

Chapter 1 : 10 High-Class Courtesans Who Played Their Clients Like Fiddles - Listverse

Sep 06, Â· *The Courtesan's Revenge: Harriette Wilson, the Woman who Blackmailed the King* by Frances Wilson pp, Faber, Â£ *Courtesans* by Katie Hickman pp, HarperCollins, Â£

Her father is said to have assumed the surname of Wilson about Her sisters Amy, Fanny and Sophia also became courtesans. In her memoir, Wilson claims that Amy sets a poor example for the others, introducing them to their licentious reputations and careers: The first person who addressed her was one Mr. Trench; a certain short-sighted, pedantic man, whom most people know about town. I believe she told him that she was running away from her father. All I know for certain is that, when Fanny and I discovered her abode, we went to visit her, and when we asked her what on earth had induced her to throw herself away on an entire stranger whom she had never seen before, her answer was, "I refused him the whole of the first day; had I done so the second he would have been in a fever. Amy is "often surnamed one of the Furies," as Wilson writes. Fanny, on the other hand, remains a close friend to Wilson and is described as agreeable. The youngest sister, Sophia, marries respectably into the aristocracy , becoming the bride of Lord Berwick at age Career[edit] Wilson began her career at the age of fifteen, becoming the mistress of William Craven, 1st Earl of Craven, 7th Baron Craven. Among her other lovers with whom she had financial arrangements was Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington , who commented "publish, and be damned" when informed of her plans to write her memoirs. She attributes his violent act toward her to the jealousy that she had become acquainted with the Duke of Argyle and a lover, a Lord Ponsonby. According to her account, Lamb attacked her because she refused him. For obvious reasons, most politicians with whom she had relationships paid high sums to keep their interactions with her private. It is celebrated for the opening line: She records a time when, while still serving as a courtesan to Lord Craven, she writes a letter to the Prince of Wales: Indignant that the prince would request she travel to meet him, she responds: So, if you can do anything better in the way of pleasing a lady than ordinary men, write directly: Harriette and Jane Austen were contemporaries.

Chapter 2 : The Courtesan's Revenge by Frances Wilson

The Courtesan's Revenge has ratings and 15 reviews. BeeQuiet said: I had relatively high hopes for this book, in part because it came recommended by.

Being given ample proof of this seems to have made no difference to Harriette. The Duke of Lorne transferred his interest seamlessly from Harriette to her sister Amy. The one man with whom Harriette fell deeply in love, Lord John Ponsonby, dumped her and then began an intrigue with another of her sisters, year-old Fanny. At least three and possibly five of her many sisters were also courtesans: This again was not uncommon. As her debts mounted, she proposed a radical solution. She was now to turn her literary talents to darker work: Any of her conquests who preferred that their name did not appear in her book could simply pay up. The strategy produced mixed results; while many readily reached for their purses and were duly scratched from the record, others chose to ride out the storm. Wellington famously scribbled in reply to her proposal: George IV, on the other hand, would "do anything to suppress what Harriette had to reveal of [his mistress] Lady Conyngham". Also featured here are Sophia Baddeley "an actress who could not act" ; Elizabeth Armistead, who - unusually - married her lover the politician Charles James Fox ; and Catherine Walters known as "Skittles"; a photograph confirms her astonishingly tiny waist. Most absorbing is the account of Cora Pearl, who was known for her "almost superhuman knowledge of the arts of love". She claimed to have been initiated in her trade as a child, by a gentleman who offered her cakes in the street but ended up plying her with gin until she passed out. Writing of waking up the next morning in bed with the gentleman, Pearl reflected: I have never pardoned men, neither this one nor the others who are not responsible for this act. Looking back on her life, Pearl recorded her recipe for success: My independence was all my fortune, and I have known no other happiness; and it is still what attaches me to life. At a house-party in November , Wilson notes, all but one male guest had been involved with Harriette: Having enjoyed the same woman, they were on an equal footing. Having had a taste of Harriette created between her lovers a sort of homoerotic fellowship First to seduce the poor wretch, and then to ill use her.

Chapter 3 : The Courtesan's Revenge (ebook) by Frances Wilson |

"The Courtesan's Revenge" is an intriguing biography and an detailed piece of the social history of Regency England's demi-monde. There are 2 sections of illustrations containing more than 30 plates of Harriette Wilson and her contemporaries.

It was either an arranged marriage, working as a governess, or the convent for them. If it was independence they desired, they would have to play their cards right, exploit their sexual prowess, engage in pursuits of pleasure, and become ladies of the night who hunt their men down for fun. In the 16th century, courtesans became a symbol of sexual liberty, beauty, and audacity. Scandal was their middle name, but one cannot compare them with the average light-skirt. Living in decadence, these temptresses were no victims. As a matter of fact, they often sacrificed their lovers in the name of lust and financial gain. These ambitious, manipulative, and shrewd high-flyers were experienced social climbers. Courtesans charged for their love by the hour; it was business first and pleasure later. Mistresses, on the other hand, gave away their love willingly, while a courtesan in love could no longer call herself a courtesan. Petersburg, Liane de Puggy was a Belle Epoque courtesan and a bisexual whose openness toward her sexual ambitions thrilled 19th-century French society. Born Anne Marie Chassaigne in , she was raised in a convent from which she managed to escape via marriage at age In her memoirs, she accused her husband of having abused her. Whether it is true or not, what is certain is that she found consolation in the hands of another man, Marquis Charles de MacMahon. Her husband accidentally walked in on them and shot at them both but only managed to scratch Liane. It was the moment she was waiting for; she abandoned her husband and son by him and never looked back. Aged 18, she began her career as a French courtesan and ensured her place at Folies Bergere when she asked the Prince of Wales to attend her debut. Liane was not afraid to show off her assets and took great pride in her skills. Her honesty and elegance earned her the name of notre courtisane nationale our national courtesan. Liane wrote about the relationship in her book, Idylle Saphique, describing Natalie as the love of her life. As Liane grew older, she got involved in longer-lasting relationships. In , Liane married a Romanian prince, George Ghika, continuing her bisexual affairs to spice things up. To end her career, she returned to the nunnery, where she helped children with birth defects. He would not be disappointed. One lady in particular drew his attention, so he made arrangements to meet her. She had been advised to behave with decency, but she knew better. After arriving 45 minutes late not by accident , she was introduced to the already infuriated prince. Immediately, she dropped her velvet robe to the ground to reveal her most prized possessions. Reprimanded, she simply replied. I showed him the best I have, and it was free! Giulia once told an army colonel that she would only sleep with him if he would parade naked in front of her house, which he did , riding a horse at the head of his troops. Her Italian charm, determination, and childlike spontaneity won her the hearts of many men. She kept her visiting cards in a china bowl by the fireplace, which is said to have contained the names of just about every man in high society at the time. The Fiercely Independent Courtesan Photo via Wikipedia In 16th-century Venice, a young, well-educated woman caused quite a stir among noblemen at high courts. The daughter of adored Venetian courtesan Paola Fracassa, the profession ran through her veins. Veronica Franco was born in ; her mother taught her the trade. Her brothers provided excellent education in Greek and Latin, and she played the lute, all imperative skills if she were to succeed in her pursuits. In the early s, she married Paolo Panizzo. It was an unhappy marriage, and the couple soon separated. Veronica asked her dowry to be returned to her. From then on, she became an independent woman who supported herself and her six children by different men. She mastered the art of lovemaking and charged a pretty penny for it, too. Rich men became her protectors, offering her a life of luxury and decadence. Among them was Domenico Venier, who held the most influential literary salons in 16th-century Venice. She had an affair with King Henri III of France and painter Jacopo Tintoretto and was often found wandering around privileged circles of politicians, poets, artists, and philosophers. She eventually gave up courtesanship, and it is said that she later regretted the choices she had made. She retired into literature and wrote two volumes of poetry: Terze rime and Lettere familiari a diversi, the latter being a collection of 50 love letters she wrote to her lovers, including Henri III of France. During the

plague, Veronica left Venice only to return and find her home plundered by thieves. She was accused of witchcraft and immorality by the Inquisition court, but the charges were dropped after one of her patrons came to her aid. Losing her fortune, she slowly descended into poverty and died in a ruined part of the city at age 30. Her life story is depicted in the movie *Dangerous Beauty*. Marie Duplessis was born in 1812 from a poor family and was forced to beg on the streets from a young age. Her father thought it best to put her beauty to good use and sold her to an elderly man, with whom she lived, when she was only 14. By the time she was 16 and working as a seamstress, she realized there was much to gain if she accompanied wealthy men, both in the bedroom and in high society. She started off as a mistress to young students and was initiated in courtesanship by Duc de Guiche. Marie was a petite woman with an enchanting smile and a great sense for fashion and elegance. Her candor made her even more attractive. Despite her humble background, she educated herself and owned as many as 100 books in her personal library. Her wits and ambition propelled her to the courts of Paris, where she became one of the greatest 19th-century French courtesans. Throughout her life, Count de Stackelberg was her sugar daddy, a wealthy man much older than Marie who took a fancy to her because she reminded him of his departed daughter. Around 1840, she met Franz Liszt, who gave her piano lessons, both literally and figuratively speaking. By this time, she was already ill with consumption, also known as tuberculosis. Charles Dickens himself attended the lavish funeral along with the cream of French society at the time. Although the affair barely lasted a year, he immortalized young Marie in his novel, *La Dame aux Camillas*, published six months after her death. Dumas turned his book into a play. On the opening night, Giuseppe Verdi stood in the audience. Moved by the story, he wrote *La Traviata*. The novel was called *Nana*, and Zola portrays the titular character as a wicked human animal, destroying everyone and everything around her. Her physique, her attitude toward men, her clawing her way through high society, and her painful death at a young age make her a perfect match. When she was only 14, she left a convent and traveled to Romania with an aristocrat, returned to Paris, joined a circus, and then traveled to St. Petersburg alongside a Russian police chief. She did rise from being a streetwalker to entertaining some of the most influential men in Paris, and it is said that her total number of lovers defies calculation. However, Zola never even met her, and he wrote his story after her death. Blanche did indeed have a taste for extravagance, throwing lavish parties and making public appearances draped in diamonds, but perhaps one of her greatest charms, not mentioned in the book, was her gullibility. After making love, she would fall into such a heavy sleep that her lovers could simply leave her bed without compensating her. Later in life, she fell madly in love with a poor tenor by the name of Luce and left her wealthy sugar daddy to be with him. She was faithful to Luce for two years until he died of tuberculosis, during which time she lost her fortune and was forced to live in modesty. She managed to bring British aristocracy to its knees. The skill ran in the family; both her sisters were courtesans. She entertained her men at the opera, surrounded by statesmen, aristocrats, poets, national heroes, and students. She was both talented in bed and financially. Harriette had a distinctive operating mode: She would choose a mark and write a passionate letter to lure him. Once the two became lovers, she would try to blackmail her lover. In her mid thirties, she retired from courtesanship and began writing her memoirs. It was yet another business deal. Together with her publisher, Joseph Stockdale, she contacted her former lovers, presenting them with two choices: It was the cold revenge of a courtesan. In her memoirs, she revised her chapters depending on how much her former lovers paid for her discretion. For a fat sum, she even offered to depict them in the most favorable light. Virginia Oldoini was a ravenous beauty with long brown hair and blue eyes. Born of noble parents in 1812, she received an excellent education and could speak several languages. At 16, she became mistress to naval officer Marquis Doria. One year later, her parents threw her into an arranged marriage with Count Castiglione. She had a child by him, but she was nowhere near the obedient, faithful wife he had hoped for. In her mission, she seduced Louis Napoleon, the French emperor, and was quite the sensation at the French court. Johann Strauss once stopped a recital because he was stunned by her beauty when she entered the room. Her string of lovers did not end there; Richard Seymour Conway offered one million francs for 12 hours in her company. Countess Castiglione, as she liked to be called, has a legacy that goes far beyond her courtesan skills.

Chapter 4 : Review: Courtesans and The Courtesan's Revenge | Books | The Guardian

Harriette Wilson was the most desired and the most dangerous woman in Regency London. This highly acclaimed biography reveals for the first time the true story behind her sensational life and scandalous 'Memoirs'.

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Chapter 9 : Harriette Wilson - Wikipedia

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