

Complete Gentlemen: Educational Travel and Family Strategy, 1650–1750.

Richard Ansell.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022. x + 294 pp. \$100.

Where, why, and how did young British men acquire an education through travel in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries? According to most existing scholarship, the answers to these questions lie in the Grand Tour, a phenomenon conceptualized primarily in terms of travel to Italy, especially in the mid-eighteenth century, and associated with the consumption and collection of Italian art. Richard Ansell's *Complete Gentlemen* challenges the tacit assumptions, both geographical and chronological, on which such scholarship is based. For Ansell, the focus on the Italian Grand Tour is misleading. It undermines the importance of destinations in Continental Europe other than Italy and intellectual preoccupations other than artistic collecting for educational travel. As a result, it fails to capture the diverse forms that such travel could take, as well as the full extent of its social and cultural significance.

Departing from these restrictive framings, *Complete Gentlemen* offers a more expansive view of male educational travel by examining it in relation to family strategy. Ansell's starting point is that the family is the context within which educational travel must be understood, because the experiences that young men had on the Continent were shaped fundamentally by their families' situations, aspirations, and constraints. Focusing on four clusters of gentry and noble families from England and Ireland, Ansell demonstrates that the decisions these families made about their sons' travels, both domestic and continental, were bound up with their desires to advance or consolidate their social and financial positions. Families understood travel as an investment, which, like any investment, involved potential risks and rewards. Young men could improve their family's social standing by seizing the opportunities that travel gave them to learn new skills, to make connections, and to put their cultural capital on display through practices of conspicuous consumption.

Ansell pursues this argument across five chapters that attend, variously, to the relationship of foreign travel to other modes of education, including study at universities or academies as well as private tuition; the significance of travel as a vehicle for social mobility; the links between Continental experience and diplomatic and military careers; the formation of English and Irish elite society through friendships cultivated abroad; and the afterlives of travel—that is, the ways in which families remembered and represented their travel experiences, using strategies such as gift giving and the keeping of archives.

Complete Gentlemen is a compelling and carefully researched study which will be of significant interest not only to historians of travel but also to scholars working on the period in a range of disciplines and fields. Ansell's writing on elite masculinity, for instance, enriches the histories of gender and sexuality, while his examination of constructions of Englishness has implications for scholarship on nationhood and ethnicity.

For reasons of space, it is not possible to offer a comprehensive overview of the book's many scholarly contributions. I will, however, mention some key ones here.

One of the most valuable aspects of *Complete Gentlemen* is the approach it takes to sources. While existing scholarship tends to prioritize records of travel in diaries, journals, and other accounts, especially in print, Ansell casts a much wider net, and finds rich material on travel in family archives, including letters, ledgers, and biographical and genealogical projects. This approach, which enables Ansell to illustrate the transgenerational dimensions of travel as well as its entanglement with questions of capital, should prompt other scholars to follow suit and think of travel writing in more capacious terms.

By shifting attention away from the Italian Grand Tour, Ansell calls attention to the importance of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century encounters with other parts of the Continent; his discussions of British engagements with France and French culture are especially insightful. Further, Ansell's treatment of travel as belonging to a "mixed economy" of education, in which it complemented rather than opposed formal study, will sharpen our collective understanding of education in this period more generally.

In sum, *Complete Gentlemen* succeeds in placing educational travel in its proper contexts, in modelling a new approach to sources, and in expanding our definitions of education and travel altogether.

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Ingenious Trade: Women and Work in Seventeenth-Century London.

Laura Gowing.

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Laura Gowing's *Ingenious Trade* serves as a corrective to the predominantly male-focused nature of existing work on trade guilds, apprenticeship, and citizenship. Gowing shows that, rather than being isolated from the world of guilds and trade, women's work occupied an important parallel to that of men. *Parallel* is a key term, used throughout the book to denote the real yet restricted access women had to official guild resources and titles, as well as to denote the similarities and differences between the patriarchal guild system and the networks and formal associations of working women in seventeenth-century London. The work referred to is almost exclusively in the textile trade, although some other trades are mentioned across the six chapters. Chapters 1–3 cover the world of the working woman, examining the social and commercial backdrops to women's trade in the shops of the Royal Exchange, the institution and prevalence of female apprenticeship, and the role of mistresses. Chapters 4–6 take a more thematic approach, analyzing the social and business skills learnt through apprenticeship; social relations between apprentice and master/mistress and their breakdown; and the conflict between law and custom when it came to women obtaining freedom.

The struggle to uncover women's working lives lies at the heart of this book. Gowing emphasizes the informal and flexible nature of women's work as well as attempts by