Virtue and Vice:
Religion, social hierarchy and gender in English murder and execution pamphlets, 1570-1620

A dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2015

Patricia Walker

Trinity College Dublin

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work.

I agree to deposit this thesis in the Library of Trinity College Dublin and to allow the Library to lend or copy the thesis on request.

I agree to deposit this thesis in the University's open access institutional repository or allow the library to do so on my behalf, subject to Irish Copyright Legislation and Trinity College Library conditions of use and acknowledgement.

Patricia Walker
May 2016

Summary

This dissertation analyses how murder and execution pamphlets reflected and affirmed acceptable patterns of religious belief and social behaviour in late Elizabethan and Jacobean England. The key sources of this dissertation are 42 surviving pamphlets which describe 88 murders published between 1570 and 1620. I subject these texts to detailed analysis and track both similarities and differences regarding religious belief including temptation, repentance, providence and descriptions of God and the devil. Social concepts that are present within these texts include hierarchy, gender and acceptable levels of domestic violence. Authors constantly stressed the need for morality and repentance while also reminding readers about their social obligations to one another as well as their obligations to the reigning monarch.

This dissertation also includes discussion and analysis of contemporary religious tracts alongside these murder and execution pamphlets including sermons, prayers, works of theology, conduct literature and marital literature of the period. This selection of contemporary authors encompasses a variety of religious and social backgrounds and demonstrates the pervasive and constant nature of the themes found in murder and execution pamphlets throughout the period in discussion. By comparing the language of cheap print with that of dogmatic, moralistic and popular literature, I investigate the influences and references that lay at the heart of popular pamphlets and demonstrate how this literature was part of the ongoing dialogue pertaining to morality, religion, gender and societal norms found in print during the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth- centuries.

Chapter Two directly discusses representations of popular and official religious beliefs about God, the devil, sin, repentance and providential revelations of murders found in this cheap print. These pamphlets contained overt biblical references and passages and shared admonitions against sin with religious and moralistic publications. Pamphleteers engaged with Scripture and contemporary religious discussions and packaged these ideas in popular dialogues about murder and violence. The concepts of sin and providence are also analysed in Chapter Three in combination with a discussion of gender, specifically the character of the widow. Widows, as independent women, did not fit into England's patriarchal order. They existed on the peripheries of society and were sites of social anxiety. This chapter analyses representations of widows as scapegoats for violence, as murderers and as victims, while taking into account additional depictions of widows found in early modern drama and conduct literature.

Dialogue about gendered behaviour continues in Chapter Four which addresses murders committed by male householders against their domestic subordinates: wives, children and servants. Male householders were supposed to behave in a specific manner or risk losing their masculine identities. They were expected to love their wives, properly raise their children and be kind masters to servants. These roles could only be accomplished through absolute control of one's emotions and impulses at all times. Loss of control, however, meant a forfeiture of masculinity and the household could not function properly without a male head.

Authors of this genre of cheap print appeared to be very much concerned with identifying who did or did not belong among the English Christian brethren. Chapter Five analyses the exclusionary language used by authors to identify three groups of sinful and dangerous outsiders: traitors, rogues and savages. By identifying who belonged among English Christian brethren, authors highlighted desirable characteristics of men and women in these pamphlets. Chapter Six also discusses concepts of belonging by highlighting the roles neighbours played in this literature and identifies the reciprocal expectations placed on them in late Elizabethan and Jacobean England. Neighbours created and regulated reputation within a community and also played a direct role in the apprehension of felons. Momentary lapses in neighbourly duties, on the other hand, allowed murderers to grow bold and cause havoc until order was once again restored by the reassertion of proper neighbourly bonds and duties.

Chapter Seven focuses on descriptions of clothing of both victims and felons. In these pamphlets, clothing served as both weapons and disguises which granted murderers access to their victims or to escape. Clothing could be used to represent innocence in some pamphlets by being described in penitential terms. It could also represent guilt in others when people demonstrated a complete lack of respect for social hierarchy by dressing above their station. Representations of innocence and social contempt were also found in descriptions of clothing at the gallows where clothing allowed felons one final signal of dissent as they proceeded to their deaths.

Table of Contents

Summary iii

Table of Contents v

Acknowledgements vii

Conventions and Abbreviations ix

1 Introduction 1

Historiography 10

Research Questions and Methodology 16

Dissertation structure 19

2 God's Miracles and the Devil's Temptations: Literary Representations of Providence, Sin and Repentance 31

God's Providence 37

Sin and the Devil 55

Divine Revenge 60

Repentance 65

3 She-wolves and Godly Women: Representations of widows as Scapegoats, Murderers and Victims..... 79

Representations of the Early Modern English Widow 86

The Scapegoat 94

Murderers 99

Victims 109

4 Unnatural Gentlemen and Hard-hearted Masters: Representations of Male Domestic Violence 117

Shaping Manhood and Masculinity 119

Wives and Husbandly Love 126

Children and Murderous Fathers 145

Servants and domestic violence 157

5 The 'Unity of Brethren': Representations and Descriptions of the Social Other..... 163

The 'United' Christian Brethren 170

Papists and Traitors 176

The English Parasite 183

The Savage 190

6 'The Love of Neighbours': The Importance of Neighbourly Bonds and Social Networks..... 205

Creation and control of Reputations 213

Exposure and Apprehension of Felons 221
Neighbourly Neglect and Repercussions 232
7 The Stuffe of Death: Descriptions of Clothing and Textiles 237
Clothing, Morality and Society 242
Dangerous Textiles 246
Deception and Violence 258
Executions and the Gallows 272
Conclusion 287
Bibliography 293
Primary sources 293
Secondary sources 305

Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not have been possible without the generous support of numerous people and organizations. I am most grateful to the Irish Research Council for awarding me a Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship in 2014. This award has enabled me to directly focus on my research which has been extremely beneficial and has added great depth to my dissertation. I would also like to thank Students Universal Support Ireland for fees contributions between 2012 and 2014. I owe a debt of gratitude to Trinity Long Room Hub for Arts and Humanities Institute, Dr. Caitriona Curtis and Prof. Jurgen Barkhoff for providing me with a place in a vibrant interdisciplinary community and to the School of Histories and Humanities for nominating me for the workspace.

I was most fortunate to be supervised by Dr. Graeme Murdock who has been the most encouraging, supportive and tolerant supervisor a postgraduate student could aspire to have. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Drs. Allana Lindgren and Jure Gantar for their advice and support without which I would not have pursued this degree and to Drs. Joseph Clarke, Robert Armstrong, Martine Cypers and Patricia Stapleton for their comments and criticisms of draft chapters. I would like to thank the members of the European Reformation Research Group and the Trinity College Early Modern History Postgraduate Seminar for their helpful comments and criticisms of early papers and drafts. I would also like to thank the Centre for Early Modern Studies and the Department of History, Trinity College Dublin, for the excellent and informative seminar series, opportunities and experiences that have greatly shaped and contributed to my research.

This dissertation would not have been possible with the patience and support from my wonderful friends and family. A special thank you to Jennifer McNeil, Jessica Pierce, Christa Hunfeld Murray, Kaja Kiegler, Leah Hunnewell, Sarah Hunter, Fionnuala Walsh, Sophie Hingst, Robert Gorvin, Gianmarco Braghi, Dr. Fergus Robson, Dr. Tim Murtagh, Richard Lawton and Patrick Lawton. My

uncle and aunt Dr. T.W. and Merne Wilson have been with me every step of my education and provided much needed advice. My uncle and aunt Michael and Trisha Geaney have encouraged and entertained me since my arrival in Ireland. My beautiful parents-in-law, John and Ita Lawton, provided me with a family and home when I have been so far away from my own. I owe the second biggest thank you to my own my wonderful parents, William and Dale Walker, for always being present, nurturing and supportive at every moment of doubt and cause for celebration. My biggest thank you goes to my long-suffering husband, Colm Lawton, for enduring four years of a never ending discussion of death, murder and execution and for bearing my moods and whims with compassion and kindness at all times.

Conventions and Abbreviations

Quotations from printed sources remain in the original spelling and punctuation. *F* has been substituted with *s* and thorn and *y* have been replaced with *th* where appropriate. *U* and *v* have been distinguished where appropriate.

Harrison, *The Description of England*	William Harrison, The *Description of England: The Classical Contemporary Account of Tudor Social Life* (New York, 1994)
Lake, 'Deeds against nature'	Peter Lake, ''Deeds against nature': Protestantism, cheap print and murder in early modern England' in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (eds), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (London, 1994), pp. 257-83
Sharpe, 'Last Dying Speeches'	J.A. Sharpe, ''Last Dying Speeches': Ideology and Public Execution in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past & Present* 107 (1985), pp. 144-167.
Walker, 'Demons in female form'	Garthine Walker, ''Demons in female form': representations of women and gender in murder pamphlets of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries' in William Zunder and Susanne Trill (eds), *Writing and the English Renaissance* (London, 1996), pp. 123-139.

Introduction

Murder and execution pamphlets of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries appear at first sight to be unsophisticated booklets about strange and heinous crimes published for the entertainment of English readers. This form of cheap print, however, reflected the teachings of the Church of England and highlighted the importance of a pious life, constant vigilance against the devil, and the need for repentance. Within these texts, the weighty moralistic nature of Protestant doctrine served as the foundation for the construction of social norms including patriarchal control, acceptable social behaviour and gender roles. These pamphlets featured criminals and victims from a variety of social backgrounds and had the potential to appeal to a wide audience due to their scandalous nature, broad subject matter and low cost. This printed material was very formulaic, always discussing the crime, capture, repentance and death of the criminal, but it continuously informed the reader that no matter what crime was committed repentance lifted the burden of guilt from the soul.

This dissertation analyses representations of religion, social hierarchy and gender as described in English murder and execution pamphlets published between 1570 and 1620. There are 42 surviving pamphlets from this period which describe 88 murders. This form of cheap print was extremely formulaic and contained repetitive messages about repentance, morality and religious faith interlaced with warnings about violence, crime and sin. These re-occurring topics of religion, behaviour, social hierarchy and gender reveal important sites of early modern anxiety. Whether sincere or not, authors engaged in important theological conversations and repackaged them in a way that was accessible for even the basest reader. All of the pamphlets included in this study referenced God, the devil, sin and repentance in one form or another and some included highly sophisticated scriptural and Classical references. These references were seamlessly woven into stories about death and

murder by the authors which hints at the fact that readers were very much aware of both their importance and social context. These pamphlets were conduits for messages about religious faith and proper social behaviour and the inclusion of themes of piety and proper behaviour were clearly deemed by officials to be necessary for the bettering of English life as they passed rigid censorship.

The stories and characters varied but the overarching concepts of faith, behaviour, social order and punishment certainly did not. Malcom Gaskill discussed the formulaic nature and noted 'it was common for reports of murders to be fashioned in to standardized deterrent fables'.[1] Sandra Clark observed that the formulaic nature of the pamphlets did not detract from their popularity due to the belief that 'the individual life or single sensational event could always be seen as typical exemplifications of some truth and, that it was in the general rather than the particular aspect that their importance lay'.[2] The message was loud and clear: if you committed a crime, you would be caught and brought to justice by the state and, most importantly, God.

These were small, cheaply printed pamphlets and ranged in length from 8 to 30 pages. The frontis pieces were typically a woodcut of the crime described within, the hanging of the murderer at the gallows or a generic decorative design. In several cases, the woodcuts of the crime or hanging were reused by publishers and appeared in other pamphlets or the top of ballads also describing the murders. The majority reported one murder while others were collections of numerous murders and crimes such as Anthony Munday's *A View of Sundry Examples* (1591) which described 19 murders that occurred throughout the sixteenth century.

Authors included playwrights Thomas Dekker and Thomas Kyd, preacher Thomas Cooper and Newgate orderly Henry Goodcole though the majority were published anonymously which is problematic when addressing authorial intent. According to Marjorie Plant, authors were paid very

[1] Malcolm Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003), p.214.
[2] Sandra Clark, *The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular moralistic pamphlets, 1580-1640* (London, 1983), p.89-90.

little and had no bargaining power within the publishing trade.[3] Copyright claims for authors were non-existent during this period and 'borrowing' text was a common occurrence which further contributed to their lowly position in the print trade. While authors provided the stories, printers and booksellers were far more powerful. *The Register of the Stationers' Company* included printers' names for licensing purposes and book and ballad titles but never included the names of authors whose works they published. Of course, the Register was a bureaucratic record for printers rather than a record for authors but it does help to expand our knowledge of publications and printers.

These publications were cheap and sold for a few pence per copy but this does not mean that the readers exclusively belonged to the lower ranks.[4] Tessa Watt advised readers that 'one should not therefore conclude that all of these publishers catered specifically for a 'popular clientele'' because of their cheap nature.[5] According to Eric Nebeker, murder pamphlets and other titillating cheap print contributed to a 'developing a culture of printed controversy in which all levels of society could participate'.[6] The cheap nature of this literature no doubt contributed to its wide circulation and opened up a new sphere of public participation through both reading and oral participation of individuals unable to read. Readers from different backgrounds participated in shared cultural experiences through cheap print. While this print was indeed violent and sensational, its readership and the significance of its social message should not be overlooked due to a supposed base nature.

While one or two pence per pamphlet was cheap, not everyone could afford that cost. Sandra Clark has argued that this form of literature was most likely 'addressed primarily to those who were

[3] Marjorie Plant, *The English Book Trade: An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books* (London, 1965), p. 73.
[4] Adam Fox, *Oral and Literature Culture in England 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2000), p. 8.
[5] Tessa Watt, *Cheap, Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 265.
[6] Eric Nebeker, 'The Broadside Ballad and Textual Publics', *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 51(1) (2011), p.1. Nebeker directly discusses broadside ballads but the same cultural contributions can be extended to a discussion of cheap pamphlets.

literate but not highly educated or sophisticated'.[7] Clark also wrote that cheap print did have varying degrees of complexity and had the potential to appeal to more sophisticated readers who were 'capable of recognizing parody, burlesque, the use of rhetorical figures, who knew Aristotle and Ramus, who appreciated, even if they could not necessarily understand, quotations in Latin and French, exempla and marginal references to classical authorities'.[8] Joad Raymond shared this opinion and acknowledged that though cheap print may have appealed to the lower echelons of society, 'these tastes were shared by the educationally privileged, who also purchased these texts, though occasionally professing a wearisome disdain for them'.[9] Alexandra Walsham added to this notion and wrote: 'The very fact that we owe the preservation of most sixteenth- and seventeenth-century ephemera to noble and gentlemen bibliophiles like John Selden, Anthony Woods, Samuel Pepys, and Robert Harley testifies to the existence of an avid, or at least casual, audience among the affluent and educated'.[10] Popular pamphlets did not necessarily equate to a humble readership. These pamphlets would have been lost had not contemporary intellectuals made the effort to read and collect them.

The audience for this cheap print appears to have been socially diverse and the London print trade was a bustling business during this period.[11] This period was selected to study for several reasons. This was a significant period in the history of the English print trade as well as the culture of death and dying due to religious and social changes ushered in by the Reformation and the maturation of the first generation of English Protestants during the latter half of the sixteenth century. A

[7] Clark, *The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular Moralistic Pamphlets 1580-1640*, p. 18. The Star Chamber also issued decrees in 1586 that limited the number of masters who could own a printing press and dictated how many apprentices they could employ. This was done with the intention to prevent monopolies and to maintain a balance between unpaid apprentices and wage-earning journeymen. Zachary Lesser, *Renaissance Drama and the Politics of Publication: Readings in the English Book Trade* (London, 2007), p. 33.
[8] Clark, *The Elizabethan Pamphleteers*, p. 21.
[9] Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 91. Also see: Margaret Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories : Popular Fiction and Its Readership in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1981); Alexandra Halsz, *The Market Place of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1997); John Raven, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the England Book Trade, 1450-1850* (New Haven, 2007).
[10] Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999), p.37.
[11] Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*, p. 91.

burgeoning print culture captured these changes in a unique way and the first English pamphlets about crime, murder and associated executions began to appear in the 1570s. Furthermore, this was a period of social and religious turmoil as well as stability and contradiction. The crown and the church were both stable and unstable at the same time which created constant social, political and religious tensions and anxieties. The Reformation had severed England from Rome and ushered in new religious liturgy, rites and rituals. Outwardly, England was an independent Protestant country with the reigning sovereign at the head of the Church. In reality, the country was a mixture of men and women who conformed to the Church of England, recusant Catholics and those of unclear sympathies. Elizabeth I was England's longest reigning monarch and the church experienced relative stability but she was an unmarried queen with no heir. This triggered a succession crisis which involved threats and conspiracies from both inside and outside England.[12] While Elizabeth's reign was wrought with turmoil, this period also experienced a boom in literature, poetry, and theatre though these were subject to strict censorship from the Court of Star Chamber in an attempt to stop the spread of sedition.[13] Upon his ascension to the throne in 1603, James I continued Elizabeth I's outward suppression of Catholicism and required his subjects take an oath of allegiance to the Church of England. Furthermore, James commissioned an English Bible, which would eventually become known as the King James Bible, to be read in all English churches. James's moderate and inclusive approach to religion and tolerance led to a period of relative stability though his reign was threatened by internal and international plots. More surviving murder pamphlets were printed during the

[12] For more on emerging religious denominations in early to mid-seventeenth-century England see: Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities c. 1650-1700* (Surrey, 2005); Sheila Lambert, 'Richard Montagu, Arminianism and Censorship', *Past & Present* 124 (1989), pp. 36-68; John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge, 2006); Michael Questier, 'Arminianism, Catholicism and Puritanism in England During the 1630s', *The Historical Journal* 49(1) (2006), pp. 53-78; Barry Reay, 'Popular Hostility Towards Quakers in Mid –Seventeenth-Century England', *Social* History 5(3) (1980), pp. 387-407; C. John Sommerville, 'Anglican, Puritan, and Sectarian in Empirical Perspective', *Social Science History* 13(2) (1989), pp. 109-135; Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987); T.L. Underwood, *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War: The Baptist-Quaker Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1997).

[13] Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain,* p.144.

decade of Elizabeth's death and James's accession than any other decade during the period in discussion. This period saw the death of a long-reigning queen, the introduction of a married king with an heir from a different country, and also the Gunpowder Plot in 1606 which contributed to numerous social and religious anxieties. These instabilities were revealed in murder pamphlets through the ordinary actions of 'farmers, merchants, [and] artisans' rather than through those of the state.[14]

Further to political and social unrest, England's vibrant culture of death, which included art, literature and popular entertainment, no doubt contributed to the flourishing of the murder pamphlet genre. People accepted the inevitability of death and took steps to prepare for the afterlife. The *memento mori* depicted death in a variety of forms. These representations originated in medieval Europe and became a fixed feature in both public and private spaces until disappearing in the early eighteenth century. Skulls and skeletons decorated jewellery, clocks, paintings, engravings, sculptures and literature.[15] The English depiction of *The Dance of Death*, a motif consisting of dancing and celebrating skeletons interacting with the living, first appeared in 1440 in St. Paul's Churchyard.[16] Tudor court favourite Hans Holbein the Younger published his famous woodcuts of *The Dance of Death* in 1538.[17] This art displayed the precarious balance between life and death. The burial process shielded the living from seeing, and smelling, the horrors of the death and decomposition first hand but the *memento mori* thrust decay directly into eyesight and graphically highlighted the fact that man could not have one without the other. Death was a great destroyer but it was also a leveller and all would be equal on the day of judgement.

[14] Peter Lake, 'Deeds Against Nature', p. 261.
[15] Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain,* p.57.
[16] Ibid., p.57.
[17] Samuel L. Macey*, Patriarchs of Time: Dualism in Saturn-Cronus, Father Time, the Watchmaker, God, and Father Christmas* (Athens, 1987), p.46.

The *memento mori* was not alone in reminding men and women about death. *Ars Moriendi* literature existed during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods which attempted to instruct the greater population about the proper way to die. This literature originated in medieval Europe and focussed on the preparation for death but had evolved into popular handbooks by the early seventeenth century in England. Prior to the Reformation, the Catholic deathbed was of great importance and firm faith at the moment of death was of the utmost importance. Robert Swanson warned that 'failure of faith- primarily despair as a lack of trust in divine mercy- was the ultimate sin, which would consign the soul to hell regardless of the quality of the preceding life'.[18] A good death implied that the dying person was virtuous and had accepted his or her fate. It also involved the community and death was a 'communal affair in which neighbours, lawyers and family helped [the dying] to avoid temptations of despair, vain glory and infidelity'.[19] A man who lived a sinful life and died alone in a sorrowful state was denied salvation as he died a bad death. The only way to avoid the fear and horrors associated with death and to ascend to Heaven was to live a morally justified life.[20]

While Catholic belief held that it was never too late to repent, even on the deathbed, Protestants viewed the Ar*s Moriendi* as a way to die without fear of not being one of God's elect.[21] The teachings of the Church of England did not share the traditional emphasis on the final moment before death but this literature still heavily featured in preparation for death. Murder pamphlets featured similar messages and regularly addressed the need to repent. The Ar*s Moriendi* continued to circulate in the early seventeenth century which further demonstrated the evolving traditions. By the early 1600s, the evolving *Ars Moriendi* genre of literature stressed salvation through faith alone and prompted the

[18] Robert Swanson, *Indulgences in the Late Medieval Period: Passport to Paradise?* (Cambridge, 2008), p.511.
[19] Richard Wunderli and Gerald Broce, 'The Final Moment Before Death in Early Modern England', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 20(2) (1989), p.263.
[20] Thomas Lupset, *A Compendious and a very Fruitful Treatise teaching the Way of Dying Well* (London, 1534), pp.14-15.
[21] Wunderli and Broce, 'The Final Moment Before Death in Early Modern England', p.265.

concept that preparation should be completed prior to the deathbed rather than the traditional scene associated with a priest and the last rites.

Less refined forms of entertainment existed alongside moralistic literature which thrust death further into the public eye. Bull and bear baiting were events where spectators could watch dogs attack a bear or bull that was chained to a post in the centre of a specially built ring. Beargarden, a baiting facility with multiple levels for viewing, stood on the Bankside of the Thames in close proximity to popular theatres and rivalled them for audiences.[22] Death was not the primary focus of this activity. According to Oscar Brownstein, the death of the bear or bull was second to the prowess of the dogs: 'But the spectator's interest was in the dogs, their willingness, pursuit, attack and tenacity'.[23] Spectators were far more interested in the skill of the dogs and their trainers rather than the prolonged suffering of the chained animal. This was originally an aristocratic pastime due to the high costs of breeding and training the large mastiffs required for the sport.[24] Furthermore, spectators and dog owners gambled on the outcome which also shifted focus from death to money despite the fact that the entire spectacle revolved around death.

Through literature, art and entertainment, death was on the stage, in the streets and an ever-present event during the Elizabethan and Jacobean period. One of the strangest places it appeared was in medicine and the mid-1500s saw a rise in the practice of corpse medicine across Europe and a demand for mummies, specifically *mummia sincere*, embalmed and dried mummies from Arabia or Egypt.[25] Dried *mummia* could be prepared in a plethora of ways including balms, salves, powders,

[22] Oscar Brownstein, 'The Popularity of Baiting in England Before 1600: a study in Social and Theatrical History', *Educational Theatre Journal* 21(3) (1969), p. 249.
[23]Ibid., p. 243.
[24] Ibid., p.244.
[25]Richard Suggs, *Mummies, Cannibals and Vampires: The History of Corpse Medicine from the renaissance to the Victorians* (New York, 2011), p. 15. For primary sources about the use of mummia see: Joseph Duchense, *A breefe answere of Joseph Quercentanus Armeniacus, Doctor of Phisickm to the exposition of Jacobus Aubertus Vindonis, concerning the original, and causes of mettallesset foorth against chemists* (London, 1591), p. 34. Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his pilgrimage, Or Relations of the world and the religions observed in all ages and*

plasters, poultices, and healing drinks.[26] Mummy was widely consumed for a variety of ailments and diseases. John Banister, anatomist and Elizabeth I's personal surgeon, was an advocate of the use of *mummia* in medicines for a variety of ailments.[27]

While these pamphlets included graphic descriptions of murders, the vast majority of murder pamphlets did not and authors focused on the repentance and prayers of the felons instead. Crowds regularly gathered to watch public executions but only scant descriptions of hangings appeared in pamphlets from this period if at all. Sixteenth- and early seventeenth- century hangings described in murder pamphlets did not involve a stage-like scaffold; the felons climbed up a ladder at the gallows and were 'turned off' by the hangman. Descriptions included Arnold Cosbye who 'was turned off from the ladder and there hanged till he was dead' for killing Lord Burke and how William Sherwood 'was turned off to the mercy of God' as he was uttering a prayer after he murdered his cellmate while imprisoned.[28] The descriptions of murders that were committed in private were often far more detailed than those of executions which were witnessed by a large crowd in a public area. Even the deaths of traitors, the people deemed to be one of the biggest threats to the country, were not revelled in or celebrated by authors. Descriptions of the executions of John Slade and John Boyde, 'two notorious Traitors', were very brief and overshadowed by their gallows confessions.[29] Slade 'was cast beside the ladder, and afterward was cut downe & quartered, according to his Judgement' and the same brief sentence was also used to describe Boyd's death.[30] Morality and repentance were key motifs in this genre of cheap print alongside titillating or grotesque descriptions of murder and death.

---

places discovered, from the Creation unto this Present In foure parts (London, 1613), p. 189; William Basse, *A help to memory and a discourse with table-talke as musicke to a banquet of wine* (London, 1630), pp. 31-32.

[26] Suggs, *Mummies, Cannibals and Vampires*, p. 23.

[27] John Banister, *A needfull, new, and necessarie treatise of chyrurgerie briefly comprehending the generall and particular curation of ulcer, drawn foorth of sundry worthy wryters, but especially from Calmetius Vergesatus, and Joannes Tagaltius* (London, 1575), p.120.

[28] *The manner of the death and execution of Arnold Cosbie, for murdering the Lord Boorke, who was executed as Wansworth townes end on the 27. of Januarie 1591* (London, 1591), sig. A2v; *A true report of the late horrible murther committed by William Sherwood* (London, 1581), sig. Biiiv.

[29] *The severall executions & confessions, of John Slade & John Boyde: traitours* (London, 1583), sig. Aiir.

[30] Ibid., sig Biir, Biiiv.

Readers were no doubt familiar with public executions and these pamphlets focused on providing the back stories of crimes and felon confessions as well as including calls for prayers and pious behaviour.

The constant public presence of death in popular culture and medicine did not signal a morose society but rather one that accepted and prepared for death, or in the case of corpse medicine a means to prolong life through the death of another. *Memento mori* constantly reminded men and women that they would die while attempting to remove the fear of the unknown. These same people then chose to watch plays which enacted death on stage or read murder pamphlets which provided the observer with a cathartic moment of clarity and recognition of mortality. People did not shy away from death and gathered to watch an execution or read about it but this did not necessarily mean that they were entertained. Likewise, it did not mean that they were all pious observers or readers. Authorial intent, like public reception and reaction, is all but impossible to discover directly as there are no surviving reactions explicitly stating an author's intentions. Murder and execution pamphlets shared topical traits with more high-brow publications, poetry and drama from the period in discussion.

Historiography

England's dynamic religious and social culture of death has been discussed at length by historians and this dissertation reflects upon on the works of David Cressy, Ralph Houlbrooke, Clair Gittings and Sarah Tarlow.[31] Cressy discussed the stages of the life cycle and related rites and rituals. His work further explored changing religious and social attitudes to death in early modern England and addressed the tensions created during the shift between traditional and reformed burial and memorial rites. Houlbrooke's study included discussion of wills, the deathbed, grief, mourning and

[31] David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death: Rituals, Religion, and the Life Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1999); Ralph Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion and the Family in England, 1480-1750* (Oxford, 1998); Clare Gittings, *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England* (London, 2001); Sarah Tarlow, *Ritual, Belief and the Dead in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2011).

commemoration. Houlbrooke addressed England's changing religious climate during the period in discussion but acknowledged a constant presence of Christian ideals in these rites and rituals. Tarlow discussed early modern English practices associated with death and dying. This interdisciplinary work directly addressed the role play by the dead body in funereal practices and mourning rites through a discussion of history, archeology, theology and folklore. Gittings further addressed the changing burial and funereal customs in England following the Reformation. She also discussed the rise of the individual and the ways in which his or her individuality contributed to the early modern English culture of death. Gitting's discourse on the individual has been particularly helpful to this dissertation as murder pamphlets discussed representations of individuals as murderers and victims. The tone of the pamphlets was established by both the pious character of the victim and the sin and eventual repentance of the murderer.

Murder pamphlets themselves have been the subject of recent scholarly discussion and this dissertation draws upon the works of Peter Lake, Malcolm Gaskill, Frances Dolan and Garthine Walker and investigates the ways in which this body of literature reflected religious and social attitudes through a dialogue of violence and murder.[3233]This dissertation also considers the work of J.A. Sharpe, Katherine Rodgers and John Bellamy when discussing representations of crime and execution.[34]

[32] Peter Lake, 'Deeds Against Nature'; Peter Lake and Michael Questier, *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England* (New Haven, 2002); Malcolm Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England; idem*, 'Reporting Murder: Fiction in the Archives in Early Modern England', *Social History* 23(1) (1998): pp. 1-30; Frances Dolan E., 'Gentlemen, I have one thing more to say': Women on Scaffolds in England, 1563-1680', *Modern Philology*, 92 (1994), pp. 157-78.

[33] For further publications by Peter Lake see: 'Puritanism, Arminianism and a Shropshire axe-murder', *Midlands History* 15 (1990), pp.37-64; 'Popular form, puritan content? Two puritan appropriations of the murder pamphlet from mid-seventeenth-century London' in Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (eds), *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain. Essays in Honour of Patrick Collinson* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 313-24; Peter Lake and Isaac Stephens*, Scandal and religious Identity in Early Stuart England: A Northamptonshire's Maid's Tragedy* (Woodbridge, 2015).

[34] John Bellamy, *Strange, Inhumane Deaths: Murder in Tudor* England (London, 2005); J.A. Sharpe, ''Last Dying Speeches': Ideology and Public Execution in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past & Present* 107 (1985), pp. 144-67. Also see: David Atkinson, 'Magical Corpses, Ballads, Intertextuality, and the Discovery of Murder', *Journal of Folklore Research* 36 (1999), pp. 1-29; Randall Martin, 'Henry Goodcole, Visitor of Newgate: Crime, Conversion,

Garthine Walker has discussed representations of gender and violence in murder and execution pamphlets and acknowledged that this literature contained representations of real events and people. Furthermore, Walker stated 'whatever the sensationalist intent and appeal of rehearsing shocking doings, the central organizing theme of the genre was not disquieting titillation or violence, but the restorative and comforting trilogy of sin, divine providence and redemption'.[35] Sometimes authors embellished events or characteristics of real people and these representations were included in this literature for specific reasons. Gaskill discussed the 'obvious differences between legal evidence and commercially produced print'.[36] Meanwhile, J.A. Sharpe observed that pamphleteers may have taken liberties with facts but, for the most part, these pamphlets reflected actual events and described representations of interpersonal violence.[37] The following chapters will discuss this body of pamphlets by analysing the language and characters found in this literature rather than to attempt to place the pamphlet versions of these people and events in the real world. While the events and characters might have been embellished, the various descriptions and comments found in murder and execution pamphlets reveal patterns of early modern behaviour, religious beliefs, and sites of social anxieties.

Religious belief and the legal system of the late Elizabethan and Jacobean periods were based on concepts of divine providence and retribution. The Church of England was at the centre of society in a way that was far more imposing in the sixteenth century than in latter periods. While Gaskill noted discrepancies between legal fact and the printed story, he also recognized that during the sixteenth century 'many English murder witnesses presented their evidence either in the supernatural idiom of providential miracles- bleeding corpses, ghosts and dreams- or otherwise packaged and embellished

---

and Patronage', *The Seventeenth Century* 20(2) (2005), pp. 153-184; Leigh Yetter (ed.), *Public executions in England, 1573-1868, Volume 1: Public Executions in England, 1573-1674* (London, 2009).

[35] Walker, 'Demons in female form', p. 124

[36] Malcolm Gaskill, 'Reporting Murder: Fiction in the Archives in Early Modern England', *Social History* 23(1) (1998), p. 5.

[37] Sharpe, 'Last Dying Speeches', p. 146.

what they knew in order to articulate a particular interpretation of material evidence or versions of events'.[38] Testimony found in actual depositions often bore similarities with descriptions and language found in murder pamphlets. David Atkinson described these miraculous revelations as 'supernatural motifs' that were constantly present 'from the early modern period onwards, in printed sources ranging from literary works to more supposedly factual reports and legal accounts'.[39] Atkinson further added that these legal and literary motifs were cited by pamphleteers as 'a crucial factor in bringing the guilty to justice' in murder pamphlets.[40] While pamphlets were no doubt embellished, we do have glimpse into the interconnected nature of early modern life, religion and cheap print.[41]

These pamphlets continually stressed the teachings of the Church of England and presented the reader with an idealised version of England. While this was most likely to do with censorship laws, these pamphlets provide a unique look into late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English life and religion. Peter Lake argued that these pamphlets 'represent sites on which contemporaries could imagine, play with, act out, question the ideological and cultural contradictions and concerns of the day with…greater freedom'.[42] Pamphleteers compiled information from court testimony and records, coroners' reports, and gallows confessions as well as neighbourhood conjecture, gossip and rumour. It is most likely that each pamphlet was a reflection of the author's own individual social and religious experiences and also an attempt to appeal to the English print market rather than simply formulaic cheap print. This genre of cheap print was formulaic but diverse; realistic and idealised at the same time.

[38] Gaskill, 'Reporting Murder: Fiction in Archives in Early Modern England', p. 4.
[39] David Atkinson, 'Magical Corpses: Ballads, Intertextuality, and the Discovery of Murder', *Journal of Folklore Research* 36(1) (1999), p. 2.
[40] Ibid., p.2.
[41] Gaskill, 'Reporting Murder', p.7.
[42] Peter Lake and Michael Questier, *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England* (New Haven, 2002), p. 693.

As stated earlier, the confession and repentance of the soon-to-be dead felon on the gallows appeared more frequently than a description of the execution itself.[43] While important and innovative research has been recently published concerning the culture of death and dying, less attention has been paid to executions of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[44] There is, on the other hand, a good deal of work concerning executions of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[45] Executions of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century martyrs, traitors and witches have been discussed while analysis of executions of everyday felons and English hangmen remains limited though the neglect of the study of early executions is in part due to limited sources and records.[46] The physical action of hanging a felon might have been the same between 1500 and 1800 but the reasons and motives were very different as time progressed. Lake has discussed sixteenth-century executions and stated that they needed to 'be stage managed in order to bolster

[43] Lake, 'Deeds Against Nature', p. 275.

[44] See: Joel F. Harrington, *The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honour and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth* Century (London, 2014); Martin Ingram, 'Shame and Pain: Themes and Variations in Tudor Punishments' in Simon Devereaux and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Penal Practice and Culture, 1500-1900: Punishing the English* (London, 2004), pp. 36-62; Gerald D. Robin, 'The Executioner: His Place in English Society', *The British Journal of Sociology* 15(3) (1964), pp. 234-253; Katherine Royer, *The English Execution Narrative, 1200*-1700 (Abingdon, 2014); Franz Schmidt, *A Hangman's Diary: Being the Journal of Master Franz Schmidt Public executioner of Nuremburg, 1573-1617*, Albrecht Keller (ed.), C. Calvert and A.W. Gruner (trans.) (London, 1928); Andy Wood, 'The Deep Roots of Albion's Fatal Tree: The Tudor State and the Monopoly of Violence', *History* 99(336) (2014), pp. 403-417.

[45] V.A.C. Gatrell, *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People 1770-1868* (Oxford, 1994); Michael Harris, 'Murder in Print: Representations of Crime and the Law c. 1660-1760' in Rosamaria Loretelli and Roberto de. Romanis (eds), *Narrating Transgression: Representations of the Criminal in Early Modern England* (New York, 1999), pp. 13-26; T.W. Laqueur, 'Crowds, Carnival and the State in English Executions, 1604-1868' in A.L. Beier, D. Cannadine, and J.M. Rosenheim (eds), *The First Modern Society: Essays in English History in Honour of Lawrence Stone* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 305-55; Randall McGowan, 'Managing the Gallows: The Bank of England and the Death Penalty, 1797-1821', *Law and History Review*, 25 (2007), pp. 241-82; *idem*, 'The Problem of Punishment in Eighteenth-Century England' in Simon Devereaux and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Penal Practice and Culture, 1500-1900: Punishing the English* (London, 2003), pp. 210-31; Andrea McKenzie, *Tyburn's martyrs: execution in England, 1675-1775* (London, 2007); *idem*, ''God's Hat' and the Highwayman's Shoes: A Gestural and Sartorial History of Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century English Trial and Execution', *Canadian Journal of History* 47(2) (2012), pp. 231-257; Richard M. Ward, *Print Culture, Crime and Justice in 18th-Century London* (London, 2011).

[46] For discussions on executions in early modern literature and drama see: Lorna Hutson, 'Rethinking the 'Spectacle of the Scaffold': Judicial Epistemologies and English Revenge Tragedy', Representations 89(1) (2005), pp. 30-58; Susannah Brietz Monta, *Martyrdom and Literature in early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2005); Margaret E. Ownes, *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama* (Cranbury, 2005); Frank Whigham, *Seizures of the Will in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge, 1996).

the cause of order and obedience to the church and state' but the central features of executions were confession and repentance rather than displays of monarchical power.[47] Both actual executions and those described in print were 'stage managed'. An execution was a physical enactment of the power of God and the state while the formulaic nature of murder pamphlets ensured that nothing subversive would appear in print. Katherine Royer has suggested that 'sixteenth century execution narratives are filled with speeches, farewells, prayers and the descriptions of the demeanour of the condemned' which reflected a public interested in the spiritual state of the felons rather than an interest in their deaths.[48] Andrea McKenzie also commented on the public desire to read about gallows confessions during the seventeenth century: 'For as far as last dying speeches were concerned, the medium- that is, the bearing and countenance of the condemned- was the message'.[49] When discussing actual executions, Steven Mullaney suggested that 'it was only in leaving life that [a felon] again became *himself* and achieved again a certain decorum of self'.[50] The world described in these pamphlets was a constant battleground between God and the devil, humans and temptation, and crime and justice. While a person's execution appeared in print, his or her death fit into the greater order and state killing made sense within a dialogue about confession, repentance and acceptance.

Changes ushered in by the Reformation no doubt contributed to the interest in the repentance of the individual rather than his or her death. Within Protestantism, as discussed by Sarah Tarlow, 'by the time a death had taken place it was too late for anyone to do anything on behalf of the dead person's soul'.[51] Clare Gittings discussed the rise of the individual during seventeenth- and

[47] Lake, 'Deeds Against Nature', p. 275.
[48] Katherine Royer, 'Dead Men Talking: Truth, Texts and the Scaffold in Early Modern England', in Simon Deveraux and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Penal Practices and Culture, 1500-1900: Punishing the English* (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 70.
[49] Andrea McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs: Executions in England, 1675-1775* (London, 2007), p. 35.
[50] Steve Mullaney, 'Lying Like Truth' Riddle, Representation and Treason in Renaissance England', *EHL* 47(1) (1980), p.33.
[51] Sarah Tarlow, *Ritual, Belief and the Dead in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 24.

eighteenth-century funeral services. She argued that Protestant belief encouraged increased individualism and 'the personality of the deceased [began to be] seen as completely divorced from the physical body in which it had lived'.[52] This separation of the individual's soul and the empty 'carkas', as it was frequently referred to in murder pamphlets, encouraged greater attention in the final confession of a felon rather than his or her death itself. Furthermore, these pamphlets typically were circulated after an execution by which time the felon was long dead. The final moments of life and repentance held more weight than descriptions of death. By ending on a positive note rather than another death, the authors of these pamphlets restored order to a world turned upside down and encouraged the reader to reflect on their own lives rather than on the deaths of others.

Research Questions and Methodology

This dissertation explores and analyses sites of anxiety and attitudes towards religion, gender and social hierarchy through descriptions of death, violence and punishment found in murder pamphlets. This genre of cheap print reflected and affirmed acceptable patterns of religious belief and social behaviour in late Elizabethan and Jacobean England. Chapters directly address current historiography and engage with scholarly debate about death, dying and cheap print as well as engage with early modern authors. While stories about murder were the driving force behind this cheap print, they were not the sole focus. I subject these texts to detailed analysis and track both similarities and differences regarding religious belief and social concepts including gender, patriarchy and state punishment. Themes such as repentance and providence remained consistent throughout the period in discussion while representations of God and the devil changed depending on the murder committed. God could appear as a benevolent father who forgave all transgressions and sins of the truly repentant. He was also described as a vengeful God who sought revenge against murderers to

[52] Clare Gittings, *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England* (London, 2001), p. 47.

restore order. The devil could be an overt agent of destruction or a sinister figure lurking in the background waiting for a man or woman to succumb to despair.

Authors referenced concepts such as social hierarchy, gender and behaviour in different ways depending on the individuals involved and the types of murders being committed. Social rank and hierarchy was stressed when murders were committed by men against their families but not in cases of spontaneous inter-male violence. Inter-male violence was a way for men to challenge existing power dynamics or to re-affirm social hierarchy depending on who initiated the violence.[53] Gender was discussed when men and women acted outside prescribed roles and these murderers were frequently described as 'unnatural' and dangerous to the general well-being of England. Just as authors constantly stressed the need for morality and repentance, they also reminded readers about their social obligations to one another, to spouses, children and servants as well as their obligations to the reigning monarch. This evaluation of patterns of similarities and differences also involves a discussion of the various representations of violence and conflict described in these texts. Murders that occurred in the household between family members differed greatly from those that occurred in public settings between non-related individuals, typically men. The number of conspirators involved in a murder also contributed to both the descriptions of murders and the felons and in this cheap print. Weapons and resulting wounds also varied greatly depending on the gender of the felons as well as the location of the crime and the number of people involved.

This dissertation includes discussion and analysis of contemporary literature alongside murder pamphlets, including sermons, works of theology, conduct literature and marital literature of the period. These publications were written by a variety of authors from all walks of life and different religious backgrounds. Popular moralistic and conduct literature used here includes works written by Puritan clergyman and theologian Thomas Beard, London Puritan preacher William Gouge, Henry

[53] Alexandra Shepard, *Meaning of Manhood* (Oxford, 2003), p. 151.

Smith, also known as the 'silver-tongued preacher' of St Clement Danes, Westminster, and the prolific writer and Church of England clergyman Thomas Adams.[54] This dissertation also considers the publications of prominent clergymen Thomas Playfare, chaplain to James I, Gervase Babington, Bishop of Llanduff, and later Exeter, and Lewis Bayly, Bishop of Bangor, and Archbishop of Canterbury, Richard Bancroft.[55] These works directly addressed the need for morality, faith and fear of God though these messages were not limited to pious publications. The same moralistic and religious messages can be found in the poetical works of Robert Abbot, William Basse, Nicholas Brenton, Patrick Hannay and Sir Edmund Tilney, Master of the Revels to Elizabeth I and James I.[56] Further relevant observations can be found in the social commentary of Thomas Harmon, John Stow, William Harrison, and Raphael Holinshed.[57] Discussion will not be limited to these clergymen, poets and authors and will also include the works of lesser known writers from the period in discussion.

This selection of contemporary authors encompasses a variety of religious and social backgrounds and demonstrates the pervasive and constant nature of the themes and motifs found in murder pamphlets throughout the period in discussion. Clearly we can see just how interconnected almost

[54] William Gouge, *Of domesticall duties eight treatises* (London, 1622); Henry Smith, *A preparative to marriage* (London, 1591); Thomas Adams, *The devils banket described in foure sermons* (London, 1614); *Mysticall bedlam, or the world of madmen* (London, 1615); *idem*, *The black devil or the apostate* (London, 1615); *idem*, *The happiness of the church* (London, 1619).

[55] Thomas Beard, *The Theatre of Gods Judgements: or, a Collection of Histories out of Sacred, Ecclesiasticall, and prophane Authours concerning the admirable judgements of God upon the transgressours of his commandements* (London, 1597); *idem*, *A retractive from the Romish religion containing thirteen forcible motives diswading from the communion with the Church of Rome* (London, 1616); Gervase Babington, *A brief conference betwixt a mans frailities and faith wherein is declared the true use and comfort of those blessings pronounced by Christ in the fifth Matten* (London, 1584); *idem*, *A profitable exposition of the Lords prayer* (London, 1588); *idem*, *A sermon preached at Paules Crosse the second Sunday in Mychaelmas term last. 1590* (London, 1591); *idem*, *Certaine plaine, breife, and comfortable notes upon everie chapter of Genesis* (London, 1592); Richard Bancroft, *Dangerous positions and proceedings published and practised within the iland of Brytaine, under the pretence of reformation, and for the presbiteriall* (London 1593); Lewis Bayly, *The practise of pietie directing a Christian how to walke that he may please God* (London, 1613).

[56] Robert Allott, *Witts theatre of the little* world (London, 1599); William Basse, *A helpe to discourse* (London, 1619); Nicholas Brenton *Choice, chance, and change, or Conceites in their Colours* (London, 1606); Patrick Hannay, *A happy husband, or Directions for a maide to choose her mate* (London, 1619); Edmund Tilney, *A brief and pleasant discourse of the duties of marriage, called the flower of friendshippe* (London, 1571).

[57] Thomas Harmon, *A Ceveat or Warning for Common Curisitors, vulgarily called vagabonds* (London, 1573); John Stow, *The Annales of England* (London, 1577); Harrison, *The Description of England*; Raphael Holinshed, *The Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*. Volume IV England (London, 1808).

every element of early life was. By comparing the language of cheap print with that of dogmatic, moralistic and popular literature, I analyse the influences and references that lay at the heart of murder pamphlets and gain a deeper understanding how this genre of cheap print was shaped by, and contributed to, the ongoing dialogue of morality and religious, gender and societal beliefs found in print during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Research questions include analysis of how the seemingly unstable religious and political climate of the late sixteenth century was represented and described in this genre of cheap print through examples from everyday life. To what extent were the teachings of the Church of England utilised by authors and directed to readers of these pamphlets? What can these pamphlets reveal about socially-prescribed concepts of masculinity, manhood and gender both within a family unit and a community? What role did reputation play in shaping descriptions about murderers and victims? How did the authors of this literature use a dialogue about murder, chaos and death to describe and demonstrate the positive and redeeming qualities of religious faith, communal co-operation and love found in every day early modern life?

Dissertation structure

This project focuses on three key elements of early modern English life: religion, social hierarchy and gender. These elements were constantly present in murder and execution pamphlets and overlapped in a variety of ways and revealed sites of social anxiety. These pamphlets provided the reader with examples of acceptable behaviour while also instructing about morality. Every murder pamphlet analysed for this dissertation contained overt references to God and His earthly interactions with English men and women. Chapter Two directly discusses representations of both popular and official religious beliefs about God and the devil, sin, repentance and the providential revelations of murders found in this cheap print. These pamphlets contained constant and overt biblical references and

passages as well as shared admonitions against sin with contemporary conduct literature and moralistic tracts. While these pamphlets contained seemingly bizarre elements of divine revenge or miraculous revelations thrust into everyday life, it must be remembered that they described the events of 'pamphlet England' rather than the real world. This was a world where every murder was solved and the vast majority of felons heartily repented before calmly proceeding to their deaths. Descriptions of Cain and Abel in the pamphlets informed readers about the horrors of sin and temptation which led to murder. The story of Cain and Abel further served to explain God's vengeance against all murderers as the blood of victims cried for revenge.

By engaging in a discussion about representations of sin, repentance and providence, this chapter demonstrates that while the religious and moralistic messages found in these pamphlets may not have contained the polished language of official church liturgy, authors did engage with scripture and contemporary religious discussions and packaged them in a dialogue of murder and chaos for the English reader. Peter Lake, Garthine Walker, and Malcolm Gaskill have discussed religious messages found in murder pamphlets at length and I seek to add to this scholary body of work through a discussion of regularly occurring motifs including sin, miracles, and the story of Cain and Abel. This chapter further adds to this ongoing dialogue through analysis of peripheral characters such as prison orderlies and preachers which demonstrate the interconnection between everyday life, religion and cheap print.

The concepts of sin and providence are also discussed in Chapter Three in combination with a discussion of gender, specifically the character of the widow.[58] The identity of the early modern

[58] For more about early modern English widows see: Lucinda M. Becker, *Death and the Early Modern English Woman* (Aldershot, 2003); Vivien Brodsky, 'Widows in Late Elizabethan England: Remarriage, economic Opportunities and Family Orientation' in Lloyd Bonfield, Richard Smith, Keith Wrightson and Peter Laslett (eds), *The World We Have Gained: Histories of Population and Social Structure* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 122-154; Christine Churches, 'Women and Property in Early Modern England: A Case Study', *Social History* 23(2) (1998), pp. 165-80; Ira Clark, 'The Widow Hunt on the Tudor-Stuart Stage',*SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 41(2) (2001), pp. 399-416; *idem*, *Comedy, Youth, Manhood in early Modern England* (Newark, 2003), pp. 86-102; Vivian Bruce Conger, *The Widow's Might: Widowhood and Gender in Early British America* (New York, 2009);

widow was irrevocably connected to the concept of the biblical 'widow indeed' as described in 1 Timothy 5:3-4: 'Honour widows that are widows indeed. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day'. The 'widow indeed' was expected to shun life's pleasures and live in a prolonged state of mourning. Women were commonly viewed as weaker vessels who needed to accept their submissive social and gendered position in the greater scheme of things. Marriage and family, according to Charles Carlton, 'were key links in a hierarchical view of the cosmos in which all and everything had their place, each containing the disruptive effects of human sexuality'.[59] The family unity kept both men and women in their proper prescribed roles. Widows, as independent women, did not fit into this scheme and were perceived to be dangerous to social order.[60] This chapter analyses descriptions of the widow as a scapegoat for violence, a murderer and a victim. Widows described as catalysts of violence or as murderers were represented as having deviated from early modern gender roles. These women were depicted as having no connection to the domestic sphere. Widows as victims, on the other hand, were presented as having properly fulfilled their prescribed social and domestic roles. Their deaths were due specifically to masculine violence and often committed by their sons.

Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (New York, 1993); Sara French, 'A Widow Building in Elizabethan England' in Allison Levy (ed.), *Widowhood and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 161-76; Elizabeth Foyster, 'Marrying the experienced widow in early modern England: the male perspective' in Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1999), pp. 108-124; Amy M. Froide, 'Martial Status as a Category of Different: Singlewomen and Widows in Early Modern England' in Judith M. Bennet and Amy M. Froide (eds.), *Singlewomen in the European Past, 1250-1800* (Philadelphia, 1998), pp. 236-269; Laure Gowing, *Gender Relations in Early Modern England* (Harlow, 2014); J.S.W. Helt, 'Memento Mori: Death, Widowhood and Remembering in Early Modern England' in Allison Levy (ed.), *Widowhood and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 39-54; Jennifer Panek, *Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedies*(Cambridge, 2004); Tom Stretton, 'Widows and the Law in Tudor and Stuart England' in Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1999), pp. 193-208; Barbara J. Todd, 'The remarrying widow: a stereotype reconsidered' in Mary Prior (ed.), *Women in English Society, 1500-1800* (London, 1985), pp. 25-52; *Idem*, 'The Virtuous Widow in Protestant England' in Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1999), pp. 66-83.

[59] Charles Carlton, 'A Widow's Tale: Male myths and female reality in sixteenth and seventeenth century England', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 10(2) (1978), p.121.

[60] Ibid., p.126.

This chapter directly engages with the representations of widows in murder pamphlets while taking into account additional depictions of widows found in early modern plays and conduct literature. The widow was specifically chosen as a topic of discussion because of the contradictory characteristics ascribed to her by moralistic writers, playwrights, poets and pamphleteers as discussed by Charles Carlton, Ira Clark, Laura Gowing, Barbra J. Todd and Bernard Capp. Furthermore, this character was chosen due to the fact that the widow was the only independent woman to be described in murder pamphlets despite the fact that other single women such as spinsters or abandoned wives formed 'a very substantial group, and their situation created social problems on a considerable scale, especially among the poor' in real life.[61] This chapter will contribute to dialogues about the ongoing marginalization of widows throughout this period while also introducing a discussion about murderous widows and the reasoning behind their supposed destructive natures.

Murders committed by widows only accounted for a minority of violent crimes discussed in murder pamphlets but these women were perceived to be a threat to patriarchal hierarchy and control.[62] Just as widows had prescribed social and domestic roles to fulfill, male householders were also expected to behave in specific manner or risk their masculine identities.[63] Dialogue about gender

[61] Bernard Capp, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbourhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), p. 38.

[62] See: Susan Dwyer Amussen, 'Punishment, Discipline, and Power: The Social Meanings of Violence in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies* 34(1) (1995), pp. 1-34; Sandra Clarke, 'Deeds against nature: Women and Crime in Street Literature of Early Modern England' in Luisa Fernanda Rodriguez Palomero and Andrew Monnickendam (eds), *Sederi XII* (Valladolid, 2001), pp. 1-34; *Idem*, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature of Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 2003); Frances E. Dolan, 'Gentlemen, I Have One More Thing to Say': Women on the Scaffold in England, 1563-1680,' *Modern Philology* 92(2) (1994), pp. 157-78; Laura Gowing, *Gender Relations in early Modern England* (Harlow, 2012); Randal Martin, *Women, Murder, and Equity in Early Modern England* (New York, 2008); Susan C. Staub, *Nature's Cruell Step-Dames: Murderous Women in the Street Literature of Seventeenth Century England* (Pittsburgh, 2005); Garthine Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003); Merry Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2000).

[63] For more on early modern marriages and domestic duties see: Eric Josef Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1994); Miranda Chaytor, 'Household and Kinship: Ryton in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', *History Workshop* 10(1) (1980), pp. 25-60; Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination in England, 1500-1800* (New Haven, 1995); Christine Peters, 'Gender, Sacrament and Ritual: The Making and Meaning of Marriage in Late Medieval and Early Modern England', *Past & Present* 169 (2000), pp. 63-96; J.A. Sharpe, 'Plebeian Marriage in Stuart England: Some Evidence from Popular Literature', *Transactions*

specific murders is continued in Chapter Four which addresses murders committed by male householders against their domestic subordinates: wives, children and servants. By discussing representations of masculinity, this chapter participates in a dialogue about gendered expectations in both the public and private spheres and seeks to build upon the works of Frances E. Dolan, Alexandra Shepard and Garthine Walker.[64] While masculinity is the focus of this chapter, this analysis involves discussion of both masculine and feminine traits and behaviours. Within murder pamphlets, we can see a world preoccupied with separate gender spheres while in reality these spheres regularity crossed and overlapped in a variety of everyday activities.

Male householders were under pressure to behave properly and to ensure that the people within their households did the same. All the murders that will be discussed in this chapter were committed by married men against the members of their household. While the crimes may appear to be similar on the surface, the motivations and the ways in which the crimes were committed greatly differed based on the individual murderer's reputation, perceived masculinity, wealth and social status. Conduct and marital literature reveal that an early modern man was expected first and foremost to love his wife, properly raise his children and be a kind master to his servants. These roles could only be accomplished through absolute control of one's emotions and impulses at all times. A certain level of domestic violence was acceptable and identified as 'correcting' or 'chastising' rather than

---

of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth series 36 (1986), pp. 69-90; Tim Stretton, 'Marriage, Separation and the Common Law in England 1540-1640' in Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster (eds), *The Family in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 18-39; Andrea Wilson, *Ritual and Conflict: The Social Relations of Childbirth in Early Modern England* (Surrey, 2013), pp. 61-110.

[64] Frances E. Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England 1550-1700* (Ithaca, 1994); Alexandra Shepard, 'Manhood, Credit and Patriarchy in Early Modern England c. 1580-1640', *Past & Present* 167 (2000), pp.75-106; *idem*, *Meaning of Manhood*(Oxford, 2003); Garthine Garthine, *Crime, Gender and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003); *idem,* ''Demons in female form': representations of women and gender in murder pamphlets of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries' in William Zunder and Susanne Trill (eds), *Writing and the English Renaissance* (London, 1996), pp. 123-139; *idem*, 'Expanding the Boundaries of Female Honour in Early Modern' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series 6 (1996), pp. 235-245; *idem*, Keeping it in the family: Crime and the early modern household' in Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster (eds), *The Family in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 67-95.

aggressive behaviour. Loss of control, however, meant a forfeiture of masculinity and the household could not function properly without a male head. [65] The examples of extreme male domestic violence discussed in murder pamphlets were both shaped and affirmed by Elizabethan and Jacobean concepts of gender, domestic behaviour, acceptable levels of corrective violence and religious beliefs. By engaging with conduct and marital literature alongside this body of cheap print, we can recognise the social demands placed on a man as the divinely-ordained head of a household and fully understand how male domestic violence as depicted in murder pamphlets destabilized both a family and an individual's masculine identity.

Early modern life involved a great deal of negotiation between religious beliefs and practices and gendered behavioural expectations. Chapter Five continues this discussion and also includes an analysis of exclusionary language found in murder and execution pamphlets. Concepts of hierarchy did not just exist between the social echelons. The authors of this cheap print appeared to be very much concerned with those who belonged among English Christian brethren and those who did not.[66] This chapter analyses the exclusionary language used by pamphleteers to identify three dangerous groups found within England: traitors, parasites and savages, through a discussion informed by concepts of national and indiviaual identity.[67] These three characters represented everyday dangers

[65] Shepard, *Meaning of Manhood*, p. 66.

[66] For discussion of about national identity and perceived outsiders see: Andrew Hadfield, *Amazons, Savages and Machiavels: Travel and Colonial Writing in English, 1550-1630* (Oxford, 2001); Colin Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World 1600-1800* (Cambridge, 1999); Marianne Novy, *Shakespeare and Outsiders* (Oxford, 2013); Thomas G.M. Peace, 'Deconstructing the Sauvage/ Savage in the Writing of Samuel de Champlain and Captain John Smith', *French Colonial Studies* 7 (2006), pp. 1-20; Phillip H. Rand, *By Nature and Custom Cursed: Transatlantic Civil Discourse and New England Cultural Production, 1620-1660* (Hanover, 1999); Kathy Stuart, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts: Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, 1999); Kaspar von Greyerz, *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 133-156; Philipp Wolf, 'The Emergence of National Identity in Early Modern England: Causes and Ideological Representations' in Herbert Grabes (ed.), *Writing the Early Modern Nation: The Transformation of National Identity in the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century* (Amsterdam, 2001), pp. 149-172.

[67] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* Revised Edition (New York, 2006); Tom Betteridge, *Literature and Politics in the English Reformation* (Manchester, 2004); Andrew Hadfield, *Literature, Politics and National Identity: Reformation to Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1994); Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago, 2005).

and appeared regularly as objects of anxiety in early modern England. Papists threatened the stability of the Church of England by aligning themselves with dangerous foreign powers while interacting with English men and women.[68] The Elizabethan period saw a growing trend in the identification of homegrown criminals who apparently lived with no thought but to destroy the happiness of their fellow countrymen. The murderers in these pamphlets were often described in parasitic terms, they silently wreaked havoc and destroyed everything wholesome. By labelling English felons as savages or describing them in animalistic or Classical terms, pamphleteers highlighted their supposed lack of proper civility and bloodthirsty nature. Traitors, parasites and savages threatened to destroy England from the inside out and murder pamphlets warned English brethren about the associated dangers of fostering outsiders in their midst.[69]

When discussing domestic murder, Frances Dolan argued that 'the threat usually lies in the familiar rather than the strange, in the intimate rather than the invader'.[70] I draw from this statement and argue that the motif of the dangerous familiar can also apply to England as a whole when discussing murder. Indeed, the family was frequently referred to a miniature version of the commonwealth

[68] For more about recusancy and post-Reformation English Catholicism see: Christopher Haigh, 'From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 31 (1981), pp. 129-147; *idem*, 'Success and Failure in the English Reformation', *Past & Present* 173 (2001), pp.28-49; Martin Ingram, 'From Reformation to Toleration: Popular Religious Cultures in England, 1540-1690' in Tim Harris (ed.), *Popular Culture in England, c. 1500-1850* (London, 1995), pp. 95-123; John J. LaRocca, 'Time, Death, and the Next Generation: The Early Elizabethan Recusancy Policy, 1558-1574', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 14(2) (1982), pp. 103-117; Lisa McClain, 'Without Church, Cathedral, or Shrine: The Search for Religious Space among Catholics in England, 1559-1625', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 33(2) (2002), pp. 381-399; John Morrill, *The Nature of the English Reformation* (London, 1993); Phebe,Jensen, 'Singing Psalms to Horn Pipes: Festivity, Iconoclasm, and Catholicism in *The Winter's Tale', Shakespeare Quarterly* 55(3) (2004), pp.279-306; Alexandra Walsham, ''Domme Preachers'? Post-Reformation English Catholicism and the Culture of Print', *Past & Present* 168 (2000), pp.72-123; *idem*, 'Miracles and the Counter-Reformation Mission to England', *The Historical Journal* 46(4) (2003), pp. 779-815.

[69] For discussion of rogues and criminals see: Sandra Clark, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature of Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 2003); J.S. Cockburn, 'Patterns of Violence in English Society: Homicide in Kent, 1560-1985', *Past & Present* 130 (1991), pp. 70-106; Providence Felicity Heal, 'The Crown, the Gentry and London: The Enforcement of Proclamations, 1596-1640' in Clare Cross, David Loades and J.J. Scarisbrick (eds), *Law and Government Under the Tudors* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 211-260; Marjorie K. McIntosh, 'Poverty, Charity, and Coercion in Elizabethan England', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, XXXV (3) (2005); pp. 457-479; John L. McMullan, 'Criminal Organizations in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century London', *Social Problems* 29(3) (1982), pp. 311-323.

[70] Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars*, p. 4.

with the male householder ruling over all. These three classifications of outsiders were part of a larger national dialogue about identity and involved identifying who belonged and who did not. The authors of murder pamphlets engaged with this widespread form of social identification and ostracization and contributed to emerging concepts of a new English, and specifically Protestant, national identity.

By identifying those who did not belong among the English Christian brethren, authors highlighted desirable characteristics of men and women in these pamphlets. Chapter Six discusses the importance of neighbourly bonds and the roles neighbours played in this literature. As Lake noted, many murder pamphlets were set 'in more commonplace settings- the households of farmers, merchants, artisans'.[71] Family members, servants, customers and neighbours regularly interacted in these settings. While neighbours were primarily represented in murder pamphlets as a nameless and autonomous group, they were a constant presence with far-reaching power and influence. Neighbours created and regulated reputation within a community.[72] Neighbours also played a direct role in the apprehension of felons and the restoration of order after murders were committed by reporting crimes or overheard confessions to officials in addition to pursuing and capturing fleeing

[71] Lake, 'Deeds Against Nature', p. 261.

[72] For more information about early modern neighbours, communities and social duties see: John Barry, 'Civility and Civil Culture in Early Modern England' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 181-96; John Boddy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570-1850* (Darton, 1975); Susan Brigden, 'Youth and the English Reformation',*Past& Present* 95 (1982), pp. 37-67; David Cressy, *Birth, Death and Marriage: Ritual, Religion, and the Life Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1999); Catherine Davies, ''Poor Persecuted Little Flock' or 'Commonwealth of Christians': Edwardian Concepts of the Church' in Peter Lake and Maria Dowling (eds), *Protestantism and the national church in sixteenth century England* (Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 78-102; Mary E. Fissell, 'The Politics of Reproduction in the English Reformation', *Representations* 87(1) (2004), pp. 43-81; Laura Gowing, 'Language, power, and the law: women's slander litigation in early modern London' in Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (eds), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), pp. 26-47; Ralph Houlbrooke, 'Civility and Civil Observances in the Early Modern English Funeral' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 67-86; Ronald Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: The Ritual Years 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1994); Mark S.R. Jenner, 'Civilization and Deodorization? Smell in Early Modern English Culture' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 127-44; Alexandra Shepard, 'Manhood, Credit and Patriarchy in Early Modern England 1580-1640', *Past & Present* 167 (2000), pp. 75-106; Paul Slack, *The Impact of the Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1985); Kaspar von Greyerz, *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 113-132; Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (London, 1982).

murderers. While neighbours in murder pamphlets represented England's collective morality, rationality and faith, they were human and sometimes faltered. Momentary lapses allowed murderers to grow bold and cause havoc until order was once again restored by the reassertion of proper neighbourly bonds and duties.

Of course, neighbours and communities have been discussed at length and this dissertation has been greatly informed by Alexandra Shepard, Phil Withington, and Steve Hindle's work on early modern communities, social order and change throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[73] Again, Gittting's analysis of the rise of the individual in burial rites is important to this discussion. She argued that by the early sixteenth century, 'older practices were gradually being erode by rituals stressing the individuality of the deceased and the importance of the immediate family, rather than the wider social group'.[74] Protestantism ushered in a new focus on the individual in death and while changes were made to once-communal ceremonies such as baptisms and burials, the community continued to be of great importance to the living. Through an analysis of the descriptions of reputation, acceptable behaviour, religious faith and neighbourly love found in this body of cheap print as well as in conduct literature, this chapter identifies the reciprocal expectations and obligations placed on neighbours and contributes to a deeper understanding of daily life and social interactions in late Elizabethan and Jacobean England.

Chapter Seven further discusses themes of reputation, piety, social interactions and behavioural expectations through an analysis of descriptions of clothing of both victims and felons. Elizabethan

[73] J.A. Sharpe, ''Such Disagreement betwixt Neighbours': Litigation and Human Relations in Early Modern England' in *Disputes and Settlements: Law and Human Relations in the West*, John Bossy (ed.) (Cambridge, 1983), p. 167-88; Phil Withington and Alexandra Shepard, 'Introduction: communities in early modern England' in Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (eds), *Communities in early modern England* (Manchester, 2000), p.9. Phil Withington, 'Intoxicants and the Early Modern City' in Steve Hindle, Alexandra Shepard and John Walker (eds), *Remaking English Society: Social Relations and Social Change in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 135-164; *idem, Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2010); Also see: Bob Scribner, 'Is There a Social History of the Reformation?', *Social History* 2(4) (1977), pp 483-505; Keith Wrightson, *English Society: 1580-1680* (London, 1982).

[74] Gittings, *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England*, p. 102.

sumptuary laws attempted to control acceptable patterns of dress for all social levels. While these laws were repealed by James I, English society remained concerned with dressing for one's social station and outward demonstrations of wealth and status. Murder pamphlets, along with religious literature, implored men and women to shun proud clothing and focus on their morality and faith instead. In this genre of cheap print, clothing played important, albeit silent, roles in murders by serving as a weapon or a disguise which allowed a murderer to gain access to his or her victim or to escape. Clothing was also used to represent innocence in some pamphlets by being described in penitential terms and guilt in others when men and women demonstrated a complete lack of respect for social hierarchy by dressing above their station. Representations of innocence and social contempt were also found in descriptions of clothing at the site of execution where pious or garish garments allowed felons one final signal of dissent as they proceeded to their deaths.

This chapter seeks to introduce a new topic into the existing discussion of murder pamphlets by specifically analysing clothing, something which has surprisingly not been explored before. Scholarly research has identified many sites of early modern anxiety which arose from clothing including both 'cross-class' and 'cross-gender' dressing and theft which has greatly informed this discussion.[75] Furthermore, this chapter considers the publications about sumptuary laws and enforcement by Frances Baldwin and Alan Hunt as well as research pertaining to patterns of consumption by Linda Levy Peck, Daniel Roche and Margaret Spufford.[76] As clothing permeated almost every element of

[75] For social anxiety relating to clothing see: David Cressy, 'Gender Trouble and Cross-Dressing in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies* 35(4) (1996), pp. 438-465; Roze Hentschell, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England: Textual Constructions of a National Identity* (Hampshire, 2008); Jean E. Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England' in *Shakespeare Quarterly* 39(4) (1988), pp. 418-440; Beverly Lemire, 'The Theft of Clothes and Popular Consumerism in Early Modern England', *Journal of Social History* 24(2) (1990), pp. 255-276; Christine M. Varholy, ''Rich like a Lady': Cross-Class Dressing in the Brothels and the Theatre of Early Modern London', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 8(1) (2008), pp. 4-34; Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothing in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003).

[76] Frances Baldwin, *Sumptuary legislation and personal regulation in England* (Baltimore, 1926); Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (London, 1996); Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 2005); Daniel Roche, *The Culture of* Clothing*: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Regime*, trans. Jean Birell (Cambridge, 1996); Margaret

early modern life, it should come as no surprise that textiles and garments played multiple roles in murders, miraculous revelations and executions. This analysis of the descriptions of clothing and textiles found in murder and execution pamphlets reveals England to be a society that was very much concerned with outward demonstrations of piety, social position and wealth while also revealing anxieties associated with the social unrest that occurred when clothing fell into the wrong hands and became tools of deception and murder.

Spufford, 'The cost of apparel in seventeenth-century England, and the accuracy of Gregory King', *Economic History Review* 53(4) (2000), pp. 677-705.

2

God's Miracles and the Devil's Temptations: Literary Representations of Providence, Sin and Repentance

Murder pamphlets participated in the spread of England's post-Reformation religious beliefs and identity through a dialogue about death and redemption while also including sensational details about murders. Indeed, the title 'murder pamphlet' can appear misleading because while murder may be the reason a pamphlet was written, death was not the main focus. Through an analysis of the overt religious themes of providence, sin and repentance, this chapter will demonstrate how this genre of literature contributed to the distribution of the teachings of the Church of England and informed readers about morality as well as titillating them with sensational stories.

The first topic to be addressed in this chapter will be providence, the belief that nothing could happen on earth without God's divine permission. Providence was the concept that both explained and controlled nature and social events. Alexandra Walsham described providence as

> a set of ideological spectacles through which individuals of all social levels and from all positions on the confessional spectrum were apt to view their universe...Central to the political, medical, and philosophical thought and the literary and historical discourse of the period, it was also an ingrained parochial response to chaos and crisis...[1]

Natural disasters or sickness such as plague epidemics were sometimes viewed as God punishing England as a whole.[2] Likewise, individual illness, death or change in fortune, both good and bad, could also be viewed as the providential workings of God. The concept of providence, as described by Blair Worden, changed over the course of the sixteenth century and was greatly shaped by the Reformation: 'Protestantism, which expelled the intermediaries between God and the soul, and which contrived at once to make God more awesomely distant and to bring him more awesomely

[1] Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 2-3.
[2] Ibid., p. 107.

close, placed a novel emphasis on providence at the exercise of his power'.[3] Keith Thomas suggested that the Reformation brought about 'a new insistence upon God's sovereignty' because He alone intervened for the sake of mankind.[4]

The concept of providence was somewhat malleable and both 'general' and 'special' providence were referenced though the belief that providence was the working of God on earth remained firm. Worden addressed the differences between 'general' and 'special' providence and their applications: 'Sometimes the former meant God's government of the natural world, the latter His dealings with humanity. Sometimes God's 'special' providence was taken to be His watch over His church and His elect, while His 'general' providence supervised mankind at large'.[5] Special providence was specifically linked to God's punishment for murder and appeared in a variety of descriptions. According to Malcolm Gaskill, when discussing literary representations of early modern homicide, special providence 'was the means through which murder was checked' and the phrase 'murder will out' was a key concept in this genre of cheap print.[6] The reader was assured that no murder, secret or otherwise, would go unseen or unpunished by God.

Gaskill described murder as 'more than just a breach of the peace: it struck at the heart of order in the Protestant state. Murder usurped God's right to take life, symbolizing rebellion against providence, nature, authority and Christian society'.[7] Gaskill further added: 'Murder emulated evil and desecrated the holy, thus providence sealed the fate of those who committed it'.[8] The providential identification and punishment of murderers was described in several ways in murder pamphlets. Victims of violence could seemingly defy their mortal wounds and live long enough to identify their attackers through God's providence. Miracles such as bleeding afresh or miraculous

[3] Blair Worden, 'Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England', *Past & Present* 109 (1985), p.58
[4] Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England* (London, 1971), p. 97
[5] Worden, 'Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England', p. 60.
[6] Malcolm Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 211.
[7] Ibid., p. 210.
[8] Ibid., p.211.

speech gave silent victims agency and allowed them to play an active role in the apprehension of their attackers. Providence was more than an abstract extension of God's might.[9] It provided stability in a world where the detection, capture and persecution of felons was dependent on informal and often ineffectual policing. God was present in everyday life and played a direct role in punishing the wicked, rewarding the faithful, and revenging the innocent.

Sin, the second topic to be addressed, was the undisputed root of man's downfall and punishment and was connected to providence. Men and women needed to constantly guard themselves from temptation in order to live a godly life. Scripture and godly publications, such as sermons and conduct literature, warned English readers about the dangers associated with sin. Murder pamphlets contained similar admonishments. In *Strange, Inhuman* Deaths, John Bellamy demonstrates the important connection between the rise of Protestantism in England and the descriptions of sin and crime contained in murder pamphlets. Bellamy argues that rise of Protestantism played a role in the proliferation of the literary genre as the reformed religion encouraged inward reflection of sin and the consequences of immoral behaviour.[10] Murder pamphlets provided readers with examples and consequences of earthly and divine transgressions. Authors encouraged readers to learn from the mistakes of others and also to recognize their own shortcomings and amend ungodly behaviour. The murderers and victims, as described by Lake, 'were all common enough social types, and they all figured prominently the chains of sin…Not everyone who fell prey to the devil and sinned would end up a murderer, but all sin was potentially mortal'.[11] Anyone could fall victim to temptation and

[9] Malcolm Gaskill, 'The displacement of Providence: policing and prosecution in seventeenth and eighteenth Century England', *Continuity and Change* 11(3) (1996), p. 343.
[10] John Bellamy, *Strange, Inhumane Deaths: Murder in Tudor England* (London, 2005), p. 3
[11] Lake, 'Deeds against Nature', p. 278.

authors frequently directly addressed readers about the dangers of sin in the preface with a heading such as 'To the Christian reader'.[12]

This dialogue of good and evil was a part of everyday life and sin was perceived to be a very real threat. Lust, greed, envy and wrath were the main sins described in murder pamphlets. Both murderers and victims could be sinners. Indeed, some victims were described as the authors of their own demise because they chose to associate with criminals and lived wickedly. The story of Cain and Abel frequently appeared in murder pamphlets during discussions directly pertaining to sin and God's revenge of murder. As the world's first murderer, Cain was abhorred and 'Adam was more grieved at the sinne of Caine, than for the slaughter of Abel'.[13]

The final topic to be discussed in this chapter is the importance of repentance for both the living and the soon-to-be-dead. Death could strike at any time from a plethora of reasons including sudden natural causes and interpersonal violence. Men and women needed to address and repent their sins for their deaths to be considered 'good' and to be reconciled with God.[14] Repentance not only reconciled sinners with God; it also reunited the wicked with the community of the faithful in England. Preachers were recurrent characters in murder pamphlets and authors described the lengths they took to procure confessions and repentance from felons prior to their executions.

Katherine Royer outlined the changing nature of English executions and demonstrated how over time the focus shifted from medieval bodily punishment and suffering on the scaffold to interest in the behaviour, language and repentance of the felon in the sixteenth century both in person and print. She stated: "The sixteenth century execution narratives are filled with speeches, farewells,

[12] *A World of Wonders. A masses of Murthers. A covie of Cosonages* (London, 1595), sig. A2r; Arthur Golding, *A brief discourse of the late murther of George Saunders* (London, 1573), sig. Aiir.
[13] *A True report of the horrible Murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bows, Knight, on the 20. day of February, Anno Dom* (London, 1606), sig. A3v.
[14] Richard Wunderli and Gerald Broce, 'The Final Moment before Death in Early Modern England', The *Sixteenth Century Journal* 20(2) (1989), p. 263.

prayers and the descriptions of the demeanour of the condemned'.[15] While murder pamphlets published between 1570 and 1620 did not regularly contain the overt 'last dying speeches' of their late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century counterparts, they did report the same messages about sin and repentance that were a constant at the gallows for nearly three centuries.[16] Daniel E. Williams addressed the fact that members of the clergy were often 'left to discover the meaning of such sadness [created by both murder and execution] and the best way of learning from their severe lessons' through scripture.[17] Like the clergy present at executions, those pamphlets attempted to explain how unnatural or untimely deaths were part of God's providential plan. Pamphleteers urged the reader to repent and ended with admonishments against sin. No life was complete without the proper preparation for death.

Peter Lake states that 'the pamphlets most obviously belong to 'grub street', the bottom end of the market where publication was for profit and the consequent aim was to pander to popular taste'.[1819] While these were indeed 'grub street' publications and published for profit, readers came from all walks of life. Just because the average pamphlet cost a penny or twopence does not mean that the readers or the content belonged exclusively to the lower echelons of society.[20] Furthermore, the fact that this material was cheap and ephemeral does not mean that all pamphlets were created

[15] Katherine Royer, 'Dead Men Talking: Truth, Texts and the Scaffold in Early Modern England', in Simon Deveraux and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Penal Practices and Culture, 1500-1900: Punishing the English* (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 70.

[16] For more about last dying speeches see: Frances E. Dolan, ''Gentlemen, I have one thing more to say': Women on Scaffolds in England, 1563-1680', *Modern Philology* 92 (1994), pp 157-78; Andrea McKenzie, *Tyburn's Martyrs: Executions in England, 1675-1775* (London, 2007); Sharpe, 'Last Dying Speeches'.

[17] Daniel E. Williams, '"Behold a Tragic Scene Strangely Changes into a Theater of Mercy": The Structure and Significance of Criminal Conversion Narratives in Early Modern New England', *American Quarterly* 38(5) (1986), p. 830.

[18] Further publications by Peter Lake about murder and religion include: 'Puritanism, Arminianism and a Shropshire axe-murder', *Midlands History* 15 (1990), pp. 37-64; 'Popular form, puritan content? Two puritan appropriations of the murder pamphlet from mid-seventeenth-century London' in Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (eds), *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain. Essays in Honour of Patrick Collinson* (Cambridge, 1994),pp. 313-24; Peter Lake and Michael Questier, *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England* (New Haven, 2002); Peter Lake and Isaac Stephens, *Scandal and religious Identity in Early Stuart England: A Northamptonshire's Maid's Tragedy* (Woodbridge, 2015).

[19] Lake, 'Deeds against nature', p. 258.

[20] Walker, 'Demons in female form', p. 123.

equal. Some authors were educated while others were not.[21] For the most part, these pamphlets were published anonymously which is extremely problematic for contemporary researchers. However, we can study the various representations and descriptions of murder, death and executions found in these pamphlets and analyse how they fit into Elizabethan and Jacobean society and what they represented.

It must be noted that these pamphlets did not represent the real world though they did contain representations and descriptions of actual people and events. Instead, authors described a perfect world where God punished all sinners and felons freely repented before their executions. These pamphlets offered readers the opportunity to place 'their hopes of salvation in the avoidance of extraordinary sin, [and take] pleasure and relief from the contrast between the enormities described in the pamphlets and their own trivial misdemeanors'.[22] This 'pamphlet England' was far more optimistic and godly than the real England. Everyone in this world was either a member of the Church of England as represented by the godly and sinners alike, or as an outsider, primarily a dangerous Papist.[23]

Religious belief in real England was far more convoluted and contradictory than in its pamphlet counterpart. The state demanded outward religious conformity but there was no true way of knowing if a person had fully embraced the new Church of England or privately remained loyal to Rome. This was a serious site of anxiety in post-Reformation England as demonstrated by recusancy

[21] Some notable pamphleteers included Anthony Munday, playwright Thomas Dekker and Thomas Kyd, and clergyman and Newgate orderly Henry Goodcole.
[22] Lake, 'Deeds Against Nature', p, 283.
[23] The papist had been a destructive outsider motif in early modern English society prior to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. When discussing post-Reformation Protestantism, Catherine Davies stated: 'The defence of the English church was not so much a question of defending its visible institutions and observances as of attacking popery in all its manifestations'. Catherine Davis, ''Poor Persecuted Little Flock' or 'Commonwealth Christians': Edwardian Protestant Concepts of the Church' in Peter Lake and Maria Dowling (eds), *Protestantism and the nation church in sixteenth century England* (London, 1987), p. 78. In murder pamphlets, the papist character represented dangers from both inside England and the continent that threatened the peace of the newly established Protestant Church. See Chapter Five for further discussion.

legislation during the reign of Elizabeth I and the execution of traitors.[24] Society may have contained elements of Catholic belief repackaged as Protestant but this new label meant the difference between life and a traitor's death. The moral lessons contained in murder pamphlets reflected this desire for national religious unity through the teachings of the Church of England. While the world they depicted may have been in part imagined, the social anxieties described in murder pamphlets were very real indeed.

God's Providence

God's divine providence controlled everything in the England described in these pamphlets; nothing happened without His permission. Providence was directly mentioned in several pamphlets regarding the identification, exposure and punishment of criminals.[25] A person's decisions and actions had huge repercussions in life and death and God had the power to administer both temporal and eternal sufferings. Divine exposure was one of the main focuses of murder pamphlets as crime and punishment always went hand in hand. A wrong-doer never went unpunished even if it took years for him or her to be caught. In *A brief discourse of the late murther of master George Saunders* (1577), George Saunders and his servant John Bean were attacked and killed by George Brown. Brown and Saunders's wife were lovers and planned the murder together. Saunders died immediately but Bean 'did by God's wonderful providence revive agayne, and creepying a great way on all foure, (for he

[24] Christopher Haigh, 'The Continuity of Catholicism in the English Reformation', *Past &* Present 93 (1981), p. 53. For more about post-Reformation English Catholicism see: Eamon Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (London, 2005); Christopher Haigh, 'From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fifth Series 31 (1981), pp. 129-147; *idem*, 'Success and Failure in the English Reformation', *Past & Present* 173 (2001), pp. 28-49; Martin Ingram, 'From Reformation to Toleration: Popular Religious Cultures in England, 1540-1690' in Tim Harris (ed.), *Popular Culture in England, c. 1500-1850* (London, 1995), pp. 95-123; Phebe Jensen, 'Singing Psalms to Horn Pipes: Festivity, Iconoclasm, and Catholicism in *The Winter's Tale', Shakespeare Quarterly* 55(3) (2004), pp.279-306; John Morrill, *The Nature of the English Reformation* (London, 1993); Alexandra Walsham, ''Domme Preachers'? Post-Reformation English Catholicism and the Culture of Print', *Past & Present* 168 (2000), pp. 72-123.

[25] Miraculous revelations of murderers were examples of 'Divine Providence', when God directly intervenes in the lives of men and women.

could neyther go nor stand) was found by an old man...and conveyed to Woolwich, where he gave evident tokens and markes of the murtherer'.[26] Had it not been for God's intervention, Brown would have escaped unidentified as the men were alone on the road when the murder took place.

Providence also led to the capture of the murderer in *The Examination, confession, and condemnation of Henry Robson, Fisher of Rye* (1598). The author, recorded as L.B., included an epistle to the reader and described the importance of providence in the context of murder:

> Gentle Readers, amongst all the cruell Stratagems, poysoning and homicide, I have here described one, which in my judgement passeth all that ever were invented; together with God's providence in bringing it to light. And the sooner have I penned it, that others may beware of being deceived by Sathan to doe the like, in hope it shall be concealed.[27]

Robson murdered his wife in an attempt to gain her property by slipping a small sachet of glass and ratsbane into his wife's 'privies' while she spent the night with him in debtor's prison.[28] The poison had a particularly adverse effect on Robson's wife and 'her bodie began to swell more and more'.[29] She languished in bed for five days before finally dying. During this time, her neighbours nursed her and recognized that she had been poisoned. Traditionally women would wash and dress the corpse of another woman to preserve her modesty. Sarah Tarlow describes the intricacies associated with women's burials and states '[w]omen were often identified far more closely with their bodies than men were', hence the need for modesty even after death.[30] The attending doctors were so disturbed by the woman's death that they 'hindered their [the neighbours'] purpose, and having obtained license of the officers, they caused her to bee ripped'.[31] The term 'ripped' refers to an autopsy and was rarely performed on women due to aforementioned anxieties about preserving female modesty

[26] Golding, *A brief discourse of the late murther of master George Saunders*, sig. Aiiiir.
[27] L.B., *The Examination, confession, and condemnation of Henry Robson, Fisher of Rye* (London, 1598), sig. A2v.
[28] Ibid., sig. A4r. Poisoning was considered to be a particularly heinous crime due to the fact that it was done in secret and the victim had no way to defend him or herself.
[29] Ibid., sig. A4v.
[30] Sarah Tarlow, *Ritual, Belief and the Dead in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2011), p.143.
[31] L.B., *The Examination, confession, and condemnation of Henry Robson*, sig. A4v-Br.

in life and death.[32] When the corpse was inspected, the physician discovered the sachet and officials were 'determined to finde out by some meanes who was the doer of this villainy'.[33] The discovery of the poison and apprehension of Robson were only accomplished through the providential autopsy. At the beginning of this pamphlet the author directly spoke to the reader about the ways in which divine providence would root out all murderers. The story of Robson's crime demonstrated that no matter how covert a crime appeared to be, murder would always out.

In this example, murder was exposed through human observation but this observation was only possible because God willed it so. In the epistle to the reader, the author discussed 'the cruell Stratagems, poysonings and homicides' in England and implored readers to be grateful for 'God's providence in bringing it to light'.[34] Medical and police practices were still at an early stage of development and 'providential ideology was therefore important in this context because it offered a certainty and reliability which caulked the gaps of chance and contingency between the planks of law enforcement against serious crimes'.[35] Krista Kesselring, when discussing the exposure of secret murders in particular, stated: 'Divine and human detection co-existed easily, and the reliance on providence did not preclude medical assistance'.[36] Worden addressed the seemingly contradictory or irrational nature of providence in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and stated: 'There is no logically self-evident boundary beyond which a sovereign Creator can be deemed not to direct events. Providence seemed the friend of reason, even though it of course transcended it'.[37] As nothing could happen without God's permission, all aspects of investigation into murder, including miracles and medical practices, worked towards the same goal: the revelation and punishment of the murderer.

---

[32] Tarlow, *Belief and the Dead n Early Modern Britain and Ireland*, p. 143.
[33] L.B., *The Examination, confession and condemnation of Henry Robson*, sig. A2v.
[34] Ibid., sig. A2v.
[35] Malcolm Gaskill, 'The displacement of Providence', p. 342.
[36] Krista Kesselring, 'Detecting Death Disguised', *History Today* 56(4) (2006), p.25.
[37] Worden, 'Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England', p. 63.

The concept of providence was not only used by authors to demonstrate the divine workings of God to reveal murderers. Providence was also deployed in print to justify bad behaviour as demonstrated by three pamphlets published over a twenty year period about the murder of preacher William Store by Francis Cartwright in 1603.[38] After Cartwright killed the preacher he fled to France and later returned to England after securing a pardon. Several years later he killed another man, one Master Riggs, after a confrontation and was sentenced to a year's imprisonment for manslaughter. He then joined the navy but was eventually sent back to England due to his quarrelsome nature where he accidentally fell on his own sword though the wound did not prove fatal. In *The Life, confession and heartie repentance of Francis Cartwright, Gentleman* (1621), Cartwright specifically mentioned providence and equated his sufferings with divine punishment due to his sinful life:

> God hath by threatening me with unheard dangers, always following mee, and yet never hurting, as if his Providence would not leave one houre of mine to such securities, as might make me presume that he had forgotten to punish me, longer than I remembered to be mindfull of my sinnes, and renew my Repentance for them.[39]

This pamphlet was supposedly penned by Cartwright himself and was written in the first person. In this publication, Cartwright expressed his repentance and humility by acknowledging his wrongdoing and it is likely that it was intended to repair his reputation after a life of bad behaviour.[40] Despite his numerous sins and two murders, Cartwright believed that God had not forsaken him and his actions were justified because 'the Providence of God [was] still [his] Preserver'.[41] Cartwright even stated that he killed Master Riggs because God had 'permitted [him] to be a Destroyer'.[42] This statement was at odds with the above quoted text as he stated that God continually threatened him but also appeared

[38] *The manner of the cruel, outrageous murther of William Storre* (London, 1603); *Three Bloodie Murthers* (London, 1613); *The Life, confession and heartie repentance of Francis Cartwright, Gentleman* (London, 1621).
[39] *The Life, confession and heartie repentance of Francis Cartwright, Gentleman* (London, 1621), sig. A4v-Br.
[40] John Bellamy, *Strange, Inhumane Deaths: Murder in Tudor England* (London, 2005), p. 85.
[41] *The Life, confession and heartie repentance of Francis Cartwright, Gentleman*, sig. Bv.
[42] Ibid., sig. B3r.

to allow him to be destroyer. This distorted confession appears as a means to explain ungodly behaviour rather than as an act of true contrition.

This particular case does not fit into the regular pamphlet formula where a murder was committed and the murderer was justifiably hanged. It does, however, fit into the greater concept of providential punishment. Murder pamphlets collectively shared the concept that 'murder will out', the belief that God will reveal murder and punish the guilty.[43] Not all murders committed in life resulted in providential exposure though the power of God and the devil were always discussed. Just because a murderer was not punished on earth did not mean that he or she escaped God's wrath in the next life. While Cartwright was imprisoned for the manslaughter of Riggs, he did not receive punishment for the murder of Storre.

Whether a coincidence or deliberate decision made by the author, the second installment of the Cartwright pamphlets, *Thee Bloodie Murders* (1613), included a story about a murder that went unpunished during the period when Cartwright fled to France. A badly decomposed corpse was discovered on the side of a road by a dog and its master. As the body had been there for some time it could not be identified and was buried where it lay. While no legal punishment could be enacted, the pamphlet described the omnipotence of God and His inescapable judgement:

> and till the Murderers can be found here is al that can be spoken of him; what they are and where they are God knows, and will (no doubt) at his good wil and pleasure reveale them. For, howsoever they doe yet ly hidden from the eyes of men, from the all seeing eye of the almighty God, they do not.[44]

Providence was not mentioned by name in this pamphlet but the inevitability of detection for murder, in this life or the next, was the key message. Even though Cartwright fled, he would have to face the consequences for his actions sooner or later. The same was true of the unknown murderer. God knows everything and all transgressions will be revealed in due time. The belief that God would

[43] David Atkinson, 'Magical Corpses: Ballads, Intertextuality, and the Discovery of Murder', *Journal of Folklore Research* 36(1) (1999), p. 2.
[44] *Three Bloodie Murthers* (London, 1613), sig. C3v.

expose murderers was constantly referred to and murder pamphlets continually referenced the omnipotence of God.

Divine providence revealed itself in a variety of ways including miracles. The concept that 'murder will out' was not a distinctly Protestant notion and had roots in fifteenth-century Catholicism. Likewise, miraculous or magical revelations of crimes were a remnant of Catholic belief and the cult of the saints.[45] There was still space for miracles in post-Reformation England. The concept of miracles revealing God's displeasure or delight did not change but the language through which it was described certainly did. Many elements of the reformed church evolved from traditional religious beliefs and helped shape new ones. Walsham referred to this as 'the cross-fertilization of an eclectic body of opinions and beliefs'.[46] This traditional belief was absorbed into Elizabethan and Jacobean culture and greatly informed legal practices. Catholic rhetoric and beliefs continued to inform both religious and state affairs long after the Reformation and miraculous revelation as described in murder pamphlets remained in print until the middle of the eighteenth century.[47]

The most common form of miraculous revelation to be featured in this body of literature was bleeding afresh. Bleeding afresh was the belief that a corpse would blush or bleed from wounds when approached by the murderer.[48] This practice was both a collective ritual and a state-sanctioned practice that could be performed informally or ordered by JPs and coroners.[49] Whether or not a corpse actually bled was not necessarily as important as the belief that it would. An innocent person would not hesitate to approach or touch a corpse whereas a person's hesitation to do so could be taken as a sign of guilt. Again, we see how providence and state-sanctioned legal practices co-existed

[45] Kathleen R. Sands, 'Word and Sign in Elizabethan Conflict with the Devil', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 31(2) (1999), p. 254.
[46] Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, pp 9, 70.
[47] Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England*, p. 264.
[48] This practice was also known as the ordeal of touch, corpse touching, bier right or the right of the bier.
[49] Malcolm Gaskill, *Crimes and Mentalities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 228. This practice was officially sanctioned by German Bishop Peter Binsfeld in *De Confessionibus at Sagarum* (1589) and James IV of Scotland in his *Daemonologie* (1597). In England, this practice was supported by legal writer Michael Dalton in *Countrey Justice, Conteyning the Practice of the Justices of the Peace out of their sessions* (1618).

and offered stability in an unstable world. Bleeding afresh was linked to the murder of Abel by his brother Cain. After the murder, God said to Abel 'What hast thou done? The voice of thy brothers blood crieth unto me from the ground' (Genesis 2:10). In *Daemonologie* (1597), James IV also described this miracle as a cry for revenge: 'if the dead carkasse be at any time thereafter handled by the murtherer, it wil gush bloud, as if the bloud were crying to the heaven for revenge of the murtherer'.[50] The very first murder was revealed through the cry of innocent blood. No one witnessed Abel's murder but God heard the demand for revenge.

Bleeding afresh appeared in pamphlets that described particularly heinous or vicious crimes. *Sundry strange and inhumaine Murthers, lately committed* (1591) was one such pamphlet and described the murder of three children by a day labourer at the request of their father. The father, Lincoln, arranged to have his children killed in an attempt to woo a neighbouring widow. He believed this woman shunned his advances because she was independently wealthy and did not want children.[51] While this man attended a local market with his eldest son, the labourer killed the children by 'knocking them on the heads with a hatchet, and cutting their throats'.[52] When the bodies were discovered, neighbours instantly gathered and prepared to search for the murderer, though 'the harde hearted father made no signe of sorrowe for them, neither would he seeke meanes to pursue the murtherer'.[53] Furthermore, Lincoln made no attempt to bury his children 'until a Gentlewoman named mistres West came and reproved him of his unnatural dealings towards them'.[54] The children's bodies lay exposed for several days and when their father did bury them, he did so in a pit that was filled with water by means of a spring. Eight days after the murders, the labourer and

[50] James VI, *Daemonologie in forme of a dialogue, divided into three bookes* (Edinburgh, 1597), p. 229
[51] *Sundry strange and inhumaine Murthers, lately committed* (London, 1591), sig. A3r.
[52] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[53] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[54] Ibid., sig. A4r.

father, who both professed innocence, were brought before the corpses. When Lincoln was reunited with his dead children, the Coroner;

> commanded the partie apprehended to looke upon the children, which he did, and called them by their names, whereupon, behold the wonderfull works of God, for the fact being still denied, the bodies of the children, which seemed white like unto soaked flesh laid in water, sodainly received their former coulour of bloude, and had such a lively countenance flushing in their faces, as if they had been living creatures lying asleep, which in deed blushed in the murtherers when they wanted grace to blush and bee ashamed of theyr owne wickednesse.[55]

The children's bodies bled afresh despite having been violently murdered with a hatchet and knife and also having been soaked in water for several days. This miracle, witnessed by neighbours and officials, provided divine evidence against the accomplices. The labourer instantly confessed and accused the father of masterminding the murders. This miracle proved that God would not suffer the murderers to remain hidden amongst the faithful. It also proved that 'the consenter is as evil as the deed dooer' and both men were hanged even though only the labourer committed the murders.[56]

Another example of a murder which was solved by miraculous bleeding was also published in 1591 though this crime occurred between two soldiers. Arnold Cosbye, a captain, murdered Lord Burke after he sent him a letter 'stuft with a rable of bumbasted braves, scornefull tearms, and odious comparisons, binding him [Burke] upon his honour and manhoode, the next morning to meete [Cosbye]' for a duel.[57] This crime proved so infamous that three different pamphlets were published during the year about the murder and Cosbye's execution.[58] When the pair were preparing to fight, Burke, holding his rapier in his left hand, bent over to remove his spurs and Cosbye 'taking the advantage as it fell, not like a Souldier, or a Gentleman, but lyke a brutish manquellour, and

[55] Ibid., sig. A4r.
[56] Ibid., sig. A2r.
[57] *The most horrible and tragicall murther of the right honourable, the virtuous and valorous Gentleman, John Lord Bourgh, Baron of Casell Connell* (London, 1591), sig. A3r.
[58] *The most horrible and tragicall murther of the right honourable, the virtuous and valorous Gentleman, John Lord Bourgh, Baron of Casell Connell* (London, 1591); *The Araignment, Examination, Confession and Judgement of Arnold Cosbye* (London, 1591); *The manner of the death and execution of Arnold Cosbie, for murthering the Lord Boorke, who was executed ay Wanswoorth townes end on the 27. of Januarie* (London, 1591).

murderous conspiratour, voyd of all virtue and humanitye…ranne his rapier twelve intches into his brest'.[59] Burke was taken to a nearby house and Cosbye fled on horseback but he could not escape providence as the strong, young gelding he was riding fell lame for no reason and he had to continue his flight on foot. Later, when lost, Cosbye approached the house, 'whereunto [Burke's corpse] was not sooner approached (which is a thing especially to be noted,) but his wounds bled more freshlie then when they were first given'.[60] This miracle was witnessed by several people of good quality, including 'one John Powell, yeoman of the bottles in her majesties house'.[61] The witnesses raised the alarm that the murderer was nearby and Cosbye was apprehended.

Ariane M. Balizet, when discussing *Arden of Faversham* (1591), a play based on the murder of Master Arden by his wife and her lover also committed in 1591, suggests that bleeding afresh was a representation of the shame of menstruation because the husband was cuckolded prior to his murder.[62] Bleeding afresh, however, was more than just a demonstration of shame; it was an earthly manifestation of God's might. Furthermore, bleeding afresh was not just limited to men and the corpses of adults and children, both male and female, bled. In one case, a murder was providentially revealed through a bleeding apron.[63] An innkeeper's wife murdered a traveller at night and stole his money. She took her blood soaked apron to a neighbouring washerwoman 'saying that she had stucked a pig and her maydes had no leave to washe it'.[64] As the woman commenced her work the stain became fresher:

> behold a wonder, murder cannot be hidde the more the woman washed it the more fresher began the blood to looke and the cloth the more blacker, which so amazed the

[59] *The most horrible and tragicall murther of the right honourable, the virtuous and valorous Gentleman, John Lord Bourgh,* sig. A4r.
[60] Ibid., sig. A4v.
[61] Ibid., sig. A4v.
[62] Ariane M. Balizet, *Blood and Home in Early Modern Drama: Domestic Identity on the Renaissance Stage* (New York, 2014), p.75.
[63] *A World of wonders. A Masses of Murders. A Covie of Cosonages*, sig. F2v-F3v.
[64] Ibid., sig. F3v.

> poore woman and troubled her in mode so that shee could not be quiet till shee had told the Constable.[65]

The innkeeper's wife was then arrested and executed. Bleeding afresh was not restricted to one sort of person or behaviour. Murder was viewed as a crime that was so evil that corpses behaved unnaturally and providentially cried for revenge. It went above and beyond gendered shame and upset the natural order of society to such a degree that it was necessary for God to intervene.

A variation of this miraculous revelation appeared in *Sundry strange and inhumaine Murthers, lately committed* (1591). An unnamed shoemaker murdered a young man and buried the corpse in Uppingham, Rutland. Although there were no witnesses of the crime 'and the murtherer little suspected for the same: nevertheless upon bare suspition hee was apprehended and the dead coarse digged up again'.[66] When the man approached the corpse it 'not only bled, but with one of his eies standing open, he starred upon the shoomaker that murthered him'.[67] When the murderer was led away from the corpse, its eye closed but when he was brought near the body the eye opened again 'and stared upon him as before, as who wold saie, this is the murtherer, stay him, my bloud asketh for vengeance'.[68] The author directly described this miraculous revelation with a cry for divine vengeance of the murder.

Similar language about bleeding afresh also appeared in a political pamphlet printed in 1579. Pamphleteer and political commentator John Stubbe used bleeding afresh as a means to condemn the potential marriage of Elizabeth I and the Duke of Anjou. Stubbe reminded the reader about the last time a French Catholic married a Protestant and the subsequent St. Bartholomew's Day massacre:

> The hundred thousand men women and children, whose innocent blood solemnized that marriage, might be sent to us againe from the dead…they would lay forth the

[65] Ibid., sig. F3v.
[66] *Sundry strange and inhumaine Murthers, lately committed*, sig. A4v.
[67] Ibid., sig. A4v.
[68] Ibid., sig. A4v.

> harmes of that marriage which such revived objections that their wounds would bleed afresh and theyre headless bodies speake (as it were) before you.[69]

Bleeding afresh was a providential manifestation that helped the dead to punish the guilty. In this publication, the struggle between good and evil was reflected through the real life events of France's wars of religion and the turmoil surrounding Elizabeth's potential suitors. The marriage between Catholic Marguerite de Valois and Protestant Henri de Navarre resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Protestants and the memory was still fresh in people's minds. Stubbe believed a repetition of such a marriage would be disastrous. The corpses of French Huguenots had cried out for revenge against the French crown, and Stubbe reminded the Queen that she was the head of the Church of England and defender of the one true religion. Unfortunately for Stubbe, this publication greatly angered Elizabeth I and he was arrested and his right hand cut off.[70]

Bleeding afresh was not only present when discussing murders. This occurrence also appeared in religious publications and was connected to concepts of spiritual guilt and remorse though it still served the same function of identifying evil. Bleeding afresh was mentioned in several sermons published during this period in connection with Christ's death and sacrifice. Thomas Playfere, a highly respected clergyman, professor of divinity and later chaplain to James I, wrote that whenever a man was tempted by sin he should imagine Christ standing before him saying

> Beware, take heed what you doe: detest sinne, abhorre sinne, fie upon it, a chame light on it, it did once most vilely and villainously murder me: But now seeing my wounds are whole, doe not I beseech you, do no rub and revive them againe with your sinnes, to make them bleede afresh.[71]

---

[69] John Stubbe, *The discoverie of a gaping gulf whereinto England is like to be swallowed by another French Marriage, if the Lord forbid not the banes, by letting her Majestie see the sin and punishment thereof* (London, 1579), sig. Cv.

[70] Natalie Mears, 'Stubbe [Stubbs], John (c. 1541-1590], Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, www.offorddnb.com/view/article/26736?docPos=1 (26 April 2014). Stubbe was arrested along with Hugh Singleton, the publisher, and William Page, who attempted to distribute copies after a royal proclamation prohibited its circulation. Singleton, who was eighty, was pardoned.

[71] Thomas Playfere, *A most excellent and heavenly sermon upon the 23. chapter of the Gospell of Saint Luke* (London, 1595), sig. D4v.

Again, the connection between devious behaviour and bleeding afresh was present. The sins of early modern England were so great and unnatural that they had the potential to continually torment Christ even after His sacrifice for mankind. Clergyman and preacher of St George's Church, Canterbury, Thomas Wilson echoed Playfere's sentiments nearly twenty years later when he wrote:

> For even they which let slip out of minde the bloodshed of Jesus, forgetting they were once purged by it from their old sinnes, due live securely and presume piuously in a sinnefull course being worldly and prophane; what else doe they but (what lyeth in them) cause Jesus to bleed afresh, and againe crucifie him, making voyd the force and fruit of his passion to themselves.'[72]

These clergymen likened sin to murder as Christ died for the good of mankind. The continually selfish and sinful actions of men and women demonstrated a lack of respect and reverence for His sacrifice. Christ was innocent and His bleeding afresh served to show the world that He was wronged. We see a parallel between religious publications and murder pamphlets. While bleeding afresh occurred in only a few pamphlets, the victims were innocent and their deaths upset natural order. Christ's bleeding wounds, like those of the victims discussed, signified that sin was rife and someone purposefully acted against them with wicked intentions. In both cases, the godly community recognized the importance of miraculous bleeding and attempted to beat out sin through pious and devout behaviour.

This world of representations of murders was one where miracles were very real and led to the capture and executions of felons.[73] Further providential miracles that appeared in print in England included a Dutch story published in 1605 in which a young man hung on the gallows for five days after being falsely accused of theft while travelling in Bonn. *A True relation of Gods wonderfull mercies, in preserving one alive, which hanged five days, who was falsely accused* described how John Johnson, after being accused of theft and murder, 'was committed to prison, put upon the Racke, and

[72] Lief Dixon, *Practical Predestinarians in England, c. 1590*-1640 (Farnham, 2014), p. 177; Thomas Wilson, *Christs farewell to Jerusalem, and last prophesie A sermon preached in the quier of the Cathedrall Church of Cunterburie* (London, 1614), sig. C4v.
[73] Lake, 'Deeds against Nature', p. 270.

grievously tormented' and 'cryed to God for ayde'.[74] The young man confessed to the crime under duress and was sentenced to hang. At the gallows, he spoke of his past sins and stated: 'I am here condemned to die, I doe beseech Almighty God that it will please him through his great power, to shew some miracle on me, whereby the truth may be known'.[75] God miraculously saved Johnson by placing a stool under his feet and sent 'the Angell of the Lord' to feed him for five days.[76] When the truth was revealed, the actual thief was caught and burned at the stake for having allowed an innocent man to suffer his punishment.

The miraculous nature of the discoveries revealed the workings of a God who was both punisher and protector.[77] In *A most horrible & detestable murther committed by a bloudie minded man* (1595), a man killed his wife with a knife as their young son slept and fled the scene. After he left, the house caught fire due to an unattended candle and burned down but the child was miraculously saved. The boy identified his father as the murderer and also described the weapon despite having not witnessed the crime. The pamphlet concluded with the statement 'This God revealeth the wicked practices of men. Who though the act bee kept ever so secrete, to their great rebuke he discovereth'.[78] In *A True report of the horrible murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes, knight*, the author directly described the 'marvalous operations of Gods finger in the discoverie of murthers' after two thieves secretly murdered a servant.[79]

The pamphlets *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther committed by an Inkeepers Wife and The Horrible Murther of a young Boy of three yeres of* age featured a providential revelation that was directly linked to Scripture. Both pamphlets described the murder of two parents and the abduction

[74] *A True relation of Gods wonderfull mercies, in preserving one alive, which hanged five days* (London, 1605), sig. B2r.
[75] Ibid., sig. B2r.
[76] Ibid., sig. B3r.
[77] Lake, 'Deeds against Nature', p. 270.
[78] *A most horrible & detestable murther committed by a bloudie minded man upon his owne wife* (London, 1595), sig. A4v.
[79] *A True report of the horrible murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes, Knight*, *on the 20. day of February, Anno Dom. 1606* (London, 1607), sig. C2v.

of their children, a young boy and girl, by robbers. They then gave the children to Annis Dell, an innkeeper's widow, who, with the help of her son George, murdered the boy, Anthony James, and cut out his sister's tongue to prevent her from alerting the authorities. The boy's body was tied to a large stake and thrown into a 'bottomless Pond' a mile outside of Hatfield.[80] His sister, Elizabeth, was given to a travelling beggar and taken far from the scene of the crime for four years. Several weeks after Anthony's death 'some Gentlemen and others (being a hunting for Wild-foule) hapned with their dogs to beat about this Pond; when one of these dogges having scented the child…whined and cried, and by no means could be beat or drawne from thence'.[81] The men began to turn the pond with staves and discovered the child's body. The discovery of the boy itself was miraculous but the identification of the murderers was even more astounding. Elizabeth returned to the town but was unable to identify herself or the murderers. She was unable to speak but miraculously regained her speech after hearing a cock cry while playing with a friend:

> One day, some month before Christmasse last, going to play with the Goodwifes daughter where she sojourned in a Parke joining to Hatfield…as they were in sport together, A coke hard by them fell a crowing, when the other Girle mocking the Cocke with these words, Cock a doodle dooe, Peggy hath lost her shooe, and called to her Besse canst not thou doe so? When presently the Girle in the like manner did so.[82]

When Elizabeth heard the cock cry, she was able to speak despite not having a tongue. The second pamphlet, *The Horrible Murther of a Young Boy, of three yeres of age,* described the same event including the rhyme. The author likened it to the Biblical story of Peter's Denial in which Peter denied all knowledge of Jesus three times before the rooster crowed the following morning as predicted by Jesus during the Last Supper:

---

[80] *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther committed by an Inkeepers Wife, called Annis Dell, and her Sonne George Dell, four years since*(London, 1606), sig. Br.

[81] Ibid., sig. B3r.

[82] Ibid., sig. Cr. This is also the earliest recorded print version of the nursery rhyme. It appeared again in print in *Mother Goose's Melody: or, Sonnets for the Cradle* in an expanded form. This edition of the rhyme included a little moral lesson that stated: 'The cock crowns us up early in the morning, that we may work for our bread, and not live upon charity or upon trust: for he who lives upon charity shall often be affronted, and he that lives upon trust shall pay double'. *Mother Goose's Melody: or, Sonnets for the Cradle* (London, 1791), p. 34. Here, the rooster is associated with industry and work ethic.

> It pleased God at that time, to make a cocke to be (as it were a tutor to the child, and) his first messenger of this mightie miracle, like as a bird of the same name and nature, using the selfe same not, put Peter in minde that hee denied his maister: from which his remembrance, sprung from his true and heartie repentance.[83]

The story of a tongue-less girl regaining speech was itself miraculous but when paired with the story of the Denial of Christ by Peter it became a powerful religious display as the rooster's cry signalled an end to both darkness and ignorance. When Elizabeth, like Peter, heard the rooster she was finally able to speak the truth that had so long been denied. Upon this revelation, Dell and her son were arrested and hanged and justice prevailed after several years.

Murder pamphlets did not just discuss the revelation and punishment of murderers; they also incorporated information about the punishments of the murdered men and women. In many cases, the victims seemingly deserved their fate due to sinful lives. While sinners may have been victims of violence, their deaths were also a part of God's divine order and they too suffered for their transgressions. In *Deeds Against Nature and Monsters by kinde* (1614), John Arthur, a crippled beggar, killed his companion after having

> obtained the daily use of her bodie, and continually commited of that sinne of lust and shame, making a practise thereof in the contempt of Gods Laws, that the eye of heaven could no longer wink at them, but with a cleare sight see into their base wickednes.[84]

The key words in this quote are 'them' and 'their'. Only Arthur committed murder but both parties were in the wrong in the eyes of God. The victim, who remained unnamed in the pamphlet, was described as a 'strumpet' and malefactor for her lustful behaviour.[85] The author, however, did award her death some sympathy and described it as untimely while he labelled Arthur 'a monster by kinde

[83] *The Horrible Murther of a Young Boy, of three yeres of age, whose sister had her tongue cut out* (London, 1606), p. 8.
[84] *Deeds Against Nature and Monsters by kinde* (London, 1614), sig. A2v.
[85] Ibid., sig. A2v.

and the doer of a deed against nature'.[86] In this case, both sinners died as the direct result of providence but only one suffered the humiliation of the gallows.

Murder pamphlets continually mentioned the just punishment for the wicked, both murderers and their less-than-innocent victims. Psalm 34:21 stated: 'but malice shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall perish'. Sinners had no one to blame but themselves and their actions caused a chain reaction which led to their downfall. In *A horrible creuel and bloudy murther committed at Putney in Surry on the 21. Of April last, 1614* (1614), Edward Hall was murdered by three servants in a particularly violent attack described as 'damnably devised' and 'devishly and butcherly accomplished and executed'.[87] While the murder was described as a terrible and cruel act of petty treason, Hall's actions as a master were brought into the discussion and his meanness 'procured him the hatred of his servants and familia'.[88] Neither his servants nor his family loved or respected him. His servants confessed they killed Hall because he did not love his family as he should; he was a bad master who did not give them enough meat and killed him 'by the inspiration and instigation of the devil'.[89] The devil provided the strength for the attack but Hall's neglect and confrontational nature furnished the motivation for his own murder.

This pamphlet contained the standard warnings about avoiding sin and murder but it also shared domestic messages with godly conduct literature. In *The practise of pietie directing a Christian how to walke that he may please God* (1613), Lewis Bayly, chaplain to James I and later Bishop of Bangor, described how to live a godly life. In the section 'Meditations for Household Piety', Bayly stated that a man, 'according to his *duetie*' must raise his family in the '*service* and *feare* of God in his *owne*

[86] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[87] *A horrible creuel and bloudy murther committed at Putney in Surry on the 21. Of April last, 1614* (London, 1614), sig. A4v.
[88] Ibid., sig. A4v.
[89] Ibid., sig. B2v.

house, then the house of *God* should be better filled'.[90] Hall clearly neglected this as the author stated that his family grew to hate him. Likewise, Hall mistreated his servants and denied them sufficient food which earned him their hatred. Bayly cautioned householders against this behaviour and wrote: 'But alas, *most* Housholders make no other use of their *Servants*, then they doe of their *beasts*. While they may have their *bodies* to do *their* service, they care not if their *Soules* serve the *Devill*'.[91] This was exactly what happened in the Hall household. He neglected this responsibility to both God and the people living in his house and was punished in return.

The same notion of punishment did not just apply to violent murderers or blatant sinners. Men and women who killed themselves received no sympathy and were excluded from the godly community. According to Michael MacDonald, 'The Protestant emphasis on providence led the pious to regard events as signs, signifiers of God's will unfolding in this world. Self-murder was so unambiguously evil that godly writers readily interpreted it as evidence of divine displeasure'.[92] MacDonald specifically stated that godly writers condemned suicide but this belief was shared by pamphleteers too. In *A View of Sundry Examples,* popular pamphleteer Anthony Munday discussed several suicides and placed the blame squarely on the 'self-murderers', the contemporary term used to described people who committed suicide, and emphasised that their ungodly behaviour led directly to their deaths. For example, a woman known only as the Widow Barnes threw herself from a window at the devil's urging in 1574. The entry notes that, prior to her death, she frequently swore and 'no divine persuasion could turn her heart from this wicked and detestable exercise'.[93] Barne's wilful nature hardened her heart and allowed the devil to tempt her. The elderly Father Lea perjured

---

[90] Lewis Bayly, *The practise of pietie directing a Christian how to walke that he may please God* (London, 1613), p.434.
[91] Ibid., p. 434-5.
[92] Michael MacDonald, 'Suicide and the Rise of the Popular Press in England', *Representations* 22 (1988), p. 41. Georgia Noon notes that the word 'suicide' first appeared in 1651. Prior to this, terms such as 'self murder,' 'self destruction,' 'homicide' and 'slaughter' were used. Georgia Noon, 'On Suicide', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 39(3) (1978), p. 372.
[93] Anthony Munday*, A View of Sundry Examples* (London, 1580), sig. Biiir.

himself and asked the man he had sworn against for forgiveness. The man replied 'that the offence against him might be easily forgiven: but the offence against God was ten times more'.[94] Lea broke God's law by swearing a false oath, and unable to cope with the guilt, killed himself by stabbing his stomach with a rusty knife.[95] In another case of suicide described in *A View of Sundry Examples*, a man named Berry also committed perjury and killed himself. Berry was taken to prison and 'desparying of God's mercie, and giving him selfe to the Diveils temptation, cruellie cut his own throat'.[96] As both the perpetrator and victim of murder, these men and women received no sympathy. Their actions denied them the opportunity for salvation and allowed them to succumb to despair.

A View of Sundry Examples only provided quick glances into the early modern view of suicide. *A True Relation of a most desperate Murder, committed upon the Body of Sir John Tindall Knight* (1616) provided an in-depth description of a murder and subsequent suicide. John Barterham, an aging gentleman, killed Sir John Tindall with a pistol and then hanged himself while in prison. The outrage of the pamphlet stemmed from several facts: that Barterham killed a knight, his social superior; he killed himself which prevented justice from being performed; and because he did not repent prior to hanging himself. Barterham's actions were harshly criticised and made an example of:

> Had not the Murderer, bin his owne Justicier, condemning, and executing his owne selfe, the example had bin prodigious, and as full of danger, as it is of wonder: But to terrifie others, from imitation of such damnable Attempts, God out of his divine vengeance, drew an Arrow, to smit him, to the heart, who had shed the bloud of another.[97]

By killing himself, Barterham perverted the course of divine and state justice. He also denied the king of a subject and, more importantly, angered God. The author described his death as God's just

[94] Ibid., sig. Biiiir.
[95] Leviticus 19:1, 'Thou shalt not swear by a name falsely, neither shalt thou defile the name of thy God: I am the Lord.' Quoted in Munday, *A View of Sundry Examples*, sig. Biiiir.
[96] Ibid., sig. Biiiv.
[97] *A True Relation of a most desperate Murder, committed upon the Body of Sir John Tindall Knight, one of the Maisters of the Chancerry* (London, 1616), sig. C2v-C3r.

punishment because it denied him the opportunity to confess and repent which denied him salvation. Had he been brave enough to face justice and execution, his soul might have been saved:

> Foole that he was, to avoid a hanging he hung himself; to shun one shame of a publike gallowes, where (happily) God might have sent him the grace of repentance, and with the good there save him, even at the last howre, he ran desperately to a more infamous execution. He fled out of a storme, to fall voluntary shipwrack. Barbarous man hee had done bad enough before killing another, but to kill himself was the basest cowardise.[98]

Barterham's punishment stemmed from his lack of piety and fear of God rather than his sins alone.[99] If he had trusted in God, he would have had the opportunity to repent rather than to face His vengeance. His death, though deemed necessary by state and divine law, was not satisfactory because it happened without an act of contrition.

Sin and the Devil

God's divine punishment went hand in hand with sin. Indeed, sin, the second topic to be discussed in this chapter, was at the root of all earthly evil. Lake writes that murder pamphlets provided the reader with a glimpse into 'a nightmare world turned upside down in which basic human impulses- lust, greed, revenge- having broken free from the normal social and religious moorings which otherwise contained their destructive potential'.[100] I would like to contribute to this argument and highlight that lust and greed were indeed 'basic human impulses' but they were also dangerous sins in pamphlet England.[101] Sin, and its accompanying downward spiral, was one of the constant themes addressed in this literature. All men and women were sinners and must be constantly on guard against the devil. Anthony Munday, in *A view of Sundry Examples*, stated: 'man is subject to many misfortunes, multitudes of myseries, yea, many and sundrie mischances...our faith is the onelie

[98] Ibid., sig. C3v-C4r.
[99] Lewis Bayly specifically stated that all Christians must be taught how to properly serve and fear God. *The practise of pietie directing a Christian how to walke that he may please God*, p. 434.
[100] Lake, 'Deeds against Nature', p.263.
[101] Of the seven deadly sins, lust and greed appeared most frequently in this body of literature.

weapon'.[102] Lust, greed and other dangerous sins were not the result of just an impulse; they were the result of temptation and human weakness.

This chapter cannot discuss sin without first discussing the integral role played by the devil. The devil has been described as 'Gods hang-man' and 'Gods Ape' because he 'counterfeits in his servants this service & forme of adoration, that God prescribed and made his servants to practice' by James IV in *Daemonologie*.[103] The early modern devil was both God's servant and enemy. He was described as a powerful and destructive entity but, at the same time, he could not act without the permission of God.[104] To ignore the dangers associated with sin was to deny the powers of the devil; whoever denied the devil also denied 'the power of God, and [were] guiltie of the errour of the Saccuces'.[105] In *The Theatre of Gods Judgement* (1587), Puritan clergyman Thomas Beard noted that while 'wicked miscreants' wronged and abused the people around them, they themselves were 'abused and cousened of the Devill, who is a finer juggler than them all'.[106] Even though the devil was a servant of God, God was not culpable for a man's downfall. Walsham noted that men and women could be tempted by the devil but because 'they had been endowed with the capacity to resist such temptations, they remained entirely at fault'.[107] The devil frequently appeared in murder pamphlets and encouraged men and women to act violently against others and themselves but only after they willingly severed themselves from God in favour of sinful pursuits.[108] Authors used these fallen men and women to educate and inform readers against the dangers of wicked living and stressed that a sinful lifestyle would result in punishment, both in this world and the next.

---

[102] Munday, *A view of Sundry Examples*, sig. Bi.
[103] James VI, *Daemonologie in forme of a dialogue*, pp. 4, 35.
[104] Ibid., p.45; Thomas Adams, *The happiness of the church* (London, 1619), p. 122.
[105] James VI, *Daemonologie in forme of a dialogue*, p. 55
[106] Thomas Beard, *The Theatre of Gods Judgements: or, a Collection of Histories out of sacred, Ecclesiasticall, and prophane Authours concerning the admirable judgements of God upon the transgressours of his commandements* (London, 1597), p. 74.
[107] Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, p.14
[108] MacDonald, 'Suicide and the Rise of the Popular Press in England', p. 41.

The pamphlet *Three Bloodie Murders* (1613) described three very different murders though all were the direct result of weakness and sin. One murder was committed by Francis Cartwright, the young gentleman previously discussed, out of wrath and another was a case of infanticide due to lust. The third murder described in this text differed from the others due to the fact that the victim could not be identified as the corpse was too badly decomposed when it was discovered. As a result, the murderer and his or her intentions could be not identified. The pamphlet ended with a strong admonition against sin rather than explicitly against murder or violence: 'If we could alwaies have in minde these three things, viz. that there is an eye above us, that sees all wee do, an eare that heares all we say, and a booke, in which all our words and deeds are written, we should never sin'.[109] 'Basic human impulses' were extremely dangerous both on earth and in the afterlife. [110] While anger or lust can be seen as relatively commonplace emotions, the felons described in *Three Bloodie Murders* demonstrated how easily a supposedly small sin could spiral out of control.[111] God saw all and no sin would go unpunished.

In *The Bloody Downfall of Adultery, Murder, Ambition* (1615), the author directly blamed sin, specifically lust, for the downfall of good men:

> That hating al vertue makes sin seeme pleasing, which workes in the flexable heart such a sweet desire for forbidden pleasures…Lust and Adultery I mean, which I described in this manner, it is the most insolent of all things, it troubles the mind and taketh away the empire of liberty, it confounds memory, kills providence, and treads good council.[112]

The author acknowledged that the pursuit of sin was pleasing but also stressed just how dangerous it was in the broad scheme of things. In *The Unnaturall Father* (1621), John Rowse killed his children because he 'was loth they should go about the Towne a begging' after his gambling, drinking and

[109] *Three Bloodie Murders*, sig. C3v.
[110] Lake, 'Deeds against Nature', p.263.
[111] For a discussion on the personal dangers associated masculine anger and the need to control this emotion see Chapter Four.
[112] *The Bloody Downfall of Adultery, Murder, Ambition* (London, 1615), sig. Bv.

licentious behaviour destroyed himself and his family.[113] Rowse's descent into sin had multiple repercussions. He ruined his estate and children's inheritance through his ungodly behaviour. What is more, he allowed himself to be manipulated by the devil who led 'him along through doubts and feares, to have no hope in Gods providence, [and persuaded] his Conscience that his sinnes were unpardonable'.[114] The main message of both *The Bloody Downfall* and *The Unnaturall Father* was that sin blinded good men from seeing the truth and the benevolence of God.

The authors of these pamphlets described sin as the root of all crime. There were no innocent human impulses; only a constant struggle between good and evil. Sin, as described in *A True report of the horrible Murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes* (1607), was the 'promise of a false delight in the time of doing, but leave a true sorrow behind them, being once done'.[115] The innocent were often entangled in sinful plots or actions by the wicked. The author further stated:

> For, as it is thought, that Adam was more grieved at the sinne of Caine, than for the slaughter of Abel: so, it is like, that such as bewaile the wickednesse of the time, bemone the offender than the offended…A wrongfull suffering is commendable and rewarded, but a wrongfull doing is abominable with God.[116]

Sin had a wide reach and did not just destroy the wicked party. While Adam may have wept for Abel, he did not question the actions of God. He did, however, lament the actions of his son after Cain gave himself over to the sins of wrath and envy.

The story of Cain and Abel appeared several times in various publications throughout the period in discussion and for very good reason. Murder did not just disrupt the social structure of a family or community. Murder was the *first* crime and it was one with repercussions that extended well beyond the immediate social body of the victim or perpetrator. The murder of Abel was particularly

---

[113] *The Unnaturall Father: Or, The Cruell Murther committed by one John Rowse of the Towne of Ewell, ten miles from London, in the Country of Surry, upon two of his owne Children*, (London, 1621), sig. B3r.
[114] Ibid., sig. Cv.
[115] *A True report of the horrible Murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bows, Knight,* sig. A3r-v.
[116] Ibid., sig. A3v.

distressing because it was committed by a brother. The author of *A True report of the horrible Murther* discussed the sin of Cain but he further discussed the sin of murder itself and stated: 'A sinne it is, that makes the end of the world correspondent to the beginning of it; for, the world was of no long standing, before that the earth was defiled with the blood of one brother spilt by the hand of another'.[117] Every murder arrested moral progress and reminded man about his inherently wicked nature.

The motif of Cain and Abel appeared in varied forms. The most common representation was used to shine light on sinful behaviour. In *A View of sundry Examples*, an unnamed man in Worcestershire killed his brother and buried him under the hearth in his home. The author described the man as 'most monsterous and bloody' and the act as 'far passing the committed offence of Cain who slew his Brother Abel'.[118] This murderer had obvious parallels to the biblical brother but unlike Cain, the man attempted to hide his crime in an attempt to avoid punishment. Not only was he a murderer, he was also a coward. A similar description was recorded in *The Examination, confession, and condemnation of Henry Robson, Fisher of Rye*. Henry Robson poisoned his wife while he was in debtor's prison because he believed that he would inherit her money and purchase his freedom. Robson was described as a greedy man and this greed allowed him to fall prey to the devil's urgings. This poisoning was labelled by the author as a 'hainous crime…the like whereof since Cain murthererd the righteous Abel, hath not been heard of'.[119] Robson was guilty of several sins. He had lived in good estimation amongst his neighbours but privately his expensive tastes and lavish spending landed him in debtor's prison.[120] Even while in prison, Robson continued to have thoughts of grandeur and plotted to kill his wife that he might be free when he inherited her money. Robson, like the unnamed

[117] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[118] Munday, *A View of sundry Examples*, sig. Ciiiiv.
[119] L.B., *The Examination, confession, and condemnation of Henry Robson*, sig. A4r.
[120] Ibid., sig. A3v.

man in *A View of sundry Examples*, attempted to conceal his crime. These actions went beyond basic human impulses and were calculated acts of murder and self preservation.

The two murderers above discussed were described as having been worse than Cain because of their malicious and cowardly behaviour. In *The Bloody downfall of Adultry, Murder, Ambition* (1615), felon Richard Weston described himself as Cain as well as other biblical figures in the section labelled 'Master Westons Tears'.[121] Richard Weston was executed along with three other conspirators in 1615 for his supposed part in the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury in the Tower of London. Weston was Overbury's keeper in the Tower and had direct contact with him. In this pamphlet, Weston 'stated' 'With *Caine* I have been a Murderer, and with *Judas* a Betrayer of the Innocent. My body is a Slave to Sathan, and my wretched Soule is devowred up by Hell'.[122] While the previous murderers discussed were labelled as worse than Cain, Weston, or the pamphlet version of Weston, was granted some compassion by the author. Here he confessed both his crime and sins. This character further described himself as 'Arch Traitor' and asked God for mercy.[123] He displayed humility and labelled himself as a murderer and sinner before God and the readers of England.

Divine Revenge

The story of Cain and Abel described the first murder and also introduced the concept of divine revenge to Christianity. Lake stated that the murders featured in these pamphlets were due to 'basic human impulses- lust, greed, revenge'.[124] I find the reference to revenge in particular to be somewhat problematic because only God could seek revenge in the pamphlet version of England.

[121] It must be noted that while this section was written in the first person it is more than likely that it was not actually written by Weston himself. Similar examples of confessions, lamentations or repentance frequently appeared in murder and execution pamphlets but were penned by the authors rather than the felons themselves.
[122] *The Bloody downfall of Adultry, Murder, Ambition,* sig. D4v.
[123] Ibid., sig. D4v.
[124] Lake, 'Deeds against Nature', p.263.

The word 'revenge' only appeared in early modern murder pamphlets in very specific circumstances and had an important divine connection rather than as a catalyst for violent behaviour. Revenge was never cited as a cause of murder though several murders did arise from wrath which may be confused with revenge. In *Three Bloodie Murders*, Francis Cartwright murderer preacher William Storre after Storre publicly spoke against his bad behaviour in the pulpit.[125] While this may appear as a vengeful act, Cartwright was described as 'a young man of unbridled humour'.[126] When he attacked Storre he was described as having 'a stomacke filled with raw humours, [that] corrupted all good nourishment that cometh therein; so this mans minde frought with rancor and malice, wrested all things he heard, into the worst sense'.[127] Anger and irrational thoughts drove Cartwright to murder rather than thoughts of revenge.

A similar story appeared in *The Crying Murther* (1624) where curate Trat was murdered after a legal dispute over the rightful patronage of the curacy with the Smithwicke family.[128] This crime differed from the Storre case as four people conspired against the curate rather than just one murderer. Like the murder described in *Three Bloodie Murders*, this one also appeared on the surface to be caused by a desire for revenge. Mr Trat publicly rebuked his opponents in the pulpit. This deeply insulted both Old and young Smithwicke and they plotted against Trat. Again, this appears to be a simply case of revenge but the subtle language used by the author places the blame solely on the fact that Old Peter Smithwicke could not rationally control his anger:

> Hence sprung the chiefest flame of that malice, which from the small sparks of meane or false suppositions caused such combustions in the household of Mr Smithwicke to the utter ruine of their household, estates, and lines, and to the finall perill of their soules.[129]

---

[125] *Three Bloodie Murders*, sig. A3v.
[126] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[127] Ibid., sig. A4r.
[128] *The Crying Murther: Contayning the cruell and most horrible Butchering of Mr. Trat, Curate of olde Cleave* (London, 1624), sig. B2r.
[129] Ibid., sig. B3r.

The author acknowledged that Trat's rebuking actions did indeed enrage the Smithwicke family. What is more important, however, is the fact that Smithwicke and his conspirators allowed their malice to run rampant and chose 'to imbrue their hands in the blood of the Innocent'.[130] The author specifically described Trat as 'innocent' which makes an argument about revenge impossible. Rather than choose to turn the other cheek, the Smithwicke family pursued the wrong course and became objects of divine and state revenge at the gallows rather than administers.

These two pamphlets described crimes in which clergy were murdered after publicly rebuking and inciting an enemy to action. *Sundry Strange and inhumaine murthers, lately committed* described a murder instigated by a woman after her parents insisted she marry a man she did not love. The young woman was originally intended to marry a young man named Strangwidge but her parents decided 'that it was their pleasures shee should marrye one M. Padge of Plimouth [sic], who was a widdower, and one of the cheefest inhabitants of that towne'.[131] The young woman and Strangwidge plotted against Padge and hired two men to carry out the act. The four were eventually arrested and hanged. This was not a case of revenge as Padge never wronged the young woman. Padge simply wanted to be remarried to a younger woman. He had no prior knowledge that an informal marriage agreement had transpired. The issue raised by this murder had to do with proper domestic and wifely behaviour. The woman's parents made a decision based on the fact that Padge was a wealthy widower who could take care of her and was 'a more sufficient matche to marrye her'.[132] This young woman did not honour her parent's wishes or her marital vows and Strangwidge meddled in private matters in pursuit of his own desires.

When discussing revenge through the story of Cain and Abel, the author of *Sundry Strange and inhumaine Murthers, letely committed* stated 'but leave, as wee ought, the revenge of all wrongs unto

[130] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[131] *Sundry Strange and inhumane Murthers, lately committed*, sig. B2r.
[132] Ibid., sig. B2r.

the Lord, for we may be assured we cannot deale colourablie with God, as Pilate thought to have done when he pronounced sentence against his own conscience'.[133] God rewarded the pious and punished the wicked accordingly. The author further stated that God may 'suffer the murderer to escape for a time, yet doth he follow them with so sharpe revenge, as either they desperately slay themselves, or reape such shame as the worlde may be satisfied, that God hath dealth justly with them'.[134] Revenge was a sword to be wielded by God alone.

Genesis 4:11 states 'The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground' after God discovered Abel's murder. While this passage did not mention revenge by name it was implied that God would never suffer a murderer to go unpunished.[135] This sentiment appeared frequently in murder pamphlets. The author of *The Trueth of the most wicked secret murthering of John Brewen, Goldsmith of London* (1592) stated that blood 'cried most shrill in the eares of the righteous God for vengeance and revenge on the murderer'.[136] Murder was described as 'wide mouthed' and cried incessantly for revenge in *The Bloody downfall of Adultery, Murder, Ambition*.[137] Within these pamphlets revenge was both a deterrent and a divine punishment. These pamphlets did more than just describe crimes and misfortunes; they carried divine warnings about punishment and stressed that the providential discourse of murder and 'revenge [was] always in Godshand [sic]'.[138]

Murder did more than just end a life or upset a community. A murderer usurped God's divine power and robbed Him and the reigning monarch of a subject. Walsham states: 'This is a God who behaves more like a feudal warlord jealously engaged in a personal vendetta than a stern but

[133] Ibid., sig. A2r.
[134] Ibid., sig. Bv.
[135] The only direct mention of revenge in the Book of Genesis involved God directly slaying the wicked: Genesis 34:25, 'God revenged the whoredome of Dinah', and Genesis 38:7, 'God slew Er, the first born of Judah'.
[136] *The Trueth of the most wicked secret murthering of John Brewen, Goldsmith of London* (London, 1592), sig. A2r.
[137] *The Bloody downfall of Adultery, Murder, Ambition*, sig. C2v.
[138] *Two most unnaturall and bloodie Murthers* (London, 1605), p. 4.

benevolent Father and Redeemer'.[139] Unlike the vengeful God presented in Genesis who directly slew the wicked for their transgressions, the God portrayed in murder pamphlets was both a benevolent father and a protective ruler who demanded order and respect within His kingdom. God did not suffer a murderer to go unpunished and would not 'rest until hee grant revenge, not onely for the blood of the slaughtered, but for the soule of the innocent ascending to his shrine'.[140] In *The Cry and revenge of blood, Expressing the Nature and haynousnesse of willfull Murther* (1620), Church of England clergyman and moralist author Thomas Cooper expressed the belief that God acted as both protector and revenger:

> Either [a murderer] thinks that God is unto him, because hee prospers in his sinne, or that hee likes well thereof, because sentence doth not speedily passes to his discovery and conclusion. Doth not the close convayance of sinne, and long concealing thereof provoke him to challenge the Omnipresence of God, as if he were hid in the clouds, and could not see it?[141]

This statement referenced Psalm 50:21-2: 'These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue: therefore thou thoughtest that I was like thee: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thee. Oh consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be one that can deliver you.' Murder pamphlets presented the reader with a world where things were either good or wicked; there was no middle ground. If you were bad you were punished and if you were one of the faithful, ie. a penitent sinner, you were rewarded. God could be both benevolent and a warlord at the same instant as he was omnipotent and knew the true intentions of all men.

Even though a murder may take years to be recognized, God would have his revenge. In early modern England, God revenged murders through the legal system. He exposed murderers and 'ordained a Lawe that the creul and unjust blood-sheader should have his blood justly shed again'.[142]

---

[139] Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*, p.90.
[140] *The Bloody downfall of Adultery, Murder, Ambition*, sig. C3v.
[141] Thomas Cooper, *The Cry and Revenge of Blood, Expressing the Nature and haynousnesse of willfull Murther* (London, 1620), sig. Bv.
[142] Ibid., sig. B.

The 1587 publication *A Short declaration of the end of traytors* stated: 'the law of it selfe is an honourable thing, it hath no desire of revenge, it doth carry an indifferent mind to all sortes in point of Justice, it oppresseth none, it is not angry with any, it coveteth no mans life, goods, nore lands, it is induced only for equities'.[143] The legal system should be blind and seek to administer fair punishments through the guidance of God. Likewise, pamphleteers implored the reader to trust God and leave revenge to Him alone.[144] An execution was not the crown's revenge for murder but was the climax of God's revenge administered through His representation on earth.

Repentance

Thus far, this chapter has discussed divine providence, sin and revenge. Sin began a man's downward spiral and was exposed through providential means. God's revenge ensured that all murderers would suffer for their transgressions. In this light, God did appear as Walsham's 'feudal warlord' but all was not lost for sinners. Through repentance, the final topic to be addressed, a sinner could be reconciled with God before his death. The felon facing execution could not escape earthly punishments but he could save his soul by confessing and asking forgiveness. J.A. Sharpe stated 'when felons stood on the gallows and confessed their guilt not only for the offence for which they suffered death, but for a whole catalogue of wrongdoing, and expressed their true repentance for the same, they were helping to assert legitimacy of the power which had brought them to their sad end'.[145] Sharpe referred to repentance as a means to reaffirm state power but the power that was being reaffirmed was also that of God. It must be noted that within the context of these pamphlets, the felons being discussed

[143] *A short declaration of the ends of Traytors, and also Conspirators against the state, & of the duetie of Subjects to theyr soveraigne Governour* (London, 1587), p.20.
[144] See: *A True Discourse of the Discoverie of the Plot of Monsieur du Terrail, and his Confederates for the Surprising of Geneve* (London, 1609), p.20; Henry Goodcole, *Londons cry ascended to God, and entred into the hearts, and eares of men for Revenge of Bloudshedders, Burglaiers, and Vagabonds* (London, 1619), sig. Bv; *Sundry Strange and inhumaine Murthers*, lately committed sig. A2r-v; *The Crying Murther: Containing the cruel and most horrible Murther of My. Trat, Curate of olde Cleave,* sig. C3r.
[145] Sharpe, 'Last Dying Speeches', p.156.

brought 'the sad end' upon themselves exclusively through sin and their deaths were ordained by God.

Convicted men and women faced the unknown when they stood on the gallows and their repentance may have been genuine rather than simply an overt show of state power, coercion or obedience. Rather than discuss the formulaic nature of repentance in this literary genre, we should discuss why it appeared in these pamphlets instead. What we do know is the fact that the pamphlet versions of these felons repented and did so heartily for the most part. Katherine Rogers discussed the importance of repentance in literature and stated 'confession, repentance and submission to the will of God were hallmarks of a good Christian death, on or off the scaffold. Once it became the sinner who was showcased on the scaffold, it was not his [execution] that authors described, but his prayers'.[146] Literary representations of prayers and repentance restored order to a chaotic world and stabilized society until the next malefactor disrupted it again. While the cyclical nature of these pamphlets may appear to be formulaic, it represented the constant battle between good and evil. Men and women were flawed creatures who succumbed to sin and temptation but through repentance and prayer could move forward on the right path again. Man could only be 'purified with prayers, repentance and amendment of life'.[147]

No one could live a sin-free life and God always forgave those who sought forgiveness. This was true even amongst those who attempted suicide. The example of John Barterham's suicide provides an example of the importance of repentance. As discussed, Barterham killed himself while in jail to avoid execution. While God did issue providential earthly punishments to the wicked, repentance played a decisive role in immortal salvation. Had Barterham been prepared to repent and face both God and the scaffold, his pamphlet would most likely have ended in a positive light; he would have

[146] Katherine Rogers, 'Dead Men Talking: Truths, Texts and the Scaffold in Early Modern England' in Simon Devereaux and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Penal Practices and Culture, 1500-1900: Punishing the English* (London, 2004), p.72.
[147] *The Lives, Apprehensions, Arraignments, and Executions, of the 19. late Pyrates* (London, 1609), sig. B4v.

died but his soul would have been saved. The case of Sir John Fites was similar to that of Barterham but had a very different outcome due to his repentance. Fites, a gentleman, killed two men and like Barterham committed suicide to avoid hanging though with one major difference: he lived long enough to repent his actions by the grace of God. In *The Bloudy booke, or The tragicall and desperate end of Sir John Fites (alias) Fitz* (1605), Fites, a man known for drunkenness and pride, killed a gentleman after a confrontation in a mutual friend's house and then fled to France. Upon his return to England a year later, he continued his wicked ways and killed a second man who tried to apprehend him. He then stabbed the man's praying wife and eventually turned the sword on himself. Fites's actions were linked to the devil and served as a warning to the reader:

> Hereby may all Ruffians and swearing swaggers, if any sparke of Grace remain in them, be warned to staie their hands, and not to shed the bloud of Gods saints, for it is pretious in his sight, otherwise he in his justice will give them over to be tempted of Sathan, to be the Butchers of their own selves, as this man was'.[148]

Fortunately for Fites, he lived long enough to repent. While other 'self-murderers' received hard criticism from pamphleteers, Fites was granted some compassion:

> Thus gastly death having seized upon his corporall body, we will commit his soul (for albeit his sins were great yea are the mercies of Gods infinitely greater) into the hands of the almighty, for charity judgeth the best in whose kingdom there is nothing but peace.[149]

Fites was guilty of the murder of two men and himself but, owing to his repentance, he was permitted a proper burial and was redeemed at the end of the pamphlet despite his violent actions. Repentance appears to have been the key in the Fites case as Barterham, another gentleman, was refused proper burial while Fites received praise for his spirituality regardless of the fact that he killed two and attacked a praying woman.

While it was a key element in this literary genre, direct mention of the term 'repentance' only regularly appeared in pamphlets published after 1610. Prior to 1610, the term 'repentance' appeared

[148] *The Bloudy booke, or The tragicall and desperate end of Sir John Fites (alias) Fitz* (London, 1605), sig. E3v.
[149] Ibid., sig. F2v.

infrequently though the concept was always alluded to in various confessions. In 1591, two pamphlets were published about the murder of Lord Burke by Arnold Cosbye. *The Manner of Death and Execution of Arnold Cosbie* stated that he asked God's forgiveness 'that he might be assured to dwell and live forever among the Angels of God…and steadfastly believed that by faith in Christ Jesus, he should have free remission of all his sinnes which from time to time he had committed'.[150] *The Araignment, Examination, Confession and Judgement of Arnold Cosbye* did not refer to Cosbye's repentance but did describe how he was permitted access to a preacher 'to comfort him Godward, seeing hee was nowe no man of this world'.[151] This representation of Cosbye demonstrated both repentance and humility by acknowledging sin and preparing himself for death.

Likewise, the three gentlemen in *The Lives, Apprehension, Araignment and Execution of Robert Throgmorton, William Porter, John Bishop, Gentlemen* (1608) spent the time prior to their executions in quiet contemplation. The three were highborn gentlemen who squandered their fortunes. They turned to highway robbery to supplement their incomes and killed a man during a confrontation:

> They desired not the company of their friends and former acquaintance to comfort them, answering that in earthly men was no comfort to them, but they must like hatefull sinners seek comfort, by intercession from Heaven: they writ not now to their friends to labour for life (though they were of real possessions) and some of them of eminent place in this kingdom, but prepared themselves for death, acknowledging that in this life is no felicity.[152]

Both murder and highway robbery were hanging offences. The three gentlemen did not abuse their privilege of rank and accepted their fate though friends promised to obtain pardons. Moreover, these men, or their literary counterparts, were so pious and repentant that they appeared in another pamphlet also published in 1608. Throckmorton, Porter and Bishop were featured in *The Araignment and burning of Margaret Ferneseed* due to their godly behaviour. These men were described as

[150] *The Manner of Death and Execution of Arnold Cosbie* (London, 1591), sig. A2r.
[151] *The Araignment, Examination, Confession and Judgement of Arnold Cosbye* (London, 1591), sig. B4r.
[152] *The Lives, Apprehension, Araignment and Execution of Robert Throgmorton, William Porter, John Bishop, Gentlemen* (London, 1608), sig. B2v.

having comforted their fellow felons and helped them to also accept their fate. Margaret Ferneseed supposedly killed her husband and was condemned to death though she pleaded not guilty. While awaiting execution, she met the three Gentlemen:

> These Gentlemen having heard how ill her life past had bene, and that her countenance was as resolute, importuned the keeper that they might have her company, partly to instruct her, but especially [that] she might see them, and by the reformation of their lives she might learne to amend her owne, and as they did, to prepare her selfe fit for death.[153]

While the three gentlemen openly repented their sins and crimes, Ferneseed's repentance did not follow the same pattern. She repented for having received stolen goods and running a brothel, which employed married and unmarried women, but denied the murder of her husband until the end. Ferneseed refused to acknowledge guilt for the crime she was accused of, and may well have been innocent of, though she still repented and professed to be a sinner prior to her death.

Repentance was such an integral part of these pamphlets that the actions of preachers working on God's behalf prior to an execution were described. Salvation, as described by Daniel E Williams, 'required more than simply expressing regret for former transgressions. Repentance was not an act, but a state, and only through self-surrender and self-loathing, in fact through a total change of character, could criminals achieve this' prior to their executions.[154] Even the worst criminal could be forgiven by God but first the felon had to repent. Prison preachers were the last chance of salvation for hardened felons and they were always described as being very diligent and relentless in their quest for repentance. As there was no way to escape from death the only option was to be prepared for its arrival. In *A Bloudy new-yeares gift, or A true declaration of the Most cruell and bloudy murther, of maister Robert Heath* (1609), Rowland Cramphorne murdered Master Heath and refused to repent. He was surrounded by 'good and godly preachers…to cleare his own conscience, and

[153] *The Araignment and burning of Margaret Ferne-seede* (London, 1608), sig. B2r.
[154] Williams, '"Behold a Tragic Scene Strangely Changes into a Theater of Mercy"', p. 833.

deliver the truth'.[155] The preachers continually implored Cramphorne to repent but he was 'loath to heare any further admonishment, which with love and much charity was laboured unto him'.[156] He then threw himself off the ladder rather than 'listen to any further good counsel' and died unrepentant.[157]

The felons described in murder pamphlets were still a part of the community even though their actions thrust them to the peripheries. Preachers laboured diligently in an effort to reunite them with both their fellow Englishmen and God; no-one was exempt from help. Catholic Margaret Vincent murdered her children to prevent them from being raised as Protestants.[158] Even though she initially refused to acknowledge any wrongdoing 'there came certain Godly preachers into her, who prevailed with her by celestiall consolations' to repent.[159] While awaiting her execution, Elizabeth Caldwell shunned all 'saving such as might yeelde her spirituall comforts, as learned Divines, and such, the faithfull servants of God'.[160] She also wrote 'a dozen Letters to severall Preachers as touching her faith, and the want of a sound resolution that God had pardoned her offences'.[161] John Kynnestar stabbed his wife twenty-five times and was reassured by a preacher that 'God will thy soule no doubt receive' if he repented prior to his execution.[162]Likewise, murderer John Lambert was visited by 'the Preacher, and other Godly men…to give hime warning and to prepare him for death' the evening before his execution.[163] Unlike Vincent, Caldwell or Kynnestar, John Lambert did not

[155] *A Bloudy new-yeares gift, Or A true declaration of the most cruell and bloudy murther, of maister Robert Heath, in his owne house at Holnourne* (London, 1609), sig. B4v.
[156] Ibid., sig. B4v.
[157] Ibid., sig. B4v.
[158] *A pittilesse Mother* (London, 1616), sig. A2r.
[159] Ibid, sig. Bv.
[160]Gilbert Dugdale, *A true discourse of the practises of Elizabeth Caldwell* (London, 1604), sig. B2r.
[161] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[162] *A true report or description of an horrible, wofull, and moste lamentable murther done in the citie of Bristowe by one John Kynnestar* (London, 1573), sig. B2r.
[163] *A Brief and True relation of the Murther of Mr. Thomas Scott Preacher of Gods Word and batchelor of Divinitie* (London, 1628), p. 6.

repent prior to his death but that did not reflect badly on the preachers. This man hardened his heart against all goodness and cemented his own damnation.

These descriptions raise the question if these pamphlets were primarily sensational or lacked a godly message then why did the authors frequently include descriptions of nameless preachers? The majority of executed felons described in murder pamphlets died repentant and reconciled with God, who now appeared as the benevolent father rather than vengeful warlord. Death was a destroyer but it was also part of God's order and these pamphlets demonstrated how death could contain comforting messages.[164] *A briefe discourse of the late murther of master George Saunders* ended with a hopeful message and reminded the reader that death was only the beginning of eternity: '[God] rayseth them by their overthrow, amendeth them by their wickednesse, and reviveth them by their death, in such wise blotting out the stayne of their former filthe, that their darknesse is turned into light, and their terrour to their comfort'.[165] God rooted out evil and providentially punished the wicked but always welcomed back wayward souls if they truly repented. In *The Arraignment, execution, confession and judgement of Arnold Cosbye*, Cosbye was visited by a preacher who told him 'God hath promised that no sinne shalle be unpardonable with him, but onely the sinne against the holy Ghost, which hee hath sayed shall never bee forgiven. And therefore trust in the mercies of

[164] Many publications were printed during this period which openly discussed death and dying and included dialogues about good and evil. See *Death's Generall Proclamation* (London, 1575); J.B., *A looking glasses for mortalitie* (London, 1597); Thomas Beard, *The Theatre of Gods Judgements: or A Collection of Histories out of Sacred, Eccelsiacticall, and prophane Authors, concerning the admirable Judgements of God upon the transgressours of his commendements* (London, 1597); Nicholas Byfield, *A defiance to death Wherein, besides sundry heavenly instructions for a godly life, we have strong and notable comforts to uphold us in death* (London, 1610); *idem*, *The cure of the feare of* death (London, 1618);Thomas Dekker, *The wonderfull yeare, Wherein is shewed the picture of London living sicke of the Plague* (London, 1603); Stephen Jerome, *Seaven helps to Heaven* (London, 1614); Abraham Man, *An amulet or preservative against sicknes and death in two parts* (London, 1617); William Perneby, *A direction to death: teaching man the way to die well, that being dead, he may live ever* (London, 1599); Christopher Sutton, *Disce more. Learne to die A religious discourse, mooving every Christian man to enter into a serious remembrance of his end* (London, 1601); Thomas Tuke, *A discourse of death, bodily, ghostly, and eternal nor unfit for souldiers warring, seamen sayling, strangers travelling, women bearing, nor any others living that thinkes of dying* (London, 1612).

[165] Golding, *A briefe discourse of the late murther of master George Saunders*, sig. Ciiv.

God, for in him now onely resteth your comfort'.[166] God punished his creations but he also loved them though this may appear to be contradictory behaviour. He is both Walsham's 'feudal warlord' and benevolent father. The body was punished on earth so that the soul may find eternal comfort and rest in death.

Descriptions of repentance in murder and execution pamphlets may have been embellished by the authors but these descriptions stressed that repentance lifted the burden of guilt and freed the souls of sinners. While not all who died were guilty, their deaths could also be used to educate the living about the importance of repentance. Thus far, this chapter had discussed repentance regarding guilty felons but will now focus on descriptions of repentance regarding innocent parties described in these pamphlets. In Luke 13:4-5, Jesus referred to the people killed when the ancient Tower of Siloam fell and stressed the importance of repentance: 'or those eighteen, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish'. This passage served to remind the reader to live a godly life, to repent of sin and remain close to God rather than to drift away and succumb to temptation. A person had to be constantly on guard against temptation and sin through faith and repentance. A pious life was not an easy one but the rewards in the afterlife outweighed earthly sufferings.

Death was inevitable but a person could find comfort in death by knowing that God would not forsake the truly faithful. Descriptions of miraculous revelations were a key element of this literature but descriptions of death and repentance were just as important. Death affected both the wicked and the godly alike and all would have to face their creator eventually. Ecclesiastes 7:3 states 'A good name is better than a good ointment, and the day of death, than the day that one is borne'. Death, when paired with a repentant soul, freed man from suffering and ended temporal miseries. *A Brief*

[166] *The Arraignment, execution, confession, and judgement of Arnold Cosbye*, sig. B4r.

discourse of the late murther of Master George Saunders ended with a call for both repentance and inward reflection when describing the execution of the murderers George Brown and Mistress Saunders:

> Were they greater sinners than all that looked upon them? No verily: but except their example lead us to repentance, we shall all of us come to as sore punishment in this world, or else to sorer in the world to come out. Their faults came in the open Theatre, and therefore seemed the greater to our eyes, and surely they were great in deed: neither are ours the less, because they lie hidden in the covert of our hearts…He hath showed in some, what al of us deserve, to provoke us also to repentance.[167]

This entry bears a striking resemblance to Luke 13:4-5 and stressed that the audience, either the reader or the crowd present at an execution, were sinners just like the felon being hanged. If anything, the criminals were in a position closer to God because they repented while the sins of the observer remained hidden. Golding continued: 'Let everyone of us look in to himself…and he shall see such a guise of disobedience in himself, as he may well think these is non offender but himself'.[168] God chose to expose and punish the sins of a few in order to enlighten the many. Murder was deemed to be both the first and the worst sin and it makes perfect sense that murderers should be used as examples to encourage repentance amongst the godly and redeemable sinners.

Admonishments about repentance also appeared in *A bloudy new-yeares gift.* Master Heath was murdered in his house by a servant Cramphorne after coming home drunk one night. While he had a penchant for drinking, Heath was not a wicked man. Cramphorne, on the other hand, was 'observed by divers, to be very idle in disposition, loose and giddie headed in affection and behaviour'.[169] This pamphlet followed the same pattern as the George Saunders one and ended with the following statement:

> Hereby may be seen the profits and fruits which may be gathered through the falseness, and undoing of others: the odiousnes of such which through hope of benefit will joyne with others in the practising of anothers hurt, and the fall which manie a one

[167] Golding, *A Brief discourse of the late murther of master George Saunders*, sig. Br.
[168] Ibid., sig. Bv.
[169] *A bloudy new-yeares gift*, sig. Br.

> hath for want of grace, though they have never so manie, nor of good examples given them. Wherefore I pray God of his mercie, to amend in every one, that which is amiss, and give all men grace to eschew the way which will bring a man to his end before his time.[170]

Both Heath and his servant Cramphorne served as examples in this pamphlet. Cramphorne, as the murderer, was the most obvious example of wicked living. Heath died as a result of his indulgence in liquor and a 'want of grace'. Heath appeared to be an innocent victim but in the end he was all too human and succumbed to an inevitable, albeit early, death.

Heath died suddenly from a blow to the head with an iron fork.[171] The pamphlet said nothing about the state of his soul and it would appear that he died unrepentant. A unrepentant death was problematic and this possibility was discussed at length in murder pamphlets. *A true report of the horrible Murther* discussed the murder of a servant Joan Wilson in the house of Sir Jerome Bowe. Wilson was murdered by two men, Edward Wilson and Robert Tetherton as they robbed the house. The men surprised her and struck her on the head with an iron bar:

> …the woman misdoubting no evill (how provided for God, or prepared to death, I know not) was suddenly, and cruelly murthered. It is not [likely] that they gave her either space, or counsell, first to call on God, ere shee died, God not being in their thoughts at that time. Thus came death upon her at unawares, and so doth it upon many, and so it may on any suddenly come, and overtake them, ere they looke or provide for it.[172]

According to the author, the state of Wilson's soul lay in doubt and he speculated whether or not she was spiritually prepared for death. The only way to be fully prepared for a good death was through virtuous living and daily repentance. The author included the warning 'they that dine with the living, may perhaps suppe with the dead'.[173] The author attributed this quote to Leonidas, king of Sparta. The author also mentioned the death of Julius Caesar.[174] Though both of these men existed outside

[170] Ibid., sig. C3r.
[171] Ibid., sig. B2r.
[172] *A true report of the horrible Murther*, sig. B3.
[173] Ibid., sig. B3r.
[174] Ibid., sig. B3r.

the Christian world, they were examples of sudden or violent deaths. Furthermore, they were both powerful rulers and demonstrated that no one, elite or poor, could escape the levelling power of death. As there was no escape from death, the only option was to be prepared for its arrival.

The same sentiment pertaining to the necessity for daily repentance was also present in *Deeds Against Nature, and Monsters by Kinde*. In this pamphlet, a prostitute was strangled in her sleep by her lover, John Arthur. Her violent death became a warning against both sin and lack of repentance: 'where though nature had denyed him strength and limbes, yet by the help of the dievell…he made meanes in her sleep to strangle her, and to take away her life, as it were suddenly and without repentance'.[175] Arthur was not the sole perpetrator of sin in this pamphlet though he was the only murderer. This woman was a prostitute and freely and repeatedly allowed Arthur illicit use of her body. Arthur represented the most dangerous elements of society: he was a beggar and hid his monstrous inclinations under the guise of helpless deformity. The woman too was a dangerous figure. Although she was a victim, she was used by the author to represent a moral lesson rather than as a figure deserving of compassion. Her life was sinful and her unrepentant death resulted from her own doing.

Conclusion

Unfortunately, discussions of authorial intent or reader response is problematic due to the anonymous and formulaic nature of this literature but these pamphlets contain many important insights into early modern religious and social beliefs. Contrary to their subject matter, murder pamphlets were not just about murders or scandals as these stories focussed on the need for a good life, repentance and proper preparations for death. Likewise, this literature discussed complex issues of God's omnipotence, punishment and divine revenge rather than simply presenting a crude version

[175] *Deeds against Nature, and Monsters by Kinde*, sig. A3r.

of providence to the reader. These pamphlets were formulaic but this formulaic nature constantly stressed the need for godly behaviour rather than simply reaffirming state or church authority.

Clearly, these pamphlets do have godly messages about divine providence, sin, revenge and repentance. The authors of this literature used a distinctly Protestant language to discuss the earthly interactions between God and the devil and Englishmen and women and to warn the reader about morally transgressive behaviour. Providence governed Elizabethan and Jacobean England and shaped the way murderers were discovered and punished. This concept co-existed with legal practices and remained an integral investigative tool throughout the early modern period. This was a world where corpses bled and felons freely confessed to both crimes and sins, even ones they were not convicted of. Providence along with God's revenge for sin reminded men and women that they could not escape punishment for their earthly transgressions. Like Cain, God would seek out a murderer and have his revenge so that the victim would be avenged and peace could be restored. The concept of divine revenge may appear at odds with a loving God but He punished the wicked for the benefit of the innocent. A murderer had to die on the gallows to restore both earthly and heavenly order. This death however, did not mean that a murderer was exempt from salvation and the sinner could be reconciled with God through repentance, prayer and contrition. The literary versions of murderers described in murder pamphlets were presented to the readers as examples of fallen but humbled Christians who were both punished and forgiven at the moment of their deaths.

It is true that this cheap print did contain sensationalist subject matter and detailed descriptions of violence but that does not negate the other messages it contained. This literature provided real life examples of sin and downfall, though exaggerated or embellished, and warned the reader against wicked behaviour. The reader was continually urged to repent and trust in God for a peaceful life and afterlife. Cheap print did not always equal base content. Religious doctrine and preaching provided

the moralistic framework the pamphlets revolved around, and while this content was paired with scandalous or vicious murders, godly teachings were an integral part of this literature.

3

She-wolves and Godly Women: Representations of Widows as Scapegoats, Murderers and Victims

Early modern cheap print reflected England's popular tastes, opinions and fears. These publications often depicted real social threats such as crime, disease and death or international political and religious intrigue which could potentially upset England's monarchy. These opinions and tastes revealed sites of both real social anxieties and perceived threats to English patriarchal society. This chapter will discuss one of these perceived threats which appeared in murder pamphlets: the widow. In reality, the widow posed little threat to the greater order of things. The plight of the early modern widow could be particularly grim depending on her social status and the support of her extended family. She was an unprotected woman with little to no social leverage. More often than not, she had children but no means to secure a steady income for her family. Popular representations of the widow as described in late Elizabethan and Jacobean murder pamphlets told a very different story. The widow existed beyond standard patriarchal control as she was independent and served as her own master. While widows committed only a fraction of early modern murders, this character appeared in several roles in these pamphlets. She could be the murderer, the victim or both in cases that involved suicide. The widow also appeared as a sinister character who lurked in the background of these pamphlets and encouraged the actual murderer to commit the bloody deed. This incarnation of the early modern widow waited patiently for the opportunity to destroy her neighbour's happiness often for no reason other than spite. The murders committed by widows tended to be by poison or other covert means and these women used what was close at hand rather than relying on physical strength.

The realities of early modern widowhood appeared in stark relief when compared to popular myths and stereotypes. This chapter will begin with a discussion of contemporary historiography followed by an analysis of real and fictitious representations of widows in early modern England. Religious and popular opinion varied greatly on the need to protect widows but for the most part these women were represented as undesirable figures on the peripheries of society. This section will then discuss the stereotypes, myths and negative representations of Elizabethan and Jacobean widowhood in popular and moralistic literature which contributed to the negative perception of the widow. Following this, I will turn my attention to three categories of widows depicted in murder pamphlets: the scapegoat, the murderous widow and the victim. The first category of widow this chapter will address is the scapegoat. This version of the widow appeared in several murder pamphlets and her behaviour seemingly justified the murderous actions of men. These characters caught the attention of neighbouring men and caused them to spurn their existing domestic harmony. These widows were the objects of lust or greed of men through no fault of their own but became embroiled in the murders nonetheless. Their very presence represented temptation and carnality, at least from the masculine perspective. The next type of widow to be discussed will be the murderous widow who acted violently or spurred others to violent acts. These widows were described in animalistic terms and were perceived to be beyond the control of society. They represented the very worst of widowhood and women in general. The next category of widow to be discussed in this chapter is the victim. The deaths of these women provide a bleak look into the final moments of old women trapped in poverty or abusive familial relationships. Out of the three categories, this one was the most realistic and sympathetic to widows. These were vulnerable women both physically and socially and existed on the peripheries of early modern English society.

This chapter will focus on nine widows who fell into three distinct categories published in texts between 1570 and 1620. Overall, this dissertation looks at the 42 surviving murder pamphlets which

discussed 88 murders. Of these 88 murders, 17 were committed by women while only three were directly committed by widows.[1] The character of the widow was chosen as the subject matter of this chapter for several reasons. The widow existed on the margins of society through no fault of her own due to the death of her husband. She was a victim of circumstances but these uncontrollable circumstances also made her dangerous. While other groups of independent women existed including spinsters and abandoned wives, the widow was also chosen due to her inherent proximity to death and dying.[2] Widowhood 'began with a wrench, a sharp turn in the road of life's journey: The husband had indeed died first'.[3] Another person's death gave the widow a new identity and she existed somewhere between life and death. She had to take part in funeral rituals and often became the executrix of her husband's estate while also being expected to properly participate in public mourning rites well after the initial death. The character of the widow was also chosen due to her supposed social dangers. Other groups of independent and supposedly uncontrollable or dangerous single women were largely absent in this body of murder pamphlets. Bernard Capp acknowledged that independent women 'attracted surprisingly little contemporary comment' even though they formed 'a very substantial group, and their situation created social problems on a considerable scale, especially among the poor'.[4] The widow, on the other hand, was regularly featured in pamphlets and entertainment. Single men of all ages appeared in murder pamphlets but, aside from widows, single women rarely appeared in this body of cheap print which is telling of both the lowly social standing of

[1] It is estimated that women committed between 10 and 30% of murders in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This number varies depending on area of England where the crimes were committed. This number also varied greatly depending if the victim was a relative or not. Women were far more likely to kill a member of their household including relatives and servants than non-familial people. J.A. Sharpe, 'Domestic Homicide in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal* 24(1) (1981), p. 37.

[2] For independent women see: Amy M. Froide, 'Martial Status as a Category of Different: Singlewomen and Widows in Early Modern England' in Judith M. Bennet and Amy M. Froide (eds.), *Singlewomen in the European Past, 1250-1800* (Philadelphia, 1998), pp. 236-269; Eleanor Hubbard, *City Women: Money, Sex, and the Social order* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 253-272.

[3] Joel T. Rosenthal, 'Fiftenth-Century Widows and Widowhood: Bereavement, Reintegration, and Life Choices', in Sue Sheridan Walker (ed.), *Wife and Widow in Medieval England* (Ann Abor, 1993), p. 33.

[4] Bernard Capp, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbourhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), p. 38.

these women and the actually danger they posed to society.[5] I have chosen to discuss 50 years of pamphlets because this sample demonstrates that popular attitudes towards widows did not change during this period despite petitions for kindness and love found in published works and conduct literature penned by preachers and clergymen. Even though widows participated in far fewer murders than married or single men and women, they were still perceived as a great social threat. When men murdered, they did so on account of succumbing to sin and temptation. When a widow murdered, she too was a sinner but her downfall came about because she existed outside of her proper domestic sphere. While the widow character frequently appeared in witchcraft and infanticide pamphlets, this particular literature will not be discussed due to its very specific motivations and crimes.[6] Both witchcraft and infanticide pamphlets involved supposed premeditation

[5] Single women infrequently appeared though they were typically maids. They were depicted as the victims of violence such as the unnamed maid in Anthony Munday, *A View of sundry examples* (London, 1580) and Joan Wilson in *A True report of the horrible Murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes, Knight, on the 20. day of February, Anno Dom. 1606* (London, 1607). The only example of a single woman acting alone in a murderous role was Elizabeth Abbot in *The apprehension, Arriagnment, and execution of Elizabeth Abbott, alias Celbrooke, for a cruell and horrible murther, committed on the body of Mistris Killingworth in S. Creechurch Parish neere Aldgate in London* (London, 1608).

[6] For discussion on early modern witchcraft see: Robin Briggs, *Witches and neighbours: The social and cultural context of European witchcraft* (London, 1996); Frances E. Dolan, *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century* England (Philadelphia, 2013); Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The idea of witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Oxford, 1997); Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1994); Kathleen R. Sands, 'Word and Sign in Elizabethan Conflicts with the Devil', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British* Studies 31(2) (1999), pp. 238-56; J.A. Sharpe, *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in England 1550-1750* (London, 1976); Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England* (London, 1971); Mary Wiesner-Hanks (ed.) *Witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Boston, 2006); Sarah F. Williams, *Damnable Practices: Witches, Dangerous Women, and Music in Seventeenth-Century English Broadside Ballads* (Surrey, 2015). For discussion of infanticide see: Laura Gowing, 'Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past & Present* 156 (1997), pp. 87-115; Martin Ingram, 'Infanticide in Late Medieval and Early Modern England' in Laurence Brockliss and Heather Montgomery (eds), *Childhood and Violence in the Western Tradition* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 67-74. Randal Martin, *Women, Murder and Equality in Early Modern England* (London, 2008), pp. 155-201; Linda A. Pollock, 'Embarking on a Rough Passage: The Experience of Pregnancy in Early Modern Society' in Valerie Fildes (ed.), *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England: Essays in Memory of Dorothy McLauren* (London, 1990), pp. 39-67; J.A. Sharpe, 'Women and Violence in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century England: Evidence from the Cheshire Courts of Great Sessions' in Richard Hillman and Pauline Ruberry-Blanc (eds), *Female Transgression in Early Modern Britain: Literacy and Historical Exploration* (Farnham, 2014), pp. 127-140; Garthine Walker, *Crime, Gender and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003); i*dem*, 'Just Stories: Telling Tales of Infant Death in Early Modern England' in Margaret Mikesell and Adele Seeff (eds), *Culture and Change: Attending to Early Modern Women* (Newark, 2003), pp. 98-115; Keith Wrightson, 'Infanticide in Earlier Seventeenth-Century England', *Local Population Studies*, 15 (1975), pp. 10-22.

and suspicion before the crimes occurred. The key difference between murder and witchcraft was that while witches could murder someone, 'their sinne [was] in dealing with devils' rather than explicitly for interpersonal violence.[7] Murder pamphlets, on the other hand, included men and women from all walks of life interacting and sometimes conspiring together to commit murder.

Scholars have engaged with early modern widows in a variety of social topics ranging from wills and material culture to theatrical characters and displays, all of which have greatly contributed to the understanding of the negative depictions found in murder pamphlets.[8] Garthine Walker noted that while a woman may appear in a pamphlet, the literary representation presented to the reader 'might be based upon actual incidents, but in the translation from event to narrative, the genre demand[ed] that character, motive and detail [were] subject to purposeful remoulding'.[9] Walker was not alone in her analysis of women and widows in early modern England and additional scholastic work exists that focuses on the representations and roles embodied by these women. Ralph Houlbrooke analysed the

[7] George Gifford, *A dialogue concerning witches and witchcrafts* (London, 1593), sig. D2v. For pamphlets about witches and witchcraft see: *A Detection of damnable driftes, practised by three Witches arraigned at Chelmsforde in Essex, at the laste Assizes there holden, which were executed in April, 1579* (London, 1579); *The Apprehension and confession of three Witches* (London, 1589); *A True Discourse Declaring the damnable life and death of one Stubbe Peeter, a most wicked Sorcerer* (London, 1590); *The Most Wicked worke of a wretched Witch, (the like whereof none can record these manie yeeres in England)* (London, 1592); *The most wonderfull and true storie of a certain witch named Alse Gooderige of Stapen hill, who was arraigned and convicted at Darbie at the Assizes* (London, 1597); *A Strange report of sixe notorious witches who by their divelish practises murdered about the number of foure hundred small children* (London, 1601); *The life and death of Lewis Gaufredy a priest of the Church of Accoules in Marceilles in France, (who after hee had given hime selfe soule and bodie to the Devill) committed many more abhomindble sorceries* (London, 1612); *The wonderful discoverie of the witchcrafts of Margaret and Philip Flower, daughters of Joan Flower neere Bever Castle: executed at Lincolne, March 11. 1618* (London, 1619).

[8] For more about early modern English widows see: Vivien Brodsky, 'Widows in Late Elizabethan England: Remarriage, economic Opportunities and Family Orientation' in Lloyd Bonfield, Richard Smith, Keith Wrightson and Peter Laslett (eds), *The World We Have Gained: Histories of Population and Social Structure* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 122-154; Christine Churches, 'Women and Property in Early Modern England: A Case Study', *Social History,* 23(2) (1998), pp. 165-80; Vivian Bruce Conger, *The Widow's Might: Widowhood and Gender in Early British America* (New York, 2009); Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (New York, 1993); Sara French, 'A Widow Building in Elizabethan England' in Allison Levy (ed.), *Widowhood and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 161-76; Jennifer Panek, *Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedies* (Cambridge, 2004); Tim Stretton, 'Widows and the Law in Tudor and Stuart England' in Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1999), pp. 193-208.

[9] Walker, 'Demons in female form', p.134.

domestic sphere at length and discussed the various roles played by women regarding marriage, familial life and death.[10] David Cressy, Clare Gittings and Sarah Tarlow have also contributed to research pertaining to familial rites and rituals about death in early modern England.[11] J. S. W. Helt discussed the role that widows played in burial and remembrance rites.[12] He argued that widows played a vital role in helping the dying attain a good death, preparing the corpse for burial as well as encouraging remembrance despite the fact that society continued to marginalize them. The dying process fragmented a wife's identity and turned her into a widow while it also 'provided her with a certain power to shape and control the social aspect of the dying process and, through it, the creation of memory'.[13] The widow herself was a powerful *memento mori* as her social status and identity were inseparable from death.

Lucinda M. Becker and Barbara J. Todd have both directly discussed the social roles performed by widows and the social expectations enforced upon them in early modern England as well as the ways these roles fit into the existing patriarchal structure.[14] Becker highlighted the seemingly contradictory nature of widowhood as established and reaffirmed by masculine writings, scholarship and deathbed involvement. A woman was free from a husband but became figure of repression and exclusion due to his death. Ideally, widowhood should have been 'a time of maximum female autonomy' but society's patriarchal structure did not allow for this.[15] Bernard Capp highlighted differing social attitudes towards widows based on age. Capp noted that old widows were often seen as a financial

[10] Ralph Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion and the Family in England, 1480-1750* (Oxford, 1998); *idem*, 'Civility and Civil Observances in the Early Modern English Funeral' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 67-86.
[11] David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death: Rituals, Religion, and the Life Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1999); Clare Gittings, *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England* (London, 2001); Sarah Tarlow, *Ritual, Belief and the Dead in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2011).
[12] J.S.W. Helt, 'Memento Mori: Death, Widowhood and Remembering in Early Modern England' in Allison Levy (ed.), *Widowhood and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 39-54.
[13] Ibid., p.45.
[14] Lucinda M. Becker, *Death and the Early Modern English Woman* (Aldershot, 2003); Barbara J. Todd, 'The Virtuous Widow in Protestant England' in Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1999), pp. 66-83.
[15] Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550-1720* (Oxford, 1998), p. 180.

burden but 'younger widows were more problematic to place with the patriarchal order' and 'many saw [a young widow] as a corrupting influence on married women and maids'.[16]Merry Wiesner-Hanks noted that the perceived corrupting influence stemmed from the fact that the widow was both 'economically independent…and sexually experienced' and both factors were dangerous to the patriarchal order of things.[17] Todd, along with Elizabeth Foyster, examined and discussed English myths and lies associated with the supposed insatiable sexual appetites of widows and related dangers they posed to men.[18] Charles Carlton discussed negative and aggressive representations of early modern widowhood while Ira Clark and Jennifer Panek further analysed these myths and lies by discussing the various incarnations of the widow to appear in English theatrical comedies, though the young and merry widow was the most popular character.[19] Panek suggested that 'this insulting stereotype' acted 'as a kind of ideological substitute for the official male control from which she had slipped free'.[20] While a widow may have been 'free', she was at the mercy of negative stereotypes, literary representations and social attitudes.

This scholarly work has been extremely important to the study of the early modern English widow by establishing how widows were perceived within popular culture, the law, their families and other women. The historiography just discussed addresses the reality of different everyday activities of widows and, when read in combination with murder pamphlets, reveals a greater depth and wide reaching social dialogue about these women. This chapter seeks to contribute to the existing

[16] Capp, *When Gossips Meet,* p. 38.
[17] Merry Weisner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 75.
[18] Barbara J. Todd, 'The remarrying widow: a stereotype reconsidered' in Mary Prior (ed), *Women in English Society, 1500-1800* (London, 1985), pp. 25-52; Elizabeth Foyster, 'Marrying the experienced widow in early modern England: the male perspective' in Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1999), pp. 108-124.
[19] Charles Carlton, 'A Widow's Tale: Male myths and female reality in sixteenth and seventeenth century England', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 10(2) (1978), pp. 118-29; Ira Clark, 'The Widow Hunt on the Tudor-Stuart Stage', *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 41(2) (2001), pp. 399-416; *idem*, *Comedy, Youth, Manhood in early Modern England* (Newark, 2003), pp. 86-102; Jennifer Panek, *Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy* (Cambridge, 2004).
[20] Panek, *Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 7.

conversation through an analysis pertaining to representations of widows in late Tudor and early Stuart murder pamphlets as established by contemporary moralistic literature stereotypes and popular entertainment. While these pamphlets may have been sensational, they provide information that might otherwise have been lost as widows often vanished from city or church records and their actions seemed of little consequence after their husbands died. The behaviour of widows described in murder pamphlets reaffirmed religious, social and sexual stereotypes of this unfortunate class of women and a study of this literature will contribute to this existing body of knowledge.

Representations of the Early Modern English Widow

During the early modern era, the position of women was not meant to be one of hardship or oppression though it did involve gender specific roles and behaviours. In Genesis 2:22-3, God made Adam and then made Eve from his rib to be a companion: 'And the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her to the man. Then the man said, This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man'. The first woman was the same flesh and bone as man but she was created second. Women's subjectivity was an important element in the creation and the preservation of mankind. At the centre of Christian doctrine lies an important hierarchical structure with God ruling over all. Man, specifically the head of the household, was subjected to God and women, children and lesser men were subjected to him in various roles as monarch, husband, father or master of servants and apprentices. In turn, children and servants were also obliged to acknowledge their mother or mistress as a figure of authority. This voluntary subjectivity was seen as a duty in order to prevent personal ambition from clouding one's true recognition of God's might.[21] The Bible contained passages which specifically discussed the importance of the subjectivity of women during marriage.

[21] William Gouge, *Of domesticall duties in eight treatises* (London, 1622), pp. 24, 26-7.

Ephesians 5:2 stated 'submit yourselves unto your owne husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and he is the Saviour of the body'. The woman must listen to her husband. The onus for a happy marriage, however, did not just rely on the domestic subjectivity as a husband's matrimonial life and compassion were also necessary. Corinthians 7:3 stated: 'Let the Husband give unto the Wife due benevolence: here is a commandement to yield this duety: that which is commanded, is lawfull, and not to do it, is a breach of the commandement'. Like God, the head of the family must be a benevolent ruler and love those under his dominion. This responsibility for a happy marriage and household depended on the husband's compassion and authority, the wife's cooperation and respect, and a mutual abstention from sin.

These passages shed light on early modern marriage and domestic life. As discussed above, and in Chapter Four in greater detail, a wife must perform specific duties that demonstrated both her love and subjectivity to her husband. When her husband died, a woman no longer had a 'head' and essentially became her own master for the first time in her life. Married women stood a good chance of being widowed and a lesser chance of being remarried. Amy Louise Erickson noted that 'up to 45 percent of all women could expect to be widowed sometime in their lives' in early modern England.[22] Erickson also acknowledged that remarriages accounted for roughly a quarter of marriages in early modern England.[23] According to J.A. Sharpe, the average age from a sample of twelve English parishes for a man's first marriage between 1600 and 1649 was twenty-eight and twenty-six for a woman.[24] The average duration of a first marriage during this period was estimated to be between seventeen and twenty years.[25] According to these figures, a woman would roughly be between 53 and 56 years old if she outlived her husband. By this age, her father would most likely be dead and she was no

[22] Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London, 1993), p. 154.
[23] Ibid., p. 198-9.
[24] J.A. Sharpe, *Early Modern England: A Social History 1500-1760* (London, 1997), p. 39
[25] Ibid., p.41.

longer under the dominion of a male figurehead. This led to numerous, and often unfounded, anxieties about these masterless women which manifested themselves in various social outlets including theatre, ballads and murder pamphlets.

Though she no longer answered to a husband, she did answer to God. A woman had one of two choices if she wanted to be pious: to remarry or live in a state of perpetual widowhood either with her adult children or on her own.[26] Both choices came with strings attached. A woman either had to give up her freedom or live a single life but one filled with financial uncertainty unless her husband left her an inheritance. The wife, once described by Adam as 'flesh of my flesh' and the body of the family, now became an ominous outsider capable of wicked or carnal behaviour. The first option available to widows was to marry for the second or in some cases the third or fourth time. This option had several social motives behind it. First and foremost, it protected society against fornication, sin and bastardy. Socially, remarriage protected morality, and returned men and women to their proper domestic roles after death disrupted their daily lives. Furthermore, remarriage could also have a medicinal function as a woman could suffer from ailments such as 'greensickness' and 'frenzy of the womb' if she did not have regular sex.[27] Marriage was the only way to morally treat such conditions. As only God had control over death, men and women were not made to suffer alone when their partners died. William Gouge, a popular Puritan preacher and moralist writer in London, discussed remarriage at length and wrote:

> But as the vertue of a deceased person may not be buried with the dead corps: so neither may the person be kept above ground with the memorie of his or her vertue: which after a sort is done, when love of the partie deceased either taketh away, or extenuateth the love of the living. This is to give dominion to the dead over the living: which is more than the law enjoyneth.[28]

[26] Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), p. 241.
[27] Elizabeth Foyster, '*Marrying* the Experienced Widow in Early Modern England: The Male Perspective' in Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern England (*New York, 1999), p. 111.
[28] Gouge, *Of domesticall duties eight treatises*, p. 227.

Henry Smith, the 'silver-tongued' preacher of St Clement Danes, Westminster shared Gouge's sentiments and noted Ecclesiastes 4:10 which stated 'Woe to him which is alone, that is he which is alone shall have woe'.[29] God gave mankind the sacrament of marriage to protect against immorality but also for companionship and a means of easing an individual's domestic and spiritual burden.

The other option available to widows was to remain in a perpetual state of widowhood and to refrain from overt public displays of reverie. This option, however, appears to have been available to very pious widows over the age of 60 only according to 1 Timothy 5:9-10: 'Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, that hath been the wife of one husband, And well reported of for good works'. According to Scripture, the only way to truly please God was through the state of perpetual widowhood. When discussing widows in medieval England, James A. Brundage noted that 'early Christians held strong reservations about the morality of remarriage' and some considered 'that remarriage was as grave a moral delinquency as fornication, adultery, or murder'.[30] Under these circumstances, a widow was to openly shun earthly delights and concentrate on pious activities such as daily prayer and devotion. Of course, a widow was supposed to honour the memory of her dead husband but not to dwell on him in order to avoid, as Gouge stated, giving 'dominion to the dead over the living'.[31] 1 Timothy 5:3-6 stated: 'Honour widows that are widows indeed. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth'. This devout and suffering widow, or the 'widow indeed', should spend her time in contemplation and prayer and live as a nun

[29] Henry Smith, *A preparative to marriage The summe whereof was spoken at a contract and inlarged after* (London, 1591), pp.24-5. Smith was the preacher at St Clement Danes, an Anglican church in the city of Westminster during the letter years of the sixteenth century. His works were well received and Lord Burghley was his patron while Thomas Nashe applauded his work. He was so popular that by '1610 Smith's printed sermons had gone through eighty-five or more editions and his fame as a powerful preacher survived him for several decades'. Ronald B. Jenkins, *Henry Smith: England's Silver-Tongued Preacher* (Macon, Georgia, 1983), p. 59.

[30] James A. Brundage, 'Widows and Remarriage: Moral Conflicts and Their Resolution in Classical Canon Law' in Sue Sheridan Walker (ed.), *Wife and Widow in Medieval England* (Ann Abor, 1993), p. 18.

[31] Smith, *A preparative to marriage*, p. 227.

in a cloister. According Romans 8:6, 'to be carnally minded is death: but to be spiritually minded, is life and peace'. The Bible also contained several supplications to protect the widow along with other socially peripheral figures: the fatherless, the poor and the stranger.[32] This version of the widow depicted a woman who was innocent, weak and in need of masculine protection.[33] The figure of the 'widow indeed' was a constant reminder of the inevitability of death but also of the rewards for morality and devotion.[34] God necessitated the need for mankind to protect the pious widow and the fatherless orphan who were left in a state of helplessness through no fault of their own.

If this social and religious dialogue constantly stressed the need to protect and honour the widow, why and how did this figure become the sexual, wicked or spiteful peripheral figure who often appeared in literature from this period? While only two options existed for the widow, both were the means to the same end. As stated above, remarriage was openly encouraged by ministers and writers as a means to both fulfil man's marital obligation and to combat carnal urges. Although Gouge and Smith spoke highly of remarriage for social and moral purposes, The Bible contained seemingly contradictory information. Leviticus 21:14 placed the widow in the same company as a divorced or carnally minded woman when discussing remarriage: 'A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife'. Likewise, Ezekiel 44:22 opposed marrying a widow in favour of a virgin: 'Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before'. 1 Timothy 5:11 stated that young widows only remarried

[32] Deuteronomy 27:19: 'Cursed be he that perverteth the judgement on the stranger, the fatherless, and widow'; Jeremiah 22:3: 'Thus saith the Lord; Execute ye judgement and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, not the widow, neither innocent blood in this place.'; Zechariah 7:10: 'And oppress not the widow, the fatherless, the stranger, the poor, and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart'; Psalms 146:9: 'The Lord preserved the stranger; he relieved the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turned upside down.'; Proverbs 15:25: 'The Lord will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.'

[33] Tim Stretton, 'Widows and the Law in Tudor and Stuart England' in Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1999), p. 197.

[34] Gervase Babington, *A profitable exposition of the Lords prayer* (London, 1588), p.369.

after 'they have begun to wax wanton against Christ'. Women who could not control their sexual desires remarried 'because they have cast off their first faith. And withal they learn *to be* idle'.[35] The option of remarriage was available to all widows but came with contradictory messages. If a widow remarried then any sexual activity she engaged in was technically morally correct as it occurred within the confines of marriage. According to 1 Timothy 5:11, however, a widow only entered into a second marriage because she was carnally minded rather than out of respect for morality or her dead husband. A woman may have remarried for several reasons aside from sex such as financial obligations, to protect her fatherless children or simply for love.

In 'Gender and the Language of Insult in Early Modern London', Laura Gowing, when discussing inconsistent and contradictory attitudes towards women, noted that 'restrictions on [women's] speech, behaviour, and movement…were picked up and used, but twisted towards other ends than the original intention. To make any kind of use of contemporary ideas about household, defamers had to ignore the huge gulf between literature and experience'.[36] These inconsistent attitudes and modes of gendered control meant that women, especially widows, held extremely tenuous positions both privately and publicly. The reality of the widow's social position bore little resemblance to either the religious construction of the 'widow indeed' or the popular stereotype of the lustful widow depicted on the stage.[37] Though rich in the spiritual sense, the 'widow indeed' was at a distinct disadvantage as she did not have a husband to protect her and her children. The death of her husband also meant the end of financial security. The majority of widows were left destitute after their husbands died. While some remarried and others were left a comfortable inheritance, the average inheritance of widows during the period in discussion was £33 after the payment of debts

[35] 1 Timothy 5:11-12.
[36] Laura Gowing, 'Gender and the Language of Insult in Early Modern London', *History Workshop* 35 (1993), p.10.
[37] Charles Carlton, 'The Widow's Tale: Male myths and female reality in sixteenth and seventeenth century England', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 10(2) (1978), p. 119.

according to Amy Louise Erickson's study of widows and inheritance.[38] Widows often remained poor in their widowhood and frequently lived with other destitute women in poverty or depended on the charity of their children and family members.[39] The widow was left without a 'head' when her husband died. She was still a mother but her partner and companion was gone along with the accompanying attributes of honesty, morality and integrity associated with a godly wife.[40]

The public interest in the widow was no doubt derived from the fact that she was a social abnormality; she existed without a master or partner when both were deemed necessary by Scripture and society. It is this point that draws a striking contrast between the godly view and the unfortunate reality of the widow as a peripheral figure. The widow was in a rare position of power even though she was not meant to rule according to Christian hierarchy. This juxtaposition lent itself nicely to the plots of pamphlets and plays which depended on inversion and disorder to fuel both comedy and drama. Ira Clark has discussed public perception and popular opinion of widows as depicted by playwrights. Widows were portrayed as the objects of lust of young gentlemen rather than grieving women in precarious financial situations. Clark stated that the 'lack of attention to widows as people cannot be surprising in an era that regarded women primarily in relation to fathers, husbands, or male guardians'.[41] While ministers may have preached love and compassion for these unfortunate women from the pulpit, pamphleteers, poets and playwrights seized this figure and turned the widow into site of comic relief, social commentary and patriarchal anxiety. This commentary remained

[38] Erikson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England*, p. 222. Erikson discussed the difference of inheritance between 'ordinary' people and members of the aristocracy. 'Ordinary' husbands and wives tended to share workloads during life. These men more often than not named their wives as the executrixes of their wills and did not put limitations or restrictions on the inheritance.

[39] Olwen Hufton originally coined the term 'spinster clustering' to describe poor widows or women living together in the eighteenth century. While this is outside the scope of this essay, the term still lends itself nicely to the phenomenon despite the century. Olwen Hufton 'Women without men: widows and spinsters in Britain and France, in the eighteenth century', *Journal of Family History* 10 (4) (1984), p. 361

[40] Martin Ingram, ''Scolding women cucked or washed': a crisis in gender relations in Early Modern England' in Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (eds), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), p. 49.

[41] Ira Clark, 'The Widow Hunt on the Tudor-Stuart Stage', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 41(2) (2001), p. 400.

constant throughout the period encompassed in this chapter and turned the widow into a stock character who was either violent, sexually uncontrollable or a rich prize for a young and ambitious man. Oxfordshire poet William Basse, in *A Help to discourse; Or, a miscellany of merriment Consisting of witte, philosophical and astronomical questions and answers* (1619) mocked the widow and stated: 'Q. What was the young mans answer wherefore he would not marry a widowe? A. Because according to the old saying, He would not drinke in the water that another had dyed by tasting of.'[42] This quip likened a widow to poison rather than the wife and domestic partner she actually was.

One interesting element of this less-than-flattering portrayal of widows employed by authors and playwrights was that while these men mocked the hapless widows and praised the wealthy ones, they also sought to uphold social norms. The widows featured in Elizabethan and Jacobean comedies and tragedies by William Shakespeare, Lording Barry, Thomas Middleton and John Webster either remarried or received their just and godly punishments for wicked behaviour. The widows featured in comedies initially fought against the romantic advancements of suitors but married in the end. The majority of real widows did not remarry but these plays promoted a world where once independent women willingly returned to their proper roles as submissive wives. The only exception of Shakespeare's widows to remarry was the character of Mistress Quickly who appeared in *Henry IV* parts 1 and 2 and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The importance of her widowhood lay in the fact that she was an innkeeper and this role blurred gender lines. She interacted with men on a masculine level by telling bawdy jokes while also serving as a go-between for lovers. The widows of theatrical tragedies, on the other hand, brought about their own demise due to their unnatural or independent behaviour such as in Webster's *The Duchesse of Malfi*. The widowed Duchesse secretly married Antonio, a steward, rather than the noble match her brother Ferdinand supported. This match infuriated Ferdinand who then plotted her and her new family's murders. The main reflection at the

[42] William Basse, *A help to discourse. Or, A miscellany of merriment Consisting of witt, philosophical and astronomicall questions and answers* (London, 1619), p. 99.

heart of late Tudor and early Stuart drama was order and observance of proper gendered behaviour which included marriage and submission.

The Scapegoat

The widows of murder pamphlets received the same stereotypical treatment as their popular theatrical counterparts and were a part of this ongoing dialogue of identification and control. Clark noted that the stage widows were seldom allotted names by playwrights.[43] Like her stage counterparts, the widow in *Sundry Strange and Inhumane Murders* (1591) was nameless though this did not lessen her capacity to drive the plot of the pamphlet even though she was a passive character and indirectly related to the murder. The drama of the pamphlet stemmed from the widow and her refusal to marry a widower named Lincoln based on the fact he had four dependent children. This nameless woman bore a striking resemblance to the stock character of the widow of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays and embodied the key characteristics of the desirable widow. According to Clark, a desirable widow was wealthy and independent. She was both a luxury due to her wealth and a trophy due to the ordeal suffered to win her hand.[44] The widow in *Sundry Strange and Inhumane Murders* possessed both these qualities. The drama of this pamphlet deviated from the theatrical 'widow hunt' due to the fact that Lincoln decided to kill his 'great charge of children' rather than becoming embroiled in a series of adventures and mishaps.[45]

Lincoln plotted with a day labourer to murder three of his four children in a bid to make his familial position more appealing. The author stated: 'This man being about fiftie yeeres of age was a widower, and therefore became a sutor to a widow not farre from thence, who beeing of some reasonable

[43] When the widows were named, their names represented their trophy status rather than their individuality such as Lady Goldenfleece in Thomas Middleton's *No Wit No Help Like a Woman's* (London, 1611), Lady Bright in Nathanial Field's *Amends for Ladies* (London, 1618) and Lady Alworth in Philip Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (London, 1633). Clark, 'The Widow Hunt on the Tudor Stage', p. 403.
[44] Ibid., p. 402.
[45] *Sundry, Strange and Inhumane Murders, lately committed* (London, 1591), sig. A3r.

wealth, refused to marrie with him, in respect of his great charge of children'.[46] Unlike her theatrical counterparts, this widow did not succumb to her suitor's advances and settle down and this decision proved to be the inspiration for the murder of three children. Lincoln and the widow were suited to one another due to the deaths of their respective spouses and age but she chose to buck the traditional maternal role and openly avoided marriage and children in favour of an independent life. She was portrayed as existing well outside the normal patriarchal rules. The author described her as a financially independent woman who did not need to align herself with another husband during her widowhood, especially one with a 'great charge of children'.[47] By refusing her suitor's advances, this widow disrupted the perceived proper social order. This widow represented everything that marriage should have combated. She existed without a master or husband and her money granted her the rare privilege to refuse men. After this unnatural rejection, 'the devil entered so farre into [Lincoln's] minde that he cast many ways in his thought how to make [his children] awaie, and returning home sate down in a great heavinesse by the fire side'.[48] Lincoln then plotted with the labourer to murder his children, which eventually led to their deaths and the two men's executions.

The author did not include any information about the widow aside from her rejection and the fact that she was independently wealthy. Even though this woman had only a slight connection to Lincoln she was still identified as the instigator of his murderous plot and her refusal was the catalyst for the downfall of two men. The opening paragraph of this pamphlet stated: 'In murder the consenter is as evill as the deed doer. So Pilats conference made him guiltie of Christe's Death, for which the wrath of God still followed him: for after that time Pilate in executing his office did nothing but that which was injustice'.[49] Lincoln paid the labourer to kill his children but was equally guilty of their deaths. Likewise, the widow did not act openly in the murders but she did commit an injustice against social

[46] Ibid., sig. A3.r
[47] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[48] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[49] Ibid., sig. A2r-v.

norms by refusing to marry a man who was her equal in both age and social status. The only apparent reason for Lincoln wanting to marry the widow was due to her wealth, no doubt to ease the domestic burdens that arose from having four children. While her motives for rejecting his advances were labelled as the catalyst for murder, his motives for wanting to marry her were never raised. Her virtues were never discussed and the author never mentioned any previous romantic connection between the pair. She was simply portrayed as a commodity that Lincoln believed would relieve him of his suffering. While pining for the widow after her refusal, the labourer asked Lincoln: 'how comes it that you marrie not some honest woman to comfort you?'[50] He replied that no woman, widow or otherwise, would marry him due to his children. It would appear that, while the widow was the deciding factor that that convinced the man to murder his children, women in general were to blame for his misery. True to the 'widow hunt', Lincoln only wanted the widow because she was rich. Had she been poor, he would most likely have pursued another woman.

The widower's response that no woman would marry him highlighted an interesting gender inversion that was present in this case but none of the others to be discussed in this chapter. Older widowers were far more likely than widows to remarry. *Sundry, Strange and Inhumane Murders, lately committed* presented the reader with a situation in which a widower was in a position of desolation more likely to be experienced by an aging woman. The natural order of society was disrupted when Lincoln, the labourer and the widow did not fulfil their proper social or parental roles and created a world turned upside down. Lincoln succumbed to his 'unnaturall' thoughts after the widow thwarted his matrimonial intentions and the labourer abandoned 'God and all godlynes' for forty shillings and a cow.[51] This pamphlet presented a distorted version of reality to the reader; it was a mix of truths, scriptural arguments and social anxieties about gender and behaviour. The underlining message, however, was about the acceptance of the power of God and the state.

[50] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[51] Ibid., sig. A3r.

Problems arose when people like Lincoln attempted to rid themselves of responsibility and pursue their own course. Likewise, the figure of the widow demonstrated the problems and anxieties associated with female independence.

This peripheral but respectable character of the widow also appeared in *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Lincolneshire* (1604). The widow in this pamphlet was indirectly responsible for the revelation of a murder rather than the cause of crime as described in *Sundry, Strange and Inhumane Murders*. This woman too was nameless and she was only referred to as 'Newton's wife' and later as 'Newton's widow'. Like the widow in *Sundry, Strange and Inhumane Murders*, she only appeared in the background and was not granted a direct voice by the author. While this woman appeared as both a wife and widow, her widowhood was the specific catalyst for Cash's detection and downfall. After years of marriage, murderer Thomas Cash became embroiled in multiple extramarital affairs which helped to kindle a 'secret dislike…of his wife, and a great desire to be rid of her'.[52] The author described his wife, Ellen Green, as a good but long-suffering woman whose 'malady sprung from his disloyalty and unkindenesse' as Cash carried out adulterous relationships with both his servant Anne Pottes and his neighbour Newton's wife.[53] Again, the reader was presented with a murder that sprang from disorder. As a husband and head of the household, Cash 'should and ought to have been [his wife's] chiefest comfort in the time of her sickness'.[54] Instead, he introduced adultery into the house of a respectable woman. Ellen Green fulfilled her marital duties through her godly living and good example though this went unnoticed by her husband. Gouge, when discussing the proper role of a wife stated: 'The good wife which is set forth by the holy Ghost for a patterne and example unto others to follow, together with her husband, are

[52] *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Lincolnshire, by two Husbands upon their Wives* (London, 1604), sig. A2v.
[53] Ibid., sig. A2v.
[54] Ibid., sig. A2v.

noted to be helpful to one another in this dutie'.[55] Cash's house was not a balanced one. His wife was pious but he allowed his household to become a microcosm of disorder and chaos was at the root of Greene's murder. His lack of benevolence and authority when paired with lust caused him to neglect his role as master and allowed his servants to grow bold. Cash was the main instigator but Pottes and Newton's wife consented to be part of his debauchery rather than to learn from Green's devotion.

One of the themes addressed in *Sundry strange and inhumane Murders, lately committed* was the relationship between consent and guilt as demonstrated through the author's discussion of Pontius Pilate.[56] A party need not have a direct hand in a murder but a person was guilty if he or she agreed to a plan or did nothing to stop it while having prior knowledge. The same notion was put forth in *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Lincolneshire* through the actions of the three adulterous characters. While discussing their domestic situation with Pottes, Cash told her that his wife would 'be a continuall hourely trouble unto us, except wee take some course to prevent it'.[57] Pottes, believing that once his wife was removed Cash would marry her, kept quiet and did nothing to prevent the murder. One night, Cash grabbed Green by the throat and stopped her mouth with a cloth until he smothered her to death.[58] She was known amongst friends to be unwell, a fact Cash took advantage of, and no one suspected foul play due to her continual poor health. After her death, Cash betrayed Pottes and married Newton's wife, now a widow. Pottes left his service as a wronged woman and never forgot the slight or her part in her mistress's death. Time passed and Cash settled into a respectable life though 'the hell and horror of a guilty conscience ceased not to follow him'.[59] During this time, the widow died and Cash remarried again. Unlike Lincoln, Cash encountered no difficulty in finding both a second and third wife. He appeared to have temporarily avoided the wrath

[55] Gouge, *Of domesticall duties*, p. 264.
[56] *Sundry, Strange and inhumane Murders*, lately committed, sig. A2r-v.
[57] *Two Horrible and inhumane murders done in Lincolneshire*, sig. A3r.
[58] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[59] Ibid., sig. A4v.

of God and established himself as a seemingly respectable husband. Pottes, on the other hand, lived alone and greatly suffered from both guilt and spite at having been abandoned by Cash in favour of the widow. She confessed on her deathbed and Cash was arrested and hanged.

Had Cash favoured Pottes instead of the widow, the murder may have never come to light. The woman's transformation from wife to widow was essential for the revelation of the murder in this pamphlet. When Cash married the widow rather than Pottes he revealed the depths of his depravity as he willingly deceived Pottes while conducting illicit sexual relationships with both women. Cash may have intended to marry the widow the entire time and her presence might have been the inspiration for Green's murder. Even if his decision to marry the widow was an impulse, her presence was necessary for the drama of the pamphlet as Cash's marriage to her fuelled Pottes hatred which eventually led to her confession and his execution. As discussed in Chapter Two, the providential phrase 'murder will out' was the driving force behind the exposure of murderer. This revelation was dependent on a chain reaction started by God who would not suffer sin to remain hidden and was fuelled by the characters until the revelation of the crime and execution of the perpetrator.

Murderers

Not all widows featured in this literary genre were represented as passive instigators of violence or objects of desire. Murder pamphlets also featured widows as the main cause of strife and death. Since the widow was not bound to any particular man or family, she could supposedly behave as she wished which threatened to upset patriarchal order and peace. The aggressive widow who appeared in murder pamphlets represented the very worst qualities of women and was perceived to be a danger due to her freedom. Unlike the widows just discussed who were desired by men, the murderous widow had no connection to the masculine sphere at all. This particular character appeared in several publications and remained a consistent stereotype throughout this period. The

'olde Widdowe, called Mother Dell' featured in *The Horrible Murther of a young Boy of three yeres of age* (1606) and *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther committed by an Inkeepers Wife* (1606), was described as one of the worst and most unnatural of all women featured in murder and execution pamphlets.[60] She was directly responsible for the murder of Anthony James and the disfigurement of his sister Elizabeth, both young children. The two children were brought to her inn by a band of robbers after they killed their parents in an attack on their family home. The robbers, not knowing what to do with the children, sought out Dell for advice. Dell lived up to her dastardly reputation, murdered the boy and had her son George dump his body in a pond. When this act was committed, Dell, 'giving him for his requiem farewell no other funerall rites and christian buriall, but these words; sinke there intead of a mother grave'.[61] She then cut the girl's tongue out to prevent her from revealing the truth to the authorities:

> Whereup this bloody Tygris, to make her selfe more monstrous, had her put out her tongue that she might feele it...when the childe she presently caught it by the end, and with her thumbe wresting open the childs jaws to the widest she could stretch them, she cut it out even by the root...this She-wolfe holding her knife to her throat, bad her peace, or she would cut that as she had flit her tong.[62]

Dell did not hesitate for a moment when performing either of these bloody acts and was portrayed by the author as a truly deplorable woman and sinner.

Unlike other pamphlets, these pamphlets did not describe Dell's background or her downfall story which would have explained her motivations for murder and she first appeared in the pamphlet in a public masculine role as an innkeeper. From the very beginning, Dell appeared as an independent woman and hardened criminal through and through. Throughout *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther*, the author described Dell as a 'monstrous female,' 'tygris,' 'She-wolfe' and 'whore'.[63] Dell's

[60] *The horrible murther of a young boy of three yeres of age, whose sister had her tongue cut out* (London 1606), sig. A2r. She was called Annis Dell in *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther committed by an Inkeepers Wife, called Annis Dell, and her Sonne George Dell, four years since* (London, 1606).
[61] *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther committed by an Inkeepers Wife*, sig. B2r.
[62] Ibid., sig. Bv-B2r.
[63] Ibid., sig. Bv, B2r.

initial introduction to the reader was as a vicious figure that was barely human and deserved no sympathy. In early modern England, a woman's good name was based on honesty which in turn was linked to sexual behaviour and Dell was described as being neither modest nor human. [64] She may have been a woman at one point but years of hard living and association with the lowest ranks of society stripped away her humanity and transformed her into a dangerous animal lurking in the woods.[65]

Other pamphlets from this period described the murders of young children but the Dell murder case featured enough scandalous and unique elements to attract numerous readers and multiple pamphlets were printed.[66] *The horrible murther of a young boy of three yeres of age, whose sister had her tongue cut out* featured the same narrative as *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther* but this pamphlet opened with the delivery of the children to Dell's house by a peddler and his wife who killed their mother and father rather than a band of robbers.[67] The presence of peddlers rather than robbers did not detract from the malicious nature of the characters or crimes as thieves often disguised themselves as peddlers and pretended to be transient workers.[6869] In this pamphlet, Dell was also referred to as 'Mother Dell' by the author which further highlighted her unnatural nature.[70] Her adult son George appeared to take the place of his late father and acted as her accomplice rather

[64] Ingram, 'Scolding women cucked or washed', p. 49.
[65] The use of animalistic descriptions highlighted Dell's social and gender transgressions. For more discussion about exclusionary labels and descriptions related to animals see Chapter Four.
[66] For examples of pamphlets which described the murder of children see: *A world of Wonders. A masses of Murthers. A covie of Cosonages*(London, 1595); *A pitiless mother* (London, 1616); *The unnatural father: Or, The murther committed by John Rowse*(London, 1621); and *A brief and true relation of the Murther of Mr. Thomas Scott Preacher* (London, 1628).
[67] *The horrible murther of a young boy of three yeres of age*, sig. A2r.
[68] Harrison, *Description of England*, p.185. 'Swadders' or 'peddlers' were the names given by Harrison to thieves who pretended to be real peddlers.
[69] This murder story was also the topic of two ballads printed in 1606. *The Stationer's Company Register* noted that licenses for the ballad *A reporte of a Murder of a young boy whose sister lykewise had her tongue cut out by a woman and her sonne Dwelling in Hatfield* and *The murther of a boy 3 yeres of Age whose sister had her tongue also cut out and yet speaketh* were granted 26 September and 13 October 1606. Edward Arber (ed.), *A transcript of the register of the Company of Stationers,* Vol. III (London, 1875), pp. 329, 330. This story appears to have captured the interest of the English reader most likely due to a combination of the grisly crimes, the unnatural mother and son partnership, and the miraculous revelation of the truth.
[70] *The horrible murther of a young boy of three yeres of age,* sig. A2r.

than her child.[71] It must be noted that while the pair worked together it was not an equal relationship. Dell was fully in charge and her son was the submissive partner who followed orders. Furthermore, her son did not appear to have a family of his own despite having reached adulthood and continued to live with his widowed mother, whom he should have taken care. When discussing concepts of manhood and masculinity in early modern England, Alexandra Shepard noted: 'According to the patriarchal model of manhood which subordinated men on the grounds of age and socio-economic status, such dependent males were not fully men'.[72] At the death of his father, her son did not become the head of the household and remained in a subordinate position to his domineering mother, which further emphasized her unnatural state of widowhood.

Dell was not the only violent representation of widowhood to be featured in murder pamphlets though she was by far the most vicious one. In *A true discourse of the practices of Elizabeth Caldwell* (1604), Elizabeth Caldwell attempted to poison her husband with the help of her lover Jeffrey Bownd and neighbouring widow Isabell Hall. The murder did not go as planned and a small child ate the poisoned food and died while Caldwell's husband only fell sick. Unlike the other widows discussed thus far, Caldwell was described in sympathetic tones by the author, Gilbert Dugdale. On the cover page of the pamphlet Dugdale described himself as Caldwell's 'own country-man'.[73] Dugdale's opening paragraph declared Bownd was Caldwell's 'bloody lover' and the widow Hall 'an untimely actor' in the tragedy.[74] The very opening of the pamphlet identified the lower ranked characters as bloody and prone to violent behaviour. The author's sympathies were exclusively directed to Caldwell and Dugdale directly stated to the reader: 'First, I knowing your generall griefs for the fall of so good a Gentlewoman, and when no remedy could be, to comfort such a godly soule, aswell in her

[71] Her son was only named as 'T. Dell' in *The Horrible muther of a young boy of three* and George in *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther committed by an Inkeepers Wife.*
[72] Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 210.
[73] Gilbert Dugdale, *The true discourse of the practises of Elizabeth Caldwell* (London, 1604), sig. Air.
[74] Ibid., sig. Aiiir.

time of imprisonment as at the houre of her death'.[75] This appears to have been wishful thinking on Dugdale's behalf as he clearly wanted to thrust the burden of the murder solely on Bownd and the widow Hall rather than on the gentlewoman herself, who, it must be noted was both an adulterer and convicted murderer. If anything, Caldwell represented the very worst of women because she flouted her marriage vows by conducting an adulterous affair with Bownd, surrounding herself with less-than-desirable company, and attempting to poison her husband.[76] Last but not least, Caldwell was responsible for the death of an innocent child who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The author continually attempted to describe Caldwell in the very best possible light while demonising her accomplices. She married young and her husband frequently travelled, leaving her alone and vulnerable for long periods of time. Dugdale described these absences as the initial wrong which tainted an otherwise happy domestic relationship and caused her to look for pleasure outside of their marriage vows.[77] During one of his absences, Bownd, her young and wealthy neighbour, conspired to 'withdraw her to his unlawful desire' and seduced her though she withstood his advances for a long time.[78] Together with the widow Hall, Bownd

> work[ed] her to an unlawfull reformation, so that in the processe of time, with many earnest perwasions, they wone this silly soule, to their will; and having so done, the sayd *Bownds* insatiable desire could not bee so satisfied, but perswaded her of himself, and also by the sayd *Isabell Hall*, to yeelde her consent by some meanes to murder her sayd husband, the which she was though drawne to the other, yet very unwilling to agree unto that.[79]

---

[75] Ibid., sig. Aiiiv.

[76] Husband murder was called 'petty treason' as a wife attempted to kill her domestic sovereign. Legal writer Michael Dalton described this type of murder as one that 'is committed…upon any subject, by one that is in subjection, and oweth faith, duetie, and obedience'. Michael Dalton, *Countrey Justice, Conteyning the Practice of the Justices of the Peace out of their sessions* (London, 1618), p.204. The punishment for petty treason was burning rather than a standard execution of death by hanging. Poisoning was considered to be one of the most heinous forms of murder due to its secretive nature. Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England*, pp. 113, 210.

[77] Walker, 'Demons in female form', p.132.

[78] Dugdale, *The true discourse of the practices of Elizabeth Caldwell*, sig. Aiiii.

[79] Ibid., sig. Aiiiiv.

If Dugdale was to be believed, Caldwell was an innocent victim drawn into a murderous plot while the widow Hall was identified as the main instigator of the crime. Supposedly, Hall 'willed *Bownd* to buy some Ratsbane' and then baked it into 'Oaten-cakes for that she knewe [Master] *Caldwell* much affected them'.[80] Hall seemingly had no motivation for the murder and Dugdale never revealed any reason for her animosity though he alluded to a wicked past and secret motives: 'she was verie expert in such like actions, being an ancient motherly woman, and to all mens judgements in her outward habite, was farre from harbouring such a thought'.[81] Widow Hall worked her evil through the virtuous gentlewoman and appeared to desire murder simply for murder's sake. Caldwell gave the poisoned oatcakes to her husband and even though she supposedly instantly regretted her decision did nothing to stop the plan. Master Caldwell shared the baked goods with a neighbour's child aged six or seven who later died from the poison along with two dogs and a cat.[82]

The three were arrested, tried and found guilty. Bownd's motives for murder appeared to be straightforward: he loved a married woman and her husband's untimely death would set her free to marry him. Elizabeth's Caldwell's sensitive and weak nature allowed her to be swept into the plot against her will. Hall's motives, however, never received an explanation. She was simply the stock character of the wicked widow who contributed nothing but malice towards Caldwell, the pamphlet's ever-suffering heroine whose only crime was falling in love with the wrong man. Dugdale portrayed Hall as a clandestine figure lurking in the background waiting to harm people for no reason. One interesting element of Dugdale's pamphlet was that he described himself as a fellow countryman of Caldwell but not Hall despite the fact that they were all from the same vicinity. The author appeared to desire an association with Caldwell who he represented as an innocent woman ensnared in a murderous plot rather than with a widow on the peripheries of society.

[80] Ibid., sig. Br.
[81] Ibid., sig. Aiiiiv.
[82] Ibid., sig. Bv.

Dugdale's account of the murder contained additional commentary on widowhood. This commentary, however, was used in an attempt to make himself appear in a better light to the reader rather than to discuss widows. In the opening paragraph of the pamphlet, the author directly addressed the reader and stated that his 'dutious love' for his audience and desire for the truth to be known compelled him to write the pamphlet.[83] He implored the reader 'to accept my poore mit, onely considering this, the poore mans plenty is prayer to regrate your worthy loves, & as truly as I live, that shall be no niggard'.[84] This quote referenced the story of the widow's mites in Luke 21:1-4 and Mark 12:41-44. In this story, Jesus, while teaching in the Temple in Jerusalem, witnessed many rich men donate large gifts to the treasury. A poor widow then gave two mites, a very small sum in comparison. This action greatly pleased Jesus and Luke 21:3-4 stated: 'And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all. For they all have of their superfluity cast into the offerings of God; but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had'. The rich men gave large sums of wealth but this did not affect their lives. The widow, on the other hand, gave all she possessed. Dugdale used this story in an attempt to humble himself before the reader by comparing his pamphlet to the widow's sacrifice. His allusion to his pamphlet being 'a poore mite' suggests that he was either aware of his low status as the author of ephemeral literature or he wanted to appeal to the reader's sympathies by demonstrating humility. Dugdale usurped the position of the impoverished scriptural widow while opening discriminating against her real life counterpart. Even though the author referenced the virtuous story of the poor widow's mites, the pamphlet's widow Hall remained a feared and marginalized character.

This surreptitious depiction of the widow was not unique to *The true discourse of the practices of Elizabeth Caldwell* and appeared in other pamphlets. George Saunders's murder occurred thirty years before the Caldwell pamphlet but this murder proved to be so popular amongst readers that several

[83] Ibid., sig. Aiiiv.
[84] Ibid., sig. Aiiiv.

pamphlets and a play were published during that period. This murder, as initially described in A *Brief discourse of the late murther of master George Saunders* (1573), involved a plot between Mistress Saunders, George Browne, a man in love with Mistress Saunders, the neighbouring widow Anne Drewrie and her servant, Trusty Roger. This murder story was reprinted four years later in 1577. The crime also appeared in print again in 1595 in *A World of Wonders. A masses of Murthers. A covie of Cosonages*. Furthermore, a play based on the murder was also published entitled *A Warning for Fair women* (1599). By the time the play was published, the four conspirators had long been executed but the crime continued to captivate audiences.[85] Just as in *A true discourse of the practices of Elizabeth Caldwell,* the widow of this pamphlet received very harsh treatment from author Arthur Golding, a notable Elizabethan literary figure.[86] Like Isabell Hall, Anne Drewrie filled the role of the malicious and bitter widow. Drewrie was described as the main instigator of the crime despite having no invested interest or profitable outcome in the murder. George Browne was condemned as the 'principall doer of the murther' although he represented the muscle rather than the brains behind the murderous plot.[87]

The author opened the pamphlet with the standard admonition to the reader about the struggle between good and evil. Golding did not discuss a back story which might have explained the motives of the murderers but continued directly to a discussion of the murder. According to the author, the murder was fully initiated by the widow Drewrie. Browne received a letter containing 'secret intelligence from mistresse Drewrie, that master Saunders shoulde lodge the same night at the house

[85] In *A world of Wonders. A masses of Murthers. A covie of Cosonages* the murder only received a brief description: 'The 25 of March 1573 George Saunders a merchant was murthered most shamefully by George Browne by the instigation of his own wife and other her complices'. *A World of Wonders. A masses of Murthers. A covie of Cosonages* (London, 1595), sig. Fv. The widow was not specifically mentioned but it is most likely that the executed felons were known as the story had been published several times which demonstrated both popularity and longevity.

[86] Golding was a well-known writer and gained professional recognition for his translations of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* (1565) and John Calvin's *Sermons* (1577).

[87] A *Brief discourse of the late murther of master George Saunders, worshipfull Citizen of London* (London, 1573), sig. Aiiiiv.

of one Mister Barnes in Woolwich' and would be vulnerable to an attack on the road the following morning.[88] While Golding fingered Drewrie as the instigator, he did not furnish his accusations with any motives; she was presented to the reader simply as a figure of destruction. Following the widow's directions, Browne attacked Saunders and his servant on the road and stabbed the pair multiple times with a sword. Saunders died instantly while his servant crawled for help and identified their attacker before he died. After being apprehended, Browne stated 'that he often times before pretended and sought to do the same, by the instigation of said widow Drewrie, who (as he sayd) had promised to make a marriage between him and Mistresse Saunders (who he seemed to love excessively)'.[89] Drewrie was identified as the instigator of murder even though she had nothing to gain by Saunders's death. The author never mentioned an unhappy history or altercation between the two nor did he mention anything negative about Drewrie's everyday behaviour such as being an outspoken or aggressive woman. After the murder was committed, Drewrie continued to meddle in the crime by selling her and Mistress Saunders's plate to raise twenty pounds to aid Browne's escape and later provided him with an additional five pounds.[90]

This pamphlet shared several features with the Annis Dell and Elizabeth Caldwell publication. These stories involved murders committed by groups of people rather than one perpetrator. Also, these pamphlets featured out-of-control widows bent on murder who planned the crimes with little or no provocation. Unlike the other pamphlets, however, the widow described in *A Brief discourse of the late murther of master George Saunders* was given some sympathy at the end. After Browne's execution, both Mistress Saunders and Drewrie stood trial and were sentenced to hang. A minister named Mell visited Saunders in jail but fell in love with her. He then 'dealte with Mistress Drewrie to

[88] Ibid., sig. Aiiir.
[89] *A Brief discourse of the late murther of master George Saunders,* sig. Aiiiiv.
[90] Ibid., sig. Aiiiir-v

take the whole guilte upon hir self'.[91] Drewrie agreed to his plan while he attempted to secure a pardon for Saunders with the hopes of marrying her. This plot did not end successfully; the death sentence remained firm and Mell was sent away. Though Golding initially identified Drewrie as the wicked woman, she was redeemed and Saunders was allotted the destructive role instead. Drewrie knew she agreed to a lie and it weighed heavily on her conscience. Saunders tried to convince her to keep her promise and take the burden of the guilt to which Drewrie replied she 'was fully determined not to hazard her own soule eternally for the saftie of an other bodies temporal life'.[92] She repented to save her soul rather than lie to extend Saunders's life. Drewrie emerged as a penitent sinner rather than the character of the murderous widow while Saunders schemed in vain to avoid her punishment.

As discussed, the pamphlets which described murderous widows shared similar descriptions and stereotypes. These pamphlets also shared a further common feature. The crimes which directly involved widows in a murderous role happened in, or within close proximity to, homes but never occurred within the widow's home itself. Women's crimes have been identified as primarily occurring in the home and away from the outside world.[93] Randall Martin described the domestic sphere as one that was 'saturated with cultural obligations for women to fulfil prescribed roles as obedient wives and dutiful mothers'.[94] Female murderers typically killed members of their household, such as their children or husbands, in their homes, such as in the pamphlet *A pittilesse Mother* (1616) in which Margaret Vincent strangled her two young children in her home to prevent them from becoming Protestant. Cases of interfamily violence were particularly unnatural for several reasons. First and foremost, they disrupted familial order. The murder of a husband stripped a family of its head and protector; the death of a child at the hands of its mother went against bonds of motherhood.

[91] Ibid., sig. Aviir.
[92] Ibid., sig. Aviiiv.
[93] Sharpe, 'Domestic Homicide in Early Modern England', p. 37.
[94] Randall Martin, *Women, Murder and Equality in Early Modern England* (London, 2008), p. 18.

Furthermore, murderous women transformed their household, a setting that should have been devoted to tranquillity and obedience, into one of chaos. Annis Dell killed Anthony James deep in the woods and threw his body in a pond. Isabell Hall acted through Bownd and Caldwell: Bownd procured the poison while Caldwell delivered to her husband in their home. The murder of George Sanders happened on the road far from the home of Anne Drewrie. Despite marrying John Brewen, Anne Wells did not live with him under the pretence that his home was not a suitable dwelling for a new bride though the truth of the matter was that her lover insisted they live apart to avoid detection after she poisoned him. Brewen died alone in his home while she remained in hers to strengthen her alibi. Even the widower Lincoln from *Sundry strange and inhumane Murthers* partook in this gendered behaviour and arranged to have the labourer murder his children outside the family home and initially refused to grant them a proper Christian burial.[95] Unlike cases of filicide or petty treason, these murders did not just disrupt patriarchal or domestic bliss. These women provided treacherous examples of widowhood because they were described as uncontrollable outsiders. They did not remain anchored to their proper social roles and their crimes reached far across the community and also involved men in subordinate positions.

Victims

The widows discussed thus far have both directly and indirectly contributed to the deaths of others. The widow featured in *The Apprehension, Arraignment, and execution of Elizabeth Abbot* (1608) directly contributed to her own murder and this pamphlet did not feature any redeemable characters. Mistress Killingworth lived near Aldgate in London and was known by her neighbours to be a heavy drinker. She outlived three husbands and now lived by herself in widowhood. The author

[95] Lincoln proved to be even more unnatural than the widows discussed because he initially took no actions to bury his children. He left their corpses exposed for in the yard for several days until a neighbour rebuked him. He eventually buried them but even then he only buried them in a shallow grave. *Sundry, Strange and Inhumane Murthers*, sig. A4r.

of the pamphlet described her background in a rather roundabout way. Killingworth appeared to be a quarrelsome woman but the author only discussed the 'one infirmity which she had [her drinking]…since it is both a general disease that reignes in our age, and was an excuse to her murtherer even in the instant of her tragedy'.[96] Killingworth was a regular topic of conversation within the surrounding area and her neighbours openly discussed her troublesome behaviour. The author identified her drinking as an illness but still criticised her and directly linked her behaviour to her death. Her neighbours often aided her when she fell down drunk outside her home but after a while they stopped due to the 'requital of the paines bestowed upon her friendly neighbours, so animated their opinions against her, that after notice was taken of her ingratitude, they from thence left her'.[97] The community, no longer willing to suffer her abuses, left her to her own devices and her isolation attracted the attention of her eventual murderer.

Killingworth truly lived on the peripheries of the community and Elizabeth Abbot exploited both her widowhood and ostracization. Abbot moved into Killingworth's house under the pretence of caring for her during her bouts of 'illness'. Shortly after Abbot moved in, the windows were suspiciously covered with cloth. One evening, neighbours witnessed Killingworth hanging out of an upper story window yelling 'O Lord shal I die thus and never a neighbour come at me'.[98] This behaviour was initially believed to have been the result of drinking. Abbot pulled her back inside and that was the last anyone ever saw of the widow. After several days passed without seeing her, the neighbours became suspicious and searched the house, which was empty. They found bones in the hearth and a lock of hair stuck to the bricks of the chimney. It was conjectured that Killingworth 'was first made drunke, a vice shee was properly inclined unto by disposition, then strangled in her bed,

[96] *The Apprehension, Arraignment, and execution of Elizabeth Abbot, alies Cebrooke, for a cruell and horrible murther, committed on the body of Mistres Killingworth in S. Creechurch Parich neere Aldgate in London* (London, 1608), sig. A2v.
[97] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[98] Ibid., sig. A4r.

the coverlets of which were found folded downe, then brought and set upright in the chimney there burnt, and so to be consumed to ashes'.[99] During the investigation into the murder, Abbot's past was revealed and she was exposed as a robber and housebreaker. Abbot was a true rogue who corrupted all she encountered. After her apprehension, she denied being guilty of the crimes she was accused of and went to her death unrepentant. The main character of *The Apprehension, Arraignment, and execution of Elizabeth Abbot* was the cause of her own misery and also of the people around her. Had Killingworth behaved better, she would most likely have been accepted as part of the community and not have died in such a violent manner. She did not live as a woman in her situation ought to and her drinking was described as 'most abomoniable in women, since it [was] so detestable in men'.[100] The widow, as described in 1 Timothy 5:5-6, should 'trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth'. Killingworth chose a reckless lifestyle and became the perfect example of the disobedient widow who deserved neither help from her neighbours nor succour from God. Her neighbours' decision to leave Killingworth to her own devices was justified and was described by the author as a just punishment for her sins.

This pamphlet differed from the others discussed in this chapter because there were no positive characters. The two parties involved, both the murderer and the victim, were peripheral figures who did nothing to better their social or moral positions. Killingworth was a victim but she was also the cause of her own providential downfall and murder. This example leads to the final category of widow to be discussed in this chapter: the widow represented as the innocent victim of murder. Women like Killingworth existed but so did women who personified the 'widow indeed' and did not deserve their fate. Even though the roles filled by women in this literature alternated between inspiration, accomplice and murderer, proximity to all things domestic remained a constant. Vindictive or murderous widows brought violence near or into the homes of others but never into

[99] Ibid., sig. Br-v.
[100] Ibid., sig. A2v.

their own domestic space. Murders which involved widows as victims almost always involved a family member and the events happened in the widow's place of dwelling. Violence done to widows followed the same pattern as cases of spousal murder or filicide described in murder pamphlets which also typically occurred in the home.[101]

In *A View of Sundry Example* (1580), the reader was presented with the deaths of two widows with very different outcomes and moral lessons. The first was the death of a woman known as the Widow Barnes at Corn Hill in 1574. Her death was due to suicide rather than murder. Suicide, however, was legally referred to as 'self-murder' during the period in discussion and cases of suicide discussed in murder pamphlets were described in the same manner as cases of regular murder. The author described Barnes as a quarrelsome and wicked woman who was urged by the devil to do harm to herself. Barnes succumbed to temptation and for this reason she could not be described as an innocent victim. The devil urged her to 'cast her selfe out at her window into the street, and there to brake her neck'.[102] Although this case may appear to be an anomaly due to the fact that Barnes was both victim and murderer, her death still followed the established pattern of murders instigated by widows. The Widow Barnes killed herself by jumping out of window and died in the street rather than in her own home.

The second example of murder that involved a widow in *A View of Sundry Examples* described the death of a woman at the hands of her son. Unfortunately, pamphleteer Anthony Munday did not include detailed accounts of the various crimes and miracles he reported but he did document

[101] For examples of spousal murder see: *A true reporte or description of an horrible wofull, and moste lamentable murther done in the cities of Bristowe by one John* Kynnestar (London, 1573); *A most horrible & detestable Murther committed by a bloudie minded man upon his owne* Wife (London, 1595); *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Licolneshire, by two Husbands upon their Wives* (London, 1607); *A Bloudy new-yeares gift, or A True Declaration of the most cruell and bloudy murther, of maister Robert Heath, in his owne house at high Holbourne, being the signe of the fire brand* (London, 1609); *Deeds Against Nature, and Monsters by kinde* (London, 1614). For examples of filicide see: *Sundry, Strange and Inhumane Murthers, lately committed* (London, 1591); *Two most unnaturall and bloodie Murthers* (London, 1605); *A pittilesse Mother* (London, 1616); *The Unnaturall Father* (London, 1621). Spousal murder appeared in pamphlets more frequently than cases of filicide.

[102] Anthony Munday, *A View of Sundry Examples* (London, 1580), sig. Biiiir.

information that may otherwise have been lost. The entry pertaining to Thomas Hill and the murder of his widowed mother did not mention the specific date and the details were sparse. Munday did note that the murder occurred in the Hill's Faversham home after his mother told him that she intended to leave him so that she could live with her other son in Canterbury. Hill treated his mother terribly during her life and killed her in her bed as she slept rather than allow her to leave. After Hill murdered his mother he quickly buried her corpse before informing his brother she was dead of plague. The brother, mistrustful of Hill's story, caused his mother's corpse to be exhumed and 'saw nothing wherof shee dyed, neither her flesh abated with wickness nor any sore wherby they should say it was the plague'.[103] When Hill stood before the body, his mother's corpse began to bleed afresh. He was promptly arrested and taken to prison where he hanged himself.

While this entry started off as a seemingly simple case of murder, the crime became increasingly fantastical. The murder of a parent by a child was a particularly heinous and went against the bonds of nature. Thomas Hill was described as having ill-treated his mother during her widowhood when he should have protected her in the absence of her husband, his father. By introducing his righteous brother, the author caused Hill to be subjected to further harsh criticism. Hill's brother was represented as a man while he was described in a subordinate position to his mother. The brother was the mature head of a household who wanted to protect his widowed mother and early modern manhood was 'conditional on age, marital status, [and] behaviour'.[104] Hill, his mother's supposed protector, appeared in stark contrast when paired with his brother who Munday described as 'one who loved [his mother]' dearly.[105] The brothers were born of the same woman but only Hill cast aside all familial love and turned on his own flesh and blood. Justice for the murdered 'widow indeed''

[103] Ibid., sig. Dr.
[104] Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 88.
[105] Ibid., sig. Dr.

materialized because her devout son upheld his filial duty and demanded to know the true cause of his mother's death.

The fact that Hill killed his mother was a particularly alarming twist and this pamphlet was one of a very small number to feature a case of matricide.[106] In fact, the only examples of matricide to be described in these pamphlets were committed against widows. *A Spectacle for Userers and succors of poore folks bloud* (1606) also featured the murder of a widow at the hands of her son.[107] Like Munday's entry about the Hill murder, this work did not include any specific information about location or the date of the crime aside from the fact that it was committed in France. Anthony Moillon died and left his wife Gasparde Brifin in charge of money and property until their son, George Moillon, turned twenty. George would then inherit all the money under the condition that the pair lived together. If the mother and son decided not to live together then the property was to be split evenly. George, now almost twenty, grew into a spendthrift which greatly troubled his mother. In turn, she refused to give him large sums of money in order to protect his inheritance. After a confrontation, he wrapped a cord around her neck, strangled her and stole all he could from the house.[108] He was eventually caught and his punishment was particularly brutal. He 'was the condemned by the Senate, to bee pinched his flesh off under the [pays], in three places of the towne with pinched red hot and afterward to be burned to death in the market called Barnay'.[109] George was described as a 'new Orestes' after the tragic Greek character who killed his mother Clytemnestra to avenge his father Agamemnon.[110] This label, however, was not a fitting one as Clytemnestra was a vicious woman who killed her husband when he was defenceless. Gasparde Brifin was represented

[106] These murders were typically committed by a son who killed his mother over financial matters. These crimes were also premeditated unlike the majority of early modern murders which appeared to be done at the spur of the moment.
[107] This pamphlet was originally printed at an unspecified date and location in France and translated into English in 1606.
[108] *A Spectacle for Userers and succors of poore folks bloud* (London, 1606), p.10
[109] Ibid., p.11. These kinds of executions were typical of continent Europe rather than England where hanging was the standard execution for all felonious crimes aside from treason.
[110] Ibid., p.10.

as an honest woman who was trusted by her late husband to look after the best interests of their only child. The author chose not to discuss the religious or social difference between England and France. Instead, the pamphlet presented a universal discussion of matricide, a crime which truly defied the natural order of procreation. George's last dying speech before his execution in France implored children to be obedient to their parents and avoid lewd living, the very things that led to his downfall.

The horror of matricide appeared very rarely in cheap print. Patricide, the killing of one's father, on the other hand, appeared more frequently but was still rare. It was far more common for a parent to murder his or her child rather than vice versa. The rarity of a mother being murdered by her child no doubt added to the public appeal of these pamphlets and captivated the interests of the readers. The widow was truly a pathetic character; she raised children and watched her husband, or husbands, die and then lived on in the peripheries of the community without protection unless she remarried and began the process over again. Unlike antagonistic or murderous women, the victim widows were portrayed as godly women who took pride in their families. Their families, however, let them down. The widows discussed above were killed by their sons who wanted what they considered to be their rightful property and were prepared to commit violent acts against their mothers for financial gain.

Conclusion

The women discussed in this chapter came from a variety of backgrounds and social conventions but they had many features in common. They were widows and, while some may have remarried and others remained single, they existed on the peripheries of English society. The widow witnessed her husband die and often became responsible for the preservation of her family at the same time. A widow had the difficult task of navigating between acceptable gendered behaviour, religious criticism, literary myths and theatrical stereotypes, all of which seemingly contradicted each other. The three incarnations of widows discussed in this chapter depicted both the stereotypes and harsh

realities associated with early modern widowhood. The widows who were depicted as indirect causes of male violence became scapegoats and were assigned a portion of the blame by pamphleteers regardless of their apparent innocence. Upon closer reading, however, these innocent widows did not act within the confines of early modern gendered behaviour and their very presence in pamphlets became the catalyst for murder. Likewise, overtly violent widows existed outside both their prescribed gender roles and locations. They behaved in masculine or animalistic ways and acted outside of their homes. They freely interacted with men and women from all walks of life and frequently dictated the actions of submissive men. Their lack of meekness and piety meant disaster for anyone who sought out their company. On the other hand, the innocent widows who were murdered by their sons personified a world turned upside down. They suffered unnatural deaths at the hands of their own children whom they had reared. These widows died at the hands of the very people who should have protected them well into old age due to anger and greed. Even the pious 'widow indeed' was faced with the threat of an untimely and violent death.

The women described in these pamphlets were no doubt subjected to the authors' embellishments and their literary representations were shaped by popular interpretations, myths and stereotypes. These pamphlets presented the reader with an idealised world rather than reality where people behaved in a proper manner or risk divine punishment. By navigating through religious and moral dialogues and descriptions of early modern gendered behaviour, we can recognise and understand both the difficulties and anxieties associated with Elizabethan and Jacobean widowhood in greater depth.

4

Unnatural Gentlemen and Hard-hearted Masters: Representations of Male Domestic Violence

The crimes depicted in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean murder pamphlets provide unique insight into familial disorder and socially acceptable levels of domestic violence. The messages contained in these pamphlets were not unique to this genre and were shared by moralistic publications such as sermons, matrimonial conduct literature and other forms of prescriptive literature. Like their moralistic literary counterparts, murder pamphlets stressed that within a marriage the husband and wife must perform their allotted duties to God, one another and their domestic inferiors: children and servants. This chapter will discuss what happened when men, the divinely-ordained head of the household, neglected their duties and allowed both themselves and their households to spiral out of control. Most importantly, these murderous men acted against the very people they were supposed to protect. This neglect caused men to abandon three key elements of early modern masculinity: their position as the head of a household, their ability to rationally regulate emotions, and a natural and manly disposition. This chapter will directly engage with descriptions and representations of masculinity found in murder pamphlets and compare and contrast these descriptions with those found in religious texts, writings about domestic duties and moralistic conduct literature from the same period. By focusing on masculine violence directed at three subordinate household groups, wives, children and servants, this chapter identifies and highlights the rigorous demands ascribed to male householders by religious belief and social constructs of masculinity and discusses gendered sites of anxiety in early modern England.

Early modern England was not without violence and domestic abuse but stories about men killing their wives held a much deeper meaning and social significance than warnings against aggressive behaviour. These pamphlets stressed that a husband and wife must live together peacefully and

respectfully. A marriage could not work if a man and woman did not share a mutual love for one another. In *Dangerous Familiars*, Frances E. Dolan noted that the cases of spousal murder described in these pamphlets were due to domestic disharmony and 'abuses not only of authority but of intimacy'.[1] Authors of moralistic literature and cheap print warned readers about hasty marriages, loveless matches and spousal neglect. These messages about love and respect highlighted the fact that marriage was identified as the necessary foundation of a properly ordered society; it united families, gave issue to legitimate children and was under the jurisdiction of a male authority figure.[2] Of course, these messages about mutual love were highly idealized and always sought to secure male domestic authority through seemingly contradictory language of inclusion and equality.[3] An additional message contained in pamphlets which described wife-murder was that a husband needed to control his emotions and impulses at all times in order to control his wife and household. A wife may act against her husband but he must curb her behaviour in an appropriate manner, typically through restrained physical correction also known as chastisement. God granted man authority over woman but he was expected to behave in a fitting manner at all times. Rationality and control of emotions were at the heart of the description of the able husband.[4]

The murder of children was committed far more frequently by women in real life but murderous fathers appeared more frequently in publications than their domestic counterparts. A quarrel

[1] Frances E. Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England 1550-1700* (Ithaca, 1994), p. 99.
[2] Miranda Chaytor, 'Household and Kinship: Ryton in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', *History Workshop* 10 (1980), pp. 25-60.
[3] Bernard Capp, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbours in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), p. 11.
[4] For more on early modern marriages and duties see: Eric Josef Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1994); Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination in England, 1500-1800* (New Haven, 1995); Christine Peters, 'Gender, Sacrament and Ritual: The Making and Meaning of Marriage in Late Medieval and Early Modern England', *Past & Present* 169 (2000), pp. 63-96; J.A. Sharpe, 'Plebeian Marriage in Stuart England: Some Evidence from Popular Literature', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 36 (1986), pp. 69-90; Tim Stretton, 'Marriage, Separation and the Common Law in England 1540-1640' in Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster (eds), *The Family in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 18-39; Andrea Wilson, *Ritual and Conflict: The Social Relations of Childbirth in Early Modern England* (Surrey, 2013), pp. 61-110.

between a husband and wife could result in murder due to biting words and insults or violent outbursts. Of course, murder was never justified or excused in these pamphlets but the back story described by authors furnished the motivation behind the crimes. The murder of children, on the other hand, was always described as a particularly unnatural and abhorrent crime. A father was responsible for the physical and moral upbringing of his children. The murder of children by a father was the culmination of the man's downfall into sin and chaos and the ultimate loss of control rather than any wrongdoing on the children's behalf. This crime destroyed a man's masculinity because he lost all reason and behaved in an unmanly manner. Most importantly, this action destroyed a man's family name and lineage. The final category of victims to be discussed will be servants. Servants lived and worked alongside their masters and mistresses. Like children, servants needed to be educated and occasionally physically corrected by their domestic superiors. Servants, however, were also vulnerable figures within a household due to the fact that they were outsiders and relied on hospitality and goodness rather than bonds of kinship for their wellbeing. Conduct literature prescribed behaviour for husbands and fathers as well as proper behaviour of masters towards their servants. Violence against servants was typically portrayed as tyrannical behaviour as this relationship rested on a social contract rather than a spiritual or physical connection.

Shaping Manhood and Masculinity

This chapter will analyse 12 pamphlets which describe male domestic violence. While this number may appear relatively low, it does reflect the fact that domestic violence was not a frequent cause of reported homicide in early modern England. Typically, murders occurred outside the home and between two unrelated men. J.A. Sharpe discussed murder rates based on homicide records from the Essex assizes, one of the more intact assize records from this period. He noted that between 1560 and 1609 only 15 out of 132 murders occurred between family members while 24 out of 172 familial

murders were committed between 1609 and 1659.[5] Unfortunately, Sharpe did not specify which family members committed the murders though more men were found guilty than women.[6] For the most part, murder pamphlets mirrored these statistics. Out of 88 murders reported in 42 surviving murder pamphlets published between 1570 and 1620, the majority of crimes were committed by men against unrelated men outside of the home. Furthermore, the murders of children by men in domestic settings were more common in these pamphlets than women though the reality of the situation was the exact opposite. 18 children were killed in total (10 by men and 8 by women[7]) while 16 women were killed (12 women and 4 widows[8]) in surviving murder pamphlets.

The pamphlets to be discussed in this chapter feature representations of male domestic violence and the particular murders were shaped by different forms of masculinity. Alexandra Shepard discussed how factors such as marriage, age and surroundings helped to form public perceptions of masculinity. Violence too contributed to concepts of masculinity and authority: "Violence also informed alternative meanings of manhood, and was in addition widely appropriated by men otherwise excluded from positions of authority in deliberately anti-patriarchal stances'.[9] Behaviour, livelihood and marital status were important to a man's masculinity as was violence and men acted against one another as a means to demonstrate their authority and prowess. Violence became problematic when it was used excessively or inappropriately. Violence was a part of the early modern household but that does not mean that excessive violence or cruelty was acceptable from either men or women.[10] Domestic violence was only acceptable as a means to correct disruptive behaviour and

[5] J.A. Sharpe, 'Domestic Homicide in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal* 24 (1981), p. 34.
[6] Ibid., p37.
[7] Five children killed by women were infanticide cases and these pamphlets carried a different message than those which discussed the murder of legitimate children.
[8] I separated women and widows as the widows were primarily the victims of their sons who killed them for inheritance reasons. See Chapter Three for a full discussion of widows in murder pamphlets.
[9] Alexandra Shepard, *Meaning of Manhood* (Oxford, 2003), p. 151.
[10] Corrective violence was described as chastisement and was identified as being important to householders, princes and God for correcting the behaviour of subordinates. John More celebrated God's chastisement: 'But whether God blesseth us we must be thankful & rightly use it: or whether he chastiseth us, we must be humble

even then only when used with moderation and self-restraint, two elements which helped to shape concepts of manhood and masculinity.[11] According to J.A. Sharpe, conduct literature during this period revealed both a wide readership and 'a body of authors concerned enough to write on these themes' who regularly addressed improper behaviour.[12] The fact that violence caused enough outrage to inspire moralist authors to denounce aggressive actions runs contrary to the belief that male domestic violence was an accepted part of life.

Not all interactions were violent and Keith M. Botelho identified ways in which social conjecture and rumor contributed to masculinity. Botelho, through representations of male behaviour found in the works of Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, identified how rumour and listening, or 'earwitnessing', could strengthen or weaken male authority based on the ability to navigate through rumours, truths and falsehoods. Language was used in this manner to distinguish supposedly superior men from lowly ones as well as to identify social divides. Shepard noted that social exclusion through language 'was a rhetorical device aimed to establish definitions of manhood in exclusively patriarchal terms and to encourage men either to adopt self-discipline or to submit to the authority of others'.[13] Authority and masculinity were greatly informed by social communication and language also had further gendered functions. Botelho, when discussing language, stated: 'To bolster the appearance of having informational authority, then men and male institutions often cast women as a threat than needed to be controlled'. [14] Language and behaviour appear to be malleable identifiers that were easily manipulated to back the patriarchal order of early modern England.

& profit by it'. John More, *Three godly and fruitful sermons* (London, 1594), p. 31; John Bradford described how God 'hath often beaten, chastised, and fatherly corrected us'. John Bradford, *The mirror of martyrs* (London, 1613), p. 192. The anonymous author of *Politique discourse upon trueth and lying* wrote that we should not interpret God's chastisements as a punishment 'but to the end discipline may be kept, manners corrected, and licentiousnes ended'. *Politique discourse upon trueth and lying* (London, 1586), p. 117.

[11] Sharpe, 'Domestic Homicide in Early Modern England', p. 30; Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, pp. 87-89.

[12] Sharpe, 'Domestic Homicide in Early Modern England', p.30.

[13] Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 88.

[14] Keith M. Botelho, *Renaissance Earwitnesses: Rumour and Early Modern Masculinity* (New York, 2009), p. 10.

The authors of conduct literature and murder pamphlets attempted to uphold a world where men and women fit into different spheres and embodied specific gendered traits.[15] Of course, the gender divides described in murder pamphlets did not exist and men and women interacted in a variety of social, economic and neighbourly ways. Even though men were more likely to murder their wives in real life, murderous husbands simply did not receive the same attention from pamphleteers.[16] Sandra Clark has extensively studied pamphlets in which women killed their husbands and stated that this topic has been a 'perennial fascination' with contemporary readers because it depicted women acting outside their proper gender roles.[17] The same can also be said about men who murdered the people they were supposed to protect. Garthine Walker has stated that

> The majority of pamphlets dealing with spousal murder (and therefore with domestic treachery) focused upon that of husbands by wives. Between 1590 and 1630, two or three such pamphlets were published each decade, whereas the murder of wives features far more rarely. It has been suggested that murderous husbands appeared so rarely in popular representations because wife murder did not seem heinous enough.[18]

A violent wife was far more culturally subversive than a violent husband as a husband's duties involved a certain amount of violence in the form of physical correction of bad behaviour. In *Dangerous Familiars*, Frances E. Dolan discussed representations of spousal homicide and notes the gendered differences between husband-murder, known as 'pretty treason', husband-murder, or

[15] See: Craig Muldew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 1998).

[16] For discussions of women and murder in early modern England see: Susan Dwyer Amussen, 'Punishment, Discipline, and Power: The Social Meanings of Violence in Early Modern England*', Journal of British Studies* 34 (1995), pp. 1-34; Sandra Clarke, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature of Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 2003); Frances E. Dolan, 'Gentlemen, I Have One More Thing to Say': Women on the Scaffold in England, 1563-1680', *Modern Philology* 92(2) (1994), pp. 157-78; Randal Martin, *Women, Murder, and Equity in Early Modern England* (New York, 2008); Susan C. Staub, *Nature's Cruell Step-Dames: Murderous Women in the Street Literature of Seventeenth Century England* (Pittsburgh, 2005); Garthine Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003); Merry Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2000).

[17] Sandra Clarke, 'Deeds against nature: Women and Crime in Street Literature of Early Modern England' in Luisa Fernanda Rodriguez Palomero and Andrew Monnickendam (eds), *Sederi XII* (Valladolid, 2001), p.9.

[18] Walker, 'Demons in female form', p. 131.

'petty tyranny'. Unlike petty treason, 'petty tyranny was not a legal category, nor did the law distinguish wife-murder from other kinds of murder'.[19]

While both kinds of murder led to the death of a spouse, the two crimes were enacted in very different ways which is most likely the root of the 'perennial fascination' of early modern pamphleteers. In the majority of pamphlets about murderous wives, it must be noted that very few women actually performed the murders themselves. They plotted with their lovers, servants and other women, typically widows, who actually committed the murders on their behalves.[20] While the women may not have acted violently themselves, they held great authority as they convinced the subordinate characters to kill for them. Botelho stated that 'many of the anxieties about gender in the [early modern] period could be witnessed in the crossover effect; that is, female spaces seeping over into male spaces, and vice versa'.[21] Four out of six pamphlets[22] published during this period about husband-murder featured the wife's lover as the murderer while in *Two most unnatural and bloodie murthers* (1605) the crime was committed by the wife's kinsman and her daughter's former suitor. In the remaining husband-murder pamphlet, *The Arraignment and burning of Margaret Ferne-seede* (1608), Fernseed's husband was discovered dead and she was believed to be the murderer due to her quarrelsome nature though she denied committing the crime even at her execution. The male accomplices in these cases were socially marginal characters, typically servants. These women had power over men that gave them masculine and feminine traits at the same time; they were both powerful and weak at the same moment. Furthermore, their actions led to the deaths of honourable husbands which no doubt contributed to the fascination of the public. The more conspirators

[19] Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars*, p. 90.
[20] As discussed in Chapter Three, the widow was a character of particular interest because she did not live under the control of a husband or master.
[21] Botelho, *Renaissance Earwitnesses*, p. 9
[22] *A Brief discourse of the late murther of master Saunders* (London, 1573); *Sundry, Strange, and inhumane Murthers, lately committed* (London, 1591); *The trueth of the most secret murthering of John Brewen* (London, 1592); *A bloudy new yeares gift, or A true declaration of the most cruell and bloody murther, of maister Robert Heath, in his owne house at high Holbourne* (1609).

involved in a plot meant more stories and eventual executions to catch the reader's attention. Only one pamphlet featured an example of a husband acting with an accomplice to kill his wife and this was only done due to the fact that he was in prison at the time of the murder while all other wife-murders were committed by the husbands themselves.[23]

Material objects also played a role in shaping perceptions of early modern concepts of masculinity. As noted, murder pamphlets themselves included examples of acceptable behaviour for both men and women and featured stories in which people acted outside their proper gender sphere. More women killed their husbands in print than in real life. Furthermore, authors described more examples of fathers killing children than mothers, a crime typically associated with women. Pamphleteers did not deviate from the status quo and, according to Walker, while the stories were based on true crimes, 'the precise nature of events was always defined and interpreted from a particular point of view'.[24] These pamphlets contained information about early modern crime and punishment and also provided context to social constructions such reputation, proper gendered behaviour and domestic roles though they were idealized.

Messages about masculinity were not only found in print. Indeed, material culture played a role in shaping concepts of manhood along with social interactions, moralistic literature and behaviour. In the article 'Showing the Heart: Love Friendship and Anatomy in Early Modern Portraiture', Sarah R. Cohen discussed how material culture, specifically works of art, projected and contributed to concepts of masculinity through gestures and overt displays of wealth and status.[25] David Kutcha discussed concepts of manhood, material consumption and non-verbal communication in *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550-1850*. Kutcha's discussion, though limited to the

[23] L.B., *The Examination, confession and condemnation of Henry Robson, fisher of Rye* (London, 1598).
[24] Garthine Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 114.
[25] Sarah R. Cohen, 'Showing the Heart: Love, Friendship, and Anatomy in Early Modern Portraiture' in Amy E. Leonard and Karen L. Nelson (eds), *Masculinities, Childhood, Violence: Attending to Early Modern Women- and Men. Proceedings of the 2006 Symposium* (Lanham, 2011), pp. 21-77.

clothing of the upper echelons of society, identified 'the connection between a social doctrine of aristocratic sartorial splendor, a political doctrine of royal bravery, an economic doctrine of beneficial consumption, and a religious doctrine of ceremonial conformity- an entire regime of masculine conspicuous consumption'.[26] Will Fisher analysed representations of everyday personal items in plays, poetry, moral literature and works of art and specifically highlighted cod pieces, handkerchiefs, beards, and hair when discussing gender and sexuality.[27] A man's physical appearance provided information about his wealth, status and age and facial hair, too, played a role in shaping perceptions of early modern manhood. According to Mark Albert Johnston, 'the presence of a beard heralded both the socioeconomic and sexual viability of its host to the early modern English imagination'.[28] The ability to grow and maintain a beard signalled masculine prowess.[29] Even beards could be a site of both violence and anxiety as cases of beard cutting occurred throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England as a very visible, and sometimes lengthy, means of insult.

The descriptions about gender, manhood, and masculinity found in this genre of cheap print were greatly shaped and informed by this large social dialogue. While concepts of gendered behaviour appear to be fixed in murder pamphlets, 'men in this period appeared to be 'anxious' about their masculinity uncertain as to what was expected of them, worried about contradictions that seem to have emerged in codes of manhood, and eager to assert and demonstrate their masculinity in a variety of ways'.[30] Scholarly discussions of masculinity have explored such demonstrations and reveal the complex and malleable world of manhood which, according to Diane Purkiss, 'are often to be

[26] David Kutcha, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550-1850* (London, 2002), p.50.
[27] Will Fisher, *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Cambridge, 2006).
[28] Mark Albert Johnston, 'Bearded Women in Early Modern England', *SEL Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 47(1) (2007), p. 1.
[29] For more on the beard, patriarchy, and masculinity see: Mark Albert Johnston, *Beard Fetish in Early Modern England: Sex, Gender and Registers of Value* (Farnham, 2011); Mark Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1996).
[30] Merry Wiesner-Hanks, 'Do Women Need the Renaissance' in Alexandra Shepard and Garthine Walker (eds), *Gender and Change: Agency, Chronology and Periodisation* (Oxford, 2009), p. 121.

found in the obliques of texts and not in their straight lines'.[31] As contemporary scholarship has demonstrated, concepts of manhood and masculinity were manufactured and governed by many different areas of social thought though these different concepts constantly overlapped and often contradicted one another.

Wives and Husbandly Love

Early modern masculinity was shaped by internal and external influences. While murder pamphlets and moralistic literature attempted to demonstrate that gender and social identity were fixed concepts, it is clear that they were unstable sites of social anxieties. Even though men committed more crimes against their families, women have received more attention, both historically and contemporarily. Women's domestic violence was described as unnatural and outside gender norms but the same is true of murderous husbands. This section will discuss the domestic murders of wives by their husbands. These murders occurred in one of two ways, either through spontaneous excessive violence or premeditated actions. Both types of murders stemmed from the fact that the husbands in discussion did not fulfill their proper patriarchal roles and this lapse resulted in the violent deaths of their wives. Inter-male violence between men was often associated with the expression or defence of masculinity and physical prowess but this was not the case in the domestic sphere. While some violence may have been permissible to correct inappropriate behaviour within the household, extended bouts of cruelty or abuse were not. Elizabethan author and dramatist George Whetstone, in 1586, described the benefits of corrective and moderate chastisement: 'for if they be governed with libertie without chastisement, they will soone growe insolent and againe, if

[31] Diane Purkiss, *Literature, Gender, and Politics during the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 5.

with severtie without gentlenesse, theyr malice will be incurable'.[32] While domestic violence of any sort may appear to be counterproductive, corrective violence or chastisement reaffirmed the husband's natural position as the head of the house and all those who lived in it. Without this exertion of power and discipline chaos and disorder could thrive.

Chastisements were an important part of domestic life but marital love and respect were deemed absolutely necessary by religious texts, conduct literature and popular writings. This body of writing also discussed the necessity of men and women to conform to specific gender roles during a marriage. A marriage should be based on love and respect as God ordained but this was not enough for a happy life. This concept of love did not just refer to notions of mutual affection for one's spouse; it also involved a certain level of fear though this fear was out of reverence rather than dread. It is true that a wife was expected to honour and obey her husband but the husband was expected to honour and obey God. Both had to acknowledge their subjection to a higher power. Popular writer and Master of the Revels to Elizabeth I and James I, Sir Edmund Tilney wrote 'he [a husband] must above all thynges haue the feare of God before hys eyes, which with the rest well considered, and put in execution, no doubt he shall enioye the fragrant savour thereof'.[33] In the popular work *Wits theatre of the little world* (1599), author and poet Robert Allott wrote:

> 'This contract of marriage, called the contract of God, (as by him first instituted in paradize) is called the bond of mutuall love and riciprocall affection between man and wife, over whom he ought to rule, not as the Lord over his Servant, but as our Lord & Saviour doth over the church'.[34]

In *Of domesticall duties,* popular London preacher William Gouge stressed that 'Husbands must come as neare as they can to Christ in loving their wives. In which respect, because they can never love so

[32] George Whetstone, *The English mirror A regard wherein al states may behold the conquests of envy* (London, 1586), p. 216
[33] Edmund Tilney, *A brief and pleasant discourse of the duties of marriage, called the flower of friendshippe* (London, 1571), p.18.
[34] Robert Allott, *Wits theatre of the little world* (London, 1599), p.106.

much as Christ did, they must never thinke they have loved enough'.[35] These authors came from very different backgrounds but all agreed that a husband must be benevolent, tolerant and accepting in order for there to be peace in the house. The husband was only encouraged to admonish his wife through constructive chastisements and never through bouts of excessive violence or abuse. Woman was meant to be man's partner but not his equal either in status or strength. Violence led to inward hatred and disobedience on the wife's behalf which would only serve to exacerbate the situation rather than remedy it.[36]

The earliest wife-murder pamphlet of this period to be published was *A True report or description of an horrible, and moste lamentable murther done in the citie of Bristowe by one John Kynnestar* in 1572. This murder occurred through spontaneous violence but was actually the result of years of husbandly neglect. John Kynnestar did not commit murder due to malice or wrath towards his wife. His actions were portrayed as solely due to his own shortcomings and neglect of his wife. He never laid hands on his wife until one night in August 1572 when he simply rose from his sleep and attacked her with a knife. After the attack, he threw her body out of their bedroom and into the street below. Kynnestar had no knowledge of the murder until he was presented with his wife's corpse and confessed:

> And that night the neighbours did us see,
> Between us was no strife,
> And after I had slept a while,
> I did not thinke her yet to spoile,
> Till in my head was put this stile,
> Arise goe kill thy wife.[37]

While neighbours never noticed discord between the couple, tension lurked beneath the surface. The author included the names of witnesses, Thomas Pepper, Davie Floyde, William Welch and

[35] William Gouge, *Of domesticall duties in eight treatises* (London, 1622), p.45.
[36] Ibid., p. 391.
[37] *A true report or description of an horrible, woful, and moste lamentable murther done in the citie of Bristowe by one John Kynnestar* (London, 1572), sig. Aiiiv. The entire pamphlet was written in rhyming verse.

Richard Barwicke, the vicar of Bristol, who reported that the pair lived together quietly and confirmed the suddenness of the attack.[38] *A true report or description* was a basic story that used murder to explain to the reader the need to love one's wife. Of course, it condemned both the murder and the murderer but it also had a deeper message. The author used Kynnestar as a sort of 'everyman': he got along with his wife, worked hard to maintain his family at a comfortable level and was a seemingly good Christian. Although he had the trappings of a good man, his soul was in a state of peril.

This murder was the culmination of years of repressed displeasure of his wife. The author reminded the reader that 'Tis better that thou live alone in pease and so to rest:/ Then for to greeve thee with thy wife, or yet thy self molest'.[39] When asked why he killed his wife, Kynnestar replied: 'She is now rewarded for her paine,/ That she hath done to me'.[40] The author did not describe any wrongdoing on the wife's behalf and solely blamed Kynnestar for the crime. It would appear that his wife's actions indirectly caused Kynnestar 'paine' but he allowed this behaviour to silently irritate him until he rose in 'a mirucilouss rage' and stabbed her twenty-five times as she slept.[41]

Kynnestar's crime, according to the author of the pamphlet, resulted from two main sites of neglect. First, he did not rebuke he wife as he should and, secondly, he chose to suffer alone rather than seek the counsel of the woman appointed by God to be his partner and source of succour. This neglect ran counter to all advice from both religious and popular writings concerning the proper behaviour of a husband. In *The plaine mans path-way to heaven* (1607), Puritan minister and religious writer Arthur Dent stated that a good husband must acknowledge his wife's shortcomings and 'beare with them, yea to make nothing of them, loving her never the less for them' rather than to

[38] Ibid., sig. Aiv. See Chapter Six for a discussion about the role of neighbours in identifying sin and wrongdoing.
[39] Ibid., sig. Biiiv.
[40] Ibid., sig. Aiiir.
[41] Ibid., sig. Aiiiir.

resort to violence.[42] *The Court of Good Counsell*, anonymously translated into English in 1607, stated 'Now if chaunce to espy any fault in his wife, eyther in words, gestures, or doings, he must reprehend her, not reproachfully nor angerly, but as one thas is careful of her honesty'.[43] Additionally, 'he must also vouchesafe in signe of love to deliver unto her his thoughts and secret councels for many have found much profit in following their wives councell'.[44] Kynnestar did not consciously intend to kill his wife and did not even know that that he killed her until he was confronted with her corpse. As a husband, he should have behaved better and admonished his wife whenever she gave him offence. The horror of this murder stemmed from the fact that Kynnestar allowed his anger to grow uncontrolled until he woke in the middle of the night and unknowingly killed his wife in an unprovoked attack. By not immediately admonishing his wife for any pain she might have caused, Kynnestar did not fulfill his husbandly duties. His actions were those of a violent man and an ineffective husband whether they were premeditated or not. This pamphlet exposed the dangers that hid in a man's soul and warned that outward piety could mask inward corruption.

This theme of domestic disharmony due to the lack of proper husbandly love appeared in all pamphlets about wife-murder though in different forms. In all cases, the husband was represented as being solely to blame as he was the head of household. Any disharmony or strife should have been identified and amended immediately but these men allowed their homes to descend into chaos because they neglected their proper domestic duties. The next pamphlet to discuss wife murder was published twenty-two years after the Kynnestar pamphlet which demonstrates the rarity of pamphlets about this particular crime. Like the Kynnestar murder, this murder was also the result of spontaneous and excessive violence. *A most horrible and detestable murther committed by a bloudie*

[42] Arthur Dent, *The plaine mens path-way to heaven* (London, 1607), p.390.
[43] Stefano Guazzo, *The Court of good Counsell. Wherein is Set downe the true rules, how a man should choose a good Wife from a bad, and a woman a good Husband from a bad* (London, 1607), sig. C4. Guazzo was an Italian writer (1530-1593). This work was anonymously translated into English and published posthumously in London in 1607. Guazzo's name was omitted from the English translation and the forward was written by 'W.R.'. sig. A2.
[44] Ibid., sig. C4.

minded man upon his owne wife (1595) featured a different type of murderer from Kynnestar. The prologue to this pamphlet discussed the importance of reciprocal love and stated that a man must 'have a wife which as himself he loveth'.[45] The author also wrote that this pamphlet 'hath bin published for our example to the world, thereby to put us in mind of our duties to God'.[46] These duties went beyond warnings about murder and sin and urged the reader to be a loving husband. The murderer, iron miner Ralph Meaphon killed his wife after an argument. He returned home for a meal at 9pm and had to knock as his wife was in bed with their son. This greatly displeased him and he immediately 'fel to rayling and chiding with her: and in the end, whether it were a matter pretended, or otherwise' killed his wife with a knife he kept in his pocket after the argument escalated.[47] From the beginning of the pamphlet, Meaphon was represented as a compassionless and 'bloudie minded' man. The author stated that 'he drew out his knif and cut her throat' as they argued at their kitchen table.[48] Unlike Kynnestar who unknowingly committed murder, Meaphon was an outwardly aggressive man who killed his wife with little provocation and without hesitation. He then left her corpse alone in the house with their five year old son and returned to work without 'any semblance of sorrow for this most odious murther'.[49] He was described as outwardly playing the role of the good husband by providing for his family while hiding his true nature within their household.

From the author's description it would appear that both husband and wife equally participated in this quarrel. Meaphon, however, went too far. Meaphon's anger stemmed from the fact that he had to knock on the door to enter his house and this inconvenience caused him to physically lash out at his wife 'without any sense of sorrow'.[50] Again, Dent's admonition about toleration springs to mind and this sort of violence was specifically condemned by scripture. The Bible contained many

[45] *A most horrible and detestable murther committed by a bloudie minded man upon his owne wife* (London, 1595), sig. A2r.
[46] Ibid., sig. A2r.
[47] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[48] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[49] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[50] Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order*, p. 33.

admonitions against male violence which were echoed in this pamphlet. Colossians 3:19 stated: 'Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter unto them' while Ephesians 5:28 stated: 'So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself'. The author of A *most horrible and detestable murther*, echoing these scriptural admonitions, implored the reader to 'have a wife which as himself he loveth'.[51] The author warned that while a man may feel anger towards his wife for her shortcomings, even if they were truly wicked, 'yet with harts griefe, is he faine to smother so vyle, and most odious' life lest it 'worke his shame in the world, and his life thereby dangered'.[52] Meaphon's actions proved unnatural and the author labelled him 'the enemie of mankind'.[53] His lack of toleration and restraint 'in a matter pretended, or otherwise' caused him to be viewed as an outsider when his domestic position should have garnered respect.[54]

Both Kynnestar and Meaphon were represented as having suddenly snapped and killed their wives. Kynnestar's crime was the result of suppressed anger while Meaphon lost control of his emotions and reason. John Dilworth, one of the murderous men described in *Two horrible and inhumane murders done in Lincolneshire* (1607), killed his wife Joan in a drunken rage and burned her dismembered body in the family hearth while their children slept upstairs. In this pamphlet, Joan Dilworth was accused of antagonistic behaviour towards her husband. The author described her as 'milde and gentle' with neighbours and friends while 'the most parte of her wordes to him were sharpe...and biting, especially when they were alone'.[55] Joan was not alone in her bad behaviour as her husband was presented as a drunkard though he was ultimately responsible for the crime. When discussing this pamphlet, Sandra Clarke stated 'The author in fact implies that [Joan] was to blame for her fate

[51] *A most horrible and detestable murther committed by a bloudie minded man upon his owne wife*, sig. A2r.
[52] Ibid., sig. A2r.
[53] Ibid., sig. A2r.
[54] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[55] *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Lincolneshire, by two Husbands upon their Wives* (London, 1607), sig. B2v.

because although she was mild and gentle in public,' she was a harsh, shrewd wife in private.[56] This statement was true to some extent as Joan was indeed initially described in a negative light. Clarke, however, omitted a very important statement made by the author in which he excused the woman's poor behaviour: 'Again truly to excuse her, let me tell you, that the report of his life and behaviour was such, as being true, where of I make no doubt and question; it was able to make any woman to breake'.[57] John Dilworth did not behave as a proper husband should have as he drank and beat his wife which no doubt caused Joan to grow shrewish. The author, however, absolved her of any wrongdoing and clearly stated his intentions to excuse her of any blame. There was clearly no love or respect between husband and wife. John failed to love and admonish his wife as a husband ought to do which caused his household to spiral out of control.

John Dilworth's excessive force led to his wife's murder and his execution. In *Two horrible and inhumane murthers*, Dilworth was revealed to be an abusive husband who beat his wife prior to her murder. By abusing his wife, Dilworth demonstrated that he was an incompetent husband as he resorted to violence rather than constructive criticisms. When discussing wife-beating, Walker noted that a violent husband was represented 'as one who undermined not only his wife's authority as mistress of the household, and thereby the household's economy and social credit, but also his manhood'.[58] Dilworth's actions compromised his position as both a householder and a man. He was described as a man who 'would oftentimes be over gone with drinke, at which times hee would not sticke (at his comming home) to beate and abuse his wife'.[59] The author described Dilworth as an 'unnatural father' for the disorder he caused in the household and labelled his anger 'hellish' and 'monstrous'.[60] It must be noted that these labels were not applied to Dilworth himself but to his

[56] Clarke, 'Deeds Against Nature', p. 11.
[57] *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Licolneshire*, sig. B2v.
[58] Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order*, p.66.
[59] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[60] Ibid., sig. B3v, B4r.

uncontrolled anger. His weakness for alcohol, inability to control his household and unbridled anger transformed him into a grotesque figure. According to the author, he should have better governed his impulses 'for the sake of love and fatherly care' but he was too far gone into temptation and sin.[61] Dilworth attempted to hide the crime by dismembering the corpse and burning it; a method which further added to his 'monstrous' and 'hellish' demeanour.

The warning to the reader featured at the end of this pamphlet stressed the need for domestic harmony. This epilogue did not favour one gender over the other to rebuke more harshly. The author declared that both men and women had to perform their proper allotted duties or a marriage would not be successful: 'For, as husbands are taught by the Apostle Paul, not to be bitter unto their wives: so are wives likewise instructed by the selfesame Apostle to be loving and amiable to their husbands'.[62] The author further included a warning for women not to antagonize their husbands 'lest they drive them to unmanly cruelty, which will in time proove hatefull tyrannie'.[63] Both husband and wife were responsible for the happiness of a household and all actions, good and bad, had reciprocal effects. This advice was labelled as 'rules and directions' to be followed if married couples wished to 'surely and safely flie from all such faults...and many others that the Divell doth daily tempt them unto'.[64] Excessive violence was never sanctioned or excused within this literature. God was the only figure who possessed the power to punish and both men and women had to live within the roles He allotted.

Just like the men discussed above, Thomas Horsey in *Londons Cry* (1619) also lost control and suddenly snapped during an argument. He killed his partner in the heat of the argument with a

[61] Ibid., sig. B3.
[62] Ibid., sig. C2r.
[63] Ibid., sig. C2r.
[64] Ibid., sig. C2r.

penknife that was close at hand.[65] Unlike the other murders discussed in this chapter, this one was part of a collection of cases compiled by Henry Goodcole, minister and ordinary of Newgate Prison, from the Old Bailey sessions dated between 9-12 December 1619. An ordinary was a clergyman appointed to a jail for the spiritual wellbeing of prisoners and his position included preaching as well as procuring confessions and repentance from soon-to-be executed felons.[66] As the title suggests, this publication discussed the various criminals Goodcole encountered in Newgate prison during the early seventeenth century and warned the reader about all types of crimes and sin. The example of wife-murder in this pamphlet was only three paragraphs in length but contained important domestic commentary. Thomas Horsey stabbed his partner Elizabeth Cover with a penknife during a heated argument in their home. The pair were unmarried but lived as husband and wife. Cover 'was a woman of a most lewd life, and they both unlawfully accompanied together' though the pair grew increasingly quarrelsome.[67] Again, the theme of an unhappy domestic life was present and the pair was described as being ill-suited for one another. Their problems stemmed from the fact that their union was based on carnal love rather than proper marital love. Goodcole wrote: 'But so it fortunes, that such love which was between them, could not long continue, nor have a happy issue'.[68] He further described the pair as 'Two lustie, lustfull Lovers'.[69] They 'unlawfully accompanied together' and defied the honourable 'causes for which matrimonye was ordained' as set forth by God.[70]

In this genre of cheap print, men were portrayed as vulnerable to temptations and weaknesses.[71] This potential to succumb to weakness could prevent a man from fulfilling his duties and undermine his domestic authority. The men discussed thus far, Kynnestar, Meaphon, Dilworth and Horsey, were

[65] Henry Goodcole, *Londons Cry: Ascended to God and entered into the hearts, and eares of men for Revenge of Bloodshedders, Burglaiters, and Vagabonds* (London, 1619), sig. Cv.
[66] Randall Martin, 'Henry Goodcole, Visitor of Newgate: Crime, Conversion, and Patronage', *The Seventeenth Century* 20(2) (2005), p. 156.
[67] Ibid., sig. Cv.
[68] Ibid., sig. C2r.
[69] Ibid., sig. C2r.
[70] Ibid., sig. C2r.
[71] Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 77.

not described as particularly malicious or murderous. Kynnestar freely confessed and repented when he was made aware of the fact that he killed his wife in her sleep. Meaphon initially denied his guilt until the evidence was presented before him while Dilworth boldly confessed to the murder though he did not immediately repent his wrongdoing. Horsey too initially denied the murder but freely confessed at the gallows, stating that 'hee meant not to slay her, but to give her a marke, for remembrance of her abusing of him'.[72] Aside from Dilworth, these men were never described as violent men prior to the murders and a previous history of domestic violence was never mentioned.

These murders happened because these men gave themselves over to absolute anger.[73] Bouts of appropriate anger were acceptable according to popular preacher Thomas Adams in his work *Diseases of the soule a discourse divine, morall, and physicall* (1616). Adams stated: 'God placed *Anger* amongst the affections ingraffed in nature, gave it a seate, fitted it with instruments, ministred it matter whence it might proceed, provided humours whereby it is nourished. It is to the *Soule* as a nerve to the body'.[74] As man was an emotional creature, anger was viewed as a part of the human condition that needed to be vented at appropriate times for appropriate reasons and never through violent behaviour:

> But there is a vicious, impetuous, franticke anger, earnest for private and personall grudges; not like a medicine to cleare the eye, but to put it out. This pernicious disease of the *Soule* hath degrees. 1. It is *inhumane*; Tygers devoure not Tygers, this rageth against kind and kindred. 2. *Impious*; it rageth often against God…3. *Mad*; for it often rageth against unreasonable creatures… 4. It is more then mad, striking at insensible things.'[75]

Adams described unbridled anger as a characteristic that had no place within a civilized community. He specifically used the word 'inhumane' and stated that even beasts would not attack one of their own. Although God gave man the ability to be angry, man had to control this emotion and aspire to

[72] Goodcole, *Londons Cry,* sig. C2r.
[73] Thomas Gataker, *Marriage duties briefly couched together out of Colossians, 3.18.19* (London, 1620), p. 37.
[74] Thomas Adams, *Diseases of the soule a discourse divine, morall, and physicall* (London, 1616), p.14.
[75] Ibid., p.14.

behave in a fitting manner. Even though anger was deemed natural, a true man learned to control this emotion for the good of his family and himself.

Pamphlets which discussed murderous husbands revealed a great deal of information about the expectations placed on early modern spouses. The couples discussed in this chapter were poorly matched and this created an antagonistic domestic relationship which fostered anger and led to spontaneous violence. *Two horrible and inhumane Murders* ended with a warning to husbands to guard themselves against their anger and 'to have a special care, that they give not any just case of offence to their honest wives'.[76] Women, too, were warned about shrewish behaviour. The author advised women to act 'in a modest and milde manner' and to avoid 'reproving [their husbands] boldly or bitterly when they are very merrie'.[77] While marriage was a sacred partnership and both parties had to work together for harmony or risk the repercussions, Dolan noted that these narratives exposed 'the violence that underlies, and is even produced by the fiction of subsumption, of two becoming one' after marriage.[78] Perhaps Dilworth hid his drinking prior to marriage or it escalated years later along with the physical violence. Either way, he did not fulfill his marital vows and love his wife. Joan Dilworth's duplicitous behaviour was absolved by the author because her husband and master was incapable of being a proper husband and led his family astray.

The representations of domestic murders analysed thus far described unfit husbands who could not control their aggression and did not properly love their wives. The murder of Ellen Cash by her husband John in *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Lincolneshire* was premeditated and inspired by the adulterous relationships between John and Ellen's servant Anne Pottes and his neighbour's wife. In this situation, the servant usurped her mistress's position as Cash's object of affection while he laid violent hands upon Ellen. Ellen suffered from a protracted illness which the

[76] *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Licolneshire*, sig. C2r.
[77] Ibid., sig. C2r.
[78] Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars*, p. 99.

author described as the catalyst of the murder through no fault of her own. Rather than attempt to ease his wife's suffering, Cash repeatedly committed adultery. The author wrote that Cash 'kept [and] had use of one Newtons wife', their neighbour, as well as Anne Pottes.[79] This behaviour created a hostile domestic environment. Spousal love was viewed as the natural state between a man and a woman as demonstrated by the marriage service in *The Book of Common Prayer*: 'Wilt thou love her, comforte her, honour, and kepe her, in sickenes, and in health? And forsakying al other, kepe thee onely to her, so long as you both shall live?'[80] Cash forsook his vows in two ways as he did not continue to love his wife during her sickness and placed multiple women before her. Ellen's sickness further complicated the matter because her lack of authority in the domestic sphere enabled her servant to grow bold.[81] While Ellen's illness was at the centre of this unrest she was not to blame. Pottes rose above her intended station and became close with Cash when she too should have been a comfort to Ellen.

Cash's neglect of his wife caused her illness to grow worse and, as a result, he grew resentful of her enfeebled state. He began to plot a means of getting rid of her even though he was the sole cause of her suffering. Again, we see the disaster that resulted from a husband's neglect of spousal love. Cash confided in Pottes and told her about his plan to kill his wife in order to be free from her continuous sickness: 'if thou canst and shall be secret, I can and will soone finde the means to ride us of that trouble'.[82] Pottes, believing her master would marry her after the murder, agreed to stay silent about Cash's plan and did nothing to prevent the death of her mistress. In the moments before the murder, Ellen 'spake in a kinde and loving maner unto him' though Cash did not reciprocate the affection. [83] Instead, he 'graspt her by the throat, and having in his left hand, a napkin, or some other cloth,

[79] Ibid., sig. A2v.
[80] *The Book of Common Prayer, 1559*, p.158.
[81] When discussing household politics, Bernard Capp stated 'that servants with a mistress who was weak, idle or sick' frequently grew bold and attempted to manipulate their mistress or refused to do work in a timely fashion. Capp, *When Gossips Meet*, p. 166.
[82] *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Licolneshire*, sig. A3r.
[83] Ibid., sig. A3v.

…stopped her mouth'.[84] Cash double-crossed Pottes and married the neighbour he was having an affair with instead. Pottes suffered with a guilty conscience for years and eventually confessed to her role in the crime which resulted in Cash's arrest and eventual execution.

Throughout the pamphlet, Cash revealed himself to be an inconsistent man incapable of singular love for his wife or any woman. In *Diseases of the soule*, Thomas Adams discussed the dangers of lust and stated that it corrupted the humours and led to uncleanliness.[85] Most importantly, he stated: 'The *Lustfull* man is a monster; as one that useth'.[86] In his pursuit of pleasure, Cash abandoned his rightful position as the head of a family and household. Furthermore, he abandoned both his masculinity and humanity and was transformed into a violent murderer. This was the only case that stemmed from adultery in pamphlets that described wife-murder. Cash's behaviour was more typical of a woman who was conducting an affair with a socially inferior male rather than the actions of a head of a household. Pamphlets that described husband-murders featured admonitions against adultery, fornication and lust. This murder was also premeditated which was a typical characteristic of a husband-murder.

The pamphlet *The Examination, confession, and condemnation of Henry Robson, Fisher of Rye* (1598) also featured a story about a premeditated murder and competing interests for the husband's attention though this crime did not stem from adultery. Henry Robson killed his wife for her property with poison while in debtor's prison in a vain attempt to free himself. His excessive spending landed him in prison where he met a man who offered to help him kill his wife in exchange for a vow of friendship and fidelity. Robson's downfall was due to his self-absorbed lifestyle and 'through his lavish spending, became greatly in debt to his utter ruine'.[87] He was arrested and sent to debtor's prison where he came into contact with less-than-desirable characters, including a man identified

[84] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[85] Adams, *Diseases of the soule*, p.44.
[86] Ibid., p.45.
[87] L.B, *The Examination, confession, and condemnation of Henry Robson*, sig. A3r.

only as Glasier who was used by the devil 'to be an instrument to put this his villanie in practice'.[88] Upon taking Glasier's advice to kill his wife, Robson had him procure ratsbane or arsenic and wrapped it in a small piece of leather along with tempered glass. He convinced his wife to spend a night with him in prison and, during an intimate moment, inserted the poison into her body. After his wife died, an autopsy was requested due to the strange nature of her illness and revealed the case of death to be poisoning. During this time, Glasier disappeared from the narrative and Robson faced the consequences of his crime alone.

Like the other husbands who killed their wives, the pamphlet about Robson revolved around a man's inability to properly love this wife and retain control of his household. He failed to perform his domestic duties as the head of a family due to his selfishness and ended up in debtor's prison. While in prison, he allowed himself to fall into a submissive position and be convinced by Glasier to kill his wife rather than to suffer the consequences of his actions. Robson's weaknesses revealed that he loved pleasure more than he valued his marriage. Furthermore, Robson also exchanged vows with Glasier in his pursuit of freedom which appears to have nullified his existing marital vows with his wife. Glasier promised to help Robson but only under the pretext that Robson would promise total secrecy. He agreed to this and also promised to devote himself to Glasier for life if the plan worked: 'Which words, when Robson heard, greatly rejoicing at this good hap [sic], he not only vowed to be secret, but also to put this in speedie execution, and during his life to remaine Glasiers friend, if it forged to good effect'.[89] Robson abandoned his wife and made new vows with his accomplice before she was even dead. While there was no allusion to a romantic alliance in the Robson pamphlet, this type of pact predominantly appeared in pamphlets where a wife plotted with her lover to kill her

[88] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[89] Ibid., sig. A4r.

husband.[90] Typically, the pair conspired in secrect while the unwitting spouse was alive and only one conspirator, the submissive lover, committed the murder. The Robson/Glasier pact was the only one of its kind to be made by a husband in surviving murder pamphlets.

The author revealed that while he was in prison, Robson's wife fulfilled her domestic duties and regularly visited him. While the author praised her efforts, Robson did not: 'yet did she relieve him in such sort by her diligent labor, that each [neighbour] wondered at her indevour: yet nevertheless, he little weighed neither her kindness nor the laws of God, as hereafter shall manifestly appeare'.[91] Had Robson not been so bent on self-preservation, he would have recognised that his wife remained loyal despite his downfall. She continued to visit him even after he brought shame on the family and languished in debtor's prison. A wife should have been a comfort to a man in riches or poverty. This concept was discussed in this pamphlet as the ideal of marital relations and reflected the wisdom of Scripture. Proverbs 19:14 stated: 'Houses and Riches are the inheritance of the fathers: But a prudent wife cometh of the Lord'. Proverbs 31:11-12 stated: 'The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good, and not evil all the days of her life'. A good wife made a poor man spiritually rich but only if he recognised love and sacrifice.[92] The author used Robson's wife as a foil to demonstrate how his selfish nature prevented him from loving his wife and being a good husband to her in return. Robson's antics also caused him to be separated from his wife and home. This pamphlet presented a greatly inverted world to the reader because Robson's wife behaved in a far more respectable manner than Robson, a feeble husband and murderer who was utterly dependent on the people around him. Robson adopted very specific female qualities during the plotting and executing of his plan after succumbing to temptation. Women, as the weaker sex,

[90] See: *A brief discourse of the late murther of master George Sanders, a worshipful Citizen of London* (1573), *A brief discourse of two most cruell and bloudie murthers, committed bothe in Worcestershire, and both happening unhappily in the yeare 1583* (1583), *Sundrye, strange and inhumane Murthers, lately committed* (1591), Gilbert Dugdale, *A true discourse of the practises of Elizabeth Caldwell* (1604).
[91] L.B, *The Examination, confession, and condemnation of Henry Robson*, sig. A3v.
[92] Henry Smith, *A preparative to marriage* (London, 1591), p.25.

were believed to be easily manipulated by the devil. Robson's unmanly nature was further stressed by the fact that he himself did not hatch the plot to murder his wife. In the end, Robson even depended on Glasier to procure the ratsbane for him to kill his own wife. Robson further distinguished himself from the other murderous husbands because he did not kill in a masculine way. Poisoning was typically associated with women as they prepared food which was served to men. Poisoning was, for lack of a better term, a dishonest form of murder as it was done in secret and difficult to detect.

A happy marriage as presented by pamphleteers and preachers could only exist if the husband granted all his love solely to his wife, something which Robson, like Cash, appeared to be incapable of. According to clergyman Thomas Gataker in *Marriage duties briefly couched together out of Colossians*: 'If the husband must in this manner love his wife, then must hee draw home his affections from loving any other in that sort. For if such a singularitie of love be here required, then it can be but one that in this sort is affected'.[93]A spouse should not have to compete with friends or material possessions for affection; this love must be both spiritual and reciprocal. Incumbent of Christ Church William Massie, in a marriage sermon published in 1586, warned that 'Athiestes, or Libertines or Machivelians or Spend-thriftes or covetous Rabals or great Gamesters or Luxurious or Riotous persons or seditious and traiterous papists [were] no fitte men to bee such a husband' because their interest lay outside the house and wife.[94] Poet Patrick Hannay, in *A happy husband* (1619), also warned about the dangers of a husband with competing affections and interests:

> Drunkennesse, gaming, he must want,
> He shwewes what ils such unthrifts flaunt;
> He must not haunt anothers sheets.
> Grace, and whoredome never meets;...

[93] Gataker, *Marriage duties briefly couched together out of Colossians, 3.18.19*, p. 36.
[94] William Massie, *A Sermon Preached at Trafford in Lancashire at the marriage of a dayghter of the right Worshipfull Sir Edmond Trafford Knight, the 6. of September Anno, 1586* (Oxford, 1586), sig. A6v.

His humours must with hers agree,
Else true friendship cannot be;[95]

A man could not be a devoted husband if he allowed himself to be led astray by unnecessary distractions. As God created Eve to be a companion and helper, Adam was expected to love her above all else which demonstrated his gratitude and obedience to God in the process.[96]

The final premeditated murder to be discussed was committed by a man who neither feared God nor loved his fellow man. In *Deeds against Nature, and Monsters by kinde* (1614), John Arthur, a deformed and crippled dwarf who made his living by begging, strangled his unnamed partner after she insisted he marry her. This relationship was presented as one that could not work because neither partner lived up to their proper decreed roles. Arthur clearly did not want to marry the woman he lived with though he supposedly professed that he loved her once: 'At last when I loves pleasures prov'd,/ I hated her whom late I lov'd'.[97] Arthur 'obtained daily use of her bodie, and continually committed so that sinne of lust and shame, making a practise thereof in the contempt of God's Lawes'.[98] He eventually agreed but his promise 'bred such a rage in his heart, that a purpose came into his minde to be rid of her by some untimely death'.[99] The pamphlet ended with rhyming verse titled 'The Cripples complaint in the Dungeons at Newgate.' This poem was written in the first person and described Arthur's anguish. While Arthur was described as having loved the woman he killed, this was the same carnal love which was described in the Horsey murder: 'Of her, I promised to make my wife:/ For love so gained can never last,/ no sooner done, but love is past'.[100] Carnal love was very different from the spiritual love described in marital literature; it could not last as it was founded in passion rather than respect. Of course, that is not to say that Arthur and his partner did

[95] Patrick Hannay, *A happy husband, or Directions for a maide to choose her mate* (London, 1619), p. 6.
[96] Roger Hacket, *Two Fruitful Sermons, Needfull for these times* (London, 1607), sig. A2r.
[97] *Deeds against Nature, and Monsters by kinde* (London, 1614), sig. Br.
[98] Ibid., sig. A2v.
[99] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[100] Ibid., sig. Br.

not feel some affection to one another but the relationship was seen as immoral from the very beginning. Obviously, this woman wished to spend her life with Arthur. She had already 'promised to be his associate, and as his companion and wife' prior to demanding marriage.[101] As the relationship was founded in lust, it lacked Christian love, the essential foundation for any marriage. This lust could not be sustained and caused Arthur's love to grow lukewarm.

All the men discussed in this chapter compromised their masculinity by killing women but only Arthur was truly irredeemable. Arthur's neglect of his partner's honour signalled his ineptitude as a husband and his physical deformity signalled his ineptitude as a man. The dominant belief during this era was that inner monstrosity was visible externally through deformities.[102] As stated, Thomas Adams wrote 'the Lustfull man is a monster; as one that useth'.[103] This belief that the monstrosity could be physically seen also appeared in popular literature. In *A happy husband*, Hannay warned the reader about the dangers of marrying a deformed man:

> As for his *shape* I would it should be free
> From (Natures, not of spite) *Deformity:*
> Deformed *shape is of so bad a nature*,
> That it is dislike even in a noble creature;
> Where comely *shape* and *love* attracts the eyes,
> By secret sympathy is all it sees.[104]

A well-formed man made a good husband according to the poet. Arthur, however, represented the beliefs about monstrosity and his misshapen body was the result of his inward wickedness.[105] As stated above, John Dilworth's behaviour was labelled as 'monstrous' after he murdered and dismembered his wife's body but he himself was not; he temporarily lost control and adopted

[101] Ibid., sig. A2v.
[102] Katheryn Brammal, 'Monstrous metamorphosis: Nature, Morality, and the Rhetoric of Monstrosity', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 27(1) (1996), p.6.
[103] Adams, *Diseases of the soule*, p. 44.
[104] Hannay, *A happy husband*, p. 9.
[105] Ibid., 12. David Cressy, *Travesties and Transgressions in Tudor and Stuart England: Tales of Discord and Dissension* (Oxford, 2000), p. 34.

monstrous traits while Arthur was both figuratively and literally monstrous.[106] Arthur personified everything wrong with English society; he was a dangerous beggar who lived in sin with his partner. Furthermore, he regularly swore, drank and blasphemed and had 'not one good thought of God'.[107]

Children and Murderous Fathers

The men who killed their wives were depicted as creatures prone to violence who could not control their households let alone themselves. The number of pamphlets which discussed wife-murder was low and the same was true of pamphlets which described cases of children murdered by their fathers. Pamphlets which reported cases where women murdered their children were very different from those about men as the majority of these murders were cases of infanticide.[108] These women were alone on the peripheries of society and this was one means of self-preservation. Only one pamphlet, *A pittilesse Mother* (1616), described a case where a married woman killed her children while three pamphlets reported men killing their legitimate issue. Both men and women who killed their children were described as unnatural because they killed their own flesh and blood. The cases of filicide

[106] For a more in-depth discussion of early modern concept of monsters and monstrous behaviour see Chapter Five.

[107] *Deeds against nature,* sig. A2v.

[108] For infanticide in pamphlets see: Anthony Munday, *A View of sundry Examples* (London, 1580), *A world of wonders. A masses of Murthers. A covie of Cosonages* (London, 1595), T.B., *The Bloudy Mother, or, The most inhumane murthers, committed by Jane Hattersley upon divers Infants, the issue of her owne bodie* (London, 1610), and *Deeds Against Nature and Monsters by kinde* (London, 1614). For discussion of infanticide see: Laura Gowing, 'Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past & Present* 156 (1997), pp. 87-115; Martin Ingram, 'Infanticide in Late Medieval and Early Modern England' in Laurence Brockliss and Heather Montgomery (eds), *Childhood and Violence in the Western* Tradition (Oxford, 2010), pp. 67-74; Randall Martin, *Murder and Equality in Early Modern England* (New York, 2008), pp. 155-201; Linda A. Pollock, 'Embarking on a Rough Passage: The Experience of Pregnancy in Early Modern Society' in Valerie Fildes (ed.) *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England: Essays in Memory of Dorothy McLauren* (London, 1990), pp. 39-67; J.A. Sharpe, 'Women and Violence in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century England: Evidence from the Cheshire Courts of Great Sessions' in Richard Hillman and Pauline Ruberry-Blace (eds), *Female Transgressions in Early Modern Britain: Literary and Historical Explorations* (Farnham, 2014), pp. 127-40; Garthine Walker, *Crime, Gender and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003); *idem*, 'Just Stories: Telling Tales of Infant Death in Early Modern England' in Margaret Mikesell and Adele Seeff (eds), *Culture and Change: Attending to Early Modern Women* (Newark, 2003), pp. 98-115; Keith Wrightson, 'Infanticide in Earlier Seventeenth-Century England', *Local Population Studies* 15 (1975), pp. 10-22.

reported in pamphlets described middling to high ranking families whereas infanticide was a crime primarily associated with women of low rank.

It is likely that men who killed their children featured more frequently than women in these pamphlets as they were perceived to have acted outside their traditional genders roles to a greater extent as women were identified more closely with young children in the domestic sphere. These men behaved unnaturally and killed their children, specifically sons, who were absolutely necessary to carry on the family name. To kill these children was to destroy a family's past and future. As discussed, early modern wife-murder was depicted as the result of a man losing control of his emotions. The majority of these murders happened due to quarrels which escalated to physical violence. Wife-murder resulted from a lapse in both domestic control and the proper performance of divinely ordained gender roles.

Cases of filicide by fathers described in this cheap print, on the other hand, were exclusively caused by masculine honour gone awry. This section will discuss the four cases of filicide committed by fathers described in surviving murder pamphlets and analyse the unnatural and unmanly qualities these men took on. Walker noted that a man's willingness to fight an enemy 'was thought to arise from the emotion 'boldness' fortifying the soul'.[109] In some cases, violence was the most natural and honourable thing a man could do. The term 'unnatural', however, appeared frequently in these pamphlets and was used by the authors to highlight the horror associated with filicide. A man's 'natural office' was associated with the fulfillment of proper familial and social obligations whereas 'unnatural' behaviour stemmed from sinful living and associated chaotic actions and impulses.[110]

In *Sundry, strange and inhumane Murthers, lately committed* (1591), widower Lincoln, the 'unatrual father' as he was referred to by the author several times throughout the pamphlet, plotted

[109] Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order*, p. 85.
[110] *Two most unnatural and bloodie murders* (London, 1605), p. 12; Shepard, *The Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 132.

with a labourer to kill three of his four children with an axe after a neighbouring widow refused to marry him.[111] He believed that if he had fewer children he could convince the widow to marry him. While Lincoln did not kill the children himself, the author stressed 'in murther the consenter is as evil as the deed doer'.[112] This man showed more regard for his pride than for his own children and consented to their murder. On the day of the murders, he took his eldest child into town and bought shoes for his children as a means of creating a crude alibi. Upon returning home and discovering the bloody corpses of his children, 'the harde harted father made no signe or sorrow for them' and made no means to bury them.[113] Lincoln further showed his disregard for his family when he defended the actual murderer and accused his remaining child, a fifteen year old boy, 'to bee the author of this murther, and upon him would willinglie have imposed the same'.[114] Lincoln was eventually identified as the murderer after the children's 'woundes began to bleed afresh' when both he and the labourer were present before the corpses.[115] Had it not been for this miraculous revelation, Lincoln would most likely have continued to pursue the neighbouring widow.

Prescriptive literature for fathers existed during this period and highlighted the behaviour and qualities required of men for the proper upbringing of children. London moralist pamphleteer William Averall, in *A dyall for dainty darlines, rockt in the cradle of securitie* (1584), warned fathers that:

> after pride, followeth forgetfulnesse of God, contempt of men, and utter disdain of all verture. But especially pride so transformeth the inward ornaments of the mind, that it leadeth the body to all abuse and bring the soule to utter ruine, inchanting the wittes with such unnaturall passions.[116]

This quote speaks directly to Lincoln's 'unnatural' actions. After the widow wounded his pride by rejecting his advances, Lincoln plotted to murder his children. The pamphlet hinted that Lincoln's

[111] *Sundry, strange and inhumane Murthers, lately committed* (London, 1591), sig. A2v, A3r.
[112] Ibid., sig. A2r.
[113] Ibid., sig. A3v, A4r.
[114] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[115] See Chapter Two for a full discussion on miracles and bleeding afresh.
[116] William Averall, *A dyall for dainty darlings, rockt in the cradle of securitie* (London, 1584), sig. Bir-v.

domestic life was happy and the author described robust children who always ran to greet their father when he returned home.[117] But Lincoln's determination to be rid of them led his 'soule to utter ruine' and stirred the 'unnatural passions' Averell warned the reader about. Despite being well off, Lincolne wanted more and set his sights on a woman 'of some reasonable wealth'.[118] His personal honour and pride were deeply wounded when the widow rejected him and he resorted to murder in a vain attempt to restore it. The result of this ill-conceived plan was the loss of his reason, his family and his honour, essentially everything that made him a respectable man, and he ended his life in shame on the gallows in Ashford alongside the labourer.

Lincoln plotted the murder of his children so that he might ease his wounded pride and honour. M. Caverly of Caverly, Yorkshire murdered two of his young children and attempted to kill his wife and his remaining child after losing his estate and disgracing the family. Unlike Lincoln, the murderer of *Two most unnatural and bloodie murthers* (1605) received sympathetic treatment at the end from the author despite having committed a greater number of offences against his family. Like *Sundry, strange and inhumane Murthers, lately committee*, this pamphlet revolved around the murder of innocent children after a father resorted to unnatural acts against his family due to lost honour and injured pride. Caverly, a gentleman with seven or eight hundred pounds a year, married a young and virtuous gentlewoman.[119] After several months, Caverly's

> actions did now altogether practise the unprofitable taste of vice…For though he were a man of so good revenew as before, he continued his experience in such exceeding riot, that he was forced to mortgage his lands, run in great debts, entangle his friends by being bound for him, and in short time so weakened his estate.[120]

Caverly was initially presented to the reader as a decent gentleman due to his annual income but his disruptive behaviour reached beyond his family and entangled noble friends in his downfall too.

[117] *Sundry, strange and inhumane Murthers*, *lately committed*, sig. A3v.
[118] Ibid., A3r.
[119] *Two most unnatural and bloodie murders*, p. 4.
[120] Ibid., p. 4.

Despite having brought turmoil upon himself and others, Caverly 'indeed grew from bad to worse' and gave himself wholeheartedly to 'excesse rioting, as discing, drinking and revelling, and it is thought, to fed one evil with another'.[121] Caverly gave no thought to his proper domestic duties and obligations.

This was the very behaviour that Lodowick Bryskett, a poet and English state administrator, cautioned against in the prescriptive handbook for gentlemen, *A discourse of civil life containing the ethike part of morall philosophie* (1606).[122] Bryskett stated:

> For he that is void of religion and of that feare of God, which is in effect but a due reverence unto his Majesty, can never in all the whole course of his life, do any thing worthy of prayse or commendation. Whereas on the other side, he that hath this holy feare fixed in his mind, will always abstaine from doing any thing unfitting or dishonest, or that may offend God, and bring him to his wrath and indignation.[123]

Caverly did not love his wife as he should which, as discussed above, resulted in tragedy. Additionally, he did not respect his family's heritage and destroyed the estate he inherited from a long line of noble predecessors. Caverly brought God's 'wrath and indignation' upon himself and his innocent family.

Eventually, Caverly recognized that he had been 'the ruine of his ancient house, which hundreds of years together had bin Gentlemen of best reputation in Yorkshire'.[124] This recognition caused him to lose control of his emotions and 'sometimes he would teare his hairs, by and by the tears would flush into his eyes'.[125] As discussed earlier, the proper regulation of anger and other emotions were part of masculine identity and excessive emotion was perceived 'as yet another obstacle to the achievement of rational discretion' according to Shepard.[126] Botelho, when discussing gendered

---

[121] Ibid.,p.7
[122] Richard A. McCabe, 'Bryskett, Lodowick (*c*. 1546-1609x12)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3817 (12 June 2015).
[123] Lodowick Bryskett, *A discourse of civil life containing the ethike part of morall philosophie* (London, 1606), p.57.
[124] *Two most unnatural and bloodie murthers,* p.13.
[125] Bryskett, *A discourse of civil life containing the ethike part of morall philosophie*, p.13.
[126] Shepard, *The Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 67.

behaviour and knowledge, stated: 'Many of the anxieties about gender in the [early modern] period could be witnessed in the crossover effect; that is, female spaces seeping over into male spaces, and vice versa'.[127] Caverly behaved in both a womanly and an unmanly manner. He wept now uncontrollably, lashed out at his children through no fault of their own and 'being overwhelmed by the violence of his passion, all naturall love was forgot in his remembrance'.[128]

Caverly attacked his children as a misguided means to revenge himself against the wrongs he caused and to save them from shame after he 'brought them to beggary'.[129] Again, Bryskett's advice for gentlemen was poignant to this case: 'he that taketh so unjust a course to revenge his private wrong, is so farre from getting honor thereby , as he rather looseth whatsoever honor or reputation he had before; the combat being a thing odious and offensive unto God'.[130] By killing his children, Caverly punished himself and removed the disgraced branch of his family tree. Furthermore, he lost his honour as well as his masculinity by being unable to control his emotion as demonstrated by his fits of violence and uncontrollable weeping. The author further highlighted Caverly's unmanly state by describing him as 'a Strumpet' when he initially refused to acknowledge that he had done wrong in murdering his children.[131]

Caverly did receive some sympathy from the author of the pamphlet despite the fact that he murdered his children. The murder of Lincoln's children was a calculated crime: he plotted with the labourer and bought shoes for the children he knew would be dead when he returned home. Lincoln also attempted to frame his only living son and heir of the murders of his siblings. He appeared to be intent on destroying all remaining connections to his previous marriage in the hope of wooing the neighbouring widow. Obstinate to the end, he only 'confessed himself guilty of the murther, having

[127] Botelho, *Renaissance Earwitnesses*, p. 9
[128] Ibid., p.13.
[129] Ibid., p.17.
[130] Bryskett, *A discourse of civill life containing the ethike part of morall philosophie*, p. 70.
[131] *Two most unnatural and bloodie murthers*, p. 17.

before denied it even till the houre of death' as he was about to be hanged.[132] Caverly, on the other hand, was the prodigal son who returned to God and freely confessed and repented. Caverly's own childhood was presented as having played a great role in shaping the wretched adult he became. His father died 'before he had reacht the years of privilege, during his nonage, he was Warde to a most noble and worthy gentleman in' York.[133] Children owed great duty to their 'Parents, which God and nature hath commaunded' and while this gentleman was described as 'noble and worthy', he was not Caverly's father and the bond between ward and guardian was not the same as father and son.[134] This was a reciprocal bond in which the son was supposed to respect and honour the father. Just as a husband was supposed to chastise and love his wife, Bryskett stated that a father was meant to educate and correct his son:

> Great is the care then that fathers ought to use in framing the manners and dispositions of their children when they be young and tender in their owne houses, and are yet in their nurses laps…Besides that, such stirring of them, wakeneth and kindleth in them that naturall heate which helpeth the digestion of humors in them, and maketh them apt to be well nourished and strengthened against those outward feares, which cause their waywardness and crying.[135]

Caverly did not have proper fatherly guidance to set him on the right path in life. He became entangled in a secret engagement with a neighbouring gentlewoman but broke his promise and married another woman. Even in his youth he was depicted as an inconstant man. While the wronged woman forgave him, the author stated that this background set the stage for the murders and wrote 'yet revenge being alwaies in Gods hands, thus it fel' before describing Caverly's downfall.[136]

After a life of vice, Caverly redeemed himself though only at the very end of the pamphlet when his wife comforted him after he was arrested. She rushed to him and embraced him and this 'strange

---

[132] *Sundry, strange, and inhumane Murthers, lately committed*, sig. A4v.
[133] *Two most unnatural and bloodie murthers*, p.1.
[134] Averall, *A dyall for dainty darlings, rockt in the cradle of securitie*, sig. Civ.
[135] Bryskett, *A discourse of civill life containing the ethike part of morall philosophie*, pp. 53-4.
[136] *Two most unnatural and bloodie murthers*, p. 4.

kindness so strook to his heart, remembering the misery hee had heaped on her', he broke down. He finally recognized how he had squandered his life and those of his young family.[137] His early years were spent in disorder without the aid and guidance of a father. He was not a thoroughly wicked man, just a man who had been led astray by lack of fatherly guidance combined with a desire for life's pleasures. When remembering his children prior to his execution, the memory 'reflected such a natural heate upon him, that he was melted into water, and had not the power to take any farewell of them, but onely in teares'.[138] This heat was caused by his excessive emotions and 'a man who abandoned himself to his senses encouraged internal chaos by surrendering reason to passion'.[139] Even at the moment of his death, Caverly could not compose himself and totally surrendered to his emotions and wept. The above passage quoted from Bryskett also used the same term 'natural heate' when discussing the importance of fatherly guidance which 'nourished and strengthened [a boy] against those outward feares'.[140] Caverly's children saved his soul in death when his own father could not during his life and allowed him to die with the respect allotted to a gentleman even though it was in the hangman's noose.

The third pamphlet about a murderous father to be published during the period in discussion bore a striking resemblance to *Two most unnatural and bloodie murthers*. We see a man who ruined his family and killed his children in a misguided attempt to save his family name from public humiliation. *The Unnaturall Father* (1621) reported the downfall of John Rowse. Unlike Caverly, Rowse was not a gentleman. He was a wealthy fishmonger in London but was described as 'a Gentlemans companion, of good Reputation and Calling, that hee had Friends, Lands, Money, Apparell, and Credit, with means

[137] Ibid., p.17.
[138] Ibid., p. 17.
[139] Shepard, *The Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, p. 67.
[140] Bryskett, *A discourse of civill life containing the ethike part of a morall philosophie*, p. 54.

sufficient to have left for the maintenance of his of Family'.[141] Rowse had a penchant for drinking, gambling and prostitutes though by all outward appearances 'hee lived in good and honest fashion'.[142] He began an affair with a maidservant and kept her in the family home as his mistress for two years before his wife died, supposedly of a broken heart. After his wife's death, Rowse gave himself over to vice completely until 'his estate began to be impoverished, much of his Land morgag'd and forfeited, himself above two hundred pounds in debt, and in processe of time to be (as a lewd liver) of all his honest neighbours rejected and contemned'.[143] He remarried and continued to live so badly that he fled to Ireland and Holland to escape creditors.

Shepard noted that 'a man who diverted resources from the household economy was dishonest, negligent and unseemly'.[144] Upon his return, he reconciled with his long-suffering wife though his neighbours and friends continued to shun him and his good reputation was destroyed. His lost estate and prolonged social rejection played havoc on Rowse's self-identity, both public and private. He lamented the loss of his good name and social standing as well as 'the poore case of his children'.[145] He decided to kill his children 'by a speedy & intimely death' so that they might be spared from his dishonourable fall from grace.[146] He wrongly believed his actions were honourable and murdered his children because 'he had left [them] but poverty and beggery' and they 'were like to be left to go from doore to doore for their living'.[147] Again, Bryskett's warnings to fathers were relevant and when discussing personal honour he wrote 'that to fight for cause of honour, is not an act of fortitude…whereas true fortitude, is to use these gifts [honour and strength] well and honesty, according to reason. And what honestie or reason can there be in this so mischievous and wicked a

[141] *The Unnaturall Father: Or, The Cruell Murther committed by one John Rowse of the Towne of Ewell, ten miles from London, in the Country of Surry, upon two of his owne Children*, (London, 1621), sig. Br-v.
[142] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[143] Ibid., sig. A3v-A4r.
[144] Alexandra Shepard, 'Manhood, Credit and Patriarchy in Early Modern England c. 1580-1640', *Past & Present* 167 (2000), p. 83
[145] Ibid., sig. Bv.
[146] Ibid., sig. Bv.
[147] Ibid., sig. Bv.

fight?'.[148] The final question bore a resemblance to a question posed by the arresting constable who 'demanded of [Rowse] why and how he could commit so unnaturall a fact, as to murder his Children'.[149] Rowse answered 'he was loth they should goe about the Town a begging'.[150] While Rowse's actions may have been committed with the best of intentions, they remained unnatural and dishonourable.

Rowse's actions were indeed dishonourable and were made even more so by his behaviour both during and after the murders. Like Caverly, the author described Rowse in unmanly terms to stress the fact that he was not behaving within proper gender roles.[151] He took his two young daughters one by one from their beds and drowned them in a spring that ran through the cellar in his house. He placed the corpses in their room and covered them with a sheet in a manner reminiscent of tucking them into bed. He then walked 'up and downe his house, weeping, and lamenting his owne misery, and his friends treachery, that was the maine ground of all his misfortunes, & the death of his Children'.[152] Again, the feminine and masculine spheres seep into one another and caused Rowse to behave in both womanly and unmanly ways as he both wept excessively and allowed his passions to overpower his reason. He further exhibited unmanly qualities when 'he drew his sword and laid it naked on a Table'.[153] Only men were permitted to carry swords and these weapons were both a

[148] Bryskett, *A discourse of civill life containing the ethike part of morall philosphie*, p. 74.
[149] *The Unnaturall Father*, sig. B2v.
[150] Ibid., sig. B3r.
[151] The concept of 'unmanly' murder also appeared in *A True Relation of a most desperate Murder*. This pamphlet described the murder of Sir John Tindall by John Barterham after a long court battle which was settled in Tindal's favour. After this, Barterham took Tindal by surprise and shot him with a pistol he had hidden in his coat. Barterham was arrested and was committed to the King's Bench where he hanged himself. The final line of the pamphlet stated: 'But his fact was foule, his quarrel ignoble, his defence unmanly, his conscience seared, his hands full of bloudy guiltnesse, his heart of shame, his soule of terrors, and his end damnable'. *A True Relation of a most desperate Murder* (London 1617), sig. C4v. His actions were described as particularly cowardly because he did not allow Tindal the opportunity to defend himself by shooting him with a concealed weapon and hanged himself rather than face justice for his actions.
[152] Ibid., sig. B2r.
[153] Ibid., sig. B2r.

signifier of an elevated social rank and a readiness to protect oneself or one's family.[154] To be without a sword was to be defenceless but Rowse had nothing left to defend as he destroyed his fortune and his family and was a remnant of the respectable householder and father he once was.

The final murderous father to be discussed behaved in the most depraved manner out of all the cases of filicide identified in this chapter. The pamphlet *A True Relation of the most Inhumane and bloody Murther* (1609) primarily reported the murder of Minister Master James in Rockland, Norfolk by his curate Lowe after he had been conducting an affair with his wife. On the surface, this was a straight forward case of petty treason. Lowe was a subordinate to James as was Mistress James. Both reached above their stations which resulted in the death of a respectable husband, father and member of the Church of England. Lowe's gallows confession, however, revealed him to be a truly depraved man. Before becoming James' curate, Lowe served as a schoolmaster where 'hee fell in love with a wealthy mans daughter, and shee likewise with him'.[155] The woman became pregnant because of the affair. After she gave birth, Lowe paid for the child to be sent to a nurse. Lowe, 'intending to have made her his wife, requested her Fathers good wil, who absolutely denied him'.[156] In retaliation, Lowe attempted to burn down the man's house but only succeeded in setting fire to a barn full of corn. Bernard Capp noted that 'embittered servants without the courage to kill could pursue an alternative means of revenge: arson. Setting fire to an employer's house was an ideal weapon of the weak'.[157] After the fire, he left the area and began to work for the ill-fated Master James. He sent for the child under the guise of seeking a new nurse but 'smothered it in his cloake' when it was delivered to him and buried the small corpse in a field.[158] This murder bore a resemblance to cases of infanticide as he was single and sought to save his reputation by killing his

[154] Shepard, *The Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, p.147.
[155] *A True Relation of the most Inhumane and bloody Murther, of Master James Minister and Preacher of the word of God at Rockland in Norfolke* (London, 1609), sig. C2r.
[156] Ibid., sig. C2v.
[157] Capp, *When Gossips Meet*, pp. 177-8.
[158] *A True Relation of the most Inhumane and bloody Murther*, sig. C3v.

child. The difference, however, was that this child was not a newborn and he had already openly accepted it as his own issue.

The more details provided about Lowe's life, the more unnatural he became. He believed 'that he was borne to higher Fortunes, then to live so base…a life'.[159] His supposed baseness, however, was of his own construction because he refused to accept his allotted role in life. The author described him as a man 'altogether divorst from christian humanity and absolutely markt and seald for vessels of perdition'.[160] This was a man whose actions were damnable and devoid of all humanity. He could not control his sexual desires and seduced two respectable women. This resulted in the downfall of James's wife and the deaths of a child and the minister. He refused to accept his place in God's order but became a member of the clergy. It must be noted that while Lowe refused to accept his submissive role in life, he did not relinquish his masculinity in the same manner as Caverly and Rowse. The author noted that when he was interrogated shortly before his execution he behaved 'like a man careless of life and fearelesse of death, with a sullen yet manly countenance'.[161] He maintained full control of his emotions and bravely faced the death of his own making.

Lowe's actions in James's house were depraved but they were indirectly encouraged by James himself. Lowe refused to accept his lot in life and convinced himself 'that he was borne to higher Fortunes, then to live so base and stipendary a life'.[162] This complete lack of rational thinking directly led to his downfall. Master James too exhibited a lack of proper control and awareness for his position as the head of a household. The author reported that Lowe and Mistress James were suspected of adultery by neighbours who began to talk amongst themselves. James sought out 'the first Author' who 'he not onely admonisht but very seriously threatened them, that if they persisted

[159] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[160] Ibid,. sig. A3v-A4r.
[161] Ibid., sig. Cv.
[162] Ibid., sig. A3r.

in any such ill kind of speaking, he would urge the severity of the Law against them'.[163] While this might be perceived as a man protecting his household's respectability and honour, it simply created a cover for the adulterous pair to act under. James did not broach the topic with either his wife or Lowe even though these actions were so overt that their private life spilled into the public sphere. According to Puritan author Robert Pricke in *The Doctrine of Superioritie of Subjection* (1609), a master was

> to dispence & proportion correction, according to the nature & measure of the offence: and therefore he is not egerly to pursue small faultes, or overpasse great: nor extreamly revenge offences against himself, & to make light account of sinnes committed against God, and the salvation of the servant.[164]

James did exactly the opposite of what he should have done: he overlooked a great offence committed against both God and himself and did not properly correct his servant and wife's behaviour. By refusing to see what was so blatant, James proved himself to be an impotent householder who fostered and indirectly encouraged the man who murdered him in his own bed.

Servants and Domestic Violence

This chapter has identified and discussed the various ways that men abandoned their reason, nature, and manhood and became murderers. These men killed their wives and children in a variety of ways after neglecting their domestic duties. The third category of domestic violence committed by men to be discussed is the murder of servants but this particular crime appears to be absent from murder pamphlets. There are several surviving pamphlets such as the case just discussed which connected a master's failings with his murder at the hands of his servants but none in which a master murdered

[163] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[164] Robert Pricke, *The Doctrine of Superioritie of Subjection, contained in the fift Commandement of the holy law of Almightie God* (London, 1609), sig. L7v.

his servant. Perhaps this was due to the fact that violence directed towards servants by their masters was not uncommon. Alexandra Shepard has noted that

> while sometimes a particularly vigorous master's disciplinary powers were curtailed by a higher authority, many cases of abuse seem to have come to light only *after* serious injury had been suffered by the servant, which suggests that masters enjoyed considerable autonomy in their use of disciplinary violence.[165]

Interestingly enough, the only pamphlet to directly address the murder of a servant featured a woman as the murderer but this woman behaved in a blatantly masculine manner. In *Three Bloodie Murders* (1613), Elizabeth James beat her servant and cut her throat after an extended period of abuse. James 'borrowed' her servant's clothes and money and refused to return the items until the servant was 'forst to complaine to her Maister, who, till then, knew nothing of his wives cosenage, and hard usage of her'.[166] Master James did right by the servant and 'spoke some what sharpely to his wife…and forced her to returne unto her, that money and apparel, that she so deceitfully had taken from her'.[167] James was depicted as an ideal master because he was fair and honest to the servant and properly corrected his wife's behaviour through 'hard words, and blowes'.[168] In this case, the use of corrective violence within the household was described as beneficial as it was meant to curb disruptive behaviour: 'For as the common Proverbs is, By*rch breaketh no bones*; neither moderate correction bring danger of death'.[169] Elizabeth, however, represented the very worst of both wives and mistresses because she respected neither her husband and domestic superior, nor the socially inferior servant she was supposed to both value and manage. Clearly, Elizabeth was beyond the

[165] Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, pp. 138-9.
[166] *Three Bloodie Murders* (London, 1613), sig. Cv.
[167] Ibid., sig. Cv.
[168] Ibid., Sig. Cv.
[169] Robert Cleaver and John Dod, *A godly forme of household government for the ordering of private families, according to the direction of Gods word* (London, 1598), p. 266. Dod was a non-conformist Church of England clergyman' and was also 'one of a handful of seventeenth-century puritan leaders with national standing'. J. Fielding, 'Dod, John (1550-1645)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7729 (21 March 2015). Cleaver was the minister in Drayton, Oxfordshire but was 'silenced by Archbishop Bancroft for nonconformity'. Benjamin Brook, *The Lives of the Puritan* vol III (London, 1813), p. 516.

control of even the most influential husbands. While this crime was committed by a woman it bore a striking resemblance to murder committed by a man. James beat the girl and slit her throat, the most common form of murder amongst brawling men. She then dismembered the body and buried some parts in her garden while burning others.

This particular crime was an anomaly for several reasons. Firstly, it was the only example of a householder murdering a servant. The second reason this crime was unusual was the savagery with which it was committed. Furthermore, the fact that such a vicious crime was committed by a woman no doubt contributed to its interest and inclusion in the printed pamphlet. The final reason that this particular crime was an anomaly was the fact that it did not actually happen in the way it was reported by the pamphlet's author. Bernard Capp, when discussing the 1613 Surrey Calendar, noted major discrepancies between this murder as described in the pamphlet and official records. He stated: 'The brief assize record stated only that Elizabeth James was convicted in 1613 of murdering Elizabeth Wellome by pushing her downstairs and breaking her neck'.[170] The pamphleteer obviously took some liberties with the story. The calendar entry said nothing about the husband but the fact that this upright character and his use of corrective behaviour were included in the pamphlet further highlighted Elizabeth's murderous behaviour. This woman was beyond all help and reason. She refused to learn from her husband's rebukes and allowed her wrath to spur her to murder rather than to acknowledge her proper domestic duties and obligations.

While murderous masters did not appear in print, bad masters were indeed discussed but they were never the primary villains of the stories. *A horrible creuel and bloudy murther committed at Putney in Surrey on the 21. of Aprill last, 1614* (1614) described how three servants killed their tyrannical master Edward Hall with a pickaxe. Just as the author of *A True Relations of the most Inhumane and bloody Murther* acknowledged a master's shortcomings, so too did the author of *A*

[170] Capp, *When Gossips Meet*, p. 158.

horrible creuel and bloudy murther committed at Putney though Hall's neglect was far worse than that of James. Hall's murder was particularly brutal and the author described how the servants had 'beat out his brains' and struck him with such force that the blows 'split and shivered his breast boane'.[171] After their arrest, the servants confessed that they killed their master after suffering abuse and neglect in his house. They accused him of not loving his family as he should and that he did not give them enough meat.[172]

A lack of meat appears to have been a common concern amongst miserly masters as clergyman Robert Cleaver and John Dod warned against in *A godly forme of household government for the ordering of private families* (1621): 'Many misers pinch their servants in their meate and drinke, allowing them not enough or not good enough, and this they take for frugalitie or thrift…This is no more to be counted frugalitie, or good husbandry, them to rob a poore man to give to the rich, is true liberalitie'.[173] The mean master did more to injure himself and his household through his misdirected frugality than he could have helped with money. Hall's actions alienated his family and servants and pushed him away from God's good graces. Cleaver and Dod discussed the importance of caring for one's domestic inferiors, especially servants so 'that they might be his servants by grace, and to make their wives the chaste spouses of Jesus Christ, and so al of them to serve him, the lord justly punisheth them [masters], that they [servants] are disobedient unto them'.[174] While Hall's servants were the ones who committed the violent murder, Hall himself was blatantly to blame even though he never laid hands on the men previous to the murder. His actions turned all the members of his household against him and God punished him for his failings as a man and master. The author of *A horrible creuel and bloudy murther committed at Putney* did not solely blame Hall but rather

[171] *A horrible creuel and bloudy murther committed at Putney in Surrey on the 21. of Aprill last, 1614* (London, 1614), sig. Bv.
[172] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[173] Cleaver and Dod, *A godly forme of household government for the ordering of private families, according to the direction of Gods word*, pp. 77-78.
[174] Ibid., pp. 39-40.

acknowledged that both the master and servants were grievous sinners. He implored the readers to pray to 'him that is the giver of grace, that hee may be graciously pleased to make the ungracious more gracious'.[175] Hall's household was in a state of mutual disrespect: he did not treat his servants well and they did not respect his authority. Other pamphlets were published which described the murders of men by wives and their servant lovers but these pamphlets focus on the wrongdoings of wives against loving husbands rather than the wrongs of the masters.[176]

Conclusion

Pamphlets which reported male domestic aggression did not condone excessive violence. They described the actions of men who abandoned reason and behaved in unacceptable ways for their gender. Authors presented men with explicit examples of how not to behave. Scripture, conduct literature and murder pamphlets alike all stressed the need for men to demonstrate reason, rationality and emotional restraint at all times. A household would only descend into chaos if a man did not perform his masculine duties properly and thoroughly. Men who killed their wives were portrayed as creatures incapable of love and order. God made Eve to help Adam and to be his partner rather than to suffer abuse at his hands. The men discussed in this chapter killed their wives during bouts of sudden violence or through premeditated acts of murder. While one may seem worse than the other, both forms of murder were the result of inappropriate husbandly decisions and behaviour. The men who murdered their children were portrayed as irrational and unmanly. They killed defenceless and innocent creatures who were in their care based on their own feelings of lost honour and inadequacy as fathers, providers and men. In doing so, these men destroyed both their

[175] *A horrible creuel and bloudy murther committed at Putney*, sig. A3r.

[176] See: *A Brief discourse of the late murther of master Saunders* (1573); *Sundry, Strange, and inhumane murthers* (1591); *The trueth of the most secret murthering of John Brewen* (1592); *Two most unnatural and bloodie murthers* (1605); *The Araignemnt and burning of Margaret Ferne-Seede* (1608); and *A bloudy new yeares gift, or A true declaration of the most cruell and bloody murther, of maister Robert Heath* (1609).

families' lineage and future. The men who neglected their servants, on the other hand, were depicted as hard-hearted and cruel. While the relationship between master and servant was based on social rather than familial ties, a master still needed to demonstrate respect and toleration for his domestic inferiors and provide them with proper care while they lived in his household.

A householder needed to exhibit complete physical, emotional and spiritual control at all times for there to be order in his domestic domain. Male domestic violence and murder meant a forfeiture of masculinity, reason and peace. These pamphlets did not just exist to titillate the reader with stories about murder and chaos; they stressed the need for love and toleration or correction of faults as well as the adherence to divinely appointed duties within the family unit. Murder pamphlets which described male domestic violence were part of an ongoing prescriptive discourse about household identity and gender roles. Of course, it must be noted that while these pamphlets did describe men who acted outside proper masculine norms, they still reaffirmed patriarchal control. The men described in this cheap print were examples for other householders of how not to behave towards their domestic inferiors. Women, children and servants were to be respected and protected by men but these pamphlets reminded the same men that they held elevated positions within their households while also reminding their inferiors about their allotted roles. By comparing and contrasting these publications with religious texts and prescriptive literature, it is possible to recognize the nuanced and cautionary language present in these pamphlets and to gain a deeper understanding of the complex expectations of a husband, father and master in early modern England.

5

'The Unity of Brethren':
Representations and Descriptions of the Social Other

Murder and execution pamphlets from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries continued the tradition of the medieval *memento mori* and used the dead to remind the living about their eventual deaths and the need to repent. These pamphlets contained descriptions of crimes and statements supposedly made by the murderers and their family and neighbours. These descriptions and statements condemned violence and murder but also established a firm pattern of behaviour that was to be adhered to in order to be a fully functioning member of society. The Book of Jesus the Son of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus 25:1 stated that; 'In three things I was beautiful, and stood up before God and men: the unity of brethren, the love of neighbours, a man and wife that agree together'. While this book was not considered to be canonical it was still considered to be of importance for the spiritual wellbeing of Englishmen and women.[1] As discussed in Chapter Three, a marriage would not last if the husband and wife did not love one another and perform their respective domestic roles. This chapter will focus on the concept of the unity of brethren within England and how this message was expressed in murder pamphlets. The unity of brethren could only exist between a collective of men and women who shared the same ideological beliefs. The murder pamphlets in discussion stressed the necessity of the reader to accept the teachings of the Church of England, to shun the papacy and to live in a godly manner every day. To deviate from this prescribed behaviour resulted in the spiritual, and sometimes physical, expulsion from the community. To live outside the community

[1] This book was part of the Apocrypha. While it was not Canonical Scripture 'learned [Protestant] Divines attribute to these Apocryphall writings the next place to the Canonicall Scripture'. *A Gagge for the Pope, and the Jesuits: or The Arraignment and Execution of Antichrist* (London, 1626), p. 71. The Apocrypha was discussed in the finalized *39 Articles* (1571) and deemed to be of importance to English daily life: 'And the other bookes, (as Hierome sayeth) the Church doth reade for example of lyfe and instruction of manners: but yet doth it not applie them to establish any doctrine'. Oliver O'Donovan, *On the Thirty nine Articles: a conversation with Tudor Christianity* (London, 2011), p.137.

meant the ostracised individual was no longer human, let alone brethren. The authors of these pamphlets frequently referred to the felons they described in both animalistic and Classical terms. Men and women could only be a fully united front against evil by sharing the same Christian beliefs, specifically those of the Church of England, and adhering to the laws of the realm. This message was not unique to this genre of literature but the style in which it was presented to the reader certainly was. Prescriptive conduct literature and sermons instructed the reader about the necessity of adhering to the Protestant faith and the Church of England. The murder pamphlet reader, however, was not just presented with Biblical quotes or examples of hubris from Classical Greek drama. This reader witnessed 'first hand' the dangers of peripheral life and related punishments.

During the second half of the sixteenth century, England was in an interesting state of transition; it was both old and new at the same time. The country, monarchy and church had existed for hundreds of years but these institutes underwent a radical transformation during the aftermath of the Reformation. When discussing the complexities of the emergence of national identity, social anthropologist Ernest Gellner noted that 'nationalism is not the awaking of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist'.[2] Benedict Anderson added to this and stated that the creation of identity

> was the spontaneous distillation of a complex 'crossing' of discrete historical forces, but that once created, they became 'modular,' capable of being transplanted with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations.[3]

Of course, England had long been a nation before the Reformation but a new English identity emerged that was 'Protestant' in name though it was in fact a mixture of traditional religious and social practices, beliefs, rites and rituals. By representing men and women as socially peripheral

[2] Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London, 1965), p. 169.
[3] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* Revised Edition (New York, 2006), p. 4.

characters such as traitors, parasites and savages, the authors of these pamphlets directly engaged with this new 'Protestant' identity and used it as a powerful exclusionary device in a country where national unity did not fundamentally exist. [4]

In *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, Stephen Greenblatt further discussed concepts of identity of both the national as a whole and the individual through representations found in early modern literature including the works of Edmund Spencer, William Shakespeare, and Christopher Marlowe to name but a few. He stated:

> Their significance for us is not that we may see *through* them to underlying and prior historical principals but rather we may interpret the interplay of their symbolic structures with those perceivable in the careers of their authors, and in the larger social world as constituting a single complex process of self-fashioning and, through this interpretation, come closer to understanding how literary and social identities were formed in this culture.[5]

Like plays and poetry, murder pamphlets reflected popular culture and tastes as well as fears and prejudices. The character of the 'other' or outsider could be applied in a variety of situations to equally diverse social groups but always with the intention of differentiation or exclusion. This chapter will engage with the exclusionary dialogue contained in murder pamphlets in a manner similar to Greenblatt's approach to early modern drama and examine how this literature engaged with new and emerging concepts of social, national and religious identities.

To be affiliated with another church or country meant that an individual was an outsider and excluded from the English brethren. Pamphleteers used a variety of characters and language to create a distinctly English identity. The first outsider character to be discussed in this chapter is that

---

[4] For discussion of about national identity and perceived outsiders see: Colin Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World 1600-1800* (Cambridge, 1999); Marianne Novy, *Shakespeare and Outsiders* (Oxford, 2013); Phillip H. Rand, *By Nature and Custom Cursed: Transatlantic Civil Discourse and New England Cultural Production, 1620-1660* (Hanover, 1999); Kaspar von Greyerz, *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 133-156; Philipp Wolf, 'The Emergence of National Identity in Early Modern England: Causes and Ideological Representations' in Herbert Grabes (ed.), *Writing the Early Modern Nation: The Transformation of National Identity in the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century* (Amsterdam, 2001), pp. 149-172.

[5] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago, 2005), p. 6.

of the traitor, one of England's greatest threats. A traitor could be a papist or a person opposed to the monarchy. The character of the papist regularly appeared in literature during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Tom Betteridge, when analysing the poetry of Barnaby Googe, an early pastoral poet, argued that literature and poetry revealed a society greatly concerned with the 'lower class, heretical papist, [and] female, [who had] their own laws and rules and [were] dangerous close to, indeed often actually impinge upon, the order of magisterial Tudor England'.[6] According to Andrew Hadfield, the character of the papist frequently appeared in poetry as a straw doll used to represent a variety of supposed evils. Hadfield added that 'the papist of course [was] given fewer lines, which [were] less poetical as well as less truthful'.[7] This character, as an enemy of godly society, was often depicted as a two dimensional character through which English anxieties could be vented and superiority claimed.[8] According to Peter Lake, Elizabethan England transformed the Catholic threat from being solely associated with religion to a greater problem that also incorporated discourses of 'secular obedience and treason'.[9] Popular literature opinion disapproved of Catholicism and James I openly engaged in 'an official rhetoric of scorn and contumely against papist and puritan subjects who placed themselves outside the generous bounds of' the Church of England'.[10]

While international wars and intrigue threatened England as a whole, recusant Catholics and priests threatened the country on a grassroots level and poisoned communities from within. Lynn Robson has noted that character of the 'bloody papist' did not appear consistently in murder pamphlets published between 1580 and the final decade of the seventeenth century: 'Instead, its emergence [was] crisis-related, associated with particular moments of politico-religious pressure

[6] Tom Betteridge, *Literature and Politics in the English Reformation* (Manchester, 2004), p. 203.
[7] Andrew Hadfield, *Literature, Politics and National Identity: Reformation to Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1994), p.72.
[8] Also see: Kaspar von Greyerz, *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 113-132.
[9] Peter Lake and Michael Quiestier, 'Papists, Puritans and the Public Sphere: The Campion Affair in Context', *The Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000), p. 506
[10] Lori Anne Ferrell, 'Kneeling and the Body Politic', in Donna B. Hamilton and Richard Strier (eds), *Religion, Literature, and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540-1688* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 70.

when the threat from Catholics was perceived as most acute'.[11] Lake further discussed the character of the papist and noted it was a 'perfectly symmetrical negative image to an English Protestant' whose presence could both shock and unite readers against the foreign threat.[12] Print culture and language interwove England's religious beliefs, political persuasions and evolving national identity into complex network of characters, stereotypes and representations of both real and perceived dangers visible in almost all elements of literary and cultural expression.

The second category of outsiders used by pamphleteers to separate the godly from the godless was the homegrown threat: the English parasite. The character of the rogue as defined by chroniclers Thomas Harmon and William Harrison first appeared in mid-sixteenth-century social literature and became a popular criminal archetype.[13] Coney-catching or rogue pamphlets, as described by Anna Bayman, 'were collections of anecdotes and descriptions of the different villains that supposedly inhabited the country with details of the tricks they played and the habits, organization and language.[14] Thomas Harman's *Caveat for Common Cursetors, Vulgarly Called Vagabongs* has continually inspired scholarly research in social history. Peter Burke has discussed rogues and vagabonds and stated that Harman was 'moved by a curiosity not unlike that of modern anthropologists' and J.S. Cockburn has used Harmon's descriptions to inform his research involving

[11] Lynn Robson, 'The Bloody Papist: Murder, Papists and Propaganda in Early Modern Prose Murder Pamphlets', *Renaissance Journal* 2(1) (2004), p.3.

[12] Peter Lake, 'Anti-Popery: The Structure of a Prejudice', in Anne Hughes and Richard Cust (eds), *Conflict in Early Stuart England* (London, 1989), p. 73. Also see: Peter Lake and Michael Questier, *The Anti-Christ's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England* (New Haven, 2002).

[13] For discussion of English crime and criminals see: Sandra Clark, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature of Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 2003); J.S. Cockburn, 'Patterns of Violence in English Society: Homicide in Kent, 1560-1985', *Past & Present* 130 (1991), pp. 70-106; Felicity Heal, 'The Crown, the Gentry and London: The Enforcement of Proclamations, 1596-1640' in Clare Cross, David Loades and J.J. Scarisbrick (eds), *Law and Government Under the Tudors* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 211-260; Marjorie K. McIntosh, 'Poverty, Charity, and Coercion in Elizabethan England', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35(3) (2005); pp.457-479; John L. McMullan, 'Criminal Organizations in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century London', *Social Problems* 29(3) (1982), pp. 311-323.

[14] Anna Bayman, 'Rogues, Coney-Catching and the Scribbling Crew', *History Workshop Journal* 63(1) (2007), p.2. Also see Anna Bayman, *Thomas Dekker and the Culture of Pamphleteers in Early Modern London* (Farnham, 2016). Notable authors of this genre included Robert Greene, Thomas Nash and Thomas Dekker.

records of court assizes.[15] Linda Woodbridge, on the other hand disputed Harmon's work as a credible source and described him as 'an axe-grinder…His every syllable [bespoke] an antivagrant agenda'.[16] A.L. Beier too appeared sceptical of Harmon and Harrison's identification of supposed rogue organizations and hierarchy and noted that evidence of solidarity or order amongst England's criminals was rare.[17] Keith Wrightson and David Levine echoed Beier's sentiments and agreed that there was little evidence of a supposed network or 'fraternity of vagabonds' in England.[18] Whether or not the descriptions featured in chronicles or cheap print reflected the true nature of early modern crime and criminals, they do reveal that men and women were disturbed by the thought of the lower-echelons of society acting against the 'natural' social hierarchy.

The rogue became synonymous with deviance and demonstrated what could happen when men and women turned from their faithful English brethren to a life of crime and eventual damnation. This English criminal could come from any social rank and included gentlemen and the poor alike. The rogue, the villain and the vagabond all appeared in various forms of print including morality literature, social tracts like those of Harmon and Harrison, and crime pamphlets. When described in murder pamphlets, however, the rogue underwent a transformation and was described in parasitic terms. The murderers described were indeed rogues but they were also far worse. They were destructive 'caterpillars', 'cankerworms' and' bloodsuckers' rather than wicked criminals. The pamphleteers described this type of rogue as parasites that literally destroyed England from the inside out.

---

[15] Peter Burke, 'Urban History and Urban Anthropology of Early Modern Europe', in Derek Fraser and Anthony Sutcliffe (eds), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983), p. 179. J.S. Cockburn, *Crime in England, 1550-1800* (London,1977), p. 62-3

[16] Linda Woodbridge, *Vagrancy, Homelessness, and English Renainassance Literature* (Chicago, 2001), p. 40

[17] A.L. Beier, *Masterless Men: The Vagrancy Problem in England 1560-1640* (London, 1985), p. 125. Also see A.L. Beier, 'Social Problems in Elizabethan London', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 9 (1978), pp. 203-21; *idem,* 'On the Boundaries of New and Old Historicisms: Thomas Harman and the Literary Rogue', *English Literary Renaissance* 33(2) (2003), pp. 181-200.

[18] Keith Wrightson and David Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525-1700* (Oxford, 1995), p. 142.

The final method used by pamphleteers to exclude criminals from the English brethren was to compare the felons to so-called savages from both the New World and Classical characters.[19] The world was expanding due to exploration and education which led to the discovery of new and unusual ideas and people. Social othering and the character of the dangerous 'savage' has long been a part of English literature and frequently appeared in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century plays.[20] Eric Griffin's chapter 'Shakespeare, Marlowe, and the Stranger Crisis of the early 1590s' analysed tensions caused by immigration at the end of the sixteenth century and its influence in English theatre. Griffin argued that 'oscillating between sympathetic identification and outright contempt, English citizens were discomfited by the presence of 'strangers' in their midst, even when they understood why they ought to be offering support'.[21] The concept of the outsider was a constant site of anxiety in both English life and literature. Leslie Fielder, in his pioneering study *The Stranger in Shakespeare*, analysed representations of marginalized characters including the Jew, the Moor, the 'savage' and women in Shakespeare's plays, poems and sonnets. Jack D'Amico focused specifically on the stereotypical, and often villainous, descriptions of the Moor in early modern plays. D'Amico suggested that the supposed savage characteristics of socially peripheral characters were the outward projection of the less-than-godly thoughts and desires harboured by Englishmen and women.[22] The same notion was present in murder pamphlets. When compared to the 'savage', felons fared worse than their literary counterparts and were expelled to the peripheries of humanity.

The literary representation of the 'savage' found in murder pamphlets had a three-fold function. Firstly, this character represented the unknown dangers associated with foreign regions or nations.

[19] Also see: Andrew Hadfield, *Amazons, Savages and Machiavels: Travel and Colonial Writing in English, 1550-1630* (Oxford, 2001); Thomas G.M. Peace, 'Deconstructing the Sauvage/ Savage in the Writing of Samuel de Champlain and Captain John Smith', *French Colonial Studies* 7 (2006), pp. 1-20.

[20] For more discussion of social othering and early modern theatre see: Jacques Lezra, 'Translated Turks on the Early Modern Stage' in Robert Henke and Eric Nicholson (eds), *Transnational Exchange in Early Modern Theatre* (Aldershot, 1988), pp. 159-80.

[21] Eric Griffin, 'Shakespeare, Marlowe, and the Stranger Crisis of the Early 1590s' in Ruben Espinosa and David Ruiter (eds), *Shakespeare and Immigration* (London, 2014), p. 14.

[22] Jack D'Amico, *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama* (Gainesville, 1991).

Secondly, the 'savage' served as a foil to emphasize the admirable qualities of England's men and women. Thirdly, the literary term 'savage' functioned as an exclusionary label when applied to English felons and highlighted the dangers that lurked within England itself. Anderson notes that the 'character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other' was a useful tool to remind people of their supposed national unity and to 'inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love'.[23] When used in this context, pamphleteers used the trope of the 'savage' to identify the wicked and to inspire Englishmen and women to godly living. By highlighting negative traits of the 'other' in print , authors of murder pamphlets also brought perceived deficiencies in England's social, national and religious under scrutiny.[24]

The 'United' Christian Brethren

By representing men and women as socially peripheral characters such as traitors, parasites and savages, the authors of these pamphlets created a powerful exclusionary device. These felons were no longer just corrupted sinners; they were national enemies and existed outside the human realm. When discussing manhood and masculinities in Chapter Four, this dissertation addressed the importance of language as a powerful 'rhetorical device aimed to establish definitions of manhood in exclusively patriarchal terms and to encourage men either to adopt self-discipline or to submit to the authority of others'.[25] Language greatly contributed to gender identity and also had the potential to strip away a person's humanity, allowing for harsh public scrutiny. The use of exclusionary rhetoric also occurred on a national level. Natalie Zemon Davis, in 'The Rites of Violence: Religious Riots in Sixteenth-century France', touched on a similar concept of dehumanization in regards to public judgement and action during the French wars of religion. She described how French mobs, both

[23] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 145.
[24] Robson, 'The Bloody Papist', p. 3.
[25] Alexandra Shepard, *Meaning of Manhood* (Oxford, 2003), p. 88.

Catholic and Protestant, regularly used dehumanizing language against each other to legitimate violence: 'The crucial fact that the killers must forget is that their victims are human begins. These harmful people in the community- the evil priest or hateful heretic- have already been transformed for the crowd into 'vermin' or 'devils''.[26] By turning the enemy into a figure of evil or ridicule, the opposing mob could partake in a guilt-free massacre in the name of God. These actions mimicked those of the state as official corporal violence also incorporated exclusionary language to highlight a felon's guilt and suppress his or her humanity. Both sides were physically human but their supposed heretical beliefs meant that they were outside the opposing side's community of like-minded brethren.

This same concept was present in English murder pamphlets though in a slightly modified way. Zemon Davis discussed men and women who killed as part of an extra-judicial mob and employed dehumanization techniques to justify their behaviour. These actions mimicked official punishments and executions as this formal violence was used to both demonstrate state power and curb the behaviour of subordinates. The authors of English pamphlets, on the other hand, used similar exclusionary methods to justify crown power and to uphold the institution of public execution. The readers of these pamphlets, however, were not the angry mobs described by Zemon Davis. They were ordinary men and women who were equals of the featured traitors and murderers. The only way to justify killing an equal was to cast them out of the collective Protestant brethren and label them unworthy of sympathy. How else could people gather to hurl both abuse and debris at men and women being dragged on hurdles to the gallows? The Church taught love and forgiveness but this lesson only extended to like minded people and not the men and women who willingly left the right path to pursue pleasure or vice.

[26] Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Rites of Violence: Religious Riots in Sixteenth-century France', *Past & Present* 59 (1973), p. 85.

The France described by Zemon Davis was a Catholic country with a Protestant population which caused great unrest. England, on the other hand, was a Protestant country with no alternative religion permitted. The concept of who was included in the English brethren appeared to waver slightly in different situations described in murder pamphlets and must be addressed prior to discussing the categories of exclusion. When discussing post-Reformation Protestantism, Catherine Davies stated: 'The defence of the English church was not so much a question of defending its visible institutions and observances as of attacking popery in all its manifestations'.[27] The majority of these pamphlets were written and published by English pamphleteers but occasionally translated stories from both Protestant and Catholic European countries appeared in circulation. Stories from the Netherlands and Germany often served as examples of supposed international Protestant brethren. The pamphlet *A Gagge for the Pope, and the Jesuits* (1626) condemned the actions of the Catholic Church and its clergy. The anonymous author also praised all Protestant countries for having escaped the tyranny of Rome:

> First then concerning Religion, now called Reformed, who knows not, what England, Scotland, Denmarke, Norway, Sweden, the low Countries, and many great townes and Provinces, both in Germany and France have done? And that with resolution never to return to the vomit again?[28]

The final line of this quote refers to Proverbs 26.11: 'As a dog turneth again to his own vomit, so a fool turneth to his foolishness'.[29] This referred to a vicious cycle that would only end in misery. Unlike Catholics, Protestants themselves as a whole broke free of folly and superstition. What was never addressed, however, was the discord amongst the different Protestant churches across Europe. When discussing different approaches to religious practices both in and outside England, Rachel Willie

[27] Catherine Davis, ''Poor Persecuted Little Flock' or 'Commonwealth Christians': Edwardian Protestant Concepts of the Church' in Peter Lake and Maria Dowling (eds), *Protestantism and the nation church in sixteenth century England* (London, 1987), p. 78.
[28] *A Gagge for the Pope, and the Jesuits: or The Arraignment and Execution of Antichrists* (London, 1626), p. 4.
[29] This proverb was also referenced in 2 Peter 2:22: 'But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire'. These animals, the dog and the pig, cannot change their base instincts and return time and time again to a state of degradation through greed and selfish desires.

noted that 'far from demonstrating Protestant unity against Catholicism and vice versa, the material practices of devotion were pliable'.[30] As previously stated, the England described in these pamphlets was both simplified and idealized and the possibility of religious pluralism was never addressed.[31]

This supposed international and united brethren was used by authors in several pamphlets to demonstrate the righteousness of the Reformed Church. The action in *A True relation of Gods wonderfull mercies, in preserving one live, which hanged five dayes, who was falsely accused* (1605) occurred in Bonn and the protagonist, John Johnson, was a young Dutch man who was travelling with his uncle. Despite the different nationality, this story no doubt appealed to English audiences due to the fact that Johnson was a described as a devout Protestant:

> Insomuch, that whatever the young man did was most pleasing to his Uncle as also to most who knew him: He was many times assailed by Jesuits (and others of that religion) to convert him from the true religion which he then professed, but he continuning constant, by no meanes would yield unto them: which being bruited in the Citie, he was of all the godly generally well respected.[32]

Johnson was falsely accused of robbery at an inn and hanged in Bonn after a trial. His faith, the true faith, however, saved him. He hanged for five days but was uninjured. God's providential miracles were not reserved exclusively for the English and were bestowed on all faithful Protestants. The author stressed the importance of Protestant belief but did not differentiate between the different churches. There was never mention of Lutheranism or Calvinism despite the fact that these groups often quarrelled amongst themselves and perfect unity of brethren never existed. All Protestants, regardless of nationality and leaning, shared a common bond and could benefit from the experiences

[30] Rachel Willie, ''All Scripture is Given by Inspiration of God: Dissonance and Psalmody' in Kevin Killeen, Helen Smith and Rachel Willie (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the Bible in Early Modern England, 1530-1700* (Oxford, 2015), p. 295.

[31] For more discussion of representations of Protestant unity in print see: David Loevenstein, *Treacherous Faith: The Specter of Heresy in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Oxford, 2013); Melinda S. Zook, 'Women, Anglican Orthodoxy, and the Church in Ages of Danger', in Sigrun Haude and Melinda S. Zook (eds*), Challenging Orthodoxies: The Social and Cultural Worlds of Early Modern Women* (Farnham, 2014), pp. 101-122.

[32] *A True relation of Gods wonderfull mercies, in preserving one live, which hanged five dayes, who was falsely accused* (London, 1605), sig. A3v-A4r.

of others. This unity meant not only a shared system of religious beliefs but also the collective experience of fighting superstition and Catholicism across Europe.

Not all featured stories were faith based. Murder pamphlets did rely on a certain amount of scandalous content to attract readers and some featured crimes committed by non-Protestants. In pamphlets where the protagonist was not Protestant the authors stressed the unity of all men rather than that of the Reformed religion and avoided overt mentions of Catholicism. In *A most strange, rare, and horrible murther committed by a Frenchman* (1586), the translator stated several times on the same page that the murders happened 'in the dominions of the french kinge'.[33] This fact was most likely stressed to assure the reader that such a 'strange, rare and horrible' crime could not happen in England. This fact may also have been repeated as a means of implying that the murderer was Catholic rather than Huguenot. Unlike John Johnson, who was described several times as a member of the 'true religion', the religion of the unnamed criminal in this pamphlet was never discussed. [34] The opening paragraph discussed the moralistic nature of the pamphlet. It stated that the message would benefit everyone and was 'open to all men' rather than just faithful English readers.[35]

The same is true concerning the murder of a mother by her son in Rumilly Haute-Savoie in *A Spectacle for usurers and Succor for poore folks blood* (1606). George Moillon strangled his mother Gasparde Brifin for her money after he squandered his inheritance. This particular type of murder, matricide, appeared very rarely in this literature and was described as a particularly unnatural act. Rather than use a Biblical figure as a sinful example, the author described the actions of Roman

[33] *A most strange, rare, and horrible murther committed by a Frenchman of the age of too or three and twentie years old* (London, 1586), sig. A2r.
[34] *A True relation of Gods wonderfull mercies, in preserving one live, which hanged five dayes, who was falsely accused*, sig. A3v.
[35] *A most strange, rare and horrible murther committed by a Frenchman of the age of too or three and twentie years old,* sig. Av.

Emperor Nero 'who most unnaturally caused his mother to be slaine'.[36] The religion of murderer and victim was never mentioned and the admonition at the end of the pamphlet stressed the importance of proper familial love:

> This may serve an example both for parents, to be carefull how they bring up their children in the feare of God and in good nurture betimes, while they are under their government: and for youth, to take heed that they eschew riotous and lewd company, least thereby the Devil procure them to the like desperate and damnable attempts.[37]

Again, we see how the author skirted around the contentious issue of religion in favour of a universal abhorrence of murder and sin. That being said, this universal message never stated that Catholics or Protestants should set aside their differences and unite as one. Rather, the author used somewhat vague language to express an opinion that could not be directly linked to Catholicism. Even the historical example the author provided existed outside of Christianity.

These examples united the reader with the non-English Christian brethren. Furthermore, it demonstrated that murder was a universal evil and the devil would stop at nothing to destroy the Christian community. The pamphlet *A Spectacle for Userers and Succors of poore folks blood* featured a harsh criticism of Jews. While the French and English may have had differences resulting from religion and politics, the author implored all Christians to unite against this common enemy. Unlike Christians, the Jews were described as 'men so voyde of all charity, and so without all humanity towards their neighbours, that they are not ashamed by all sortes of greedy covetousness and extortions'.[38] The author accused the Jews of being people without ties to community and neighbours. This accusation was increasingly harsh when compared with the author's praise of the Christian community. Of course, the author never mentioned the French wars of religion and accompanying massacres or the English burnings of both Catholic and Protestants during the tumultuous mid-sixteenth century. The main message presented in this story was that of universal

[36] *A Spectacle for Userers and Succor for poore folks blood* (London, 1606), p.7.
[37] Ibid., p. 11.
[38] Ibid., p. 1.

unity of Christian brethren against outsiders despite the fact that Catholic and Protestant factions repeatedly proved themselves incapable of co-operation both in political and social arenas.

Papists and Traitors

On the whole, the pamphlets in discussion were greatly concerned with identifying who did or did not belong to the English brethren. One of the main threats to English life and religion was the papist or traitor, the first outsider category to be discussed in this chapter. Papists were seen as unnatural because they went against their fellow English men and women. Pamphlets featuring stories of papists and murder enabled readers to witness the dangers of heresy and sin through a controlled medium. When discussing literary representations of social outsiders including the papist in early modern print, Betteridge recognized that 'this work allowed readers the 'frisson' of reading material that was potentially shocking and dangerous while at the same time its narrative form imposed a predictable order on the chaos and disorder it seemed to celebrate'.[39] The papist was a real threat to religious stability but one that could also be controlled and manipulated in print to demonstrate supposed religious prowess at the same time.[40]

The character of the papist described in murder pamphlets was deemed to be the greatest outlaw in England and described in one pamphlet as an enemy who sought to 'robbe God of his creatures, Christ of his members, her Majestie of her subjects, and the people of their salvation'.[41] Through the help of Satan, papists sought 'to disturbe the quiet and established state of this Church of England

[39] Betteridge, *Literature, Politics in the English Reformation*, p. 203.
[40] For recusancy in England see: John J. LaRocca, 'Time, Death, and the Next Generation: The Early Elizabethan Recusancy Policy, 1558-1574', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 14(2) (1982), pp. 103-117; Lisa McClain, 'Without Church, Cathedral, or Shrine: The Search for Religious Space among Catholics in England, 1559-1625', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 33(2) (2002), pp. 381-399; Alexandra Walsham, 'Miracles and the Counter-Reformation Mission to England', *The Historical Journal* 46(4) (2003), pp. 779-815.
[41] *A true report of the inditement, arraignment, conviction, condemnation, and execution of John Weldon, William Hartley, and Robert Sutton,* sig. A3r.

under the happie government of [the] dreade sovernge'.[42] Prior to his execution in 1607, Robert Drewrie, a recusant priest, was accused of returning to England 'to reconcile, seduce, and withdraw his majesties subjects from their naturall duties, love and allegiance, to a foreigne service and obedience'.[43] Papists turned their backs on their birthright in order to help foreign powers. These criminals did not attempt to live by the rules or laws of England and refused to recognize the supremacy of their monarch.

Papists were identified by pamphleteers as dangerous outsiders and were frequently described as animals. They were part of the natural world albeit a dangerous part. One animalistic term that was ascribed to them was that of the wolf. This title was particularly suited for the papist due to references that equated a congregation as sheep and the preacher as the shepherd. In *A pittilesse Mother* (1616), gentlewoman Margret Vincent, a recusant Catholic, murdered her two young children to 'save' them from Protestantism. Though Vincent was labelled 'pitiless' the author did ascribe some compassion to her because she was led astray by priests who had no right to be in England:

> This Gentlewoman being witty, and of a Ripe understanding, desired much conference in religion, and being carefull as it seemed of her soules happiness, many times resorted to Divines to have instructions of salvation little thinking to fall into the hands of Romaine Wolves (as she did) and to have the sweete Lambe, her soule, thus intangled by their perswasions.[44]

Not all murderers were horrible creatures who preyed on the faithful but recusant priests were described in such terms. While she was clearly guilty of murder, Vincent was also a woman who was led down the wrong path. She actively sought out advice concerning the state of her soul but it was from the wrong source.

---

[42] *A true report of the inditement, arraignment, conviction, condemnation, and execution of John Weldon, William Hartley, and Robert Sutton* (London, 1588), sig. A2r.
[43] *A True Report of the Arraignment, tryall, conviction, and damnation, of a Popish Priest named Robert Drewrie, at the Sesions house in the old Balie, on Friday and Wednesday, the 20. and 24 of February* (London, 1607), sig. A4v.
[44] *A pittilesse Mother* (London, 1616), sig. A2v.

The imagery of a flock led astray by a predatory animal also appeared in *The Parricide Papist, Or the Cut-throat Catholick* (1606). This pamphlet described the actions of a particularly violent young recusant Catholic, James Jeanes, who attacked and killed his own father before killing himself by cutting open his stomach with a knife. Robson noted the violent disembowelling 'as a method of suicide [recalled] part of the punishment for high treason that the Gunpowder plotters and those Catholic priests accused with them had recently undergone' the year previous.[45] Like Vincent, Jeanes was guilty of murder but was drawn into corruption by a priest rather than through his own malicious intentions. The author stated 'a Stoicall stupidity had possessed his braines and body' but his bloody end moved 'many beholders to pittie him, which did not pitty himself'.[46]

Dorus, the pamphlet's corrupting priest, and his Catholic followers, however, did not fare so well. The author labelled him a 'Calfe of Dan' and 'a Bell-wether to the scabbed flocke'.[47] Dorus and priests like him poisoned England and made good men and women sick: 'theyr nurse Ignorance, Darkness theyr dwelling, and Confusion theyr inheritance'.[48] This vivid description elicits imagery of corrupt and disfigured priests and their equally sinful congregations. The only way to free the country from the evils of Catholicism was to treat the source, the priests, like dangerous animals and destroy them before they could do further damage.

Not all animalistic descriptions of papists were as specific as the example given in *A pittilesse Mother* or *The Parricide Papist.* The pamphlet *A true report of the late horrible murther committed by William Sherwood* (1581) described one of the worst case scenarios that threatened English life. Like James Jeanes, William Sherwood was both a papist and a murderer. Sherwood, however, killed a fellow priest rather than an English citizen while in prison awaiting his execution but he did not receive the same pity Jeanes did. Sherwood, unlike the other papists discussed, was a priest who

[45] Robson, 'The Bloody Priest', p. 7.
[46] *The Parricide Papist, Or, the Cut-throat Catholick* (London, 1606), sig. B3v-B4r.
[47] Ibid., sig. B4r.
[48] Ibid., sig. B4r.

sought out men and women to convert. The author used Sherwood as an example of the ultimate evils of Rome. It was the responsibility of all good men and women to root out this evil otherwise papists would 'devour poor Protestauntes, as Beastes eate grasse'.[49] The author went one step further and directly compared the destructive actions of papists to unbridled animalistic impulses: 'These are the Bores which destroy the Wineyard, who because they are not baighted with Dogs, and their ears torne off, they will play lyke madde Dogges themselves, byting all that come in their way'.[50] This pamphlet implored pious English readers to curb the brutal behaviour of papists in order to protect their country and church.

These papists thought nothing of destroying good men and women in pursuit of their wicked desires. Even Mary I was not above rebuke for her popish beliefs and one author wrote that she 'ought to have been put to death as being a tyrant, a monster, a cruell beast'.[51] The author of *The Araignment and Execution of the Late Traytors* (1606) described the Pope as 'a cunning Foxe, that lying in his denne praieth on all the geese that he can light on'.[52] These animalistic descriptions were used to highlight concepts of barbarity. Anyone who displayed a wanton disregard for the true faith could easily descend into inhuman behaviour. In the prescriptive work *Englands sicknes* (1615), clergyman Thomas Adams stated that 'to bee sicke, and die are common to [man] with plants and beastes' but 'man hath a soule, wherein his reason is placed'.[53] Simply put, God placed man above the beasts. Man was considered to be part of nature but he had the ability to display reason, something animals could not do. It comes as no surprise that papists were frequently described as animals in pamphlets because they clearly showed this lack of reason and logic by choosing to celebrate popish superstitions.

---

[49] *A true report of the late horrible murther committed by William Sherwood* (London, 1581), sig. Bir.
[50] Ibid., sig. Aiiv.
[51] Richard Bancroft, *Daungerous positions and proceedings published and practised within the iland of Brytaine, under pretence of reformation, and for the presbiteriall discipline* (London, 1593), p. 36.
[52] *The Araignement and Execution of the Late Trayotrs, with a relation of the other Traytors, which were executed at Worcester, the 27th, of January last past* (London, 1606), sig. D2v.
[53] Thomas Adams, *Englands sickness* (London, 1615), p. 91.

While animalistic descriptions were used when describing papists, this group was also represented as being gullible or easily confused. They believed the Pope's lies and magic. These men and women had the luxury to be born in England but ruined their lives by swearing an allegiance to Rome. The pamphlet that described the execution of the men involved in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 stressed both the unnatural and unchristian behaviour of traitors. *The Araignment and Execution of the Late Traytors* stressed the fact that these men were outside the control of both God and England due to their poor choices. The author opened the pamphlet by imploring 'all faithful and obedient Subjects' to abhor and detest these men.[54] The author continued 'This treason I say, so horrible and detestable in the sight of God and man, for which their bewitched hearts, not having that true repentance, that in true Christians may be required'.[55] They did not behave as true Christians and actively sought 'the ruine of their Native Countrie' with no regard for those who did.[56]

Though the main focus was the papist himself, these pamphlets also discussed how his actions affected family and friends. Papists and their traitorous activities raised doubts and uncertainties amongst the godly by tainting the lives of innocent people. The author of *The Araignement and Execution of the late Traytors* apologised for aggravating 'the sorrow of the living in the shame of the dead' by making the reader experience the actions of these traitorous men and their subsequent executions.[57] These men had families who suffered on their account. As they were executed as felons their property was forfeited to the crown and their children bore the stigma of having a traitor for a father. At his trial for his part in the Gunpowder Plot, Everard Digby was thoroughly unapologetic for his actions but made several requests to the crown. He asked that his debts be paid, his children to inherit his land and 'for his death, to be beheaded, and not hanged'.[58] Hanging was an odious form of

[54] *The Araignement and Execution of the Late Trayotrs*, sig. A3r.
[55] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[56] Ibid., sig. B2r.
[57] Ibid., sig. Br.
[58] Ibid., sig. B4r.

death for a gentleman and members of the nobility were typically granted the honour of being beheaded instead. A powerful hierarchy existed even in death and continued to haunt the living. Digby was denied his birthright due to the abhorrent charges against him and 'went up the Ladder and with the help of the hangman made an end of his wicked daies in this world'.[59] Digby's request was denied as a final demonstration of the Crown's power. Though born a gentleman, he was a traitor and died like one. The author concluded the pamphlet by stating that these men, and other would-be traitors, could never triumph against the true religion. They only stood to 'loose their lands, goods, begger their wives and children, and leave an infamy to their name for ever'.[60] Their love for disorder selfishly overpowered their duty to their country.

Traitors were once a part of decent society but their actions would have brought 'the ruine of the land, and utter shame to the whole world'.[61] While all papists were traitors, not all traitors were papists though they posed the same threat to both the Church and State. The case of John Appletree from 1579 was a unique treason case for several reasons. One reason that this case was different from other examples of treason from the period was that Appletree was an accidental traitor and would-be murderer. The second reason was that he was pardoned by Elizabeth and allowed to return to respectable life. Typically, these pamphlets describe a great crime and the felon paid the price but a few demonstrated the mercy of the crown. While sitting on the side of the Thames, Appletree randomly fired a harquebus four times. Unfortunately for the young man, the Queen's barge happened to be passing at the same moment and a bullet hit one of her bargemen. Even though the man did not die from his wounds, the crime was described as 'devilish' because 'of the

[59] Ibid., sig. Cv. An example of the exact opposite treatment of a felon appeared in Nuremberg in 1593. Hangman Franz Schmidt kept an extensive diary about and made a note about the death of one Bartholomew Matzeroth, a native of Milian who was to be hanged for thief. Schmidt granted him the favour of being beheaded rather than hanged for the sake of his family as it was a more noble death. Franz Schmidt, *A Hangman's Diary: Being the Journal of Master Franz Schimdt Public Executioner of Nuremberg, 1573-1617*, ed. Albrecht Keller, trans. C. Calvert and A.W. Gruner (London, 1928), p.149.
[60] *The Araignement and Execution of the Late Trayotrs*, sig. D2v.
[61] Ibid., sig. C4v.

place, and presence, where in it chanced to be done'.[62] Appletree's actions were further described as 'traynnous or trayterous a fact…though it were in fact never executed'.[63] Although he committed this crime without malice or even intent, his actions were still outside the realm of godly behaviour as he showed blatant disregard for his surroundings during his pursuit of pleasure as well as human life.

Appletree's actions were particularly dangerous for many reasons and set precedence for wanton violence in England and all Protestant nations in general. The author stated that this man 'most miserably not only plagued [Elizabeth's] owne land, but all the servants of God dispearsed through Christendome, our Religion, & true faith in Jesus Christ'.[64] Appletree's actions were not those of a good Christian, specifically Protestant, subject. For a brief moment, Appletree was stripped of all humanity and made into a public example about the dangers of anti-social behaviour and bad judgement. Appletree prepared for his death in prison, during which time he frequently confessed his trespasses, prayed and begged Elizabeth's forgiveness. Moments before this execution, he was pardoned and his humanity was mercifully restored, which no doubt helped the Queen's public image by showing her to be a loving and forgiving sovereign.

The pamphlet *A true report of the most gracious and mercifull message of hir most excellent majestie* was not the only publication concerning the Appletree case. *A brief discourse of the most haynous and traytor like fact of Thomas Appletree* was also published in 1579 by the same printer Henry Bynneman. In this pamphlet, Appletree was described in kinder terms and the author considered his actions to be rash rather than devilish. This rashness, however, proved to be his undoing because he acted without regard for his surroundings or fellow man. His impulsive actions proved particularly 'haynous and wicked' to good Christians and he had to be punished for his

[62] *A true report of the most gracious and mercifull message of hir most excellent majestie* (London, 1579), sig. Bv.
[63] Ibid., sig. Biir.
[64] Ibid., sig. Aiiiiv.

actions.[65] Obviously, the actions of traitors were considered by pamphleteers to be beyond the pale and the unity of brethren was deemed necessary to appear beautiful before God. The felons accused of traitorous activities, even accidental ones, proved themselves incapable of being part of the Church of England.

The English Parasite

Pamphleteers used religious descriptions and representations as a means to both separate and unite the English brethren. Overt outsiders like papists and traitors were deemed enemies of the Church of England and used as warnings. During this period, England as a whole began to grow wary of undesirable members from within the country and English men and women could be just as wicked to one another as their traitorous counterparts. This internal threat brings us to the second topic to be discussed in this chapter: the English parasite. New literature was introduced alongside pamphlets about treason and murder which warned readers about dangerous English criminals that threatened the stability of everyday life. One of the best known examples of this literature is Thomas Harman's *A Caveat or Warning for Common Curisitors, vulgarily called vagabonds*, first published in 1566 and again in 1569 and 1573 and warned the reader about rogues, vagabonds and sturdy beggars.[66] Within this work, Harman identified and described the various types of dangerous criminals for the reader. In 1587, William Harrison published *The Description of England* in which he described the hierarchy of criminals. The types of criminals which Harman and Harrison described are extremely helpful to the study of social history as these characters frequently appeared in murder pamphlets. Harrison described three classes of robbers. The first was 'gentlemen living beyond their means',

[65] *A brief discourse of the most haynous and traytor like fact of Thomas Appletree* (London, 1579), sig. Aiiv.
[66] The term *rogue* first appeared in the 1560s and is believed to have been coined by Harman. Craig Dionne and Steve Mentz, 'Introduction' in *Rogues and Early Modern English Culture*, eds. Craig Dionne and Steve Mentz (Ann Arbor, 2007), p. 1.

followed by 'servicemen whose wages are not enough.'[67] The final and most threatening to social order was the rogue class, a catch-all term for undesirables, which he described as 'the worst because they [were] not bound by social order or respect for neighbours, friends or strangers'.[68] As a member of the aristocracy, a gentleman had an image and responsibilities to uphold while the soldier was poor, ideally, through no fault of his own. Both contributed in their own way to English life and their actions, though illegal, were not nearly as frowned upon as those of rogues. Rogues were more dangerous because they could corrupt other rogues and also the gentlemen and soldiers. Their depravity, supposedly, knew no bounds.

Craig Dionne and Steve Mentz discussed the rise of the rogue in England and stated that the rogue, or the concept of the rogue, blurred 'the boundaries between the historical and the literary, objective and subjective understandings, public paranoia and private experience'.[69] The crimes described in murder pamphlets contained these rogues and likewise blurred the boundaries between fact and fiction and stressed the necessity for social conformity from all ranks and orders. While Harman and Harrison described criminals in hierarchical terms, a man's social position did not necessarily protect him from the gallows. Social rank was often highlighted by pamphleteers but this was done as a means to identify a fall from grace rather than to elicit sympathy. If anything, a noble man's descent into sin was even worse than that of a pauper because he ought to have known better. He had been exposed to education and religion but still pursued sin while the poor lived in ignorance.

Although felons came from different walks of life, the same terms were used to describe them based on the ferocity of their crimes. These exclusionary terms ranged from parasitic creatures to out-and-out rogues depending on the individual and crime. The term 'caterpillar' appeared frequently in literature and plays during this period and was used when discussing parasitical rogues,

[67] Harrison, *The Description of England*, p. 187.
[68] Ibid., p. 187.
[69] Dionne and Mentz, 'Introduction', p. 11.

for a lack of better phrase. Caterpillars were one of the plagues God sent to punish the Pharaoh as described in Psalms 105:34 and Exodus 10:13.[70] Harrison, when discussing the 'caterpillar,' stated that they 'lick the sweat from the true laborers brow' and 'stray and wander about, as creatures abhorring all labor and every honest exercise'.[71] Nicholas Brenton, in *The Good and the bad, or Descriptions of the worthies, and unworthies of this age* (1616), continued in the same vein as Harrison when discussing criminals. He wrote that a beggar 'is a kind of caterpiller that spoils much good fruite, and an unprofitable creature to live in a common-wealth'.[72] Unlike papists or traitors, the parasite's primary motive was self-preservation rather than an ideological concept. The parasite had no master or loyalty to a greater power and lived for destruction.

Caterpillars had an inconspicuous presence and could blend into their surroundings but also had the ability to cause extensive damage. As the title suggested, *Deeds against Nature and Monsters by kinde* featured two criminals whose behaviour securely placed them outside acceptable society. The first was John Arthur, a crippled dwarf who killed his lover to avoid marrying her, and the second was Martha Scrambler, a woman hanged for infanticide. Arthur's monstrous behaviour was discussed at length in Chapter Four.[73] The author chose to include the story of Martha Scrambler with that of Arthur because both crimes appeared to be particularly unnatural. Arthur murdered the woman he should have married and Scrambler the child she should have loved. The author described Scrambler's deviancy in a variety of ways. First and foremost, she was a strumpet and a harlot as she was sexually active despite being unmarried. Her murderous actions then transformed her into a

[70] Further scriptural references to the destructive caterpillars include: 1 Kings 8:37; Jeremiah 51:14,27; Isaiah 33:4 and Joel 1:4, 2:25. The caterpillar was also known as the cankerworm or palmerworm.
[71] Harrison, *The Description of England*, p. 183.
[72] Nicholas Breton, *The good and the bade, or Descriptions of the worthies, and unworthies of this age* (London, 1616), p. 26.
[73] For early modern discussion and representation of monsters and monstrosity in English print see: Pierre Boaistuau, *Theatrum mundi the theatre or rule of the world, wherein may be sene the running race and course of everye mans life* (London, 1566), *idem*, *Certaine secrete wonders of nature containing a descriptio[n] of sundry strange things, seming monstrous in our eyes and judgement, bicause we are not privie to the reasons of them* (London, 1569); Ambroise Paré, *The workes of that famous chirurgion Ambrose Parey translated out of the Latine and compared with the French by Th. Johnson* (London, 1634).

'Caterpiller of nature, a creature more savage then a shee wolfe, more unnaturall then either bird or beast'.[74] The unnatural label was a fitting one because she killed her own child. The term 'caterpiller' was far more aggressive as it suggested that she destroyed more than just her child. She sought employment in a respectable house despite the fact that she knew she was pregnant with a bastard. She later gave birth in the same house and 'not like a mother, but a monster' threw the infant's body 'downe into a loathsome privy house, therein to give it an undecent grave'.[75] These actions brought great shame on herself and also into her innocent master's house. Furthermore, she made a mockery of the institution of marriage, baptism and burial in one fell swoop. Her actions, like those of a gnawing caterpillar, went temporarily unnoticed but when they came to light, all the damage she caused resulted in her identification and execution. Ironically, this woman who was described in animalistic terms was undone by a dog that discovered the infant's body.[76]

Martha Scrambler was not alone in being described in animalistic or parasitic terms nor was this sort of description reserved for a specific class of criminal. In *The Bloody Booke, or The Tragicall and desperate end of Sir John Fites (alias Fitz)*, published in 1605 and again in 1606, the author described Fites as both a bloodsucker and a pig after his crime and subsequent flight. Fites, a very wealthy and well-esteemed nobleman attacked and killed his friend Maister Slanning, Esquire, after an argument in a neighbour's house. The pair quarrelled and appeared to make amends but Fites followed after him with four men and attacked him as he travelled home:

> …[Slanning] the whiles taking the greene fields for his more contented walke, looking back, hee might behold Sir John Fites with four more galloping amaine after him. Which sight as it could not but breede doubtfull and fearefull suspition, for could it not but bee a great amazement to Maister Slanning, who little thought on the desperate plot of so vicious a minded bloodsucker'.[77]

[74] *Deeds against Nature, and Monsters by kinde* (London, 1614), sig. A3v.
[75] Ibid., sig., A4r.
[76] Ibid., sig. A4r.
[77] *The Bloudie Booke, or The most desperate end of Sir John Fites (alias Fitz)*, (London, 1605), sig. Bv.

The author condemned this act as both particularly violent and brazen and Fites was described in parasitical terms. He was a wealthy knight who wanted for nothing but chose to take all he could from a supposed enemy. Fitz's actions demonstrated that criminal behaviour was not limited to the lower classes and all men could have a hand in destroying English harmony.

Fites fled to France and eventually returned to England after his wife procured him a pardon.[78] Despite this merciful opportunity, Fites, like the perpetual bloodsucker he was, continued his downward spiral through drink and gambling. His wife returned to her father and 'now was his owne house without contradiction, or controlement, open to his associates, where nowe (if they please) they may erect a little Common-wealth of many iniquities, and much imputation'.[79] Since he was no longer a part of the respectable world, Fites built a new and wicked commonwealth for himself and his friends. He lived in bad company with criminals and rogues for some time but eventually his conscience got the better of him. Believing himself pursued, he fled towards London but on the way attacked and killed an innkeeper and stabbed the man's wife. He then ran himself through with his sword and later died of the injury.[80] In life, Fites existed on the peripheries of humanity. He killed his neighbour and was labelled a 'bloodsucker'. He later rejected English life, built his own commonwealth and populated it with criminals and rogues like himself. Even in the throes of death, FItes could not be labelled as human. After he stabbed himself 'he was anon…found wallowing in his owne bloud, like a Pigge that had been latelie sticked'.[81] This man, a knight of the realm who should have been held in high esteem, was no better than a pig when all was said and done.

Like a caterpillar, a bloodsucker gorged itself on the produce of others and only revealed its true motives after the damage was done. The term bloodsucker also has a scriptural connotation. The horseleech, a type of large leech found in ponds, was described in Psalm 30:15: 'The horseleach hath

[78] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[79] Ibid., sig. C2r.
[80] Ibid., sig. Ev-E2r.
[81] Ibid., sig. E3r.

two daughters which cry, Give, give. There be three things that will not be satisfied: yea, four that say not, It is enough'. Puritan clergyman Robert Cleaver analysed this passage in *A brief explanation of the whole booke of Proverbs of Salomon* (1615). He stated the horseleech is

> a creature well knowne unto us...*hath two daughters*, two forkes in her tongue, whereby she first pricketh and pierceth the skinne and afterward sucketh the blood...but her insatiable appetite of sucking blood is the actuall crye, which she maketh: for she never giveth over till she be filled, and then she falleth of[f]; yet afterward to it she will again, and be as hungry of it as shee was at the first.[82]

Cleaver's description of the horseleech bore a striking resemblance to the sins of Fites. He continually pursued pleasure and glutted himself at the peril of his family's honour and his salvation. He killed a man, received a pardon and then returned to the very same bloody behaviour, just like the horseleech's continual quest for blood. Unlike the bloodsucker or horseleech, Fites recognized his sins and repented while he was still able to secure his salvation but not his life.

By describing criminals in parasitic terms introduced by Harmon and Harrison, the authors of these pamphlets commented on the criminals' downfall. They passed from humans to lowly creatures with no useful function. Annis Delll, an innkeeper's wife who kept company with robbers and murderers while maintaining a respectable exterior, was described as both a parasitic creature and a monster for her terrible crimes. She killed a young boy without hesitation and cut out his sister's tongue to prevent her from disclosing the crime. The term monster underwent a change during the latter half of the sixteenth century. It went from being an external identifier based on a deformed or ugly appearance to an internal corruption. This new monster was far more dangerous due to the fact that a monster could now hide amongst good men and women, which was exactly what Annis Dell did. Even when first accused of these crimes, Dell was able to hide behind an assumed veil of honesty. The author stated: '…yet was her honest carriage such to travelors, and to all sorts of people she had

[82] Robert Cleaver, *A brief explanation of the whole booke of the Proverbs of Salomon by Robert Cleaver* (London, 1615), pp. 524-24.

to deale withall, that generally the whole country acquited her'.[83] The author stripped away Dell's humanity and described her as a 'monstrous female' rather than a woman.[84] She was simply a female of a sub-human species who contributed nothing to the world despite having the appearance of a kindly woman. Furthermore, her son George appeared to inherit this inhumane nature and aided in the crimes by throwing the child's body in a pond after the murder was committed.

Dell's unnatural and monstrous nature was further stressed due to the fact that she showed absolutely no remorse. 'The wonderfull works of God' made people feel guilt for their sins even when the sins were concealed.[85] The author wrote: 'knowing that a guilty conscience Salamander-like lives always in fire, that his days are dreadfull, his nights terrible'.[86] Even the concept of guilt was described in animalistic and unnatural terms. The salamander was considered to be a deviant creature with the ability to 'quencheth the fire that hee toucheth, as Ise doth, & water frose'.[87] The link between the sinner's guilt and the salamander was the fact that neither could be consumed by fire. The salamander was 'alwaies in the fire, and never consumeth so the wicked shall be alwaies in the fire of hell, & never consume'.[88] Furthermore, the salamander was believed to be so poisonous that 'if his spittle touch the foot [of a man], it infecteth and corrupteth all the mans body'.[89] Again, the parallel between the sinner as personified by Dell in this pamphlet and the salamander was presented to the reader as a corrupting influence to wholesome men and women.

---

[83] *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther committed by an Inkeepers Wife, called Annis Delll, and her Sonne George Delll, four years since* (London, 1606), sig. B3v.
[84] Ibid., sig. Bv.
[85] Ibid., sig. B4v.
[86] Ibid., sig. B4v.
[87] Stephen Batman, *Batman upon Bartholome his booke De proprietaibus rerum, newly corrected enlarged and amended* (London, 1582), p. 379. This work was originally written in 1240 by Franciscan monk Anglicus Bartholomaeus.
[88] Arthur Dent, *The plain mans path-way to heaven* (London, 1607), p. 365.
[89] Batman, *Batman upon Bartholome*, p. 379.

The Savage

England's social problems stemmed from both external and internal influences and the godly had to be constantly on guard to maintain respectability. Labels such as bloodsucker, salamander or caterpillar identified criminals as bad members of society. They exhibited parasitic behaviour though they remained a part of society, at least until their execution. The final exclusionary method used by pamphleteers to separate particularly wicked murderers from the realm of respectable English men and women to be discussed in this chapter was to completely ostracise them from community and label them as savages. In *Turks, Moors, and English men in the Age of Discovery*, Nabil Matar addressed the fact that while the term frequently appeared within English literature, very few supposed 'savages' ever stood on English soil. When discussing North American Indians, Mater noted that when they appeared in England in the early sixteenth century, they were 'encountered not as Indians assured of their identity and history, but as de-Indianized Christians who were learning to become 'English' men and women, to dress in English clothes and speak the English language'.[90] Furthermore, Turks and Moors frequently appeared in the Elizabethan court as diplomats and ambassadors rather than peripheral characters.[91] The literary character of the 'savage' greatly disparaged the behaviour and appearance of the actual people. The term savage appeared in murder pamphlets as a means of identifying men and women who acted far beyond the limits of socially acceptable behaviour rather than a direct comment on the 'savage' people themselves.

Indeed, this method of social othering was not limited to this genre of cheap print. By using the exclusionary title of 'savage', pamphleteers engaged with a widespread form of identification and ostracisization. The world was expanding during this period through exploration and the English population, like the rest of Europe, was being exposed to new cultures. The term savage appeared in

[90] Nabil Mater, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York, 2012), p. 4.
[91] Ibid., p.196.

different forms of literature but did not refer exclusively to newly discovered people. Spanish Dominican friar Bartolome de las Casas used the term savage to describe the inhumanity of his fellow countrymen in the new world in the mid-sixteenth century. One of his works, *The Spanish colonie, or Briefe chronicle of the acts and gestes of the Spaniardes in the West Indies, called the newe world*, was translated into English and published in 1583. In this work, de las Casas described the actions of Spanish soldiers during an attack on the local population of the Isle of Hispaniola and stated that they were 'emptie of all pitie, behaving them as savage beastes, the slaughterers and deadly enemies of mankind'.[92] When discussing the actions of the Spanish in Granada in 1542, he stated:

> The force being mounted to the highest type of extremitie, and all the violences, tyrannies, desolations, anguishes, and calamities above sayde, spread over all the Indies, where ther are any Spaniardes, although they bee more cruell in one part then they bee in an other, and more savage and more abhominable.[93]

This abhorrent behaviour was not just directed towards the indigenous population but also 'betwixt themselves by a just judgement of God'.[94] This work, and others like it, used exclusionary language to caution the reader about the treacheries of man. There is little doubt that this translation also demonstrated the superiority of England by portraying Spain, an enemy, as a country full of savages with no regard for their fellow countrymen.

As international expansion continued, the term savage took on a different connotation and eventually became associated with the stock character of the 'noble savage' in the late seventeenth century.[95] This term, however, did not carry the same meaning in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and appears to be linked more with behaviour than race alone. Anyone, European or otherwise, had the potential to be a savage. French essayist Michel de Montaigne held

---

[92] Bartolome de las Casas, *The Spanish colonie, or Briefe chronicle of the acts and gestes of the Spaniardes in the West Indies, called the newe world, for the space of xl. yeeres*, trans. M.M.S. (London, 1583), sig. A4r.
[93] Ibid., sig. M3r.
[94] Ibid., sig. M4r.
[95] The term first appeared in John Dryden's play *The Conquest of Granada* written in 1672. Interestingly enough, de las Casas' description of events in Granada in the mid sixteenth century revealed the indigenous population to be far less savage than the conquering Spanish army.

up a mirror to his readers and exposed the savage nature of Europe. When discussing cannibals, Montaigne stated:

> I thinke there is more barbarisme in eating men alive, then to feed upon them being dead; to mangle by tortures and torments a body full of lively sense, to roast him in peeces, to make dogges and swine to gnawe and teare him in mammockes (as wee have not only read, but seene very lately, yea and in our owne memorie, not amongst ancient enemies, but our neighbours and fellow-citizens; and which is woorse, under pretence of pietie and religion) then to roast and eate him after he is dead.[96]

The behaviour of Europeans to one another was just as brutal and savage, if not more so, than the actions of New Worlders. The difference between the New World and Europe, however, was the fact that European customs were rooted in time and tradition. This violence was 'normal' to society. The authors of murder pamphlets constantly denounced violence amongst individuals but celebrated it when it was justly performed by the Crown.

Use of the word savage appeared in murder pamphlets throughout this period in the same context as the writings of Montaigne and de las Casas. Murderous men and women were compared to so-called savages but always came out the worse for wear. They embodied the very worst elements of both the New World and Europe through their violent and chaotic behaviour. Margret Vincent, the murderous woman featured in *A pittilesse Mother*, was identified as both a Catholic recusant and unnatural mother as she bucked the natural order of the world and killed her children. These two reasons led to her being considered an absolute outsider. Firstly, she 'was bewitched with, a witchcraft begot by hell and nursed by the Romish Sect'.[97] Secondly, her crime cast her far beyond the reach of both Christian and non-Christian company. She killed her children, something that even cannibals would not do. The author stated: 'yea every beast and fowle hath a feeling of nature, and according to kinde will cherish their young ones'.[98] Furthermore, Vincent was labelled as 'more

[96] Michel de Montainge, *Essays written in French by Michael Lord of Montaigne, Knight of the Order of S. Michael, gentleman of the French Kings chamber in three books*, trans. John Florio (London, 1613), p. 104.
[97] *A pittilesse Mother* (London, 1616), sig. Bv.
[98] Ibid., sig. Bv.

unnatural then Pagen, Caniball, Savage, Beast or Fowle'.[99] Her beliefs and actions were so abominable and abnormal that she could not even be compared to the basest creatures known to mankind. Even animals exhibited maternal inclinations and cared for their offspring. Pagans and cannibals may have little disregard for outsiders but they were still human and protected their young.

These figures, the cannibal and savage, represented the peripheries of humanity and were viewed as incompatible with godly men and women unless they converted to the true faith. This othering was not exclusively reserved for supposedly non-civilized humans. Supposed savages existed in Europe too. As discussed above, the message contained in the pamphlet *A Spectacle for Userers* was not specifically Protestant but it did discuss the need for unity of 'Christian brethern and sisters'.[100] This call for unity established a major difference between European Christians and non-Christians. George Rolet, a usurer, was Christian though his profession made him appear 'to live among Jewes'.[101] When discussing the dangers of the unchristian behaviour of usury, the author wrote 'that the Turkes and Saracins, I had almost said, the very savage and brutish Americans, would be ashamed to plot and practice such horrible and accused means'.[102] The author's commentary demonstrated that these various religious cultures, and their supposed evils, were perceived to be different by Christians. In *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*, Christopher Haighly addresses the fact that the label 'Turk' was interchangeable with the 'Mohammdean, Ottoman, Sacaren, and Moor' and represented the fear of eastern expansion.[103] The Turks and Saracens appear to have ranked higher than indigenous Americans but none of these groups were as much of a threat as the Jew. Rolet was a particularly villainous character due to the fact that he turned his back on his Christian upbringing and chose to align himself with an outside culture and economic practice.

---

[99] Ibid., sig. Bv.
[100] *A Spectacle for Userers*, p.1
[101] Ibid., p.1.
[102] Ibid., p.2
[103] Christopher Highley, *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2008), p. 56.

This same concept of supposed Eastern savagery and exclusion from the 'proper' world can be seen in *A Briefe Discourse of two most cruell and bloudie murthers* (1585). The first of the murders described in this pamphlet occurred due to jealousy. Thomas Smith killed his friend Robert Greenoll, a cloth merchant like himself, after 'he began to envy [Greenoll's] prosperous estate'.[104] Smith invited Greenoll to his house to have friendly drinks one evening. He killed him in an extremely violent manner and buried the body in the dirt in his cellar. He then took the keys to Smith's shop and 'robbed it, bringing a great deale of the goods from thence into his owne house'.[105] Smith's actions were described as particularly vicious: 'So had this man compassed a monstruous and moste devilish devise, the verye conceite whereof is able to astonish the heart of a Jewe, or Mohomitans recreant'.[106] Typically, murders from this period were done by one or two blows to the head or a cut throat. Smith, however, struck Smith six heavy blows to the head. Following this, he then 'cut the throat of Greenoll…and then would have stabbed him to the heart of the knife, but missed and smote him and the shoulder blade, whereupon he stroke again, and then indeed pierced him to the heart'.[107] The author deemed these acts to be extremely unchristian and considered them to be so savage that even the supposedly depraved Jew and Muslim would not think to carry out such a violent attack on another human.

Pamphleteers were not aone in using social others to demonstrate the ills of English society. Poets, political figures and literary characters from Classical drama were quoted and described in these pamphlets but contemporary writers did not perceive them as their equals. These figures were discussed at length but represented as heretics and savages who served as foils against orderly English men and women. Even the great philosophers of Greece and Rome were described as 'heathens'. Thomas Cooper, Bishop of Lincoln, in a sermon published in 1575, stated 'reason hath

[104] *A brief discourse of two most cruell and bloudie murther* (London, 1585), sig. A5r.
[105] Ibid., sig. A7v.
[106] Ibid., sig. A5v.
[107] Ibid., sig. A7r.

persuaded the most parte of the heathen Philosophers, that the soule of man is immortal, and receiveth after this life eyther reward or punishment'.[108] John Calvin shared this belief and stated:

> wee see that the heathen Philosophers knewe Gods works so farre, as they could take of his majestie. But what? It was all confusedly: and in the end they vanished away in their own imaginations so as they never attained to the point where they should have come.[109]

There was no disputing that the works of Classical antiquity were important and influential in early modern literature but these ideas were viewed as incomplete.

This concept of incomplete knowledge could also be applied to contemporary sinners. They had the opportunity to discover the teachings of God but would never achieve salvation due to their ignorance. *A pittilesse Mother's* Margaret Vincent was one such sinner. She was born into a respectable English family but her ignorance pushed her from the true path. She was described as a wicked woman for many reasons as she was a recusant Catholic and a murderer. Her murderous actions further ostracised her from the Christian world because her actions were comparable to those of the tragic Greek character Medea according to the author.[110] Meada killed her children as a form of revenge after her husband Jason left her for a young princess of Corinth. Vincent had several parallels with this character. The first, and most obvious, was that they both killed their children. The second was that the two women were perceived as outsiders in the area they lived. Vincent was Catholic living in a Protestant country while Medea fled her homeland of Colchis to live with Jason. The third was that both had connections to witchcraft, though Vincent's was implied through her Catholic faith rather than out-and-out witchcraft while Medea was a priestess of Hecate and used her power to kill.[111] Furthermore, both women were members of the nobility. Vincent was a

---

[108] Thomas Cooper, *The true and perfect copie of a godly sermon in the minister at Lincolne, by the reverend father in God, Thomas L. Bishop of Lincolne the .28. of August. Anno. 1575* (London, 1575), sig. Aviiv.
[109] John Calvin. *The sermons of M. John Calvin upon the fifth booke of Moses called Deuteronomie faithfully gathered word for word as he preached them in open pulpit*, trans. Arthur Golding (London, 1583), p. 375.
[110] *A pittileses Mother*, sig. A3v.
[111] Thomas Heywood, *The Brazen Age* (London, 1613), sig. F2v.

gentlewoman from a wealthy family and Medea was the daughter of King Aeetes of Colchis. Vincent and Medea, however, turned their backs on the laws of their respective countries and served as 'a cleare looking Glasse for a womans weakness in, how soon and apt she is wonne unto wickednes, not onely to the bodies overthrow, but the soules danger'.[112] These two tragic characters were not totally hated by society and allotted some pity by the authors. In Euripides' *Medea,* Jason wronged Medea. She helped him retrieve the Golden Fleece and watched as he killed her brother before fleeing. He repaid her loyalty by leaving her in a foreign country without protection for a better match. Vincent was a murderer but she was manipulated by Catholic priests. The author implored the reader to 'Forgive and forget her good Christians, she is not the first that hath beene blemished with blood'.[113] She confessed and repented but her crimes meant that she should fade into oblivion rather than live on in good memory.

Greek mythological characters appeared in several additional murder pamphlets, again to highlight the unnatural and un-Christian behaviour of the murderers. The Furies or Erinyes were three ancient Greek goddesses who relentlessly pursued men and women who killed their kin. One of the most famous Greek tragedies to feature these goddesses was Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, the third play of the *Oriesta* trilogy in which the Furies pursued Oresetes after he killed his mother Clytemnestra. While these foreign deities were present in murder pamphlets, they did not behave as they did in ancient Greece. Keith Sidewell, in 'Purification and Pollution in Aeschylus' Eumenides' stated that in ancient Greek drama, 'the gods determined human actions…the human is a pawn and the god must take responsibility for making him act against established law'.[114] The early modern Englishman, however, had free will and his actions were his personal responsibility. The Furies featured in murder

[112] *A pittilesse Mother*, sig. A2r.
[113] Ibid., sig. B2r.
[114] Keith Sidwell, 'Purification and Pollution in Aeschylus' Eumenides', *The Classical Quarterly* 46(1) (1996), p. 50.

pamphlets were transformed into an extension of the guilty man or woman's conscience rather than a separate deity competing with God.

The Furies were known in early modern England from Classical literature due to a rise in the study of the humanities. Author Stephen Bateman, in *The golden booke of the ledden goddes* (1583) discussed Classical literature, though the title suggested that these 'ledden' gods were not on an equal footing with almighty God. Bateman described the Furies as goddesses 'which day and night, cryeth for vengeance, and punish the sinnes of lewd Parents upon their wicked children'.[115] The Furies appeared in different forms of literature throughout this period though in a slightly altered state. They became a part of the Christian world rather than ancient outsider deities that needed to be appeased through blood though they did retain some old characteristics. They were described as 'the furies of hell…with which the guilty consciences of men were tormented' in Robert Allott's classical analysis *Wits theatre of the little world* (1599).[116] This transformation from blood thirsty goddesses into the personification of chaos and its accompanying guilt was further described in *The return of the Knight of the Poste from Hell* (1606). The author stated 'there is sent into the worlde certain Furies of Hell, who…runne aboute to disturbe Peace, and overthrouw friendship, to breake the bonde of nature, and the chaine of allegance'.[117] These new Furies were sent from hell to cause doubt and turmoil within an individual until it was too late to save one's soul.

The appropriation of 'savage' Classical knowledge occurred frequently in early modern England. The predictions of the ancient Roman Sibyls were quoted in *A Gagge for the Pope, and the Jesuits* to demonstrate the fall of Catholicism due to the Reformation. The Second Book of the Oracles was quoted as saying that Rome's 'strength shall faile, and the people tremble'.[118] This anonymous pamphlet's author appeared to be staunchly Protestant but used unchristian sources to stress his

[115] Stephen Bateman, *The golden booke of the ledden goddes* (London, 1583), p.21.
[116] Robert Allott, *Wits theatre of the little world* (London, 1599), p. 269.
[117] *The Return of the Knight of the Poste from Hell* (London, 1606), p. 18.
[118] *A Gagge for the Pope, and the Jesuits*, p. 57.

point. The appropriation of the Furies was part of an ongoing dialogue between the literary past and the burgeoning English print trade. These new 'Christian' Furies also appeared in religious works from the period. They appeared in Thomas Beard's *The theatre of Gods judgement* (1597) as both devils and pagan instruments of destruction: 'Hell vomited up all her Furies of warre, the whole earth was in a tumult, young and old with tooth and naile were imployed to root out the Church of Christ'.[119] The Furies were even present in the instructive book *A preparative to marriage* (1591) written by popular London preacher Henry Smith. When discussing the importance of finding the right spouse, Smith wrote: 'Such furies do haunt some men, like Saules spirit, as though the Devill had put a sword into their hands to kill themselves'.[120] In this example, the Furies were lingering doubts that accompanied a bad match and drove both husband and wife to distraction.

The earliest pamphlet of this period to feature the Furies was *The Bloudy Booke* (1605). Smith's warnings about a bad match and subsequent torment were realised through the actions of John Fitz, the devilish nobleman already discussed in this chapter. The early modern furies only appeared in a handful of pamphlets but these pamphlets featured particularly violent murders. Fitz killed a man and received a second chance to live a Christian life but he rejected this opportunity and killed again. After this second murderous outburst, Fitz was hounded by the Furies as he attempted to flee from his crimes:

> So Syr John, seeing how by his inordinate disorders he had impaired his estate, sever'd himself from his wife, wedded himself to wilfull obstinacie, abused his neighbours, murthered his friends, consorted himselfe with villaines & caused himselfe to be so odious, as his life was now in new danger, he now thought it behooved him to make freends, and to that intent hee posted towards London, where by the way, (continuall Furies tormenting his minde) ere he came to hopes, he ended his lyfe.[121]

[119] Thomas Beard, *The Theatre of Gods Judgements: or, a Collection of Histories out of sacred, Ecclesiasticall, and prophane Authours concerning the admirable judgements of God upon the transgressours of his commandements* (London, 1597), p. 35.
[120] Henry Smith, *A preparative to marriage* (London, 1591), p. 26.
[121] *The Bloudy booke*, sig. C3v.

In this pamphlet, the Furies appeared in both their old and new form. They hounded Fitz until they eventually caught him even though he did not kill any family members. They simply wanted justice for his victims rather than for his wrongs. He eventually killed himself after the guilt of his crimes proved too heavy a burden, an action that was thought thoroughly unnatural in the early seventeenth century.

The Fitz story also had an interesting parallel with Aeschylus' version of the goddesses in *The Eumenides.* Throughout the play, Aeschylus refers to the Furies as bloodsuckers.[122] Fitz too was referred to as a bloodsucker during his murderous attack on his neighbour Slanning.[123] Fitz and the Furies were very different creatures but they were part of the same bloody spectrum. Murderous actions, like those of Fitz, caused the Furies' rage and cry for revenge. The mantra of murder pamphlets was 'murder will out' and God would never suffer a murderer to walk free. These ancient 'bloodsuckers' were used in murder pamphlets as a providential device. They fed on a murderer's guilt and hounded him until the truth was revealed.

Traditionally the Furies only hunted men and women who killed members of their family but now they chased people with a particularly guilty conscience. In theory, all murderers suffered from the guilt of their crimes and could only escape it when they repented. In several pamphlets the murders were deemed so heinous that the murderer's guilt became his worst enemy and spurred him on to terrible actions. Sir Fitz killed his friend and ruined his family despite having been granted a pardon due to his wife's labours. As he attempted to flee from the repercussions of his crimes, his guilt followed him and he continued to make poor decisions which resulted in more violence as he murdered an innkeeper and wounded his wife.[124] The next appearance of the Furies was two years later in *A True report of the horrible Murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes*

[122] Sidwell, 'Pollution and Purification in Aeschylus' Eumenides', p.44.
[123] *The Bloudy booke*, sig. Bv.
[124] Ibid., sig. D4v-Ev.

(1607). This pamphlet did not contain the same amount of violence present in *The Bloudy Booke* but the crime was equally sensational. Both *The Bloudy booke* and *A True report* featured knights but for very different reasons. Sir Fitz was a bloody murderer while Sir Bowes was a victim of depraved rogues. Bowe's house was robbed and his servant, Joan Wilson, was murdered. The outrage in this pamphlet stemmed from the fact ruffians brought violence into a respectable and high-ranking man's house as well as the murder itself. This murder was committed by two men, Edward Wilson and Robert Tetherton, both of whom had been saved from the gallows 'having been pardoned for stealing'.[125] Both men knew Joan Wilson, had worked with her before and she and Edward shared the named Wilson. She let them enter Bowe's house not suspecting their intentions: 'this poore soule, neither suspecting them, nor expecting anie such thing, as they purposed, for olde acquaintance sake, with one, welcomed both into her Masters house'.[126] The men repaid her kindness by striking her on the head with an iron bar as soon as she turned her back and dumped her body in the cellar while they robbed the house.[127] They preyed on her good nature and trust while bringing chaos and murder into a respectable house.

Like Sir Fitz, these men had been pardoned and were given the opportunity to live good lives but they chose to remain criminals. The author mentioned the Furies and defined their roles in solving murders, though in their altered early modern form: 'the first, signifying revenge of the murther: the second, a loathing, and abhorring, in the murtherer, of himself, and of all creatures else: the third, a torment within him never ceasing'.[128] The Furies were now solely a part of man's conscience rather than the relentless goddesses of Antiquity. The author further brought the Furies into the Christian realm by highlighting the similarities between their new roles and those of the all-consuming worm

[125] *A True report of the horrible murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes, Knight*, *on the 20. day of February, Anno Dom. 1606* (London, 1607), sig. B2r.
[126] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[127] Ibid., Sig. B2v.
[128] Ibid., sig. Ev.

from Isaiah 66:24: 'And what is more then all the rest, it is a fire, & a worme gnawing, & fretting it: consuming, yet not consumed: gnawing, and never sufficed: an ever burning fire, a never dying worm'.[129] If these men had used their pardons to their full potential they might have escaped the Furies, the worm and the gallows.

The imagery of the Furies and the worm were not exclusive to *A True Report*. This same language also appeared in the ballad *James Franklin A Kentishman of Maidstone* published in 1615.[130] Franklin was hanged for his supposed part in poisoning Sir Thomas Overbury. This was a particularly high profile murder case as it involved numerous scheming figures from the Court. The ballad was written in the first person and supposedly composed by Franklin himself while in King's Bench Prison. In the first paragraph of the ballad, Franklin lamented his fate and cursed his conscience 'which hath ever bin/ A thousand witnesses: and now it tells/ A Tale, to cast me to then thousand Hells'.[131] He further described the torments his conscience created for him which were like:

> the black stings my speckled soule now feeles,
> Which like to Furies dog me close at heeles.
> The Hangman, that attends me is Despaire,
> And gnawing wormes my fellow-Prisoners are.[132]

His own conscience punished him just as much as the legal system could. His actions, and their consequences, caused his final few days on earth to be a living hell. He had to endure the Furies and their accompanying stings. Furthermore, he was harshly confronted by his own mortality and his only companions were the relentless, punishing worms of Isaiah 66:24 mentioned above. Although he had to endure these torments, his eventual execution freed him from his earthly sufferings and his repentance allowed him to live forever in heaven.

---

[129] Ibid., sig. E2r.
[130] While this is a ballad and not a pamphlet, it is still relevant to the scope of this chapter because it exhibits the common literary use of the Furies and their newly adapted mannerisms.
[131] *James Franklin A Kentishman of Maidstone, his owne Arraignment, Confession, Condemnation, and Judgement of Himselfe, whilst he lay Prisoner in the King's Bench for the Poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury*, (London, 1615).
[132] Ibid.

The final pamphlet published during this period to feature the Furies was *The Unnaturall Father* (1621) which described the how John Rowse drowned his two young daughters in the middle of the night after he squandered his fortune and left his family desolate. This pamphlet returned the Furies back to their original role as punishers of men and women who killed their kin. The description of the Furies, however, was not original to this pamphlet. It was copied almost verbatim from the Franklin ballad *James Franklin A Kentishman from Maidstone* published five years earlier. The majority of the pamphlet was told from a third person's point of view. It described Rowse's downfall from a man 'well reputed of all his neighbours, and in good estimation with Gentlemen' to the wretch who drowned his children while 'weeping teares of pittilesse pitie, and unmecrifull mercy'.[133] The last few pages of the pamphlet were supposedly penned by Rowse himself, though it is clear that the author 'borrowed' the work from the ballad. Even though the section containing the Furies was copied, the pamphlet still stressed the importance of a relentless conscience. After Rowse drowned his children he did not attempt to escape though he had done this in the past when he fled to Ireland to escape creditors.[134] Even though the opportunity to flee was there, 'the burthen and guilt of his conscience was so heavy to him, and this desperate case was so extreme, that hee never offered to depart; but as a man weary of his lyfe, would, and did stay'.[135] His crimes were so abominable and offensive that he could never escape them. Although his conscience allowed him to flee in the past, he finally had to answer for his sins.

Conclusion

The authors of murder pamphlets used examples from the Bible and Classical literature as well as descriptions of animals and creatures from the New World to create a powerful language of exclusion

[133] *The Unnaturall Father: Or, The Cruell Murther committed by one John Rowse of the Towne of Ewell, ten miles from London, in the Country of Surry, upon two of his owne Children*, (London, 1621), sig. A3r, Cr.
[134] Ibid., sig. A4v.
[135] Ibid., B2v.

and define the supposed English Christian brethren. These authors contributed to England's post-Reformation national identity by describing a world where all were loyal to the Church of England and the reigning, Protestant, monarch. England was an old country with a new identity and these formulaic pamphlets regularly reminded men and women about the necessity of unity and loyalty. While some examples were drawn from predominantly non-English sources, the focus was always on upholding English identity and religious belief. These pamphlets constantly stressed the importance of being part of the Christian brethren. By adhering to the laws of both church and state, English men and women served God and the reigning monarch while also protecting their souls from damnation. This, however, was not enough to appear beautiful before God, as described in the Book of Ecclesiasticus 25:1. Man must also love his wife, be a part of the godly and also love his neighbour. These works abhorred the ungodly behaviour of outsiders including traitors, parasites and savages. Even though these groups exhibited inhuman behaviour, they could have returned to the true religion at any point through repentance. Repentance was the final opportunity for a man to be united, or re-united depending on the circumstance, with his Christian brethren. Even though the traitor and papist sought to destroy the very foundation of the Church of England, authors acknowledged that these felons were simply weak souls corrupted by an outside evil. The parasite chose to sin against his own people due to his selfish desires and brutal nature. He too had to renounce his ignorance and recognise the faults of his own making to be part of the English brethren again. The men and women described in savage terms had to reconcile themselves with their humanity and ask forgiveness to both God and their fellow countrymen for turning their back on society.

Pamphleteers used language to create a powerful exclusionary device which identified men and women as either a part of the English Christian brethren or an outsider. The call for the unity of brethren was important to English society for several reasons and held a prominent place in early modern pamphlets. It helped to create and foster a new Protestant national identity for England

following the Reformation. Subjects were obliged to acknowledge the sovereignty of Elizabeth I and James I while shunning all traitorous activities. This call for unity also helped to establish patterns of acceptable behaviour and Englishmen and women were expected to obey the laws of the realm at all times and avoid both crime and criminals. Those who willingly deviated from prescribed social norms and laws were excluded, imprisoned or executed for the benefit of their fellow countrymen. Savage or barbaric behaviour, on the other hand, simply had no place within an orderly society. This genre of cheap print attempted to encourage the English reader to show restraint and reason during their daily activities through a dialogue of exclusion while also warning about morality and mortality. Authors of murder pamphlets used exclusionary language as a means to both warn and unite readers about potential threats and deemed this unity of brethren and behaviour as necessary for England to withstand her enemies, both foreign and domestic.

6

'The Love of Neighbours':
The Importance of Neighbourly Bonds and Social Networks.

The Book of Ecclesiasticus 25.1 stated that 'in three things I was beautiful, and stood up before God and men: the unity of brethren, the love of neighbours, a man and wife that agree together'. Thus far, this dissertation has discussed the necessity of a harmonious marriage in Chapter Four and the unity of the English brethren in Chapter Five as described in murder and execution pamphlets. This chapter will identify the various roles played by neighbours in this genre of cheap print and discuss the ways in which their behaviour contributed to descriptions of murders and the apprehensions of murderers in late Elizabethan and Jacobean English cheap print. The plots of these pamphlets revolved around death and disorder but this literature called for love and peace amongst neighbours as a means of establishing both divine and secular order before and after a murder was committed. These crimes disrupted life and communities and always involved more people than those directly connected to the events. This involvement should come as no surprise due to the fact that neighbours were involved in almost every aspect of an individual's birth, life and death. When a child was born a group of neighbouring women assembled to help with the delivery. English neighbours gathered to welcome a child into a community through baptism. *The Book of Common Prayer* contained inclusive language and stressed the importance of unity and communal cooperation in a variety of celebrations including marriages and burials. Death too was a communal event that marked a man's transition into the next world while reminding the living about their own mortality. The untimely deaths described in murder pamphlets also involved neighbours in both passive and active ways. Death, including murder, was part of God's providential plan. Neighbours played several important roles in murder pamphlets and a study of these roles reveals deep social connections based on reputation, religious faith, and neighbourly love and cooperation.

This chapter will discuss three important roles played by neighbours in murder pamphlets: how neighbours created and governed personal reputation, aided in the apprehension of felons and, in several cases, inadvertently contributed to murders.[1] The first section will discuss the integral role of neighbours in the formation and policing of personal reputation within a community through the identification of immoral behaviour. Though often described as a nameless, autonomous group, neighbours in this cheap print were used to represent the collective faith, morality and rationality of England and were suitably outraged when a subject turned his or her back on God and country. As discussed in Chapter Five, the unity of the English Christian brethren was of the utmost importance in murder pamphlets as it identified dangerous outsiders who threatened the peace. These pamphlets described an ideal England where everything was black or white and good or bad. In the vast majority of these pamphlets, the felons were initially described as men and women of good reputation. These descriptions were subtly inserted into accounts of crimes within the pamphlets by the authors but likely originated within the communities where they lived. While some people may have been mobile or had access to larger social networks throughout the country, reputations were, for the most part, anchored to concepts of family honour, proper social behaviour and godly living within a specific area. An individual was expected to contentedly interact with neighbours on a daily basis during which time his or her behaviour was surveyed, scrutinized and shaped by the way others interacted with him or her. Those who deviated from acceptable patterns of behaviour, including

[1] For more information about early modern neighbours, communities and social duties see: John Barry, 'Civility and Civil Culture in Early Modern England' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 181-96; John Boddy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570-1850* (Darton, 1975); Susan Brigden, 'Youth and the English Reformation', *Past & Present* 95 (1982), pp. 37-67; Catherine Davies, ''Poor Persecuted Little Flock' or 'Commonwealth of Christians': Edwardian Concepts of the Church' in Peter Lake and Maria Dowling (eds), *Protestantism and the national church in sixteenth century England* (Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 78-102; Mary E. Fissell, 'The Politics of Reproduction in the English Reformation', *Representations* 87(1) (2004), pp. 43-81; Mark S.R. Jenner, 'Civilization and Deodorization? Smell in Early Modern English Culture' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 127-44; Alexandra Shepard, 'Manhood, Credit and Patriarchy in Early Modern England 1580-1640', *Past & Present* 167 (2000), pp. 75-106; Paul Slack, *The Impact of the Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1985); Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (London, 1982).

drinking and whoredom, were portrayed as having socially and spiritually alienated themselves from their neighbours and descended into violence and murder.

Murder pamphlets did not discuss the occasional sinner; they discussed men and women who overtly rejected their communities and who were in turn rejected by the very neighbours they were supposed to love. The second topic to be discussed in this chapter will focus on the ways in which neighbours acted to restore order and aid in the apprehension of felons after a murder was committed. Neighbours were used by authors as a literary device similar to the chorus in Greek tragedy. They represented faith, morality and rationality. They observed the downfall of a felon and attempted to guide the sinner to repentance before it was too late. When these warnings were ignored, neighbours rallied around victims and their families to capture escaping felons and bring them to justice. In several cases where a murder was committed in secret, providential animals appeared and exposed the crimes to neighbouring witnesses who then acted quickly. The final section of this chapter will discuss the consequences of the disintegration of neighbourly bonds and duties. As neighbours were only human, they occasionally faltered and these missteps allowed sinners to grow bold and commit violent acts. Like monster births or natural disasters, God's providential displeasure with a community, city or even country could be revealed through a series of unfortunate or violent events. In these cases, the main message 'murder will out' was accompanied by a stern warning to readers and neighbours to be constantly on guard against temptation and sin.

Of course, this chapter would not be possible without the wealth of existing scholarly work that covers the many facets of civil and neighbourly life in early modern England. The culture of death and dying in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries involved an immense amount of neighbourly co-operation and interaction. David Cressy highlighted the importance of social and kin-interactions during different stages of the life cycle including birth, marriages and deaths and the associated, and

ever evolving, rites and rituals.[2] Ralph Houlbrooke's *Death, Religion and the Family, 1480-1750* discussed the importance of family and neighbourly interaction with the dying in order to achieve a good death. Houlbrooke also analysed private and public practices of grief, mourning and commemoration over the course of three hundred years. In his article 'Civility and Civil Observances in the Early Modern English Funeral', Houlbrooke specifically focused on funerary practices and highlighted the reciprocal bond between the living and the recently deceased. The living gathered to celebrate and mourn while the dead man was responsible for providing proper mourning attire and gifts. As he noted, "it was notoriously easy to case offence by neglecting neighbours or kinsfolk by giving them presents that did not match their own estimate of the closeness of their connection with the deceased".[3] Even in death, neighbourly bonds were not taken lightly. Social interactions and practices were just as complex for the living as they were for the dead.

Further discussions of death and neighbourly interactions and duties can be found in Paul Slack's *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England*. Death, especially during times of epidemic, placed communities under great stress and led to unneighbourly behaviour such as scapegoating, theft or riot due to shortages of food, lack of proper state intervention or simple fear of infection. Of course, not all people acted against their neighbours and times of epidemics and mass death also elicited sympathy and help for the dying.[4] J.A. Sharpe studied untimely deaths and discussed modes of interaction and communication at public executions between spectators and the soon-to-be dead as they stood on the scaffold.[5] The study of death, when combined with early modern law, further

[2] David Cressy, 'Kinship and Kin Interactions in Early Modern England', *Past & Present* 113 (1986), pp. 38-69; *idem*, Birth*, Marriage and Death: Rituals, Religion, and the Life Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1999).
[3] Ralph Houlbrooke, 'Civility and Civil Observances in the Early Modern English Funeral' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 74-5.
[4] Paul Slack, *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 256-284.
[5] J.A. Sharpe, ''Last Dying Speeches': Ideology and Public Execution in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past & Present* 107 (1985), pp. 144-67; *idem*, 'Civility, Civilizing Process, and the End of Public Punishment in England' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 215-230.

contributes to discussions of social interactions and behaviour as executions and public punishment were a deep-rooted 'part of a rich and complex popular culture'.[6]

Not all deaths were natural and contemporary studies of witchcraft have greatly contributed to understanding early modern communities and behaviour when faced with adversity and suspicious or unexplainable deaths.[7] Several specific studies have focused on witchcraft and communities. J.A. Sharpe discussed the role played by neighbours in shaping social reputations and accusations of witchcraft.[8] Lyndal Roper further addressed the creation and monitoring of reputation through a dialogue involving early modern religion, gender and sexuality.[9] Robin Briggs, in "Many Reasons Why', noted that the study of early modern witchcraft trials helps 'us to reconstruct the distinctive social and intellectual character of a past age' while also providing 'much information about the lives and thoughts of ordinary people'.[10] While witchcraft was a specific crime, it did have far reaching effects. Accusations could be made through genuine fear of the unknown but they could also be used for exploitation or self-preservation against one's enemies. Discussion of witchcraft trials reveals a variety of descriptions and representations about social interactions as well as revealing community legal practices and sites of anxiety amongst neighbours.

---

[6] Sharpe, 'Civility, Civilizing Process, and the End of Public Punishment in England', p. 222.

[7] For more on early modern English witchcraft see: Frances E. Dolan, *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century* England (Philadelphia, 2013); Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The idea of witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Oxford, 1997); Malcolm Gaskill, 'Witchcraft and Neighbourliness in Early Modern England' in Steve Hindle, Alexandra Shepard and John Walker (eds), *Remaking English Society: Social Relations and Social Change in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 211-232; Kathleen R. Sands, 'Word and Sign in Elizabethan Conflicts with the Devil', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British* Studies 31(2) (1999), pp. 238-56; Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England* (London, 1971); Mary Wiesner-Hanks (ed.) *Witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Boston, 2006); Sarah F. Williams, *Damnable Practices: Witches, Dangerous Women, and Music in Seventeenth-Century English Broadside Ballads* (Surrey, 2015).

[8] J.A. Sharpe, *Witchcraft in Early Modern England* (London, 2001). For specific discussion on the community see 'Chapter 3 Witch-trials, witchcraft accusations and the problem of community', pp. 32-45. Also see: J.A. Sharpe, *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in Early Modern England* (London, 1995).

[9] Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1994).

[10] Robin Briggs, 'Many reasons why': witchcraft and the problem of multiple explanation' in Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester and Gareth Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 50, 51. Also see: Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours: The Social and Cultural Context of Witchcraft* (London, 1995).

Sharpe also discussed the legal system in connection with interpersonal interactions and focused on the impact of litigation amongst neighbours.[11] Laura Gowning's article 'Language, power and the law: women's slander allegation in early modern England' also discussed litigation and specifically focused on women's participation in church courts.[12] Women used church courts to defend their honour against slanderous attacks as well as shape neighbourly interactions and to settle the score for past perceived wrongs.[13] In 'Gender and the Language of Insult in Early Modern England', Gowing analysed gender, reputation and slander amongst neighbours in church court records.[14] Tim Stretton contributed to this topic and analysed how litigation and the early modern legal system contributed to changing methods of social interaction and community relations. Stretton, when discussing financial litigation stated 'debt-related litigation becomes less a sign of eroding personal relations than a measure of the heat generated by a robust economy within an increasingly sophisticated society'.[15] As England's economy expanded during the seventeenth century, the legal system changed too and neighbourly behaviour evolved and adapted to the new financial climate.

[11] J.A. Sharpe, ''Such Disagreement betwixt Neighbours': Litigation and Human Relations in Early Modern England' in John Bossy (ed.), *Disputes and Settlements: Law and Human Relations in the West* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 167-88.

[12] Laura Gowing, 'Language, power, and the law: women's slander litigation in early modern London' in Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (eds), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), pp. 26-47; Also see: Laura Gowing, 'Women, Status and the Popular Culture of Dishonour', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6 (1996), pp. 225-234; Paul Griffiths, 'Punishing Words: Insults and Injuries, 1525-1700' in *The Extraordinary and the Everyday in Early Modern England: Essays in Celebration of the Work of Bernard Capp*, eds. Angela McShane and Garthine Walker (London, 2010), pp. 66-85.

[13] Also see: Christopher Haigh, 'Slander, and the Church Courts in the Sixteenth Century', *Transactions of the Lancastershire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 78 (1975), pp. 1-13; Ralph Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People during the English Reformation 1520-1570*(Oxford, 1979); Martin Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1987); Garthine Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003)

[14] Laure Gowing, 'Gender and the Language of Insult in Early Modern England', *History Workshop* 35 (1993), pp. 1-21. Also see Bernard Capp, *When Gossips When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbourhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003).

[15] Tim Stretton, 'Written Obligation, Litigation and Neighbourliness, 1580-1680' in Steve Hindle, Alexandra Shepard and John Walter (eds), *Remaking English Society: Social Relations and Social Change in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2013), p. 190.

England's expanding economy greatly contributed to changes in interactions between neighbours through a variety of ways. Stretton has noted changing attitudes towards litigation.[16] Keith Wrightson's *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain, 1470-1750* discussed England's economy through a study of changing household structure, neighbourhood relationships, markets and social organization.[17] Craig Muldrew has discussed the rise of credit in the marketplace and stated that 'far from breaking up communities [the use of credit] actually created numerous bonds which held them together'.[18]David Pennington further added to this field of research by discussing how gender and neighbourly relationships affected marketplace politics and exchanges including bargaining, trade and reputation.[19]

In this chapter, I will use the term community when discussing the events of murder pamphlets in a particular area. The term community can be problematic when discussing early modern life because it raises questions about a universal or collective identity. Early modern England was a heterogeneous mix of religious belief including Protestants, recusant Catholics and religious dissenters who certainly did not share one common ideology.[20] Steve Hindle described a community

[16] Ibid., p. 189-210.
[17] Keith Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain, 1470-1750* (London, 2002). Also see: Keith Wrightson, *English Society: 1580-1680* (London, 1982).
[18] Craig Muldrew, 'Interpreting the Market: The Ethics of Credit and Community Relations in Early Modern England', *Social History* 18(2) (1993), pp. 163-183. Also see: Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (New York, 1998).
[19] David Pennington, *Going to Market: Women, Trade and Social Relations in Early Modern English Towns, c, 1550-1630* (New York, 2016).
[20] For more information about England's changing political and religious climate in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries see: Jennifer L. Anderson, 'Anti-Puritanism, Anti-Popery, and Gallows Rhetoric in Thomas Nashe's 'The Unfortunate Traveller', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35(2) (2004), pp. 43-63; Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c. 1400-1800* (New Haven, 1992); Madeline Gray, *The Protestant Reformation: Beliefs and Practices* (Brighton, 2003); Ronald Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: The Ritual Years 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1994); Peter Marshall, ''The map of god's word': geographies of the afterlife in Tudor and early Stuart England' in Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (eds), *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 110-30; John Morril, *The Nature if the English Reformation* (London, 1993); Timothy Rosendale, ''Fiery Tongues': Language, Liturgy, and the Paradox of the English Reformation', *Renaissance* Quarterly 54(1) (2001), pp. 1142-64; Bob Scribner, 'Is There a Social History of the Reformation?' in *Social History,* 2(4) (1977), pp. 483-505; Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England* (London, 1971); Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2011); *idem*, *The*

as both a civilizing process and an ideal that created and governed 'the highly prescriptive norms… [of] quietness, charity, credit, honesty, consensus'.[21] This was a cyclical bond; these prescriptive norms identified acceptable behaviour and people aspired to behave in a proper manner so as to be a part of the community. A community 'was not only a territorial and jurisdictional entity, it was also a social, economic and moral hierarchy'.[22] Phil Withington and Alexandra Shepard stated that a 'community can exist as a powerful rhetorical concept- a symbolic entity in its own right' and 'as a symbolic, or 'imagined' category which can operate at a national, or even global, level'.[23] When I use the word community in this chapter I do so with these definitions in mind.

The authors of murder pamphlets created a world where everything was simply good or evil; there was no middle ground. These pamphlets do not directly address the complex networks of actions, rites, rituals and public interaction discussed above but they do address the social tensions and fears they raised. Unlike real England, this 'pamphlet England' featured communities where most men and women always strove to do what was right, acted as one in the face of sin and were God-fearing members of the Church of England. The men and women described in these pamphlets all shared a universal abhorrence of evil both on a local and national level. Trouble only appeared in this literature when people defiantly acted out against the collective social norms of 'quietness, charity, credit [and] honesty' identified by Hindle which triggered a downward spiral into sin.

This chapter seeks to contribute to this existing body of scholarly knowledge by demonstrating just how far-reaching the peripheral actions of neighbours were in early modern England through a discussion of murder and violence. While the neighbours were never the focus of the pamphlets,

---

Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland (Oxford, 2011); Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580-1680* (London, 1982).

[21] Steve Hindle, ''A sense of place?' Becoming and belonging in the rural parish, 1550-1650' in Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (eds), *Communities in early modern England* (Manchester, 2000), p. 96.

[22] Ibid., p. 97.

[23] Phil Withington and Alexandra Shepard, 'Introduction: communities in early modern England' in Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (eds), *Communities in early modern England* (Manchester, 2000), p.9. Also see: Phil Withington, *Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2010).

they were a constant presence. Their involvement contributed to murders in a variety of ways and authors frequently commented on their actions to highlight unacceptable forms of behaviour and also provided examples of proper neighbourly interactions for readers. Murder pamphlets described a world-turned-upside down and the featured descriptions of neighbourly interactions illustrated the complex network early modern men and women had to navigate through during periods of social disorder in order to avoid punishment both on earth and in the afterlife.

Creation and Control of Reputations

This chapter will begin by focusing on the ways in which neighbours created and controlled the reputations of individuals. The descriptions of reputations of felons in this literature were necessary for several reasons. Firstly, they demonstrated that anyone might fall from grace no matter what their social standing was. Secondly, they identified people who willingly excluded themselves from proper society in the pursuit of self-interest or pleasure. The devil encouraged wicked behaviour, tempted men and women and aided in their downfall. Of course, this concept of wickedness was not limited to this cheap print and was also discussed at length in religious tracts. In *The happiness of the church*, (1619), clergyman Thomas Adams discussed sin and temptation and wrote: 'and if [the devil] perceive that God more especially love any, have at them to chuse. If he can but bruise their heeles, O hee thinks hee hath wrought a great slight to God'.[24] The fall of a once-faithful and well-reputed Christian was the ultimate triumph for the devil and a definitive warning to all would-be sinners reading these pamphlets. Criminals from the lower echelons of society made appearances in murder pamphlets but authors also included the crimes of wayward gentlemen and the middling sort. In

[24] Thomas Adams, *The happines of the church, or, A description of those spirituall prerogatives wherewith Chirst hath endowed her considered in some contemplations upon part of ther 12. chapter of the Hebrews* (London, 1619), p. 122.

'pamphlet England' the nobility and the impoverished received the same treatment if they committed murder.

While these groups appeared to be very different on the surface, they did share several key characteristics including a penchant for immorality, drunkenness and whoredom, the term used for any form of illicit sexually activity. Morality and godly behaviour were discussed at length and sin was greatly abhorred within this literature. Chapter Two highlighted the providential ramifications for immorality while Chapters Three and Four examined the dangers of both real and perceived whoredom. The discussion of proper husbandly duties in Chapter Four highlighted the fact that drunkenness was extremely undesirable in a marriage. This chapter will discuss the dangers that the consumption of alcohol imposed on a neighbours and how communities dealt with this threat. Pamphleteers railed against public drunkenness and these pamphlets shared reoccurring patterns of admonishing language with moralistic prescriptive literature as well as Church of England visitation articles, both of which were greatly concerned with proper neighbourly behaviour.

The vast majority of the felons in murder pamphlets were initially described in a positive light. These were ordinary men and women who simply could not avoid temptation and succumbed to sin; something that could happen to anyone due to man's inherently sinful nature. The drama described in these pamphlets stemmed from the fact that the people who fell from grace were once respectable men and women rather than villains. Sir John Fites, the murderous gentleman of *The Bloudy booke* (1605) was initially described as a man of good reputation and deserving of respect. As the story progressed, Fites was transformed from a young man 'of whom the world hoped nothing but a fruitful ripenes' to a wretch 'over whom sinne hath greater predominance…until as last, being over-ripened, [fell] by [his] owne rottennesse'.[25] Adam Adamson of East Grinstead, Sussex who disposed of multiple infant corpses murdered by his lover was introduced to the reader as 'a man that

[25] *The Bloudy booke, or, The Tragicall and desperate end of Sir John Fites (alias) Fitz* (London, 1605), sig. A3r, C2v.

for his yeares, place, and sufficiencie in estate of living, was in good account and recconing amongst his neighbours'.[26] Margaret Vincent was praised by the author 'for her modest and seemly carriage' but became as a 'creature not deserving mothers name' after she murdered her two young children.[27] John Rowse was not a gentleman but he was 'well reputed of all his neighbours, and in good estimation with Gentlemen and others that dwelt in the adjoyning Villlages' prior to killing his two young daughters.[28] Henry Robson 'lived long time in very good estimation amongst his neighbours' prior to murdering his wife 'who for her honest dealing and good neighbourhood, was greatly beloved both of yong and old'.[29] Anne Welles, 'a proper young woman', was noted for 'her favour and comely personage, as also in regard of her good behaviour and other commendable qualities' prior to committing adultery and murdering her husband with the help of her lover.[30]

These descriptions of reputation and the loss thereof played an important part in highlighting patterns of unacceptable behaviour in early modern England such as the above vices mentioned. Authors described felons' back stories which they gathered from court records, assize trials, and gallows confessions as well as neighbourhood observance, gossip and rumour. Neighbours witnessed these downfalls first hand and immediately saw the danger of a sinful life. The reader was also able to experience the same downfall through the voyeuristic and shared admonitory language used by authors. A crime occurred in one location but the patterns of inappropriate behaviour appear to have been universal across England. Admonitions against drinking regularly appeared in a variety of early modern print and this activity was identified as a catalyst for greater sins. Drinking remained a constant site of moral anxiety throughout the period in discussion as demonstrated through the

[26] T.B., *The Bloudy Mother, or, The most inhumane murthers, committed by Jane Hattersley upon divers Infants, the issue of her owne bodie* (London, 1610), sig. A3v.
[27] *A pittilesse Mother* (London, 1616), sig. A2v, A4r.
[28] *The Unnaturall Father: Or, The Cruell Murther committed by one John Rowse of the Towne of Ewell, ten miles from London, in the Country of Surry, upon two of his owne Children*, (London, 1621), sig. A3v.
[29] L.B., *The Examination, confession, and condemnation of Henry Robson, Fisherman of Rye* (London, 1598), sig. A3r, A3v.
[30] *The trueth of the most wicked and secret murthering of John Brewen, Goldsmith of London* (London, 1592), sig. A2r.

various editions of Thomas Beard's *The Theatre of Gods Judgement*, initially published in 1597 and greatly expanded by 1631. The 1597 edition included a chapter titled 'Of unlawfull gestures, Idlenesse, Gluttony, Drunkennes, Daunsing, and other such like disolutenes' in which Beard warned of the dangers of these sinful activities.[31] The expanded 1631 edition revealed a continuing disdain for drunkenness throughout the period in discussion and specifically stated 'that few murthers and manslaughters are committed, which are not from this root of drunkenness… wherewith thousands are brought to their untimely end'.[32] In the expanded edition, Beard also included a chapter specifically about drunkenness which discussed various ways in which the consumption of alcohol hastened the deaths of people from all walks of life including yeomen, labourers and members of the nobility. These deaths included disease, sudden or accidental deaths as well as violent ones.[33] Drunkenness ushered in riotous behaviour and cruelty which threatened to destroy both the consumer and all those around him or her.[34]

Sir John Fites was one the most riotous felons described in murder pamphlets. His excesses began on a small scale but spiralled out of control as he was urged on by unsavory friends:

> …insomuch as that Towne of Tavestocke, though otherwise orderly governed with sobriety & wisdom…was thereby infected, with the beastly corruption of drunkennesse… and being drunke, they blaspheme and sweare, and in thys theyr

[31] Thomas Beard, *The Theatre of Gods Judgements: or, a Collection of Histories out of sacred, Ecclesiasticall, and prophane Authours concerning the admirable judgements of God upon the transgressours of his commandements* (London, 1597), pp. 365-376.

[32] Thomas Beard, *The Theatre of Gods Judgements: Revised, and augmented* (London, 1631), p. 286. Further expanded editions were written by clergyman Thomas Taylor, incumbent of St. Mary Aldermanbury, London, and in published in 1642 and 1648.

[33] See Ibid., Chapter XXI: Of Drunkenness, pp. 420-26.

[34] For more discussion on drunkenness see: Mark Hailwood, *Alehouses and Good Fellowship in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2014); Clare McBride, 'A Natural Drink for an English Man: National Stereotyping in Early Modern Culture' in Adam Smyth (ed.), *A Pleasing Sinne: Drink and Conviviality in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 181-192; James Nicholls, *The Politics of Alcohol: A History of the Drink Question in England* (Manchester, 2009); *idem*, '*Vinum Britannicum:* The 'Drink Question' in Early Modern England', *The Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 22(2) (2008), pp. 6-25; Adam Smyth, 'It were far better to a *Toad*, or a *Serpent*, then a Drunkard: Writing About Drunkenness' in Adam Smyth (ed.), *A Pleasing Sinne: Drink and Conviviality in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 193-225; Phil Withington, 'Intoxicants and the Early Modern City' in Steve Hindle, Alexandra Shepard and John Walker (eds), *Remaking English Society: Social Relations and Social Change in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 135-164.

> blasphemy, they teare the divine name of their almighty Creator into a thousand peeces, neyther regarding hope of redemption, or dreading feare of damnation, plucking men by night out of their beds, violently breaking windows, quarrelling with Ale-conners, fighting in private brables amongst themselves…[35]

Fites was among the worst felons due to his disregard for his family, neighbours, himself and God. In this example, the author stressed that an individual's drinking and related problematic behaviour corrupted the entire town. This corruption spread through physical means such as damage to property, overhearing and imitating foul language, or through encouraging a badly behaved person.

This particular form of unneighbourly behaviour also appeared in several murder pamphlets from the period in discussion. Authors stressed the dangers of embarking on a life of sin and described how this sin directly affected neighbours. John Arthur, one of the murderers discussed in *Deeds Against Nature, and Monsters by kinde* (1614), was a crippled dwarf who made his livelihood through begging. Arthur survived on handouts from passersby but was described as a 'wretch gracelesse, and unthankfull for Gods blessings thus bestowed upon him'.[36] Instead of thanking God and his anonymous benefactors, Arthur chose to devote himself to 'the service of the Devill, as in blasphemie, swearing, drunkenness, and such like, all damnable sinnes and such as be the nurses and breeders of others'.[37] While sins such as drinking and swearing appeared to be minimal when compared with violence and murder, they were the breeding ground for absolute corruption.

The drunkenness and riotous nature of Mistress Killingworth in *The Apprehension, Arraignement, and execution of Elizabeth Abbot* (1608) drove her neighbours away and left her prey to a murderous thief. Killingworth was regularly intoxicated in public and her neighbours would escort her home to bed. But 'when she should have had reason to commend, and have bin thankfull for the love of her neighbours, she taught her selfe a kind of perversnes to condemne them…that after notice taken of

[35] *The Bloudy Booke,* sig. B4r-v.
[36] *Deeds Against Nature, and Monsters by Kinde* (London, 1614), sig. A2r-v.
[37] Ibid., sig. A2v.

her ingratitude, they from thence left her'.[38] After being left to her own devices, Elizabeth Abbot, an outsider of the parish, moved into her house and murdered her shortly after. Killingworth pushed her neighbours too far and ruined herself in the process. The author warned the reader that God

> gives to every offence his due punishment, and makes our sinnes like fire the which confumes it selfe in his owne glory: drunkennes was hir sinne, drunkennes was hir punishment: the neglect of hir neighbours was hir sinne, and their neglect toward hir for that sinne, was an excuse to hir murtherer and a furtherer to hir death.[39]

Pamphlets such as this one along with *The Bloudy booke* and *Deeds Against Nature* were at heart deeply moralistic documents that were concerned with the greater wellbeing of an idealised community. Killingworth rejected neighbourly love as a result of her drunkenness. Sir Fites chose drinking and rioting above his familial and neighbourly duties while John Arthur revelled in his drunkenness to the detriment of his soul.

In the pamphlets just mentioned, drunkenness was depicted as a gateway into sin and eventually led to murder. This vice could also be the direct cause of murder. John Dilworth, one of the murderous husbands described in *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Lincolneshire* (1607), regularly returned home 'over gone with drinke, at which times hee would not sticke…to beate and abuse his wife'.[40] One night while extremely drunk, Dilworth 'tooke up a staffe or spoke of a Carte wheel' and beat his wife to death during an argument.[41] He then dismembered the corpse, burned some parts and attempted to hide the rest in their garden. One of the murders described in *A Briefe Discourse of Two most cruell and bloudie murthers* (1583) also occurred after an evening of drinking. Thomas Smith grew jealous of his friend Robert Greenoll's prosperity. Both men were mercers and Smith killed Greenoll, buried the corpse in his basement and ransacked the dead man's shop. Smith

[38] *The Apprehension, Arraignement, and execution of Elizabeth Abbot, alias Cerbrooke, for a cruell and horrible murther, committed on the body of Mistris Killingworth in S. Creechurch Parish neere Aldgate in London* (London, 1608), sig. A3r.
[39] Ibid., sig. A4v.
[40] *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Lincolneshire, by two Husbands upon their Wives* (London, 1607), sig. B2v.
[41] Ibid., sig. B3v.

lured Greenoll into his house on New Year's Eve 'where he promised to bestowe a quart of wine and an apple upon him, saying further, they would passe away the Evening pleasauntly in friendlie talke and drinking together'.[42] The pair, 'thus sitting alone, did drinke to ech other verie familiarly, tyll at last' Smith beat his friend to death with an iron pestle.[43]

The author of *A Briefe Discourse of Two most cruell and bloudie murthers* directly addressed the importance of neighbourly love. Disorder sprang from 'our negligence of duetie to our God, as also our lacke of loove to our neighbour'.[44] Love of God and neighbours was the key message of this pamphlet and the author directly quoted 1 John 4.7: 'Beloved, let us loove one an other, for love cometh of God, and everie one that looveth, is borne of God and knoweth God: But he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love'.[45] The author also directly quoted Ecclesiasticus 25.1: 'Three things rejoice me, and by them am I beautiful before God and men: the unitie of Brethern, the love of neighboures, and a man and wife that agree together'.[46] Simply stated, men and women must love one another and honour the reciprocal bonds of neighbourly love. The way in which this particular murder was committed also evoked a scriptural warning against abusing one's neighbours. Habakkuk 2:15 stated: 'Woe until him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to him and makes him drunken also, that thou mayest look on his nakedness'. Drunkenness left a man vulnerable to both attacks and sinful behaviour. Thomas Smith preyed on Greenoll's genial and trusting nature; he plied his neighbour with wine until he had the upper hand and attacked a defenceless man.

Wine also played a role in the murder of a tavern keeper and his family in *The most straunge, rare and horrible murther committed by a Frenchman* (1586). This murder occurred in France and was translated into English to 'turne the wicked harts of all such evill disposed persons' and remind the

[42] *A Brief Discourse of Two most cruell and bloudie murthers* (London, 1583), sig. A5v.
[43] Ibid., sig. A6r.
[44] Ibid., sig. A2r.
[45] Ibid., sig. A2v.
[46] Ibid., sig. A2v.

reader about the necessity to 'Love thy neighbours as thy selfe, and do unto al men as thou wouldst be done unto'.[47] The unnamed murderer rose early in the morning and went to his neighbour's tavern where he woke the man and demanded wine. When his neighbour was not looking, the man took a 'hatchet and therewithal cleaved this Taverners head as it were in twaine, in such manner and sort, that he never spake nor styrred against him'.[48] The murderer then attacked the tavern keeper's wife and child in the same brutal manner and set the tavern on fire before returning home to bed with his wife. This attack also brings to mind the warning from Habakkuk as the murderer was emboldened to attack his neighbour after being given wine. The tavern keeper was described in a positive light when taverns and alehouses, along with their proprietors, held a precarious social position. Amussen noted that 'attitudes toward the alehouse were ambivalent; an alehouse was a respectable source of supplementary income for the poor, yet alehouses also threatened both the morals and resources of the consumers'.[49] The alehouse or tavern was sociably acceptable but the immoral behaviour which originated in it was a threat to peace, order and morality both in and out of the establishment. In this example, the dangers associated with the murderous man trumped the socially disruptive nature of the tavern.

Drunkenness was indeed a major site of social anxiety amongst neighbours. Amussen further noted that 'the links between alehouses and other forms of disorder are clear both in petitions to justices and in presentments to the church courts'.[50] Warnings about drinking and resulting riotous behaviour in murder pamphlets were part of a much larger social and religious dialogue as revealed by reoccurring patterns of admonitory language in both secular and religious publications from this period. Drunkenness resulted in quarrels, property damage, disruptions of the peace and loss of

[47] *A most straunge, rare, and horrible murther committed by a Frenchman of the age of too or three and twentie years* (London, 1586), sig. A2r, A2v. The anonymous translator did not state when this crime originally occurred.
[48] Ibid., A3r.
[49] Susan Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (New York, 1988), p.170.
[50] Ibid., p. 168.

reputation. It also had the potential to ruin families and could lead to separations between husbands and wives.[51] In *A brief conference betwixt mans frailtie and faith* (1584), Gervase Babington, Bishop of Llanduff and later Exeter, discussed the dangers posed to society by idle drinking especially 'when a man hath nothing to doe, and to applie himself unto, but sitte on a bulke in the street, or bench in a tavern, or an ale house, and to wet his tongue with drink, and drie it with talking'.[52] Babington concluded this argument by stating that 'whosoever wil be a preserver of peace…must be an enimie to [idleness and drinking] assuredly'.[53] Thomas Cooper, Bishop of Lincoln, wrote in 1573 that immoderate drinking turned men into beasts and 'discovering themselves filthily, and therein take they great delight and pleasure. Wherefore God threatneth them punishment for that wickednesse'.[54] Thomas Adams, in *The happiness of the church* (1619), discussed the many debaucheries of man and stated 'the drunkard [was] like a hogge'.[55] Adams also quoted 1 Corinthians 6.9 and wrote '*Idolaters, Adulterers, theeves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners*, and other *dogges* of the same litter [were kept] from the kingdome of God'.[56] In *The devils banket described in foure sermons*, Adams further stated that 'the drunkard is an *Hercules furens*: he will kill and slay: how many doe that in a Taverne, which they repent in Tiburne?'.[57]

Exposure and Apprehension of Felons

The shared admonitory language against sinful behaviour of moralistic literature and cheap print demonstrates that early modern England was greatly concerned with disruptive and un-neighbourly

[51] Ibid., pp.99, 166; Capp, *When Gossips Meet*, pp. 86-9, 90-1, 104.
[52] Gervase Babington, *A brief conference betwixt mans frailtie and faith wherein is declared the true use, and comfort of those blessings pronounced by Christ in the fifth of Matthew* (London, 1584), p. 111.
[53] Ibid., p. 112.
[54] Thomas Cooper, *A brief exposition of such chapters of the olde testament as usually are redde on the church at common praier on the Sondayes set forth for the better helpe and instruction of the unlearned* (London, 1573), p. 391.
[55] Adams, *The happines of the church*, p. 139.
[56] Ibid., p. 266.
[57] Thomas Adams, *The devils banket described in foure sermons* (London, 1614), p. 19.

behaviour. In murder pamphlets, men and women took direct action to expose and apprehend sinful neighbours after they publicly transgressed acceptable social behaviour. After years of a seemingly happy marriage, John Kynnestar rose from his bed, stabbed his wife multiple times and threw her corpse into the street. The murder came as a shock because the couple appeared happy on the surface. When Kynnestar confessed he stated:

> This night before we were merie,
> As any man and wife could be:
> And that the neighbours did us see,
> Betwene us was no strife.[58]

Had Kynnestar been a violent or abusive husband his wife might have lived. Bernard Capp stated that neighbours were often aware of domestic abuse and intervened in extreme circumstances.[59] Intervening neighbours risked violence directed at them 'but when desperate women turned to them for help, most obeyed the 'law of good neighbourliness' and helped.[60] This murder shocked both Kynnestar himself and his neighbours because outwardly he appeared to be an ideal husband while his soul was in a state of turmoil.

The neighbours described in *A most horrible and detestable Murther committed by a bloudie minded man upon his own Wife* (1595) only discovered a murder had occurred by chance. Ralph Meaphon returned home from working in an iron mine for his dinner.[61] Meaphon cut his wife's throat after an argument escalated and left her corpse in the house with their sleeping child while he returned to work. He 'left some candle or fire in such place of danger, that the house ther with was fired, which the neighbours adjoyning and the whole towne came to quench'.[62] One neighbour, 'an honest woman named Jone Baylie', played a key role in the pamphlet as she was the first to see the

[58] *A true report or description of an horrible, woful, and moste lamentable murther done in the citie of Bristowe by one John Kynnestar* (London, 1572), sig. Aiiiir.
[59] Capp, *When Gossips Meet*, p. 83.
[60] Ibid., pg. 107.
[61] *A most horrible and detestable Murther committed by a bloudie minded man upon his owne Wife* (London, 1595), sig. A3r.
[62] Ibid., sig. A3v.

fire and also 'did what shee coulde to save the Child'.[63] After the child was rescued, the neighbours continued to labor to save the house and its goods when they discovered Mistress Meaphon's corpse. This group of neighbours included a constable who then alerted the coroner. None of the gathered neighbours knew how the murder occurred but they did play an important role in the revelation by saving the child. Despite being asleep at the time of the murder, the child providentially revealed the events of the evening and perfectly described the knife his father used to murder his mother. Meaphon was then approached by the coroner who 'required to have a sight of his knife, which he pulled out of his pocket, and was in all pointed for bignes [sic], colour of haft, and all other markes even as the Childe had before at large repeated unto the said Coroner'.[64] Meaphon was arrested and brought to the Assizes and 'the evidence of his sonne which was present before the Judges [and]…and which he was found guiltie and had judgement, and on the 27 of februarie, 1595. he was executed at Greeneste, in the Countie of Sussex'.[65] While the neighbours were unable to give evidence, their actions led to the miraculous revelation of both the murder and the murderer. Neighbour Jone Baylie played an important though subtle role in this pamphlet. She alerted her fellow neighbours who were described as more than willing to help 'quench' the fire and she herself saved the sleeping child.

The author *The trueth of the most wicked and secret murthering of John Brewen, Goldsmith of London* (1592), on the other hand, presented the reader with an example of murderers being brought to justice because of a public fight. John Brewen was secretly poisoned by his wife Anne Wells and her lover John Parker. After the murder, the pair lived together unmarried for two years, during which time Parker abused her and frequently 'threaten[ed] to stabbe and thrust her through with his

[63] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[64] Ibid., sig. A4r.
[65] Ibid., sig. A4v.

dagger' whenever she opposed him.[66] Their domestic situation came to a riotous head in the street. The pair began to shout loudly at one another about who was to blame for the murder and 'these speeches thus spoken between them in vehemencie of spirite, was over heard of some that revealed it to the majestrates'.[67] In this example, neighbours alerted an official to arrest Anne Wells rather than help her even though her partner openly threatened to kill her in the street.

A similar exposure was reported in *The Bloudy mother* (1610) after a pair of lovers also quarrelled in public. Adam Adamson and his wife's servant Jane Hattersley were sexually involved for several years. During that time, Hattersley gave birth to several children which she murdered and were buried by Adamson in his orchard. The pair had raised the suspicion of their neighbours, but Hattersley 'so cunningly blinded the eyes of people, in the time that her sinne must needs appeare, with loose lacing, tucking, and other odde tricks that she used, that to the very instant minute of her deliverie, none could perceive she was with childe'.[68] No moral blame was placed on the neighbours for Hattersley's transgressions. The beginning of the end occurred when Adamson sold his orchard to a man named Edward Duffel. Perhaps avoiding detection for a prolonged period caused Adamson to grow increasingly bold and 'with his owne tongue [gave] cause of suspicion for three or foure times' by requesting Duffel 'not to dig neere the Box Tree' where the infants were buried.[69] The matter rested until

> within a small time after this…*Adamson* & *Jane* were at high words, and very bitter revilings past from one to another. In which windie battails, *Jane* cald her maister murderer, in the hearing of many neighbours, and that not once or twice, but iterated and reiterated it, very freely & bouldy: and to this added, that there was that yet hidden, that would hang him. And that there was a tree in *Duffels* orchard, which if it could speake, would send him to the gallows.[70]

---

[66] *The trueth of the most wicked and secret murthering of John Brewen, Goldsmith of London,* p. 5
[67] Ibid.,p.6.
[68] T.B., *The Bloudy Mother, or, The most inhumane murthers, committed by Jane Hattersley upon divers Infants, the issue of her owne bodie* (London, 1610), sig. A4v.
[69] Ibid., sig. B3v.
[70] Ibid., sig. B3v.

Upon hearing this, 'Edward Duffel tooke divers of his neighbours, and …went then and diggd about' until they discovered the small bodies.[71] The pair was arrested but Adamson convinced Hattersley to accept full responsibility for the murders and burials and in exchange he would procure her a pardon, which he never attempted to do. Of course, Adamson did not go unpunished and God sent 'lice in great multitudes' to torment and devour him.[72] The pair's crimes were exposed by their neighbours but only Hattersley suffered a public death. Adamson's providential punishment caused 'so loathsome a savour [to come] from his body' that neighbours 'would leave him, ere they could well looke on him' and he died alone in misery.[73]

The arrests made in *The Crying Murther* (1624) were also due to neighbourly intervention after the murderers revealed too much information. Master Trat, the curate of Old Cleeve in Somerset, was murdered by Peter Smithwicke, Andrew Barker, Cirill Austen and Alice Walker after an ongoing feud over the rightful possession of the curacy. The author noted that the four conspirators 'were not blemish'd before the committing of this fact with the scandal of any notorious crimes…yet were they not free from the suspition of some faults, whereof youth by nature, and age by custome is too… guilty and capacious'.[74] While they may not have previously committed a felony, their neighbours were wary of them for past behaviour. This murder was particularly gruesome as Trat's body was dissected and his body parts, save his head and genitals which were never discovered, were parboiled and distributed about his house: 'His armes, legges, thighs, and bowels were powdred up into two earthen steenes in a lower roome of the house…[and] the bulke of his carkeise was plac'd in a fatte or tube, covered over with a cloath in a chamber over head'.[75] The details of the crime, though horrible, proved to be the undoing of the conspirators as they began to talk and dropped subtle hints 'after the

[71] Ibid., sig. B3v.
[72] Ibid., sig. Cr.
[73] Ibid., sig. Cr.
[74] *The Crying Murther: Containing the cruel and most horrible Murther of Mr Trat, Curate of Olde Cleave* (London, 1624), sig. B2r.
[75] Ibid., sig. B3v.

murder was committed, but not detected'.[76] While Trat was still considered missing, Alice Walker, Smithwicke's maid-servant, stated that 'if he did not come home the sooner, his powdred Beef would stinke, as after that his powdred-flesh did indeed very shortly.[77] She had previously threatened Trat and stated that 'hee should have beene cut as small as herbs in the pot'.[78] She also supposedly confessed 'the guilty burthen of her own conscience unto one of her neighbours' though she later denied this when questioned by Justices of the Peace.[79] Andrew Baker was seen 'throwing downe of a pot of stinking blood, supposed to be Trats'.[80] Further evidence was presented by neighbours to the Justices of the county. A bloody bridle was discovered in Smithwicke's house and identified as having belonged to Trat. Pieces of skull, neck bone and teeth were also discovered in Smithwicke's house which raised further suspicion as Trat's head was never discovered. While the conspirators had never committed a crime before, neighbours were wary of them based on past public misbehaviour. The four believed themselves to be above suspicion and behaved boldly in public while their neighbours silently watched. In the end, the conspirators acted against their community and were undone by their own hubris.

The four conspirators did not appear to suffer from guilty consciences and their behaviour led to their executions. Their speech drew attention to their guilt rather than as a means to deflect it. The author of *Sundry Strange and inhumane Murthers, lately committed* (1591), on the other hand, warned about the exact opposite behaviour. Secretive behaviour and inner turmoil could be just as blatant as bold actions when observed by neighbours. The author stated that:

> horror and feare always accompanieth the murtherer, his owne conscience is to him a thousand witnesses, hee standeth in dreade of every bush, beast, and birde, he

[76] Ibid., sig. C2v.
[77] Ibid., sig. C2v.
[78] Ibid., sig. C2v.
[79] Ibid., sig. C2v.
[80] Ibid., sig. C2v.

> imagineth that every thing discovereth his evil, and many times it falleth out, that the silly creatures of the earth detecteth him.[81]

God's providence would never suffer a murder to go unpunished. A murderer could be undone through direct interactions with neighbours or by withdrawing from the community. A murderer made enemies with everything, including neighbours, his own conscience and even the animals that should have been subordinate to him.

Neighbours alerted officials when felons exposed themselves and when alerted by animals through providential means. Of course, neighbours also played a direct role in the identification and capture of murderers. Martin Ingram stated that concepts of good and wicked behaviour 'were rooted in an intensely communal ethos, that demanded not merely that citizens should themselves avoid misdoings but that they should be vigilant and active in preventing- or, if prevention failed, in correcting- such misdoings'.[82] In *A Bloudy new-yeares gift* (1609), neighbours played the principle part in the identification and apprehension of Rowland Cramphorne after he supposedly murdered his master Robert Heath 'with an yron fyer forke, giving him his deaths wound upon his head'.[83] Cramphorne pleaded not guilty but 'divers good and substantiall witnesses…to the number of twelve' including a maid servant and boy of Heath's household, a gentlemen lodger, and 'a Joyner being the next neighbour, who heard the noyse in the house, when the bloodie act was performed'.[84] Cramphorne thought he was alone with his master in the middle of the night but did not realise just how vast the network of people was that surrounded Heath and his household. When the hue and cry was raised in the morning, the joiner led other neighbours into the house and attempted to save Heath, who had not yet died from his injuries, and apprehended Cramphorne. The joiner played a

---

[81] *Sundrye strange and inhumaine Muthers, lately committed* (London, 1591), sig. A2v.
[82] Martin Ingram, 'Shame and Pain: Themes and Variations in Tudor Punishments' in Simon Devereaux and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Penal Practice and Culture, 1500-1900: Punishing the English* (New York, 2004), p. 47.
[83] *A Bloudy new-yeares gift, or A True Declaration of the most cruell and bloudy murther, of maister Robert Heath, in his owne house at high Holbourne* (London, 1609), sig. B2r.
[84] Ibid., sig. B2r.

key role in the pamphlet because he rallied the neighbours and gave evidence against the murderer. The author included a flattering albeit brief description of the joiner and stated that when the alarm was raised early in the morning, the man was 'up and ready, because he frequented the morning lecture at Christs-Church'.[85] The joiner was described as a man of great faith and by stressing this fact, the author greatly contributed to the man's honest character and evidence.

In this example, the joiner and other nameless neighbours gave evidence against Cramphorne after he was arrested by officials. In several pamphlets, the neighbours themselves gave chase and apprehended the felons. *The Bloudy booke* has already been discussed in this chapter in relation to lost reputation but this pamphlet also drew attention to neighbourly alliances. Sir John Fites murdered his neighbour Slanning after the pair quarrelled during 'dinner with manie of their neighbors and friends'.[86] The county was outraged 'for the death of so beloved a gentleman' and Fites fled to France for a year after the attack.[87] Fites was granted a conditional pardon and was bound to good behaviour 'but as it is commonly seene, a man naturally hardened in ill, can hardly amende his deformity of wickedness' and quickly returned to his former behaviour.[88] After Fites had 'impaired his estate, sever'd himself from his wife, wedded himself to wilfull obstinacie, abused his neighbours, murthered his friends' he attempted to flee again though this time he was pursued by neighbouring men, including his father-in-law.[89] The men eventually captured Fites and brought him to justice though not before he murdered another man in his attempted flight.

His neighbours took it upon themselves to pursue Fites and bring him to justice after he continually abused their hospitality and wrought havoc wherever he went. The neighbours described in *The Manner of the Cruell, Outragious Murther of William Storre* (1603) behaved in the exact same manner

[85] Ibid., sig. B3v..
[86] *The Bloudy booke*, sig. A4v.
[87] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[88] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[89] Ibid., sig. C3v.

after Francis Cartwright attacked and murdered the town's minister William Storre.[90] Like Fites, Cartwright did not attempt to conceal his wicked behaviour and was publicly known as 'a young man of an unbridled humour'.[91] Storre spoke against Cartwright's behaviour in the pulpit which led to the violent attack in which Cartwright was armed with two swords.[92] This pamphlet also drew attention to the fact that one man could have different reputations within a community. The author stated that some of his neighbours and friends believed that 'hee, being a young man, was provoked, and stirred up by evill words to commit that in the heate of his blood, which otherwayes he would never have committeed' while others believed him to be guilty beyond a shadow of a doubt because of his constant quarrelsome behaviour.[93] Word spread quickly and 'many were already assembled… to apprehende the felon' after Storre died from his injuries.[94] Indeed, the gathered crowd was so outraged by Cartwright's violence that 'his father fearing least in that desperate heate, hee should doe some more mischief, did what hee could to pacifie the tumult until the Constables came, and then delivered him'.[95]Cartwright was granted a minimal bail and fled the country to the dismay of Storre's widow.[96]

The pamphlets just discussed provide overt examples of the role neighbours played in the identification and apprehension of murderers. Murder pamphlets also contained references to the ways which neighbours in various official roles contributed to the persecution of felons through the early modern court system. Several authors specifically stated that they were present at the trials and executions of the felons they wrote about. The author of *The report of the horrible Murther*

[90] This particular murder proved to be of significant interest amongst readers and was published several times between 1603 and 1621. *The Manner of the Cruell Outragious Murther of William Storre Mast. of Arts, Minister, and Preacher at Market Raisin in the Country of Lincolne* (1603), *Three Bloudy Murders* (1613) and *The Life, Confession, and Heartie Repentence of Francis Cartwright, Gentleman* (1621).
[91] *The Manner of the Cruell Outragious Murther of William Storre Mast. Of Art, Minister, and Preacher at Market Raisin in the County of Lincolne* (London, 1603), sig. A2r.
[92] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[93] *Three Bloudy Murders*, sig. A2r.
[94] Ibid., sig. Bv.
[95] Ibid., sig. Bv.
[96] Ibid., sig. B2r

which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes (1607) stated that he 'was present at the death of the murthers, and heard their confessions of the murther by them done, [and] hath set it downe in writing…That the bad might heare and feare and the good might live in more safetie and peace'.[97] Pamphleteer Thomas Cooper, author of *The Cry and Revenge of Blood* (1620), was present at the Berrie Assizes in 1620 where he 'was an ear-witnesse of the Discovery of the most strange and cruell Murther' as described by unnamed witnesses.[98] Other authors mentioned in passing that they gathered the information for their pamphlets from witness testimony heard at various Assizes and Sessions held across England though these references were frequently vague.[99] While these references were not expanded on, they did remind the reader that the eyes and ears of neighbours were always upon one another both in the confines of a community and in the courts of law.

Some details about local officials who were also neighbours of the murderers were included in pamphlets which further revealed the interactions between community ties and the law. The 'pittilesse mother' Margaret Vincent was held by a neighbouring constable after being arrested 'who with a strong watch lodged her in his owne house…who shewing the part and duty of a good Christian with divers other of his neighbours, all that same night plyed her with good admonitions, tending to repentance'.[100] Murderer Henry Robson was undone by 'the Maior, Jurats and Recorder' of Rye who gathered to inquire into the untimely death of his wife after being informed of the presence of poison

---

[97] *The report of the horrible Murther which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes, Knight, on the 20. day of February, Anno Dom. 1606* (London, 1607), sig. A2r. Other gallows confessions can be found in *The True Relation of the most Inhumane and bloody Murder of Master James*, sig. Cr.; *Deeds Against Nature*, sig. A4v

[98] Thomas Cooper, *The Cry and Revenge of Blood: Expressing the Nature and haynousnesse of willfull murther* (London, 1620), sig. A3r.

[99] *A Brief discourse of two most cruell and bloudie murthers*, sig. Br-v, B4r-v; *A True Relation of the most Inhumane and bloody Murther of Master James, Minister and Preacher of the words of God at Rockland in Norfolke* (London, 1609), sig. B4v, *Sundry Strange and inhumane Murthers, lately Committed*, sig. A4r-v; *The Trueth of the most wicked and secret murther of John Brewen* (London, 1592), sig, A4v; *Deeds against nature, Monsters by kinde*, sig. A2r, B4v-Cr; *A True Relation of Theg [sic] Round, Occasion, and Circimstances , of that horrible Murther committed by John Bartram* (London, 1616), sig. C2r-v, Dr-D3v.

[100] *A pittilesse mother*, sig,. Br.

by the coroner after neighbours voiced suspicion.[101] The author of *A Brief discourse of two most cruell and bloudie murthers* described how murderer Greenoll was observed by the local watchman stealing from his victim's shop after committing the crime. Ordinarily, the town of Evesham did not employ a watchman save 'all the time of Christmas… that no misorder or il rule be committed in the Towne, which doubtless is a verie good and commendable order'.[102]

The majority of neighbours remained unnamed and only a few pamphlets from this period directly named witnesses. The author of *A true report or description of an horrible, woful, and moste lamentable murther* included the names of witnesses who described the pair's domestic life and stated that murderer John Kynnestar and his wife appeared to be a happy couple. Thomas Pepper, Davie Floyde, William Welch and Richard Barwicke, the vicar of Bristol, testified that the pair lived together quietly and confirmed the suddenness of the attack.[103] The miraculous bleeding afresh of Lord Burke's corpse was witnessed by 'one John Powell, yeoman of the bottles in her majesties house' in *The most horrible and tragicall murther of the right honourable, the virtuous and valorous Gentleman, John Lord Bourgh* (1591).[104] The author of *Three Bloodie Murders* (1613) included the names of neighbours who gave testimony against murderer Francis Cartwright for the brutal attack on Minister William Storre including twenty-four parishioners, seven knights and five esquires.[105] These 'neighbours somewhat neere adjoyning, thought it [their] Christian dutie to yield testimonie therein accordingly' out of respect for their minister and wished to see justice served.[106] The names of nine preachers, twelve doctors of divinity and twelve bachelors of divinity who gave testimony about

[101] L.B., *The Examination, confession and condemnation of Henry Robson*, sig. Br.
[102] *A Brief discourse of two most cruell and bloudie murthers*, sig. A7v.
[103] *A true report or description of an horrible, woful, and moste lamentable murther done in the citie of Bristowe by one John Kynnestar*, sig. A1v.
[104] *The most horrible and tragicall murther of the right honourable, the virtuous and valorous Gentleman, John Lord Bourgh, Baron of Casell Connel* (London, 1591), sig. A4v.
[105] *Three Bloodie Murders*, sig. B2v, B3r.
[106] Ibid., sig. B3r.

Storre's blameless character were also included.[107] Furthermore, the author also mentioned several unnamed witnesses who confirmed the brutality of the attack including local constables, 'a Bone-setter, and three or foure of the best Chyrugions'.[108] While neighbours were not always directly named as witnesses, they were always present in the background of these pamphlets.

Neighbourly Neglect and Repercussions

These pamphlets contain multiple references to the various roles that neighbours played in the apprehension of felons. Descriptions of neighbours were mostly positive and these nameless characters continually upheld and reaffirmed proper neighbourly love. Neighbours gave evidence and also directly pursue the malefactors. Once the felon was in the hands of the authorities, however, the neighbours disappeared from the narratives and the focus turned from the community to a discussion about the individual felons. As discussed in Chapter Two, repentance was a key feature of murder pamphlets and authors stressed the need for a sinner to make peace with God before death. Prior to capture and repentance, however, the felons ran wild in a world turned upside down. Neighbours primarily aided in the restoration of order but sometimes they unwittingly contributed to the chaos.

In *The Unnaturall Father* (1621), the author placed both the blame for the murder and credit for the apprehension of the murderer on the inhabitants of Ewell. On the surface, this case appeared to be relatively simple: a man ruined his family, could not handle the thought of poverty and killed his children to save them from becoming beggars. John Rowse was apprehended by neighbours after the bodies of his daughters were discovered, confessed to the crimes and was hanged. The root of this murder, however, appears to have been due to a collective neglect on behalf of himself and the same

[107] Ibid., B3v, B4r.
[108] Ibid., sig. Br.

neighbours who apprehended him. The author included a standard admonition against sin: 'This was the lamentable end of John Rowse, a man of the age of fifty years, and one that might have livd and dyed in better fashion, if he had laid hold on the grace of heaven, and craved Gods protection and fatherly assistance'.[109] Of course, Rowse was to blame for the murders. He allowed himself to descend so far into sin that he could not be redeemed. Rowse, however, did not suffer the blame alone. His recklessness was only possible because his neighbours neglected their duty and had not appointed a preacher for the parish of Ewell, something both 'lamentable and remarkable' in a Christian community.[110] The town had neither a preacher nor pastor because the parsonage was rented out for a great price. A reader was paid seven pounds a year 'and by this means the Towne [was] served with a poor old man that [was] half blind'.[111] Due to selfishness and greed, the men and women of Ewell, including the murderous Rose, did not stand a chance against evil and were 'in danger of famishing, for want of a good Preacher to breake the Bread of Life unto them'.[112] Neglectful neighbours created sinners and the local collective was responsible for the actions of individuals.

In the example just discussed, the neglect of the people of Ewell led to the deaths of two young children. One of the murders described in *A Briefe Discourse of Two most cruell and bloudie murthers*, on the other hand, directly resulted from the intervention of neighbours. In Cotheridge, Worcestershire, Thomas Beast was murdered by his servant Christopher Tomson who was engaged in an adulterous affair with Mistress Beast. The pair conducted themselves in such a blatant manner that 'the neighbours not suspecting, but credibly perceiving the common and unhonest behaviour of this wicked woman and her lusty Yonker: began so much to dislike thereof'.[113] The 'rumor of the People' brought the affair to Beast's attention and he attempted to turn the servant out. Mistress

[109] *The Unnaturall Father: Or, The Cruell Murther committed by one John Rowse of the Towne of Ewell, ten miles from London, in the Country of Surry, upon two of his owne Children*, (London, 1621), sig. B3v.
[110] Ibid., sig. B3v.
[111] Ibid., sig. B3v.
[112] Ibid., sig. B3v.
[113] *A Brief Discourse of Two most cruell and bloudie murthers*, sig. B2v.

Beast, however, intervened and Tomson stayed a little while longer during which time the pair plotted her husband's murder.[114] The neighbours appeared to have done their moral duty by identifying socially transgressive behaviour but they did not recognize just how dangerous this woman truly was. During this time, 'so great grew the hatred of this harlot against her Husband, as she must needs have Christopher her sweet dallying friend, to dispatch the life of him', which he did with a forest bill in a violent attack when the pair were alone in a field.[115] This violence ultimately resulted from the fact that neither Beast nor his wife behaved properly: he allowed his wife's lover to linger in their home and she was a 'most horrible and wicked Woman, a woman, nay a devil'.[116] The neighbours did what was right but in this case the exposure of adultery proved to be a catalyst for violence.

Conclusion

Neighbours and communities played an important role in early modern English life. Church rites and rituals were witnessed and celebrated by neighbours and *The Book of Common Prayer* introduced a common language for all English men and women after the Reformation. Murder pamphlets, too, stressed the importance of collective language and behaviour through a moralistic dialogue. While the focus of this cheap print was ultimately the felons and their repentance, the background was always filled with both direct reference and indirect commentary about neighbours. In 'pamphlet England', neighbours played several important roles within this cheap print. They helped to construct and police reputation within a community and represented the collective faith and morality of England as a whole. Men and women who deviated from acceptable behaviour including gambling, drinking and whoredom risked being permanently alienated from the social and spiritual support of

[114] Ibid., sig. B3r.
[115] Ibid., sig. B2v-B3r, B4r.
[116] Ibid., sig. B3r.

their neighbours and communities. Neighbours did not just monitor reputation and behaviour; they also intervened for the good of the community and apprehended felons who threatened collective peace. Some neighbours reported crimes and bore witness while others directly acted and gave chase to murderous individuals when they attempted to flee. This group included everyday men and women but also included justices of the peace, sheriffs and other law officials. While neighbours played an extremely positive and important role in murder pamphlets, they were only human and prone to flawed behaviour. In these examples, men and women indirectly encouraged sin and violence by neglecting their neighbourly duties. This neglect allowed sinners to grow increasingly bold and resulted in murder.

The neighbours described in these pamphlets were frequently represented as an autonomous, ever-present and constantly observing group. Authors established moral norms and values through descriptions and observations as reported by neighbours and derived from reputable sources such as Assize records and other court commentaries as well as through the world of conversation, rumour and gossip circulating in communities affected by murders and crimes. Murder pamphlets, moralistic literature and official Church of England visitation articles suggest that England was a country very much obsessed with reputation and proper behaviour. These sites of reoccurring patterns of admonitory language highlighted socially unacceptable behaviour and sought to educate men and women about the dangers of sin and vice. Scriptural descriptions of neighbours and their prescribed duties to both God and one another further cemented the need for honest dealings and respectful behaviour within communities. By identifying and discussing the main sites of early modern neighbourly responsibility and resulting actions described in English murder pamphlets, we can gain a deeper understanding of the importance of reciprocal duties, ties and behaviour on an individual, a community and England as a whole.

7

The Stuffe of Death: Descriptions of Clothing and Textiles

The history of clothing and personal adornment is a dynamic and multifaceted field and is not limited to discussions of popular fashions, trends or consumption. Indeed, discussion of clothing is extremely important to the study of social history and material culture. Many scholars have produced excellent studies pertaining to England's early modern cloth trade, both at home and abroad, and the second-hand clothing trade, as well as topics such as dressing habits of the elite and both cross-gender and cross-class dressing.[1] The problem with discussing clothing and textile history, however, is that contemporary scholars are left with very little information that directly relates to the lower echelons of English society during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[2] Clothing was handed down and worn until it could no longer be mended or 'translated', the term used to describe the action of taking apart a garment and creating new ones from the fabric.[3] These thrifty practices left very little behind and limit the study of clothing to descriptions from various literary sources. This chapter will analyse the descriptions of clothing and textiles as found in murder and execution pamphlets. Previous chapters have analysed the religious, domestic and social representations found in this literature but none have specifically looked at what these pamphlets can tell us about clothing

[1] See: David Cressy, 'Gender Trouble and Cross-Dressing in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies* 35(4) (1996), pp. 438-465; Roze Hentschell, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England: Textual Constructions of a National Identity* (Hampshire, 2008); Jean E. Howard, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 39(4) (1988), pp. 418-440; Beverly Lemire, 'The Theft of Clothes and Popular Consumerism in Early Modern England', *Journal of Social History* 24(2) (Winter, 1990), pp. 255-276; Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth Century England* (Cambridge, 2005); Margaret Spufford, *The Great Reclothing of Rural England: Petty Chapmen and the Wares in the Seventeenth* Century (London, 1984); Gese Stedman, *Exchange in Seventeenth Century France and* England (Surrey, 2013); Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothing in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003); Jane Whittle and Elizabeth Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household' The World of Alice Le Strange* (Oxford, 2012).

[2] Margaret Spufford, 'The cost of apparel in seventeenth-century England, and the accuracy of Gregory King', *Economic History Review* 53(4) (2000), p. 677.

[3] Christine M. Varholy, ''Rich like a Lady': Cross-Class Dressing in the Brothels and the Theatre of Early Modern London', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 8(1) (2008), p. 6.

or forms of non-verbal communication related to death. Clothing was worn by every man, woman, and child in England from all social ranks and it should come as no surprise that garments and textiles featured heavily in murder and execution pamphlets.

Existing scholarship on early modern clothing and textiles covers a wide range of topics including legislation, the popular consumption of luxury goods, courtly etiquette and attire, and national and international trade. Francis Baldwin's groundbreaking and formidable *Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England*, first published in 1926, is one of the most comprehensive studies of English sumptuary law beginning in the fourteenth century. Alan Hunt's *Governance of the Consuming Passion: A History of Sumptuary Law* (1996) further analyses European sumptuary laws by highlighting moral regulations and discourses from official institutions such as the Church and monarchs as well as public groups including women and religious and social reformers. Hunt notes that sumptuary laws did not just emerge from above and social hierarchy played an important role in shaping popular perceptions of acceptable attire and supposed respectability.[4]

Clothing, morality and identity have a very strong and complicated bond. This concept has been discussed by Woodruff D. Smith in *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600*-1800 (2002). Smith highlights and discusses changing patterns of consumption in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe as well as changing concepts of respectability, virtue and gendered behaviour during this period. While Smith's book does not focus exclusively on clothing, he firmly established the connections, and associated discord, between public consumption, individual identity and moral order. Linda Peck's *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* further analyses the changing patterns of early modern consumption, specifically focusing on the

[4] Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passion: A History of Sumptuary Law* (London, 1996), p. 72.

consumption of luxury goods in England. Like Smith, Peck's study discusses a variety of luxury goods though she does pay specific attention to England's silk trade and shopping habits.[5]

Without a doubt, clothing speaks on the wearer's behalf and identifies his or her social rank and wealth. The early modern period did not just witness a rise in consumption and trade; it also witnessed a rise in new forms of identification, discipline and control. In *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication Through Clothing*, Nathan Joseph addresses the rise of the uniform in early modern Europe. He describes the uniform as 'a learned category which is acquired only through socialization, exists and had meaning only within certain social contexts'.[6] Clothing was part of a vast network of non-verbal forms of communication that was indirectly agreed upon by society. Luxurious clothing identified the wearer as part of the societal elite while a uniform, both military and livery, or shabby clothing marked the wearer as a member of the lower echelons of society. Daniel Roche, in *The Culture of Clothing*, expands this concept and notes that clothing had the power to separate and divide individuals while also contributing to social classification.[7] Roche further discusses the important role the rise of the uniform played in early modern society and contributed to the separation of military and civil society through visual display.[8] Furthermore military clothing was also used to establish discipline as a soldier had to wear his country's clothing and was also responsible for its maintenance and upkeep.[9]

Clearly, the study of clothing goes beyond costume or fashion history and also encompasses the work of cultural, economic and military historians. By studying clothing and textiles in cheap print, this chapter will contribute to this ongoing dialogue and seeks to demonstrate just how integral clothing was to early modern social and national identity as well as discuss the various roles clothing

[5] Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 1-24.
[6] Nathan Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication Through Clothing* (New York, 1986), p. 115.
[7] Daniel Roche, *The Culture of* Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Regime, trans. Jean Birell (Cambridge, 1996), p. 148.
[8] Ibid., p. 225.
[9] Ibid., p 148.

played in everyday interactions, public protest, religion and, of course, death. This chapter will open with a discussion about what we do know pertaining to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century clothing. Godly conduct literature was deeply concerned with sin, specifically pride. Moralist writers stressed that clothing was only given to man by God after the Fall and should serve as a reminder of wickedness rather than a means to project wealth or beauty.[10] While murder and execution pamphlets frequently shared popular ideas and opinions with conduct literature, the two did not share the same direct aversion to pride. Murder and execution pamphlets described sin as an overarching concept and discussed how it affected society on a large scale rather than focusing on one particular sin. Both types of literature, however, were deeply concerned with morality and proper social behaviour as represented by clothing and delineated by sumptuary laws.

Following this introductory discussion, the first topic to directly discuss representations of clothing in murder and execution pamphlets will be how clothing was directly used as a murder weapon. The typical methods of murder in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were frequently a blow to the head and a cut throat or an injury resulting from a sword or knife wound. These crimes typically occurred quickly and without premeditation. Clothing, however, could be just a deadly and unassuming items including gloves, handkerchiefs, girdles, and stocking garters filled in for knives or swords in heated moments. Just as clothing could be a murder weapon, it could also be the motive behind the crime. Pride and jealousy of clothing and textiles spurred men and women to commit violent acts against friends, servants and family members. These murderers, however, never escaped punishment and in several cases the crimes were revealed by the garments themselves.

[10] See Genesis 3:21-3: Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD make coats of skins, and clothes them. And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. And now lest he put forth his hand, and take also the tree of life and eat and live forever. Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the earth, whence he was taken. Philip C. Almond, *Adam and Eve in Seventeenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 200.

During the period in discussion, items of clothing were sewn by individual tailors or dressmakers and ready-made garments did not emerge until the mid-seventeenth century.[11] This form of cottage industry helped to establish the second topic to be discussed in this chapter: deception through clothing. Unique garments worn by the wrong person could identify a thief or murderer when spotted in the street. On the other hand, the same unique item when paired with a disguise could lead to wrongful identification. Cross-class dressing appeared in several pamphlets in which men and women dressed above their station in order to gain access to members of England's gentry for dubious reasons.[12] Clothing allowed criminals to hide both their intentions and weapons until it was too late for the unsuspecting victim to flee. Clothing provided thieves and murderers with disguises in which to escape or cast the blame on others. Men and women also used clothing to create a distraction or alibi as they went about with murderous intentions. Deceptive clothing could hide crimes such as theft or murder as well as sins relating to whoredom, pride or papacy.

The final topic to be discussed in this chapter will examine descriptions of clothing directly related to executions. The repetitive mantra of 'murder will out' frequently appeared in this form of cheap print and continually stressed that God would have his revenge for earthly violence. In several pamphlets, God was described in vengeful armour preparing to strike down murderers. In other pamphlets, metaphors and biblical passages relating to clothing and dress were used to castigate guilty felons and justify their deaths at the hands of the state. At the gallows, clothing had the ability to speak on the wearer's behalf and declare innocence or demonstrate disregard for the Crown's authority.

[11] Spufford, 'The Cost of Apparel in Seventeenth-Century England, and the Accuracy of Gregory King', p. 700.
[12] Varholy, 'Rich like a Lady', pp. 4-34.

Clothing, Morality and Society

Clothing was frequently discussed in moralistic literature but in a very different way than it was described in murder and execution pamphlets. In moralistic tracts, clothing was a source of pride and wickedness. In 1613, Puritan Bishop of Bangor Lewis Bayly warned his readers : 'As thou art putting on thine apparel, remember, that they were first given as covering of shame, being the filthy effect of sin: and that they are made but of the offals and excrements of dead animals'.[13] Popular poet William Basse reminded his readers in 1619 that clothing was a site of punishment and reminder 'of the fall of man, for Adam wore no clothing'.[14] Clergyman Thomas Adams shared this opinion and compared clothing to the hangman's noose: 'The wickedness brought shame to nakedness, and apparel hides it; where of being proud, he glories in his own halter. Strip him of his gawdy clothes, and put him in a Charnel house, where he may reade visable lectures of mortality and rottenesse'.[15] According to George Whetstone, 'Pride proceedeth from mans overweening of his owne excellencie'.[16] Stephen Gosson argued against ostentatious clothing and wrote that the only purpose of 'costly apparel [was] to flatter the sight' and provided no moral fortitude.[17] Man should first and foremost strive to please God rather than to please others or himself. Most importantly, man was only given clothing by God after the fall and apparel should not take a place of precedence above one's eternal soul. The words 'luxury' and 'lechery' were synonymous early modern England and further linked pride of apparel to sin.

Moralistic and conduct literature shared many similarities with murder and execution pamphlets and highlighted sites of social anxiety. Both discussed proper behaviour of husbands and wives as well as constantly reminding the reader about the necessity of conformity to the Church of England;

[13] Lewis Bayly, *The Practice of Pietie*, (London, 1613), p. 307.
[14] William Basse, *A Help to Discourse* (London, 1619), p. 35.
[15] Thomas Adams, *Diseases of the Soule* (London, 1616), pp. 34-5.
[16] George Whetstone, *A heptameron of Civill discourses* (London, 1582), p. 3,
[17] Stephen Gosson, *The School of Abuses* (London, 1579), p. 14.

sin and vice were abhorred and God would always forgive the truly repentant. Pride and clothing went hand in hand in conduct literature but not to the same extent as in murder or execution pamphlets. This literature warned about possible downfall while murder pamphlets dealt directly with the aftermath. Murder pamphlets did discuss pride to a certain extent but the main focus was how the culmination of sin ended at the gallows. These pamphleteers appeared to have been more concerned with demonstrating how clothing and pride could be a corrupting factor in the bigger picture rather than highlighting specific examples. It is most likely that the readers had previously read or heard these moralistic arguments against pride and this cheap literature was part of the continuing dialogue about this sin.

While conduct literature and cheap print did not share the same theme of pride, they did share a disdain for tailors, the purveyors of pride. Tailors were essential for clothing production during this period but were not described in a positive light. This trade was viewed as corrupt for producing gaudy or prideful clothing and also because tailors supposedly kept fabric remnants for themselves rather than return them to their rightful owner. In *Choice, chance and change: or, Conceites in their colours* (1606), Nicholas Brenton discussed proper urban behaviour and warned 'No Tailor should put more stuffe in a garment, then was allowed him for his measure'.[18] Thomas Adams described the tailor as 'scarce a man' while clergyman and social commentator William Harrison labelled members of the trade as 'fickle-headed' and 'cunning' because they abused their trade knowledge and possessed 'several tricks in cutting, thereby to draw fond customers to more expense of clothing'.[19] This same attitude appeared in several popular ballads. In the ballad *A New Medley, OR A messe of All-together*, the author wrote 'tom Taylor did not use me well,/ To steal two yards out of one Ell'.[20]

[18] Nicholas Brenton, *Choice, chance and change: or, Conceites in their colours* (London,1606), p. 13.
[19] Adams, *Diseases of the Soule*, p.31; William Harrison, *The Description of England*, pp 145, 146.
[20] *A new Medley, OR A Messe of All-together* (London, 1640).

Likewise, the author of *An excellent new Medley* wrote: 'Beleeve my word without an Oath,/ The Taylor stole some of her cloath'.[21]

Religion and morality played a part in shaping public perceptions of clothing but this was not the only method. Sumptuary laws were introduced to England in the fourteenth century as a means of creating and maintaining authority for feudal lords as well as a way to insure that various social ranks were respected within the nobility itself.[22] Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli has stated 'such a system indicates a model of society in which inequality was an accepted fact' and everyone had a specific role to play.[23] The first sumptuary legislation in England appeared in 1363 and was titled 'A Statute Concerning Diet and Apparel'.[24] This legislation also restricted the import of foreign goods and protected the English cloth trade. According to Maria Hayward, legislation during the reign of Henry VIII revealed 'a growing concern with emphasizing the increasingly subtle definitions of rank with the nobility and gentry' while the middle sorts and rising mercantile groups were ignored.[25] Sumptuary legislation continued through Elizabeth I's reign though the context changed slightly. Peter Hyland has argued that Elizabethan legislation was not concerned with 'aristocratic excess, but with the presumption of the lower classes'.[26] During this period, the lower echelons were being subjected to increased scrutiny and being labelled as sites of potential social anxiety and unrest.[27] Clothing enabled the wearer to ape the aristocracy and hid his lowly birth behind fine clothing which was easy enough to obtain if you knew where to look. Cloth-catching, or the theft of clothing, was a lucrative business and garments could be stolen and passed on to brokers very easily and relatively anonymously.

---

[21] *An excellent new medley to the tune of the Spanish pavin* (London, 1620).
[22] Paul Raffield, *Images and Cultures in Law in Early Modern England: Justice and Political Power, 1558-1660* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 161.
[23] Maria Guiseppina Muzzarelli, 'Reconciling the Privilege of a Few with the Common Good: Sumptuary Laws in Medieval and Early Modern Europe', *Journal of Medieval and early Modern Studies* 39(3) (2009), p. 597.
[24] Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (London, 1996), p.303.
[25] Maria Hayward*, Rich Apparel: Clothing and the Law in Henry VIII's England* (London, 2009), p. 18.
[26] Peter Hyland, *Disguise on the Early Modern English Stage* (Surrey, 2011), p. 28.
[27] See Chapter Five for a discussion of the English rogue.

Sumptuary legislation was repealed in 1604 by the first Parliament called by James I. Alan Hunt suggests that this repeal was due to disagreements between the King and Parliament after it was proposed that James, like his predecessor Elizabeth I, regulate dress through proclamation, a proposal which Parliament heartily rejected, rather than due to a perceived failure of the legislation to effectively regulate dress.[28] It has been suggested that these laws and legislation were very difficult to enforce and Frances Baldwin, in her ground-breaking seminal study, noted that no significant evidence of enforcement in records of legal officials has been recorded:

> Surely, if the statues of apparel had been executed as the legislators intended them to be, some of the cases arising under them would have been appealed to the higher courts and some reports of them would have been preserved. And yet no such reports can be found.[29]

Hunt suggested this lack of historical evidence was due in part to an acceptance and 'few people disliked attitudes towards sumptuary restraints with the degree of strong feeling likely to have left a trace on the historical record'.[30] Whether or not these laws were effective, they did leave behind a continuing and self-perpetuating legacy. People did not stop aspiring to wear fine clothing after the repeal of the legislation, much to the chagrin of the religious writers discussed above. Several of the pamphlets to be discussed in the following pages were equally concerned with men and women using clothing in deceitful ways both before and after the repeal in 1604. The pervasive nature of the moralist criticisms about cross-class dressing found in murder pamphlets, as well as in religious tracts and conduct literature, demonstrates the persistent nature of a sumptuary mentality across all levels of early modern English society throughout the period in discussion. Clothing was revealed to be a contentious site of social anxiety as people took it upon themselves to watch and guard against deceitful dress even when the state would not.

---

[28] Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions,* pp. 321-22. See: 'Chapter 12: Mapping a Sumptuary Tradition: The English Experience', pp. 295-324.
[29] Frances Baldwin, *Sumptuary legislation and personal regulation in England* (Baltimore, 1926), pp. 117-18.
[30] Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions*, p. 355.

Dangerous Textiles

Turning from the social attitudes associated with clothing, this chapter will now discuss pamphlets in which clothing was used with murderous intentions. The majority of these examples were set in the domestic sphere and described murders which occurred between members of the same household.[31] Out of 88 murders described in the 42 surviving murder and execution pamphlets analysed here, seven directly mentioned clothing as the murder weapon. As discussed in Chapter Four, very few murders were actually committed in the domestic sphere in comparison with interpersonal violence between men outside the home.[32] The examples of domestic murder which included clothing appeared for the most part to have occurred without premeditation. The soon-to-be murderer flew into a rage and grabbed the closest item at hand.

One such murder was described in Anthony Munday's *A View of sundry examples* (1580), a compilation of various sins, crimes, murders and miracles. This particular entry described the actions of 'a gentlewoman named Mistres Amy Harison (alias) Midleton, who was a very wicked liver, an unjust dealer, a bewrayer of fortunes, and one who was wholely inclinded to vice abandoning vertue'.[33] Harison beat her maid, who also happened to be her godchild, 'sometimes with big cudgels, sometimes with a girth' or girdle.[34] This type of violent 'correction' was regular in Harrison's household and the unnamed girl eventually died after one such beating.[35] The mistress was described as violent and 'void of all reason' but there was nothing in the pamphlet to suggest that she truly wanted to murder the girl.[36] Servants were part of the household and their behaviour could be corrected within reason by their masters or mistresses but these same masters and mistresses had a

[31]The phrase 'members of the same household' signifies family members, servants and boarders rather than just immediate family.
[32]J .A. Sharpe, 'Domestic Homicide in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal* 24(1) (1981), p.34.
[33] Anthony Munday, *A View of sundry examples* (London, 1580), sig. Ciiv.
[34] Ibid., sig. Ciiir.
[35] Ibid., sig. Ciiir.
[36] Ibid., sig. Ciiir.

responsibility to protect them.[37] The moral lesson at the end of the entry was directed to 'all Mistresses and Dames' to demonstrate 'how they misuse their Servants in such unmerciful manner' rather than an admonishment specifically against murder.[38]

The next pamphlet to be published which featured an item of clothing as a murder weapon was *Sundry strange and inhumaine Murthers, lately committed* (1591). This pamphlet featured two murder stories that involved clothing in different ways though only one featured a garment as a weapon. The murder of Master Padge of Plymouth occurred in his home and had been plotted by his wife and two young men named Stone and Priddis. One Mr. Glandfeeld's daughter was supposed to marry a man named Strangwidge but he changed his mind and she wed Padge instead. This decision left her bitter and she devised a plan with Stone and Priddis to kill her husband as he slept.[39] The two men crept into his room and attacked him. He was naked aside from a handkerchief on his head, which the opportunistic men 'took from about his head, and knitting the same about his neck, they immediately striffled him'.[40] The violent attack broke Padge's neck and the pair attempted to straighten the bed 'clothes in ordinary fact as though no such act had been attempted, but that he had died on Gods hands'.[41] Once Padge's corpse was moved in the morning, however, foul play was quickly detected and the murderous plot was revealed. These two men killed Padge in a skulking manner. They hid in the darkness and attacked him when he was naked and most vulnerable. The attackers and the victim were thrown into harsh contrast and this image brings to mind the moralistic commentary which stressed that clothing was a cover for man's wickedness after the Fall.

These two men killed Padge with a handkerchief, a rather unimposing item. The murderers described in *A True report of the horrible Murther, which was committed in the House of Sir Jerome*

[37]See 'Of the lawfulnesse of a masters place and power' in William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties* (London, 1622), pp. 591-2.
[38] Munday, *A View of sundry examples*, sig. Ciiir.
[39] *Sundry strange and inhumaine Murthers, lately committed* (London, 1591), sig. B2v-3r.
[40] Ibid., sig. B3r.
[41] Ibid., sig. B3r.

Bowes (1606) also killed their victim with a small and unassuming article of clothing in a surprise attack though this victim was fully clothed. This pamphlet described the murder of a servant by two robbers, one of whom was her kinsman.[42] Edward Wilson and Robert Tetherton used servant Joan Wilson to gain access to Sir Bowes' house. When they were inside and her back was turned, Tetherton struck her on the head with an iron bar and dragged her body to the cellar. When she cried out 'Wilson ranne downe in haste and stopped her mouth with a glove, till Tetherton came after him, with the iron barre' and bludgeoned her a second time.[43] The two men brought the iron bar with the specific intention to harm the servant while the glove was grabbed in haste to prevent detection and hasten her death. While the glove was not the primary cause of her death, its presence had a profound significance. Wilson's death happened fairly quickly and 'it is not likely that they gave her either space or councell, first to call on God, ere she died'.[44] The first blow left her at death's door and when she attempted to call out they stopped her mouth and struck her again. She had neither the time nor the physical ability to repent her sins before she died.

The attack on Ellen Cash in 1607 bore a striking resemblance to the murder of Joan Wilson. In *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Licolneshire, by Two Husbands upon their Wives*, John Cash killed his sickly wife, Ellen, by 'stopping her mouth' with 'a napkin, or some other cloth'.[45]Cash viewed Ellen as a burden and was also having an affair with her maid, Anne Potts. The author stated 'this secret dislike which he had of his wife, and the great desire to be ridde of her' caused him to plot her murder.[46] He discussed the possibility with Potts but the pamphlet did not mention any specific plans. While Cash had plotted to kill his wife, the attack itself appeared frenzied unlike the calculated murder of Joan Wilson in *A True report of the horrible Murthers* as Cash grabbed an item close at

[42] *A True report of the horrible Murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes, Knight, on the 20. day of February, Anno Dom. 1606* (London, 1607), sig.B2r.
[43] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[44] Ibid., sig. B3r.
[45] *Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Lincolneshire, by Two Husbands upon their Wives* (London, 1607), sig. A3v.
[46] Ibid., sig A2v.

hand and used it to kill his wife. The description of the murder weapon was extremely vague and Cash was described as having used 'a napkin, or some other cloth'.[47] This vague description could be due to the fact that this murder went undetected for almost twenty years and Cash forgot specific details when he confessed. The Cashes appeared to be a relatively affluent couple as they could afford servants and additional comforts such as napkins or superfluous textile. Cash harboured a secret distain for his wife for some time prior to her murder. While the pair lived comfortably, they did not live happily and domestic creature comforts could not protect Ellen from violence or the devil's urgings.

While the three murders here discussed involved clothing in a haphazard way, the murder described in *A True Relation of the most Inhumane and bloody Murther, of Master James* (1609) certainly did not. The main focus of the pamphlet was the murder of Master James, the minister and preacher of Rockland in Norfolk by his curate, a man named Lowe, who lived in his household. Lowe and James's wife were having an affair and the pair plotted together to murder the minister in order to be together. This murder, however, did not feature clothing. The murderous role of clothing was only revealed through a surprise confession just before Lowe was hanged. Lowe revealed that prior to being a curate he was employed as a schoolmaster and fell in love with a rich man's daughter whom he was forbidden to marry. The girl became pregnant 'and the child, *Lowe* put forth to nurse'.[48] He attempted to burn the man's barn as retaliation for his refusal. While suspected of the crime, Lowe was never convicted and he left the area to work in Rockland with Master James. Shortly thereafter, he wrote to the nurse and demanded the child be returned to him because 'hee heard it was not well used there [and] hee had provided it a new nurse'.[49] Lowe confessed that 'hee smothered it in his cloke, and being demanded what became of it after, answered, he left it in the

[47] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[48] *A True Relation of the most Inhumane and bloody Murther of Master James, Minister and Preacher of the words of God at Rockland in Norfolke* (London, 1609), sig. C2v.
[49] Ibid., sig. C3r.

field, being dark, and went to Master James his house for a Spade, and buried it'.[50] This confession was included at the end of the pamphlet rather than at the beginning where it would have explained Lowe's downfall from a good schoolmaster into a murderer. Instead, the reader was presented with the story of a murderer which went from bad to worse and concluded with a description of fornication, arson and the murder of an innocent child. The pamphlet described a cold and calculated murder: Lowe demanded his child and when out of sight of the nurse, killed the child with his cloak while still on horseback.[51] This is the only case where a parent killed their child outside the domestic sphere. Clearly, he wanted to be rid of the child as soon as he could and his cloak provided the perfect means to do so. He killed his child with little to no compassion and left its body exposed in a field for some time before he returned to bury it while he remained warmly wrapped in his cloak, which he no doubt continued to wear well after the fact as he went about his daily duties.

Lowe was revealed to be a thoroughly wicked man who murdered the child begot by improper relations so that he might move forward with his life. The murderer described in *Deeds Against Nature, and Monsters by kinde* (1614) also killed his victim to hide shame associated with fornication. John Arthur, a crippled beggar, was convicted of murdering his betrothed wife and begging partner at the Old Bailey Sessions and hanged at Tyburn in July 1614. Arthur lived with his unnamed partner and 'had daily use of her bodie'.[52] The woman 'perceiving, and knowing her selfe to be but his strumpet, challenged of him the promise of marriage' to which he grudgingly agreed.[53] Shortly after this promise, Arthur 'tooke the womans owne girdle, and putting the same slyly about her necke…he made meanes in her sleep to strangle her'.[54] She had not the time to repent and died in a similar manner to Joan Wilson in *A True report of the horrible Murther.* Both women were silenced by a

[50] Ibid., sig. C3r-v.
[51] Ibid., sig. C3r.
[52] *Deeds Against Nature, and Monsters by kinde* (London,1614), sig. A2v.
[53] Ibid., sig. A2v
[54] Ibid., sig. A3r.

simple item of clothing and were not granted the opportunity to repent any sins prior to their deaths. The murder of Arthur's betrothed appeared slightly more sinister due to the fact that she was murdered as she slept and did not have an opportunity to defend herself. Furthermore, she was murdered by her would-be husband with an item of clothing from her own body so that he would 'be rid of the shame thus daily following him'.[55]

The final pamphlet from this period to discuss clothing as a murder weapon was *The pittilesse Mother* (1616). Gentlewoman Margaret Vincent, a secret Catholic, murdered her children with her own garters to save their souls because 'they were brought up in blindness and darksome errours' by her Protestant husband.[56] While this pamphlet condemned her actions, the author described her as a 'deceived Gentlewoman' as she was misled by recusant priests.[57] After a Sunday church service, Vincent excused herself from a gathering and returned home alone to kill her children, beginning with the youngest:

> Shee tooke it violently by the throat, and with a Garter taken from her legge, making thereof a noose and putting the same about her Childs sweet necke, she in a wrathfull manner drew the same so close together, that in a moment she parted the soule and body, and without any terror of Conscience, she layd the liveles infant, still remaining warme upon her bed, and with a relentless countenance looking thereon, thinking thereby she had done a deed of immortallity.[58]

After this was done, she 'likewise pressed out the sweet ayre of life [from the eldest child] and laid it by the other upon the bed sleeping in death together'.[59] She tried to strangle herself with the same garter 'but nature being weake, and flesh fragile, she was not able to do it.'[60] She then attempted to drown herself but was stopped by her maid. Though she immediately felt remorse after the murders were committed, it was too late.

---

[55] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[56] *A pittilesse Mother* (London, 1616), sig. A3r.
[57] Ibid., sig. A2v.
[58] Ibid., sigs. A3v-A4r.
[59] Ibid., sig. A4r.
[60] Ibid., sig. A4v.

Vincent's crime bore a resemblance to that of Lowe. Both killed their children with an item of clothing taken directly from their bodies. Vincent used a garter, an intimate and hidden item, while Lowe used his cloak, a coarse outer garment. The different locations of the murders further separated the crimes: Vincent killed her children in her private rooms as opposed to Lowe who killed his child openly in a field.[61] The former laid her children on a bed in a manner similar to sleeping and Lowe laid his child's corpse on the bare dirt until he returned with a spade to unceremoniously bury it and be rid of it.[62] Vincent believed that she was doing right and murdered her children for the sake of their souls while Lowe smothered his child to hide his past sins and shame. While it may sound perverse, Vincent's actions appeared to have been done out of love, albeit misguided love, rather than self-preservation.

The examples just discussed all featured clothing as a weapon but in the case of murderer Arnold Cosbye an article of clothing provided him with the upper hand during a confrontation. Cosbye, a soldier, murdered Lord Burke, Baron of Castle Connell, prior to a duel after Cosbye insulted the gentleman. This murder caught the attention of the English readership and three pamphlets were published in 1591: *The Araignment, Examination, Confession and Judgement of Arnold Cosbye*, *The Manner of the death and execution of Arnold Cosbie for the murthering of the Lord Boorke*, and *The most horrible and tragicall murther of the right honourable, the virtuous and valorous Gentleman, John Lord Bourgh, Baron of Castell Connell.* Cosbye attacked Burke with a sword as he bent over to unbuckle his spurs and stabbed him at least twenty-four times.[63] When Cosbye's sword was inspected 'it was all to be smeared with the blood of the Lord Burke, at the least sixteen inches

[61] Ibid., sig. A3v-A4r; *A True Relation of the most Inhumane and bloody Murther, of Master James*, sig. C3r.
[62] Death was associated with sleep in Classical mythology. Hypnos and Thanatos, the Greek personifications of Sleep and Death, were twin brothers and paired together. This imagery was present in early modern England and tombs were frequently influenced by Greek and Roman art and myths.
[63] *The Araignment, Examination, Confession and Judgement of Arnold Cosbye* (London, 1591), sig. Aiiiir-v.

deepe'.[64] Cosbye was portrayed as an opportunistic villain as he pounced on Burke as the gentleman prepared for their duel rather than wait for a fair fight. After his sentence was passed, Cosbye 'humbly craved the favour of the Court, that rather then he should be hanged, he desired to be shotte to death with bullets'.[65] This request was rejected due to the vicious nature of the attack and Cosbye was 'hanged up in chaines, according to his former judgement'.[66] In this case, a simple pair of spurs proved to be the undoing of two men.

As demonstrated, clothing and textiles had the potential to be very dangerous when in the hands of wicked people. Another entry that appeared in Munday's *A View of Sundry Examples* (1580) described the theft of a bolt of fabric rather than murder and the immediate providential punishment of the crime. Anne Averies, a widow living in the vicinity of Aldergate entered a shop and 'tooke up there six pound of Towe, and departed without paying therefore'.[67] When she was confronted for either payment or the return of the textile, she 'rapt out two or three terrible oaths…and being come back to the shoppe, she desired vengeance at Gods hands'.[68] Unfortunately for her, God's vengeance came quickly and 'her mouth being put to such a vyle office, that from thence issued that which should have discended at the lower parts'. [69] She was carried away and died a few days later 'in a stynking Stable'. [70] It was obvious from the description that Averies was not a good woman and ill-used people for her own gain. She brought about her own downfall through the combination of her theft of the tow, lies and terrible oaths. According to the narrative provided by Munday, it was simply a matter of time before she received her comeuppance, which was hastened in this particular example by textiles.

---

[64] Ibid., sig. Aiiiiv.
[65] Ibid., sig. Biiiiv.
[66] *The manner of the death and execution of Arnold Cosbie for murthering the Lord Boorke* (London, 1591), sig. A2v.
[67] *A View of sundry Examples*, sig. Biiiv.
[68] Ibid., sig. Biiiv.
[69] Ibid., sig. Biiiv.
[70] Ibid., sig. Biiiv.

Clothing appeared in murder pamphlets in a variety of sinister ways but could also have a positive presence. In *Two most unnatural and bloodie Murthers* (1605), clothing actually saved a woman from death. The gentleman Master Caverley from Yorkshire ruined his estate through drinking and gambling. He decided to kill his children to spare them from ruin. When he was captured after the murders he stated: 'I had brought them to beggary, and am resolved I could not have pleased God better, then by freeing them from it'.[71] During the attack he also wounded his wife as she attempted to protect her children:

> …and when he saw he could not get it [a child] from her, he most remorcelesse stabbed at it some three or foure times, all which she saved the child from, by taking it on her selfe, and having a paire of Whale-bone bodies on, it pleased God his dagger glanced on them, that she had yet but one wound in her shoulder.[72]

The children did not survive Caverley's vicious attack but his wife did thanks to her undergarment. Her providential stays saved her but Caverley's wrath proved too strong for their children.

Mistress Caverley's clothing played a further role in the pamphlet and she became the perfect visual representation of forgiveness. After Caverley was arrested, he asked if he could speak to his wife who came to him 'before the blood was washed from her cloathes, which he pierced out of her and her infants bodies'.[73] When she was with him, 'she forgot both her own wounds, and the deaths of her two children' and embraced him.[74] She stood before him as an abused woman and a childless mother but was still able to forgive Caverley and embrace him. Her blood-stained clothing stood in harsh contrast to her forgiving nature but her goodness and godly disposition overpowered the morbid scene. This pathetic scene bore a similarity with a description of forgiveness in *A True report of the horrible Murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes*. In the opening admonition, the author stated 'that *Adam* was more grieved at the sinnes of *Cain*, than for the

[71] *Two most unnaturall and bloodie Murthers* (London, 1605), p. 17.
[72] Ibid., p. 14. A 'paire of Whale-bone bodies' refers to corset though this term was not used until the nineteenth century. Bodies or stays were made with whale baleen during this period.
[73] Ibid., p. 18.
[74] Ibid., p. 17.

slaughter of *Abel*'.[75] The author further wrote 'A wrongfull suffering is commendable and rewardable, but a wrongfull doing is abominable with God'.[76] Mistress Caverley embodied this 'commendable suffering' as she forgave her husband for the destruction of their family while the pair were still covered in the blood of their children. Caverley could not escape the gallows but he was forgiven and died a repentant man thanks to the efforts of his wife.

The example of Mistress Caverley's penitent behaviour and providential 'Whale-bone bodies' demonstrated how clothing could reveal innocence and divine favour.[77] In several pamphlets, descriptions of clothing, particularly clean cloth, revealed inner wickedness and played a significant role in revelations of sin. *A Spectacle for Userers and Succors of poore folks bloud*(1606) described the wicked life and grisly death of French usurer George Rolet. A woman named Margaret Pasehall pawned seven rings and when she paid 'the principall, and then the interest, demandeth again her rings', Rolet only returned six.[78] The pair quarrelled and Rolet denied the presence of a seventh ring and 'after many other oaths and protestations, did in the end (according to his usuall manner of swearing, or rather cursing himself) beseech God, for to suffer the Rates to eate and devour him up, if ever he had, or received any such ring'.[79] God's providence acted quickly and innumerable swarm of rats quickly descended upon Rolet.[80] In an attempt to save the usurer from dangers, 'his friends and kinsfolke caused him to be stripped, and so to bee wrapped in a cleane clothe and to be carried away into another lodging'.[81] Despite their best efforts, Rolet could not be saved from the rats. Even though the trappings of his usury were removed and he was washed dressed in simple cloth as a means to avoid the rats, he could not escape divine punishment.

---

[75] *A True report of the horrible Murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes*, sig. A3v.
[76] Ibid., sig. A3v.
[77] *Two most unnaturall and bloodie Murthers*, p. 14
[78] *A Spectacle for Userers and Succours of poore folks bloud* (London, 1606), p. 4.
[79] Ibid., p.4.
[80] See Chapter Two for full discussion of providential punishments administered by God.
[81] Ibid., p.5.

One of the characters described in *The Bloudy Mother* (1610) died in a manner almost identical to Rolet and received the same treatment. Jane Hattersley, 'the bloudy mother', committed numerous acts of infanticide over several years and her master and lover Adam Adamson buried the bodies in his orchard. The pair had been suspected of misdoings by other servants and neighbours though these suspicions came to nothing. It was not until Adamson sold his orchard to a man named Edward Duffel who, after digging in said orchard, 'found many small bones, which…were proovd…by the skill of a cunning and very expert Anothomist, to be the bones of a child'.[82] The pair were arrested but Adamson was released on account of his good character while Hattersley was confined to Horshan Gaol near Greensteed.[83] Adamson convinced Hattersley to accept full blame for the murders and promised her that he would procure a pardon, which of course he did not and she hanged for the crimes. God, however, would never let a murder remain unpunished and worms and 'lice in great multitudes tormented him: no shift in linen, nor other costly shift in trimming, picking and anointing, could decrease the innumerable number of them' and his body began to smell like 'the infecting stench of carrion'.[84] Adamson languished in this manner for half a year before he died. In this state, Adamson appeared as a corpse dressed in its winding sheet without a proper burial that was left to rot in ignominy, much like the infant corpses he himself unceremoniously discarded.

Sin was continually linked with spiritual uncleanliness. In a sermon published in 1574, English reformer and Marian martyr John Bradford wrote: 'He sweepe the houses of our hartes, & makes them clean, that they may be a woorthy harborough and lodging for the Lord'.[85] When discussing repentance, Bradford further stated: 'In Gods sight now are you as cleane, and healed from all your

[82] T.B., *The Bloudy Mother. OR The most inhumane murthers, committed by Jane Hattersley upon divers Infants, the issue of her own bodie: & the private burying of them in an Orchard with her Araignment and execution.* (London, 1610), sig. B4v.
[83] Ibid., sig. B4v.
[84] Ibid., sig. Cr.
[85] John Bradford, *Two notable sermons. Made by that worthy martyr of Christ Maister John Bradford, the one of repentance, and the other of the Lordes supper never before imprinted. Perused and allowed according to the Queens Majesties injunction* (London, 1574), sig. Mvir

sores of synne'.[86]John More, preacher of Norwich, wrote in 1594: 'But let them wash themselves cleane as they will, they shal be found before the judgement seat of God no more innocent of the bloude of Christes flocke, then was Pilate of the blood of Christ himself'.[87]Lodowick Bryskett, in 1606, stated that spiritual cleanness and purity 'is required in them to whom that everlasting blisse and felicitie is promised'.[88] The call for cleanliness was not just metaphorical and passages about clean cloth and garments also appeared in scripture. Genesis 35:2 stated 'Then said Jacob unto his household and to all that were with him, 'Put away the strange gods which are among you, and cleans yourselves and change your garments'. Matthew 27: 59 specifically stated that Joseph wrapped Jesus' body in 'a clean linen cloth' before placing it in the tomb. Mark 9:2-3 stated

> And six days after, Jesus took Peter, and James, and John, and brought them up into a high mountain out of the way alone, and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment did shine, *and was* very white as snow, so white as no fuller can make upon earth.

Spiritual purity was linked with outward signs of cleanliness. In both *A Spectacle of Userers* and *The Bloudy Mother*, the clean cloth served as a foil for the tainted souls of Rolet and Adams, two men who preyed upon weak victims. Adamson disposed of the infants that threatened his lustful way of life and even double-crossed his partner that he might continue living in his sinful manner. Rolet, not content with making money from his services and interest, stole from the degraded Pasehall who had no other alternative for money than to pawn her possessions.

While their bodies were washed in a vain attempt to save them, their souls were foul and they had no hope of salvation. The descriptions of the men being swaddled in clean clothes also elicit images of the baptismal chrisom, the white cloth or garment worm by infants during baptism and returned to the church upon the mother's churching. The difference was that baptised babies were cleaned of

[86] Ibid., sig Niiiv.
[87] John More, *Three godly and fruitfull sermons declaring first how we may be saved in the day of judgement, and so come to life everlasting* (London, 1594), p. 68.
[88] Lodowick Bryskett, *A discourse of Civill life containing the ethike part of morall philisophie* (London, 1606), p.24.

their original sin while the sins of these two men damned them. The baptismal chrisom also had a pathetic purpose and served as the shroud if the child died with a month of the baptism.[89] Rather than being welcomed into the godly community and cleaned of original sin as during a baptism, these two men were singled out for their wicked acts by God and cast out of the faithful brethren as sinners. The clean clothes were used in vain and ruined by the chewing and gnawing of the pests.

Deception and Violence

Turning from examples of murderous textiles, this chapter will now discuss the various ways in which clothing was used to deceive people and acted as a catalyst or cover, or both, for violence. The most obvious method by which clothing could be used as a tool of deception was by hiding a weapon under loose garments. *A most strange, rare, and horrible murther committed by a Frenchman* (1586) described how a young man in Hector, Normandy, killed his neighbour, a tavern owner, at night. The young man entered the house with a hatchet hidden under his arm under the pretence of purchasing a drink. The man then 'sodenly toke the same hatchet and therewithal cleaved this taverners head as it were in twaine' and then killed the man's wife and child in the same manner.[90] Murderer Thomas Sherwood who appeared in *Heaven's Speedie Hue and cry sent after lust and murder* (1635) hid 'a short Trunchin, or Bastinado under his cloak' which he used to brain his victims before robbing their corpses of clothing.[91]

Murderer John Barterham hid a pistol under his cloak and shot Sir John Tindall in front of his servants in broad daylight before anyone realised his murderous intentions.[92] *A True Relation of Theg*

[89] Clare Gittings, *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England* (London, 2001), p. 82.
[90] *A most strange, rare, and horrible murther committed by a Frenchman of the age of too or three and twentie years* (London, 1586), sig. Aiiir.
[91] *Heavens Speedie Hue and cry after lust and murder* (London, 1635), sig. B2v.
[92] *The True Relation of a most desperate Murder, committed upon the body of Sir John TIndall, Knight, one of the maisters of the Chancery* (London, 1617), sig. B2.

[sic] *Round, Occasion and Circumstances, of that horrible Murther committed by John Barthram* (1616) and *The True Relation of a most desperate Murder, committed upon the body of Sir John Tindall* (1617) both described the murder of Tindall by Barterham. This murder received much attention no doubt due to the high rank of both men and the fact that both the victim and murderer were 'so stricken in age'.[93] Barterham shot Tindall in full view of his servants after a long and drawn out court battle which resulted in financial loss for Barterham.[94] The crime was described as particularly devious and malicious because Barterham used a pistol rather than a gentlemanly sword which 'could be shot off before it can be seene' and also due to the fact that he loaded it with two bullets to ensure that Sir Tindall would not survive the attack.[95] Barterham also hid a small dagger in his pocket which he intended to use to kill himself after the deed was done though it was discovered when he was searched.[96]

Clothing played a further subtle but very important role in this pamphlet. Barterham knew that he would hang in chains and took measures to prevent this. The corpses of malicious or violent felons were hanged in chains and their bodies left to rot in public places. Terrified by the thought of hanging in chains, Barterham killed himself: 'Which as some say, he fearing, that it should have beene to *hang* alive in chaynes, struck with so strong impression into him, that to avoide that shame, and torture, he purposed to lay violents hands upon himself, if hee could but meet the opportunity'.[97] Barterham hung himself 'from a tenter hooke, that was fastened above the window to hang a hat on' with a small piece of cord he found in his cell.[98] This murderer was eager to salvage what he could of his damaged reputation and avoid posthumous shame at all costs. The author described him as a

[93] *A True Relation of a most desperate Murder, committed upon the body of Sir John Tindall Knight*, sig. A4r .
[94] Ibid., sig. Bv.
[95] [95] *A True Relation of Theg [sic] Round Occasion and Circumstances of that horrible Murther committed by John Barterham* (London, 1616), sig. B3v, Cr.
[96] Ibid., sig. B4v.
[97] *True Relation of a most desperate Murder, committed upon the body of Sir John Tindall Knight*, sig. Cr.
[98] *A True Relation of Theg [sic] Round Occasion and Circumstances of that horrible Murther committed by John Barterham*, sig. C4r.

'Barbarous man' and a coward as he lacked the courage behind his convictions.[99] If he were truly a gentleman, he would have accepted his fate and begged God for mercy. Instead, Barterham found solace in a small piece of cord and a hat hook.

Clothing did not just hide murder weapons; it could also cover an evil disposition. Fine clothing and an attractive countenance appear to have been synonymous with good and godly behaviour. Several authors lamented the downfall of well-clothed and handsome young men due simply to their appearance rather than for their character. The author of *The Bloudy Booke* (1605) discussed murderer Sir John Fitz's 'comelinesse of personage' and appearance as contributing to his gentility and reputation.[100] Fitz, however, was far from a gentleman and killed three people before he ran himself through with his sword in the end. In *The Unnaturall Father* (1621), John Rowse 'had been a Gentlemans companion, of good Reputation and Calling' and 'had Friends, Lands, Money, Apparell, and Credit'.[101] Although he was not a gentleman like Sir John Fitz, his reputation and fine attire garnered him respect from both his peers and superiors. Likewise, the murderous soldier John Lambert in *A Briefe and True Relation of the Murther of Mr. Thomas Scot Preacher* (1626) was initially described in a positive light: 'Hee was at this time [prior to entering the army] aged thirty sixe years, of tall structure, and well clothed'.[102] Unlike the other men, Lambert appeared to suffer from a mental disorder and killed preacher Thomas Scott when stationed in Utrecht after Scott supposedly prevented him from being presented to the Queen of Bohemia.[103] Whether purposefully or not, these men were murderers and their fall from grace was presented to the reader as all the more lamentable due to the fact that they were attractive and dressed well. Sin, however, lurked on the inside and waited for the right moment to strike.

---

[99] *True Relation of a most desperate Murder, committed upon the body of Sir John Tindall Knight*, sig. C4r.
[100] *The Bloudy booke, or, The Tragicall and desperate end of Sir John Fites (alias) Fitz* (London, 1605), sig. A3r-v.
[101] *The Unnatural Father: Or, The cruell Murther committed by John Rowse of the Towne of Ewell, ten miles from London, in the County of Surry, upon two of his owne Children* (London, 1621), sig. Br.
[102] *A Briefe and True Relation of the Murther of Mr. Thomas Scot Preacher of Gods Word and Bachelor of Divinitie* (London, 1626), p.1.
[103] Ibid., p. 2.

The notion of a wolf in sheep's clothing was not a new concept in early modern England and appeared in moralist writing. Thomas Becon, a Protestant reformer and canon of Canterbury Cathedral, discussed the perils associated with a handsome exterior in *The acets of Christe and of Antichiste* (1577): '*Antichrist* is well clothed with precious garments, and hath change for everyday, and commaundeth others to be beaten and sore punished, and false witness to be brought in to testifie, whatsoever hee will have against the poore innocent christen people'.[104] Sin and evil could be hidden under a respectable or changeable exterior. Like their pamphlet counterparts, the murderers described in the ballad *A Warning for all murderers* (1620) used clothing to change identity, albeit temporarily, in order to kill their kinsmen. The unnamed gentleman plotted to kill David Williams and his wife in an attempt to inherit his estate. They chose to disguise themselves as German soldiers:

> At length three sturdy men they [Williams and his wife] met,
> in soldiers tattered rages,
> With swords fast girt unto their sides,
> which fangled in their jagges.
> Their faces smear'd with dust and sorte,
> in loathsome beastly wise,
> With black thrumb'd hats upon their heads
> as is the Germans guise.[105]

The men chose to dress as foreign travelling soldiers to hide their true identities. These disguises initially appeared to have worked and the men went unpunished for several years. Unfortunately for them, God saw all murders and His providence could not be tricked by clothing. Williams' wife was pregnant at the time of the murders but the child miraculously survived and revenged his parents. He bit one man and stabbed another in the leg with a large pin. The wounds would not heal and both men died. The child then stuffed a bramble into the third man's mouth as he slept which rent 'his

[104] Thomas Becon, *The actes of Christe and of Antichriste concernyng bothe their life and doctrine: diligently gathered and now taken out of his works, by Thomas Becon* (London, 1577), sig. Diir.
[105] *A Warning for all Murderers* (London, 1620).

wind-pipe around about' and he died from the injuries.[106] The three men temporarily avoided punishment due to their disguises but were undone by a child despite his having never seen them.[107]

Clothing served as both disguise and motivation for the murders described in Henry Goodcole's *Heavens Speedy hue and cry* (1635). Elizabeth Evans and Thomas Sherwood, aka Country Tom, worked together to rob men of their clothing which they then sold. Evans, 'borne in Shropshire, of a very good parentage', moved to London for employment but quickly descended in degradation and ended up a 'brazen-face Strumpet'.[108] While wearing a fine suit of clothing, Evans lured men to secluded areas where Sherwood attacked them 'with a short Trunchin, or Bastinado' he hid in his clothing.[109] The pair then rifled through the pockets, stripped the corpse of all its clothing and ran away. Evens and Sherwood made their living by robbing clothes but these same clothes proved to be their undoing. During this period there was no mass production of clothing and each item had distinct characteristics. Sherwood was apprehended as he attempted to sell the clothing of the previous night's victim, a well-liked gentleman named Thomas Claxton:

> And observe how thither hee commeth with his understanding infatuated by the ireful Judge of Heaven, that with the apparel he commeth on his back that morning, of the Gentlemans who he slew the Night before, and waite was layed for such fashioned apparel, which he wore, and proffered to sell in Houndsditch so inconsiderately, suddenly was apprehended.[110]

It would appear that Sherwood's greed led to both his and Evans's downfall. Evans and Sherwood singled out Claxton because of his costly garments and were in turn arrested when the same garments were identified as those of the murdered man. The clothes of the dead man spoke when he could not and God's providence worked through material possessions.

---

[106] Ibid.
[107] This child served as the messenger and practitioner of God's divine punishment. Although he appeared insignificant when stood before three men, the child proved to be their downfall because he had God's justice on his side.
[108] Henry Goodcole, *Heavens speedie hue and cry sent after lust and murder* (London, 1635), sigs. A4v, Br.
[109] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[110] Ibid., sig. B3r.

Evans and Sherwood were both executed but only Sherwood was hanged in chains. Evans did not directly commit the murders but she was a partner in the crimes and her body was also posthumously punished. For her part, Evans was hanged and her body given to the Barber Surgeons Hall 'for a skeleton having her bones reserved in a perfect forme of her body'.[111] The pair was described as 'two inhumane Creatures' for their crimes while only Evans was described a 'Monster of her sexe'.[112] This was no doubt due to the fact that her contributions to the murders involved lust and deception which were two characteristics particularly abhorred in women. While both felons suffered posthumous humiliation, it is clear that these punishments did not deter other felons. In fact, two men were robbed and their clothes stolen in a similar manner directly under the gibbet where Country Tom's corpse hanged in chains.[113] The unknown thieves attacked the men, stripped them of their clothing, and bound them naked to the gibbet with a gag in their mouths. Goodcole stated that this punishment 'should rather have frightened and hindered them from doing this bold and insolent act'.[114] It is most likely that the terror associated with the gibbet emboldened the thieves because it was a location typically avoided and they knew they could carry out the crime with minimal observance.

These murderers adopted disguises in an attempt to hide their true identities while they committed violent acts. The murderers described in *The Crying Murther* (1624), on the other hand, used a disguise in an attempt to create an alibi. Peter Smethwick, Andrew Baker, Cyrill Auster and Alice Walker murdered Mr Trat, the curate of Old Cleeve in 1624. They then dismembered and parboiled his body and hid the various parts about his house, though 'his head and members could

[111] Ibid., sig. C3r.
[112] Ibid., sig. B2r.
[113] Ibid., sig. C4r.
[114] Ibid., sig. C4r.

not be found'.[115] The night of the murder, one of the conspirators dressed in 'his habite and cloake usurp'd his name' and called upon an old acquaintance of the curate, one John Foard.[116] This false Trat then told Foard that he had stabbed a man in his house and was fleeing before the crime was noticed. Foard was examined by two Justices and stated that he had initially been deceived 'with the night, his [the imposter's] boldness and habite' but was confident it was not Trat.[117] After further examination, Trat's bridle was discovered in Smethwick's house along with a bloody napkin and 'diverse peeces of skull and neck bone with some teeth' in his hearth.[118] The four conspirators used every tool of deception available to them but still could not escape God's revenge.

In the pamphlets just discussed, the murderers were able to hide in plain sight for a time due to their respectable appearance. Murderers also used clothing to create a blind, both figuratively and literary, in an attempt to hide their guilt. In *Sundry strange and inhumaine Murthers, lately committed* (1591), a widower known as Lincoln plotted with a labourer to murder his children. Lincoln attempted to woo a wealthy neighbouring widow and felt that his children were a hindrance.[119] The pair agreed that Lincoln would travel into the town of Ashford to visit the market with his eldest child while the labourer remained behind and killed his three other children for 'fortie shillings in money and a good cowe'.[120] As he was in the employment of Lincoln, the man would have a reason for being seen around the house but the father needed to create an alibi to explain his absence. Lincoln, 'the better to colour his unnatural consenting of the death of his own children, bought three pairs of new shoes for them, whom he knew should be murthered before he came home'.[121] Clearly, neither money nor conscience was an obstacle to Lincoln. He paid 40 shillings for

[115] *The Crying Murther: Contayning the cruell and most horrible Butchering of Mr Trat, curate of Olde Cleave* (London, 1624), sig. B4r.
[116] Ibid., sig. B4v.
[117] Ibid., sig. B4v.
[118] Ibid., sig. C2r.
[119] *Sundrye strange and inhumaine Murthers, lately committed* (London, 1591), sig. A3r.
[120] Ibid., sig. A3r.
[121] Ibid., sig. A3v.

the murder and an additional undisclosed amount of money for three pairs of shoes that he knew would be of no use to him. Clearly, he did not suffer from poverty and was spurred on by a covetous desire for more money. He set his sights on the widow and would let nothing stand in his way, including his own young children.

A pamphlet published thirty years later bore a resemblance to this murder. In *The Unnaturall Father* described the murders committed by John Rowse upon his two young daughters. Like Lincoln, Rowse plotted the deaths of his child and used clothing to create a distraction while the deed was done. Unlike Lincoln, however, Rowse, a once wealthy and highly regarded man, ruined his family and killed his children to save them from beggary rather than for personal gain. After an extended absence in London, Rowse returned a ruined man and 'resolved to worke some meanes to take away [his children's] languishing lives, by a speedy & untimely death'.[122] In order to be alone in the house, 'hee sent his Wife to *London* in a frivolous errand, for a riding Coate' very early one morning.[123] His wife clearly did not understand the depths of Rowse's financial ruin and he attempted to carry on as usual by having her purchase an unnecessary riding coat that they clearly could not afford. While she was gone, Rowse seized the opportunity, carried his children from their bed to a spring of water in the cellar and drowned them.

Clothing played a larger role in this pamphlet than just as a distraction for murder. After he drowned the girls, Rowse prepared their bodies and laid them side by side in bed: 'he carried her [the eldest child] up the stayres & laid her by her sister; that done, he laid them out, and covered them booth with a sheete, walking up and downe his house, weeping and lamenting his own misery'.[124] Rowse's actions were reminiscent of death rites performed prior to burial by women. The rites of washing the corpse and wrapping it in its winding sheet were part of the domestic female realm.

[122] *The Unnaturall Father: Or, The Cruell Murther committed by one John Rowse of the Towne of Ewell, ten miles from London, in the Country of Surry, upon two of his owne Children* (London, 1621), sig. Bv.
[123] Ibid., sig. Bv.
[124] Ibid., sig. B2r.

Rowse further transcended gender boundaries by behaving in an unmanly manner; he could not control his emotions and wept openly. According to the author, Rowse ruined his family and lost the masculine prowess once associated with his good name.[125]

Both Lincoln and Rowse used clothing to distract people while murders were being committed. The murderers described in two other pamphlets, *Two horrible and inhumane Murthers done in Licolneshire, by two Husbands upon their Wives* (1607) and *The Apprehension, Arraignment, and execution of Elizabeth Abbot* (1608) used textiles to keep prying eyes out while they disposed of their victims' corpses by fire. In *Two horrible and inhumane Murthers*, John Dilworth, a wheelwright, killed his wife with 'a staffe or spoke of a Carte wheel' while drunk.[126] Dilworth then built a large fire and began to burn the corpse. He 'laide uppe blankets and coverlids before the windows, to the end to hide the light this great fire did cast'.[127] Even in his drunkenness, Dilworth still recognised the importance of secrecy and used everything available at hand in an attempt to avoid detection. Unfortunately, Dilworth did not follow through with his plan and 'the carcasse [remained] not halfe…consumed' by the fire.[128] He attempted to hide it under a pile of thatch where it was discovered and he was hanged.

Elizabeth Abbot in *The Apprehension, Arraignment, and execution of Elizabeth Abbot* also used this method in an attempt to hide her crime. Mistress Killingworth, living in Creechurch Parish near Aldgate in London, was a notorious drunk who wore out her welcome amongst her kindly neighbours.[129] Opportunistic Abbot gained admittance to Killingworth's house and lodged with her prior to the murder. Shortly after she began to live with Killingworth, 'thick cloth' was hung over the

[125] Also see Chapter Four for an in-depth discussion of Rowse's inappropriate domestic behaviour and masculine transgressions.
[126] The murderers described in two other pamphlets, *Two horrible and inhumane Murthers done in Lincolneshire, by two Husbands upon their Wives* (London, 1607), sig. B3v.
[127] Ibid,. sig. B4r.
[128] Ibid., sig. B4r.
[129] *The apprehension, Arriagnment, and execution of Elizabeth Abbott, alias Cebrooke, for a cruell and horrible murther, committed on the body of Mistris Killingworth in S. Creechurch Parish neere Aldgate in London* (London, 1608), sig. A2v.

windows so that no one could see in.[130] One night, a neighbour's maid heard Killingworth crying out 'O Lord shal I die thus and never a neighbor come at me?'.[131] Abbot then appeared at the window and assured the maid that Killingworth was drunk again and she would take care of her. The sudden presence of the curtains did not draw suspicion at the time and Killingworth's cries for help were perceived to be an extension of her 'sickness'.[132] Neighbours did, however, grow suspicious after several days passed without seeing the ailing woman and 'the cloth hanging before the window, which until that time, had never beene accustomed to have so, they began now to suspect more fearefully some danger had happened to her'.[133] Neighbours sent for the Constable and officers who then entered Killingworth's house through a window. Neither woman was in the house but there was evidence of a powerful fire in which they found 'certain small bones' and 'a locke of her haire tide in her hairelace' in the chimney.[134] Abbot fled the parish but word of mouth spread quickly and she was arrested based on a description of her clothing.

Abbot hung the cloth in an attempt to avoid detection but it had the opposite effect in the tight-knit community. Initially it attracted some attention but was dismissed as the unconventional behaviour of a drunkard. Its continual presence when combined with Killingworth's prolonged absence signalled that something was not right. Both Dilworth and Abbot employed the same method to avoid detection but only Abbot's behaviour drew neighbourly attention. Dilworth hung the blankets in the middle of the night and removed them when he thought the task was completed while Abbot did not employ the same caution before she fled. The two hid their crimes from their immediate neighbours but God's providence would never suffer a murderer to walk free and both Dilworth and Abbot hanged for their transgressions.

---

[130] Ibid., sig. A4v.
[131] Ibid., sig. A4r.
[132] Ibid., sig. A4r.
[133] Ibid., sig. Br.
[134] Ibid., sig, Br.

A Briefe discourse of two most cruell and bloudie murthers, committed in Worcestershire (1583) also described a secret murder that revealed by cloth though in a different way than that of Dilworth or Abbot. Thomas Smith and Robert Greenoll were close friends and neighbours and both were mercers in Evesam. Smith 'seeing Greenoll have so good utterance for his wares, and so well esteemed' grew jealous of his friend and began to plot his murder.[135] He invited Greenoll to his house on New Year's Eve and 'promised to bestowe a quart of wine and an apple upon him'.[136] After the wine was drunk, Smith invited his friend into his cellar where he attacked him and then buried the corpse in the dirt. Not satisfied with this, Smith then took the dead man's keys and robbed his shop, 'bringing a great deal of the goods from there into his own house'.[137] This covetous action proved to be Smith's undoing rather than the murder itself due to the fact 'that the Towne of Evesam, all the time of Christmas, and at no other time, there [was] watch and ward kept, that no misorder or il rule be committed'.[138] Unbeknownst to Smith, a watchman spotted him roaming the streets. When Greenoll was reported missing the next day and his shop robbed, the watchman raised the alarm and Smith's house was searched. Whether due to nerves or embolden by his crime, Smith granted the watch access to his cellar where 'by chaunce one of them happened to espye a little piece of earth, as it were new broken out of the grounde' and the corpse discovered.[139] Jealousy spurred Smith to kill his friend but the decision to rob his friend's shop appeared to have been an afterthought rather than the motivation behind the murder. Had he simply killed Greenoll and buried the body he might have avoided detection but his greed was his ultimate undoing.

Smith's jealousy of his friend's material success proved to be a catalyst for violence and deception. One of the murders descried in *Three Bloodie Murthers* (1613) also occurred after the

[135] *Briefe discourse of two most cruell and bloudie murthers, committed in Worcestershire* (London, 1583), sig. A5r.
[136] Ibid., sig. A6v.
[137] Ibid., sig. A7v.
[138] Ibid., sig. A7v.
[139] Ibid., sig. A8v.

onset of jealously and ended with a body being secretly buried. Elizabeth James employed a young woman who was described 'to be a pretty young wench, and handsomely apparrelled' as a maid.[140] Initially, James treated the young woman with much kindness but slowly began to abuse her rights as an employer. She borrowed money from the maid 'till shee had left no more to lend her; and [James] not onely thus deceived her of her money, but her cloathes also'.[141] James refused to give back both the money and clothing until the maid complained to Master James, who until that moment was unaware of his wife's malicious character and cruelty towards the girl. Thus deprived of money and handsome clothes as well has having been soundly rebuked by her husband, James took revenge on the girl and attacked her first with a knife and then a hatchet.[142] To hide her crime, James 'cut her poore wounded body into many small peeces, some of which she burnt, some boiled, and some in the dead time of night, she buried in her garden'.[143] The crime was eventually revealed through a hungry dog that dug up the corpse and a mute woman who witnessed the act identified James as the murderer.

James lived a comfortable life and her husband provided for all her needs. Like the mercer John Smith, her only motivation for the murder was her envy of material possessions.[144] The entry opened with a warning to guard one's self from the dangers of temptation: 'How happy are those men that as so truly wise, for this serious meditation of death, is a sure shield of defence, against the multitude of most grievous, and dangerous temptations, that in this world men are subject unto'.[145] The author urged readers to consider their mortality and to avoid sin for the sake of their souls. Both Elizabeth James and John Smith represented the antithesis of this warning. Their crimes had no practical benefit aside from pride and immediate pleasure. Proverbs 16:18 warned 'Pride goeth before

[140] *Three Bloodie Murthers* (London, 1613), sig. Cv.
[141] Ibid., sig. Cv.
[142] Ibid., sig. C2r.
[143] Ibid., sig. C2r.
[144] Envy, along with lust and wrath, was one of the primary sins with were highlighted by pamphleteers as being a catalyst for murder. See Chapter Two for a discussion of these sin and accompanying punishments.
[145] Ibid., sig. Cr.

destruction and an haughty spirit before the fall'. Both of these murderers allowed themselves to be overpowered by greed for superfluous objects. That is not to say that clothing or textiles were viewed as inherently wicked or a site of vanity. Many moralist writers from this period believed that the finest thing a person could do was to dress in a manner that matched one's station and exhibited modesty.[146] A noble woman could wear rich clothing without appearing garish so long as it was modest; the same was expected of a poor woman who could only afford rough cloth. James, a married woman, took the clothing of a young maiden because she was jealous of the woman's physical attributes and demonstrated a total lack of charity for her subordinate servant whom she should have protected. She neither paid attention to station nor her outward appearance in her attempt to preserve her fragile ego. Likewise, John Smith murdered and robbed his friend in order to be rid of competition. While Smith did not wear Greenoll's clothing, he hoped that his finances would benefit from the theft though his soul was in peril.

While the next pamphlet to be discussed did not involve murder or violence, the crime in question reflected the pervasive anxiety about dressing outside of one's station and resulted in felon being hanged after he challenged social hierarchy. *The Araignment of John Selman* (1612) described the actions of John Selman, a thief who attired himself in a fine suit of black velvet and gained entrance to the King's Chappell Christmas day 1611. While inside, Selman picked 'the pocket of Leonard Barre, servant to the right honourable Lord Harrington' in the presence of the King and members of the nobility.[147] Sumptuary laws had been repealed by this time but clothing still remained a site of social uneasiness and people continued to dress according to rank and social standing. In *Dressing the Elite*, Susan Vincent discussed the social implications and potential unrest associated with cross-class

[146] *Politique discourses upon Trueth and Lying*, trans. Sir Edward Hoby, Knight (London, 1583), p. 45; Gervase Babbington, *A profitable exposition of the Lords prayer* (London, 1588), p.283; Thomas Adams, *The Happiness of the Church* (London, 1619), p. 277; William Gouge, *Of Domesticall duties eight treatises*(London, 1622), p. 221.
[147] *The Araignment of John Selman, who was executed neere Charing-Crosse the 7. of January, 1612. for a Fellony by him committed in the Kings Chappell at White-Hall upon Christmas day last, in presence of the King and divers of the Nobility* (London, 1612), p. 3.

dressing and stated that 'the counterfeiting of appearance in the quest for social mobility was not the only sartorial dislocation to be feared…clothing had the potential to disguise the wearer, and deceive and mislead the viewer'.[148] At this point clothing went from being an expression of aspiration to one of gross deception. The author of the pamphlet felt it necessary to highlight the fact that Selman was practising deception rather than showing off his wealth through his clothing, as many members of the nobility in the King's Chappell that day were doing. The author wrote:

> Now gentle Readers, you must understand, that this Selman came into the Kings Chappell in very good and seemely apparel, like unto a Gentleman, or Citizen: viz. a faire blacke cloake laced and either lined thorow or faced with velvet. The rest of his apparel in reasonable manner being answerable thereunto. Which was the cause that he without resistance had free entrance into that holy and sanctified place.[149]

Many thieves and pickpockets were hanged at Tyburn every year and their deaths went unnoticed by the press. Selman's crime, however, became a topic of public interest and was viewed as far worse than simple pick-pocketing even though he did not break any additional laws. Sumptuary laws were, as noted by Linda Peck, established 'to reinforce order, hierarchy and status distinctions [but] had long laid unenforced and ended in 1604'.[150] Officially, sumptuary laws were abandoned but abhorrence for misidentification and dressing above or below one's station remained deeply entrenched in English society. Selman gained access to both a location and social group which he should have been excluded from and, what is worse, he was granted close proximity to the King. He hanged for felony robbery but the outrage that stemmed from his deception cast him into infamy and he became a figure of public interest after his death.

Unlike the case just discussed, the thieves described in *The Lives, Apprehension, Araignment & Execution, of Robert Throgmorton. William Porter. John Bishop. Gentlemen* (1608) avoided deception at all costs as they performed their robberies though the final result was the same and all were

[148] Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothing in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), p. 154.
[149] *The Araignment of John Selman*, p. 6.
[150] Peck, *Consuming Splendor*, p 31

hanged. These three young gentlemen came from highly regarded families but ruined themselves due to their overindulgences. As young gentlemen, they were accustomed to indulging in the finer things in life and 'began to thinke that thirst could not be quentcht without drunkenness, the body not be kept warme without Satten and Velvet'.[151] They decided to become highwaymen and equipped themselves with 'good horses [and] good swords' as would suit gentlemen.[152] This appears to have been a relatively common occurrence in early modern England. In *The Description of England* (1587), William Harrison discussed three distinct types of robbers and 'young shifting gentlemen' who bore 'more port than they [were] able to maintain' was the first group to be identified.[153] Image was such an integral aspect of early modern life that young gentlemen were willing to become thieves in order to maintain the comforts that befitted their rank. Just as they presented themselves as gentlemen robbers, they sought victims whose 'habite or other character gave them any hope'.[154] They based their selection process on the appearance of potential victims and accidentally killed a well-dressed merchant during a robbery. The finer the suit of clothing meant the greater potential for a large purse. Their finery, however, did not save them and they were hanged in the same manner as the base thief Selman though they were very penitent for their crimes and went to the gallows in a calm and gentlemanly manner.[155]

Executions and the Gallows

The final section of this chapter will be devoted to the discussion of clothing associated with executions. Executions were an extension of God's providence and performed by the state in order

[151] *The Lives, Apprehension, Araignment & Execution, of Robert Throgmorton. William Porter. John Bishop. Gentlemen* (London, 1608), sig. A3v.
[152] Ibid., sig. A4r.
[153] Harrison, *The Description of England*, pp 192-3.
[154] *The Lives, Apprehension, Araignment & Execution, of Robert Throgmorton. William Porter. John Bishop. Gentlemen*, sig. A3v.
[155] Ibid., sig. C2r.

to both punish and warn England about the dangers of sin and crime. While this was stressed in all murder and execution pamphlets in one form or another, two pamphlets used scriptural examples of armour to highlight the battle between good and evil taking place in England. In the first, *The Cry and Revenge of Blood* (1620), God appeared as a warrior being dressed in armour and about to go to war: 'He put on righteousnesse as a brest-plate, and an Helmet of Salvation upon his head, and he put on a garment of vengeance for a clothing, and was clad in seale as a cloake'.[156] This is a direct quote from Isaiah 59:17 which described God's readiness to both fight and revenge. His aggression was vindicated through an outward demonstration of righteousness and salvation on His divine body. Every element of the armour was important and had a specific role in the war against evil. *The Crying Murther*, on the other hand, described the destruction of armour due to overpowering sin and the need for both Godly and princely intervention:

> Never was there more cause for the distressed Levite to implore the help of the Princes of the people then now: The Aarinicall & once budding rod of his Authority, being almost broken in peeces. His linnen Ephod being rent in sunder, and his scantified breastplate of Urim and Thummim, being pierced thorow with the malicious ejaculations of known adversaries, or the secret wounds of luke-warm professors and temporarie back-sliders.[157]

These items were first mentioned in Exodus 28 which described God's instructions to Moses about how to properly attire the first priests after the flight from Egypt. These items were once beautiful and used to celebrate God but had fallen into disrepair through a lack of proper faith. In this description, sin wore away the armour and priestly vestments, leaving the godly vulnerable to attack. While the armour may have been damaged, all was not lost if the wearer still had faith, the final protective layer against evil. In these pamphlets, this armour only appeared after a wrong had been

[156] Thomas Cooper, *The Cry and Revenge of Blood* (1620), p. 39.
[157] *The Crying Murther*, sig. A2v.

committed and needed to be righted by God's vengeance. Both examples described a world so entrenched in sin and murder that only divine warfare could redeem it.[158]

Unrepentant felons appeared rarely in this literature but when they did, they represented the very worst of sinners and criminals who would have to face a vengeful God. Out of the murder and execution pamphlets being discussed in this chapter, only three specifically described the felon's clothing when they were at the gallows. Out of these three, two described unrepentant felons. These pamphlets shared nothing in common except for the fact that the felons denied the charges against them and went to their deaths unrepentant of the crimes they were charged with. *A True report of the arraignment, tryall, conviction and damnation, of a Popish Priest* (1607) and *The Araignment and burning of Margaret Ferne-seede* (1608) featured the executions of two particularly scandalous felons. *A True report of the arraignment, tryall, conviction and damnation, of a Popish Priest* described the trial and execution of seminary priest and Benedictine fryer Robert Drewrie. Drewrie had multiple opportunities to avoid arrest but he ignored them and continued to secretly preach in England. James I had 'to him [Drewrie] and all others of his coat, granted generall pardon' if they left the country.[159] The author further added that those priests 'who were not too monstrous' accepted this pardon. Drewrie refused and continued to live and preach in secret. After his sentence was passed, Drewrie was again given the opportunity to save his life if he took the Oath of Allegiance and swore fidelity to James I and the Church of England. He refused, stating 'neither…can it be any waye advantageable to me, being condemned as I am and therefore I have no reason to take it. But then to meet justly with such cunning dissembling, and equivocating, and to discover such apparent

[158] For further scriptural references to righteousness demonstrated through armour and clothing see: Ephesians 6:10-18, Isaiah 11:5, and 1 Thessalonians 5:8.
[159] *A True report of the arraignment, tryall, conviction and damnation, of a Popish Priest* (London, 1607), sig. Br.

falsehood'.[160] Drewrie denied any guilt and claimed 'he dyed not for Treason but for his Priest-hood' as he awaited execution at the gallows.[161]

The story of a seminary priest being executed for treason and refusing to acknowledge any wrongdoing was not a new or unique story. What made Drewrie's execution interesting was the fact that he chose to deny the authority of James I through both words and clothing. He wore a stately outfit to his execution on 25 February 1607:

> …having out on after the maner of the *Benedictine Fryers* beyond the Seas, a newe sute of apparel, being made of black stuffe, new shooes, stockings, and Garters, and a blacke new stuffe Priests gown or Cassock being buttond downe before by Loops and buttons, two and two together to the verye foote, a new cornerd cap on his heade, and under it a faire wrought night cap…[162]

The author wrote that Drewrie was 'hoping yet for life and not thinking to die' as he proceeded to Tyburn but his clothes revealed a very different sentiment.[163] If Drewrie was truly hoping to receive a pardon from the king then he would not have arrived at the scaffold wearing a priest's cassock while imploring all 'Roman Catholics to pray with him, and for him'.[164] He told the gathered crowd that he died for his priesthood rather than treason and his clothing reiterated this claim through a powerful visual display. The crown was indeed executing a priest for being a priest. Drewrie lived in secrecy prior to his arrest to avoid detection and no doubt avoided all overt displays of priesthood. He did, however, have the courage behind his convictions during the final moments of his life and used clothing as a final protest to speak when he could not. He stood on the scaffold in illegal clothing which revealed his allegiance to a foreign power while remaining defiantly unrepentant to either James I or the Church of England.

[160] Ibid., sig. C2v.
[161] Ibid., sig. D3v.
[162] Ibid., sig. D3r.
[163] Ibid., sig. D3r.
[164] Ibid., sig. D3v.

The description of Drewrie's clothes revealed more than defiant priest. He presented himself as both the (soon-to-be) corpse and chief mourner. While on the scaffold, he asked Catholic spectators to pray for his soul and attempted to die a good death while remaining true to his religion. His brand new clothes and accessories aped those bequeathed to mourners in a will. Traditionally, clothing, or black cloth which was then made into mourning garments, was given to mourners to wear and was the greatest funereal expense due to both the amount of fabric and cost of dye.[165] Drewrie furnished himself in a brand new outfit for what was to be both his deathbed and his funeral. He could not hope for proper burial or mourning rites as he was to be quartered and his limbs distributed about London but his clothing did provide him with the trappings of respectability in an otherwise shameful situation.

The execution of John Felton, another priest, appeared in a ballad though his death did not have the same final flourish as that of Drewrie.[166] Like Drewrie, Felton was reminded that he was 'a Traytour great and to the Queene offender' rather than a religious martyr.[167] Unlike Drewrie, however, he did not cut a dashing figure. The author described his threadbare attire as he made his way to his death:

> His Gowne of Grograine he put of,
> which on his back he had:
> And eke his Doublet which was made
> of Sattin somewhat sad.
> Into his Shirte he then was stript,
> and up the Ladder he
> Did mount, for to receave that death,
> that ache man there might se.[168]

[165] Vincent, *Dressing the Elite*, p. 64.
[166] *The end and Confession of John Felton who suffred in Paules Churchyard in London, the .viii. of August, for high Treason. 1570* (London, 1570).
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid.

The clothing Felton wore to his execution was used against him in this account. The author described his shabby appearance as though it were an extension of his sins and 'wicked corps'.[169] The author further added to Felton's humiliation by highlighting the fact that he was publicly stripped of his inferior garments, his only remaining worldly possessions, which were then given to the hangman to do with as he pleased.[170] The author concluded the ballad with a supplication to the reader to avoid sin and stated 'No shame it is to turne to God, though you have gon far wide'.[171] The ballad appears to have been deeply concerned with the concept of shame and the word was frequently mentioned. This shame was visible through Felton's clothing, and subsequent seizure by the hangman, as well as through his traitor's death and display.

The final appearance of clothing at the gallows in murder and execution pamphlets appeared in 1608 though for a very different reason. Drewrie used his clothing to broadcast his contempt and highlight his unrepentant stance against king and country while Margret Fernseed attempted to show her innocence through her dress. In *The Araignment and burning of Margaret Ferne-seede*, the reader was introduced to a wicked woman. Margret was married to Anthony Fernseed, a respectable tailor who was 'reputed to be both sober and of verie good conversation'.[172] Anthony was found dead and his death was believed to be murder for murder sake rather than a robbery due to the fact that he was found 'having his throat cut, a knife in his hand, golde rings upon his fingers, and fortie shillings in money in his purse'.[173] Margaret was the number one suspect due to her shockingly disreputable character. Unbeknownst to her husband, she was a former prostitute who now ran a brothel.[174] She persuaded women by telling them 'that they were not beloved of their husbands' and others were

[169] Ibid.
[170] The hangman frequently sold the felon's garments after the execution as souvenirs of the event to the gathered spectators.
[171] *The end and Confession of John Felton who suffred in Paules Churchyard in London.*
[172] *The Araignment and burning of Margaret Ferne-seed* (London, 1608), sig. A3v.
[173] Ibid., A3v.
[174] Ibid., B2v.

lured with the promise of clothing and adornments.[175] She then blackmailed these women by threatening to tell their husbands if they attempted to sever ties with her. She did not weep or mourn when her husband was discovered dead and continued about her daily business. Furthermore, she and Anthony 'lived in all disquitness, rage, and distemperature' and she had threatened to kill him on numerous occasions.[176] Margret's sinful past caught up with her and she was arrested for the murder of Anthony.

Margret vehemently denied the charge of murder though she freely confessed to all other allegations brought against her after spending time in prison.[177] Apparently, Margaret came in contact with three gentlemen sentenced to be hanged for robbery and murder who freely confessed their crimes and accepted their deaths.[178] Their penitent behaviour softened Margaret's temper and she began to prepare for her death.[179] While imprisoned at the White Lion, she admitted her many sins and crimes including whoredom and receiving stolen goods but vehemently denied murdering her husband. The day of her execution, she continued to deny the crime and 'made great show of her repentance for her life past'.[180] Prior to her procession to the stake,

> She was stripped of her ordinary wearing apparel, and upon her owne smocke put a kirtle of Canvasse pitched cleane through, over which she did weare a white sheet, and so was by the keeper delivered to the Shereve, one each hand a woman leading her, and the Preacher going before her.[181][182]

She went to her death refusing to repent for murder and attempted to demonstrate her innocence through her clothing. Her clothes were like a penitent sinner: white and clean and her kirtle was made of rough canvas. Thomas Harman, in *A Caveat or Warning* (1573) wrote that 'harlots and their

[175] Ibid., sig. B2v, B3r.
[176] Ibid., sig. A4v.
[177] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[178] These gentlemen were the highwaymen Robert Throckmorton, William Porter and John Bishop who hanged in 1608 for highway robbery and murder. Their full story was published in *The lives, apprehension, arraignment & execution of Robert Throgmorton. William Porter. John Bishop. Gentlemen* (London, 1608).
[179] *The Araignment and burning of Margaret Ferne-seed*, sig. B2v.
[180] Ibid., sig. B4r.
[181] Women accused of killing their husbands were burned at the stake for petty treason.
[182] Ibid., sig. B4r.

mates' were made to do 'open penance in sheets, in churches and marketsteds'.[183] During this period, white clothing could also be used during the funerals of children and virgins.[184]

Margaret was neither a child nor a virgin but her crisp white attire no doubt visually connected her to the funeral of innocents. She was, at her own admission, guilty of whoredom and used penitential clothing to express both her guilt and innocence in the death of her husband. The pamphlet's author, however, did not believe Margaret's penitential display to be true and described how the preacher present at the execution continually 'admonished her that now in that minute she would confesse that fact for which she was now ready to suffer'.[185] She denied the accusation one last time before her death. Margaret's character was at odds with the white-clad image she presented at the moment of her death. She had been a prostitute, madam of a brothel, and scold and attempted to demonstrate her innocence through penitential clothing and no one appeared to have believed her protestations. The presence of execution clothing in the two pamphlets were similar in intentions as both Drewrie and Fernseed attempted to use their clothes to demonstrate their defiance of the court's decisions. Both viewed themselves as innocent and were two sides to the same coin: Margaret accepted her fate, confessed to sins she believed she was guilty of and attempted to humble herself before her death while Drewrie, the defiant priest, appeared in full Roman Catholic regalia and denied all charges.

While these were the only pamphlets to describe clothing at the gallows, *The Parricide Papist, or Cut-throate Catholicke* (1606) described a murder which also resulted in clothing playing an important role in the final moments of the murderer's life. In this pamphlet, a young papist, Inigo Jeanes, murdered his father James after he refused to allow a seminary priest 'a place of secrecie in his

[183] Thomas Harman, *A Caveat or Warning for Common Curisitors, vulgarily called vagabonds* (London, 1573).
[184] Ralph Houlbrooke, *Death, Religion, and the Family in England, 1480-1750* (Oxford, 1998), p. 248.
[185] *The Araignment and burning of Margaret Ferne-seed,* sig. B4.

house, for the exercise of their idolatrous massings'.[186] When James refused his son's request, Inigo 'tooke up a club or beetle (where-with they used to cleave wood) and rudely… barbarously assailed his owne naturall father, and stroke him violentlie on the head to the ground'.[187] He then took an iron bar 'and stroke him with maine force and brake his backe, so that hee presently died of those wounds'.[188] After killing his father, the young man ran to Saint Saviours Chapel near Padstowe, where after removing all his clothing 'with a bad and blunt knife…gastly in two or three places gashed his own belly athwart, that his bowels were to be seene'.[189] Unlike Drewrie and Fernseed, the absence of Inigio Jeanes' clothing highlighted his guilt and remorse for his crime rather than to project a dissenting message. All three characters died unrepentant of the sins they were accused of though only Inigo demonstrated remorse without having been prompted or prodded by state-assigned preachers. According to the pamphlet's unsympathetic author, his penitence demonstrated his remorse but it also disparaged Catholicism. He committed murder due to the fact that he possessed 'the franticke spirit of a Papist'.[190] He was blinded by 'heresie and false religion, which being a poison of the soule, brought from the denne of darknes…and transformeth [men's] whole natures, ingendering in them unnatural thoughts and desires'.[191] While he died repentant before the altar, he also, and most importantly, died a wicked man.

While only a small number of pamphleteers discussed the clothing worn by felons at their executions, it should not be understood that other felons went to their deaths quietly or lacking in style. The pamphlet *Clinton, Purser & Arnold, to their countrymen wheresoever* (1583) described the execution of three pirates as a solemn and repentant affair rather than the flamboyant exposition it actually was. These men were portrayed in the pamphlet as penitent sinners who wished to make

[186] *The Parricide papist, or, Cut-throate Catholicke* (London, 1606), sig. B2r.
[187] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[188] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[189] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[190] Ibid., sig. B2v.
[191] Ibid., sig. Br.

amends before they died. There was nothing particularly original about this pamphlet and it shared the same formulaic pattern with other pamphlets about murder and execution printed during this period. The felons begged God for forgiveness and mercy and Clinton supposedly stated: 'Admit I slew a marchant by my shot,/ Good frends forgive me for I wisht it not'.[192] They implored the reader to avoid the same wretched path as them and to be God-fearing English citizens. In addition to this pamphlet, a play entitled *Fortune by Land and Sea* appeared in 1607 and a second pamphlet, *A True Relation of the live and deaths of the two most famous English Pyrats, Purser and Clinton,* was published in 1639. These works span over fifty years and the reigns of three different monarchs. In reality, these men were violent criminals. State papers revealed that Clinton once viciously attacked and tortured a ship's crew in an attempt to force them to reveal the location of supposed treasure. The attack left some crew members without fingers and thumbs while others lost their hearing and sight.[193]

Meanwhile, the 1583 pamphlet presented the reader with men resigned to death and humbled before God and the Queen. The truth, however, was a far different story and can be revealed through additional sources.[194] These men were anything but humble and repentant when they went to their deaths. The 1587 edition of *The Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* described the execution in detail and highlighted the clothing worn by the felons. Purser (aka Thomas Watson), wore 'venetian breeches of crimson taffeta' while Clinton wore a 'murrey velvet doublet with great gold buttons, and his like coloured velvet venetians laid with great gold lace'.[195] This description painted a picture that was very much at odds with the dignified and sorrowful men presented in the

[192] *Clinton, Purser & Arnold, to their countrymen wheresoever* (London, 1583), sig. A2r.
[193] Claire Jowitt, *The Culture of Piracy, 1580-1630* (Surrey, 2010), p.19.
[194] Interestingly, this is the only example of an execution described in these pamphlets that
[195] Raphael Holinshed, *The Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*. Volume IV England (London, 1808), p. 506.

pamphlets. These clothes were no doubt stolen and now paraded for all to see.[196] Sumptuary laws were still in effect during this period which prohibited lowly men like Clinton and Purser from wearing taffeta and velvet, particularly red or purple velvet. The only men permitted to wear both the textile and colour were 'a knight of the order, one of the privie counsel, or a Gentleman of the privie chamber'.[197] The same was true for gold lace and buttons. These pirates directly rejected monarchical authority through their garish attire at the moment the same monarchical authority was hastening their deaths.

The men's clothing announced their complete disregard for England's hierarchical order as did their actions at their executions. Traditionally, the clothing of executed felons became the property of the hangman to do with as he liked and was frequently referred to as 'the hangman's budget'. Purser not only appeared on the scaffold in red taffeta but he also tore his breeches into pieces and, as Holinshed suggested, 'distributed the same to such his old acquaintance as stood about him'.[198] By doing this, Purser created his own *memento moris* for his friends. He usurped the hangman's rights by giving away what could have been sold as the hangman frequently charged for fragments of a felon's clothing. While the men cut a fine figure during their final earthly moments, it proved fleeting and, as stated by moralist Arthur Dent, 'the finest cloth is soonest stained' and everything must return to dust and clay in the end.[199]

These men's clothing not only put them at odds with the Queen and the hangman but also with decent English society. The discussed description specifically described foreign fashion, textiles and extravagant colours. These qualities were deeply frowned upon by authors such as William Harrison,

[196] Clothing theft by pirates appears to have been a common occurrence. Clothing and textiles were valuable commodities and easy to move from ship to ship. See the compilation *The lives, apprehensions, Arraignments and Executions of the 19. Late Pyrates* (London, 1604), in particular the accounts of Captain Longcastle, sigs. Er-Fr; Captain Downes, sig. F2v-G3r; and Captain Halfe, sig. G3v-H1v.

[197] By the Queen. A Proclamation with certayne clauses of divers statutes, & other necessary additions, first published in the xix. yeere of the Queens Majesties reigne, and now revived by her highness commandement to be put in execution, upon the penalties in the same connteined (London, 1580).

[198] Holinshed, *The Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, p. 506.

[199] Arthur Dent, *The plaine mans pathway to heaven wherein every man may clearly see* (London, 1607), p. 34.

author and clergyman, lamented the increasing demand for foreign fashions in England.[200] He stated: 'Oh, how much cost is bestowed nowadays upon our bodies and how little upon our soules!'.[201] Pride and foreign influence were blinding the English and preventing them from living pious lives. Harrison also stated of the bold fashions 'that women are become men and men transformed into monsters'.[202] Clinton and Purser, brazen in their foreign luxury, represented the ills of society. They were masterless men who belonged neither here nor there, indignantly dressed like barons and murdered for profit when it pleased them. They had been exposed to foreign sins and fashions of the Continent and brought the supposedly polluting influences back to England.

While the examples just discussed brought garments directly onto the scaffold, poetic language also utilized descriptions of clothing to demonstrate guilt. *James Franklin A Kentishmen of Maidstone* (1615) was part of the much larger story of adultery, court intrigue, and murder relating to the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury. James Franklin was executed on Tower Hill for his part in Overbury's murder by poison on 20 November 1615. The murder and accompanying executions garnered so much public attention that several pamphlets and ballads were published in 1615 and 1616.[203] Franklin was an accessory to the murder of Overbury rather than a protagonist and allowed the murderers to pass into the Tower. Franklin, or at least the author's version of Franklin, lamented his crimes and was more concerned with making amends while still alive than worrying about his death. The soon-to-be executed felon described his crime and guilt in a clothing-related metaphor:

[200]Harrison, *The Description of England,* pp 145-6.
[201] Ibid., p. 146.
[202] Ibid., p. 147.
[203] See: *The Just Downfall of Ambition. Adultery. Murder.* (London, 1615), *The Lieutenant of the Tower his Speech and Repentance at the time of his Death, who was executed upon Tower Hill on the 20. day of November. 1615* (London, 1615), and *The Bloody Downfall of Adultery, Murder, Ambition* (London, 1616). Ballads: *Franklins Farewell to the World, With his Christian Contrition*(London, 1615) and *James Franklin A Kentishman of Maidstone, his owne Arraignment, Confession, Condemnation and Judgement of Himselfe, while he lay Prisoner in the Kings Bench for the Poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury* (London, 1615).

'This Divells coats to my body made I fit,/ Brave was the outside, Thrid-bare was the wit'.[204] This metaphor was particularly apt for a discussion of sin. Franklin did not have to accept the 'Divells coat' but he did so and even tailored it to fit his particular motives. Likewise, he appeared brave on the surface while all the while his soul was in a wretched 'thrid-bare' state with no hope of repair unless he threw off the oppressive garment.

The character of Franklin appeared in cheap print more frequently than the actual aristocratic plotters themselves most likely due to the fact that he was a pitiable character. Anyone could have been tricked into taking part in a plot by a high-ranking man without understanding the full ramifications of the situation but not everyone was capable of murder. In *The Lieutenant in the Tower* (1591), Franklin stated: 'And therefore I exhort you not to trust in men (how great soever) for they cannot hide themselves when God is angry; neither can they protect you from the shame, when God will consume you'.[205] While a man's outer appearance may appear respectable, finery and rank cannot protect against the wrath of God. Franklin appeared as an everyman who was lured away from the right path but ultimately had to face the consequences of his choices.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed three ways in which clothing was described in murder and execution pamphlets. Clothing and textiles could be a dangerous weapon when placed in evil hands. These items had the potential to deceive and manipulate England's godly citizens. Finally, it allowed some wearers a final voice on the gallows while it marked others with infamy in death. I have argued that these points matter a great deal and a discussion of them reveals a new dialogue about murder and intent in early modern England. We can see that not all violence was particularly savage or

[204] *James Franklin A Kentishman of Maidstone, his owne Arraignment, Confession, Condemnation and Judgement of Himselfe, while he lay Prisoner in the Kings Bench for the Poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury* (London, 1615).
[205] Ibid., sig. B4r-v.

indiscriminate. A large proportion of murders which involved clothing appeared to have happened due to spur of the moment decisions based on emotions rather than senseless violence. This discussion of clothing also highlights the fact that clothing was an unofficially agreed upon signifier of wealth, rank and supposed goodness by society at large. Sumptuary legislation was repealed halfway through the period in discussion but the same concepts of control and identification persevered. The laws may have changed but these beliefs were firmly entrenched in the collective social thought. At one point, sumptuary legislation dictated what people could wear and people chose to impose rules upon themselves when the laws became obsolete. Men and women from all walks of life aspired to better themselves and demonstrate through clothing that they were of a better sort of people. These aspirations sometimes ended in death as demonstrated in several pamphlets. While the fall of a member of the nobility might have made for a more sensational pamphlet, this literature did not contain a social bias while reporting the crimes of England as a whole and indiscriminately discussing sinners from all social ranks.

Indeed, all the clothing and textiles discussed in this chapter turned the ordinary upside down and transformed mundane possessions into dangerous weapons, tools of deception or marks of infamy. This chapter has highlighted how the study of early modern material culture, both surviving murder and execution pamphlets themselves and the representations of everyday garments and textiles described in this genre of cheap print, reveals a wealth of information about late Tudor and early Stuart life and contributes to contemporary scholarship pertaining to social interactions, interpersonal violence, and rites and rituals associated with death and dying. Clothing and textiles may appear on the surface to be unassuming material possessions but these same items had the potential to be dangerous, providential or edifying depending upon the individuals in possession of them.

Conclusion

This dissertation has attempted to demonstrate the pervasiveness of social and religious themes found in the dynamic and provocative genre of murder and execution pamphlets. Late Elizabethan and Jacobean murder and execution pamphlets were not just cheap and ephemeral publications about death and corporal punishment. They were a part of a large ongoing dialogue in the early modern English print trade about morality, gender, social hierarchy and behaviour. Through this study of surviving Elizabethan and Jacobean murder and execution pamphlets, this dissertation has analysed a world where the living learned from the mistakes of the dead and these publications acted as a means to inspire self-reflection and to prepare for the readers' own deaths. Death was the final stage in the life cycle and permanently severed the Protestant living from the dead.[1] Even so, Englishwomen and men of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries directly confronted the unknown through mourning rites and rituals, faith, repentance and prayer.[2]

These same concepts of faith, repentance and prayer featured heavily in murder and execution pamphlets. This genre of cheap print highlighted the importance of a godly life, the avoidance of sin, and the constant need for repentance in order to be prepared for death at all times. Discussion in Chapter Two revealed a world where God's providence always triumphed over sin and the devil.[3] While these pamphlets contained the language of divine revenge, punishment and abhorrence of sin, the reader was constantly reminded that all sinners, no matter how depraved, could be forgiven by God if they repented though their bodies may be subjected to punishment and death. Preachers and prison ordinaries were represented as continuously labouring to save the souls of felons prior to their

[1] Richard Wunderli and Gerald Broce, 'The Final Moment Before Death in Early Modern England', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 20(2) (1989), p. 275.
[2] David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death: Ritual, Religion and the Life Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 379, 387.
[3] Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 8-64; David Atkinson, 'Magical Corpses: Ballads, Intertextuality, and the Discovery of Murder', *Journal of Folklore Research* 36(1) (1999), p. 2.

executions in the backgrounds of this literature. While these pamphlets did not use the lofty language of official church doctrine or dogmatic literature, they did contain the same prescriptive advice about how to live a pious life and face death with confidence and hope.[4] Authors engaged in contemporary moralistic and religious dialogue about preparations for death and encouraged readers to adhere to the teaching of the Church of England.

These pamphlets contributed to discussion about the correlation between temptation, sin and murder as well as identifying acceptable levels of violence both in and outside of the home. Authors engaged in discussion about the proper roles and behaviour assigned to men and women. More murders were committed by men outside the home in a variety of ways including violent confrontations between neighbours, brawls due to drunkenness and economic jealousy. These crimes could be classified as either murder or manslaughter.[5] While all violence was of course frowned upon, these cases greatly differ from ones where men killed their children or wives as discussed in Chapter Four. Murders committed by men in the domestic sphere were due to the loss of emotional and physical control and exceeded the level of acceptable violence or correction. These men were described in unmanly and irrational terms. Murders committed by women, on the other hand, predominantly occurred between members of a household including husbands, children and servants. These murders were always labelled as unnatural or monstrous as these women killed the people they should have feared and respected or nurtured and protected. While both men and women were upbraided for deviant behaviour, these pamphlets always upheld the patriarchal order where man held undisputed sovereign over woman.[6] Authors admonished both men and women if they behaved in a manner than ran contrary to their prescribed gender roles though particular vehemence was used when discussing murderesses.

[4] Ralph Houlbrooke, *Death, Religious and the Family in England, 1480-1750* (Oxford, 1998), p. 26.
[5] Garthine Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 113-134.
[6] Susan Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 34-66.

Gender did not prevent a person from committing a murder but it did contribute to the different ways men and women were represented in this cheap print. The same was true about social rank. Death made men and women from all walks of life equal. Social position could not protect a person from death nor did it prevent a person from succumbing to temptation and sin. These pamphlets described victims and murderers from all social echelons ranging from the lowest beggar to noble gentlemen of some of England's oldest families. Discussion in Chapter Four revealed that even the wealthiest gentlemen succumbed to temptation, committed murders and ended their lives on the gallows. Chapter Six identified the roles that neighbours played in the identification of both sin and murder as well as the apprehension of murderers. While the majority of the neighbours described in these pamphlets appeared as a nameless autonomous group who created reputations and policed morality within a community, occasional descriptions provided by authors revealed that they too came from all walks of life. Neighbours ranged from servants and labourers to sheriffs, justices of the peace and members of the nobility. These pamphlets represented social hierarchy in an optimistic way and presented a world where everyone was responsible for England's collective morality and all felons received fair punishment from both God and the state. [7]

No one could escape sin or divine punishment based on social rank but these pamphlets revealed England to be a world that was deeply concerned with who belonged and who did not. These messages were seemingly contradictory as they signalled equality and exclusion at the same time. Chapters Three and Five highlighted sites of anxiety and continuing social dialogues concerned with social labelling and exclusion based on gender and rank alongside inclusionary messages about the necessity of the unity of the English Christian community. Scripture dictated that widows were to be protected while in reality they were thrust to the peripheries of society. Widows were frequently viewed as dangerous after the deaths of their husbands. God dictated that their husbands should die

[7] Ibid., p.129.

but these deaths left widows as supposedly dangerous independent women. Traitors and savages came from all walks of life while the English rogue was a character associated with the lower echelons of society and was perceived to be a dangerous threat to the country's wellbeing. Traitors and Catholics threatened the Church of England and the precarious religious stability established during the reign of Elizabeth I. Savages and parasites threatened to unravel England's national identity from the inside out though in different ways. The concept of the savage was established through Classical references, international expansion in the New World and perceived superiority. Parasites, on the other hand, had an actual disruptive and criminal presence in late Elizabethan England. They were described as the lowest of the low and seemingly lived only 'to lick the sweat from the true laborers' brows and bereave the godly poor'.[8] Even within the utopian world of 'Pamphlet England', all men were not equal and dialogues concerning religion, gender and social hierarchy were frequently inconstant and contradictory.

The discussion of clothing in Chapter Seven further revealed instabilities caused by perceptions of social hierarchy and demands for morality. Elizabethan sumptuary laws firmly established the proper clothing and colours to be worn by specific social ranks. While the official enforcement of these laws is debatable due to lack of legal evidence, popular attitudes about clothing were very much concerned with properly dressing for one's station.[9] Upon the repeal of sumptuary laws at the beginning of James I's reign, people continued to govern their clothing and those of others in an attempt to maintain public distinctions and hierarchy. Even though fashionable extravagance was no longer illegal after 1604, these laws remained firmly entrenched in the collective English thought as a means to control upward social mobility and prevent deception through rich displays in appearances. Clothing was also linked to morality and piety and excessive clothing was perceived by moralist clergy

[8] Harrison, *The Description of England*, p. 183.
[9] Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (London, 1996), p. 240; Laura Gowing, *Gender Relations in Early Modern England* (London, 2012), pp. 13-14.

and pamphleteers to reveal a proud nature.[10] While these concepts were an important element of early modern identity, they were relaxed at executions. Clothing spoke loudly when the soon-to-be dead did not and demonstrated innocence or contempt of the law depending on the wearer. Identifying and discussing the descriptions of clothing found in murder and execution pamphlets not only highlighted cases of deception or morality, it also shed light on interpersonal violence and methods of murder in early modern England, particularly in domestic settings. Clothing and textiles served as murder weapons and disguises and also provided felons with one final voice as they proceeded to their deaths. Clearly, clothing in this genre of cheap print turned the ordinary upside down and transformed mundane possessions into powerful non-verbal forms of communication.

This dissertation has demonstrated that these pamphlets did indeed contain extensive messages and discourses about early modern piety, violence, social hierarchy, patriarchy and gender roles but questions still remain about the intentions of authors in writing and publishing this genre of cheap print. These pamphlets contained real life examples of murders and executions though they were embellished. They were plausible and credible as well as fantastical and formulaic. By comparing murder pamphlets with a wide variety of contemporary publications stemming from popular literature and poetry to dogmatic religious tracts and conduct literature, this dissertation has identified overarching themes and similarities found in early modern print. These pamphlets were reflections of the individual authors' personal interpretations of religious and social beliefs and experiences in combination with flourishes to appeal to the late Elizabeth and Jacobean print market. These pamphlets were indeed formulaic with each one containing a description of murder and the resulting apprehension and execution of the felons. The reader was constantly reminded that God would never suffer a murderer to go unpunished. Having said that, there was also diversity within a fixed narrative formula in these texts. Some pamphlets contained detailed scriptural discussions

[10] Proverbs 16:18: Pride goeth before destruction and an haughty spirit before a fall.

while others focused on violence with limited moralistic commentary. Some contained educated references to Classical philosophers and drama while others described events in simplistic terms. This dissertation has engaged directly with the printed word of these texts and demonstrated how this particular genre of early print literature reflected and repackaged religious beliefs about death and dying along with moralistic teachings to readers through a seemingly contradictory and titillating dialogue of murder, violence and justice.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

A bloudy new-yeares gift, or A true declaration of the most cruell and bloudy murther, of maister Robert Heath, in his owne house at Holnourne (London, 1609).

A Brief and True relation of the Murther of Mr. Thomas Scott Preacher of Gods Word and batchelor of Divinitie (London, 1628).

A brief discourse of the late murther of master George Sanders (London, 1577).

A briefe Discourse of the most hainous and traitor like fact of Thomas Appletree: for which hee should have suffered Death on Tuesday the one and twentith of Julie last: wherein it set down his Confessin (London, 1579).

A Brief discourse of two most cruell and bloodie murthers, committed both in Worcestershire (London, 1583).

Adams, Thomas, Diseases *of the soule a discourse divine, morall, and physicall* (London, 1616).

Adams, Thomas, *Mystical bedlam, or the world of madmen* (London, 1615).

Adams, Thomas, *The blacke devil or the apostate Together with the wolfe worrying the lambes* (London, 1615).

Adams, Thomas, *The devills banket described in foure sermons* (London, 1614).

Adams, Thomas, *The happines of the church, or, A description of those spirituall prerogatives wherewith Christ hath endowed her consideration in some contemplations upon part of the12. chapters of the Hebrewes* (London, 1619).

A Detection of damnable driftes, practized by three Witches arraigned at Chelmsforde in Essex, at the laste Assizes there holden, which were executed in Aprill, 1579 (London, 1579).

A *gagge for the Pope, and the Jesuits: or The Arraignment and Execution of Antichrist* (London, 1626).

A horrible creuel and bloudy murther committed at Puntey in Surrey on the 21. of Aprill last, 1614 (London, 1614).

Allott, Robert, *Witts theatre of the little world* (London, 1599).

A most horrible & detestable murther committed by a bloudie minded man upon his owne wife. (London, 1595).

A most straunge, rare and horrible murther committed by a Frenchman of the age of too or three and twentie years (London, 1586).

A Most Wicked worke of a wretched Witch, the like whereof none can record these manie yeeres in England (London, 1592).

A new Medley, OR a Messe of All-together (London, 1640).

An excellent new medley to the tune of the Spanish pavin (London, 1620).

A pittilesse Mother (London, 1616).

A Short declaration of the ends of traytors, and false conspirators against the State (London, 1587).

A Spectacle for Userers and succors of poore folkes bloud (London, 1606).

A Strange report of sixe most notorious witches who by their divelish practises murdered about the number of foure hundred small children (London, 1601).

A true discourse of the discoverie of the plot of Monsieur du Terrail and his Confederates at the Surprising of Geneva. And of their Apprehension, Confession, and Executions done in the fame, the 19. of April, 1609 (London, 1609).

A True Relation of a most desperate Murder, committed upon the Body of Sir John Tindall Knight, one of the Masters of the Chancerry (London, 1617).

A true relation of Gods wonderfull mercies in preserving one alive, which hanged for five dayes, who was falsely accused (London, 1617).

A True Report of the Araignment, tryall, conviction, and damnation, of a Popish Priest, named Robert Drewrie, at the Sessions house in the old lie, on Friday and Wednesday, the 20. and 24. of February: the extraordinary great grace and mercy offered him, and his stubborne, traytorus, and wilfull refusal (London, 1607).

A true Relation of the most Inhumane and bloody Murther of Master James Minister and Preacher of the word of God at Rockland in Norfolke (London, 1609).

A True Relation of the Round, Occasion, and Circumstances, of that horrible Murther committed by John Bartram, Gent, upon the body of Sir John Tyndal of Lincolns Inne, Knight (London, 1616).

A true report of the horrible Murther, which was committed in the house of Sir Jerome Bowes, Knight, on the 20. day of February, Anno Dom. 1606 (London, 1607).

A True report of the late horrible murther committed by William Sherwood, prisoner in the Queens Bench for the Profession of Popery, the 18. of June, 1581 (London, 1581).

A True report of the most gratious and mercifull message of hir most excellent Majestie, sent by the righte honourable Sir Christopher Hatton Knight, chamberlaine, & one of hir Highnesses most honourable privie Counsell, to the place where Thomas Appletree should have suffered for his most Traitorlike action (London, 1579).

A True Report or description of an horrible, woefull, and moste lamentable murther done in the citie of Bristowe by one John Kynnestar (London, 1573).

Averall, William, A *dyall or dainty darlings, rockt in the cradle of securitie* (London, 1584).

A Warning for all Murderers (London, 1620).

A World of Wonders. A masses of murthers. A covie of cosonages (London, 1595).

Babington, Gervase, *A briefe conference betwixt a mans frailties and faith wherein is declared the true use, and comfort of those blessings pronounced by Christ in the fifth of Matthen, that every Christian man and woman ought to make and take hold of in their severall tentations and conflicts* (London, 1584).

Babington, Gervase, *A profitable exposition of the Lords prayer, by way of questions and answers for most playnnes together with many fruitfull applications to the life and soule, as well as for the terror of the dull and dead* (London, 1588).

Babington, Gervase, A *sermon preached at Paules Crosse the second Sunday in Mychaelmas tearme last. 1590* (London,1591).

Babington, Gervase, *A sermon preached at the Court at Greenewich the XXIII. of May, 1591* (London, 1591).

Babington, Gervase, *A very fruitfull exposition of the Commaundements by way of questions and answers for greater plainnesse together with an application of every one to the soule and conscience of man, profitable for all* (London, 1583).

Babington, Gervase, *Certaine plaine, briefe, and comfortable notes upon everie chapter of Genesis Gathered and laid downe for the good of them that are not able to use better help* (London, 1592).

Bancroft, Richard, *Dangerous positions and proceedings published and practised within the iland of Brytaine, under pretence of reformation, and for the presbiteriall* (London, 1593).

Banister, John, *A needful, new, and necessarie treatise of chyrurgerie briefly comprehending the generall and particular curation of ulcer, drawn foorth of sundry worthy writers, but especially from Calmetius Vergesatus and Joannes Tahaltuis* (London, 1575).

Basse, William, *A helpe to discourse. Or, A miscelany of merriment Consisting of wittie, philosophical and astronomicall questions and answers* (London, 1619).

Basse, William, *A help to memory and a discourse with table-talke as musicke to a banquet of wine* (London, 1630).

Bateman, Stephen, *Batman upon Bartholome his booke De proprietaibus, newly corrected enlarged and amended* (London, 1582).

Bateman, Stephen, *The golden booke of the ledden goddess* (London, 1583).

Bayly, Lewis, *The practise of pietie directing a Christian how to walke that he may please God* (London, 1613).

Beard, Thomas, *A retractive from the Romish religious contayning thirteen forcible motives disswading from the communion with the Church of Rome (*London, 1616).

Beard, Thomas, *The Theatre of Gods Judgements: or, a Collection of Histories out of Sacred, Ecclesiasticall, and prophane Authours concerning the admirable judgements of God upon the transgressours of his commandements* (London, 1597).

Beard, Thomas, *The Theatre of Gods Judgements: Revised, and augmented* (London, 1631).

Becon, Thomas, *The actes of Christe and of Antichriste concernyng bothe their life and doctrine: diligently gathered and now taken out of his works* (London, 1577).

Becon, Thomas, *The sicke mans salve Wherein the faithfull Christians may learne both how to behave them selves paciently and thankfully in the tyme of sicknes, and also vertously to dispose their temporall goods, and finally prepare themselves gladlye and godly to die* (London, 1568).

Boaistuau, Pierre, *Certaine secret wonders of nature containing a description of sundry strange things, seeming monstrous in our eyes and judgement, because we are not privie to the reasons of them* (London, 1569).

Boaistuau, Pierre, *Theatrum mundi the theatre or rule of the world, wherein may be sene the running race and course of everye mans life* (London, 1566).

Brenton, Nicholas, The good and the bade, or descriptions of the worthies, and unworthies of this age (London, 1616).

Bryskett, Lodowick, *A discourse of civil life containing the ethike part of morall philosophie* (London, 1606).

Byfield, Nicholas, *A defiance to death Wherein, besides sundry heavenly instructions for a godly life, we have strong and notable comforts to uphold us in death* (London, 1610).

Byfield, Nicholas, *The cure of the feare of death* (London, 1618).

Cleaver, Robert and John Dod, *A godly forme of household government for the ordering of private families, according to the direction of Gods word* (London, 1621).

Cooper, Thomas, *A briefe exposition of such chapters of the olde testament as usually are redde in the church at common praier on the Sondayes set forth for the better helpe and instruction of the unlearned* (London, 1573)

Cooper, Thomas, *The Cry and Revenge of Blood: Expresing the Nature and haynousnesse of willfull Murther* (London, 1620)

Cooper, Thomas, *The true and perfect copie of a godly sermon in the minister at Lincolne, by the reverend father in God, Thomas L. Bishop of Lincolne the .28. of August. Anno. 1575* (London, 1575).

Dalton, Michael, *Countrey Justice, Conteyning the Practice of the Justices of the Peace out of their sessions* (London, 1618).

Deaths Generall Proclamation (London, 1576).

Deeds against Nature, and Monsters by kinde (London, 1614).

Dekker, Thomas, *The wonderfull yeare, Wherein is shewed the picture of London living sicke of the Plague* (London, 1603).

del las Casas, Bartolome, *The Spanish colonie, or Briefe chronicle of the acts and gestes of the Spaniardes in the west Indies, called the new worlde, for the space of xl. yeeres*. Trans. M.M.S. (London, 1583).

Dent, Arthur, *The plaine mans path-way to heaven Wherein every man may cleerely see, whether he shall be saved or damned* (London, 1607).

Duchense, Joseph, *A breefe answer of Joseph Quercentanus Armeniacus, Doctor of Phisickm to the exposition of Jacobus Aubertus Vindonis, concerning the original, and causes of mettallesset foorth against chemists* (London, 1591).

Dugdale, Gilbert, *A true discourse of the practises of Elizabeth Caldwell* (London, 1604).

Estinne, Charles, *Maison rustique, or The country farme. Complyed in the French tongue by Charles Steves and John Liebault, Doctors of Physicke* (London, 1616).

Franklin, James, *A Kentishman of Maidstone, his owne Arraignment, Confession, Condemnation, and Judgement of Himselfe, whilst hee lay Prisoner in the Kings Bench for the Poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury* (London, 1615).

Gataker, Thomas, *Marriage duties briefely couched togither out of Colossains, 3.18, 19* (London, 1620).

Gifford, George, *A dialogue concerning witches and witchcraft* (London, 1595).

Gifford, George, A *Discourse of the Subtill Practises of Devills by Witches and Sorcerers* (London, 1587).

Golding, Arthur, *A Brief discourse of the late murther of master George Sanders, worshipful Citizen of London: and of the apprehension, arreignment, and execution of the principall and accessaries of the same* (London, 1577).

Goodcole, Henry, *Londons Cry: Ascended to God, and entered into the hearts, and ears of men for Revenge of Bloodshedders, Burglaiters, and Vagabonds* (London, 1619).

Goodcole, Henry, Heavens *Speedie Hue and Cry sent after Lust and Murther* (London, 1635).

Gosson, Stephen, *The School of Abuses* (London, 1579).

Gouge, William, *Of domesticall duties eight treatises* (London, 1622).

Guazzo, Stefano, *The Court of Good Counsell. Wherein is Set downe the rules, how a man should choose a good Wife from a bad, and a woman a good Husband from a bad* (London, 1607).

Hacket, Roger, *Two Fruitful Sermons, Needfull for these times* (London, 1607).

Hannay, Patrick, A *happy husband, or Directions for a maide to choose her mate* (London, 1619).

Harman, Thomas, A *Ceveat or Warning for Common Curisitors, vulgarily called vagabonds* (London, 1573).

Harrison, William, *The Description of England* (London, 1587).

Heywood, Thomas, *The Brazen Age* (London, 1613).

Holinshed, Raphael, *The Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*. Volume 4 England (London, 1808).

Lupset, Thomas, *A compendious and a very Fruitful Treatise teaching the Way of Dying Well* (London, 1534).

Man, Abraham, *An amulet or preservative against sicknes and death in two parts* (London, 1617).

Massie, William, *A SermonPreached at Trafford in Lancashire at the marriage of a dayghter of the right Worshipfull sir Edmond Trafford Knight, the 6. of September Anno, 1586* (Oxford, 1586).

Montainge, Michel de, *Essays written in French by Michael Lord of Montainge, Knight of the Order of S. Michael, gentleman of the French Kings chambers in three books*. Trans. John Florio. (London, 1613).

More, John, *Three Godly and fruitfull sermons declaring first how we may be saved in the day of judgement and so come to life everlasting: secondly, how we ought to live according to Gods will during our life: which are two things that everyone out to be more carefull of as long as they live* (London, 1594).

Mother Goose's Melodys: or, Sonnets for the Cradle (London, 1791).

Munday, Anthony, *A View of Sundry Examples, reposting many strange murthers, sundry persons prejured, Signes and Tokens of Gods anger towards us* (London,1580).

Paré, Ambroise, *The workes of that famous chirurgion Ambrose Parey translated out of the Latine and compared with the French by Th. Johnson* (London, 1634).

Politique discourse upon Trueth and Lying. Trans. Sir Edward Hoby (London, 1583).

Pricke, Robert, *The Doctrine of Superioritie, contained in the fift Commandement of the holy law of Almightie God* (London, 1609).

Save a Thief from the gallows, and hee'l hang thee if he can:, or, The mercifull father, and the merciless sonne (London, 1635).

Smith, Henry, A *preparative to marriage The summe whereof was spoken at a contract, and inlarged after. Whereunto is annexed a treatise of the Lords Supper, and another of usurie* (London, 1591).

Smith, Thomas, *De Republica Anglorum: The maner of government or policie of the Realme of England* (London, 1583).

Spackman, Thomas, *A declaration of such grevious accidents as commonly follows the biting of mad dogges, together with the cure thereof, by Thomas Spackman, Doctor of physic* (London, 1613).

Spicer, John, *The sale of sales, of The seasoning of soules* (London, 1611).

Stow, John, *The Annales of England* (London, 1577).

Stubbes, John, *The discoverie of a gaping gul whereinto England is like to be swallowed by another French Marriage, if the Lord forbid not the banes, by letting her majestie see the sin and punishment thereof* (London, 1579).

Sundrye Strange and inhumane Murthers, lately committed (London, 1591).

Sutton, Christopher, *Disce more. Learne to die A religious discourse, moving every Christian man to enter into a serious remembrance of his end* (London, 1601).

Taylor, Thomas, *Davids learning, or The way to true happiness in a commentarie upon the 32. Psalmes* (London, 1617).

T.B. *The bloudy mother, or The most inhumane murthers, committed by Jane Hattersley, upon divers infants, the issue of her owne bodie & the private burying of them in an orchard with her araignment and execution* (London, 1610).

The Apprehension and confession of three Witches (London, 1589).

The Apprehension, arraignment, and execution of Elizabeth Abbott, alias Cerbrooke, for a cruell and horrible murther, committed on the body of Mistris Killingworth in S. Creechurch Parish neere Aldgate in London (London, 1608).

The Araignment and burning of Margaret Ferne-seede, for the Murther of her late Husband Anthony Ferne-seede, found deade in Peckham Field neere Lambeth, having once before attempted to poyson him with broth, being executed in S. Georges-field the last of Februarie, 1608 (London, 1608).

The Araignment and execution of the Late Traytors, with a relation of the other Traytors, which were executed at Worcester, the 17th. of January last past (London, 1606).

The araignment, execution, confession, and judgement of Arnold Cosbye Who wilfully murdered the Lord Burke, neere the towne of Wanswoorth, on the 14. day of this present month January and was executed the 27. of the same month, 1591 (London, 1591).

The araignment of John Selman, who was executed neere Charing-Crosse the 7. of January, 1612. (London, 1612).

The Bloody downfall of Adultery, Murder, Ambition, At the end of which are added Westons, and Mistris Turners last Teares, shed for the Murder of Sir Thomas Overbury poysoned in the Tower (London, 1615).

The Bloudy Booke, or, The tragicall and desperate end of Sir John Fites (alias) Fitz (London, 1605).

The Crying Murther: Containing the cruel and most horrible Murther of Mr Trat, Curate of olde Cleave (London, 1624).

The End and Confession of John Felton who suffered in Paules Churchyard in London, who was executed upon Tower Hill, on the 20. day of November (London, 1615).

The Examination, confession and condemnation of Henry Robson, Fisherman of Rye (London, 1598).

The Fiere Tryall of Gods Saints (London, 1614).

The golden garland of princely pleasures and delicate delights Wherin is conteined the histories of many of the kings, queenes, princes, lords, ladies, knights, and gentlewomen of this kingdome (London, 1620).

The Horrible Murther of a Young Boy, of three yeres of age (London,1606).

The Lieutenant of the Tower, his speech and repentance at the time his death (London, 1615).

The Life and Confession. And Heartie Repentance of Francis Cartwright, Gentleman, For his bloudies sinne in Killing Master Storr, Master of Arts, and Minister of Market Rason in Lincolneshire. Written with his owne hand (London, 1621).

The life and death of Lewis Gaufredy a priest of the Church of Accoules in Marceilles in France, (who after hee had given him selfe soule and bodie to the Devill) committed many more abhominable sorceries (London, 1612).

The life and death of M. Geo Sands, who after many enormous crimes by him committed, with Jones and Gent his confederates, was executed at Tyburne on Wednesday the 6 of September, 1626 (London, 1626).

The Life, Apprehension, Arraignment, and Execution of Charles Courtney, alias Holice, alias Worsley, and Clement Slie Fencer: with their Escapes and Breaking of Prison (London, 1612).

The Lives, Apprehension, Araignment and Execution of Robert Throgmorton, William Porter, John Bishop, Gentlemen (London, 1608).

The Lives, Apprehensions, Arrangments, and Executions, of the 19. late Pyrates (London, 1604).

The manner of the Cruell Outragious Murther of William Storre Mast. of Arts, Minister, Preacher at Market Raisin in the County of Lincolne (London, 1603).

The manner of the death and execution of Arnold Cosbie, for murthering the Lord Boorke, who was executed at the Wanswoorth townes end on the 27. of Januarie 1591 (London, 1591).

The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther committed by an Inkeepers Wife, called Annis Dell, and her Sonne George Dell, four years since (London, 1606).

The most horrible and tragicall murther of the right honourable, the vertuous and valerous Gentleman, John Bourgh, baron of Castell Connell (London, 1591).

The severall executions & confessions, of John Slade & John Bodye: traitours (London, 1583).

The triall of Maist. Dorrell, or A collection of defences against allegations not yet suffered to receiv convenient answere Tending to cleare him from the imputation of teaching Sommers and others to counterfeit possession of divells (London, 1599).

The Trueth of the most wicked secret murthering of John Brewen, Goldsmith of London, committed by his own wife, through the provocation of one John Parker whom she loved; for which fact

shew as burned, and he hanged in Smithfield, on Wednesday, the 28 of June, 1592. two years after the murther was committed (London, 1592).

The true reporte of the prosperous successe which God gave unto our English (London 1581).

The Unnatural Father: or The Cruell Murther committed by John Rowes of the Towne of Enwell, ten miles from London, in the County of Surry, upon two of his owne Children (London, 1621).

The Witched of Northampton-shire Agnes Browne. Joane Vaughan. Arthur Bill. Hellen Jenkenson. Mary Barber. Witches. Who were all executed at Northampton the 22. of July last. 1612 (London, 1612).

The wonderful discoverie of the witchcrafts of Margaret and Philip Flower, daughters of Joan Flower neere Bever Castle: executed at Lincolne, March 11. 1618 (London, 1619).

Tilney, Edmund, *A brief and pleasant discourse of the duties of marriage, called the flower of friendeshippe* (London, 1571).

True Recitall of the Confession of the two Murderers John De Paris, and John de la Vigne (London, 1616).

Tuke, Thomas, *A discourse of death, bodily, ghostly, and eternal nor unfit for souldiers warring, seamen sayling, strangers travelling, women bearing, nor any others that thinks of dying* (London, 1612).

Two horrible and inhumane Murders done in Lincolnshire, by two Husbands upon their Wives (London, 1607).

T*wo most unnatural and bloodie Murthers* (London, 1605).

Two notorious Murders (London, 1595).

Wecker, Johannes Jacob, *A compendious chyrurgerie: gathered & translated out of Wecker, at the request of certain, but increased and enlightened with certain annotations, resolutions & supplyes, not impertinent to this treatise, nor unprofitable to the reader: published for the benefit of all his countrymen, by John Bannister maister in chyrurgerie* (London, 1585).

Whately, William, *A Brides-Blush; Or, A Direction for Married Persons* (London, 1619).

Whetstone, George, *A heptameron of Civill discourses* (London, 1582).

Whetstone, George, *The English mirror A regard wherein al states may behold the conquests of envy* (London, 1586).

Wilson, Thomas, *Christs farewell to Jerusalem, and last prophesie A sermon preached in the quier of the Cathedrall Church of Cunterburie* (London, 1614).

Yarington, Robert, Two *Lamentable Tragedies* (London, 1601).

Secondary Sources

Abbott, Geoffrey, *Lords of the Scaffold: A History of the Executioner* (London, 1991).

Amussen, Susan, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (New York, 1988).

Amussen, Susan, 'Punishment, Discipline, and Power: The Social Meanings of Violence in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies* 34(1) (1995), pp. 1-34.

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* Revised Edition (New York, 2006).

Anderson, Jennifer L., 'Anti-Puritanism, Anti-Popery, and Gallows Rhetoric in Thomas Nashe's 'The Unfortunate Traveller', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35(2) (2004), pp. 43-63.

Armstrong, Catherine, 'Boiled and Stewed with Roots and Herbs: Everyday Tales of Cannibalism in Early Modern Virginia' in Angela McShane and Garthine Walker (eds), *The Extraordinary and the Everyday in Early Modern England: Essays in Celebration of the Work of Bernard Capp* (London, 2010), pp. 161-176.

Atkinson, David, 'Magical Corpses: Ballads, Intertextuality, and the Discovery of Murder', *Journal of Folklore Research* 36(1) (1999), pp 1-29.

Bacon, Jon Lance, 'Wives, Widows, and Writings in Restoration Comedy', *SEL Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 31(3) (1991), pp. 427-443.

Baldwin, Frances, *Sumptuary legislation and personal regulation in England* (Baltimore, 1926).

Balizet, Ariane M., *Blood and Home in Early Modern Drama: Domestic Identity on the Renaissance Stage* (New York, 2014).

Barry, Jonathon, 'Civility and Civil Culture in Early Modern England: The Meaning of Urban Freedom' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 181-196.

Bayman, Anna, 'Rogues, Coney-Catching and the Scribbling Crew', *History Workshop Journal* 63(1) (2007), pp. 1-17.

Bayman, Anna, *Thomas Dekker and the Culture of Pamphleteers in Early Modern London* (Farnham, 2016).

Becker, Lucinda M., *Death and the Early Modern Englishwoman* (Aldershot, 2003).

Beier, A.L., *Masterless Men: The Vagrancy Problem in England 1560-1640* (London, 1985).

Beier, A.L. 'On the Boundaries of New and Old Historicisms: Thomas Harman and the Literary Rogue', *English Literary Renaissance* 33(2) (2003), pp. 181-200.

Beier, A.L., 'Social Problems in Elizabethan London', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 9 (1978), pp. 203-21.

Bellamy, John, *Strange, Inhumane Deaths: Murder in Tudor England* (London, 2005).

Betteridge, Tom, *Literature and Politics in the English Reformation* (Manchester, 2004).

Bossy, John, *The English Catholic Community, 1570-1850* (Darton, 1975).

Botelho, Keith M., *Renaissance Earwitnesses: Rumour and Early Modern Masculinity* (New York, 2009).

Brammal, Katheryn M, 'Monstrous Metamorphosis: Nature, Morality, and the Rhetoric of Monstrosity', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 27(1) (1996), pp. 3-21.

Brigden, Susan, 'Youth and the English Reformation', *Past & Present* 95 (1982), pp. 37-67.

Breitenberg, Mark, *Anxious Masculinities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1996).

Briggs, Robin, 'Many reasons why': witchcraft and the problem of multiple explanation' in Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester and Gareth Roberts (eds), *Witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 49-63.

Briggs, Robin, *Witches and neighbours: The social and cultural context of European witchcraft* (London, 1996).

Brodsky, Vivien, 'Widows in Late Elizabethan England: Remarriage, economic Opportunities and Family Orientation' in Lloyd Bonfield, Richard Smith, Keith Wrightson and Peter Laslett (eds), *The World We Have Gained: Histories of Population and Social Structure* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 122-154.

Brownstein, Oscar, 'The Popularity of Baiting in England Before 1600: a study in Social and Theatrical History', *Educational Theatre Journal* 21(3) (1969), pp. 237-250.

Brundage, James A., 'Widows and Remarriage: Moral Conflicts and Their Resolution in Classical Canon Law', in Sue Sheridan Walker (ed.), *Wife and Widow in Medieval England* (Ann Abor, 1993), pp.17-32.

Burges, Clive, ''Longing to be prayed for': Death and commemoration in an English Parish in the later Middle Ages' in Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshal (eds), *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in late Medieval and Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 44-65.

Burke, Peter, 'A Civil Tongue: Language and Politeness in Early Modern Europe' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 31-48.

Burke, Peter, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham, 2009).

Burke, Peter, 'Urban History and Urban Anthropology of Early Modern Europe', in Derek Fraser and Anthony Sutcliffe (eds), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983), pp. 69-82.

Capp, Bernard, 'Arson, Threats of Arson and Incivility in Early Modern England' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp 197-213.

Capp, Bernard, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbours in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003).

Carlson, Eric Josef, *Marriage and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1994).

Carlton, Charles, 'A Widow's Tale: Male myths and female reality in sixteenth and seventeenth century England', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 10(2) (1978), pp.18-129.

Chaytor, Miranda, 'Household and Kinship: Ryton in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', *History Workshop* 10(1) (1980), pp. 25-60.

Christian, Margaret, 'Elizabeth's preachers and the Government of Women: Defining and Correcting a Queen', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 24(3) (1993), pp. 561-576.

Churches, Christine, 'Women and Property in Early Modern England: A Case-Study', *Social History* 23(2) (1998), pp. 165-180.

Clark, Ira, 'The Widow Hunt on the Tudor-Stuart Stage', *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 41(2) (2001), pp. 399-416.

Clark, Ira, *Comedy, Youth, Manhood in early Modern England* (Newark, 2003).

Clark, Richard, *Capital Punishment in Britain* (Surrey, 2009).

Clarke, Sandra, 'Deeds against nature: Women and Crime in Street Literature of Early Modern England' in Luisa Fernanda Rodriguez Palomero and Andrew Monnickendam (eds), *Sederi XII* (Valladolid, 2001), pp 1-34.

Clark, Sandra, *The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular Moralistic Pamphlets, 1580-1640* (London, 1983).

Clark, Sandra, *Women and Crime in the Street Literature of Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 2003).

Clark, Stuart, *Thinking with Demons: The idea of witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Oxford, 1997).

Cockburn, J.S., *Crime in England, 1550-1800* (London,1977).

Cockburn, J.S., 'Patterns of Violence in English Society: Homicide in Kent, 1560-1985', *Past & Present* 130 (1991), pp. 70-106.

Cohen, Sarah R., 'Showing the Heart: Love, Friendship, and Anatomy in Early Modern Portraiture' in Amy E. Leonard and Karen L. Nelson (eds), *Masculinities, Childhood, Violence: Attending to Early Modern Women- and Men. Proceedings of the 2006 Symposium* (Lanham, 2011), pp. 21-77.

Como, David, 'Puritans, Predestination and the Construction of Orthodoxy in Early Seventeenth-Century England' in Peter Lake and Michael Questier (eds), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 64-87.

Conger, Vivian Bruce, *The Widow's Might: Widowhood and Gender in Early British America* (New York, 2009).

Coster, Will, 'Tokens of Innocence: Infant Baptism, Death and Burial in Early Modern England' in Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshal (eds), *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in late Medieval and Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 266-87.

Cressy, David, *Birth Death and Marriage: Ritual, Religion, and the Life Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1999).

Cressy, David, 'Book Burning in Tudor and Stuart England', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 36(2) (2005), pp. 359-74.

Cressy, David, 'Gender Trouble and Cross-Dressing in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies* 35(4) (1996), pp. 438-465.

Cressy, David, 'Kinship and Kin Interaction in Early Modern England', *Past & Present* 113 (1986), pp.38-69.

Cressy, David, 'Purification, Thanksgiving and the Churching of Women in Post-Reformation England', *Past & Present* 141 (1993), pp. 106-146.

Croft, Pauline, 'The Catholic Gentry, the Earl of Salisbury and the Baronets of 1611' in Peter Lake and Michael Questier (eds), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 262-282.

Cunningham, Karen, 'Renaissance Execution and Marlovian Elocution: The Drama of Death', *PMLA* 105(2) (1990), pp. 209-222

D'Amico, Jack, *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama* (Gainesville, 1991).

Daniell, Christopher, *Death and Burial in Medieval England, 1066-1550* (London, 1997).

Daniell, David, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven, 2003).

Davies, Catherine, ''Poor Persecuted Little Flock' or 'Commonwealth of Christians': Edwardian Concepts of the Church' in Peter Lake and Maria Dowling (eds), *Protestantism and the national church in sixteenth century England* **(**London, 1987), pp. 78-102.

Davis, Natalie Zemon, 'The Rites of Violence: Religious Riots in Sixteenth-century France', *Past & Present* 59 (1973), pp. 51-91.

Devereaux, Simon, 'Recasting the Theatre of Execution: The Abolition of the Tyburn Ritual', *Past & Present* 202 (2009), pp. 127-174.

Dionne, Craig and Steve Mentz, 'Introduction' in Dionne and Steve Mentz (eds), *Rogues and Early Modern English Culture* (Ann Arbor, 2007), pp. 1-32.

Dixon, Lief, *Practical Predestinarians in England, c. 1590*-1640 (Farnham, 2014).

Dolan, Frances E., *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England 1550-1700* (Ithica, 1994).

Dolan, Frances E., 'Gentlemen, I Have One More Thing to Say: Women on Scaffolds in England, 1563-1680', *Modern Philology* 92(2) (1994), pp. 157-78.

Dolan, Frances E., *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century* England (Philadelphia, 2013).

Dowling, Maria, 'The Gospel and the Court: Reformation under Henry VIII' in Peter Lake and Maria Dowling (eds), *Protestantism and the national church in sixteenth century England* (London, 1987), pp. 36-78.

Duffy, Eamon, *Stripping the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (London, 2005).

Erickson, Amy Louise, *Woman and Property in Early Modern England* (London, 1995).

Ferrell, Lori Anne, 'Kneeling and the Body Politic', in Donna B. Hamilton and Richard Strier (eds), *Religion, Literature, and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540-1688* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 70-92.

Fielding, J., 'Dod, John (1550-1645)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7729 (21 March 2015).

Fisher, Will, *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Cambridge, 2006).

Fletcher, Anthony, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination in England, 1500-1800* (New Haven, 1995).

Foyster, Elizabeth, 'Marrying the Experienced Widow in Early Modern England: The Male Perspective' in Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern England* (New York, 1999), pp. 108-124.

Fox, Adam, *Oral and Literature Culture in England 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2000).

Froide, Amy M, 'Martial Status as a Category of Different: Singlewomen and Widows in Early Modern England' in Judith M. Bennet and Amy M. Froide (eds), *Singlewomen in the European Past, 1250-1800* (Philadelphia, 1998), pp. 236-269

Gardiner, Samuel, *History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil Way, 1603-1642* (New York, 1965).

Gaskill, Malcolm, *Crimes and Mentalities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003).

Gaskill, Malcolm, 'Reporting Murder: Fiction in the Archives in Early Modern England', *Social History* 23(1) (1998), pp. 1-30.

Gaskill, Malcolm, 'The displacement of Providence: policing and prosecution in seventeenth and eighteenth Century England', *Continuity and Change* 11(3) (1996), pp. 341-374.

Gatrell, V.A.C. *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People 1770-1868* (Oxford, 1994).

Gellner, Ernest, *Thought and Change* (London, 1965).

Gill, Catie, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities c. 1650-1700* (Surrey, 2005).

Gittings, Clare, *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England* (London, 1984).

Gittings, Clare, 'Sacred and secular: 1558-1660' in Peter C. Jupp and Clare Gittings (eds), *Death in England: An Illustrated History* (Manchester, 1999), pp. 147-173.

Gordon, Bruce, 'Introduction: Placing the Dead in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe' in Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshal (eds), *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in late Medieval and Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 1-16.

Gowing, Laura, 'Language, power, and the law: women's slander litigation in early modern London' in Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (eds), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), pp. 26-47.

Gowing, Laura, 'Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past & Present* 156 (1997), pp. 87-115.

Grassby, Richard, 'Material Culture and Cultural History', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 35(4) (2005), pp. 591-603.

Gray, Madeleine. *The Protestant Reformation: Beliefs and Practices* (Brighton, 2003).

Greenblatt, Stephen, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago, 2005).

Greenberg, Stephen, 'Plague, The Printing Press and Public Health in Seventeenth Century London', *Hunting Library Quarterly* 67(4) (2004), pp. 508-527.

Griffiths, Paul, 'Punishing Words: Insults and Injuries, 1525-1700' in Angela McShane and Garthine Walker (eds), *The Extraordinary and the Everyday in Early Modern England: Essays in Celebration of the Work of Bernard Capp* (London, 2010), pp. 66-85.

Griffin, Eric, 'Shakespeare, Marlowe, and the Stranger Crisis of the Early 1590s', in Ruben Espinosa and David Ruiter (eds), *Shakespeare and Immigration* (London, 2014), pp. 13-36.

Hadfield, Andrew, *Amazons, Savages and Machiavels: Travel and Colonial Writing in English, 1550-1630* (Oxford, 2001).

Hadfield, Andrew, *Literature, Politics and National Identity: Reformation to Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1994)

Haigh, Christopher, 'From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 31 (1981), pp. 129-147.

Haigh, Christopher, 'The Continuity of Catholicism in the English Reformation', *Past & Present* 93 (1981), pp. 37-69.

Haigh, Christopher, *The English Reformation Revised* (Cambridge, 1987).

Haigh, Christopher, *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven*: *Kinds of Christianity in Post-Reformation England, 1570-1640* (Oxford, 2007).

Haigh, Christopher, 'The Success and Failure of the English Reformation', *Past & Present* 173 (2001), pp. 28-49.

Hailwood, Mark, *Alehouses and Good Fellowship in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2014).

Halsz, Alexandra, *The Market Place of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1997).

Harris, Michael, 'Murder in Print: Representations of Crime and the Law c. 1660-1760' in Rosamaria Loretelli and Roberto de. Romanis (eds), *Narrating Transgression: Representations of the Criminal in Early Modern England* (New York, 1999), pp. 13-26.

Harris, Tim, *Popular Culture in England, co. 1500-1800* (London, 1995).

Hanson, Elizabeth, 'There's Meat and Money Too: Rich Widows and Allegories of Wealth in Jacobean City Comedy', *ELH* 72(1) (2005), pp. 209-238.

Harper, Sheila, 'The social agency of dead bodies', *Mortality: Promoting the interdisciplinary study of death and dying* 15(4) (2010), pp. 308-322.

Harrington, Joel F, *The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honour and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth* Century (London, 2014).

Hayward, Maria, *Rich Apparel: Clothing and the Law in Henry VIII's England* (London, 2009).

Heal, Felicity, 'The Crown, the Gentry and London: The Enforcement of Proclamations, 1596-1640' in Clare Cross, David Loades and J.J. Scarisbrick (eds), *Law and Government Under the Tudors* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 211-260.

Helt, J.S.W., 'Memento Mori: Death, Widowhood and Remembering in Early Modern England' in Allison Mary Levy (ed.), *Widowhood and visual culture in early modern Europe* (London, 2003), pp. 39-54.

Hentschell, Roze, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England: Textual Constructions of a National Identity* (Hampshire, 2008).

Highley, Christopher, *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2008).

Hindle, Steve, ''A sense of place?' Becoming and belonging in the rural parish, 1550-1650' in Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (eds), *Communities in early modern England* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 96-114.

Hindle, Steve, ''Bleedinge Afreshe' The Affray and Murder at Nantwitch, 19 December 1572' in Angela McShane and Garthine Walker (eds), *The Extraordinary and the Everyday in Early Modern England: Essays in Celebration of the Work of Bernard Capp* (London, 2010) pp. 224-245.

Hope, Andrew, 'Lollardy : The Stone the Builders Rejected?' in Peter Lake and Maria Dowling (eds), *Protestantism and the national church in sixteenth century England* (London, 1987), pp. 1-35.

Houlbrooke, Ralph, 'Civility and Civil Observances in the Early Modern English Funeral' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 67-86.

Houlbrooke, Ralph, *Church Courts and the People during the English Reformation 1520-1570*(Oxford, 1979).

Houlbrooke, Ralph*, Death, Religion and the Family in England 1480 -1750. (*Oxford, 1998).

Houlbrooke, Ralph, 'Robert Roberts and Little Cis: An Extraordinary Relationship' in Angela McShane and Garthine Walker (eds), *The Extraordinary and the Everyday in Early Modern England: Essays in Celebration of the Work of Bernard Capp* (London, 2010), pp. 48-65.

Howard, Jean E, 'Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 39(4) (1988), pp. 418-440.

Hubbard, Eleanor, *City Women: Money, Sex, and the Social order* (Oxford, 2013).

Hudson, Geoffrey L., 'Negotiating for blood money: war widows and the courts in seventeenth-century England' in Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (eds), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), pp. 146-169.

Hufton, Olwen, 'Women without men: widows and spinsters in Britain and France, in the eighteenth century', *Journal of Family History* 9(4) (1984), pp. 355-376.

Hunt, Alan, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (London, 1996).

Huston, Lorna, 'Rethinking the 'Spectacle of the Scaffold': Judicial Epistemologies and English Revenge Tragedy', *Representations* 89(1) (2005), pp. 30-58.

Hutton, Ronald, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: The Ritual Years 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1994).

Hyland, Peter, *Disguise on the Early Modern English Stage* (Surrey, 2011).

Martin Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1987).

Ingram, Martin, 'From Reformation to Toleration: Popular Religious Cultures in England, 1540-1690' in Tim Harris (ed.), *Popular Cultures in England, c. 1500-1850* (London, 1995), pp. 95-123.

Ingram, Martin, 'Infanticide in Late Medieval and Early Modern England' in Laurence Brockliss and Heather Montgomery (eds), *Childhood and Violence in the Western Tradition* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 67-74.

Ingram, Martin, ''Scolding women cucked or washed': a crisis in gender relations in early modern England' in Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (eds), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), pp. 48-80.

Ingram, Martin, 'Sexual Manners: The Other Face of Civility in Early Modern England' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 87-109.

Ingram, Martin, 'Shame and Pain: Themes and Variations in Tudor Punishments' in Simon Devereaux and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Penal Practice and Culture, 1500-1900:Punishing the English* (New York, 2004), pp. 36-62.

Jenkins, Ronald B, *Henry Smith: England's Silver-Tongued Preacher* (Macon, Georgia, 1983).

Jenner, Mark S.R, 'Civilization and Deodorization? Smell in Early Modern English Culture' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 127-144.

Jensen, Phebe, 'Singing Psalms to Horn Pipes: Festivity, Iconoclasm, and Catholicism in *The Winter's Tale*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 55(3) (2004), pp. 279-306.

Johnston, Mark Albert, *Beard Fetish in Early Modern England: Sex, Gender and Registers of Value* (Farnham, 2011).

Johnston, Mark Albert, 'Bearded Women in Early Modern England', *SEL Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 47(1) (2007), pp. 1-28.

Jones, R.E, 'Infant Mortality in Rural North Shropshire, 1561-1810', *Popular Studies* 30(2) (1976), pp.305-317.

Joseph, Nathan, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication Through Clothing* (New York, 1986).

Jowitt, Claire, *The Culture of Piracy, 1580-1630* (Surrey, 2010).

Kesselring, Krista, 'Deference and Dissent in Tudor England: Reflections on Sixteenth-Century Protest', *History Compass* 3 (2005), pp. 1-16.

Kesselring, Krista, 'Detecting Death Disguised', *History Today* 56(4) (2006), pp. 20-6.

Kidd, Colin, *British Identities Before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World 1600-1800* (Cambridge, 1999).

Kutcha, David, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550-1850* (London, 2002).

Lake, Peter, 'Deeds against Nature: Cheap Print, Protestantism and Murder in Early Seventeenth Century England' in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (eds), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Stanford, 1993), pp. 257-283.

Lake, Peter, 'From Leicester his commonwealth to Sejanus his Fall: Ben Jonson and the politics of Roman Catholic virtue' in Ethan H. Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation': Religious politics and identity in early modern England* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 128-161.

Lake, Peter, 'Moving the Goal Posts? Modified Subscription and the Construction of Conformity in the Early Stuart Church' in Peter Lake and Michael Questier (eds), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 179-210.

Lake, Peter, 'Popular form, puritan content? Two puritan appropriations of the murder pamphlet from mid-seventeenth-century London' in Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (eds), *Religion,*

Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain. Essays in Honour of Patrick Collinson (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 313-24.

Lake, Peter, 'Presbyterianism, the Idea of a National Church and the Argument from Divine Right' in Peter Lake and Maria Dowling (eds), *Protestantism and the national church in sixteenth century England* (London, 1987), pp. 193-224.

Lake, Peter, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and a Shropshire axe-murder', *Midlands History* 15 (1990), pp. 37-64.

Lake, Peter and Michael Questier, 'Introduction' in Peter Lake and Michael Questier (eds), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), ix-xx.

Lake, Peter and Michael Questier, 'Puritans, Papists, and the 'Public Sphere' in Early Modern England: The Edmund Campion Affair in Context', *The Journal of Modern History* 72(3) (2000), pp. 587-627.

Lake, Peter and Michael Questier, *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England* (New Haven, 2002).

Lake, Peter and Isaac Stephens, *Scandal and religious Identity in Early Stuart England: A Northamptonshire's Maid's Tragedy* (Woodbridge, 2015).

Laqueur, T.W., 'Crowds, Carnival and the State in English Executions, 1604-1868' in A.L. Beier, D. Cannadine, and J.M. Rosenheim (eds), *The First Modern Society: Essays in English History in Honour of Lawrence Stone* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 305-55.

LaRocca, John J., 'Time, Death, and the Next Generation: The Early Elizabethan Recusancy Policy, 1558-1574', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 14(2) (1982), pp. 103-117.

Lee, Maurice, 'James I and the Historians: Not a Bad King After All?', *Albion,* 16(2) (1984), pp. 151-163.

Lemire, Beverly, 'The Theft of Clothes and Popular Consumerism in Early Modern England', *Journal of Social History* 24(2) (1990), pp. 255-276.

Lesser, Zachary, *Renaissance Drama and the Politics of Publication: Readings in the English Book Trade* (London, 2007).

Lezra, Jacques, 'Translated Turks on the Early Modern Stage', in Robert Henke and Eric Nicholson (eds), *Transnational Exchange in Early Modern Theatre* (Aldershot, 1988), pp. 159-80.

Llewellyn, Nigel, *The Art of Death* (London, 1997).

Loevenstein, David, *Treacherous Faith: The Specter of Heresy in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Oxford, 2013).

MacCulloch, Diarmaid, 'The Myth of the English Reformation', *Journal of British Studies* 30(1) (1991), pp.1-19.

MacDonald, Michael, 'Suicide and the Rise of the Popular Press in England', *Representations* 22 (1988), pp. 36-55.

Macey, Samuel L., *Patriarchs of Time: Dualism in Saturn-Cronus, Father Time, the Watchmaker God, and Father Christmas* (Athens, 1987).

MacFarlane, Alan, 'Civility and the Decline of Magic' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 145-160.

Marshall, John, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge, 2006).

Marshall, Peter, 'Angels around the Deathbed: Variations on a Theme in the English Art of Dying' in Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham (eds), *Angels in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 83-103.

Marshall, Peter, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (Oxford, 2004).

Marshall, Peter, 'Is the Pope Catholic? Henry VIII and the Semantics of Schism' in Ethan H. Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation': Religious politics and identity in early modern England* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 22-48.

Marshall, Peter, ''The Map of God's Word': Geographics of the Afterlife in Tudor and Early Stuart England' in Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (eds), *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in late Medieval and Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 110-130.

Martin, Randall, 'Henry Goodcole, Visitor of Newgate: Crime, Conversion, and Patronage', *The Seventeenth Century* 20(2) (2005), pp. 153-184.

Martin, Randall, *Women, Murder and Equality in Early Modern England* (London, 2008).

Mater, Nabil, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York, 2012).

McBride, Clare, 'A Natural Drink for an English Man: National Stereotyping in Early Modern Culture' in Adam Smyth (ed.), *A Pleasing Sinne: Drink and Conviviality in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 181-192.

McCabe, Richard A., 'Bryskett, Lodowick (*c*. 1546-1609x12)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National, Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3817 (12 June 2015).

McClain, Lisa, 'Without Church, Cathedral, or Shrine: The Search for Religious Space among Catholics in England, 1559-1625', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 33(2) (2002), pp. 381-399.

McCoog, S.J., Thomas M., 'Construing Martyrdom in the English Catholic Community, 1582-1602' in Ethan H. Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation': Religious politics and identity in early modern England* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 95-127.

McGowan, Randall, 'Managing the Gallows: The Bank of England and the Death Penalty, 1797-1821', *Law and History Review* 25 (2007), pp. 241-82.

McGowan, Randall, 'The Problem of Punishment in Eighteenth-Century England' in Simon Devereaux and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Penal Practice and Culture, 1500-1900: Punishing the English* (London, 2003), pp. 210-31.

McIntosh, Marjorie K., 'Poverty, Charity, and Coercion in Elizabethan England', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35(3) (2005), pp. 457-479.

McKenzie, Andrea, ''God's Hat' and the Highwayman's Shoes: A Gestural and Sartorial History of Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century English Trial and Execution', *Canadian Journal of History* 47(2) (2012), pp. 231-257.

McKenzie, Andrea, *Tyburn's Martyrs: Execution in England, 1675-1775* (London, 2007).

McMullan, John C., 'Criminal Organizations in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century London', *Social Problems* 29(3) (1982), pp. 311-323.

Mears, Natalie, 'Stubbe [Stubbs], John (c. 1541-1590]' in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, www.offorddnb.com/view/article/26736?docPos=1 (26 April 2014).

Mendleson, Sara, 'The Civility of Women in Seventeenth-Century England' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 111-125.

Mendelson, Sara and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550-1720* (Oxford, 1998).

Monta, Susannah Brietz, *Martyrdom and Literature in early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2005).

Morrill, John, *The Nature of the English Revolution* (London, 1993).

Muldrew, Craig, 'Interpreting the Market: The Ethics of Credit and Community Relations in Early Modern England', *Social History* 18(2) (1993), pp. 163-183.

Muldrew, Craig, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (New York, 1998).

Mullaney, Steve, 'Lying Like Truth' Riddle, Representation and Treason in Renaissance England', *EHL* 47(1) (1980), pp. 32-47.

Muzzarelli, Maria Guiseppina, 'Reconciling the Privilege of a Few with the Common Good: Sumptuary Laws in Medieval and Early Modern Europe', *Journal of Medieval and early Modern Studies* 39(3) (2009), pp. 597-617.

Nebeker, Eric, 'The Broadside Ballad and Textual Publics', *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 51(1) (2011), pp. 1-19.

Nelson, Alan H., *Early Cambridge Theatres: Colleges, University, and Town Stages, 1464-1720* (Cambridge, 1994).

Nicholls, James, *The Politics of Alcohol: A History of the Drink Question in England* (Manchester, 2009).

Nicholls, James, '*Vinum Britannicum:* The 'Drink Question' in Early Modern England', *The Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 22(2) (2008), pp. 6-25.

Nischan, Bodo. 'The Exorcism Controversy and Baptism in the Late Reformation', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 18(1) (1987), pp. 31-52.

Noon, Georgia. 'On Suicide', *Journal of the History of Idea* 39(3) (1978), pp. 371-386.

Novy, Marianne, *Shakespeare and Outsiders* (Oxford, 2013).

Ownes, Margaret E., *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama* (Cranbury, 2005).

Panek, Jennifer, *Widows and Suitors in Early Modern English Comedy* (Cambridge, 2004).

Peace, Thomas G.M., 'Deconstructing the Sauvage/ Savage in the Writing of Samuel de Champlain and Captain John Smith', *French Colonial Studies* 7 (2006), pp. 1-20.

Peck, Linda Levy, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth Century England* (Cambridge, 2005).

Pennington, David, *Going to Market: Women, Trade and Social Relations in Early Modern English Towns, c, 1550-1630* (New York, 2016).

Peters, Christine, 'Gender, Sacrament and Ritual: The Making and Meaning of Marriage in Late Medieval and Early Modern England', *Past & Present* 169 (2000), pp. 63-96.

Plant, Marjorie, *The English Book Trade: An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books* (London, 1965).

Pollock, Linda A., 'Embarking on a Rough Passage: The Experience of Pregnancy in Early Modern Society' in Valerie Fildes (ed.) *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England: Essays in Memory of Dorothy McLauren* (London, 1990), pp. 39-67.

Pullan, Brian, 'Catholics, Protestants, and the Poor in Early Modern Europe', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35(3) (2005), pp. 441-456.

Purkiss, Diane, *Literature, Gender, and Politics during the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 2005).

Pye, Christopher, 'The Theatre, the Market, and the Subject of History', *ELH* 61(3) (1994), pp. 501-522.

Questier Michael, 'Arminianism, Catholicism and Puritanism in England During the 1630s', *The Historical Journal* 49 (2006), pp. 53-78.

Questier, Michael. 'Conformity, Catholicism and the Law ' in Peter Lake and Michael Questier (eds), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 237-261.

Questier, Michael, 'Elizabeth and the Catholics' in Ethan H. Shagan (ed.), in *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation': Religious politics and identity in early modern England* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 69-94.

Raffield, Paul, *Images and Cultures in Law in Early Modern England: Justice and Political Power, 1558-1660* (Cambridge, 2004).

Rand, Philip H., *By Nature and Custom Cursed: Transatlantic Civil Discourse and New England Cultural Production, 1620-1660* (Hanover, 1999).

Raven, John, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the England Book Trade, 1450-1850* (New Haven, 2007).

Raymond, Joad, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2003).

Reay, Barry, 'Popular Hostility Towards Quakers in Mid –Seventeenth-Century England', *Social* History 5(3) (1980), pp. 387-407.

Robin, Gerald D., 'The Executioner: His Place in English Society', *The British Journal of Sociology* 15(3) (1964), pp. 234-253.

Robson, Lynn, 'The Bloody Papist: Murder, Papists and Propaganda in Early Modern Prose Murder Pamphlets', *Renaissance Journal* 2 (2004), pp. 3-16.

Roche, Daniel, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Regime*, trans. Jean Birell (Cambridge, 1996),

Rogers, Katherine, 'Dead Men Talking: Truths, Texts and the Scaffold in Early Modern England' in Simon Devereaux and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Penal Practices and Culture, 1500-1900: Punishing the English* (London, 2004), pp. 63-84.

Roper, Lyndal, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1994).

Rosendale, Timothy, ''Fiery Toungues': Language, Liturgy, and the Paradox of the English Reformation', *Renaissance Quarterly* 54(1) (2001), pp. 1142-1164.

Rosenthal, Joel T., 'Fiftenth-Century Widows and Widowhood: Bereavement, Reintegration, and Life Choices', in Sue Sheridan Walker (ed.), *Wife and Widow in Medieval England* (Ann Abor, 1993), p. 33-58.

Royer, Katherine, *The English Execution Narrative, 1200*-1700 (Abingdon, 2014).

Sands, Kathleen R., 'Word and Sign in Elizabethan Conflict with the Devil', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 31(2) (1999), pp. 238-256.

Scarre, G., 'Speaking of the Dead', *Mortality: Promoting the interdisciplinary study of death and dying* 17(1) (2012), pp. 36-50.

Schen, Claire S., 'Constructing the Poor in Early Seventeenth-Century London', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 32(3) (2000), pp. 450-463.

Scribner, Bob, 'Is There a Social History of the Reformation?' in *Social History* 2(4) (1977), pp. 483-505.

Scribner, Bob, 'Practical Utopias: Pre-Modern Communism and the Reformation', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 36(4) (1994), pp. 743-774.

Scribner, Bob, 'Reformation, Carnival and the World Turned Upside-Down', *Social History* 3(3) (1978), pp. 303-329.

Scribner, Bob, 'Religion, Society and Culture: Reorientating the Reformation', *History Workshop* 14 (1982), pp. 2-22.

Shagan, Ethan, 'Confronting Compromise: The schism and it legacy in mid-Tudor England' in Ethan H. Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation': Religious politics and identity in early modern England* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 49-68.

Shakespeare, Joy, 'Plague and Punishment' in Peter Lake and Maria Dowling (eds), *Protestantism and the national church in sixteenth century England* (London, 1987), pp. 103-123.

Sharpe, J.A., 'Civility, Civilizing Process and the End of Public Punishments in England' in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 215-230.

Sharpe, J.A., 'Domestic Homicide in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal* 24 (1) (1981), pp. 29-48.

Sharpe, J.A., *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in England 1550-1750* (London, 1976).

Sharpe, J.A., ''Last Dying Speeches': Ideology and Public Execution in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past & Present* 107 (1985), pp. 144-167.

Sharpe, J.A., 'Plebeian Marriage in Stuart England: Some Evidence from Popular Literature', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 36 (1986) pp. 69-90.

Sharpe, J.A., ''Such Disagreement betwixt Neighbours': Litigation and Human Relations in Early Modern England' in John Bossy (ed.), *Disputes and Settlements: Law and Human Relations in the West* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 167-188.

Sharpe, J.A., 'Women, witchcraft and the legal process' in Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (eds), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), pp. 106-124.

Sharpe, Kevin, 'Representations and Negotiations: Texts, Images and Authority in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal* 42(3) (1999), pp. 853-881.

Sharpe, Kevin, 'The King's Writ: Royal Authors and Royal Authority in Early Modern England' in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (eds), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Stanford, 1993), pp. 117-138

Sheils, William J., 'The Catholic Community' in Susan Doran and Norman Jones (eds), *he Elizabethan World* (London, 2011), pp. 254-270.

Shell, Alison, ''Furor Juvenilis': post-Reformation English Catholics and exemplary youthful behaviour' in Ethan H. Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation': Religious politics and identity in early modern England* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 185-206.

Shepard, Alexandra, 'Manhood, Credit and Patriarchy in Early Modern England 1580–1640', *Past & Present* 167 (2000), pp.75-106.

Shepard, Alexandra, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003).

Shuger, Debora, 'The Reformation of Penance', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 71(4) (2008), pp. 557-571.

Sidwell, Keith, 'Pollution and Purification in Aeschylus' Eumenides', *The Classical Quarterly* 46 (1996), pp. 44-57.

Slack, Paul, 'Perceptions of the Metropolis in Seventeenth-Century England' Peter Burke, Brian Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 161-180.

Slack, Paul, *The Impact of the Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1985).

Smith, Stephen R., 'Growing Old in Early Stuart England', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 8(2) (1976), pp. 125-141.

Smuts, Malcolm, 'Court-Centred Politics and the Uses of Roman Historians, c.1590-1630' in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (eds), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Basingstoke, 1994), pp. 21-44.

Smyth, Adam, 'It were far better to a *Toad*, or a *Serpent*, then a Drunkard: Writing About Drunkenness' in Adam Smyth (ed.), *A Pleasing Sinne: Drink and Conviviality in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 193-225.

Sommerset, Anne. *Unnatural Murder: Poison at the Court of James I* (London, 1997).

Sommerville, C. John, 'Anglican, Puritan, and Sectarian in Empirical Perspective', *Social Science History* 13(2) (1989), pp. 109-135.

Sommerville, Johann P., 'Papalist political thought and the controversy over the Jacobean oath of allegiance' in Ethan H. Shagan (ed.), *Catholics and the 'Protestant Nation': Religious politics and identity in early modern England* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 162-184.

Sourvinou-Inwood, Christine, 'To Die and Enter the House of Hades: Homer, Before and After' in Joachim Whaley (ed.), *Mirrors of Mortality: Studies in the Social History of Death* (London, 1981), pp. 15-39.

Spierenburg, Pieter, 'Punishment, Power and History; Foucault and Elias', *Social Science History* 28(4) (2004), pp. 607-636.

Spierenburg, Pieter, *The spectacle of suffering: Executions and the evolution of repression from a preindustrial metropolis to the European experience* (Cambridge, 1984).

Sprunger, Keith, *Dutch Puritanism: A History of English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlander in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden, 1982).

Spufford, Margaret, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and Its Readership in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1981).

Spufford, Margaret, 'The cost of apparel in seventeenth-century England, and the accuracy of Gregory King', *Economic History Review* 53(4) (2000), pp. 677-705.

Spufford, Margaret, *The Great Reclothing of Rural England: Petty Chapmen and the Wares in the Seventeenth* Century (London, 1984).

Stannard, David, *The Puritan Way of Death: A Study in Religion, Culture, and Social Change* (Oxford**,** 1979).

Staub, Susan C, *Nature's Cruell Step-Dames: Murderous Women in the Street Literature of Seventeenth Century England* (Pittsburgh, 2005).

Stedman, Gese, *Exchange in Seventeenth Century France and* England (Surrey, 2013).

Stretton, Tim, 'Marriage, Separation and the Common Law in England 1540-1640' in Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster (eds), *The Family in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 18-39.

Stretton, Tim, 'Women, custom and equity in the courts of requests' in Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (eds), *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), pp. 170-190.

Stretton, Tim, 'Written Obligations, Litigation and Neighbourliness, 1580-1680' in Steve Hindle, Alexandra Shepard and John Walker (eds), *Remaking English Society: Social Relations and Social Change in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 189-210.

Stuart, Kathy, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts: Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, 1999).

Suggs, Richard, *Mummies, Cannibals and Vampires: The History of Corpse Medicine from the renaissance to the Victorians* (New York, 2011).

Swanson, R.N., (ed). *Catholic England: Faith, Religion and Observance Before the Reformation* (Manchester, 1993).

Swanson, R.N., *Indulgences in Late Medieval England: Passport to Paradise?* (Cambridge, 2008).

Tankard, Danae, 'The reformation of the deathbed in mid-sixteenth-century England', *Mortality: Promoting the interdisciplinary study of death and dying* 8(3) (2003), pp. 251-267.

Tarlow, Sarah, *Ritual, Belief and the Dead in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2010).

Thomas, Keith, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1971).

Todd, Barbara, 'The remarrying widow: a stereotype reconsidered' in Mary Prior (ed.), *Women in English Society, 1500-1800* (London, 1985), pp. 25-52.

Todd, Barbara, 'The Virtuous Widow in Protestant England' Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan (eds), *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern England* (New York, 1999), pp. 55-86.

Tyacke, Nicholas, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987).

Underwood, T.L., *Primitivism, Radicalism, and the Lamb's War: The Baptist-Quaker Conflict in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1997).

Usher, Brett, 'New Wine into Old Bottles: The Doctrine and Structure of the Elizabethan Church' in Susan Doran and Norman Jones (eds), *The Elizabethan World* (London, 2011), pp. 203-231.

Varholy, Christine M., ‘‘Rich like a Lady’: Cross-Class Dressing in the Brothels and the Theatre of Early Modern London’, *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 8(1) (2008), pp. 4-34.

Varickayll, Robert, ‘The Social Origins of the Protestant Reformation’, *Social Scientist* 8(11) (1980), pp. 14-31.

Vincent, Susan, *Dressing the Elite: Clothing in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003).

von Greyerz, Kaspar, *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800* (Oxford, 2008).

Walker, Garthine, *Crime, Gender and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003).

Walker, Garthine, ‘‘Demons in female form’: representations of women and gender in murder pamphlets of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries’ in William Zunder and Susanne Trill (eds), *Writing and the English Renaissance* (London, 1996), pp. 123-139.

Walker, Garthine, ‘Expanding the Boundaries of Female Honour in Early Modern’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6 (1996), pp. 235-245.

Walker, Garthine, ‘Just Stories: Telling Tales of Infant Death in Early Modern England’ in Margaret Mikesell and Adele Seeff (eds), *Culture and Change: Attending to Early Modern Women* (Newark, 2003), pp. 98-115.

Walker, Garthine, ‘Keeping it in the family: Crime and the early modern household’ in Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster (eds), *The Family in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 67-95.

Walker, Garthine, ‘The Strangeness of the Familiar: Witchcraft and the Law in Early Modern England’ in Angela McShane and Garthine Walker (eds), *The Extraordinary and the Everyday in Early Modern England: Essays in Celebration of the Work of Bernard Capp* (London, 2010), pp. 105-124.

Walsham, Alexandra, ‘‘Domme Preachers’? Post-Reformation English Catholicism and the Culture of Print’, *Past & Present* 168 (2000), pp. 72-123.

Walsham, Alexandra, ‘Miracles and the Counter-Reformation Mission to England’, *The Historical Journal* 46(4) (2003), pp. 779-815.

Walsham, Alexandra, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2011).

Walsham, Alexandra, ‘‘The Fatall Vespers’: Providentialism and Anti-Popery in Late Jacobean London’, *Past & Present* 144 (1994), pp. 36-87.

Walsham, Alexandra, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2011).

Walsham, Alexandra, 'Yielding to the Extremity of the Time': Conformity, Orthodoxy and the Post-Reformation Catholic Community' in Peter Lake and Michael Questier (eds), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church c. 1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp 221-236.

Ward, Richard M., *Print Culture, Crime and Justice in 18th-Century London* (London, 2011).

Watt, Tessa, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-140* (Cambridge, 1991).

Whigham, Frank, *Seizures of the Will in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge, 1996).

Whittle, Jane and Elizabeth Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth-Century Household: The World of Alice Le Strange* (Oxford, 2012).

Wiesner-Hanks, Merry, 'Do Women Need the Renaissance' in Alexandra Shepard and Garthine Walker (eds), *Gender and Change: Agency, Chronology and Periodisation* (Oxford, 2009).

Wiesner-Hanks, Merry (ed.), *Witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Boston, 2006).

Wiesner-Hanks, Merry, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2000).

Wilson, Andrea, *Ritual and Conflict: The Social Relations of Childbirth in Early Modern England* (Surrey, 2013).

Williams, Daniel E, ''Behold a Tragic Scene Strangely Changed into a Theatre of Mercy': The Structure and Significance of Criminal Conversion Narratives in Early New England', *American Quarterly* 38(5) (1986), pp. 827-847.

Williams, Sarah F, *Damnable Practices: Witches, Dangerous Women, and Music in Seventeenth-Century English Broadside Ballads* (Surrey, 2015).

Willie, Rachel, 'All Scripture is Given by Inspiration of God: Dissonance and Psalmody', in Kevin Killeen, Helen Smith and Rachel Willie (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the Bible in Early Modern England, 1530-1700* (Oxford, 2015), p. 287-302.

Withington, Phil, 'Intoxicants and the Early Modern City' in Steve Hindle, Alexandra Shepard and John Walker (eds), *Remaking English Society: Social Relations and Social Change in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp. 135-164.

Withington, Phil and Alexandra Shepard, 'Introduction: communities in early modern England' in Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (eds), *Communities in early modern England* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 1-17.

Wolf, Phillip, 'The Emergence of National Identity in Early Modern England: Causes and Ideological Representations' in Herbert Grabes (ed.), *Writing the Early Modern Nation: The Transformation of National Identity in the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century* (Amsterdam, 2001), pp. 149-172.

Wood, Andy, ''The Deep Roots of Albion's Fatal Tree: The Tudor State and the Monopoly of Violence', *History* 99(336) (2014), pp. 403-417.

Woodbridge, Linda, *Vagrancy, Homelessness, and English Renainassance Literature* (Chicago, 2001).

Worden, Blair, 'Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England', *Past & Present* 109 (1985), pp.55-99.

Wrightson, Keith, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain, 1470-1750* (London, 2002).

Wrightson, Keith, *English Society 1580-1680* (London, 1982).

Wrightson, Keith, 'Infanticide in Earlier Seventeenth-Century England', *Local Population Studies* 15 (1975), pp. 10-22.

Wrightson, Keith and David Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525-1700* (Oxford, 1995).

Wunderli, Richard and Gerald Broce, 'The Final Moment before Death in Early Modern England', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 20(2) (1989), pp. 259-267.

Leigh Yetter (ed.), *Public executions in England, 1573-1868, Volume 1: Public Executions in England, 1573-1674* (London, 2009).

Zook, Melinda S., 'Women, Anglican Orthodoxy, and the Church in Ages of Danger', in Sigrun Haude and Melinda S. Zook (eds*), Challenging Orthodoxies: The Social and Cultural Worlds of Early Modern Women* (Farnham, 2014), pp. 101-122.