

# Accounting History

## Call for Papers

### *Accounting History - Women and Accounting's Past*

Throughout history, women have been healers and caretakers, playing multiple roles within and outside family structures; they have been regarded as 'wise women' and hunted as 'witches' (Cooperman Nadelson and Bernstein, 2015). Women are the backbone of families, communities, and economic development. However, the 'female' as a subject of analysis has not been witnessed as a transformative one in terms of writing, sources, and theorisation (Pedersen, 2000). Accounting history is not unique among sub-disciplines of history or accounting in its relative marginalisation of gender studies (Jesser, 1972) and under-representation of women.

Downs (2004: 185) outlines that 'scholars have come to agree that it is no longer possible to write history – whether of the military, political, economic, social or intellectual varieties – without taking gender into account'. Whilst Walker (2003) sketches a profile of the (limited) acceptance and spread of gender heterogeneity in accounting history studies by recognising 'phases' and 'themes' of accounting histories of women.

The representation of women in the accounting profession has increased globally, but much of the existing literature continues to underscore the persistent barriers to career advancement that female accountants face, despite their entry into the field more than a century ago (Kirkham and Loft, 1993). Many scholars have previously called for increased academic attention to the lived experiences of women in accounting, their contributions to the evolution of accounting practices, and broader inquiries into gender and the profession (Broadbent and Kirkham, 2008; Kyriakidou et al., 2016; Lehman, 2012; Siboni et al., 2016).

In this *Accounting History Special Issue*, we invite submissions that seek to expand and deepen the body of scholarship on women and accounting. Below, we outline several themes for prospective authors to consider:

- The historical emergence of women in the accountancy profession and under-represented domains of women's employment, such as commercial and professional organisations, the public and non-profit sectors, religious institutions, the military and academia.
- The gendered organisation of social space that has historically shaped and constrained women's experiences, for instance, within the private domain of the household.
- The engagement of women in and with accounting from diverse geographical regions, including the Global South, where traditional gender roles often remain deeply embedded and continue to reinforce patriarchal social structures.
- The significance of major socio-political events in shaping gendered labour patterns, women's emancipation, and women's access to and participation in the accounting profession (Poullaos and Sian, 2010). Further exploration into whether women in post-independence contexts encountered structural exclusion and discrimination may intersect axes of gender, race, and colonial legacy in shaping women's experiences in these transitional periods.

Walker (2003) observed that ‘since the 1990s accounting histories of women have seldom intersected with or been informed by theoretical and methodological advances in feminist history and the history of gender’ (p. 583). In the intervening years, scholarship in this domain has expanded to incorporate a diverse array of methodological approaches, including archival analysis, oral history, action research, autoethnography and feminist and gender historiography. This *Special Issue* invites contributions that seek to build upon this growing corpus of work, while also encouraging the introduction of innovative methodologies to further interrogate the role of women in accounting’s history, for instance by embracing the broader emancipatory paradigms and to advance what Haynes (2025) terms the ‘emancipatory potential of feminist accounting’.

By advancing this research agenda, this *Special Issue* seeks to broaden and deepen the scholarly understanding of the role of women in accounting’s past, thereby informing future trajectories of their contribution to society. At this critical juncture, characterised by the curtailment or rollback of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiatives by various governments and major corporations, this *Special Issue* offers a timely and vital platform for both established and emerging scholars to critically re-examine and foreground the past contributions of women to accounting and accountancy.

Prospective authors are asked to adhere to the submission guidelines available on the *Accounting History* journal webpage. All manuscripts will undergo the journal’s standard peer-review process. Scholars interested in discussing their proposals or manuscripts prior to submission are invited to contact the guest editors via the email addresses provided below. The deadline for manuscript submissions is **28 September 2026**, although earlier submissions are encouraged.

#### **Guest Editors:**

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