Na marchandis uncouth [...] may by ututh burgh woll na hydis or ony othir marchandyse, [...] bot gif it be fra burges.¹ [No foreign merchants may buy wool nor hides nor any other merchandise outside the burgh, [...] unless purchased from a burgess.]

Na burges dwelland a landwart suld have lot nor cavill with burgesses dwelland within burgh.² [No burgess living outside the burgh should speak or do business with burgesses living within the burgh.]

Gif ony man wytandly dois falset in mesurand or weyande of ony thyng suilk as woll [...] or swine [...] he sall pay amerciament [...]³ [If any man does falsehood in measuring or weighing of any thing such as wool or pork he shall pay a fine.]

Such detailed fifteenth-century Scottish parliamentary and burgh council legislation points to the pervasive trade/status-based anxiety which characterised late-medieval Scottish urban life. At the top of the burgh pyramid were the merchants, empowered to carry out national and international trade, legislators of communal behaviour, and increasingly de facto gentle. Throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, exigencies of the national economy served to augment their influence both nationally and locally,⁴ while resistance to the increasing hegemony of that waxing merchant elite also punctuated the period.⁵ Thus the Scottish burgh community was a permeable site of both social climbing and social discipline, and conflict both within those communities and between the burgh-dwellers and inhabitants of the local hinterland seems
to have been endemic. Yet, oddly, two anonymous alliterative satires of the early fifteenth century, 'Peblis to the Ploy' and 'Chrystis Kirk on the Grene', works insistently situated in this contested space of the burghal market, are marked more by a pervasive misogyny than any evident attention to class politics.

Most often treated as straightforward burlesques of the conventions of courtly romance, these Middle Scots companion works present the spectacle of rude-mannered Lowland commoners aping the cultural practices of the nobility. In both, a festal market day offers the opportunity for non-merchant locals to array themselves, gather, flirt, dance, and fight. 'Peblis' presents the mock-heroic spectacle of rustic labourers gathering to the Peebles market from outlying villages, whilst 'wooing' and contending for their offended 'honour'. Likewise, in 'Chrystis' the activities of burghal craftsfolk, lesser indwellers of the unnamed burgh attached to the possibly fictive Christ's Kirk, are satirically transformed into a mock-romance wooing and combat of bumpkin 'champions'.

At surface, these works illustrate a wasteful and overreaching array of common folk, both rural and burghal, unsuccessfully modelling their appearances and behaviour after gentle practice. Strangely, however, these are insistently gendered works, in which sexualised female misbehaviour figures strongly. This seeming disjunction between the class concerns of context and the gendered concerns of text masks an underlying homology. Discursive acts of social discipline need not directly represent the sources of their concerns: rather, grounds for censure may be rendered allusively, the objects of the containment at least partly displaced. In these companion pieces, concerns anent the threat of both craftsmen newly resistant to the merchant-dominated burgh councils and a fractious rural labour force are gendered as the determinately feminine and, in particular, sexual misconduct of the women of the lower orders.

Scholarship over the past twenty years has amply demonstrated the discursive traces of misogyny as a thematics and a mode characteristic of the 'medieval'; that is, both as specific expressions and as a habit of expression, misogyny typifies much of medieval discourse. The peculiarly ahistoric, monologic quality of authoritative statements concerning women's nature and practice throughout the first fifteen centuries of the Christian West has been well described by such critics as R. Howard Bloch. From the earliest patristic writers to the later scholastics, Woman exists as a defining term, the differential by which