

in combat, sexual harassment by officers, the abandoning of wounded soldiers, the prevalence of the secret police near the front lines, and the popular image of female soldiers as simply camp followers will surely be of interest to military historians.

A Revolution of Their Own has been thoughtfully edited and attractively produced. Even this reviewer, an admittedly old-fashioned political historian of the male type, found the essays enjoyable and informative. They will be of particular interest to persons studying the comparative history of women's experience in Europe and to students of twentieth-century Russia.

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A. James Hammerton — *Cruelty and Companionship: Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Married Life*. New York: Routledge, 1992; 1995. Pp. xi, 236.

The paperback re-issue of James Hammerton's study of marital conflict in nineteenth-century England brings a rich and important study to a wider audience. This study moves well beyond the most sensational and well-known cases of marital conflict — such as Caroline Norton's case — to illuminate the diverse experiences of both men and women across the social spectrum. The range of Hammerton's sources is impressive. He moves confidently from the newspaper accounts of cases in the Preston Police Court to John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* to autobiographies, fiction, and prescriptive literature, as well as debates in the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Westminster Review*. The richest and most illuminating sources for his study, however, are the cases that came before the new Divorce Court after the *Matrimonial Causes Act* of 1857. Hammerton's analysis of individual cases allows him to uncover the complex and competing causes of marital conflict and marital breakdown and the ways in which those conflicts and breakdowns were shaped by and in turn helped to shape class and gender ideologies in Victorian England.

Hammerton's main goal in the book is to complicate our understanding of the supposed shift which took place during this period, from a "patriarchal" to a "companionate" model of marriage. While Hammerton agrees that, broadly speaking, it is possible to trace a shift towards a more companionate model, at least at the level of prescriptive ideology, he is adamant that historians must recognize the ways in which inequality and patriarchal power were recuperated within the companionate model of marriage. The companionate and patriarchal models of marriage, he argues, were not opposites: they co-existed in uneasy tension. At the same time, he does trace a significant shift over the course of the century, as concerns over the regulation and modification of male behaviour gradually displaced earlier injunctions to women to "suffer and be still".

The first part of the book explores conflict within working-class marriages and focuses on cases of domestic violence. In this discussion, Hammerton is at pains to point out both the limitations of the sources available and the political context in which the debates over (working-class) domestic violence emerged. He notes, for

example, that records of convictions for violent assault — which suggest a significant decline, especially toward the end of the century — are not a reliable indicator of levels of violence, as magistrate's courts increasingly took on a more paternalistic role, aiming at reconciliation rather than conviction. He also notes that both reporters and reformers tended to obscure the incidence of wife-assault among the better-off artisans and the middle class. The judicious use of case studies not only reveals the complexities of these cases, but also points to broader patterns. The case of Robert Knowles, for example, a butcher from Preston who “kicked his wife to death” in 1888, is used to illustrate the incidence of domestic violence within respectable artisanal culture, to trace the ways in which women's “provocation” of their husbands became an issue in the courts, and to provide insights into the reshaping of working-class masculinity.

The sources for the study of middle-class family life are rather richer, especially after the passage of the 1857 *Divorce Act* which widened the possibilities for both separation and divorce. Here again, Hammerton stresses the ways in which the Divorce Courts were as much in the business of regulating marital behaviour as they were in providing assistance to wronged spouses. His careful tracing of the laws governing “marital cruelty” reveals the ways in which uniquely middle-class expectations around gender roles, respectability, and household structure shaped many of these marital breakdowns. Wives, for example, focused on their husbands' failures as breadwinners, while husbands could exploit the presence of servants in the home to humiliate their wives and subvert their authority in the household. The case of *Kelly v. Kelly*, heard in 1869 and 1870, illustrates these complicated dynamics. Frances Kelley petitioned for a judicial separation from her husband James, an Anglican vicar in Liverpool, on the grounds of cruelty. The case set a new legal precedent, expanding the definition of marital cruelty beyond the earlier focus on physical violence. James Kelley's financial incompetence, his interference in the running of the household, his elevation of a young servant to a position of authority over his wife, and his “neurotic obsession with his authority” (p. 99) are all linked in crucial ways to larger debates over conjugal behaviour more generally and to the “prescriptions, criticisms and ideals that informed the Victorian discourse on marriage” (p. 101).

One result of the new Divorce Courts, Hammerton argues, was to open a new window on marital discord that helped to reconfigure debates on marriage by the end of the century. The ordinary women who brought cases for assault or divorce to the courts are thus granted a significant role in reshaping public debates and public policy. Hammerton also emphasizes the contradictory results of reform campaigns — feminist and otherwise — and concludes that the ironic result of campaigns against male violence and cruelty was to preserve male authority “by making it more palatable” (p. 164). In campaigns against the violence of working-class men, the solutions offered to cure the “patriarchal excesses” of violent husbands often required “a more thorough commitment to respectable family values”, thus reinforcing the very structures of inequality which produced violence in the first instance (p. 33). Within the middle class, the effort to “domesticate” masculinity often led to the increased involvement of men in home and family life, but it could also provide a new arena for more subtle forms of domination by husbands and fathers. These con-

traditions and ironies return the reader to Hammerton's central claim: that, while it is possible to trace the "progressive weakening of the old paradigm of religiously sanctioned patriarchal authority", the evidence simply does not support a "whiggish" interpretation of this history, which would celebrate the gradual displacement of a harsh patriarchalism by a kinder, gentler model of masculine behaviour. Hammerton's study introduces new questions and new problems and helps to set the agenda for further studies of this important topic.

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Eric R. Wolf — *Envisioning Power: Ideologies of Dominance and Crisis*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. Pp. ix, 339.

This is not an easy book, and it is difficult to imagine that its reception will be warm or its use all that wide. If this is the case, it will be an intellectual loss, for the topic and approach are both significant and novel. Wolf's book is a meditation on power as it relates to culture. It journeys across time and space to explore the Aztecs of fifteenth-century Mesoamerica, the aboriginal Kwakiutl, a Pacific Northwest tribe which became a staple of ethnographic inquiry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the Third, "National Socialist", Reich, a fleeting but decidedly more catastrophic moment of power's perversions, lasting from 1933 to 1945. Human sacrifice, the potlach, and a brutalizing construction of the Aryan *Volk* and its historical destiny become, in Wolf's analytic orchestration, the ritualized ideologies of specific, historically constituted regimes of power capable of sustaining governing authorities that commanded allegiances, managed social labour, shaped human practice and thought, and translated material being into a seemingly understandable set of cosmological imperatives.

It is an expression of Wolf's range and synthetic imagination that such disparate social formations can be brought together. Particularly in the cases of Aztec human sacrifice and the Kwakiutl potlach (the latter Wolf regards as "the display and affirmation of privileges" and "transfers of valuables in the presence of witnessing guests", all of which marked life-cycle stages and confirmed the structures of authority and governance), this book develops suggestive and insightful readings (pp. 112–113). Wolf is able to take specific ritualized ideologies and practices of an extreme and flamboyant character, albeit events somewhat episodic in their spirituality and festivity, and work them through anthropological constructions and readings in ways that have both conceptual flair and analytic innovation. The result is a portrait of power in social motion, one that illuminates complexity, depth, and texture in the relations of life's reciprocities and restraints. At the foundation of Wolf's vision of the power operating in these ostentatious regimes is the role of myth, display, and regenerative reconstructions, all of which solidified relations of hierarchy and inequality. For Wolf they ensured the continuity of structural governance and its capacity both to coerce and to coax allegiance, a process, in short, of the making of hegemony. Students of "the gift", however specifically conceived, will want to con-