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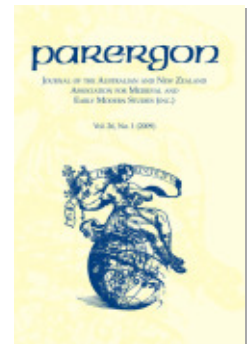
*Finding the Family in Medieval and Early Modern Scotland*  
(review)

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models of scholarship to recoup lost histories of event and inscription can be generalized beyond the texts, authors and redactors she studies, and the ways of thinking and writing she begins to illuminate, can once again inspire us in our creative engagement with the traumas of our experience.

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**Ewan**, Elizabeth and Janay **Nugent**, eds, *Finding the Family in Medieval and Early Modern Scotland* (Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008; hardback; pp. 206; 4 b/w illustrations, 3 tables; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780754660491.

Scholarship on medieval and early modern Scotland has usually focussed on political, religious and economic studies. Over the last twenty years, social and cultural history has made its mark, followed closely by gender and women's history. However, there is still a huge gap in the historiography and as the editors emphatically state, 'the study of the medieval and early modern family is still in its infancy' (p. 1). This could be perceived as somewhat strange considering the family, as a foundation for order, played a pivotal role as 'the building block of all other social institutions' (p. 8). The interdisciplinary essays in this collection have been combined in a text that assesses the importance of the family by expanding on broader historiographical debates.

Section one's four essays detail many of the sources available to the scholar of the family. Cynthia Neville explores medieval charters to garner information about the local and private concerns of families with regard to land and property. Such evidence demonstrates the patriarchal structures of Scottish society while highlighting the role of women in the disposition of landed estates, as wives and widows. As Neville explains, the emotional side of family life still remains hidden but the charters illuminate other areas of family life, such as religion, kinship ties, and family management.

Marriage is a key to any discussion of family relations, however, as Katie Barclay argues, marital relationships have come under little scrutiny until very recently. Using the medium of ballads, she examines marital relationships between 1650-1750 in order to explore attitudes towards and tensions between

love, courtship, marriage, and economics. Barclay concludes that the ballads reveal a change in family dynamics between 1650 and 1750, underpinned by complex familial and gender relationships.

Dolly MacKinnon locates the family within the world of music, arguing that music negotiated and reaffirmed social and gender roles, and suggesting it illuminates 'the more intimate aspects of Scottish life' (p. 48).

Scott Moir highlights how integral the family framework was to tensions surrounding witchcraft accusations and trials. Using a small sample of records to further his argument, Moir shows that expectations, failures, emotions, and relationships demonstrate the social construction of both the family and the concept of witchcraft.

Section two focuses on the family, presenting us with a collection of essays that analyse early modern social constructions of fatherhood (Melissa Hollander) and the emotional relationships between evangelical Protestant parents and children (David G. Mullan). Other essays in the section examine the historical records outlining the urban activities of married women with regard to debt litigation either as individuals or as part of the marital economy (Gordon DesBrisay and Karen Sander Thomson) and the information that tombstone inscriptions can give regarding familial relationships, both real or rhetorical, accurate or exaggerated (Barbara C. Murison).

The use of the family in examining broader historiographical issues is taken further in section three which looks at the interaction between family, kin and community. Mairi Cowan shows that in late-medieval Scotland there was concern with the spiritual ties of family, beginning with baptism and ending with the preferred care of the soul by blood kin. For Cowan, this emphasizes the importance of the material model of blood kinship over the spiritual model of kinship (p. 125).

Alison Cathcart also examines blood kinship but suggests that over time its significance lessened as clans looked further afield to extend their ties of influence. Focussing on marriage and the manipulation of women in order to achieve political and economic goals, Cathcart concludes that kinship, real or imagined, 'was a fundamental means of executing clan policy which aimed at preserving and enhancing the family line' (p. 138).

The final three essays look more to the inextricable links between family and community and the consequences for both of disobedience, famine and murder. J. R. D. Falconer focuses his inquiry on sixteenth-century Aberdeen court records examining ideologies around social order and honour, and

the part families played in restorative and retributive justice. Karen Cullen looks at the impact of the last national famine on the family. Decreases in baptisms and marriages were such that long-term recovery of the family was severely affected.

Murder in the wake of the 1745 rebellion, outlined in the final essay by Deborah A. Symonds, informs the reader of the effects political disorder, war and the emergence of a new textile economy had on the family. While the evidence points to a breakdown or failure of a family's formation around an illegitimate child, it is also indicative of the breakdown of wider family relationships, and the heavy impact on women, as the community sought to re-establish the order of society and the economy.

By unearthing aspects of the pre-industrial Scottish family that have hitherto been hidden, it is hoped this broad collection of essays has opened the door to further interrogative research on this slowly emerging area.

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**Fabiani** Giannetto, Raffaella, *Medici Gardens: From Making to Design* (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008; pp. 328; 54 illustrations; R.R.P. US\$55.00; ISBN 9780812240726.

*Medici Gardens: From Making to Design* is a study of the early Renaissance Medici gardens outside of Florence: Trebbio, Cafaggiolo, Careggi and Fiesole. Raffaella Giannetto begins with the historiography of the Medici garden, especially as it was shaped by the idealising visions of nineteenth-century foreign intellectuals and then by the political motivations of fascism in promoting the idea of a *giardino all'italiana*. This idea identified the Italian garden with geometric principles and a symmetrical layout that reflected the architecture of the house, the design of which was dated to Renaissance Rome. The author seeks to challenge previous critical assumptions that the Medici gardens were prototypes of a *giardino all'italiana* and that there existed an established design practice to which the creation of the early Medici gardens conformed.

The author examines the historical contexts of the Medici gardens, meticulously considering the evidence, which includes letters, books of memoirs, tax returns, notarial deeds and drawings. She identifies the risk of using later