

## Material Girls: Women Money and Markets (1750-1850) conference and WSG panel report 2017

The *Women, Money and Markets (1750-1850)* conference took place at Kings College, London on 11 May 2017 and three WSG members formed one of the panels delivering papers, *writes Johanna Holmes*. Co-ordinated by [Miriam Al Jamil](#), the panel spoke on married women's use of their moveable property as security in the credit market in eighteenth-century Scotland ([Rebecca Mason](#), University of Glasgow), women painters constructing careers in the art world of the period 1820-1850 ([Johanna Holmes](#), Royal Holloway) and Eleanor Coade, a woman who meant business in decorative stonework in the eighteenth century (Miriam al Jamil, Birkbeck College).

The conference was extremely well-attended – an estimated 100 or so delegates and panel speakers, including international delegates who had made a special trip. In view of this, conference organisers [Emma Newport](#) and [Amy Murat](#) also facilitated a visit for delegates the following morning to the [Foundling Museum](#), a trip partly inspired by WSG's connections there.

With a total of twelve panel sessions and two plenary lectures, it was a long and busy day, but the number and enthusiasm of delegates ensured that every panel had a good-sized (and discerning) audience, and that speakers found plenty to stimulate their thoughts when not on the platform. The full programme and speaker details can be found on the [event website](#). Audio will be available shortly.

The WSG panel's personal highlights of the day included:

- The consistency of a number of themes emerging from the discussions, particularly in recognising women's agency in a wide range of business activities in various forms of family and business relationships with men – this was history with women in equal focus
- The opportunity to share research and emerging thoughts with other enthusiastic delegates.

WSG member Carolyn Williams gave a paper independently, on women and their makeshift ways of making money, which was full of illuminating quotes and anecdotes about the lengths to which women had to go in order to survive.

So WSG were well represented at the conference. Many thanks to our speakers!