

An Enlightenment Statesman in Whig Britain: Lord Shelburne in Context, 1737-1805 (Studies in Early Modern Cultural, Political and Social History)



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Lord Shelburne, Prime Minister in 1782-83, was a profoundly important politician, whose achievements included the negotiation of the peace with the newly-independent United States. This book constitutes a major and long overdue reappraisal of the politician considered by Disraeli to be the "most neglected Prime Minister". The book indicates, caters for, and leads the revival of interest in high politics, including its gendered aspects. It covers Shelburne's friends, his finances, and his politics, and places him carefully within both an international and a national context. For the first time his complicated but compelling family life, his satisfying relations with women, and his Irish ancestry are presented as essential factors for understanding his public impact overall. Shelburne was a politician, patron, and cultural leader whose relationship to many of the ideas, influences, and individuals of the European Enlightenment are also emphasised. The book is thoroughly up to date, written by leading authorities in the field, and predominantly based on unpublished primary research. Shelburne and his circle constituted one of the most important (and progressive) elements in British and European politics during the second half of the eighteenth century, and the book will appeal to all readers interested in the Enlightenment. NIGEL ASTON is Reader in Early Modern History in the School of Historical Studies at the University of Leicester; CLARISSA CAMPBELL ORR is Reader in Enlightenment, Gender and Court Studies at Anglia Ruskin University.

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