

Claire Ridgway23:59

Thank you, Lauren, for joining us tonight and for your excellent talk.

Claire Ridgway23:59

Enjoy the family meal, Elizabeth!

Elizabeth Goodman00:00

Thank you!

Lauren Browne00:00

It's my pleasure Claire! It's not often you get to talk about your thesis for so long, and it's even better when people are interested haha

Claire Ridgway00:00

So, let's move on to Rosamond Clifford, royal mistresses, medieval queens...

ADMIN Tim00:00

Looks like we're thin on the ground this weekend. Can I ask a question - are there any Tudor mazes that you're aware of? Hampton Court has its maze, but I'm sure that is more recent.

Elizabeth Goodman00:01

There was one at Hever Castle with hidden water jets. We all got soaked!

Claire Ridgway00:01

I'd like to know why there are so many legends surrounding Rosamond? What is it about her that inspired so many stories?

Claire Ridgway00:01

The water one at Hever is fun!

Elizabeth Goodman00:02

My kids loved it Claire!

Lauren Browne00:02

I'm actually not that sure about the dates of particular ones, but I know that the maze at Lord Burghley's palace at Theobalds in Hertfordshire was made in 1560 and 'demolish'd by the rebels' during the English Civil War in 1643

ADMIN Tim00:02

Hever's maze was funny because our children were too light to set off the water jets, but I certainly did trigger it!

Lauren Browne00:03

They were certainly a very popular form of entertainment!

Claire Ridgway00:03

I can only think of the Hever one and Hampton Court.

Lauren Browne00:03

It's an interesting one Claire, I suppose it could have to do with her association with Eleanor of Aquitaine. She sparked a lot of rumour and legend even during her own lifetime

Claire Ridgway00:04

I suppose she's a romantic figure.

Lauren Browne00:05

I think what really got people excited about her was the romance of the tale. And perhaps there could be a nationalist element to Rosamond's treatment. She was the romantic, tragic heroine... an English rose, and Eleanor the jealous alien. It certainly is very emotive!

Elizabeth Goodman00:06

Eleanor was quite a formidable lady!

Claire Ridgway00:06

Yes! I find Eleanor intriguing, such a strong character.

Lauren Browne00:06

She was indeed Elizabeth! I think she might be one of my favourite queens-consort to write about! I did my MA thesis on her death, tomb effigy and medieval representation

Claire Ridgway00:07

Are you planning on writing a book on any of these women, Lauren?

Lauren Browne00:08

I would certainly think about it Claire, I think there's a good angle to this that hasn't really been explored- except maybe for Bardo's "The Creation of Anne Boleyn". I'd really love to get my thesis published when I'm finished as well

Claire Ridgway00:09

Good idea!

Lauren Browne00:10

We're trying to organise a conference around Women and Religion in the Medieval/ Early Modern period and would love to get a collection of essays from it published

Claire Ridgway00:10

Keep us updated on the conference as that sounds like a great idea.

Claire Ridgway00:11

I can't remember how long Rosamond was supposed to have been involved with Henry II for, how long was it?

Lauren Browne00:11

In academia at the moment, there is a real drive for students to get published as soon as possible, which is a bit of stress when you're trying to write an 80,000 word thesis already!

Elizabeth Goodman00:11

That sounds really interesting!

ADMIN Tim00:13

@Lauren Browne: my brother has a PhD (marine biology!) and was always under the pressure of having to publish things. It really is a double edged sword ... it keeps you moving forwards, but also distracts when you're trying to research something truly new. Do your articles in Tudor Life count towards anything, in your tutor's eyes?

Lauren Browne00:13

It appears that it was actually a very short period of time Claire! Henry lived openly with her as his mistress from 1174, after he had Eleanor imprisoned, and from what we can gather Rosamond died in 1175/6. Of course they may have been conducting a secret affair before this, but the records don't say anything about it until 1174

ADMIN Tim00:15

Hi Roland!

Claire Ridgway00:15

It's just fascinating that it was such a short time and yet she's become this legendary figure.

Roland Hui00:15

hello everyone 😊

Lauren Browne00:15

Tim, my supervisor was pretty excited when I told him about my involvement in the Tudor Society! He thinks that it's a very good thing to do, and that any experience in writing about history is great!

Elizabeth Goodman00:15

Hi Roland!

Lauren Browne00:15

Hi Roland 😊

Claire Ridgway00:16

Hi Roland! By the way, I got your email but have only just got back from holiday!

Roland Hui00:16

I read an interesting story that Rosamund was kept in the center of a maze, but Queen Eleanor discovered her

Roland Hui00:16

and killed her!

Claire Ridgway00:17

Lauren, that's great about your tutor and your articles.

Roland Hui00:17

Has anyone heard that tale. I think it was the subject of a Pre-Raphaelite painting

Lauren Browne00:17

Yes Claire, and she is someone that the sources really don't tell us very much about! The Tudors were really the ones that took her story and ran with it! Much of what we think about her was pretty much invented by them

Elizabeth Goodman00:18

Did Rosamund have any children with Henry?

Claire Ridgway00:18

I suppose it's like the Victorians romanticising some Tudor figures.

Roland Hui00:18

I think Rosamund died before Henry II

Lauren Browne00:18

Yes Roland, there are a number of variations of the legend! The contemporary chronicles show that this was impossible because Eleanor was imprisoned by Henry. But the later chronicles start concocting a number of legends which state Rosamond was killed by Eleanor.

Roland Hui00:19

Lauren - what can you tell us about Alice Perrers - she had a bad reputation correct?

Lauren Browne00:20

Good question Elizabeth! There is some debate about this! The contemporary chroniclers don't mention any children, but a few Tudor chroniclers state that she had two sons by him. It appears that this may have been added to pad out the story, and from my current research I can't find any record of them before the Tudor period

Elizabeth Goodman00:21

Interesting!

Lauren Browne00:23

Roland, she is someone I'm going to start research on very soon! From what I know so far, I think her bad reputation was linked more to her landownership. After Edward's death, I believe she was banished due to a land dispute and was linked to corruption.

Lauren Browne00:24

Quite a few of the chronicles say that she had seduced Edward to gain lands and wealth, but I think it was more to do with her intelligence and wits. Although it is certainly something I need to look into more

Roland Hui00:24

Yes, there's a story I read of Alice at Edward III's deathbed. As soon as he was dead, she stripped him of his jewels. I doubt there's any truth to this though.

Claire Ridgway00:25

Are there any good books (non-fiction and fiction) on Henry II and Rosamond?

Roland Hui00:26

Lauren - have you researched Henry IV's wife Joanna of Navarre? She was accused of sorcery by her stepson Henry V.

Lauren Browne00:26

Royal mistresses appear to be represented in one of two ways. They are either a tragic and sympathetic figure, or a selfish, social climber who abuses her position for her own advancement

Claire Ridgway00:28

So true!

Roland Hui00:28

Lauren - what other royal mistresses do you think historians have particularly maligned?

Lauren Browne00:30

Claire, there aren't many academic books on her at all! The main secondary work that I've studied is Vergil B. Heltzel's 'Fair Rosamond: The Development of a Literary Theme.' She's mentioned a lot in Michael R. Evans' 'Eleanor of Aquitaine: the medieval and post-medieval image of Eleanor of Aquitaine'. Sharon Penman wrote a historical fiction novel called Time and Chance about their relationship, but most of the fiction accounts of her are in relation to Eleanor

Lauren Browne00:30

There have been quite a few operas about her too!

Roland Hui00:31

I believe Rosamund was mentioned in 'The Lion in Winter'.

ADMIN Tim00:32

I'm now listening to Schubert's Overture to Rosamunde, Op. 26

Lauren Browne00:33

Very interesting question Roland! It's hard to say because over the past 200ish years, mistresses' reputations have been constantly changing. There was a real movement in the Victorian period where many royal women's reputations were overhauled and they were much more romanticised than before. The treatment of Jane Shore is also rather interesting, and she's the subject of the next talk in this series!

Roland Hui00:33

Another interesting royal mistress is Jane Shore.

Lauren Browne00:34

Haha great minds think alike Roland!

Claire Ridgway00:34

It's just so weird that she doesn't seem to have been involved with Henry for very long yet she's so well-known and has been so romanticised.

Roland Hui00:34

Richard III apparently had a bastard son - do we know who the mother was?

Lauren Browne00:34

it's a beautiful piece of music Tim!

Lauren Browne00:35

Yes Claire, that's exactly it! It's so interesting to track the development of her representation because

she starts off as a very minor character and it ends in this very dramatic legend which has been the subject of many different artistic endeavours!

Claire Ridgway00:36

The Richard III Society list three possible illegitimate children: John of Gloucester, Katherine Plantagenet and Richard Plantagenet. No mothers' details known.

Elizabeth Goodman00:37

I think Richard III had a boy and a girl but I've never read who the mother(s) was/were!

Lauren Browne00:37

Roland, the identity of the mother is a total mystery! Given the ages of his children, most historians would say he fathered them in his teenage years

Claire Ridgway00:37

I think people will always be interested in royal mistresses.

Elizabeth Goodman00:37

Thank you Claire, didn't know about the third!

Roland Hui00:38

Wow - I didn't know R III had up to 3 illegitimate children, I thought he only had one. Apparently, after he married, he was faithful to Queen Anne Neville,

Claire Ridgway00:38

Here's a link on Richard III's alleged bastard children - <http://www.r3.org/on-line-library-text-essays/back-to-basics-for-newcomers/bastards-of-richard-iii/>

Lauren Browne00:38

Yes, Roland, there is no evidence of any infidelity after his marriage, which is why historians would say that he fathered them when he was a teenager

Roland Hui00:39

Lauren - do you think Katheryn Howard was Henry VIII's mistress (in the sexual sense) when he was still married to Anne of Cleves?

Roland Hui00:39

Same with Jane Seymour.

Lauren Browne00:39

Claire, I think because of their proximity to the king, and their very unusual position, people will always be interested in Royal Mistresses. It certainly is an interesting, and rather exciting, topic
haha

Claire Ridgway00:40

I suppose it's human nature to love a good scandal!

Elizabeth Goodman00:40

And Mary Boleyn!

ADMIN Tim00:41

Royal conspiracy theories never go out of fashion.

lisa sanderson00:41

I would be surprised about Katherine Howard. I am reading the new book about her at the moment. It restores her reputation somewhat.

Lauren Browne00:42

I don't think I would be the best person to field that question Roland. It's not a topic I know a great about! I'm more focused on medieval mistresses and how they are represented in the Tudor period. I wouldn't want to hazard a guess and give you any wrong info!

Lauren Browne00:42

That's very true Tim!!

Elizabeth Goodman00:42

Hi Lisa

Lauren Browne00:42

Hi Lisa and Phillip!

Roland Hui00:42

Do we know if Edward I had a mistress?

ADMIN Tim00:43

Hi Phil, Hi Lisa!

lisa sanderson00:43

hi Elizabeth. I joined late, unfortunately. 😞

Elizabeth Goodman00:43

Hi Phil!

Claire Ridgway00:43

Which book are you reading, Lisa? Gareth Russell's one?

lisa sanderson00:43

Not good with the icons. Lol

lisa sanderson00:43

Yes, Claire.

Elizabeth Goodman00:44

Good to have you here!

Lauren Browne00:44

Roland, there is no record of Edward I having a mistress!

lisa sanderson00:44

Thank you, Elizabeth. All the way from the Gold Coast, Queensland!

Philip Roberts00:44

Hi everyone

Lauren Browne00:45

Oh Gareth's book is amazing Lisa! He's a very dear friend 😊

ADMIN Tim00:45

(lisa, there is a button to the right of the text area, next to the "send" button, where you can pick smiley faces to your heart's content!)

lisa sanderson00:45

I know more about Tudor mistresses than medieval ones.

lisa sanderson00:46

Hi Tim

Claire Ridgway00:46

Gareth's book is excellent.

Elizabeth Goodman00:46

Sounds lovely Lisa

lisa sanderson00:46

I do like Katherine Swynford and I have Alison Weir's book.

Lauren Browne00:46

Tudor society was incredibly interested in past mistresses, there was a lot of literature surrounding them. The Tudors even gave Jane Shore her christian name!

Roland Hui00:47

Other than Eleanor of Aquitaine, do we have accounts (even fictional) of how a queen felt about her rival?

lisa sanderson00:50

Thank you, Elizabeth.

Lauren Browne00:50

There are many depictions of rivalry between consort and concubine, especially in fiction. I suppose because it such an emotive situation, and one which sparks a lot of empathy! I don't tend to read a lot of historical fiction, many because I don't have the time haha, but the representation of the tense relationship between Elizabeth Woodville and Jane Seymour was really well done in the TV adaption of The White Queen

lisa sanderson00:51

Jane Shore was interesting. She married her lawyer in the end, didn't she? I think that she became quite wealthy after a difficult life?

Claire Ridgway00:52

How much competition was a medieval king's mistress to a queen consort?

Roland Hui00:53

I have a interesting fiction book - 'Anne the Rose of Hever' (by Maureen Peters) - an old woman is seen watching Anne Boleyn's execution in the crowd - she turns out to be Jane Shore!

Lauren Browne00:53

Yes, Lisa it was the King's Solicitor General I believe!

Lauren Browne00:55

That's the million dollar question Claire! In terms of position, she wasn't really a threat. But I suppose it all depended on how the affair was conducted, was it relatively private or was it flaunted etc. It also depends on the level of affection between the king and queen!

Claire Ridgway00:56

Thank you!

Lauren Browne00:56

That really does sound interesting Roland!

Lauren Browne00:57

Jane Shore and Rosamond were often represented together in Tudor literature, which I found very interesting!

Roland Hui00:57

What is next in your research Lauren?

Elizabeth Goodman00:58

So Jane Shore may have lived through the reigns of 5 kings?

Claire Ridgway00:59

It's nearly the o'clock so I just wanted to say a big thank you to Lauren for joining us tonight and also for doing this month's talk for us. Thank you also to you lord and ladies for joining us, it's been fun as always. Lauren will be continuing her look at royal mistresses in a few months' time.

Lauren Browne00:59

I'm just about to move on to Jane, Roland. This is all for the second chapter of my PhD thesis which looks as representation of royal mistresses and how it relates to the representation of certain queens-consort. After that it's on to the Wars of Roses I believe! So a lot of big characters there!

Claire Ridgway01:00

Lauren, do keep us updated on your research and we wish you all the best with it.

Roland Hui01:00

Thank you Lauren - good night everyone - this was fun an informative as always!

Lauren Browne01:00

Yes Elizabeth! She died in 1527.

Elizabeth Goodman01:00

Thank you Lauren!

Philip Roberts01:00

Thanks Lauren. Very informative x

Lauren Browne01:00

Thank you so much Claire! I certainly will 😊

Lauren Browne01:01

Thank you everyone for coming on tonight!