

Cambridge University Press  
0521819466 - A History of Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry  
Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

## A HISTORY OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY BRITISH WOMEN'S POETRY

*A History of Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry* offers a uniquely detailed record and analysis of a vast array of publications, activities and achievements by major figures as well as lesser-known poets. This comprehensive survey is organised into three historical periods (1900–45, 1945–80 and 1980–2000), each part introduced by an evaluative overview in which emerging poets are mapped against cultural and literary events and trends. Four chapters in each section consider the major figures, including Charlotte Mew, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Stevie Smith, Elizabeth Jennings, Sylvia Plath, Anne Stevenson, Eavan Boland, Carol Rumens, Denise Riley, Grace Nichols and Carol Ann Duffy. The individual essays reflect and stimulate continuing debates about the nature of women's poetry. They offer new critical approaches to reading poems that engage with, for example, war, domesticity, Modernism, linguistic innovation, place, the dramatic monologue, Postmodernism and the lyric. A chronology and detailed bibliography of primary and secondary sources, covering more than 200 writers, make this an invaluable reference source for scholars and students of British poetry and women's writing.

JANE DOWSON is Senior Lecturer in English at De Montfort University, Leicester.

ALICE ENTWISTLE is Senior Lecturer in English at the University of the West of England, Bristol.

Cambridge University Press  
0521819466 - A History of Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry  
Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

A HISTORY OF  
TWENTIETH-CENTURY  
BRITISH WOMEN'S POETRY

JANE DOWSON AND ALICE ENTWISTLE



Cambridge University Press  
 0521819466 - A History of Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry  
 Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle  
 Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press  
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York  
[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
 Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521819466](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521819466)

© Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception  
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,  
 no reproduction of any part may take place without  
 the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Dowson, Jane  
 A history of twentieth-century British women's poetry / Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle.  
 p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 81946 6

1. English poetry – Women authors – History and criticism. 2. Women and literature –  
 Great Britain – History – 20th century. 3. English poetry – 20th century – History and criticism.  
 I. Entwistle, Alice. II. Title.

PR605.W6D68 2005

821'.91099287 – dc22 2004054647

ISBN-13 978-0-521-81946-6 hardback

ISBN-10 0-521-81946-6 hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for  
 the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or  
 third-party internet websites referred to in this book,  
 and does not guarantee that any content on such  
 websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press  
0521819466 - A History of Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry  
Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

*For R. R. D (1931–2002) and R. H. W (1921–2004)*

## *Contents*

<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	x
<i>Chronology</i>	xv
Introduction	I
PART I 1900–45 OVERVIEW	7
1 Lyrical androgyny: Alice Meynell, Frances Cornford, Vita Sackville-West and Elizabeth Daryush	29
2 A public voice: war, class and women's rights	43
3 Modernism, memory and masking: Mina Loy and Edith Sitwell	58
4 ‘“I will put myself, and everything I see, upon the page”’: Charlotte Mew, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Anna Wickham and the dramatic monologue	71
PART II 1945–80 OVERVIEW	85
5 Stevie Smith	109
6 The postwar generation and the paradox of home	125
7 The poetry of consciousness-raising	139
8 Disruptive lyrics: Veronica Forrest-Thomson, Wendy Mulford and Denise Riley	153

Cambridge University Press  
0521819466 - A History of Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry  
Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

viii	<i>Contents</i>	
	PART III 1980–2000 OVERVIEW	169
9	“These parts”: identity and place	197
10	Dialogic politics in Carol Ann Duffy and others	212
11	Postmodern transformations: science and myth	227
12	The renovated lyric: from Eavan Boland and Carol Rumens to Jackie Kay and the next generation	240
	<i>Afterword</i>	253
	<i>Notes</i>	257
	<i>Bibliography</i>	302
	<i>Index</i>	363

## *Preface*

A proliferation of anthologies and reprinted works over the past twenty years has raised awareness of the number and variety of women publishing poetry in the twentieth century. At the same time, there is a sense that separatist treatments may have had their day. While this book is not intended to confine poets to a female-only tradition, reading position or audience, history tells us that without a distinct literary terminology, tradition and role models, women's poetry will continue to have uncertain status and fade from literary memory. The need to explore and chart the literary processes against which the woman poet defines herself and her art has led us to combine literary-historical survey with critical commentary. We have negotiated between recording reputations, largely based on critical reception, as they stand, and reassessing the significance of overlooked, as well as established, work. In wanting to present a near-exhaustive record of publications, we have erred on the side of comprehensiveness in the List of Published Works and in the 'Overview' to each of the three historical periods. The chapters develop critical readings which are pertinent to the period yet can also transfer to poetry in other historical or cultural frameworks. We envisage that some readers will enjoy the linear account of poets' writing in the context of women's social and literary environments. Others might already have an interest in particular names, or be moved to explore poets who have been brought to their attention for the first time. The breadth of styles dissolves any lingering assumption that the poetry of women is somehow formulaic and irrelevant to cultural or critical trends. At the same time, reading the works in context illuminates how a complicated gender-consciousness is frequently integral to their writing. In documenting and evaluating the publications and activities of well- and lesser-known poets, we want, primarily, to secure their future by stimulating new kinds of critical conversations about women and poetry.

## *Acknowledgements*

This book was completed with the invaluable assistance of Research Leave Grants from the Arts and Humanities Research Board, and Small Research Grants from the British Academy, along with teaching relief granted by the Universities of De Montfort and the West of England, Bristol. We are grateful to Eavan Boland and Medbh McGuckian for their constructive dialogue and support. We have welcomed the knowledge and patience of Neil Astley, Ken Edwards, Peter Fallon, Peter Riley, Geoff Ward and the staff of the Poetry Library at the South Bank, London. Finally, we must thank the many friends and colleagues who have been involved in this project at different stages for their insight, tolerance and practical help, particularly Shelley Burch, Ruth Clarke, Nick Freeman, Jo Gill, Robin Jarvis, Victoria Stewart, Diana Wallace and, not least, Andy Mousley whose roles included fitting the final manuscript into a Jiffybag. The book is dedicated, for several reasons, to our fathers. Our love and special thanks go to Mark, Tom, Alf and our mothers.

The cover image 'Trilogy II' is by Eileen Cooper RA, represented by Art First Gallery London. Image © Eileen Cooper RA. Photography: Rodney Todd-White & Son, London.

Every effort has been made to clear rights on poetry extracts but some sources of copyright authority have been difficult to track down. Permission has been granted by the following:

Patience Agbabi/Edinburgh: Payback Press, for *R.A.W.* 1995; *Transformatrix*, 2000.

Allardyce, Barnett, Publishers, for quotations from poems by Veronica Forrest-Thomson from Veronica Forrest-Thomson, *Collected Poems and Translations*, ed. Anthony Barnett (Lewes: Allardyce, Barnett, Publishers, 1990), reprinted in *Selected Poems*, ed. Anthony Barnett (London: Invisible Books, 1999). Copyright © Jonathan Culler and the Estate of Veronica Forrest-Thomson 1990, 1999.



*Acknowledgements*

xi

Anvil Press Poetry for extracts by Carol Ann Duffy: 'A Clear Note' and 'Lizzie Six' from *Standing Female Nude*, 1985; 'The Dummy' and 'Psychopath' from *Selling Manhattan*, 1987; 'Poet for Our Times' from *The Other Country*, 1990; 'Prayer' and 'Away and See' from *Mean Time*, 1993.

Bloodaxe Books for Fleur Adcock, *Poems: 1960–2000*, 2000; Moniza Alvi, *Carrying My Wife*, 2000; Annemarie Austin, *On the Border*, 1993; *The Flaying of Marsyas* 1995; Elizabeth Bartlett, *Two Women Dancing: New and Selected Poems*, 1995; Imtiaz Dharker, *Postcards from god*, 1997; Maura Dooley, *Sound Barrier: Poems 1982–2002*, 2002; Helen Dunmore, *Short Days, Long Nights: New and Selected Poems*, 1991; *Out of the Blue: Poems*, 2001; Linda France, *Red*, 1992; *The Gentleness of the Very Tall*, 1994; *Storyville*, 1997; Elizabeth Garrett, *A Two-Part Invention*, 1998; Lavinia Greenlaw, 'Hurting Small Animals', *New Women Poets*, ed. Carol Rumens, 1990; Maggie Hannan, *Liar, Jones*, 1995; Tracey Herd, *No Hiding Place*, 1996; Selima Hill, *Violet*, 1997; Kathleen Jamie, *The Queen of Sheba*, 1994; *Mr and Mrs Scotland are Dead: Poems 1980–1994*, 2002; Julie O'Callaghan, *What's What?*, 1991; Carol Rumens, *Thinking of Skins: New and Selected Poems*, 1993; Pauline Stainer, *The Lady and the Hare: New and Selected Poems*, 2003; Anne Stevenson, *Collected Poems 1955–1995*, 2000; *Granny Scarecrow*, 2000.

Valerie Bloom for 'Language Barrier' and 'Show Dem' from *Touch Mi Tell Mi* (Bogle-L'Ouverture Press, 1983) reprinted by permission of the author, c/o Eddison Pearson Ltd.

Eavan Boland for excerpts from 'Anna Liffey' and 'A Woman Painted on a Leaf' (from *In A Time of Violence*, © 1994 Eavan Boland); 'Suburban Woman', '6. The Muse Mother', 'The Journey' (© 1987 Eavan Boland) and 'Tirade for the Lyric Muse' (all from *An Origin Like Water: Collected Poems 1967–1987* © 1996 Eavan Boland) and 'The Harbour' (from *The Lost Land* © 1998 Eavan Boland). Used by permission of W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Carcanet Press Ltd for Patricia Beer, *Collected Poems*, 1988; Sujata Bhatt, *Point No Point: Selected Poems*, 1997; *Augatora*, 2000; Eavan Boland, *Collected Poems*, 1995; Gillian Clarke, *Collected Poems*, 1997; Anne Cluysenaar, *Timeslips: New and Selected Poems*, 1997; Elizabeth Daryush, *Selected Poems: Verses I–VI*, 1972; Elaine Feinstein, *Collected Poems and Translations*, 2002; Mimi Khalvati, *In White Ink*, 1991; Mina Loy, *The Lost Lunar Baedeker*, ed. Roger Conover, 1997; *Charlotte Mew: Collected Poems and Selected Prose*, ed. Val Warner, 1997; Anne Ridler, *Collected Poems*, 1994; E. J. Scovell, *Collected Poems*, 1988; Sylvia Townsend Warner, *Collected Poems*, ed. Claire Harman, 1982.

Harry Chambers/Peterloo Poets for Elma Mitchell, *People Et Cetera: Poems New and Selected*, 1987.

Wendy Cope for 'Poem Composed in Santa Barbara', *Serious Concerns*, Faber & Faber, 1992 © Wendy Cope. Reproduced by permission of PFD on behalf of Wendy Cope.

David Higham Associates for extracts from Elizabeth Jennings, *Recoveries*, 1964 and *New Collected Poems*, 2002; 'Colonel Fantock', 'The Sleeping Beauty' and 'Three Poems of the Atomic Age', in Edith Sitwell, *Collected Poems*, Macmillan, 1954.

The Estate of Hilda Doolittle for 'Euridyce' (excerpt), by H. D. from *Collected Poems, 1912–1944*, © 1982. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.

Carol Ann Duffy for extracts from 'William and the ex-Prime Minister', from *William and the ex-Prime Minister*, Anvil Press, 1992, and *The World's Wife* © Carol Ann Duffy, reprinted by permission of Faber & Faber Inc., an affiliate of Farrar, Straus and Giroux LLC, and Macmillan, London, UK.

Ruth Fainlight for extracts from *Sibyls and Others*, Hutchinson, 1980 and *Selected Poems*, Sinclair Stevenson, 1995.

Alison Fell for 'Women in the Cold War', 'Sail Away', 'Butterfingers' and extracts from *Kisses for Mayakovsky*, Virago Press, 1984.

Golgonooza Press/Brian Keeble on behalf of Kathleen Raine for extracts from 'Word Made Flesh', *Selected Poems*, 1998.

Lavinia Greenlaw for extracts from *Night Photograph*, Faber & Faber, 1993; *A World Where News Travelled Slowly*, Faber & Faber, 1997.

Oliver Hawkins, for the estate of Wilfred and Alice Meynell, for *The Poems of Alice Meynell*, Oxford University Press, 1940.

Margaret and George Hepburn for *The Writings of Anna Wickham*, Virago, 1984.

Jenny Joseph for 'The Lost Continent', *Selected Poems*, Carcanet, 1992.

Sylvia Kantaris for extracts from *Dirty Washing: New and Selected Poems*, Bloodaxe Books, 1989, and *Lad's Love*, Bloodaxe Books, 1993.

Jackie Kay for extracts from 'Kail and Callaloo'; *The Adoption Papers*, Bloodaxe Books, 1991; 'The Same Note' and 'In My Country', *Other Lovers*, Bloodaxe Books, 1993; 'Pride', *Off Colour*, Bloodaxe Books, 1998.

Denise Levertov for excerpts from 'Zest' and 'The Earthwoman and the Waterwoman' (*Collected Earlier Poems 1940–1960* © 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1979 by Denise Levertov); from 'The Five-Day Rain' (*Collected Earlier Poems 1940–1960* © 1960 by Denise Levertov); from 'Abel's Bride' and 'Matins' (*Poems 1960–1967*, © 1966 by Denise Levertov); 'She and the Muse' (*Candles in Babylon*, © 1982 by Denise Levertov); and 'Wondering'

*Acknowledgements*

xiii

(*Sands of the Well*, © 1996 by Denise Levertov); all reprinted here by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation and, where it appears in *Selected Poems* (Bloodaxe Books, 1994), Pollinger Ltd.

Hamish MacGibbon for extracts from Stevie Smith's *Collected Poems*, Allen Lane, 1985, and *Over the Frontier*, Virago, 1989.

Medbh McGuckian for extracts from *Marconi's Cottage* (1991), *Captain Lavender* (1994) and *Venus and the Rain* (1994), by kind permission of the author and The Gallery Press, Loughcrew, Oldcastle, Country Meath, Ireland.

Macmillan UK for Kathleen Jamie, *Jizzen*, Picador, 1999; Carol Ann Duffy, *The World's Wife*, 1999 and *Feminine Gospels*, Picador, 2002.

Wendy Mulford for extracts from *and suddenly supposing: selected poems*, Etruscan Press, 2002.

Nigel Nicolson on behalf of Vita Sackville-West for an extract from *The Garden*, 1946.

Mary O'Malley for 'The Shape of Saying', *Where the Rocks Float*, Salmon Publishing (Galway), 1993.

Grace Nichols for extracts from *i is a long-memoried woman*, Karnak, 1983 © 1983 by Grace Nichols (reproduced by permission of Karnak House Ltd); 'Spring', from *The Fat Black Woman's Poems*, Virago, 1984 © 1984 by Grace Nichols; and 'A Poem for Us' and 'On Poems and Crotches', from *Lazy Thoughts of a Lazy Woman and Other Poems*, Virago, 1989 © 1989 by Grace Nichols (all reproduced with permission of Curtis Brown Ltd, London, on behalf of Grace Nichols).

Mark Pitter on behalf of Ruth Pitter for extracts from *Ruth Pitter: Collected Poems*, Enitharmon Press, 1990.

The Random House Group Ltd for extracts from *The Handless Maiden* by Vicki Feaver, published by Jonathan Cape, 1994; Carol Rumens, 'Two Women', 'Houses by Day', *Selected Poems*, Chatto & Windus, 1987.

Denise Riley for extracts from *Mop Mop Georgette: New and Selected Poems 1986–1993*, Reality Street Editions, 1993.

Michèle Roberts for extracts from *The Mirror of the Mother: Selected Poems 1975–1985*, Methuen, 1986, reproduced by permission of Taylor & Francis Books.

Sheila Rowbotham for 'The Role of Women in the Revolution defined by some Socialist men' (1968).

Carol Rumens for extracts from 'In the Bedroom of the Page'.

Seren Books on behalf of Jean Earle for 'Jugged Hare', *Selected Poems*, 1990; and Sheenagh Pugh for extracts from 'Envyng Owen Beattie', *Stonelight*, 1999, and 'Toast', *The Beautiful Lie*, 2002.

Cambridge University Press  
0521819466 - A History of Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry  
Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

xiv

*Acknowledgements*

Elizabeth Stapleforth for Muriel Stuart, *Selected Poems*, Jonathan Cape, 1927.

Stephen Stuart Smith at Enitharmon Press for Frances Cornford, *Selected Poems*, ed. Jane Dowson, 1996.

Virago Press (Time Warner Book Group UK) for extracts from *Me Again: the Uncollected Writings of Stevie Smith*, 1981.

Michelene Wandor for 'Lullaby'.

His Grace The Duke of Wellington for 'Milk Boy' by Dorothy Wellesley.

The estate of Sheila Wingfield for extracts from *Beat Drum, Beat Heart* (1946), from *A Kite's Dinner: Poems 1938–54*, Cresset Press, 1954. Reproduced with kind permission from David Pryce-Jones.

*Chronological Table of Selected Historical and Literary Events 1900–2000*

Year	Historical events	Literary events
1901	Death of Queen Victoria.	
1903	Marie Curie wins Nobel Prize.	
1904	Founding of the WSPU in Manchester.	
1908	Women Writers Suffrage League founded by Cicely Hamilton and Bessie Hatton.	
1909		<i>Poetry Society</i> founded. Cicely Hamilton, <i>Marriage as a Trade</i> .
1910	Death of Edward VII. Suffragette March in Hyde Park.	
1911		<i>The Freewoman: A Weekly Feminist Review</i> , founded, ed. Dora Marsden (November); runs until October 1912.
1912		Carl Jung (1875–1961), <i>The Theory of Psychoanalysis</i> . <i>Poetry Society</i> formed; <i>Poetry Review</i> launched. Lady Margaret Sackville made first President.
1913	Royal Commission on Divorce.	Sigmund Freud's (1856–1939) <i>Interpretation of Dreams</i> (1900) translated into English. <i>The New Freewoman</i> founded, ed. Dora Marsden.
1914	First World War starts.	<i>The Egoist</i> (formerly <i>The New Freewoman</i> ) founded, ed. Harriet Shaw Weaver, assisted by Richard Aldington and Dora Marsden; runs until 1918. May Sinclair, <i>Feminist Manifesto</i> . Carl Jung, <i>Psychology of the Unconscious</i> .
1916		
1918	First World War ends. Women over 30 get the vote. Countess Marckiewicz elected to Parliament.	
1919	Sex Disqualification Removal Act; all professions open except the church. Nancy Astor is first woman MP to take her seat in the House of Commons.	<i>The Egoist</i> becomes Egoist Press, London. Inauguration of <i>Vogue</i> in Britain.
1920		<i>Time and Tide</i> (1920–76) started by Lady Margaret Rhondda, London.
1921	Marie Stopes opens first birth control clinic in London.	

Year	Historical events	Literary events
1922		<i>Good Housekeeping</i> launched.
1923	BBC launches 'Woman's Hour'.	Carl Jung, <i>Psychological Types</i> .
1924	Workers' Birth Control Group.	
1927		<i>Close-Up</i> magazine founded by Winifred Bryher. Vita Sackville-West receives Hawthornden Prize for Poetry. Laura Riding and Robert Graves start Seizin Press (1927–39), Mallorca and London. Cheltenham Festival inaugurated.
1928	Women over 21 get the vote.	Nancy Cunard starts The Hours Press (1928–31), Paris.
1929		Ray Strachey, <i>The Cause</i> Virginia Woolf, <i>A Room of One's Own</i> .
1936	Spanish Civil War starts.	Penguin Books launched. Ray Strachey, <i>Our Freedom and Its Results</i> .
1937	The Matrimonial Causes Act.	<i>Woman</i> magazine launched.
1938	Inheritance Act.	
1939	Second World War starts.	
1942	Beveridge Report published.	
1944	Education Act.	<i>Outposts</i> magazine launched.
1945	Bombing of Hiroshima; war ends. Introduction of Family Allowance, state payment to mothers. BBC launches Home Service and Light programmes.	
1946	Royal Commission on Equality recommends equal pay for women teachers and civil servants.	Vita Sackville-West's 'The Garden' wins Heinemann Prize.
1947	India and Pakistan granted independence. Princess Elizabeth marries Lt. Philip Mountbatten.	
1948	NHS established. SS <i>Empire Windrush</i> lands in London. John Newsom report, <i>The Education of Girls</i> .	
1951	Festival of Britain (May–September).	National Poetry Competition flops.
1952	Death of George VI; accession of Elizabeth II.	
1953	Coronation. Kinsey Report: 'Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female'.	
1954	Rationing ends.	

*Chronology*

xvii

Year	Historical events	Literary events
1955	National Council of Women, conference on single women.	Ruth Pitter awarded Queen's Medal for Poetry. Elizabeth Jennings wins Somerset Maugham Award.
1956	Report on Marriage and Divorce, the Morton Commission.	Outposts Press evolves from magazine. Elizabeth Jennings appears in Robert Conquest's Movement anthology <i>New Lines</i> .
1957		Claudia Jones founds <i>The West Indian Gazette</i> .
1958	First Aldermaston march. Notting Hill race riots. National Council of Women, conference on working mothers.	
1959	Obscene Publications Act.	Michael Horovitz founds <i>New Departures</i> . Frances Cornford awarded Queen's Medal for Poetry.
1960		R. D. Laing publishes <i>The Divided Self</i> . Jenny Joseph wins Eric Gregory Award.
1961	Contraceptive pill introduced in UK.	Penguin cleared of obscenity in <i>Lady Chatterley</i> trial. Simone de Beauvoir's <i>The Second Sex</i> published in Britain. Doris Lessing, <i>The Golden Notebook</i> .
1962	Marilyn Monroe dies. National Housewives Register founded.	
1963	Profumo Scandal breaks.	Stevie Smith 'Poet of the Year', Stratford-upon-Avon Festival. Sylvia Plath dies. Betty Friedan, <i>The Feminine Mystique</i> .
1965	Mary Quant opens Bazaar.	Approximately 7,000 people attend Royal Albert Hall Poetry reading featuring more than 40 poets.
1966		Juliet Mitchell, 'The Longest Revolution' in <i>New Left Review</i> . Writers' Workshop formed.
1967	Abortion Law Reform. Family Planning Act.	
1968	Martin Luther King assassinated. Enoch Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech. Anti-Vietnam War demonstrations.	Northern Poetry Library founded. Kathleen Raine fails to get Oxford Chair of Poetry.

xviii

*Chronology*

Year	Historical events	Literary events
1969	First landing on the moon. Divorce Reform Act.	Enitharmon Press founded. Poetry Society's Poetry Gala, Royal Festival Hall. Stevie Smith awarded Queen's Medal for Poetry. Kate Millett, <i>Sexual Politics</i> . Sheila Rowbotham, <i>Women's Liberation and the New Politics</i> . Germaine Greer, <i>The Female Eunuch</i> . Kathleen Raine wins Cholmondeley Award.
1970	First Conference of Women's Liberation Movement, Ruskin College, Oxford (February). Equal Pay Act.	
1971	First International Women's Day (March); women march in London and Liverpool.	Stevie Smith dies. Phoebe Hesketh elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. The Arvon Foundation Centre founded.
1972	First Women's Refuge set up in Chiswick, London.	<i>Spare Rib</i> launched. <i>PN Review</i> launched. Wendy Mulford founds Street Editions. Kathleen Raine receives WH Smith Literary Award. Molly Holden wins Cholmondeley Award. Liz Lochhead wins Scottish Arts Council Award. Penelope Shuttle wins Eric Gregory Award.
1973		Virago Press launched. International Cambridge Poetry Festival inaugurated.
1974		Jenny Joseph wins Cholmondeley Award.
1975	Sex Discrimination Act. Equal Opportunities Commission set up. National Abortion Campaign launched. Employment Protection Act introduces statutory maternity rights.	
1976	Domestic Violence Act. First rape crisis centre opens in North London. Mairead Maguire founds Community of Peace People movement later winning Nobel Peace Prize.	Onlywomen Press founded. Gillian Clarke edits <i>Anglo-Welsh Review</i> . Fleur Adcock wins Cholmondeley Award.



## Chronology

xix

Year	Historical events	Literary events
1977		Elaine Showalter, <i>A Literature of their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing</i> .
1978	Hite Report. Organisation of Women of Asian and African Descent (OWAAD) formed.	The Women's Press launched. Anne Stevenson elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.
1979	Margaret Thatcher becomes first woman Prime Minister; lowest number of women MPs (19) returned in 20 years.	Medbh McGuckian wins National Poetry Competition. Pamela Gillilan wins Cheltenham Literature Festival/ <i>Sunday Telegraph</i> Poetry Competition. Anne Stevenson co-founds The Poetry Bookshop, Hay-on-Wye. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar publish <i>The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth Century Imagination</i> . Denise Levertov elected to American Academy of Arts and Letters.
1980		Elaine Feinstein elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. Medbh McGuckian wins Eric Gregory Award. Dale Spender, <i>Man Made Language</i> .
1981	The Prince of Wales marries Lady Diana Spencer. Brixton riots.	
1982	First Greenham Common Peace Camp. Channel Four launched.	April: Evening of International Poetry at the First International Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books.
1983		Grace Nichols's <i>i is a long-remembered woman</i> wins Commonwealth Poetry Prize. Carol Ann Duffy wins National Poetry Competition. Medbh McGuckian wins Alice Hunt Bartlett Award.
1984	Miners' strike prompts formation of Women Against Pit Closures.	Patricia Oxley edits the new <i>Acumen</i> poetry magazine. Alison Fell wins Alice Hunt Bartlett Award.
1985		<i>Women's Review</i> launched. Denise Levertov receives Shelley Memorial Award from Poetry Society of America. Jo Shapcott wins National Poetry Competition (joint award).

xx

*Chronology*

Year	Historical events	Literary events
1986		Carole Satyamurti wins National Poetry Competition. Jenny Joseph wins James Tait Black Memorial Prize. Helen Dunmore wins Alice Hunt Bartlett Prize. Poems on the Underground.
1987		Elizabeth Jennings wins WH Smith Literary Award. Wendy Cope wins Cholmondeley Award. U. A. Fanthorpe elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.
1988	Berlin Wall comes down (November). Sian Edwards first woman conductor of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.	The Poetry Library moves to South Bank, London. Carol Ann Duffy wins Somerset Maugham Award. Selima Hill wins Arvon/ <i>Observer</i> International Poetry competition. Gwyneth Lewis wins Gregory Award.
1989		Carol Ann Duffy wins Dylan Thomas Award. E. J. Scovell wins Cholmondeley Award.
1990	Nelson Mandela released. Mary Robinson elected President of Ireland. Poll Tax riots (March). Mrs Thatcher resigns (November). Tracy Edwards captains first all-women crew to complete Whitbread Round the World Yacht Race.	Nicky Rice wins National Poetry Competition. Elaine Feinstein wins Cholmondeley Award. Helen Dunmore wins first prize in Cardiff International Poetry Competition.
1991	Helen Sharman first Briton in space.	Judith Wright awarded Queen's Medal for Poetry. Jo Shapcott's 'Phrase Book' is joint winner of National Poetry Competition.
1992	Ordination of first women deacons in Church of England. Betty Boothroyd becomes first female Speaker of the House of Commons.	Forward Poetry Prize set up. Kathleen Raine awarded Queen's Medal for Poetry. Elizabeth Jennings receives CBE.
1993		Carol Ann Duffy wins Whitbread Poetry Prize.
1994		First National Poetry Day. 'New Generation' Poets launched. Ruth Fainlight wins Cholmondeley Award. Alice Oswald wins Gregory Award.

Cambridge University Press  
 0521819466 - A History of Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry  
 Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle  
 Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

*Chronology*

xxi

Year	Historical events	Literary events
1995		Carol Ann Duffy awarded OBE. Wendy Cope wins American Academy of Letters Award. Kathleen Jamie wins Somerset Maugham Award.
1996	Prince and Princess of Wales divorce.	Orange Prize for Women's Fiction launched. Ruth Padel wins National Poetry Competition. Fleur Adcock awarded OBE.
1997	Labour party wins general election. Tony Blair becomes Prime Minister; 120 women MPs ('Blair's Babes') win seats.	Jenny Joseph's 'When I am Old I shall Wear Purple' chosen as the Nation's Favourite Poem.
1998	Death of Diana, Princess of Wales. Devolution in Scotland and Wales; 25 women elected to first Welsh National Assembly.	Poetry on the Buses.
1999	Devolution in Northern Ireland. Minimum wage introduced in UK.	Carol Ann Duffy elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and nominated for Laureateship. Oxford University Press closes its poetry list.
2000		Kathleen Raine awarded CBE.