

Previous Women's History Month Lecturers

Theresa Kaminski, University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, 1995: “Women in Early American History”

Mary Beth Norton, Cornell University, 1996: “The Curious Incident of the Gossiping Ladies of New Haven”

Faye Dudden, Union College, 1997: “Actresses and Audiences: Women and the American Theatre, 1790-1870”

Louis Haas, Duquesne University, 1998: “Medieval Women”

Constance Curry, Human Services for the City of Atlanta, 1999: “Deep in our Hearts: Women in the Freedom Movement”

Ellen Carol Dubois, University of California – Los Angeles, 2000: “Why Seneca Falls?”

Zoia Belyakova, University of Leningrad, 2001: “Russian Empresses”

Patricia Sullivan, Harvard University, 2002: “Where were the Women?: Virginia Durr and the Civil Rights Movement”

Linda Schott, University of Texas – San Antonio, 2003: “Florence Terry Griswold and the Pan American Round Table”

Catherine Clinton, Independent Scholar, 2004: “Slavery is War: Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad”

William H. Chafe, Duke University, 2005: “Paradox of Change: Changing Gender Roles from 1920”

Constance B. Schultz, University of South Carolina, 2006: “Virgins and Vamps: Images of American Women in Nineteenth Century Stereographs”

Kathi Kern, University of Kentucky, 2007: “Sacred Politics: How Religious Debate Transformed the Women's Rights Movement in Nineteenth-Century America”

Wilma Mankiller, Oklahoma Cherokee Nation, 2008: “The Changing Role of Indigenous Women”

Department of History
Department of Political Science

The Fifteenth

*Women's
History Month
Lecture*

3 March 2009

Baylor
UNIVERSITY



JILL KNIGHT, BARONESS KNIGHT OF COLLINGTREE, received her education from the King Edward Grammar School for Girls in Birmingham. In 1947 she married optician James Montague Knight and had two sons with him.

Her involvement in politics began in 1956 when she was elected a councilor and then whip on the Northampton Borough Council. As a supporter of the Conservative Party, she was elected Member of Parliament for Birmingham Edgbaston in 1966 and remained in the House of Commons until 1997.

In Parliament she was a member of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration. She also served on the Select Committee for the Council of Europe and on Home Affairs. She was Lady Chairman of the Lords and Commons All-Party Child and Family Protection Group as well as Secretary for the 1922 Committee and a member of the Conservative Back-bench Health and Social Services Committee. She was President of the West Midlands Conservative Political Centre and Lady Chairman of the Western European Union Relations with Parliaments Committee.

She was an active member of the Conservative Monday Club and a vocal opponent of the Official Irish Republican Army (OIRA). After the OIRA claimed responsibility for the 1972 Aldershot Bombing, she wanted legislation that would outlaw the IRA. Member of Parliament Sir Keith Joseph praised her as "a brave woman who speaks up when others prefer discretion in public and speak their minds only in private." Mrs. Knight responded, "I believe my constituents sent me to parliament to speak up, not shut up." Speaking out again in 1974, she called for the death penalty for the IRA and all other terrorists. In the House of Commons she presented a Bill Amendment to that end.

Queen Elizabeth first honored Mrs. Knight in 1964 with an M.B.E. for Political and Public Services. In 1985 the Queen made Mrs. Knight a Dame Commander of the British Empire, which is the female equivalent of a knighthood. The Queen honored Mrs. Knight again in 1997 by appointing her a Life Peer which ended her career in the House of Commons and made her a member of the House of Lords.

When Mrs. Knight became the Baroness Knight of Collingtree in the House of Lords, she resumed her active political career. In 2008 she spoke in twenty-one debates which is exceptional among the Lords.

She is also active as a lecturer and in the United States has spoken to the Council on World Affairs, Rotary International, and at several colleges and universities. She recently gave a series of lectures on board the Queen Mary II and currently serves as Chairman of Sulgrave Manor, the English ancestral home of George Washington.

In Celebration of

Women's History Month

Welcome

Dr. Jeffrey Hamilton
Chair Department of History

Introduction

Mrs. Spencer Brown, Sr.

Lecture

Baroness Knight of Collingtree

*Women in Politics: A Member of the House of
Commons who Escaped to the House of Lords*