighteenth-century;” her emphasis on the role of gender in shoring up political legitimacy and narrative authority; and her coining of the formal category “courtesan narrative,” a thread of the novel’s origins that looks not forward to a domestic modernity but backward to a ribald cultural past in order to formulate concepts such as sovereignty, authority, and religion.

Conway richly reconstitutes the period’s textual debates over religion and politics, and begins each chapter by documenting the recurring figure of the courtesan before turning to literary texts that internalize the figure’s privileged perspective on individual, community, church, King, and God, relationships that were most explicitly questioned during the late seventeenth century but remained of the utmost importance: “Characterizations of the Restoration as a form of political and sexual pathology speak . . . to the issues immediately at hand for eighteenth-century authors, who continued to struggle with dissent, doubt, and aggression” (p. 7). Courtesan narratives persist through mid-century, which sees the last of the Jacobite rebellions and, for Conway, the waning urgency of the questions of cultural legitimacy associated with state politics.

The Protestant Whore moves chronologically from Restoration to mid-century, attending equally to political and literary events that shaped authors’ perspectives. Vividly documenting the textual wars over succession, religious tolerance, Charles II’s sexual

conduct, and Monmouth's claims to the throne, Conway's first two chapters reveal the royal courtesan in all her signifying power—as Catholic interloper in English governance, as victim of monarchical neglect, as mother of legitimate heir to the throne. Gwyn emerges as a folk-heroine in a sea of corruption, “a Protestant vaginal antidote to the Catholic distemper” represented by Charles' treasonous French mistresses (p. 36). Driven by erotic and material interests, Gwyn's professional sexuality “renders her impervious to political corruption, a court agent whose integrity the nation might trust because of, not despite, her sexual character” (p. 37). The Protestant Whore—an abstraction of this ethical sexuality—migrates from the explicit association with Gwyn in political satire to a position of narrative authority in contemporary whore dialogues, and later in fiction by Behn, Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding. Behn's *Love-Letters*, as the second chapter shows, draws on this female authority to pit the historical sensibility of woman-author and heroine against the shifting loyalties of male aristocrats and literary characters implicated in the Monmouth affair. Further, the courtesan-heroine Silvia focalizes a skepticism regarding providential design in political affairs, voicing Behn's concern “about religious factionalism and the role played by personal belief . . . in political narratives,” an urgent set of questions that had not yet been given resolution by the arrival of William III when Behn was writing (p. 78).

The historical acumen Conway recognizes in Behn's narrative practice is in many ways the anchor for the readings of later novels. In the last two chapters, Conway locates the authority of the Protestant Whore in men's writing, where, while abstracted from a purely feminine authority, the associations between the courtesan and a Restoration past allow authors to envision present social change. Conway's discussion of Defoe's *Roxana* shows the liveliest manifestation of the Protestant Whore after the turn of the century. Emphasizing Roxana's last two non-marital affairs in Restoration court circles, Conway explains her enclosure in royal apartments as the start of a “claustrophobic entrapment” that ends in marriage, where she surrenders her former cosmopolitan and economic agency (p. 130). Henceforth, her daughter Susan exerts the narrative privilege of Protestant Whore but with normative ends, pursuing Roxana's maternal recognition and “demonstrat[ing] the long reach of domestic ideology” (p. 138). The complex narrative synthesis of the Protestant Whore's ethics with normative femininity undercuts “the integrity of the conventional moral wisdom served up intermittently” and demonstrates Defoe's skepticism that ethical, economic, and social forms of agency can be treated separately (p. 139). Conway also locates this narrative position in *Clarissa* and *Tom Jones*, where the cultural status quo that entraps novelistic characters is rejected. Clarissa's singularity is defined against female collectives—prostitutes and aristocrats—who do nothing to help her. The novel powerfully “overrides the sanction against suicide” as a response to the rape, and Clarissa so radically rejects earthly moral systems and social groupings that she “brings us to the brink of the courtesan's amorality and the iconoclasm of the Protest Whore” (p. 159). Fielding and his hero emerge as “latter-day courtesans” whose aesthetic sensibilities resist modern hegemony. Tom's “whoring” of himself to Lady Bellaston resurrects the indifference of the Protestant Whore to questions of reputation and so mobilizes the “courtesan's lawlessness” as the artistic potential to be exploited in novels (p. 171).

The Protestant Whore is shown palpably to inhabit novelist plots, and to provide the critical voice through which English identity is examined in European and domestic contexts. So complex are the cultural threads woven together that, as I found in the discussion of *The Secret History of Queen Zarah*, the conceptual pattern is occasionally difficult to discern from within the textual example. (In this instance, which examined the reigns of Queens Mary and Anne, the homosocial relation between monarch and “female favorite” more implicitly invoked the sexualized agency that so clearly distinguishes related figures in other chapters.) If one has unanswered curiosities, they look past the book’s remarkably disciplined focus. *The Protestant Whore* may inspire future work that looks at the looser implications of this culturally resilient figure. Does her narrative authority extend to prostitutes imagined in the eighteenth-century present, such as Moll Hackabout, Fanny Hill, or the workers in Mandeville’s public stews? Conway’s meticulous demonstration of the Protestant Whore’s textual ghostliness invites us to consider her influence on her less rarified contemporaries in the literary and material worlds.

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CRAIG, Béatrice, Maxime DAGENAIS, Lisa ORNSTEIN et Guy DUBAY – *The Land in Between: The Upper St. John Valley, Prehistory to World War I*. Gardiner (Maine), Tilbury House Publishers, 2009, 464 p.

Tout au long de sa longue et fructueuse carrière, l’historienne Béatrice Craig s’est consacrée d’abord et avant tout à l’histoire de la Vallée du fleuve Saint-Jean au Nouveau-Brunswick. Elle a toutefois dépassé le concept classique de l’histoire régionale en englobant celui de la frontière. C’est ainsi qu’elle reconstitue patiemment l’histoire de la population francophone du nord-ouest du Nouveau-Brunswick et du Maine, avant et un peu après le traité Webster-Ashburton de 1842. Dans ses travaux antécédents, Craig s’est concentrée surtout sur des problématiques relatives à l’histoire sociale et économique. Son plus récent essai, *Homespun Capitalists* (2009) se voulait en quelque sorte la consécration ou la synthèse définitive de ses travaux.

Mais le projet *The Land in Between* en est plutôt un de synthèse d’histoire de la frontière Nouveau-Brunswick / Maine puisqu’il aborde à peu près tous les aspects de ce genre d’ouvrage. Précisons qu’il s’agit ici du volume I, en attendant le II, *The Land Divided*, qui débutera avec la Première Guerre mondiale. *The Land in Between* est donc divisé en quatre parties totalisant 26 chapitres et une bibliographie d’une vingtaine de pages. Soulignons la grande richesse des aides visuelles qui se chiffrent à 164, incluant graphiques, tableaux, cartes et illustrations. L’usage des encadrés est judicieux et permet de se familiariser avec des personnages et des événements importants, quoique moins développés dans le texte principal. Ce livre vise trois objectifs : être une synthèse historique d’intérêt général pour le grand public; être un livre de référence pour les professionnels tels les enseignants, les libraires, les archivistes et le personnel de musée; finalement, encourager d’autres chercheurs à poursuivre des travaux sur l’histoire de cette région.