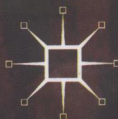
A portrait of a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a red dress with a white lace collar. She is looking slightly to the right with a gentle expression. The background is dark and textured.

EARLY MODERN HISTORY: SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Melinda S. Zook

PROTESTANTISM,
POLITICS, AND
WOMEN IN BRITAIN,
1660–1714

GENERAL EDITORS: RAB HOUSTON and EDWARD MUIR



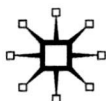
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Melinda S. Zook

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Acknowledgements

This work is the outgrowth of several impulses. The first was my desire to examine patterns of women's behavior within the context of oppositional politics between 1660 and 1688 that I had noticed while researching my book on Whig politics. The sources were thin but intimated that women were clearly enmeshed in the thick of seditious plotting and publication. They also suggested that one could not with confidence connect the actions of these women to political ideologies but that which motivated their behavior was their religiosity. I felt very strongly then that this was a story that deserved to be told. The importance of religious fervor in seventeenth-century women's lives and the degree to which I felt that I had not given religion the full weight of its significance in my first book, was also a driving force behind this book. *Radical Whigs and Conspiratorial Politics in Late Stuart England* was written initially as a dissertation in the context of life in Washington, DC, and particularly, the influence of the Centre for Political Thought at the Folger Shakespeare Library, which was then under the direction John Pocock, Lois Schwoerer, and Gordon Schochet. Given that atmosphere, it is little wonder that my focus was driven by interest, first and foremost, in political culture and discourse. This present work derives from another context entirely, one both personal and political. The impact of religious fanaticism on ordinary lives since September 2001 has certainly been cause for thought. On a more intimate level, this project is the work of a more mature woman, living a more settled life, and one who is far more appreciative of the role of spirituality in day-to-day existence.

It took me long time to write this book so I have many people to thank. I am grateful to the Center for Humanistic Studies at Purdue University for their support as well as my colleagues in the Department of History. Several of my graduate students helped me over the years with the research end of this project; they include Suzanne Calkins, Christian Griggs, and Karen Sonnelitter. My wonderful gang of female friends – Lois G. Schwoerer, Hilda L. Smith, Janelle Greenberg, and Linda Peck – all of whom I have known me since my graduate school days, have long been a tremendous source of strength and encouragement for me. Janet Todd and Derek Hughes have been dear friends for many years, and

anyone who works on Aphra Behn and Restoration drama owes them a debt of gratitude. Warren Johnson has also been a close confidant, and I am grateful to him for his help with locating seventeenth-century funeral sermons, and his insights on such topics as latitudinarianism and Anglican orthodoxy. I have benefitted from my many conversations with Gary De Krey, Robert Bucholz, and Newton Key. Maureen Bell helped me to better understand the activities of seditious booksellers. Julie Farguson helped me identify several of Mary II's charities. Stephen Taylor, Mark Goldie, Molly McClain, and Tim Harris have been kind and encouraging friends. Closer to home, Larry Mykytuik, Purdue's history biographer, has been especially wonderful at assisting with biblical texts. The Inter-Library Loan office in our Humanities Library has been unfailing in their efforts to support my research. But above all, I am grateful to the support and understanding of my dear daughter, Lucy, and my true and loyal friend, Michael G. Smith.

West Lafayette, Indiana, 2013

List of Abbreviations

Add	Additional Manuscripts, British Library, London
AHR	<i>American Historical Journal</i>
BDBR	<i>Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century</i> . 3 vols. Eds. Richard L. Greaves and Robert Zaller. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982–84
BIHR	<i>Bulletin of the Institute for Historical Research</i>
Behn, <i>Works</i>	Aphra Behn, <i>The Works of Aphra Behn</i> . 5 vols. Ed. Janet Todd. London: Pickering & Chatto, 1995
Birch, <i>Life</i>	Thomas Birch, <i>The Life of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury</i> London, 1753
BL	British Library
Burnet, <i>HOHOT</i>	Gilbert Burnet, <i>History of His Own Time</i> . 6 vols. Oxford, 1833
Burnet, <i>A Supplement</i>	<i>A Supplement to Burnet's History of His Own Times</i> . Ed. H.C. Foxcroft. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902
<i>Calamy Revised</i>	A.G. Matthews, <i>Calamy Revised: Being a Revision of Edmund Calamy's Account of the Ministers and Others Ejected and Silenced, 1660–2</i> . Oxford, 1934
CHJ	<i>Cambridge Historical Journal</i>
CSPD	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series</i>
Dalrymple, <i>Memoirs</i>	John Dalrymple, <i>Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland</i> . 2 vols. London and Edinburgh, 1771–73
Doebner, <i>Memoirs</i>	<i>Memoirs of Mary, Queen of England</i> . Ed. R. Doebner. Leipzig, 1886
DHC	Dorset History Centre
DNB	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>

Evelyn, <i>Diary</i>	<i>The Diary of John Evelyn</i> . Ed. E.S. de Beer, 6 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986
HJ	<i>Historical Journal</i>
HMC	<i>Historical Manuscripts Commission</i>
House of Commons	<i>The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1660–1690</i> . 3 vols. Ed. B. D. Henning. London: The History of Parliament Trust, 1983
JBS	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
JEH	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
Locke Correspondence	<i>The Correspondence of John Locke</i> . 8 vols. Ed. E.S. de Beer. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978–82
Luttrell	Narcissus Luttrell, <i>A Brief Historical Relation of State of Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714</i> . 6 vols. Oxford, 1857
Morrice, EB	<i>The Entering Book of Roger Morrice</i> . 6 vols. Gen. Ed. Mark Goldie. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007
NA	National Archives, London
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004
P & P	<i>Past and Present</i>
Rawl.	Rawlinson Manuscripts, Bodleian Library, Oxford
Strickland	Agnes Strickland, <i>Lives of the Queens of Scotland and England and English Princesses Connected with the Regal Succession of Great Britain</i> , 12 vols. New York, 1851–59
SEL	<i>Studies in English Literature</i>
State Trials	<i>A Complete Collection of State Trials</i> . 22 vols. Ed. T. B. Howell. London, 1816
TCHS	<i>Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society</i>
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>

Note on the Text

For the most part, I have modernized the spelling and grammar of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts, including manuscript sources. However, for Aphra Behn's plays, novels, and poems cited in Chapter 3, I have followed Janet Todd's edition of *The Works of Aphra Behn*. Similarly, in Chapter 5, I have followed the spelling in Patricia Springborg's edition of Mary Astell's *Political Writings*.

I am certainly aware that the terms "Anglicanism" and "Anglican" are basically anachronistic to the seventeenth century in the way that we use them today, but I have chosen nonetheless to retain them for reasons of clarity and simplicity.

“Brothers and Sisters: Greet Prisca and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life... Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first fruits in Asia for Christ. Greet Mary who has worked hard for you. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives and my fellow prisoners; they are prominent among the Apostles and they were in Christ before me. Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. Greet one another with a holy kiss.”

Saint Paul to the Romans, 16:3–9

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Introduction

Nursing Mothers and Sanctified Sisters: Women's Political Behavior after the Restoration

After many weeks of listening to the “strong opinions” of Tabitha Smith, an Oxford glover named Richard Crutch decided to go to the authorities. In February 1686, he traveled to London and out of his “duty to his majesty” accused Smith of treasonable activity. She had come from the West Country to live with Richard and his wife, Katherine, about a month ago. Loquacious and opinionated, Smith had told them a fraught tale of daring and escape. Her husband, James, had joined the rebel leader, the Duke of Monmouth, at Lyme and had sent word to her in Taunton that she and their servants should prepare to provide horses and provisions for the rebellion. Tabitha Smith joined Monmouth’s army and saw action at Phillips-Norton where she herself commanded a company of horse. After the rebels’ defeat at Sedgemoor, Smith escaped back to Taunton “wearing men’s clothes” to secure what goods she had left. Colonel Kirke’s regiment came “speedily after.” Smith hid what she could, borrowed money from a shopkeeper in Bristol and made it to Oxford. Since Smith practiced the same trade as the Crutches, they had taken her into their home. But her bold talk soon made Richard apprehensive, and he regretted it. Smith swore that the Duke of Monmouth was still alive and would come again with 40,000 men. She boasted of having been entertained by a kinsman of the Earl of Derby’s in Lancashire, where they were raising money in preparation for Monmouth’s return.¹ She refused to call James II, “king,” and declared that the Queen was “as arrogant a whore as any in England” and kept

¹ BL, Add. 41,804, ff. 257–257v. Tabitha Smith was probably referring to William Stanley, ninth Earl of Derby (c. 1655–1702) who was lord lieutenant for Cheshire and Lancashire.

“five or six gallants” to please herself. Smith hoped to one day “drink a draft of the Queen’s blood.”²

Is Tabitha Smith’s story true? Possibly. The authorities in London certainly took Richard Clutch seriously. Smith was arrested and questioned. Naturally, she denied Clutch’s allegations. She was promptly imprisoned anyway. Interestingly, rather than support her husband, Katherine Crutch softened the story, reporting that although Tabitha spoke “very kindly of the Duke of Monmouth, wishing God to bless him where ever he was,” she never said anything “treasonable.”³ Oxford authorities were not convinced and were more inclined to believe her husband. What happened to Smith, how long she was confined, or whether she was ever reunited with her husband, James, remains a mystery. She never resurfaces among the sources. Her story is but a sliver, a small chard of evidence, among the numerous informants’ reports on, and interrogations of, suspected Monmouth supporters following the failed Rebellion.⁴ We may find parts of the story that Tabitha Smith told the Clutches suspicious, particularly her boast of having led a troop of horse. But parts of it also mirror the activities of many women throughout history in times of war and rebellion: supplying horses, arms, food, and money or cross-dressing and even joining men in battle.⁵ Even if Smith exaggerated, she certainly had “strong opinions,” as Richard Clutch put it, it is reasonable to assume that she took some action to assist Monmouth, especially since she was on the run.

However slender the evidence, the tale of Tabitha Smith is revealing, and it supports the conclusion that women in former times, including common women, were both politically alert and active. This is nothing new. Historians of women’s history and gender history have reiterated this time and again, yet somehow it fails to breach the bulwarks around

² BL, Add. 41,804, ff. 258–9.

³ Ibid., ff. 260, 262, 263.

⁴ The story of Tabitha Smith was reported to Secretary of State, Charles Middleton (BL, Add. 41, 804, ff. 257–63). There were at least two “James Smiths” in the Rebellion. One, a cloth worker, was tried in Taunton and sent to Jamaica. The other, a yeoman, was still at large. While neither of them fit Richard’s information, it is possible that one of them was Tabitha’s husband. W. MacDonald Wigfield, *The Monmouth Rebels, 1685* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1985), p. 157; *CSPD*, James II, 1: 428, 430.

⁵ Chapter 2 describes women who helped supply Monmouth’s army. On the tradition of women cross-dressing and joining armies, see Rudolf M. Dekker and Lotte C. van de Pol, eds., *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Palgrave, 1997).

political history. Tabitha Smith was also very likely a Protestant Dissenter. She certainly had all the hallmarks of one: a tradesperson from Taunton who had supported Monmouth. Motivated, it would seem, by “the Protestant Cause,” the desire on the part of Whig exclusionists and Protestant Dissenters to deny the crown to the Catholic James, Duke of York, by law or by force, Smith went into action. It is also likely that the shopkeeper in Bristol and the Crutches of Oxford were Smith’s confessional brethren, which explains their willingness to help her. They belonged to the same Dissenting network, possibly Quakers, who felt a particularly strong sense of group identity. Only Tabitha’s big talk began to frighten her host.⁶

This book begins with this little story to make a point about a much larger story and one that remains untold: the contributions of women, at all social levels, to the political culture of Restoration and Revolution England. Certainly, over the last fifty years, women’s and gender history has transformed our understanding of family, kinship, household order, honor codes, constructions of femininity and masculinity, work and the craft industry, scientific traditions, magic and witchcraft, gossip, lay religiosity and more. But there is a gap. Explorations into the social, economic, and cultural lives of women dominate. Political history lags behind. This is not to say that studies of women and politics in the early modern era do not exist. The final chapter, “Politics,” in Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford’s *Women in Early Modern England*; Bernard Capp’s chapter, “Women as Citizens: Public and Political Life” in *When Gossips Meet*; and Hilda Smith’s discussion of “Commercialism, Politics and Gender in the Eighteenth Century” in *All Men and Both Sexes* – certainly advance our understanding of the political roles and personas played by early modern English women.⁷ But they are also tucked away, bound in books on women’s and gender history, not political history, and thereby unlikely to be sought out by the student of early modern politics. Literary critics, Susan Wiseman and Katharine

⁶ Richard L. Greaves, *Secrets of the Kingdom: British Radicals from the Popish Plot to the Revolution of 1688/89* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 335.

⁷ Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550–1720* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Bernard Capp, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighborhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Hilda L. Smith, *All Men and Both Sexes: Gender, Politics and the False Universal in England, 1640–1832* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2002). Also see, James Daybell, ed., *Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450–1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).