

Moral Regulation and Civic Identity in London 1400–1530

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Abstract

Allegations of sexual misconduct featured prominently among the business of medieval church courts, which were concerned to correct spiritual offences. But moral regulation was not solely the province of the church, as secular authorities also investigated sexual infractions and prosecuted delinquents. This article investigates the purpose of such activities by London's civic governors and considers their significance in terms of gender. Ordinances and records of prosecutions show that the city's rulers viewed their correctional activities as a necessary responsibility of moral Christian government, borrowing extensively from Christian teachings to elaborate a rhetoric of good rule and civic honesty. For London's leading citizens, the public regulation of sexuality guaranteed the honour of the city and asserted the virtuous government of the city's rulers. The essay explores how understandings of masculinity and femininity were implicated in the construction of civic identity and argues that male sexual discipline was the desired result of moral regulation.

Introduction

The regulation of morals by public authorities was a commonplace occurrence in late medieval London. The city's ecclesiastical courts investigated adultery, fornication and related offences as part of their responsibility for correcting spiritual offences.¹ In addition, the mayor

¹ R. Wunderli, *London Church Courts and Society on the Eve of the Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981).

and aldermen of London also supervised the regulation of morals within their jurisdiction. For instance, juries in local ward mote assemblies were required to report suspected sexual infractions among public nuisances and disturbances. Ward officers such as the constable and beadle, assisted by leading householders, also detected and imprisoned couples accused of adultery and fornication. Convicted strumpets and bawds were ceremonially banished from the city, adulterers sentenced to stand in the pillory and incontinent clergy prohibited from serving in city chantries or chapels.

The prosecution of sexual misconduct by London's civic authorities has been the subject of increasing attention in recent years.¹ These studies recognise that the city governors' responsibility for ensuring public order contributed to the prosecution of sexual misconduct in civic forums such as annual ward mote inquests and the Mayor's court. They have also been sensitive to issues of gender in the production of urban social order. This paper attempts to build on their insights. It explores the city governors' desire to institute a more fundamental, moral order consistent with Christian precepts and contemporary notions of good governance. The regulation of sexual behaviour helped to assert the legitimate rule of the aldermannic elite and to ensure the conformity of citizens to a specifically masculine civic honour.

Moral regulation and civic honour

A late fourteenth-century ordinance outlining penalties for bawds, strumpets,² adulterers, adulteresses, incontinent clergy and scolds is a useful

¹ Wunderli, *London Church Courts*; R. Karras, *Common Women: Prostitution and Sexuality in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1996); B. Hanawalt, 'Rituals of Inclusion and Exclusion: Hierarchy and Marginalization in Medieval London', in *Of Good and Ill Repute: Gender and Social Control in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1998), 18–34; S. McSheffrey, 'Men and Masculinity in Late Medieval London Civic Culture: Governance, Patriarchy and Reputation', in J. Murray (ed.), *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West* (New York, 1999), 243–78.

² I have retained the language of the city's fifteenth-century records, rather than substitute modern equivalents like 'prostitute' and 'pimp', to preserve the ambiguities and inclusiveness of the original terminology. Terms like 'strumpet', 'harlot', meretrix or *puteyne* could be applied to any women participating in sexual activities outside marriage, not simply those providing professional sexual services. Similarly, bawdry encompassed the toleration of illicit sexual relations as well as actively promoting them for some form of material reward. See R. Karras, 'The Latin Vocabulary of Illicit Sex in English Ecclesiastical Records', *Journal of Medieval Latin*, ii (1992), 1–17; S. Tarbin, 'Gender, Order and Sexuality in London, 1400–1530' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Western Australia, 1999), 60–116.

place to begin considering the civic authorities' conception of desirable moral order. The ordinance is significant in that it gave legal force to the punishment of sexual infractions by civic authorities, providing a blueprint for prosecutions for at least the next one hundred and fifty years.¹ A preamble explains that remedies were lacking for people indicted at ward motes, causing divine displeasure and the city's dishonour.² The prescribed penalties were necessary to remove offenders from the city, or to make them desist from their misdeeds, 'to the pleasing of God, the salvation of their souls, and the cleanness and honesty of the said city'.³

The invocation of divine pleasure and displeasure was not simply empty rhetoric. Thomas Walsingham reported that the rulers had determined to purge the city of immorality 'lest, through God's vengeance, either the pestilence or sword should happen to them, or that the earth should swallow them'.⁴ Such reasoning was consistent with contemporary teachings concerning misfortune, for example as an early retribution for sin, or as a warning to amend sinful behaviour. In the case of collective disaster, the treatise *Dives and Pauper*, was emphatic that 'comoun myschef fallyth nout to the comounte but for synne of the comounte'.⁵ Errant communities could therefore expect to feel the retribution of divine wrath. It cannot be entirely coincidental that the ordinance outlining penalties appears to have been promulgated in the wake of an earthquake on 21 May 1382.⁶

Moreover, contemporary understandings of good government directed that temporal rulers were responsible for nourishing virtue among their subordinates through teaching, reproof, correction and good example. According to one sermon, chastising delinquents could lead to their

¹ Corporation of London Records Office (CLRO), Letterbook (LB) H, f. 146v.; H.T. Riley (ed.), *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, i (Rolls Series xii, 1860), 457–60 (MGL). The original ordinance appears amongst civic business conducted in May and June 1382. Thomas Walsingham also dated the Londoners' usurpation of episcopal rights to 1382. John Stow assigned the ordinance to 1383. T. Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana* in H.T. Riley (ed.), *Chronica Monasterii Sancti Albani*, ii (Rolls Series xxviii, 1864; repr. 1965), 65; J. Stow, *A Survey of London* (ed. H. Morley) (London, 1912), 199.

² MGL, i. 457; cf. iii. 179 for an English translation.

³ Ibid. This trinity recurs in the 1417 ordinance for the closure of public bath houses. CLRO, LB I, f. 193v.; cf. H.T. Riley (ed.), *Memorials of London and London Life in the XIIIth, XIVth and XVth Centuries* (London, 1868), 648.

⁴ Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 65; Stow, *Survey*, 199.

⁵ P. Heath Barnum (ed.), *Dives and Pauper*, ii (Early English Text Society, original series cclxxv, 1976), 316.

⁶ *A Chronicle of London from 1089 to 1483* (1827; repr. 1995), 74; cf. Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 67.

reform, but 'to conveye vertewe is to shoue by ensampull of verteewous lyuyng'.¹ These responsibilities were incumbent on governors of all conditions, from princes and prelates to lowly members of the clergy and the heads of households. The citizens of London, as public office holders and householders, therefore had a positive obligation to combat sin.² This was recognised by Walsingham, who condemned the ordinance as a usurpation of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Nonetheless he noted the citizens' unhappiness with the church courts' practice of commuting penances that, in their view, allowed the guilty to continue in their sin.³ The citizens' criticism of avaricious prelates implied a failure on the part of ecclesiastical authorities to fulfil the responsibilities of their position.

In the preamble to the ordinance, obedience to divine precepts and respect for human law authorised civic measures to discipline immoral behaviour. In fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century actions against sexual misconduct, the language of good governance is quite explicit. City records bear witness to a constant vigilance to ensure 'good and honest rule' in its households and the city at large.⁴ The importance of chastising delinquents to counter their evil example was emphasised. Legislation against bath houses in 1417, and against 'strumpets, misguided and idle women' in 1483, condemned their corrupting influence.⁵ Convicted bawds, such as Elizabeth Knight and Richard Wyer, were said to provide a 'perilous example' to 'good & well disposed persones'.⁶ Officers of the city were required to uphold to the ideal of 'virtuous living'. William

¹ W.O. Ross (ed.), *Middle English Sermons, Edited from British Museum MS Royal 18 B.xxiii* (EETS, original series ccix, 1940), 242; cf. Venetia Nelson (ed.), *A Myrour to Lewde Men and Wymmen: A prose version of the Speculum Vitae, edited from BL MS Harley 45* (Heidelberg, 1981), 167.

² S. Reynolds, 'Medieval urban history and the history of political thought', *Urban History Yearbook* (1982), 14–23; S. Rigby, 'Urban "oligarchy" in late medieval England', in J.A.F. Thomson (ed.), *Towns and Townspeople in the Fifteenth Century* (Gloucester, 1988), 63–5; S. McSheffrey, 'Jurors, Respectable Masculinity and Christian Morality: a comment on Marjorie McIntosh's "Controlling Misbehaviour"', *Journal of British Studies*, xxxvii (3) (1998), 276–7.

³ Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 65.

⁴ CLRO, Portsoken Ward Mote Indictments, mm. 1, 3–7, 12–14; Journal (JOR) 11, ff. 105r., 112r., 114v., 391r. For efforts to ensure that non-citizen households also conformed to the obligations of good rule, see the payment of sureties by hucksters and brewers of ale in JOR 8, ff. 86v., 88v., 120r., 125v., 167r., 168v.; JOR 10, f. 3v.; JOR 11, ff. 121v., 270v.; JOR 12, ff. 122r., 56r., 88v., 97v. For preparations to secure the city during the absence of Henry VIII in 1520, see Repertory (REP) 4, ff. 54r., 55r.

⁵ CLRO, LB I, f. 193v.; JOR 9, f. 17r.; cf. Riley, *Memorials*, 647–8; R. Sharpe (ed.), *Calendars of Letter-Books preserved among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London, Letter-Book L* (1912), 206.

⁶ CLRO, JOR 11, f. 264r.; LB O, ff. 152v., 154r.

Arnold, the keeper of Newgate, was himself imprisoned as an example to others when he brought scandal on the city by violating a female prisoner.¹ A sheriff's sergeant accused of bawdry was suspended from office until he could purge himself of the crime, and one of the mayor's household officers was discharged when captured in adultery.²

To permit the existence of sexual immorality was to bring scandal upon the city as well as endanger its wellbeing. An ordinance passed by the common council in 1417 forbade aldermen, substantial citizens and others to accept as tenants any people indicted at ward motes, claiming that such tenants had been permitted 'to do and carry out the illicit works of their carnal appetites ... to the very great and abominating displeasure of God and to the horrible danger and scandal of the said city'.³ In 1424 Alison Boston was sentenced to the pillory for procuring a 'yong damsel'. The proclamation accompanying her punishment depicted her as a person 'nat dredyng god ne shamyng the world'. It claimed that it would be a 'grete shame to other gode peple if hir vicious governauns shuld passe unpunished'.⁴ Boston's misrule is presented as a result of her own indifference to divine authority and her worldly reputation, but her actions bring disrepute to 'good people' unless regulated by reproof and chastisement. The punishment of Boston showed the city's rulers setting a good example for other governors, such as citizen householders, to follow. Disciplinary actions such as this were a drama in which the virtue of the city's leading citizens was enacted through the public condemnation of vice and misrule.

To take action against immorality was to ensure the honour of the city—its 'cleanness and honesty' in the 1382 ordinance.⁵ In the records of the mayor and aldermen lechery was characterised by images of filth and physical disintegration. A proclamation of 1439 condemned the

¹ CLRO, JOR 5, f. 16r.; cf. JOR 6, f. 53v. Richard Mayle, beadle of Billingsgate, was imprisoned for accepting a bribe not to prosecute a case of adultery.

² CLRO, JOR 7, ff. 92r., 120v.

³ CLRO, LB I, f. 194r.; Riley, *Memorials*, 650; LB H, f. 194v.; JOR 5, f. 16r.; JOR 6, f. 103v.

⁴ CLRO, LB K, f. 11v.; cf. Sharpe, *Letter-Book K*, 17. For other examples of persons lacking fear of God and disregarding worldly shame see JOR 5, f. 213r.; JOR 6, ff. 119v. (plate 104) and 188v. (plate 164); JOR 9, f. 280r.; JOR 11, ff. 74r., 391r.; JOR 12, ff. 169r., 238r., 277v.; LB O, f. 152v., 154r. The formulaic characterisation of delinquents as neither fearing God nor the shame of the world finds echoes in sermons and religious treatises: *Dives and Pauper*, ii. 71.

⁵ See also the description of a muster and procession of armed Londoners in 1456 as 'a gret number of clene ownest men', in J.G. Nicols (ed.), *Chronicle of the Grey Friars of London* (Camden Society, original series liii, 1852), 20.

presence in the city of many people 'defoylid in the sin of lecherie' while a 1483 proclamation was issued to eschew 'the stynkyng and horrible synne of lechery'.¹ A return to a writ regarding the bawd John Denys likened promoters of lechery to 'ravens and eagles drawn by natural instincts to the place where the corpse lies'.² Bawds such as John Meriell *alias* Norfolk and Elisabeth Swynneford *alias* French Philippe were punished for causing young women to be 'devoured'.³ The image of eating and digestion was also recalled when offenders were 'voided' out of the city like excrement. The expulsion of incorrigible offenders from London's franchises thus represented a symbolic purification of the social body.

The regulation of sexuality helped to assert the communal identity and legitimacy of London's ruling citizens against competing claims to authority. In the 1382 ordinance discussed earlier was produced at a time of intense factional division in city politics. It can be read as one faction's attempt to claim political legitimacy in the midst of a struggle for authority.⁴ The citizens' actions against immorality also serves to convey an image of unity and good government aimed at the superior authorities of king and parliament. Strumpets, bawds and vagabonds were ordered to leave as part of the preparations for welcoming Edward V to the city in 1483 and when Henry VIII held a parliament at Blackfriars in 1523.⁵ The regulation of sexuality constructed civic virtue in relation to ecclesiastical authority, as the chronicle of Thomas Walsingham suggests. Despite fourteenth-century complaints by the higher clergy resulting in a royal order to desist, officers of the city continued to apprehend members of the clergy for sexual incontinence.⁶ When the delinquent was a prelate, then an ostentatious clean-up of prostitution could serve to reclaim the moral authority of the citizenry. For example, a campaign against strumpets and bawds in 1439 provided a counterpoint to protests by common councilmen about the sexual morals of John Sevenoke, the newly elected prior of Holy Trinity in Aldgate and, by virtue of this office, the new alderman of Portsoken ward.⁷

¹ CLRO, LB K, f. 179r.; Sharpe, *Letter-Book L*, 206.

² CLRO, LB L, f. 160v.

³ CLRO, JOR 10, ff. 31v., 109r.

⁴ R. Bird, *The Turbulent London of Richard II* (London, 1949); P. Nightingale, 'Capitalists, crafts and constitutional change in late fourteenth-century London', *Past and Present*, 124 (1989), 3-25.

⁵ CLRO, JOR 9, f. 17v., JOR 12, ff. 239r., 366v. The latter was part of the Christmas preparations in 1526.

⁶ *Victoria County History of London*, i. 199; Stow, *Survey*, 199.

⁷ CLRO, JOR 3, ff. 15v. (f. 17v. pencil), 18r. (f. 20r. pencil). A reiteration of the 1382 ordinance was published in Aug. 1439, and recorded in LB K, ff. 178v.-179r. For the punishment of strumpets and bawds see J. Gairdner (ed.), *The Historical Collections of a*

The gendering of good governance

The concepts of good government that were adapted by city rulers into images of civic honour and authority resonate with assumptions about gender. The reproof and correction of sin, necessary to good government, demanded a specifically masculine virtue. According to the *Dialoges of Creatures Moralyed*, 'every prelate and rular owith to be manlye and resiste them that be synfull that thei preuayle not'.¹ Moreover, in accordance with the identification of rationality as a male characteristic, and carnality or willfulness as a female trait, manliness required the ability to rule one's own body. John de Caritate's version of the *Secretum Secretorum* represented the indulgence of carnal appetites and animal desires as engendering 'wommanys condicionys'.² Lechery was therefore incompatible with both masculinity, since it had a feminising effect, and with authority, since the example of virtuous living was an integral aspect of good governance.

These were not simply abstract ideas. A city chronicle related how, in 1453, Mayor Geoffrey Fielding 'manfully' overcame a group of 'misruly' rioters and put them 'to shameful rebuke'. Fielding's manly performance was thus presented as consistent with his role in reproving the misgoverned, thus uniting masculinity and good government. A man's sexual misconduct signified his lack of self-rule and damaged his reputation among respectable people.³

In this context, male sexual transgressions represented a challenge to the moral order and to masculine authority. Consequently, the mayor and aldermen used their powers of prosecution to punish men convicted of bawdry and adultery with exposure in the pillory or ritual banishment from the city. As the promotion of immorality, bawdry implied an abuse of authority that threatened notions of virtuous masculine government. However, during the period 1400–1530, and particularly in the decades before 1470, civic authorities paid far greater attention to offences requiring self-restraint, such as adultery. No fewer than 131 men were charged with 'adultery' offences compared to 74 charged with some form of bawdry. Only 10 were charged with 'adultery' after 1470 compared with 40 for bawdry.⁴

Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century (Camden Society, new ser. xvii, 1876), 182; *Chronicle of London from 1089 to 1485*, 124; A.H. Thomas and I.D. Thornley (ed.), *The Great Chronicle of London* (London, 1938), 174.

¹ G. Katzmann and E. Gee (ed.), *The Dialoges of Creatures: a critical edition* (Leiden, 1988), 79.

² M.A. Manzalaoui (ed.), *Secretum Secretorum: Nine English Versions* (EETS, original series, clxiii, 1977), 135, 319.

³ McSheffrey, 'Men and Masculinity', esp. 257–63.

⁴ Tarbin, 'Gender, Order and Sexuality', 240.

Many involved chaplains serving in city chantries,¹ suggesting that the civic authorities were specially concerned to 'correct' members of the priestly estate whose office represented a form of government over the laity. Expectations of sexual restraint for men are also manifested in the very occasional correction of a man as a 'harlot of his body', or a 'putour of his body'.² The very phrasing of these charges, dating from the late fifteenth century and early sixteenth, denotes a concern with the regulation of the self.

The moral conduct of men was also regulated within the full range of available structures of authority within the city. Apprenticeship contracts typically specified that apprentices were not to marry or commit fornication during their period of service. The ordinances of craft guilds also attempted to limit the riotous behaviour of journeymen, who were no longer in the dependent position of apprentices. For example, the Company of Fullers' prohibited journeymen from visiting the stews.³ Ward mote juries questioned young men about rumours of fornication.⁴ On occasion, some men were required to appear in the Guildhall and to provide surety for good sexual conduct. For instance, William Gilling offered security for his good behaviour toward the ministers of the city and his agreement not to visit strumpets.⁵ In each of these forums we see the exercise of authority by leading citizens over junior or subordinate males.

For the men subjected to this scrutiny, their obedience and sexual restraint demonstrated their fitness for the eventual exercise of authority as a householder or office-holder. Moreover, this supervision of morals through the structures of public authority in the city incorporated subordinate men into the framework of honourable masculine governance. Venues such as the ward mote, city Guildhall or the courts of craft guilds and merchant companies were spaces in which male honour was defined and negotiated.⁶ As venues for correction of morals, they permitted the reform of youths and men in spaces that were 'public', in the sense of accessible to the men of the city, yet protected from the gaze of the general populace.

The importance of self-discipline suggests a model of sexual expectations

¹ Approximately two thirds of men noted for adultery were clergy: *ibid.*, 294.

² CLRO, REP 1, f. 167r.; JOR 8, f. 49r.; JOR 10, f. 31v.; JOR 11, f. 115v.; JOR 12, f. 40r.; Portsoken Ward Mote Indictments, mm. 11, 12, 14.

³ B. Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London: the experience of childhood in history* (New York, 1993), 134; Sharpe, *Letter-Book L*, 262.

⁴ London Metropolitan Archives, DL/C/205, ff. 191r.-193v.; Guildhall Library, MS 9065, f. 49r.; Cf. S. McSheffrey (ed.), *Love and Marriage in Late Medieval London* (Kalamazoo, 1995), 84-5.

⁵ CLRO, JOR 2, f. 62r.; JOR 10, ff. 1v., 3v.

⁶ McSheffrey, 'Jurors, Respectable Masculinity, and Christian Morality', 270-2.

in which moral standards for men and women overlap, rather than diverge.¹ The language of bodily misgovernance was more usually applied to female delinquents prosecuted as harlots and strumpets, thus appearing to express an expectation that women, too, could exercise self-restraint.² For women, however, the governance of the body was not implicated within a larger framework involving the rightful exercise of authority to the same degree as it was for men. While women, particularly wives, were expected to provide an example of chastity in the good conduct of the household, and to rule over children, servants and dependants, their continence expressed obedience to the male authority from which their household power derived.³ Authority followed from self-discipline for men: a more circumscribed authority followed from self-discipline *and* the acceptance of male governance for women. The perceived limits of female authority may explain why some bawds were punished as though they were strumpets, sentenced to wear a ray hood and carry a white wand before being evicted from the city. These were the symbols of whoredom, or the misuse of one's own body rather than the abuse of power over another. In a 1439 proclamation revising the 1382 ordinance, the same punishment was specified for female and male bawds: the pillory, imprisonment and eventual banishment.⁴ When a woman convicted of bawdry underwent this punishment, her offence was thus represented in terms of her own sexual misbehaviour, as though such a perversion of good order were inconceivable or inexpressible.

Outside the household, women were excluded from city government and the exercise of authority. Nor were there alternative venues for correcting female sexual delinquency but the streets of the city. Their chief contact with the process of moral regulation was as the subjects of investigation and correction, where they outnumbered men two to one between 1400 and 1530. Between 1400 and 1530 women were noted for sexual misconduct twice as often as men (399 women, 205 men). From 1470, the number of prosecutions for adultery declined and the ratio of female to male suspects increased

¹ For the case for a double standard see R. Karras, 'Two Models, Two Standards: Moral Teaching and Sexual Mores', in B.A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace (ed.), *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-century England* (Minneapolis, 1996), 123–38.

² e.g., CLRO, JOR 8, ff. 47v.–48r.; JOR 10, ff. 10r.–v.; JOR 11, ff. 110r., 111v.; JOR 12, ff. 10r., 40r.

³ F.J. Furnivall (ed.), 'How the Good Wijf Taught Hir Doughtir', in *The Babees Book* (EETS, original series ccxvi, 1868), 41–3, 45–6. Bishop Reginald Pecock also emphasised a husband's responsibilities for his wife's 'bodili noisching, bodili warding and for her vertuose leernyng and gouernyng': W.C. Greet (ed.), *The Reule of Crysten Religioun* (EETS, original series clxxi, 1927), 320–1.

⁴ CLRO, LB K, f. 179r. For the punishment of bawds in practice, JOR 8, ff. 88r., 92r.; JOR 9, f. 233v.; JOR 11, f. 148r.; JOR 11, f. 258.

to three to one (160:49).¹ This numerical dominance is related to the prosecution of strumpets, for which there was no masculine equivalent. As strumpets and bawds were paraded through Cheapside to Aldgate and back to Newgate, accompanied by minstrelsy or ringing basins, they provided a spectacle of feminine misrule properly, if only briefly, subjected to masculine reproof before their expulsion from the city.

The effect of these prosecutions was to construct a vision of misrule that was overtly feminine. It incorporated the attributes of idleness, pleasure seeking, vagrancy and a general disrespect for order. For example, a proclamation in 1483 ordered 'Strumpettes and mys guyded and idill women' to depart the city rather than 'walkyng about the streets and lanes ... repairyng to Taverns and other private places ... provokyng many other persones unto the said Synne of lechery'.² In 1492 a group of women were presented for 'walking in the nyght tymes at undewe houres about mysrule and ayenst the good lawes and ordinances of this citee'.³ Others were noted for adopting masculine garb or cutting their hair short 'when their lewde pleasure is'.⁴ The traditional ray hood and white wand imposed on strumpets may have marked them out from 'good' women, but offered little to indicate the attributes of feminine honour.⁵ Instead, the ignominy and shame of public punishments for misrule were strongly associated with feminine dishonour. Similarly, men who were sentenced to the pillory or banishment from the city for sexual offences were symbolically unmanned by the punishment, much as their ill-governed behaviour signified 'women's conditions'.

Conclusion

The regulation of morals in London demonstrated the good governance of elite citizens by protecting the 'cleanness and honesty' of the city. It imbued civic honour with masculine virtue and demanded conformity to the ideal of self-discipline in sexual conduct from subordinate men. Disobedience to the manly authority of the city rulers and this code of sexual conduct carried connotations of feminine misrule and shame that were reproduced in

¹ Tarbin, 'Gender, Order and Sexuality', 240.

² Sharpe, *Letter-Book L*, 206.

³ CLRO, JOR 10, f. 10v.

⁴ CLRO, JOR 12, f. 10r.; JOR 8, f. 50r.; JOR 11, f. 264r.; REP 3, f. 103v.

⁵ The customary of the Southwark stews forbade the women working in them to wear aprons. J.B. Post, 'A fifteenth-century customary of the Southwark Stews', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, v (1977), 426. This may be an attempt to distinguish them from 'honest' working women, such as wives of craftsmen or servants, in the liberty.

ignominious public punishments. It is worth noting that the importance of moral regulation for civic honour was given explicit recognition when other English towns emulated London's example. In the early sixteenth century, Gloucester's town council actually ordered the construction of a pillory in the market place, 'as it is done in the worshipful city of London', to counter the town's poor reputation. The ordinance claimed that the 'vicious living' of the town's inhabitants caused the town to be 'abominably spoken of in all England and Wales'.¹ The regulation of morals thus provided a successful means for urban authorities to project an image of good government and civic honour.

¹ Karras, *Common Women*, 19.