



# Q&A

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Author of *Heroines of the Medieval World*, *Silk & the Sword*,  
and *Ladies of the Magna Carta*



## What area of research do you focus on and why?

I mainly focus on medieval women, highlighting their influences on history. I find the subject fascinating, not from a feminist viewpoint, but from the fact that their stories have been downplayed by the chroniclers. I love being able to tell people about the amazing achievements of these women, those who held castles, changed laws, wrote books and ruled countries. My next project, however, is a biography of the Warenne earls of Surrey, from the 1<sup>st</sup> earl who fought at the Battle of Hastings, to the last, who died in 1347 and had considerable marital difficulties!

## What book in your field should everyone read?

Women in Thirteenth Century Lincolnshire by Louise J. Wilkinson. It gives a fabulous look into women from all walks of life in the 1200s. As it concentrates on one area, Lincolnshire, it can cover the topic in great depth.

## Which book inspired you to study History?

The Kings and Queens of Britain by Joyce Marlow. I got it for Christmas when I was 9. Well used and with a dog-eared cover, it is still one of my most treasured possessions

## What book are you currently reading?

I tend to read 2 books at a time, one non-fiction and one fiction. For fiction, I'm currently reading Giles Kristian's *Camelot* and for non-fiction, *Matilda* by Catherine Hanley.

## Which historian has had the greatest influence on you?

So many! It is hard to narrow it down. On a personal level, Amy Licence has given me a lot of encouragement and support, even before I published my first book and Michael Jones, Janina Ramirez and my editor, Danna Messer, have all been really encouraging. As for historians whose work I find invaluable, Louise Wilkinson, Marc Morris, Stephen Church and John Gillingham.

## What is the best museum you have ever been to?

That's a really hard one! The Louvre in Paris. I was amazed at the range of artefacts they had on display, from the crown jewels of France to the Venus de Milo. And the Mona Lisa is so small! The British Museum comes a very close second, with the Rosetta Stone being a real highlight for me!

We look forward to welcoming you to CamVC soon!



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