

# BIBLIOGRAPHY: WOMEN AND MEDICINE

This will be the last bibliography on "Women and Medicine" to appear in *Medieval Feminist Forum*. Since I started publishing these 14 years ago, the field has grown rich enough that it is now becoming a major amount of work to keep preparing these periodic summaries. Henceforth, I will post a cumulative bibliography, condensed into a single alphabetical list (by author) onto a personal webpage at Arizona State University. Look for announcements of this soon. Note also that students and researchers can consult *Feminae: Medieval Women and Gender Index* under relevant topic headings. <http://www.haverford.edu/library/reference/mschaus/mfi/mfi.html>.

For earlier bibliography on women and medicine, see *MFF* (formerly, *MFN*) 10 (Fall 1990), 23-24; 11 (Spring 1991), 25-26; 13 (Spring 1992), 32-34; 15 (Spring 1993), 42-43; 19 (Spring 1995), 39-42; 21 (Spring 1996), 39-41; 26 (Fall 1998), 8-11; 30 (Fall 2000), 44-49; 32 (Fall 2001), 50-53; and 35 (Spring 2003), 19-23.

Baumgarten, Elisheva. *Mothers and Children: Jewish Family Life in Medieval Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004). From the publisher's blurb: "Elisheva Baumgarten draws on a rich trove of primary sources to give a full portrait of medieval Jewish family life during the period of childhood from birth to the beginning of formal education at age seven.... [covers] nearly every aspect of home life and childrearing, including pregnancy, midwifery, birth and initiation rituals, nursing, sterility, infanticide, remarriage, attitudes toward mothers and fathers, gender hierarchies, divorce, widowhood, early education, and the place of children in the home, synagogue, and community."

Biller, Peter. "Medicine and Heresy," in Peter Biller and Joseph Ziegler, eds., *Religion and Medicine in the Middle Ages*, York Studies in Medieval Theology, 3 (York: York Medieval Press, 2001), 155-74. Biller surveys the evidence for medical practice among Waldensian and Cathar communities in southern France in the thirteenth century. Biller finds evidence for a total of about 18 female practitioners: three *medice*, two barbers, five hospital workers, one *divinatrix*, and seven women who are clearly practicing medicine but have no formal title attached to their names. Biller notes how these patterns of practice (1) show women as a higher percentage of all practitioners (about one-fourth) than other sources that have been used by medical prosopographers, and (2) that medical practice seems to have been a more characteristic feature of Waldensian spirituality than of Cathar, in large part, apparently, because of differing attitudes towards the body.

Bodarwé, Katrinette. "Pflege und Medizin in mittelalterlichen Frauenkonventen" [Care and Medicine in Medieval Nunneries], *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 37 (2002), 231-263. Summary: "If one looks for medical knowledge in medieval monasteries ("Klostermedizin"), the name of Hildegard of Bingen immediately comes to mind. However, it is rarely considered that medieval nunneries had very different social conditions compared to those of their male counterparts: they had different rules, stricter enclosure and few opportunities for education. Therefore we cannot assume that medicine had the same significance in women's as in men's monasteries. A look at the libraries and surviving manuscript collections of nunneries shows that there was very little interest in medical topics. An examination of the few known sources on medically active nuns reveals similar problems. Although some communities supported their own hospitals, the nuns did not generally nurse the ill and poor themselves. This holds also true [*sic*], in general, for beguines and sisters of the hospitallers. Most of the monasteries had an infirmary for sick and aged sisters of their own communities, but in serious cases a male doctor was usually called. In sum, there is little evidence that medieval nuns were occupied with medical studies. Hildegard of Bingen has to be regarded as an exception."

Bosselmann-Cyran, Kristian. "Gynäkologie und sexualkundliche Fachterminologie in 15. Jahrhundert. Deutsch als Wissenschaftsprache in einer Tabuzone," in *Mittelalter und Moderne: Entdeckung und Rekonstruktion der mittelalterlichen Welt. Kongressakten des 6. Symposiums des Mediävistenverbandes in Bayreuth 1995*, ed. Peter Segl (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1997), 149-60. Bosselmann-Cyran (B-C) compares the terminology used for the reproductive organs, the sexual act, and menstruation in two later

15th-century German translations of the pseudo-Albertus Magnus *Secreta mulierum*. He finds significant differences as these two translators attempt to find, or create, an appropriate vocabulary in German as they translate from the Latin. Less convincingly, B-C attempts to argue that these translations were made with the intent of transmitting the Latin learning of the universities to midwives. (B-C does not mention it, but none of the 30-plus manuscripts of these two texts offer any evidence for female ownership; both translations, in fact, address male readers and all known owners are male.) B-C is right, however, to note that texts such as these increased the reliance of regular households on the services of physicians.

Bratsch-Prince, Dawn. "A Queen's Task: Violant de Bar and the Experience of Royal Motherhood in Fourteenth-Century Aragon," *La Corónica* 27, no. 1 (1998), 21-34. Not yet seen.

Caballero-Navas, Carmen. "The Hebrew Production on Women's Healthcare in the Mediterranean West at the End of the Middle Ages," *Wellcome History*, issue 22 (February 2003), ISSN 1477-4860, 5-6. This work-in-progress note summarizes Caballero-Navas's earlier work on the *Sefer ahavat nashim* [Book of Women's Love], which deals with magic, sexuality, cosmetics, gynecology and obstetrics. She also briefly describes her current project, a study of a hitherto unedited text called *Sha'ar ha-nashim* [Women's Chapter], a brief gynecological text found in a unique manuscript, as well as her future work on recipes attributed to women.

Faraone, Christopher. "New Light on Ancient Greek Exorcisms of the Wandering Womb," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 144 (2003), 189-197. Discusses five such exorcistic texts: a 1c. BCE-1c. CE amulet from Beirut, a 3-4c. recipe in a papyrus handbook, a 4c. lead amulet from West Deeping, England, a 6-7c. papyrus amulet, and a 7-11c. Aramaic recipe from the Cairo Genizah.

Green, Monica H. "Childbirth and Infancy" and "Gynecology," in *Dictionary of the Middle Ages. Supplement I*, William C. Jordan, editor-in-chief (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2004), 108-13 and 249-53, respectively. These two general overviews (which include representative illustrations) may be useful in teaching survey classes.

———. "Masses in Remembrance of 'Seynt Susanne': A Fifteenth-Century Spiritual Regimen," *Notes & Queries* n. s. 50, no. 4 (December 2003), 380-84. Edits a brief Middle English "prayer regimen" from London, British Library, MS Sloane 249. Argues that this "regimen" was adapted, with significant elaborations, from an Anglo-Norman source. Although the regimen is nominally meant to protect any person who performs it (or the person for whom it is performed by another) from various kinds of harm, the regimen's placement here with an English gynecological text (the only other work in the original manuscript) suggests its specific use as a protection against harm in childbirth.

Guardiola, Ginger Lee. "Within and Without: The Social and Medical Worlds of the Medieval Midwife, 1000-1500," Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Colorado at Boulder, 2002. Dissertation Abstracts International, #049394768. Although not engaged with the latest work on the history of midwifery or women's medical practice, this study presents a useful survey of a range of otherwise hard-to-access primary sources.

Kim, Susan. "Bloody Signs: Circumcision and Pregnancy in the Old English *Judith*," *Exemplaria* 11, no. 2 (1999), 285-307. Not yet seen.

Larson, Wendy R. "Who is the Master of This Narrative? Maternal Patronage of the Cult of St. Margaret," in *Gendering the Master Narrative: Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, ed. Mary C. Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 94-104. Explores aspects of the cult of Saint Margaret, suggesting that women may have resisted clerical attempts to control or suppress the cult.

Lee, Becky R. "Men's Recollections of a Women's Rite: Medieval English Men's Recollections Regarding the Rite of the Purification of Women after Childbirth," *Gender and History* 14 (2002), 224-41. Using the same legal proceedings as employed in her earlier study of men's recollections of the event of childbirth, English "proof-of-age inquests"

(see *MTF* 34), Lee here explores the more public event of churching. She finds that churching was not simply a women's celebration, but also a moment when men could celebrate their fertility and lineage. Because Lee is here limiting her analysis to a single type of source, we do not learn much about the nature of these feasts. For a richer study of the material investments surrounding birth, readers may wish to compare Lee's work with that of Jacqueline Musacchio on northern Italy (see *MTF* 30, 47), which Lee does not cite. It should also be noted that much of Lee's general depiction of the rite of purification comes from early modern sources, implying (questionably, to my mind) that there is a simple continuity in women's practices.

McCracken, Peggy. *The Curse of Eve, the Wound of the Hero: Blood, Gender, and Medieval Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003). Surveying French literature for ways in which blood in its many forms is discussed, McCracken argues that women's blood (menstruation, lochia flow, etc.) is generally devalued, while that of men (spilled on the battlefield, especially) is valued much more positively.

Miramon, Charles de. "Déconstruction et reconstruction du tabou de la femme menstruée (XII-XIIIe siècle)," in *Kontinuitäten und Zäsuren in der Europäischen Rechtsgeschichte: Europäisches Forum Junger Rechtshistorikerinnen und Rechtshistoriker, München 22-24 Juli 1998* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 79-107. De Miramon examines the views of several 12th- and 13th-century canonists on notions of pollution in relation to whether menstruating and postpartal women should be allowed entrance into church.

———. "La fin d'un tabou? L'interdiction de communier pour la femme menstruée au moyen âge. Le cas du XII siècle," in *Le sang au moyen âge*, ed. Marcel Faure, *Cahiers du CRISMA*, 4 (Montpellier: CRISMA, 1999), 163-81.

Montero Cartelle, Enrique and María Cruz Herrero Ingelmo. "Las *Interrogaciones in cura sterilitatis* en el marco de la literatura médica medieval," *Faventia* 25, no. 2 (2003), 85-97. Another in Montero's series of critical editions of medieval Latin texts on sexuality and fertility. This work, "Interrogations for the Treatment of Sterility," briefly lists 41 factors that the physician needs to assess in determining the possible causes of infertility. (For example, is she old or young? Has she been with this husband for a long time?) Although the editors don't discuss this, the text is intriguing in that it is written for interrogation of the woman.

Moulinier, Laurence, ed. *Beate Hildegardis Cause et cure*, *Rarissima mediaevalia*, 1 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003). At last, a truly definitive edition of the *Cause et cure* [Causes and Cures], a medical and cosmological text attributed to Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179). This beautifully produced volume (complete with three ribbons to mark your place!) sets a standard towards which all editions should strive: one apparatus of rejected manuscript readings (the work is known in only one complete copy, plus one fragment); another suggesting parallels or possible sources in other medieval texts; and a third identifying parallels in other works in Hildegard's corpus. Through her painstaking research (all editorial material is in French), Moulinier is able to show that, rather than presenting an autochthonic Urmedicine of the "folk," this work is deeply indebted to the learned medical and scientific traditions of her day. Most importantly, Moulinier argues persuasively that although it was clearly composed on a foundation of authentically Hildegardian material, the *Cause et cure* as we have it today represents further elaborations made after Hildegard's death.

Narbona-Cárceles, María. "Woman at Court: A Prosopographic Study of the Court of Carlos III of Navarre (1387-1425)," *Medieval Prosopography* 22 (2001), 31-64. Although not directly concerned with medicine, this entry shows how widely conceived projects on women's history can enrich the study of women and medicine. By searching systematically for *all* women, of whatever class, who were associated with Carlos's court (which was an incredibly fecund household—in all, 41 wetnurses are identified!), Narbona-Cárceles was able to find evidence for three midwives. Interestingly, they all seem to have been "imported" into the household: one, apparently Christian, came from Toledo or Burgos, while the two others were Muslim (both from Toledo). Narbona-

Cárceles also finds evidence of a woman, apparently Christian, who was called in to cure Princess Isabel of an eye disease and another woman, resident in the household, who was called a “caretaker” (*cuidadora*).

Park, Katharine. “Dissecting the Female Body: From Women’s Secrets to the Secrets of Nature,” in Jane Donawerth and Adele Seeff, eds., *Crossing Boundaries: Attending to Early Modern Women* (Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 2000), 29-47. This is a preview of a larger study that Park is currently preparing on the origins of regularized anatomical dissection in the late medieval period. Tracing images of female subjects of anatomical dissection (including Nero’s dissection of his own mother), Park suggests that increasing curiosity about female anatomy was a driving force in the development of late medieval anatomy, culminating in Vesalius’s 1543 *Fabric of the Human Body*, which notably presents a female cadaver on its frontispiece.

Pierce, Joanne. “‘Green Women’ and Blood Pollution: Some Medieval Rituals for the Churching of Women after Childbirth,” *Studia Liturgica* 29 (1999), 191-215. Reviews late antique, medieval, and early modern rituals of churching, focusing primarily for the latter two periods on English evidence. Pierce’s work should be read in conjunction with that of Paula Rieder (see previous entries in *MFF*) and Becky Lee (see above).

Rawcliffe, Carole. “Women, Childbirth, and Religion in Later Medieval England,” in *Women and Religion in Medieval England*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 91-117. This is a wonderfully comprehensive, richly documented essay that surveys the role of religion in childbirth practices in 15th- and 16th-century England. (Although Rawcliffe employs some evidence from earlier centuries, her coverage of them is not systematic.) Topics covered include attitudes toward pain in childbirth as a necessary penance for Eve’s sin; death in childbirth; purification; and the use of charms and the veneration of saints for aid in fertility and deliverance. Includes six illustrations. This would be an excellent source to use in the classroom.

Reynaert, Joris. “*Der vrouwen heimelijcheit* als secundaire bron in de Zuid-Nederlandse bewerking van de *Chirurgia Magna* van Lanfranc van Milaan,” in *Verslagen en Mededelingen van de Koninklijke academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 111, no. 1 (2001), 165-188. Reynaert shows that a mid-fourteenth-century Dutch translation of the pseudo-Albertus Magnus *Secreta mulierum*, called *Der vrouwen heimelijcheit* [On the secret of women], was selectively incorporated into the Dutch rendition of Lanfranc of Milan’s *Chirurgia magna* [Great Surgery].

Schmugge, Ludwig. “Im Kindbett gestorben: Ein kanonistisches Problem im Alltag des 15. Jhdts.,” in *Grundlagen des Rechts. Festschrift für Peter Landau zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. R. M. Helmholz, P. Mikat, et al. (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schönigh, 2000), 467-76. Looking at a collection of petitions sent to the Vatican, Schmugge finds requests from the inhabitants of two small German towns (both in the diocese of Mainz) to be allowed to bury women with dead fetuses still inside them in consecrated ground. Schmugge examines earlier canon law collections and finds that there was, in fact, no injunction that such women had to be buried outside the cemetery, but the practice (or at least the fear that the practice might be enforced) lived on.

Signori, Gabriela. “Defensivgemeinschaften: Kreißende, Hebammen und ‘Mitweiber’ im Spiegel spätmittelalterlicher Geburtswunder,” *Das Mittelalter* 1 (1996), 113-34. Surveys late medieval German miracle stories, finding a common motif of children being born dead (thus lost to Salvation) who are then miraculously revived just long enough to be baptized.

Wright, Michael J. “Anglo-Saxon Midwives,” *American Notes and Queries* 11, no. 1 (1998), 3-5. Wright finds that the two specific Anglo-Saxon words for “midwife” (*byrþþinene* and *byrððinenu*) seem to be simply translating the Latin *obstetrix*, “(female) attendant on childbirth.” Neither form survived into Middle English, where the term “midwife” has not been documented earlier than ca. 1300. Wright concludes that this absence may suggest the non-existence of specialized practitioners in the field. (I reached the same conclusion, from Continental evidence, in Monica H. Green, “Documenting Medieval Women’s Medical Practice,” in *Practical Medicine from*

*Salerno to the Black Death*, eds. Luis García-Ballester, Roger French, Jon Arrizabalaga, and Andrew Cunningham [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994], 322-52.)

Zimmermann, Karin. "Ein unbekannter Textzeuge der *Secreta mulierum* und *Trotula*-Übersetzung des Johannes Hartlieb in Cod. Pal. germ. 280," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum* 131 (2002), 343-45. On the discovery of the missing portion of manuscript of Hartlieb's 15th-century German *Secreta mulierum* and *Trotula* translations, hitherto known only from a fragment of the table of contents (Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cpg 116, an. 1528). This is a rather late manuscript, however, and is unlikely to tell us much that we did not already know about the development of these two German texts.

