

John Locke on Women's rationality

Giuliana Di Biase

Abstract: Feminist scholars deny that Locke attributed women a level of rationality identical to that of men; Nancy Hirschmann agrees with this claim, yet she insists that Locke did not conceive of this difference as natural but rather as artificially constructed through the sexual division of labour. This paper contends that sound evidence in Locke's works suggests that the opposite was true: in *Some Thoughts concerning Education* he criticized mothers' irrationality, and elsewhere he described women as easy prey for vehement passions, which could hardly be reconciled with rational behaviour. As a physician, Locke fully agreed with the medical literature of his time, which viewed women's rational ability as naturally inferior to men's because of their weak physical constitution.

Keywords: Locke; women; rationality; motherhood; education; passions; physics.

1. Introduction

John Locke is a hotly contested figure in feminist thought. A substantial role in sparking feminist debate on his ideas has been played by two seminal essays by Melissa Butler and Mary Shanley, which appeared respectively in 1978 and 1979. Both Butler and Shanley claimed that Locke's theory contained the seeds of feminism; they highlighted the significant, if ambiguous role which gender played in Locke's political thought. In their view, Locke took the premises of the natural freedom and equality of family members more seriously than previous thinkers, strengthening the liberal arguments concerning the voluntary origin of all obligations, yet he rejected the notion that familial and civil authority were analogous. In the first of his *Two Treatises of Government*, Locke denounced the patriarchal system as being tyrannical both within the state and the family, each in its own way a violation of natural rights; when discussing the story in Genesis, he insisted on Eve's inclusion in the grant of "Dominion over the Creatures, or Property in them", and denied that God had granted Adam "Political power over... [Eve], much less over any body else" (1960: I, 29, 161; I, 48, 174). Similarly, in the second of the *Two Treatises* Locke

invoked the notion of the social contract to propose a shift from a patriarchal to a contractual form of marriage: he declared that marriage “leaves the Wife in full and free possession of what by contract is her peculiar Right, and gives the Husband no more power over her Life, than she has over his” (II, 82, 321). A wife retained the freedom to separate from her husband; however, Locke also recommended that, except for female rulers, women should allow their husbands ultimate control over their affairs. They had no prospect of citizenship, propertied or not; they had the right to retain property brought with them into the marriage, but received no control at all over the income they, or their husbands, generated thereafter. Men had complete control over family affairs; their decisions were the rule to be obeyed even in matters of “common Interest”, since they were “the abler and the stronger” (II, 82, 321).

Butler and Shanley attempted to reconcile these assertions with their view of Locke as being actively engaged in promoting gender equality amongst family members. By contrast, a number of feminist scholars have accused Locke of perpetuating biological or socio-biological arguments for men’s dominance over women; they have insisted that the new “freedom of contract” advocated in the *Two Treatises* masked background relations of unequal power, based on a view of women as naturally lacking in rationality.¹ Locke would have endorsed the Aristotelian view of women, in which they were, like slaves, a husband’s property, neither regarded as equals within marriage nor by the state. The role played by mothers in Locke’s *Some Thoughts concerning Education* was merely ancillary, in these scholars’ view, and endorsed his opinion that women should be subject to male authority (Wallace 1991: 19).

A more moderate opinion has been expressed recently by Gordon Schochet, who has claimed that Locke’s slow whittling away of patriarchal presumptions held radical consequences for the status of women. Schochet maintains that Locke’s anti-patriarchalism “created the theoretical possibility of full political membership for women”, even if he “was not an egalitarian on any grounds, hardly least among them, sexual”.²

Nancy Hirschmann agrees with Schochet: she notes that, although Locke’s works attest to his being quite progressive for his times, he was hardly an advocate of gender equality. Like feminist scholars, Hirschmann believes that Locke viewed women as less rational than men; unlike them, she thinks that he did not

¹ Brennan and Pateman (1979). Pateman (1988) insisted that Locke’s conception of the social contract was based on the idea of a natural sexual difference, which entailed difference in rationality. Men alone were endowed with attributes and capacities to enter into contracts, for Locke.

² Schochet (1998: 221) and (2007: 149). Schochet maintains critical distance from Jeremy Waldron, who reads Locke as a radical egalitarian for whom equality between the sexes represented “an axiom of theology” (2002: 6; 2007: 241-267).

believe that women were naturally worse at reasoning but rather that this lack was “artificially constructed through the social relations of labor and the sexual division of labor” (2007: 169). Hirschmann notes that, in Locke’s view, education was the key difference: he believed that the “defects and weaknesses in men’s understandings as well as other faculties come from want of a right use of their own minds” (Locke 2000: 159; Hirschmann 2007: 169). Locke would not deem it impossible for women to increase their intellectual abilities, but would consider it as useless, in Hirschmann’s view: women would not have time or energy to develop reason, because of their domestic duties and their role in reproduction.

Hirschmann’s interpretation seems to me too generous. Locke was a physician; substantial evidence points to his considering women as naturally prone to vehement passions, in perfect agreement with the medical literature of his time. Rationality, in Locke’s opinion, was closely linked to self-dominance; women could hardly be expected to achieve complete dominance over themselves, because of the power of vehement passions exerted over their psyche. Their strong emotional attachment to their children rendered them unfit for Locke’s masculine project of education; men were “the abler and the stronger” because of their ability to regulate their emotions.

To support my view, in the first paragraph I shall dwell on the role played by mothers in *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, which could scarcely be interpreted as supporting equality between the sexes; in the second paragraph I shall consider the enormous power which Locke, as well as several other seventeenth-century natural philosophers, attributed to vehement passions on women’s psyche and the causes of this weakness, which could not be mended by education.

2. *Locke on women’s education*

According to Melissa Butler, Locke advocated equal education for girls, with minor modifications which had primarily to do with protecting their complexions from being damaged by the sun (1978: 148). Certainly, the idea that women should enjoy equal access to quality education had begun to circulate in Locke’s time, although in restricted groups; a staunch advocate of this idea was Mrs. Bathsua Makin, a scholar with extensive learning and one of the champions of her sex. Mrs. Makin claimed that it was wrong to consider women as unfit for liberal education; she criticized the opinion which described them in such unfavourable terms:

Women do not much desire Knowledge; they are of low parts, soft fickle natures, they have other things to do they will not mind if they be once Bookish: The end of

Learning is to fit one for publick Employment, which women are not capable of...And that which is worst of all, they are of such ill natures, that they will abuse their Education, and be so intolerably Proud, there will be no living with them: If all these things could be answered, they would not have leisure. (1673: 6)

Two decades later, Daniel Defoe firmly rejected female intellectual inferiority; he wrote,

I have often thought of it as one of the most barbarous Customs in the World, considering us as a Civiliz'd and a Christian Countrey, that we deny the advantages of Learning to Women. We reproach the Sex every day with Folly and Impertinence, while I am confident, had they the advantages of Education equal to us, they wou'd be guilty of less than our selves (1697: 282).

In the last decades of the seventeenth century, a process of enlightenment had begun, vigorously assisted by the English writer Mary Astell. Astell was the most capable champion of the “fair” sex in the seventeenth century; in *A serious Proposal to the Ladies*, she challenged the prejudice about women’s intellectual inferiority and claimed that their avowed incapacity was acquired, not natural. Men were culpable of women’s ignorance and silliness, because they denied them the “benefits of an ingenuous and liberal Education”; challenging their prejudices, Astell urged women to furnish their “minds with a stock of solid and useful knowledge” (2002: 61-62; 77). The expression “useful knowledge” was frequent in *Some Thoughts*; Astell must have known Locke’s works well.³ Her purpose, however, was quite different from Locke’s. Astell aimed at promoting a sound education inculcating a good understanding in women, uprooting their ignorance and creating the right conditions for enhancing their religious piety; Locke thought of a liberal, not pedantic *paideia* able to prepare the gentleman for his future responsibilities.

Some Thoughts was a manual of advice to fathers; female education was not one of its topics. One may suppose that when Locke’s close friend William Molyneux, a keen reader and admirer of *Some Thoughts*, wrote to him that “Girls Minds require as much Framing, as the Boys, and by the same Rules”,⁴ he was drawing his attention to a fault in his book, not a virtue of it. Locke might have perceived this omission; in the first paragraphs of *Some Thoughts* he had written,

³ See Perry (1986). Astell was a keen reader of the *Essay*; later, she launched a serious attack on Locke in her *The Christian Religion, as professed by a Daughter of the Church of England*, her longest and most sophisticated work of moral philosophy. The book was published in 1705, a few months after Locke’s death. Astell’s criticism was addressed to Locke’s unorthodox religious opinions.

⁴ William Molineux to Locke, 4 October 1697, in Locke (1981: 222).

the principal aim of my Discourse is, how a young Gentleman should be brought up from his infancy, which, in all things, will not so perfectly suit the Education of *Daughters*; though where the difference of Sex requires different treatment, 'twill be no hard matter to distinguish (1989: § 6, 86).

As a matter of fact, Locke did not seem to be eager to bring traditional views on female education into question. The "difference of sex" demanded different treatment: this was an obvious truth in his view, which did not require any further investigation. Women should be prepared for motherhood: this was all that was expected from them. Their course of studies should fit this purpose: as future mothers, women only needed to have a level of instruction sufficient to provide for their children's learning during the first ten years of their life. They were not expected to study classical languages; mothers could assist in their sons' learning Latin, and thereby learn it themselves, but only because this might prompt their children to view Latin as an easy subject. In Locke's terms,

whatever stir there is made about getting of *Latin*, as the great and difficult business, his Mother may teach it him her self, if she will but spend two or three hours in a day with him, and make him read the Evangelists in *Latin* to her: For she need but buy a *Latin* Testament, and having got somebody to mark the last Syllable but one, where it is long, in Words above two Syllables, (which is enough to regulate her Pronunciation and Accenting the Words) read daily in the *Gospels*, and then let her avoid Understanding them in *Latin* if she can. And when she understands the Evangelists in *Latin*, let her, in the same manner, read *Aesop's fables*, and so proceed on to *Eutropius*, *Justin*, and other such Books. (1989: § 177, 234)

Girls were not expected to study either Latin, logic or rhetoric; Locke seemed to appreciate their learning French from a mother-tongue governess, a method of learning foreign languages he also recommended for males.⁵ Moreover, he considered a good command of English to be essential for both sexes, albeit not in the same measure and for different reasons. Being able to express yourself well both in writing and speaking was a distinctive quality of the gentleman; his dignity, as well as his business, demanded this.⁶ For mothers,

⁵ Locke (1989: § 165, 218). Locke seemed to be surprised that this method for teaching foreign languages was not used with boys: he wrote, "And when we so often see a *French*-Woman teach an *English*-Girl to speak and read *French* perfectly in a Year or Two, without any Rule of Grammar, or any thing else but prattling to her, I cannot but wonder, how Gentlemen have over-seen this way for their Sons, and thought them more dull or incapable than their Daughters". There might be a touch of irony in this remark.

⁶ Locke (1989: § 189, 241): "There can scarce be a greater Defect in a Gentleman, than not to express himself well, either in Writing or Speaking".

knowing English was only meant to make them able to support their children in practising their own language; this task however, noted Locke, might also be performed by someone else.⁷ A mother was not expected to excel in this knowledge: Locke remarked that it was ridiculous that “the Boy’s Mother (despised, ‘tis like, as illiterate, for not having read a System of *Logick* and *Rhetorick*) outdoes him in it” (1989: § 189, 243).

As for other subjects, Locke praised a mother of his own acquaintance who had taught her son the rudiments of geography; later, a tutor would finish off her work.⁸ Mothers were not expected to assist in this subsequent phase of learning; this was not their business. It is unclear whether mathematics, which Locke viewed as fundamentally important in developing a capacity for abstract reasoning, was included in female instruction; overall, the course of studies he counselled women to adopt was practical, rather than abstract or metaphysical. It was suited for preparing them for their role in society, not for developing their powers of reasoning.

A passage in *Some Thoughts* might suggest that women’s education was to be improved somehow; Locke wrote,

I have seen little Girls exercise whole Hours together, and take abundance of pains to be expert at *Dibstones*, as they call it: Whilst I have been looking on, I have thought, it wanted only some good Contrivance to make them employ all that Industry about something that might be more useful to them; and methinks ‘tis only the fault and negligence of elder People, that it is not so. (1989: § 152, 210)

Locke was concerned about preventing young children from being idle; the example of a useful pastime he cited (a game to teach the alphabet), illustrated what kind of improvements he had in mind for young girls. This was quite unlike Mrs. Makin’s idea of female instruction, including the study of grammar, rhetoric, logic, physics, languages (particularly Greek and Hebrew) and mathematics.

Improving female education was not, as a matter of fact, one of Locke’s concerns in *Some Thoughts*. He seemed to be much more interested in highlighting mothers’ mistakes: in the first part of the book, devoted to bringing up children, he advised mothers against several types of behaviour which might

⁷ Locke (1989: § 163, 216-217): “Care is to be taken, whilst he is learning these Foreign Languages, by speaking and reading nothing else with his Tutor, that he do not forget to read *English*, which may be preserved by his Mother, or some-body else, hearing him read some chosen Parts of the Scripture, or other *English* Book every Day”.

⁸ Locke (1989: § 178, 233). The mother was Locke’s friend Lady Masham. Locke hastened to clarify that what the mother had taught to her child was not all that he was to learn, but “a good step and preparation” to it.

impair their children's health and even prejudice their education. Mothers were warned against the harm which "cockering and tenderness" could do to their children's constitutions (1989: § 4, 84), and ridiculed for being eager to mend any imperfection in their babies;⁹ they were reproached for covering their children up too much,¹⁰ encouraging bad eating habits,¹¹ and being over-indulgent towards their children's whims.¹² Mothers were also warned against stimulating their daughters' vanity by buying them new clothes (1989: § 37, 106); the mistakes of "fond mothers" were likened to those of "foolish servants". A mother's conduct towards her children had to conform to the father's in all respects: she should follow her husband's example in showing disappointment or appraisal to her children, whenever their actions demanded so.¹³ Locke seemed to suggest that fathers would take over the instruction of their children during adolescence, whereas in the earliest years mothers would be in charge of their education; however, it seemed to be clear that mothers were not allowed to take any decisions on their own concerning their sons, even in their earlier years. Locke praised a "prudent and kind mother" of his own acquaintance who had been able to prevail upon her daughter's stubbornness by beating her several times, and another mother who had complied with her daughter's desire to have pets but only on condition that she took full responsibility for them: in both cases, he was referring to daughters, not sons (1989: § 78, 139; § 116, 180-181).

The narrow margin of freedom Locke granted mothers in decision making, and the many mistakes against which he warned them, suggest that he might not view them as equal partners in education; their tender feelings towards

⁹ Locke (1989: § 11, 90): "And if Women were themselves to frame the Bodies of their Children in their Wombs, as they often endeavour to mend their Shapes when they are out, we should as certainly have no perfect Children born, as we have few well-shaped that are *strait-laced*, or much tamper'd with". Mothers were also warned against obliging their children to wear uncomfortable dresses to look fashionable.

¹⁰ Locke (1989: § 5, 85; § 7, 86). Locke suggested young children should wash their feet every day in cold water; he commented, "Here, I fear, I shall have the Mistriss and Maids too against me".

¹¹ Locke (1989: § 13, 92): "This I am sure, Children would breed their Teeth with much less danger, be freer from Diseases whilst they were little, and lay the Foundations of an healthy and strong Constitution much surer, if they were not cram'd so much as they are, by fond Mothers and foolish servants, and were kept wholly from Flesh the first three or four Years of their Lives".

¹² Locke (1989: § 18, 95): "I believe Mothers generally find some Difficulty to wean their Children from *Drinking* in the Night, when they first take them home. Believe it, Custom prevails, as much by Day as by Night; and you may, if you please, bring any one to be thirsty every Hour". In Locke (1989: § 22, 99), the image of the "Mother's fine Gilt Cup" was used to refer to those excessive comforts which children should learn to do without.

¹³ Locke (1989: § 124, 187). Locke recommended a gentleman should take care that the child's "Mother, Tutor, and all about him" followed his example in showing approbation or dislike towards him.

their children were an obstacle in such a fundamental enterprise, in his opinion. A mother's emotional attachment was something natural for Locke, and as such was not to be disapproved of: when criticizing the custom of teaching children the dangerous art of fencing in *Some Thoughts*, he appealed to the tears of those mothers who had been deprived of their sons because of this imprudence (1989: § 199, 254). However, female emotional sensitivity was incompatible with the masculinity of Locke's ideal of education;¹⁴ women were not fit for such a project. The stoical "brawniness and insensibility of Mind" (1989: § 113, 173) which he recommended to be instilled into children's minds were not within the reach of "fond mothers": from the very first pages of *Some Thoughts*, Locke foretold that they would not accept his doctrine. (1989: § 7, 87) Mothers would deem his method "too hard", whereas fathers would consider it "too short";¹⁵ the content of *Some Thoughts* showed that Locke considered this latter opinion as entirely reasonable. Fathers would be worried about their children's being sufficiently refined in manners by education, as required for their future dignity: Locke took this concern seriously in his book. Mothers, on the other hand, would not been thinking of the future dignity of their sons, but only of their own strong attachment; even in later years, their tender feelings might represent a serious obstacle to perfecting their children's education. Mothers would long to have their sons married off quickly, so as to enjoy the company of new babies; fathers too might be tempted to hasten their marriage, but for economic reasons. They would be thinking of the passing down of property, a topic of the utmost importance to Locke (1989: § 216, 265). Even regarding their daughters' education, a mother's attachment might be a hindrance: they should "force" themselves to whip them when necessary. (§ 78, 139) In any case, it would be unnatural for them to act wisely for their offspring's good.

One might say that custom was, in Locke's view, responsible for a mother's many mistakes: if better educated, women might successfully overcome those defects of their own understanding which made them unfit for being more involved in his educational project. Butler seemed to suggest this when she noted that, in a letter to Mary Clarke (the wife of Edward Clarke, the dedicatee of *Some Thoughts*), Locke wrote, "Since therefore I acknowledge no difference of sex in your mind relating [...] to truth, virtue and obedience, I think well

¹⁴ Masculinity was essential in seventeenth-century idea of gentility, as Solinger (2012) clarifies. The strong ideal of virility which prevailed in late seventeenth-century writings on education made some teachings, music for instance, unsuitable for young boys; Locke's *Some Thoughts* fully conformed to this ideal. See Di Biase (2015).

¹⁵ Locke (1989: § 4, 84). Locke was referring to his rule that "gentlemen should use their children, as the honest farmers and substantial yeomen do their".

to have no thing altered in it from what I have writ".¹⁶ The principles of his treatise were therefore, in Locke's view, equally applicable to both sexes: but which principles? He was thinking of moral principles, not of instruction. In *Some Thoughts*, he insisted that children were to be taught not to lie, to obey their parents and to be virtuous; virtue was what mattered the most, and the true scope of education. However, boys had formidable support in this regard: they could study the "Wise and Useful Sentences" of classical authors such as Horace, Seneca and Cicero, who emphasized the importance of wisdom, temperance, fortitude and all the other virtues in human life (1989: § 176, 233); they could be instructed as to the great significance of prudence by studying history. Their "discreet, sober and wise" tutors would support them thanks to their knowledge of "the Ways, the Humors, the Follies, the Cheats, the Faults of the Age he [the child] is fallen into, and particularly of the Country he lives in" (1989: § 90, 148; § 94, 152). This knowledge was essentially what Greek and Roman writers excelled in, for Locke; it was to be gradually instilled by the tutor into his pupil's mind, in order to disclose to him what "lies at the bottom" of the manifold appearances which cover men's pretences, and render him able to "guess at, and beware of, the Designs of Men he hath to do with, neither with too much Suspicion, nor too much Confidence" (1989: § 94, 152). All this support, however, was reserved for boys; girls should learn how to be virtuous from their mothers. But how could those "fond mothers" whose mistakes Locke likened to those of "foolish servants" be adequate for such an enterprise? We may suppose that the degree of virtue a gentleman should possess, in Locke's view, was not the same as that required of the other sex. He noted that modesty was particularly appropriate to a girl (1989: § 60, 118); "the retirement and bashfulness" in which daughters were usually brought up were not to be criticized, in his view (§ 70, 129). He agreed with customary female education in this regard; he did not seem to expect more from women than what custom required of them. The development of right reason was not among these requirements.

The only transgressions to custom Locke seemed to encourage regarding female education were motivated by physical health. Contrary to the common opinion that girls should avoid playing outdoor, because of the negative cosmetic effects of the sun, Locke recommended females should take part in abundant outdoor activity; he wrote,

although greater Regard be to be had to Beauty in the Daughters, yet I will take the Liberty to say, that the more they are in the *Air*, without prejudice to their Faces,

¹⁶ Locke to Mrs. Mary Clarke, 7 February 1684, in Locke (1976: 686).

the stronger and healthier they will be; and the nearer they come to the Hardships of their Brothers in their Education, the greater Advantage will they receive from it, all the remaining Part of their Lives. (§ 9, 89)

The “masculine” kind of physical activity Locke recommended for females was no doubt connected to his medical expertise, as witnessed by the considerable amount of advice regarding hygiene filling the pages of *Some Thoughts*; he seemed to agree with the physician Thomas Sydenham, whose talent he celebrated in the *Essay*, concerning the importance of physical activity in preventing some diseases. Sydenham had devoted special attention to hysteria, a female distemper which was of great interest at that time, given the diverse ideas relating it to the uterus or to psychological and physiological causes; he believed that hysteria, like other diseases, could be cured by a “cooling regimen” consisting in “refreshing” the blood. Sydenham noted that women did not always benefit from such a regimen because of their sedentary life (1716: 399); as a physician, Locke seemed to agree with him. He recommended horse riding to some of his female patients, an activity which was part of Sydenham’s cooling regime, and in *Some Thoughts* praised women playing outdoor, to a certain extent. Girls should try to be more like their brothers by enduring the “hardships” of physical activity, for this might protect them from future diseases; but what about their enduring the “hardships” of cultivating their own minds? Locke remained silent on this topic; he did not advocate any change in the usual way of educating women, apart from recommending a certain degree of austerity. Since the development of reason depended on education, it is unclear how, in Locke’s view, women could eventually be able to think as rationally as an educated man.

I suspect that Locke’s answer would be that they could not: men were “abler and stronger”, in his opinion. In the *Two treatises of Government* he made it clear that women’s lot was procreation and subjection to their husbands, as stated in Genesis.¹⁷ Locke was opposed to a political reading of Adam’s supremacy over Eve, which would grant him power of life and death over her, but insisted that there was “a Foundation in Nature” for her subjection (1960: I, 47, 174); nature, not custom was responsible for the inequality of power between the two sexes. This was the reason why “every Husband hath to order the things of private Concernment in his Family, as Proprietor of the Goods and Land there, and to have his Will take place before that of his wife in all things of their Common Concernment” (1960: I, 48, 174).

¹⁷ The true meaning of God’s curse on Eve for Locke was to establish “what should be the Womans Lot, how by his Providence he would order it so, that she should be subject to her husband”. See Locke (1960: I, 47, 174).

Arguably, the inferiority Locke attributed to women depended on their being less rational than men; their mind, as well as their body, was less able to endure the “hardships” of life. Rationality for Locke demanded self-dominance;¹⁸ women were less able to achieve this, because of the power exerted by vehement passions over their minds. This power could not be attenuated by education in his view, as I shall argue in the following paragraph.

3. *Locke on women's passions*

In 1697, Locke wrote *Of the Conduct of the Understanding* as a chapter to be added to the *Essay*;¹⁹ like *Some Thoughts*, the *Conduct* was addressed to a general public of gentlemen, namely of “men of little businesse and great leisure” (2000: § 44, 187). In the *Conduct*, Locke considered both the causes which lead us to fail to reason as we should, and the remedies which may prevent us from doing so: this explains why the work came to be regarded as a book on education. Concerning the causes, Locke distinguished between external and internal factors: some errors arose because of extraneous causes, some others because of flaws in our understanding. In the first case, the main cause of error was an ‘*uneasiness* of desire’ which usually took the form of passion; unless passions were brought under control, their influence on our will was such as to mislead judgment and make our reason biased.

Locke admitted that control over intense passions was a task of the utmost difficulty; in the *Essay*, he affirmed that a “boisterous Passion hurries our Thoughts, as a Hurricane does our Bodies, without leaving us the liberty of thinking on other things” (1975: II, xxi, 12, 239-240). Turbulent passions disturbed the memory and misled our judgment (II, x, 7, 152-153; II, xxi, 67, 278); “predominant passions” were one of the causes of our suspending our assent to propositions supported by “real Probabilities” (IV, xx, 7, 711). Similarly, in the *Conduct* Locke insisted that vehement passions such as “Love, or Anger Fear or Grief” deprived reason of its liberty, so that the mind became unable to focus on its object (2000: § 88, 238); he gave an interesting example in this regard, which involved both sexes. He wrote,

A prevaileing passion so pins down our thoughts to the object and concerne of it That a man passionately in love can not bring himself to think of his ordinary affairs,

¹⁸ See Locke (1989: § 33, 103): “As the Strength of the Body lies chiefly in being able to endure Hardships, so also does that of the Mind. And the great Principle and Foundation of all Vertue and Worth, is placed in this, That a Man is able to *deny himself* his own Desires, cross his own Inclinations, and purely follow what Reason directs as best, tho’ the appetite lean the other way”.

¹⁹ The text was first published in 1706, as part of Peter King’s *Posthumous Works of John Locke*.

nor a kind mother drooping under the loss of a child is not able to bear a part as she was wont in the discourse of the company or conversation of her friends. (§ 91, 239)

The same example would reappear in the fourth edition of the *Essay* (1700), but with some important modifications. The case of the bereaved mother was used to illustrate the mechanism of the association of ideas, which in the *Conduct* was described as one of the causes of errors depending not on external factors such as passions, but rather on defects in our understanding. In the *Essay*, Locke gave several examples of this mechanism: he first mentioned the case of a man who, having received some injury from another, became unable to think of the latter without experiencing pain, then the case of a man who having suffered some pain in a certain place, could not think of that place without displeasure. Finally, he referred to the mother afflicted by grief because of the loss of her child. He wrote,

The Death of a Child, that was the daily delight of his Mother's Eyes, and joy of her Soul, rends from her Heart the whole comfort of her Life, and gives her all the torment imaginable; use the Consolations of Reason in this case, and you were as good preach Ease to one on the Rack, and hope to allay, by rational Discourses, the pain of his Joints tearing asunder. Till time has by disuse separated the sense of that Enjoyment and its loss from the Idea of the Child returning to her Memory, all Representations, though never so reasonable, are in vain; and therefore some in whom the union between these Ideas is never dissolved, spend their Lives in Mourning, and carry an incurable Sorrow to their Graves (1975: II, xxxiii, 13, 398-399).

In the *Conduct*, Locke described the wrong association of ideas as the most interesting instance of the nefarious influence of "the empire of habit" (2000: § 77, 229); habits were not to be intended as inborn attitudes - a fundamental principle in Locke's psychology, which conceived of the child's mind at birth as a blank slate -, but rather as a subsequent natural development of the mind. Habits were built by repetition, Locke affirmed in *Some Thoughts*; they could not change individual "Original Tempers" radically, yet they could modify them to a certain extent (1989: § 66, 122). Right habits of thinking and of determining the will were to be inscribed early in the child's mind, since it was very difficult to eradicate wrong ones later.

The particular danger in the wrong association of ideas for Locke was that it corrupted the very basic material of our own reasoning: the mind became unable to perceive the agreement or disagreement of its individual ideas, and became fully addicted to erroneous principles. In the *Conduct*, Locke affirmed that the best remedy for error was mental exercise or practice: wrong habits must be prevented or cured by right habits provided by practice (2000: § 8, 158).

In the *Essay*, however, he seemed to be more pessimistic: he affirmed that when “this Combination is settled and whilst it lasts, it is not in the power of Reason to help us, and relieve us from the Effects of it” (1975: II, xxxiii, 13, 398). The example of the mother was employed to clarify this point: her grief was intractable by reason and could only be overcome, if ever, by time. Locke had first hand experience of women’s tenacious attachment to grief and melancholic feelings; the letters of condolence he wrote to some of his female acquaintances indicated he viewed women as particularly prone to “incurable sorrow”.²⁰ The letters contained firm recommendations on how to use reason to prevent these feelings from becoming overwhelming; he was clearly concerned about women’s weakness in this regard. The example of the bereaved mother in the *Essay* highlighted this concern: only in this case did Locke mention death as a possible outcome of the mechanism of wrong association of ideas. Only in this case, not in the other examples, did he refer to a precise social role, that of the mother.²¹

The behaviour of the bereaved mother exemplified a basic form of irrationality, which went against a fundamental principle in Locke’s moral psychology. In the *Essay*, he affirmed that there were two basic innate dispositions in the human mind, the desire for happiness and an aversion to misery: he wrote,

Nature, I confess, has put into Man a desire of Happiness, and an aversion to Misery: These indeed are innate practical Principles, which (as practical Principles ought) do continue constantly to operate and influence all our Actions, without ceasing: these may be observ’d in all Persons and all Ages, steady and universal. (1975: I, iii, 3, 67)

Being natural, these principles were perfectly rational, for Locke; they represented the basis of rational behaviour. Women, however, seemed to show a certain stubborn inclination to cultivate unpleasant feelings and indulge in disruptive passions, which could hardly be reconciled with reason; this was a fault which could not be mended by education, being not the effect of a habit. A woman’s psyche was deficient in some important manner.

²⁰ The first letter of condolence addressed to a woman in Locke’s epistolary was written when he was twenty-one years old; it was addressed to a certain “T.A.E.” who had lost her husband recently, and contained stoical arguments against indulging in sorrow. See Locke to T.A.E., 1653, in Locke (1976a) 14-15. Another letter was written by him several years later to Martha Lockhart, who had lost her brother; in the epistolary we find only Martha’s answer, which thanked Locke for his rational arguments. See Martha Lockhart to Locke, 11 Febr. 1696, Locke (1979: 532). Another of Locke’s female acquaintances, Frances St. John, received a letter of condolence from him in 1700; see Francis St. John to Locke, 16 Feb. 1700, in Locke (1982: 12). Frances was perplexed about Locke’s rational way of treating bereavement.

²¹ Regarding Locke’s stoical attitude towards grief and vehement passions in general, see Di Biase (2016).

Locke had had personal experience of this deficiency in women's psyche: his correspondence with one of his female acquaintances, Margaret Beavis, highlighted this. Locke and Margaret were close friends; she showed a strong propensity to sympathize with others' sufferings, which had led her to depression. Locke thoroughly disapproved of her overindulgent attitude towards sorrow; he forbade her such feelings, which were impairing her mental and physical health. Margaret protested against such an imposition: was not compassion one of God's commandments? Locke's answer was illuminating: he maintained that he did not want Margaret to behave uncivilly towards her acquaintances, yet he insisted that "to a rationall creature one should not need to make use of arguments to perswade her to be happy, the first degree whereof is to be rid of trouble and vexation".²² Indulging in sorrow was against reason; Margaret seemed to be particularly prone to this irrational kind of behaviour.

Locke had experienced this indulgence even in the case of his close friend the learned Damaris Cudworth Masham, the daughter of the renowned Neoplatonist Ralph Cudworth²³; Locke celebrated her intellectual talent in a letter addressed to one of his friends, the Remonstrant theologian Philippus van Limborch.²⁴ Lady Masham often suffered from a melancholic mood which she attributed to various causes;²⁵ Locke suggested she might read Stoical philosophers (a piece of advice for melancholic women quite à la mode in the seventeenth century). Lady Masham, however, did not seem to appreciate these authors; she lamented "the Changableness and Inconstancies of ...[her]

²² See Locke to Margaret Beavis, 24 and 27 January 1670, in Locke (1976a: 333). Margaret Beavis, later Mrs. Blomer, was an attendant on Lady Northumberland. Writing to his friend Dr. Mapletoft, Locke noted that the harmful effects which sadness had had on Margaret were extremely different to the effect the same feeling had had on him; see Locke to Dr. John Mapletoft, 10 July 1670, in Locke (1976a: 339).

²³ Locke and Damaris Cudworth became acquainted in 1682; they began to correspond in that year. Damaris married a widow, Sir Francis Masham, in 1685. Locke and Lady Masham continued to correspond during the years Locke spent in Holland; on his return to England, he became a permanent resident at Oates, Lady Masham's house. Locke's intellectual pursuits in the last years of his life were overseen by Lady Masham. See Locke's open letter to Samuel Bold in the preface to *A Second Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (1697), in Locke (2012: 36).

²⁴ See Locke to Philippus van Limborch, 13 March 1691, in Locke (1979a: 237-238): "The lady herself is so much occupied with the study and reflection on theological and philosophical matters that you could find few men with whom you might associate with greater profit and pleasure. Her judgment is singularly keen, and I know few men capable of discussing with such insight the most abstruse subjects, such as are beyond the grasp, I do not say of women, but even of most educated men, and of resolving the difficulties they present". Masham wrote two books, *A Discourse Concerning the Love of God* (1696) and *Occasional Thoughts in Reference to a Vertuous or Christian Life* (1705). See Masham (2004).

²⁵ One of these was her separation from her beloved brother, who was appointed to manage the Company of East India: see Damaris Cudworth to Locke, 14 August 1682, in Locke (1976b: 539).

Nature",²⁶ and complained about the world being full of illusions.²⁷ It is unclear how efficacious Locke's rational advice was for her.²⁸

As a physician, Locke had sound reasons for fearing the power of vehement passions on women's psyche: grief, for instance, was viewed as a potentially fatal passion in the seventeenth century. Bills of mortality mentioned fear and grief among the causes of death;²⁹ several physicians warned against the unhealthy effects of vehement passions. In his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, the academic Robert Burton made grief one of the causes of melancholy, and claimed that this passion "overthrows the natural heat, perverts the good estate of body and mind, and makes them [those afflicted by it] weary of their lives"; he noted that women were "more violent and grievously troubled" by melancholy and other passions than men (1850: 110). A contemporary of Burton, Thomas Wright, explained that women "by nature, are enclined more to mercie and pitie than men, because the tendernesse of their complexion moveth them more to compassion". They were easily caught by vehement passions because of their "weakness and unableness to resist adversities or any other injury" (1630: 40). Other physicians of the time viewed women as easy prey for their power; they followed Aristotelian and Galenic physiology, which described women as more emotional and tending towards extremes in nature due to a lack of rational intellect (MacLean 1980: 28-46). The excessive melancholic humours and fluids in the female body, as well as their overall weak constitution, were viewed as the causes of this tendency; humours in excess could lead to dangerous physiological imbalances such as overly melancholic or choleric dispositions.³⁰

Sydenham had developed his own theory in this regard. He considered vehement passions as one of the causes of hysteria; in his view, women were particularly tormented by them because of the close link between the "*outward and visible Man*" composed of "sensible parts", and the "*Internal Man*" consist-

²⁶ See Damaris Cudworth to Locke, 23 May 1682, in Locke (1976b: 517).

²⁷ See Damaris Cudworth to Locke, 28 November 1682, in Locke (1976b: 562).

²⁸ Locke sent a letter to Lady Masham in 1687, on the occasion of her mother's illness; Locke's letter is lost, but we may guess something of its content from Damaris' answer. She wrote, "All that you say I must owne is very Reasonable; and would not have beene I hope without some efficacie", she continued, alluding to the eventuality of her mother's death. However, Damaris added, "should that loss ever befall me, I must believe for several Reasons that few Can be Capable to judge of the Greatness of it". Lady Masham to Locke, 7 Nov. 1687, Locke (1978: 293). Damaris might have not considered Locke as one of these few, because of his "very reasonable" way of approaching grief.

²⁹ See "London's Bill of Mortality (December 1664-December 1665) [Official Document]", in CYH, Item 159, <http://chnm.gmu.edu/cyh/items/show/159> (accessed February 29, 2020).

³⁰ Useful summaries of these ideas may be found in Laqueur (1992: 25-148); Ortner, Whitehead (1981); Stoller (1995: 48-82); Fletcher (1995).

ing in the “orderly Constitution of the Spirits”. The “internal man” could “only be discerned by the Light of Reason”; being “intimately joynd and united to the Temperament of the Body, or Corporeal Man”, he was “more or less easily disturbed and overturned, according to the strength of those Principles which Nature has endued us with”. This was “the Reason that Women are more subject to these Diseases than Man, as being framed with a finer and more delicate Constitution of Body than Man are, who are fitted by Nature for a more Laborious and Active Life” (1716: 387-388).

Sydenham pathologized vehement passions; this might have influenced Locke’s medical opinion on this subject, along with other important sources. As a physics student at Christ College, Oxford, he had attended the lessons of Thomas Willis, who enquired into the exact role that nerves played in emotions;³¹ Willis’s findings led to a revision of the language of passion and were of great significance for women in the seventeenth century. In his view, hysteric passion had its origin in the brain as a consequence of a “vehement Passion, as of fear, or Anger, or of Sadness of spirit”. Women were particularly prone to these passions, because of the weak constitution of their animal spirits. Willis wrote,

animal Spirits are in some more tender, and easily dissipable, from their very birth; so that indeed, they are not able to suffer any thing very strong or vehement, to be brought to the sense or Imagination, but strait they fly into confusions: For this Reason, women more than men, and some of them more then others, are obnoxious to the passions called Histerick. Further, sometimes a violent Passion, impresses on the spirits, though moderatly firm, this kind of dissipation and inordination, so that afterwards they are able to suffer nothing strongly, or to resist any injurie: So it often happens, that morbid impressions are affixed on the animal *regimen*, by sudden fear, or great sadness, which can hardly ever after be blotted out.³²

A renowned philosopher of the time, Nicholas Malebranche, employed Willis’s neurology to assert the natural origin of women’s intellectual inferiority, which in his view was due to supposedly more sensitive nerve fibres in the female brain.³³ Malebranche attributed a superiority in taste to women,

³¹ Locke took some notes on Willis’s lectures concerning the origin of nervous fits; he wrote, “The antecedent causes of this fermentation or boiling are anything tending to agitate that matter; the most fertile agent being an error or excess [...] for example, anger, sudden passions, terror, joy, intemperance, drunkenness”. See Dewhurst (1980: 81). Willis’s explanations of nerves are in Willis (1664).

³² Willis (1681: 6-7). The work had been originally published in Latin in 1667, with the title *Pathologiae Cerebri*. On p. 37, Willis insisted that women were often tormented by “a great sadness”.

³³ Malebranche (1997: 130-131). *The Search after Truth* was published in 1674-75; it was translated into English in 1694-95. In the second book, as part of an account of the errors arising from the

but also an inferiority in attentiveness and reason depending on their delicate fibres and body's influence on their minds;³⁴ women's ability to penetrate the truth was not equal to men's. Malebranche acknowledged that some women were tremendously learned and courageous, and that women in general were quicker than men to recognize the falsity of certain prejudices,³⁵ yet he maintained that the female sex was unsuited to contemplating abstract metaphysical truths, "feeble-minded", "stupid and weak", "blindly submissive" and hopelessly "superstitious" (1997: 279, 326).

Locke knew Malebranche's work well.³⁶ He criticized occasionalism in some manuscript notes which he left unpublished,³⁷ yet his views on moral psychology were surprisingly akin to Malebranche's.³⁸ They also agreed on the pernicious influence which women, as mother and nurses, might have on the early education of children; like Locke, Malebranche held mothers responsible for the derangement of infant minds.

I suspect that Locke's opinions on women were not too dissimilar to Malebranche's. During his life, he had become acquainted with very talented wom-

prejudices of imagination, Malebranche devoted an entire section to "The imagination of women". He argued that because brain fibres are soft and delicate in women (compared to those of most adult men), the animal spirits disturb their brains to a far greater extent. As a consequence, women do not have the concentration span to address complex questions. Regarding Malebranche's opinion on women, see Broad (2012).

³⁴ I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for drawing my attention to Hamerton (2008), who highlighted the role played by the *Recherche* in the seventeenth century as an important instance of physiological gendering of sensibility and taste: Malebranche attributed a superiority in taste to women, but trivialized this property as a capacity for superficial discrimination. He criticized taste on the grounds of the body's misleading influence on the mind. I would also like to thank the reviewer for directing my attention to McCracken's work (see note 36).

³⁵ Malebranche (1997: 542). Malebranche attributed this superiority to the fact that women exercise greater caution in their judgments than men.

³⁶ Locke read Malebranche's *Recherche* in French: he owned the third edition, the first including the *Eclaircissements*, and the fourth edition. See Harrison, Laslett (1971: 182). Locke's interest in the *Recherche* dates back to his stay in France in the late seventies; at that time, Malebranche's name had become renowned in England, as is documented by McCracken (1983).

³⁷ Locke's criticism was prompted by John Norris, a disciple of Malebranche, who attacked the *Essay* in 1690. Locke made no reply (his friend Jean Le Clerc did it on the pages of his *Bibliothèque Universelle*); he wrote *An Examination of P. Malebranche's Opinion of seeing all things in God* (King, Collins 1706: 139-213). Locke also wrote his *Remarks upon some of Mr. Norris's Books* (Desmaizeaux 1720: 151-176). Two other manuscript notes by Locke, devoted to criticize Norris and Malebranche's opinions, are mentioned in Schuurman (2008).

³⁸ According to Vienne (1991), Locke was possibly influenced by Malebranche's view that the will would be able to suspend consent to the execution of desires. Locke expounded this theory in a chapter added to the second edition of the *Essay* (1979: II, xxi, 47, 263); he identified this power of the will as the source of liberty.

en, who must have appeared to be the exception rather than the rule;³⁹ the great majority of them were unable to use their reason properly, in his view. The medical knowledge of his time suggested women fell prey easily to vehement passions, which tended to impair their mental and physical health; Locke's epistemology made vehement passions responsible for bias creeping into reason and corrupting judgment. He was particularly concerned with women's tendency to succumb to "incurable sorrow" and melancholic feelings; he did not view them as being able to be easily convinced to abandon their disruptive emotions by rational discourses. Women's inferior ability to reason was the effect of natural causes, in the medical literature of the times; it is hard to believe that Locke held a different opinion.

4. *Conclusion*

Nancy Hirschmann maintains that the question of gender in Locke's thought should be considered through the lens of class: both in the case of women and the poor, a level of reason would be employed to legitimize inequality. In Locke's view, women of all classes and the poor would be prevented from developing their reason to the same extent as the gentleman not owing to their natural incapacities, but rather to the structure of his educational programme; education would be too demanding a task for them. As Hirschmann puts it, Locke believed that

the process of education is so incredibly time-consuming, taking years of careful preparation of the canvas before an equally painstaking application of paint...since what is learned must be continually practiced, such elaborate education is pointless for any but the economically privileged, who have the sustained leisure to support it. (2007: 181)

Hirschmann might well be right concerning the poor; however, her arguments seem to be less cogent regarding women. Why should bourgeois women, in Locke's view, be prevented from developing their reason, given the utility this would have for their families? Hirschmann answers that Locke criticized mothers "for spoiling their children, and for worrying too much about their frailty", but not for their idleness (2007: 180). Their running a household and

³⁹ One of them was Catharine Trotter Cockburn, a great admirer of the *Essay*; Cockburn wrote publicly, although anonymously, in defence of its author in 1702. Locke praised "the strength and clearness" of Cockburn's reasoning: see Locke to Catharine Trotter, 30 December 1702, in Locke (1982: 731). It is also worth remembering Locke's appraisal of the Countess of Northumberland, whom he cured for a trigeminal neuralgia in 1677; in a letter to Dr. Mapletoft, Locke described her as "a person of extraordinary temper", able to endure "very great pain". See Locke to Dr. John Mapletoft, 24 Nov./4 Dec. 1677, in Locke (1976a: 360).

overseeing servants was enough, in his view, to make them industrious. This, however, would seem to be in sharp contrast with Locke's appraisal, in *Some Thoughts*, of that mother who had taught the rudiments of geography to her child, not to mention the prevailing opinion in his time that women were prone to idleness.⁴⁰ Even Lady Masham was of this opinion; she was actively engaged in promoting women's education, and urged mothers to employ "some of their many idle Hours" in learning "useful Sciences".⁴¹ Locke did not say this. He seemed to believe that only some mothers had the rational capacity for employing their idle hours in a more advantageous way: this was the case of the talented Lady Masham, the exception rather than the rule.

There seems to be scarcely any evidence supporting Hirschmann's argument, apart from the key role Locke attributed to education in developing the ability to reason;⁴² I have attempted to show that this argument could not be compelling in the case of women, because of the inconsistency Locke found between indulging in vehement passions and our innate practical principles.

Giuliana Di Biase
giuliana.dibiase@unich.it
Università "G. d'Annunzio"

References

- Astell, Mary, 2002, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies, Parts I and II* (1694; 1697), edited by Patricia Springborg, Broadview Press Ltd, Peterborough Ont.
- Brathwait, Richard, 1631, *The English Gentlewoman. Drawn out to the Full Body*, M. Sparke, London.
- Brennan, Teresa, Carole Pateman, 1979, "'Mere Auxiliaries to the Commonwealth': Women and the Origins of Liberalism", in *Political Studies*, 27, 2: 183-200.

⁴⁰ A renowned Puritan conduct writer, Richard Brathwait, quarreled heartily with the idleness prevalent among women, who spent much of their time at their mirrors and attended plays in the afternoons. See Brathwait (1631: 50).

⁴¹ Masham (2004: 192). Masham claimed that instruction was the only way in which women could perfect their virtues and become true Christians, free from silly superstitions. She complained about the ignorance in which they were usually brought up.

⁴² Hirschmann (2007: 168, 178) contends that the *Two Treatises* would imply women's rationality through the reiteration of the divine command "Honour your father and mother"; however, she acknowledges that by commanding obedience to mothers as well as fathers Locke meant to double the disciplinary force of his educational method. Moreover, Hirschmann admits that a passage in *The Reasonableness of Christianity* where Locke referred both to women and the poor suggested a natural limitation of women's reason. See Locke (1999: 170): "Men of that rank (to say nothing of the other Sex) can comprehend plain propositions, and a short reasoning about things familiar to their Minds, and nearly allied to their daily experience".

- Broad, Jacqueline, 2012, "Impressions in the Brain. Malebranche on Women and Women on Malebranche", in *Intellectual History Review* 22, 3: 373-389.
- Burton, Robert, 1850, *The Anatomy of Melancholy, what it is, with all the Kinds, Causes, Symptoms, Prognostics, and several Cures of it* (1621), J. W. Moore, J. Wiley, Philadelphia, New York.
- Butler, Melissa, 1978, "Early Liberal Roots of Feminism: John Locke and the Attack on Patriarchy", in *American Political Science Review*, 72: 135-150.
- CYH (*Children and Youth in History*), <<http://chnm.gmu.edu/cyh/>>.
- Defoe, Daniel, 1697, *An Essay upon Projects*, Th. Cockerill, London.
- Desmaizeaux, Pierre, 1720, ed., *A Collection of Several Pieces of Mr. John Locke, never before printed, or extant in his works*, R. Franklin, London.
- Dewhurst, Kenneth, 1980, *Thomas Willis's Oxford Lectures*, Sanford, Oxford.
- Di Biase, Giuliana, 2015, "Liberal Education in John Locke's *Some Thoughts concerning Education*", in *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, 94, 3: 564-587.
- Di Biase, Giuliana, 2016, "John Locke's Stoicism: *Grief, Apathy and Sympathy*", in *Etica & Politica / Ethics & Politics*, 18, 2: 215-239.
- Fletcher, Anthony, 1995, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800*, Yale University Press, New Haven.
- Hamerton, Katharine J., 2008, "Malebranche, Taste, and Sensibility: The Origins of Sensitive Taste and a Reconsideration of Cartesianism's Feminist Potential", in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 69, 4: 533-558.
- Harrison, John, Laslett, Peter, 1971, *The Library of John Locke*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Hirschmann, Nancy J., McClure, Kirstie M., 2007, eds., *Feminist Interpretations of Locke*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania.
- Hirschmann, Nancy J., 2007, "Intersectionality Before Intersectionality Was Cool: The Importance of Class to Feminist Interpretations of Locke", in Hirschmann, McClure: 155-186.
- King, Peter, Collins, Anthony, 1706, eds., *Posthumous Works of Mr. John Locke*, A. and J. Churchill, London.
- Laqueur, Thomas W., 1992, *Making Sex. Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
- Locke, John, 1960, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. by Peter Laslett, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Locke, John, 1975, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, ed. by Peter H. Niddich, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Locke, John, 1976a, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, vol. 1, ed. by Esmond S. de Beer, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Locke, John, 1976b, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, vol. 2, ed. by Esmond S. de Beer, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Locke, John, 1978, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, vol. 3, ed. by Esmond S. de Beer, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

- Locke, John, 1979a, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, vol. 4, ed. Esmond S. de Beer, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Locke, John, 1979b, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, vol. 5, ed. by Esmond S. de Beer, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Locke, John, 1981, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, vol. 6, ed. by Esmond S. de Beer, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Locke, John, 1982, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, vol. 7, ed. by Esmond S. de Beer, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Locke, John, 1989, *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, ed. by John W. and Jean S. Yolton, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Locke, John, 1999, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, ed. by John C. Higgins-Biddle, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Locke, John, 2000, *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, ed. by Paul Schuurmann, Doctoral Dissertation, University Of Keele.
- Locke, John, 2012, *Vindications of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, ed. by Victor Nuovo, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- McCracken, Charles J., 1983, *Malebranche and the British Philosophy*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- MacLean, Ian, 1980, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Makin, Bathsua, 1673, *An Essay to revive the ancient Education of Gentlewomen in religion, manners, arts, and tongues. With an answer to the objections against this way of education*, Th. Parkhurst, London.
- Malebranche, Nicholas, 1997, *The Search after Truth*, Eng. tr. and ed. by Thomas M. Lennon and Paul J. Olscamp, and *Elucidations of The Search after Truth*, Eng. tr. and ed. by Thomas M. Lennon, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Masham, Damaris Cudworth, 2004, *The Philosophical Works of Damaris Cudworth Masham*, ed. by James G. Buickerood, Toemmes Continuum, Bristol.
- Ortner, Sherry B., Whitehead, Harriet, 1981, eds., *Sexual Meanings: The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Pateman, Carole, 1988, *The Sexual Contract*, Stanford University Press, Stanford.
- Perry, Ruth, 1986, *The Celebrated Mary Astell: An Early English Feminist*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London.
- Schochet, Gordon J., 1998, "The Significant Sounds of Silence: the Absence of Women from the Political Thought of Sir Robert Filmer and John Locke (or, 'Why Can't a Woman be More Like a Man?')", in Hilda Smith, ed., *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 220-242.
- Schochet, Gordon J., 2007, "Models of Politics and the Place of Women in Locke's Political Thought", in Hirschmann, McClure: 131-153.
- Schuurman, Paul, 2008, "Vision in God and Thinking Matter: Locke's Epistemological Agnosticism used against Malebranche and Stillingfleet", in Graham A.J. Rog-

- ers, Sarah Hutton, Paul Schuurman, eds., *Studies on Locke: Sources, Contemporaries and Legacy*, Springer, Dordrecht: 177-193.
- Shanley, Mary Lyndon, 1979, "Marriage Contract and Social Contract in Seventeenth Century English Political Thought", in *The Western Political Quarterly*, 32, 1: 79-91.
- Solinger, Jason D., 2012, *Becoming the Gentleman. British Literature and Invention of Modern Masculinity, 1660-1815*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Stoller, Robert J., 1968, *Sex and Gender: on the Development of Masculinity and Femininity*, The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, London.
- Sydenham, Thomas, 1716, 3rd ed., *Praxis Medica. The Practice of Physick: Or Dr. Sydenham's Processus Integri*, tr. and commented by William Solomon, J. Knapton, London.
- Vienne, Jean Michel, 1991, "Malebranche and Locke: the Theory of Moral Choice, a Neglected Theme", in Stuart Brown, ed., *Nicolas Malebranche: His Philosophical Critics and Successors*, Van Gorcum, Aassen and Maastricht: 94-108.
- Waldron, Jeremy, 2002, *God, Locke and Equality. Christian Foundations in Locke's Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Waldron, Jeremy, 2007, "Locke, Adam and Eve", in Hirschmann, McClure: 241-267.
- Wallace, Elizabeth Kowaleski, 1991, *Their Fathers' Daughters: Hannah More, Maria Edgeworth, and Patriarchal Complicity*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Willis, Thomas, 1664, *Cerebri anatome: cui accessit nervorum descriptio et usus*, J. Flesher, London.
- Willis, Thomas, 1681, *An Essay of the Pathology of the Brain and Nervous Stock*, T. Dring, London.
- Wright, Thomas, 1630, 3rd ed., *The Passions of the Minde in General*, W. Burre, London.