

## SOCIAL CONTROL IN LATE ANTIQUITY

*Social Control in Late Antiquity: The Violence of Small Worlds* explores the small-scale communities of late antiquity – households, monasteries, and schools – where power was a question of personal relationships. When fathers, husbands, teachers, abbots, and slave-owners asserted their own will, they saw themselves as maintaining the social order, and expected law and government to reinforce their rule. Naturally, the members of these communities had their own ideas, and teaching them to ‘obey their betters’ was not always a straightforward business. Drawing on a wide variety of sources from across the late Roman Mediterranean, from law codes and inscriptions to monastic rules and hagiography, the book considers the sometimes conflicting identities of women, slaves, and children and asks how they found opportunities for agency and recognition within a system built on the unremitting assertion of the rights of the powerful.

KATE COOPER is Professor of History at Royal Holloway, University of London. She writes and teaches about Roman history and early Christianity with a special interest in daily life, gender, and the household. Her publications include *Band of Angels: The Forgotten World of Early Christian Women* (2013), *The Fall of the Roman Household* (2007), and *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (1996). Kate has been awarded numerous grants and prizes, including the Rome Prize of the American Academy in Rome, an RCUK Global Uncertainties Fellowship, and a Leverhulme Trust Major Research Fellowship.

JAMIE WOOD is Associate Professor of History at the University of Lincoln. He works on late antique and early medieval history, with particular interests in the religious and social history of the Iberian Peninsula. He has published widely on the writings of Isidore of Seville, including: *The Politics of Identity in Visigothic Spain* (2012),

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-74269-6 — Social Control in Late Antiquity  
Edited by Kate Cooper , Jamie Wood  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

*A Companion to Isidore of Seville* (co-edited, 2019), and *Isidore of Seville and His Reception in the Early Middle Ages* (co-edited, 2016). Jamie's postdoctoral research was funded by a Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowship and he has received grants from the British Academy and the Gulbenkian Foundation, among others. He is currently writing a book about the Byzantine presence in the Iberian Peninsula in the sixth and seventh centuries.

SOCIAL CONTROL IN LATE  
ANTIQUITY

*The Violence of Small Worlds*

EDITED BY

KATE COOPER

*Royal Holloway, University of London*

JAMIE WOOD

*University of Lincoln*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
 978-1-108-74269-6 — Social Control in Late Antiquity  
 Edited by Kate Cooper, Jamie Wood  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

**CAMBRIDGE**  
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India  
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.  
 It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of  
 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
 Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108742696](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108742696)  
 DOI: 10.1017/9781108783491

© Cambridge University Press 2020

This publication 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 2020  
 First paperback edition 2022

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

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data*

NAMES: Cooper, Kate, 1960- editor. | Wood, Jamie, 1978- editor.  
 TITLE: Social control in late antiquity : the violence of small worlds / edited by Kate Cooper, Royal  
 Holloway, University of London, Jamie Wood, University of Lincoln.  
 DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2020. |  
 Includes bibliographical references and index.  
 IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2020014089 (print) | LCCN 2020014090 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108479394  
 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108742696 (paperback) | ISBN 9781108783491 (epub)  
 SUBJECTS: LCSH: Social control—Rome—History—To 1500. | Violence—Rome—History—To 1500. |  
 Social structure—Rome—History—To 1500. | Roman provinces—Administration. |  
 Rome—History—Empire, 284-476.  
 CLASSIFICATION: LCC HN10.R7 S623 2020 (print) | LCC HN10.R7 (ebook) |  
 DDC 303.3/70945632-dc23  
 LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020014089>  
 LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020014090>

ISBN 978-1-108-47939-4 Hardback  
 ISBN 978-1-108-74269-6 Paperback

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

## *Contents*

<i>List of Contributors</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>Preface and Acknowledgements</i>	ix
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xi
Introduction. The Violence of Small Worlds Rethinking Small-Scale Social Control in Late Antiquity <i>Kate Cooper and Jamie Wood</i>	I
<b>PART I WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST</b>	
AUTONOMY AND SOCIAL CONTROL IN THE LATE ANCIENT HOUSEHOLD	I 3
1 Female Crime and Female Confinement in Late Antiquity <i>Julia Hillner</i>	I 5
2 Holy Beatings Emmelia, Her Son Gregory of Nyssa, and the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia <i>Vasiliki Limberis</i>	39
3 Power, Faith, and Reciprocity in a Slave Society Domestic Relationships in the Preaching of John Chrysostom <i>Jonathan Tallon</i>	59
4 A Predator and a Gentleman Augustine, Autobiography, and the Ethics of Christian Marriage <i>Kate Cooper</i>	76

PART II ‘SLAVES, BE SUBJECT TO YOUR MASTERS’	
DISCIPLINE AND MORAL AUTONOMY IN A SLAVE SOCIETY	103
5 Modelling <i>Msarrqūtā</i>	105
Humiliation, Christian Monasticism, and the Ascetic Life of Slavery in Late Antique Syria and Mesopotamia <i>Chris L. de Wet</i>	
6 Constructing Complexity	131
Slavery in the Small Worlds of Early Monasticism <i>Lillian I. Larsen</i>	
7 Disciplining the Slaves of God	151
Monastic Children in Egypt at the End of Antiquity <i>Maria Chiara Giorda</i>	
PART III KNOWLEDGE, POWER, AND SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE	
THE AESTHETICS OF CONTROL IN CHRISTIAN PEDAGOGY	171
8 John Chrysostom and the Strategic Use of Fear	173
<i>Blake Leyerle</i>	
9 The Fear of Belonging	188
The Violent Training of Elite Males in the Late Fourth Century <i>Jamie Wood</i>	
10 Words at War	213
Textual Violence in Eusebius of Caesarea <i>Aaron P. Johnson</i>	
11 Of Sojourners and Soldiers	232
Demonic Violence in the Letters of Antony and the Life of Antony <i>Blossom Stefaniw</i>	
12 Coercing the Catechists	256
Augustine’s <i>De Catechizandis Rudibus</i> <i>Melissa Markauskas</i>	

	<i>Contents</i>	vii
PART IV VULNERABILITY AND POWER		
CHRISTIAN HEROINES AND THE SMALL WORLDS OF LATE ANTIQUITY 275		
13	Reading Thecla in Fourth-Century Pontus Violence, Virginity, and Female Autonomy in Gregory of Nyssa's <i>Life of Macrina</i> <i>James Corke-Webster</i>	277
14	Family Heroines Female Vulnerability in the Writings of Ambrose of Milan <i>David Natal</i>	299
15	Women on the Edge Violence, 'Othering', and the Limits of Imperial Power in <i>Euphemia and the Goth</i> <i>Thomas Dimambro</i>	318
	<i>Bibliography</i>	337
	<i>Index</i>	372

## *Contributors*

- KATE COOPER, Professor of History, Royal Holloway, University of London  
JAMES CORKE-WEBSTER, Senior Lecturer in Roman History, King's College London  
CHRIS L. DE WET, Associate Professor of Biblical and Ancient Studies, University of South Africa, Pretoria  
THOMAS DIMAMBRO, Financial Planning and Analysis Manager, National Grid, Warwick  
MARIA CHIARA GIORDA, Professore Associato in Studi Umanistici, Università Roma Tre  
JULIA HILLNER, Professor of Medieval History, University of Sheffield  
AARON P. JOHNSON, Associate Professor of Humanities, Lee University  
LILLIAN I. LARSEN, Professor of Religious Studies, University of Redlands  
BLAKE LEYERLE, Associate Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame  
VASILIKI LIMBERIS, Professor of Religion, Temple University  
MELISSA MARKAUSKAS, Departmental Support Administrator, School of Environment, Education and Development, University of Manchester  
DAVID NATAL, Lecturer in History, Royal Holloway, University of London  
BLOSSOM STEFANIW, Heisenberg Fellow, Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle-Wittenberg  
JONATHAN TALLON, Tutor in Biblical Studies, Northern Baptist College  
JAMIE WOOD, Associate Professor of History, University of Lincoln



## *Preface and Acknowledgements*

This volume has its roots in a collaborative research project on religion and violence in late antiquity, the RCUK-funded Constantine's Dream: Belonging, Deviance, and the Problem of Violence in Early Christianity, which was hosted by the University of Manchester from 2009 to 2012. One of the most important insights of that project was the critical importance of the 'small worlds' of the household, the monastery, and the schoolroom as the places where social change either did or did not happen, depending on whether or not the men (and women) tasked with maintaining the social order were successful in doing their job. We became fascinated by the problem of social reproduction and the reciprocal relationship between 'big ideas' and the 'small worlds' in which people lived out their lives. Of course, the very nature of our sources – fragmentary, allusive, frustratingly focused on the viewpoint of elites – posed a significant barrier to making sense of the problem. We were fortunate that Manchester was buzzing with young people who were keen to think 'outside the box' – postgraduates and postdoctoral fellows who have become colleagues to reckon with. (Though our own paths have eventually led us elsewhere, this volume is among other things a tribute to a university that shaped a generation of historians by fostering both independent thinking and creative collaboration.) In 2011–12 we were fortunate to receive a British Academy Small Grants Scheme Award for a project entitled Cognitive Violence and Social Reproduction in Late Ancient Christianity: A Preliminary Study.

The idea – and the crowd – kept growing. A workshop, 'Violence, Education and Social Reproduction in Late Antiquity', was organised to coincide with the XVI International Conference on Patristic Studies in August 2011. (We are grateful to Worcester College, Oxford, for hosting this memorable symposium.) Since Oxford, we have picked up several further conversation-partners, a number of whom have become contributors to the present volume. So our first vote of thanks goes to the friends

and colleagues who have lent their energy to the conversation – one that has made an immeasurable difference to our way of seeing the ancient world.

The chapters represent a collective effort to view the changing landscape of the fourth and fifth centuries from the perspective of lived experience. Wherever possible we have tried to bring forward the experience of people whose voices have largely been passed over by the historical record. Many of the sources on which our contributors draw – laws, hagiographies, and theological tracts by superstar bishops (many of them later saints) – have traditionally been understood to offer a ‘top-down’ point of view, so we have made every effort to read these texts against the grain. Rather than assuming that elite bishops were transparently accurate spokesmen for their communities, we have tried to assess their efforts to influence audiences who saw things from a point of view very different to their own.

A number of chapters in our collection demonstrate how social reproduction functioned in small-scale social contexts, and thus go some way to explaining how the late Roman social order perpetuated itself across time and space. This order was maintained as much through quotidian micro-aggressions as much as it was through the weight of the state and its legal system. Yet our constant interest has been in the point of view of the disempowered – women, children, and the enslaved, both how they were treated and how they resisted the worst excesses of their oppressors. It is in the contexts of small worlds that some individuals whose social power was modest or minimal were nonetheless able to carve out opportunities to exercise agency. In these contributions we gain insights into the resilience of individuals and social structures on a small, everyday scale.

In addition to the contributors, we would like thank our institutions – the Universities of Manchester and Lincoln, and Royal Holloway, University of London, along with the British Academy and Research Councils UK – for the support that has made this work possible. We must also acknowledge the acute and generous work of Michael Sharp at Cambridge University Press and the anonymous peer reviewers, whose comments have done so much to sharpen our thinking. (Any errors that remain are, of course, our own.)

Finally, we must thank our families, whose bewildering power to charm, distract, and even educate us has made all the difference.

## Abbreviations

AA	Auctores Antiquissimi
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
<i>Adv. Jud.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Against the Jews</i>
<i>Alph.</i>	Alphabetical collection of <i>Apophthegmata Patrum</i>
Ambrose, <i>Ep.</i>	Ambrose, <i>Epistulae</i>
Ambrose, <i>Ep. extra coll.</i>	Ambrose, <i>Epistulae extra collectionem</i>
AP	<i>Apophthegmata Patrum</i>
can.	Canon
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
<i>c.Marc.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Contra Marcellum</i>
<i>Cod. Iust.</i>	Codex Justinianus
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
<i>Cod. Theod.</i>	<i>Codex Theodosianus</i>
<i>Dig.</i>	<i>Digesta</i>
<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistula</i>
<i>Ep. Ant.</i>	<i>Epistulae Antonii</i>
<i>Euphemia</i>	<i>Euphemia and the Goth</i>
<i>Exp. Ps.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Commentary on the Psalms</i>
Field	F. Field, ed., <i>Ioannis Chrysostomi interpretatio omnium epistularum Paulinarum</i> , 7 vols. (Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1854–62)
Foerster	Richard Foerster, ed., <i>Libanii opera</i> . Vols. I–IV (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903–8)
FOTC	Fathers of the Church
GCS	Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller
Gregory of Tours, <i>Hist.</i>	Gregory of Tours, <i>Libri historiarum X</i>
<i>Hab. eun. spir.</i>	John Chrysostom. <i>Homily on 'Those Who Have the Same Spirit of Faith' (2 Cor. 4:13)</i>

<i>Hist. Laus.</i>	Palladius, <i>Historia Lausiaca</i>
<i>Hom. acta apost.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles</i>
<i>Hom. Col.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on Colossians</i>
<i>Hom. 1 Cor.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on 1 Corinthians</i>
<i>Hom. 2 Cor.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on 2 Corinthians</i>
<i>Hom. Eph.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on Ephesians</i>
<i>Hom. Gen.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on Genesis</i>
<i>Hom. Heb.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on Hebrews</i>
<i>Hom. Jo.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on John</i>
<i>Hom. Laz.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on Lazarus</i>
<i>Hom. Matt.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on Matthew</i>
<i>Hom. Phlm.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on Philemon</i>
<i>Hom. Philip.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on Philipians</i>
<i>Hom. Rom.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on Romans</i>
<i>Hom. 1 Thess.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on 1 Thessalonians</i>
<i>Hom. 2 Thess.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on 2 Thessalonians</i>
<i>Hom. 1 Tim.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on 1 Timothy</i>
<i>Hom. Tit.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on Titus</i>
<i>Illum. catech.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Instructions to Catechumens</i>
<i>Inan.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>On Vainglory and the Education of Children</i>
John of Ephesus, <i>Vit.</i>	John of Ephesus, <i>Lives of the Eastern Saints</i>
<i>Laud.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>In Praise of Saint Paul the Apostle</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
Leges	Leges nationum Germanicarum
<i>Lib. grad.</i>	<i>Book of Steps</i>
Libanius, <i>Ep.</i>	Libanius, <i>Epistulae</i>
Libanius, <i>Or.</i>	Libanius, <i>Orationes</i>
<i>Macrina</i>	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Vita Macrinae</i>
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
N	Anonymous collection of <i>Apophthegmata</i>
<i>Nov. Iust.</i>	<i>Novellae</i>
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church
<i>Or.</i>	Oratio
PE	Eusebius, <i>Praeparatio Evangelica</i>
Pelagius, <i>Ep.</i>	Pelagius I, <i>Epistulae</i>
<i>Perf. carit.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homily on 'Concerning Perfect Love'</i>

*List of Abbreviations*

xiii

PG	Patrologia Graeca
PL	Patrologia Latina
PLRE	Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
<i>Propt. fornic.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homily on 'For Fear of Fornication, Let Each Man Have His Own Wife' (1 Cor. 7:2)</i>
PS	Patrologia Syriaca
<i>Rhet.</i>	Aristotle, <i>Rhetorica</i>
<i>Sacr.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>On the Priesthood</i>
SC	Sources chrétiennes
<i>Serm. Gen.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Sermons on Genesis</i>
SRM	Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum
<i>Stat.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>On the Statues</i>
TCH	Transformation of the Classical Heritage
<i>Thecla</i>	<i>Acts of Paul and Thecla</i>
Theodoret, <i>Hist. mon.</i>	Theodoret, <i>History of the Monks of Syria</i>
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians
VA	<i>Vita Antonii</i>
<i>Vidi Dom.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Homilies on 'I Saw the Lord' (Isa 6:1)</i>
<i>Virg.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>On Virginity</i>
Zos.	Zosimus, <i>New History</i>