

Talk Outline

Breach of Promise to Marry The Real Miss Havishams by Denise Bates

Breach of Promise to Marry investigates the social and cultural history of broken engagements between 1780-1970 and why the law allowed the person who had been jilted to claim damages from the person who had broken the engagement.

The book is based on my original research in contemporary newspapers and literature, to discover who were the real Miss Havishams, why they found different endings to their fictional counterparts and what their experiences reveal about social attitudes to broken engagements.

A talk is illustrated by relevant cases and covers

- What is breach of promise and why did it develop and then decline
- Who brought a claim and why
- Defending a claim for breach of promise
- Damages and what they meant for both parties
- What jilted women did next
- Men who sued a woman for breach of promise

As an alternative approach I can

- Provide a more detailed talk about one or more cases
- Discuss breach of promise in relation to fiction

My credentials

- History Graduate (MA)
- Author of *Pit Lasses* (2012), updated version (2023)
- Author of *Breach of Promise to Marry* (2014)
- Author of *Historical Research Using British Newspapers* (2016)
- Contributor to television, radio and magazines