

**The impact of changing legislation on capital convictions for women indicted for
new-born child murder at the Old Bailey, 1750-1830**

Victoria Bell, Newcastle University¹

This paper explores the outcomes for women on trial for newborn child murder at the Old Bailey, 1750-1830. Previous historical consideration of the phenomenon of newborn child murder focuses on the socio-economic experience of the unmarried mother, tending to overlook the treatment in law of mothers suspected of murder. Whilst extensive studies have explored local assize cases, few have considered the Old Bailey trials over any significant period of time. Focusing on the Proceedings of the trials, this study takes into account each case heard during 1750 to 1830, exploring whether legal changes instituted during the period had any effect on the incidence of guilty verdicts. The time period studied covers trials heard under the 1624 Stuart Statute and the transition to the use of Lord Ellenborough's 1803 Act, which both legitimated judicial conventions already in practice, and allowed for the imprisonment of those found guilty of concealing a birth, which was previously unpunished. Newspaper reports of the trials give a fuller picture of the social context in which the verdicts were reached, facilitating the view of a consistent picture of the treatment of the defendant, the use of the law, and the reasons for a guilty verdict. The paper challenges the suggestion that legal attitudes to unmarried mothers changed between the early eighteenth and nineteenth century, despite the reinvention of the concept of the culpability of the unmarried mother, and establishes that the application of capital punishment remained consistent, used only for the most provocative cases.

Two London newspapers, published in early January 1750, carried a brief account of the fate of Lucy Drake, committed to Newgate Prison charged with the murder of her illegitimate male child.² No newspaper reports were published following her acquittal on 17 January 1750. The only source of information on the trial and exoneration of Lucy appears in the form of the publication of the Old Bailey Proceedings, which details very little of the case, but includes the emotive feature that the child was discovered 'in a Rog house, belonging to Job Harrison, wrapped up in a coarse linnen bag, with a piece of Cloath put into its mouth'.³ The study of cases of new-born child murder has previously led to interesting conclusions on the nature of legal and social attitudes towards unmarried mothers indicted for

¹ Newcastle University School of History, Classics and Archaeology; V.Bell3@ncl.ac.uk.

² *The Morning Advertiser*, no. 1211 (12 January, 1750); *Whitehall Evening Post*, no. 613 (13 January, 1750).

³ *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* [henceforth OBP] <www.oldbaileyonline.org>, version 7.1, [accessed 1 March 2014], January 1750, Lucy Drake, (t17500117-53).

the crime.⁴ Recurring patterns in the outcome of judicial trials, in comparison, are less examined.

Drawing upon eighty-four cases of new-born child murder heard at the Old Bailey, along with contemporary newspaper publications, and with a particular focus on guilty verdicts, it is possible to evaluate the application of the law at the Old Bailey between 1750-1830 and the reasoning which underpinned those verdicts. In marked contrast to existing historiography, such as the works of Mark Jackson and John M. Beattie, this study demonstrates that rather than reflecting a shift in legal attitudes towards the mothers of illegitimate children, the treatment of unmarried mothers who killed their newborn children during the period was in fact remarkably consistent. In addition, this paper demonstrates that a confusion over the separation of the bodies of the mother and child was crucial to the acquittal of most cases. However where there was little doubt that the actions of the mother had led to the death of the child, neither of the legal frameworks designed to try women accused of new-born child-murder impacted on the reluctance of juries to impose capital convictions, rather, juries appeared to rely on established conventions, often outside of the relevant legislature.

Historical investigation of new-born child murder during the early-modern period began predominately with the work of social historians, who during the 1970s and 80s, utilised sources such as court records to explore both the incidence and punishment of the practice. Drawing on the work of other historians on rural illegitimacy, infanticide and its subsequent treatment in the seventeenth century, Keith Wrightson suggests that the practice of new-born child murder, far from having been considered by society as a tacit form of population control, was instead a recognised issue, limited largely to the exceptional

⁴ See Mark Jackson, *New-born Child Murder: Women, illegitimacy and the courts in eighteenth-century England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); Samantha Williams, 'The Experience of Pregnancy and Childbirth for Unmarried Mothers in London 1760-1866', *Women's History Review*, 20, 1 (2011).

circumstances of unmarried mothers.⁵ Continuing the investigation into rural judicial records, John Beattie considers the role of women as criminals, and suggests that incidence was more prevalent in those in service; they were more likely to be of child-bearing age, and in contact with men.⁶ Suggesting that judges and juries attempted to find evidence to justify acquittal, Beattie highlights that such unusual judicial sentiment was not encountered in the trials of more common crimes, whether committed by women or otherwise.⁷

The work of Jackson has amalgamated the methodologies of earlier works and aimed to use court records combined with other sources to investigate social attitudes, along with an examination of the role of medical testimony in cases. This approach has been utilised by historians such as Laura Gowing and Anne-Marie Kilday, who used court records to explore defendant characteristics, motives, treatment in law and social attitudes towards infanticide.⁸ Arlie Loughnan further explored the social context of new-born child murder, and suggested that changes in the social meanings accorded to women who kill their children between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led to developments in legislature designed to determine the legal issue of criminal responsibility.⁹ Similarly, the earlier work of R. Sauer posits that changes in social attitudes to unmarried mothers, and to the value placed on foetal life, in the nineteenth century manifestly impacted on the reinvention of the culpability of the unmarried mother and her subsequent treatment in law.¹⁰ More recent studies have diverged; whilst a sub-set explores the social and literary treatment of unmarried mothers, particularly during the mid-nineteenth century, others employ a microhistorical approach, highlighting defence

⁵ Keith Wrightson, 'Infanticide in earlier seventeenth-century England', *Local Population Studies*, 15 (1975), 10-22.

⁶ John M. Beattie, 'The Criminality of Women in Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of Social History*, 8, 4 (1975), 80-116.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 85.

⁸ Laura Gowing, 'Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, 156, 1 (1997), 87-115; Anne-Marie Kilday, *Women and Violent Crime in Enlightenment Scotland* (Suffolk: Royal Historical Society, 2007).

⁹ Arlie Loughnan, 'The 'Strange' Case of the Infanticide Doctrine', *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 17, 2 (2012), 1-27.

¹⁰ R. Sauer, 'Infanticide and Abortion in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Population Studies*, 32: 1 (1978), 81-93.

strategies used by women or the significance of the birthing body.¹¹ The work of Samantha Williams investigates the lived experience of unmarried mothers in London, giving birth in secret.¹² Williams uses the Proceedings of the Old Bailey, with their unique body of material on non-elite individuals, to explore the experience of solitary childbirth.

In spite of the breadth of the historiography, however, it is surprising that more studies have not investigated the underlying reasons which determined a verdict in new-born child murder trials. Whilst extensive studies have been conducted on the treatment of such cases at local assizes, few have considered the Old Bailey trials over a substantial period of time. In examining a period which spans the use of both principal pieces of legislation - the 1624 Statute and Lord Ellenborough's 1803 Act - this study is able to explore the practical application of the law, and whether legal changes instituted during the period had any effect on the incidence of guilty verdicts. Using the Old Bailey Proceedings Online, each case heard between 1750 and 1830 is considered. Newspaper reports of the trials give a fuller picture of the social context in which the verdicts were reached, facilitating the view of a consistent picture of the treatment of the defendant, the use of the law, and the reasons for a guilty verdict.

For those on trial between 1750 and 1803, the specific wording of the 1624 Stuart Statute had a direct impact on their case. The Statute made concealment of the birth of any live-born illegitimate child, by its mother, punishable by death. The burden of proof in new-born child-murder cases, uniquely in English law, lay on the accused to convince the judge and jury that the birth had not been concealed. In practice, however, no case heard at the Old Bailey between 1750 and 1830 was brought for concealment of a birth, but rather for the

¹¹ See Samantha Williams, 'The Experience of Pregnancy and Childbirth for Unmarried Mothers in London 1760-1866', *Women's History Review*, 20: 1 (2011), 67-86; Elizabeth DeG. R. Hansen, "'Overlaying" in 19th-Century England: Infant Mortality or Infanticide?', *Human Ecology*, 7: 4 (1979), 333-352.

¹² Williams, 'The Experience of Pregnancy and Childbirth', 67-86.

wilful murder of an illegitimate child. This meant that although they were not to be tried for concealment, the defendant needed to prove that the child had been born dead; that no murder could have taken place because the child had not breathed. The influence of the 1624 Statute and the issue of concealment could still be felt throughout the trials however, as the concealment of illegitimate birth, when that birth ended in death, carried with it a suspicion of murder.¹³ Four attempts were made in the 1770s to repeal the Statute. Crucially, Jackson argues, reformers considered that capital punishment was ignored by juries as it was considered disproportionate to the crime.¹⁴ Repeal, at the time, was blocked by 'conservative resistance to weakening the criminal law in any direction', in part because of fears of the influence of overseas radicalism following the American Revolution.¹⁵

Despite this period of 'strong opposition to criminal law reform', Lord Ellenborough's Act of 1803 repealed the 1624 Statute.¹⁶ Through two provisos, it ensured that all illegitimate new-born child-murders should be 'governed by such and the like Rules of Evidence and of Presumption as are by Law used and allowed to take place in respect to other Trials for Murder'; in other words the mother's were subject to the usual common law rules of evidence.¹⁷ Significantly, the Act allowed for the jury to return a verdict of concealment of birth, carrying a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment.¹⁸ In practice, where a woman had been found not guilty of murder previously, she would have been automatically acquitted; under the 1803 Act she could face imprisonment for concealment. Rather than reforming the law, the Act simply legitimated the conventions already practiced by the

¹³ 21 Jan. 1 c. 27, 1624, 'An Acte to prevent the Murthering of Bastard Children' in *The Statutes of the Realm: Volume iiv Part ii*, (1819), 1234-1235.

¹⁴ Jackson, *New-born Child Murder*, 168.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 168.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 169.

¹⁷ Jackson, *New-born Child Murder*, 170.

¹⁸ Hilary Marland, 'Getting away with murder? Puerperal insanity, infanticide and the defence plea', in *Infanticide: Historical Perspectives on Child Murder and Concealment, 1550-2000* ed. by. Mark Jackson (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 170.

courts, which were unwilling to convict when that conviction would automatically lead to a death sentence.

Jackson suggests that a consideration of cases at both the Old Bailey and the Northern Courts Circuit during the eighteenth century demonstrates that juries tended to acquit women because of a mixture of resistance to capital punishment and 'developing laws of evidence and standards of proof'.¹⁹ A total of eighty-four cases of new-born child-murder were tried at the Old Bailey between 1750 and 1830. Only eight women were found guilty and sentenced to death. That no single case was commuted suggests that where murder of new-borns was proved, the law considered that the sentence was just.

Jackson highlights the anachronistic use of the term "infanticide" when related to cases during the eighteenth century.²⁰ However, the word does appear in London newspaper reports by the 1780s, yet only in relation to legal debates or to cases outside of England.²¹ It was apparently not used in relation to a single criminal case in England until 1805, when the *Hampshire Telegraph* reported the execution of a woman in Horsham.²² The term may have been understood and used in relation to cases abroad, however, public exposure of incidents which took place within England remained to an extent framed within the linguistic context of legal proceedings, suggesting a preference to categorise an aberrant act within a particular framework. The lack of a succinct legal term supports the argument that the act of newborn child murder itself was viewed ambiguously throughout the period. There was little contemporary understanding of the separation of the body of mother and child, and over the point at which neglect, or an act that resulted in death, became murder with intent.²³ The role

¹⁹ Jackson, *New-born Child Murder*, 151-152.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

²¹ *Morning Post*, no. 4182 (13 July, 1786); *St. James's Chronicle*, no. 4001 (15 August, 1786); *St. James's Chronicle*, no. 4671 (24 March 1791); *Woodfall's Register*, no. 1793 (13 May, 1793).

²² *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*, no. 287 (8 April 1805).

²³ Laura Gowing, 'Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, 156, 1 (1997), 106.

played by medical authorities during the trial, then, became crucial to the understanding and direction of the jury.

Medical authorities were called to give evidence in fifty-two cases, with male surgeons specifically called to give post-mortem evidence in thirty-seven cases. Direction from juries and from counsel was evident in the majority of cases; questions were clearly aimed to demonstrate to the court that any uncertainty that the child had either been born dead or had died during birth, even if it had breathed whilst the body remained in the birth canal. The most contentious post-mortem issue appears to have been the hydrostatic test on the child's lungs. This test, which was thought to prove, through floatation, whether the child had breathed, was noticeably sought as evidence during trials up until 1771, and continued to be offered as evidence by medical witnesses as late as 1823.²⁴ The questioning of medical authorities in each of the twelve cases between 1762 and 1771 concentrated on the experiment, despite clear concerns over its validity.²⁵ The Court finally stated conclusively during Anne Taylor's 1778 trial that the experiment is 'never suffer[ed] (...) to be given in evidence.'²⁶ Interestingly, throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, whilst its ability to prove a child had lived was considered doubtful, the test was used to prove the contrary, if the lungs sank, it was accepted as conclusive evidence that the child had not breathed.²⁷

The questions asked of the medical authorities highlight that the court was aware of the prospect that the child had breathed but had then died in the birth canal. It is apparent from the trials that a child was not considered to be an independent human being until it had separated from the mother's body; if it died as a result of the mother's actions before complete

²⁴ *OBPDatabase*. An Access database was used to collate 84 cases of infanticide heard at the Old Bailey.

²⁵ *OBPDatabase*, cases 18-30.

²⁶ *OBP*, December 1778, Anne Taylor (t17781209-45).

²⁷ *OBP*, October 1770, Elizabeth Warner (t17701024-51) and July 1782, Sarah Russell, (t17820703-47).

separation from the birth canal, she could not be considered to have murdered it. The ambiguity between the bodies of the child and the mother formed a crucial deciding factor in new-born child-murder trials.

Although those with medical experience, such as midwives, apothecaries, surgeons and coroners regularly provided evidence, Mary Mussen's trial, in 1757, is the first to demonstrate the effect that this testimony could have on the jury's verdict. Both a midwife and surgeon who had arrived at the scene shortly after the birth were called to give evidence. Ann Farrer, the midwife, had discovered the body hidden behind a bolster, wrapped in an apron with a large wound across the throat. John James then stated that he had been called to examine the body as a surgeon, discovered the wound, and crucially 'observed that blood had been forced from the wound backwards', suggesting that the child had breathed after the wound had been inflicted.²⁸ James further stated that he examined the lungs and found 'they had been inflated', and that 'this is a positive proof to know that the child had been alive'.²⁹

Mussen's counsel had claimed that she could have cut the child's throat whilst trying to separate the umbilical cord. However, given the evidence of an open wound, and two medical opinions that the child had been born alive, Mussen was found guilty, and sentenced to death by hanging. In Mussen's case, the verdict may have rested on the aggravating factor of the open wound to the throat. However, given the apparent confusion over whether the child had ever breathed whilst independent of the mother, it seems likely that it was the testimony of both of the medical authorities that the child had been born alive and the specific actions of the mother following its birth that sealed her fate. The evidence of the medical authorities was therefore critical to the outcome of the trial. However even before the case

²⁸ *OBP*, May 1757, Mary Mussen (t17701024-51).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

had come to trial, the means of death of the child could impact the outcome, as shown in figure 1, below.

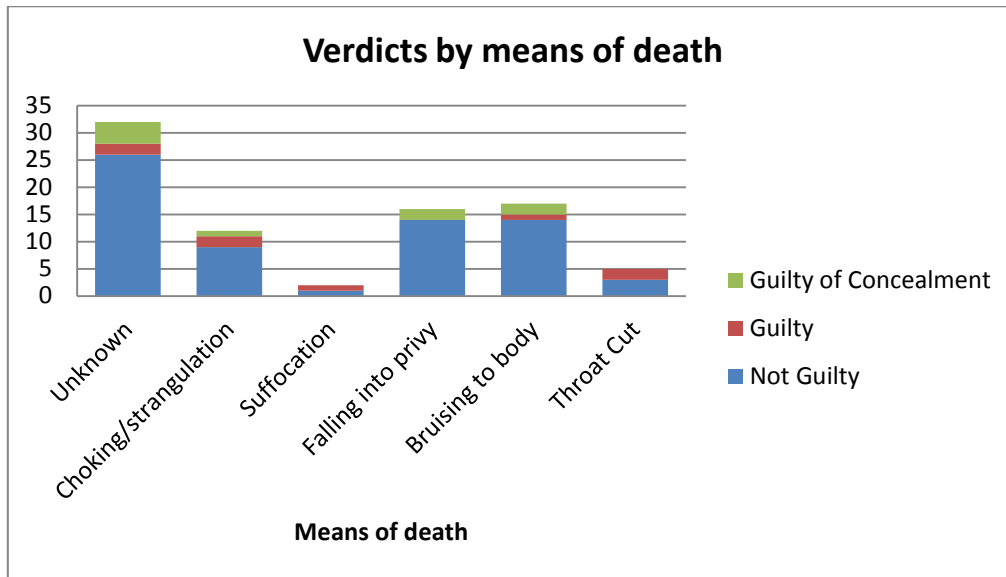


Figure 1. Means of death, where stated, at Old Bailey Trials 1750-1830.³⁰

Mary Mussen was the first of eight women to have been sentenced to death following a guilty verdict during the period of the study. In each case this was carried out, and not commuted. Prior to 1803, six women were sentenced to death; three hangings took place in 1760-1765, and two in 1774-75. Crucially, in each of these cases, an aggravating or provocative factor appeared to leave the jury no discretion to acquit. Open wounds were considered to be the means of death in Ann Hullock's 1760 trial, and in Jane Cornforth's 1774 trial.³¹ Central to the evidence submitted in Cornforth's trial was the witness deposition that the child had been alive when pulled from the water closet. Clear evidence of strangulation was submitted by the medical authorities during the trials of Esther Rowden in 1761, and Sarah Reynolds in 1775. In Rowden's case, the verdict may have been swayed by the

³⁰ *OBPD*database.

³¹ *OBP*, May 1760, Ann Hullock (t17600521-17), and *OBP*, May 1774, Jane Cornforth (t17740518-23).

deposition of a workhouse keeper, who claimed Esther had admitted that it had been born alive and that she had strangled it.³² Reynolds' trial heard that her son had been found with a handkerchief tied so tightly around his neck that the tongue was forced out. Maria Jenkins' 1765 case heard that despite evidence of a birth in one of the family bedrooms, the baby had been found in a necessary house, suggesting that it had been deliberately disposed of.³³

Surprisingly, most sentences were reached during a period where the plight of unmarried mothers was recognised. The reporting of Ann Hullock's conviction appears to have been mostly factual, with the particulars of the crime outlined in three London newspapers, followed by an account of her execution in two. By the time of Esther Rowden's conviction, seventeen months later, whilst the trial was reported factually, the accounts of her execution included more emotive language, with the *General Evening Post* describing how, she being 'near twenty-four years of age, behaved with great penitence, and plentifully shed tears as she went to and at the fatal tree.'³⁴ On Sarah Reynolds' conviction in 1775, a variety of newspapers included a report on her trial and execution, ranging from short, factual reports to larger opinion pieces.³⁵ The *London Chronicle* offered reflections on the desperate situation 'which can induce a woman to murder her own infant, rather than submit to a temporary disgrace.'³⁶ Clearly, the predicament faced by unmarried mothers was considered multifarious, as both a victim of 'a man who wilfully debauches a poor girl', and as a murderer.³⁷ The *London Evening Post* from 16 December 1775, suggested that the crime was not 'a savage barbarity', but that the 'violent shame' of the circumstances 'produces this

³² *OBP*, October 1761, Esther Rowden (t17611021-27).

³³ *OBP*, September 1765, Maria Jenkins (t17650918-40).

³⁴ *General Evening Post*, no. 4374 (24 October, 1761).

³⁵ Some of the more notable accounts appeared in *Middlesex Journal*, no. 1026 (21 October, 1775); *London Chronicle*, no. 2967 (12 December, 1775); *London Evening Post*, no. 8384 (14 December, 1775).

³⁶ *London Chronicle*, (12 December, 1775).

³⁷ *London Chronicle*, (12 December, 1775).

temporary cruelty', perhaps indicating a desire to ascribe the practice in England to a set of social circumstances.³⁸

These reports demonstrate the social development towards a more humanitarian attitude to the accused.³⁹ Dickinson and Sharpe offer the suggestion that society in general understood the particular predicament, and the 'terrible logic' under which unmarried mothers operated at the birth of their child.⁴⁰ The decision to kill the child was linked to a combination of shame and fear, rather than from an unnatural proclivity to murder; a method had been developed over time to deal with this, within the law, but one which did not require a resort to the death penalty.⁴¹ The defence plea played a vital role during the trials. As Arlie Loughnan highlights, women charged under the 1624 Statute could argue 'a number of informal defences', such as 'benefit of linen', insensibility, or that she had tried, but failed, to seek assistance during the birth.⁴² In all of the guilty verdicts, the defendants argue accidental death, stillbirth, or surprise. In all cases, the defendants had concealed their pregnancies. Combined with provocative details, an ambiguous defence plea served to convince the jury of the guilt of the mother.

It is with the introduction of Lord Ellenborough's 1803 Act that some change in the preponderance of guilty verdicts would be expected. Whilst the Act clearly impacts on the outcomes of the trials with a clear readiness to invoke the sentence of imprisonment, interestingly there is no impact on the numbers of capital convictions. The first case to be heard following that Act received a not guilty verdict. However, six consecutive cases from

³⁸ *London Evening Post*, no. 8384 (14 December, 1775).

³⁹ Jackson, *New-born Child Murder*, 111-128.

⁴⁰ J.R. Dickinson, and J.A. Sharpe,, 'Infanticide in early modern England: the Court of Great Sessions at Chester, 1650-1800', in *New-born Child Murder* ed. by Jackson, 49.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴² Loughnan, 'The 'Strange' Case of the Infanticide Doctrine', 8.

1804 to 1809 ended with a sentence of imprisonment of between six months and two years. Subsequently, five women are found not guilty over seven years, suggesting that, following a brief period of adjustment, juries were once again uncomfortable with sentencing; all but two of the cases appeared to have involved concealment.⁴³

It is possible that the 1803 Act sated a desire to apply a proportionate sanction, without having to resort to the death penalty. Despite a lack of increases in capital convictions following 1803, newspaper reports of the women on trial following the introduction of the Act suggest that social attitudes had hardened. On 24 February 1817, Sarah Perry's conviction was reported factually and without emotive language in *The Morning Chronicle*; five days later, when her execution was reported in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, the case was described as 'most shocking, and too disgusting for its cruelty to be detailed at length'.⁴⁴ Catherine Welch, sentenced in 1828, was described as a 'malefactor' who had committed a 'diabolical act for which her life has been justly forfeited' in a report covering her execution in full.⁴⁵

⁴³ See Figure 2, below.

⁴⁴ *The Morning Chronicle*, no. 14919 (24 February 1817); *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, no. 714 (1 March 1817).

⁴⁵ *The Standard*, no. 283 (14 April 1828).

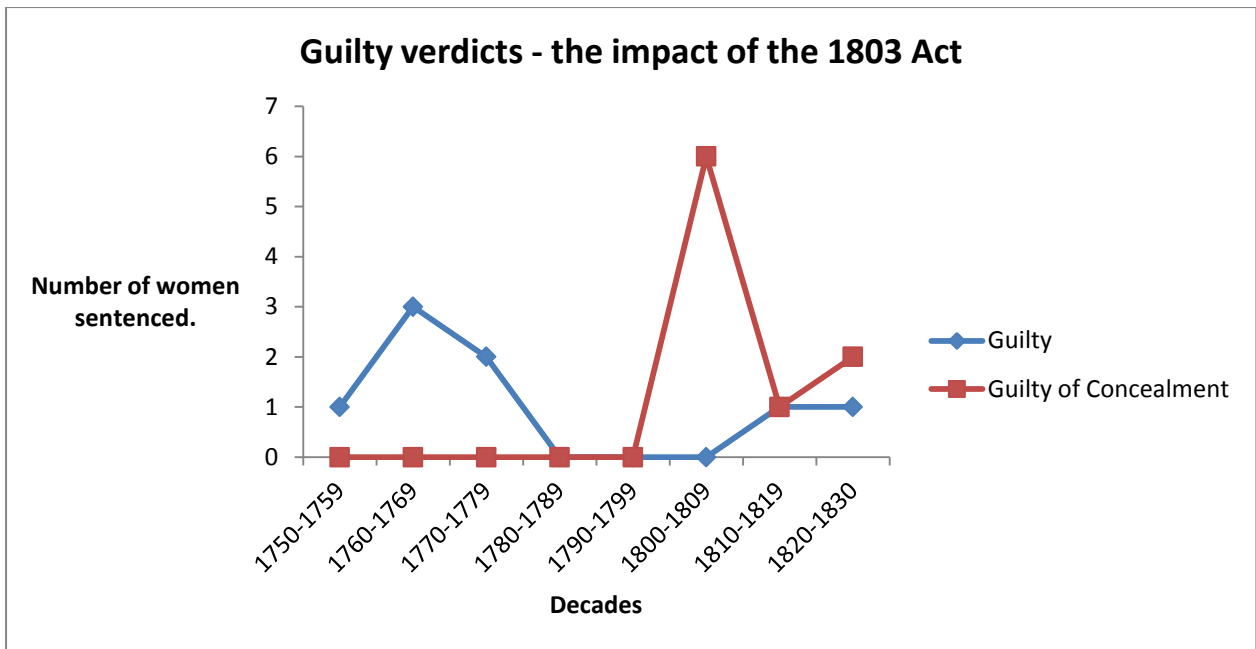


Figure 2. The impact of the 1803 Act on sentencing⁴⁶

The lack of impact of changing legislature on capital convictions demonstrates that the application of the law was primarily concerned with punishing the conception, rather than murder, of the child. New-born child-murder was an almost exclusively female perpetrated crime. Only two men appeared accused at the Old Bailey between 1750 and 1830: William Nun as a co-accused in 1752 and James Field, who in 1766 was accused of killing the newly-born child of his unmarried partner, who had died in childbirth. He was acquitted. However, that his case was brought to trial under the 1624 Statute, which did not allow for male defendants, demonstrates that crucial to the case was the concealment of an extra-marital relationship. There are, as highlighted by Beattie, assize records pointing to the dismissal of a case of child murder on the ground that the mother was married.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ *OBPDatabase*.

⁴⁷ J. M. Beattie, *Crime and the Courts in England 1660-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 114.

Both Beattie and Jackson acknowledge that studies of the treatment of new-born child-murder cases reflect changing legal attitudes towards unmarried mothers between the early eighteenth and nineteenth century.⁴⁸ However, a study of the Old Bailey cases demonstrates that, in practice, legal attitudes did not change, despite increasing capital convictions in other types of crime, and during a period of ideological threats from overseas and increasing liberal influences at home. It is clear that whilst the 1803 Act allowed, and probably encouraged, sanctions against women found to have concealed the births of their illegitimate children and who would otherwise have been acquitted under the 1624 Statute, the application of capital punishment remained consistent. It was used only for the most provocative cases, when the woman's defence either simply could not be believed, or had otherwise perjured her.

A study of the Old Bailey cases confirms that confusion over the separation of the mother and the child's body was crucial to the acquittal of most of the cases. However, where there was little doubt that the actions of the mother, once the child had been born, had led to its death, those women were sentenced to death. It is clear that conventions had developed to try women accused of child-murder, often outside the spirit of the 1624 Statute, and that this method did not change throughout the period. Newspaper reports reflect changes in attitudes towards unmarried mothers who kill, but it is evident that the issue of new-born child-murder was complicated by ambiguous life stages that were often misunderstood by male juries. Clarification of the legal position made no obvious difference to the incidence of capital conviction despite concurrent changes in social opinion and medical knowledge. However, the reluctance to impose capital conviction is arguably less a result of progressive attitudes, and more a reflection of a continued unwillingness to confront the complexities of the issue.

⁴⁸ Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, 113-124; Jackson, *New-born Child Murder*, 111-128.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

21 Jac. 1 c. 27, 1624, 'An Acte to prevent the Murthering of Bastard Children' in *The Statutes of the Realm: Volume iiv Part ii*, (1819), 1234-1235.

The Morning Advertiser, no. 1211 (12 January, 1750).

Whitehall Evening Post, no. 613 (13 January, 1750).

General Evening Post, no. 4374 (24 October, 1761).

London Chronicle, no. 2967 (12 December, 1775).

London Evening Post, no. 8384 (14 December, 1775).

Middlesex Journal, no. 1026 (21 October, 1775).

Morning Post, no. 4182 (13 July, 1786).

St. James's Chronicle, no. 4001 (15 August, 1786).

St. James's Chronicle, no. 4671 (24 March 1791).

Woodfall's Register, no. 1793 (13 May, 1793).

Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle, no. 287 (8 April 1805).

The Morning Chronicle, no. 14919 (24 February 1817).

Royal Cornwall Gazette, no. 714 (1 March 1817).

The Standard, no. 283 (14 April 1828).

Secondary Sources

Beattie, J. M., *Crime and the Courts in England 1660-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

Beattie, J. M., 'The Criminality of Women in Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of Social History*, 8: 4 (1975), 80-116.

Callahan, Kathy, 'Women Who Kill: An Analysis of Cases in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century London', *Journal of Social History*, 46:4 (2013), 1013-1038.

Cockburn, J. S., 'Patterns of Violence in English Society: Homicide in Kent 1560-1985', *Past & Present*, 130 (1991), 70-106.

- Damme, Catherine, 'Infanticide: the worth of an infant under law', *Medical History*, 22:1 (1978),1-24.
- DeG. R. Hansen, Elizabeth., "'Overlaying" in 19th-Century England: Infant Mortality or Infanticide?', *Human Ecology*, 7: 4 (1979), 333-352.
- Dickinson, J.R., and Sharpe, J.A., 'Infanticide in early modern England: the Court of Great Sessions at Chester, 1650-1800' in Mark Jackson (ed.), *Infanticide: Historical Perspectives on Child Murder and Concealment, 1550-2000*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 35-51.
- Fildes, Valerie, (ed.), *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England* (London: Routledge, 1990).
- Francus, Marilyn, 'The Monstrous Mother: Reproductive Anxiety in Swift and Pope', *English Literary History*, 61: 4 (1994), 829-851.
- Gowing, Laura, 'Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, 156: 1 (1997), 87-115.
- Griffin, Emma, 'Sex, illegitimacy and social change in industrializing Britain', *Social History*, 38:2 (2013), 131-161.
- Higginbotham, Ann R., "'Sin of the Age": Infanticide and Illegitimacy in Victorian London', *Victorian Studies*, 32: 3 (1989), 319-337.
- Hindle, Steve, *On the Parish? : The Micro-Politics of Poor Relief in Rural England c.1550-1750* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004).
- Hoffer, Peter C., and Hull N. E. H., *Murdering Mothers: Infanticide in England and New England 1558-1803* (London: New York University Press, 1984).
- Hunt, Aeron, 'Calculations and Concealments: Infanticide in Mid-Nineteenth Century Britain', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 34: 1 (2006) 71-94.
- Jackson, Mark, (ed.), *Infanticide: Historical Perspectives on Child Murder and Concealment, 1550-2000* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002).
- Jackson, Mark, *New-born Child Murder: Women, illegitimacy and the courts in eighteenth-century England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).
- Kilday, Anne-Marie, *Women and Violent Crime in Enlightenment Scotland* (Suffolk: Royal Historical Society, 2007).
- Laslett, Peter and Oosterveen, Karla, 'Long-Term Trends in Bastardy in England: A Study of the Illegitimacy Figures in the Parish Registers and in the Reports of the Registrar General, 1561-1960', *Population Studies*, 24:2 (1973), 255-286.

- Loughnan, Arlie, 'The 'Strange' Case of the Infanticide Doctrine', *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 17 (2012), 1-27.
- Macfarlane, Alan, 'Illegitimacy and illegitimates in English history', in *Bastardy and its Comparative History*, eds. Peter Laslett, Karla Oosterveen and Richard M. Smith (London: Arnold, 1980), 71-85.
- Malcolmson, R. W., 'Infanticide in the Eighteenth Century' in Cockburn, J. S (ed.), *Crime in England 1550-1800* (London: Methuen & Co, 1977).
- Marland, Hilary, 'Getting away with murder? Puerperal insanity, infanticide and the defence plea'. in Mark Jackson, (ed.), *Infanticide: Historical Perspectives on Child Murder and Concealment, 1550- 2000*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 168-192.
- May, Allyson N., "'She at first denied it": Infanticide Trials at the Old Bailey', in Valerie Frith, (ed.), *Women and History: Voices of Early Modern England*, (Concord: Irwin, 1995).
- Rabin, Dana, 'Bodies of evidence, states of mind: infanticide, emotion and sensibility in eighteenth-century England', in *Infanticide: Historical Perspectives on Child Murder and Concealment, 1550-2000*, ed. Mark Jackson (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 73-92.
- Rogers, Nicholas, 'Carnal Knowledge: Illegitimacy in Eighteenth-Century Westminster', *Journal of Social History*, 23: 2 (1989), pp. 355-375.
- Rose, Lionel, *Massacre of the Innocents: Infanticide in Great Britain 1800-1939* (London: Routledge, 1986).
- Sauer, R., 'Infanticide and Abortion in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Population Studies*, 32: 1 (1978), 81-93.
- Staub, Susan C., 'Early Modern Medea: Representations of Child Murder in the Street Literature of Seventeenth-Century England' in Miller, Naomi J., and Yavneh, Naomi, (eds.), *Maternal Measures: Figuring caregiving in the early modern period* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2000).
- Walker, Garthine, 'Expanding the Boundaries of Female Honour in Early Modern England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6: 6 (1996), 235-245.
- Williams, Samantha, 'The Experience of Pregnancy and Childbirth for Unmarried Mothers in London 1760-1866', *Women's History Review*, 20: 1 (2011), 67-86.
- Wrightson, Keith, 'Infanticide in earlier seventeenth-century England', *Local Population Studies*, 15 (1975), 10-22.

Websites

Old Bailey Proceedings Online (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.1, January 2014).

Gale, *17th and 18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers*, (www.cengage.com, January 2014).