



# Katherine Howard: A New History

*Conor Byrne*

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## **Katherine Howard: A New History** Conor Byrne

In this new full-length biography of **Katherine Howard**, Henry VIII's fifth wife, **Conor Byrne** reconsiders Katherine's brief reign and the circumstances of her life, stripping away the complex layers of myths and misconceptions to reveal a credible portrait of this tragic queen.

By reinterpreting her life in the context of cultural customs and expectations surrounding sexuality, fertility and family honour, Byrne exposes the limitations of conceptualising Katherine as either 'whore' or 'victim'. His more rounded view of the circumstances in which she found herself and the expectations of her society allows the historical Katherine to emerge.

Katherine has long been condemned by historians for being a promiscuous and frivolous consort who partied away her days and revelled in male attention, but Byrne's reassessment conveys the mature and thoughtful ways in which Katherine approached her queenship. It was a tragedy that her life was controlled by predators seeking to advance themselves at her expense, whatever the cost.

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