



# Scandalous Women: The Lives and Loves of History's Most Notorious Women

*Elizabeth Kerri Mahon*

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**Scandalous Women: The Lives and Loves of History's Most Notorious Women** Elizabeth Kerri Mahon Throughout history women have caused wars, defied the rules, and brought men to their knees. The famous and the infamous, queens, divorcées, actresses, and outlaws have created a ruckus during their lifetimes-turning heads while making waves. *Scandalous Women* tells the stories of the risk takers who have flouted convention, beaten the odds, and determined the course of world events.

\*When Cleopatra (69 BC-30 BC) wasn't bathing in asses' milk, the last pharaoh of the Ptolemaic dynasty ruled Egypt and forged an important political alliance with Rome against her enemies-until her dalliance with Marc Antony turned the empire against her.

\*Emilie du Châtelet (1706-1748), a mathematician, physicist, author, and paramour of one of the greatest minds in France, Voltaire, shocked society with her unorthodox lifestyle and intellectual prowess-and became a leader in the study of theoretical physics in France at a time when the sciences were ruled by men.

\*Long before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus, Ida B. Wells-Barnett (1862-1928) fought to end discrimination and the terrible crime of lynching and helped found the NAACP, but became known as a difficult woman for her refusal to compromise and was largely lost in the annals of history.

\*Gertrude Bell (1868-1926) had a passion for archaeology and languages, and left her privileged world behind to become one of the foremost chroniclers of British imperialism in the Middle East, and one of the architects of the modern nation of Iraq.

## Scandalous Women: The Lives and Loves of History's Most Notorious Women Details

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**Zohar - ManOfLaBook.com says**

Scandalous Women: The Lives and Loves of History's Most Notorious Women" by Elizabeth Kerri Mahon is a non-fiction book dedicated to... scandalous women. Each woman is featured in a short biographical chapter.

The book is divided into seven sections. Each section is further divided into short chapters featuring a short biography of a scandalous woman.

Section 1: Warrior Queens

Cleopatra, Boudica, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Joan of Arc, Grace O'Malley

Section 2: Wayward Wives

Émilie du Châtelet, Lady Caroline Lamb, Jane Digby, Violet Trefusis, Zelda Fitzgerald

Section 3: Scintillating Seductresses

Anne Boleyn, Barbara Palmer, Emma Hamilton, Lola Montez, Mata hari

Section 4: Crusading Ladies

Anne Hutchinson, Mary Wollstonecraft, Rose O'Neal Greenhow, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Carry Nation

Section 5: Wild Women of the West

Mary Ellen Pleasant, Sarah Winnemucca, Calamity Jane, Elizabeth "Baby Doe" Tabor, Margaret Tobin Brown

Section 6: Amorous Artists

Camille Claudel, Isadora Duncan, Josephine Baker, Billie Holiday, Frida Kahlo

Section 7: Amazing Adventuresses

Anne Bonney and Mary Read, Lady Hester Stanhope, Anna Leonowens, Gertrude Bell, Amelia Earhart

So you're thinking : "what is a bookish blog run by a man doing with this book"?

I'll tell you: it is knowledge not uncommon that scandalous women (most of them anyway) are a favorite subject among men of many cultures and intellects - that's what!

"Scandalous Women" by Elizabeth Kerri Mahon is the kind of book I loved as a young boy. No, not because of the scandalous women, that would come later, but because I always found this format of books fascinating and interesting. These type of short biographies allow me to know about each person and if I want, to research more about them.

Even though I read through this book, it is a book you can just pick up and read, then put down and pick up again a few days later since the chapters are short and are not related to one another. The book is also a must if you ever want to be on "Jeopardy".

Ms. Mahon's writing is succinct and she concentrates on the aspect of what made her subject so scandalous. Just keep in mind that the word "scandalous" is in context of the time those women lived in. while in today's standards they might seem tame, in their lifetime they certainly weren't.

Each chapter is easy to read and highlights the achievements and prominence of each woman. While the book is by no means a comprehensive biography of its subjects, nor does it claim to be, it is a wonderful introduction to many historical figures.

A special note to the wonderful section headings (Scintillating Seductresses, Amorous Artists, etc.) - that's something I used to do on my college papers and I appreciate the work, pun, word play and stylized humor wherever I go.

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## Sheena says

This read like a compilation of high school book reports. I was a bit dissapointed at the lack of depth and the overly casual tone of the author.

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## Margitte says

### BLURB

" Throughout history women have caused wars, defied the rules, and brought men to their knees. The famous and the infamous, queens, divorcées, actresses, and outlaws have created a ruckus during their lifetimes-turning heads while making waves. Scandalous Women tells the stories of the risk takers who have flouted convention, beaten the odds, and determined the course of world events.

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### COMMENTS

My interest in these kind of books does not originate in the glorification of women's lib, but rather from a curiosity for unknown and unique history. The rewriting of history(in some sense), only happens when new perspectives and new approaches are considered. This book is just one of those books celebrating famous and less famous women in a refreshing new language.

Audrey Hepburn(not included in the book) was the granddaughter of a baron, the daughter of a Nazi sympathizer, spent her childhood and teens doing ballet to secretly raise money for the dutch resistance

against the Nazis, and spent her post film career as a good will ambassador of UNICEF, winning the presidential medal for freedom for her efforts...And history remembers her as pretty.

Yet, the picture we have, changes when we take the time to read more about her. The key to understanding is READING.

Thirty five women is highlighted in this book and quite a few are new to me. Entertaining it is, and good for the soul to read it? even more so. What was regarded as scandalous a few centuries ago, has been rewritten and redefined by courage and determination through the last few decades. That's why I like to read the modern versions of their stories :-)

I wanted to read this book after finishing "*Almost Famous Women*" by Megan Mayhew Bergman <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

These women challenged the odds. All of them. And it makes me smile. Big time. Sometimes we need to read these kind of books, right?

One of my favorite characters in the book is Grace O'Malley. **"She wasn't just any Irish woman. For over forty years, she had ruled the sea in Connacht, plundering ships and causing trouble for the English in Ireland."**

Warrior queens; wayward wives; scintillating seductresses; crusading ladies; wild woman of the West; amorous artists and amazing adventuresses, fill up the pages with their stories.

Highly entertaining, tongue-in-cheek, but with a serious underlying moral to their stories, these women need to be remembered and celebrated from time to time.

This book was an introduction to many of them, for me at least. I would love to read each one's story in more detail. They are worth it. And deserve it.

In the meantime, I will clink a champs on them today in my rose garden. Come join me!

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## Sarah says

It took me a moment to become accustomed to the writer's style, but once I did, I thoroughly enjoyed this book. It houses the stories of well know and not so well known women who were all special in one way or another. It is by no means a complete compilation of such women, but seems to focus on some of those who would have otherwise been lost in history's shuffle. You have everything from Journalists, Dancers, Scientists, Courtesans, Lesbians, Artists, Alcoholics, Pirates, and fanatical Hatchet wielding Grannies and more in this book. There is certainly something for everyone!

An obvious labor of love, this is a great book for anyone interested in history, or women's studies. It would be a fabulous addition to any AP/High School or College Classroom, as along the lines of K. Waldher's *Doomed Queens* it makes learning enjoyable. What are you waiting for? Get your paws on this book!

## Cait Lieneck says

I would start off by saying that I adore the premise behind this book. It provides insight into the lives of history's most, well, scandalous women. Some of them are more well known than others, but all of the stories are inspirational and humbling. The book will make you think about how much you could accomplish if you only had the nerve.

I enjoyed Mahon's laid-back style. The book is written like a blog; which is fitting since it is based on entries in her blog "Scandalous Women" on blogspot.com. That being said, while I read this book it was clear at times that Mahon is a bit of an amateur writer.

There were several open-ended references to historical events, such as the Restoration in the story of Barbra Palmer or the Act of Succession in the story of Anne Boleyn. I also didn't feel for the slang terms and some of the cultural references Mahon makes. For example, she compares Zelda and F. Scott Fitzgerald to Heidi Montag and Spencer Pratt. Another example is in her description of Anne Boleyn's first pregnancy. "To Henry's great joy, she was soon knocked up" (83). Although I understand Mahon's attempt to maintain an easy-going tone to the book in order to attract an audience of modern young women, I felt she could have easily done so without certain off-putting terms and references.

Overall this quick read was worth the short time it took to read it. If for nothing else, for the incredible subject-matter. I will definitely continue to read Mahon's blog!

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## Sonja Arlow says

When most people think of scandalous or outrageous females the usual suspects like Cleopatra, Joan of Arc and Anne Boleyn come to mind and yes although they are in this book there are also some who just seem to be famous for their slutty behavior (I am talking to you Jane Digby and Lady Caroline Lamb and a host of others) and I found them utterly tedious.

But thankfully this book also contained some delightful discoveries for me and I will definitely want to read more about:

- 1) Calamity Jane (Wild West Woman)
- 2) Mary Ellen Pleasant (Voodoo queen, murderess and business savant)
- 3) Mata Hari (WW1 Spy)
- 4) Grace o Malley (female pirate!!! Need I say more)
- 5) Amelia Earheart (everyone knows her story but would love to read a good book about her life)

With any book of this nature I understand and accept that it's the author's prerogative who they include or leave out. The majority of women in this book are from the same time period (roughly between 1820 to 1920), with only a few exceptions. It also seems that no women of science made the cut. Believe it or not Marie Curie caused quite a few scandals with her habit of pulling male colleagues into dark cupboards to show them her glow in the dark experiments ?

So while this is a fun in-between read, it is by no means a comprehensive list of females challenging society's view of how females should behave.





imagine that it was a life that most women would want in that era or any era, but I love the thought of a woman being strong and capable when most of the women of any era in history were dependent on the men in their lives, whether it was their father, brother, or spouse for their livelihood. I also am fascinated with Boudica, can you imagine being a woman warrior and leading your tribe to fight the Romans in Britian? Then there is Mata Hari, the lady executed for espionage in 1917. Turns out that in 2000 some of the files of her arrest and trial proved her innocence.

Elizabeth Kerri Mahon tells these mini histories with knowledge, humor and compassion. The book is divided into different chapters, Warrior Queens ,Wayward Wives, Scintillating Seductresses ,Crusading Ladies,Wild Women of the West, Amorous Artists, and Amazing Adventuresses . This book is a must for all you history buffs out there. To quote Laurel Thatcher Ulrich..Well-Behaved Women Seldom Make History..after reading this book I totally agree!!!

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