

Mary Wollstonecraft: 'Britain's first feminist'

1793: Memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft – video transcript

[Presented by Amanda Vickery]

What truly discredited her ideas was a well-meaning but horribly misguided warts and all biography that came out shortly after her death.

The Tory press fell on the book and overnight Wollstonecraft's name became synonymous with scandal and sin.

Publication destroyed her reputation at a stroke and blasted any chance of 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman' being taken seriously. It would be fifty years before 'A Vindication...' was republished and another century before ladies could admit to sharing her wild wish for sexual equality.

Clip from Suffragettes Forever! The Story of Women and Power, BBC Two