

# Unsung Women- The Spinning House

By Kirsty Martin for Women of Note as part of Cambridge Cycle of Song 2014 ©

Elizabeth Howe, Jane Elsdon, Daisy Hopkins – tear it down!  
Disorderly girls – mistreated ones – unfortunates – tear it down!  
It cost fifteen hundred pounds a year -  
to keep the women living in fear/ for the Spinning House – tear it down!  
Rise Up Rise up! Rebel Rebel! Resist Resist! and tear it down!

## VERSE 1

The spinning house built on hate and neglect  
Cold and wretched – a filthy place  
A prison for men to control and correct  
Any girl who dared to show her face  
Weak tea for supper and sleeping on straw  
No fire to warm them or natural light  
Cold water and bricks to scrub the floor  
The women were shaking with anger and fright

## VERSE 2

Proctor and Bulldog they swore to protect  
The scholars and Dons and the men of the Gown  
For no reason the women and girls they'd arrest  
Just for shopping or travelling to Town  
Patrolling the streets, ignoring the law  
Bulldog and Proctor they went on the prowl  
Abusing their power strong arming the poor  
And seized any woman by FAIR MEANS OR FOUL

**RISE UP RISE UP DISORDERLY GIRLS! REBEL REBEL MISTREATED ONES!  
RESIST RESIST UNFORTUNATES! & TEAR DOWN THE SPINNING HOUSE! \*X3**

Tear down the spinning house – break through the ceiling of glass  
Tear down the spinning house – break through the ceiling of glass  
History – will be ashamed of this – will be ashamed of this

Spinning towards EQUALITY / REVOLUTION on her bike (she was)  
Get you to Girton – get you to Newnham, Beatrice - Pioneers  
Newnham – Girton – Pioneers  
Anne Jemima Clough – and Emily Davies –  
They couldn't access the library -  
They couldn't work in the laboratory –  
and they couldn't receive their degrees –  
(they couldn't receive their degrees)  
T&A: as there was no equality... (no equality)

## VERSE 4:

Spinning towards EQUALITY / REVOLUTION on her bike! (she was)  
1897, the Senate put it to the vote –  
Men came from far and wide – and called us

harpies, Suffragettes, lunatics and beggars  
They strung us up and they shouted us down,  
Yet through our defeat, we sang 'we work in hope'

(Pioneers) Girton, Newnham, Pioneers.  
Some talk of Senior Wranglers, and some of Double Firsts  
And truly of their species, these are not the worst  
But of all the Cambridge heroes, there's none – can compare  
With Woodhead, Cook and Lumsden, the Girton Pioneers!

Tear down the spinning house – break through the ceiling of glass!

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