

# Politics, Women's Voices, and the Renaissance: Questions and Context

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In 1558, the Scots reformer, John Knox, published his *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*. Knox was horrified to think of such women as the Scottish Queen Mary Stuart, her mother, Mary of Guise, and Mary I of England actually being so forward and inappropriate as to claim the power to rule. Knox vehemently described female rule as blasphemous against God. "I am assured that God hath reveled to some in this our age, that it is more than a monstre in nature that a Woman shall reigne and have empire above a Man. . . . howe abominable, odious, and detestable is all such usurped authoritie." Knox argued that God not only ordained that women were barred from authority, but given their essential nature they would be incapable of wielding authority if they illegitimately usurped it. Yet women, by their very nature avaricious, deceitful, cruel, oppressive, and proud, sought domination over men, and some men foolishly gave it to them. "To promote a Woman to beare rule, superioritie, dominion, or empire above any Realme, nation, or Citie, is repugnant to Nature . . . it is the subversion of good order, of all equitie and justice." Men must "acknowledge that the Regiment of a Woman is a thing most odious in the presence of God . . . she is a traitoresse and rebell against God . . . they must studie to repress her inordinate pride and tyrannie to the uttermost of their power." Knox claimed divine authority for his views. "By the Holy Ghost is manifestly expressed in these words, I suffer not a woman to usurp authority above the man. So both by God's law and the interpretation of the Holy Ghost, women are utterly forbidden to occupy the place of God in the offices 'foresaid, which he has assigned to man, whom he hath appointed to be his

lieutenant on earth. The apostle taketh power from all women to speak in the assembly."

Knox was not only responding to the specific Catholic women rulers, Mary I, Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, and her regent mother, Mary of Guise, for whom his tract was aimed, but more generally to the enormous social, political, religious changes in the sixteenth century that allowed women to gain some measure of power.

In the late fourteenth, early fifteenth century, the French author and poet Christine de Pizan had begun to speak as a woman, to give voice for women. Educated by her father, and then left a widow with two young children by the age of twenty-five, Christine began to write for consolation, but also to make a living. Critics now see her as one of those writers who helped bridge the transition between medieval and Renaissance. She imagined a world of women, a city of ladies, and explored who would be their heroes, what were the roles available, how could they deal with the problems for women in the public arena. By the sixteenth century, in part through the accident of female birth and early male death, women were to achieve power in startling new ways. One result was not only changes in some women's behavior and how they expressed themselves, but changes in how the larger society perceived women's roles and nature.

In early sixteenth-century England, Henry VIII, as the second generation of the new Tudor dynasty, believed that England's stability depended on his having a son to succeed him. When his first marriage to Catherine of Aragon produced only dead babies and a daughter Mary, Henry decided to have his marriage annulled. Catherine was in many ways a model queen. She was pious, strong-minded, and fiercely loyal to Henry. But she believed that if God had given her and Henry no sons this meant Mary should reign, which was a point of view anathema to Henry. Pope Clement VII's refusal to grant this annulment led in the late 1520s and early 1530s to Henry's eventual break with the Church of Rome.<sup>1</sup> Though Henry originally had political and dynastic motives, the English Reformation caused great changes in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in how people regarded their religious beliefs. And the Reformation came to have significant effects on how women were valued and on their status.

Henry's passionate attraction and second marriage to Anne Boleyn, would eventually turn to hatred when she produced a daughter, Elizabeth, and miscarried a son. The first wife, Catherine, was thrust aside, her marriage pronounced annulled by Henry's Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer. Catherine never recognized this annulment,

and in 1536 signed her last letter to Henry, in which she told him what she desired above all things was to see him once again, "Catherine the Queen." Only a few months later, Henry dispatched his second wife as well, this time to the executioner's block, accused of adultery and treason. Henry's third marriage gave him the son, Edward, he so craved. Jane Seymour, however, died of complications due to childbirth. Though he married three more times, these later unions produced no children. Henry's will, which had the force of Parliament behind it, placed his daughter Mary and then his daughter Elizabeth as successors to the realm should Edward die without heirs. Despite all his care, England might well have a queen.

Though for Henry the original motives for his break with the Church were political, in the 1530s some of those closest to him, particularly Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell, his Principal Secretary, had encouraged a real religious reformation. For some women, this religious change allowed them to see other ways to reconceptualize their lives. One especially was Anne Askew, who was known from her adolescence for her enthusiasm and commitment to Protestantism. In 1540, when she was twenty, her father arranged a marriage for her with a wealthy landowner, Thomas Kyme. It was not a happy marriage, since Kyme was still a believer in the old faith, while Anne had become a committed and ardent Protestant. Anne, convinced her husband was doing all he could to prevent her from worshipping as she believed, left him. She claimed her marriage was not lawful in the eyes of God, and went to London to seek a divorce. In London she became a visible part of a Protestant prayer circle. Conservatives attacked her and attempted to use her to discredit Henry's last wife, Catherine Parr. Askew's sense of self was so strong it did not waver even when she was tortured and finally burned to death in 1546 as a heretic. Early the next year, Henry himself died, leaving England to his one son.

Yet despite Henry's great concern that England be ruled by kings, in 1553 at the age of fifteen his son Edward VI died. After an attempted coup to place yet another female, Henry's grand niece Lady Jane Grey, on the throne, Henry's two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth were to rule for the rest of the century. Mary attempted to follow a more traditional path. She married her cousin Philip of Spain and desperately hoped for a child. The country's disillusion over this foreign and barren marriage, as well as the horror over Mary's burning of three hundred Protestants, were lessons not lost on Elizabeth when she became queen in 1558. Across the channel in France the early

death of Henry II in an accident in a tournament in 1559 meant that the queen mother Catherine de Médicis was powerfully involved in governing until her death thirty years later. At the end of the seventeenth century as well, James II's daughters Mary (with her husband William III) and Anne were to again to be queens in their own right. Women in positions of power had great impact on the age.

Such changes in the political structure also caused people to examine in new ways earlier powerful women, such as Isabel, French wife of Edward II, who in the early fourteenth century led a rebellion against her husband, and with her lover ruled for her young son Edward III, until he wrested power away from her. In the seventeenth century, women, such as Elizabeth Cary, Madeleine de Scudéry, Margaret Cavendish, Margaret Fell, Bathsua Makin, Mary Astell, and Aphra Behn as well as men were writing about both specific powerful, political women and about changing ideas about women in the public arena. Knox's trumpet was being blasted over a stormy and changing landscape.

Aimed at Catholic rulers, Knox had the bad timing of having his work appear only a few months prior to the beginning of Elizabeth I's reign. Though in no way arguing for the overthrow of the twenty-five year old Protestant Elizabeth, who succeeded to the English throne from her sister Mary in November 1558, Knox was committed to the proposition that for a woman to be the head of government was "monstrous." In the "apology" he sent Elizabeth he stated, "I can not deny the wrieting of a booke aganis the usurped Authoritie, and unjust Regement of Women; neither [yit] am I myndit to retract or call back any principall point, or proposition of the same, till treuth and verritie do farder appeir." Knox would not have considered himself to be primarily a political theorist; what mattered to this Calvinist preacher was "true" religion. But in the sixteenth century, politics and religion were completely intertwined.<sup>2</sup>

Knox's horror over women's rule and the power women might exert was echoed over four hundred years later in the 1992 elections. The Rev. Pat Robertson, who has run in the past for the Republican nomination for President and who may well make another attempt, warned of the dangers of a proposed equal rights amendment to the Iowa Constitution. Passage of such an amendment was part of the "feminist agenda," an agenda Robertson claims to be "a socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism, and become lesbians."<sup>3</sup>

Knox and Robertson, in their image of women, their horror over women in politics, their use of religious rhetoric as an argument against powerful women, their perception that powerful women are on the offense against nature, uncannily echo each other—and also evoke comparisons between powerful, gifted, politically engaged women of the Renaissance and of our own age, and the fears caused by each.

This collection examines the political rhetoric of a number of powerful women of the Renaissance, at male rhetoric about such powerful women, at drama and fiction by both male and female authors that consider women and political context, and how historians—then and now—have evaluated powerful women. Our collection begins with an essay about Christine de Pizan and her fifteenth-century look at powerful women and ends with an essay about seventeenth-century rhetoricians and how they viewed and reshaped the Renaissance in terms of giving power to women. The essays in between consider women in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, mostly English, though with some French examples. We also contextualize these examples where appropriate into modern issues as well. Our approach in this collection is deliberately multidisciplinary, as is obvious from the range of disciplines represented by the authors—history, literature, rhetoric—because we believe that a meshing, an interweaving, of different disciplines enriches our subject matter. As a result of our meshing of disciplines, we use the term political rhetoric in the broadest sense. This collection examines the rhetoric used by powerful women, the rhetoric used about them, and their representations in histories and dramas written during the Renaissance by both women and men. The use of all of these disciplines and texts allows us to learn much more about the Renaissance, the place and status of women, and the use of political rhetoric. Just as today the enormous social changes have meant re-evaluation of women's roles and gender relations, so, too, was the Renaissance a time of great social, intellectual, cultural, and religious change.

In the Renaissance—as in any period—most women belonged to family units and had roles as wives, mothers, daughters, and widows. Both within the household and often beyond it women were workers. Religion played an important role in women's lives and in the conceptions by both men and women of what woman's nature truly was.<sup>4</sup> There were also, of course, some exceptional women who found more public arenas for their gifts and ambitions. This book, by its nature, not only focuses more on such women but also attempts to place them within the context and understanding of other women's lives. The

Renaissance was a time of women in public roles—of queens—and also a time when many women, thousands of them, were also accused and sometimes executed for witchcraft. Sometimes the accusation of witch was used against a powerful woman—such as Anne Boleyn or Catherine de Médicis—though most who were actually executed were of lower social, economic status, of the powerless rather than powerful. And just as accusations of witchcraft were used against powerful women, so, too, were comments about their sexuality.

The distinction between a “good” woman and a “bad” one was used to control women in the home, but also in the public arena. While for men, the conception of honor was concerned with physical demonstrations of courage, such as on the battlefield or the joust, and with keeping one’s word, for women honor was inextricably tied up with their sexuality—not only their actual behavior, but also their sexual reputation. Even if a woman were chaste, if she behaved in such a way that she was thought not to be, she was dishonored; and her male kinsmen were dishonored with her. The easiest and most successful way to destroy a woman was an attack on her reputation for chastity.<sup>5</sup> Such belief systems made it difficult for women to move into the public realm with an articulate voice. As Ann Rosalind Jones suggests, “Female silence was equated with chastity, female eloquence with promiscuity.”<sup>6</sup>

And this is still true today. During the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing in 1991, John Doggett, a character witness for Thomas claimed that Hill was a spurned woman. He noted: “She was having a problem with being rejected by men she was attracted to.” Senator Alan Simpson [Republican, Montana] shook his head and expressed outrage concerning Hill’s sexual appetite, exclaiming, “Watch out for this woman.” When interviewed by a reporter, Senator John Danforth [Republican, Missouri], a Thomas supporter, identified a disorder associated with power and lust. He smiled and said, “There is a specific disorder relating to how people perceive authority figures and possible sexual interest by authority figures in them.”<sup>7</sup>

Clearly, for a woman to speak with an articulate voice in the public arena makes her the object of worry and the butt of jokes, and makes those around her worry about their vulnerability. A Republican consultant, after evoking a promise of anonymity, told a network newscaster about efforts to damage Hillary Rodham Clinton’s credibility before President Bill Clinton seeks reelection in 1996. The consultant referred to “the rumor machine” that he was activating against Hillary

and claimed that stories about an "either nonexistent or all too active" sex life would discredit her. As Elisabeth Perry points out, when Hillary Rodham Clinton asked people to use all three of her names, "the charges flew. Ambitious feminist. Power mad. Who is in charge here?" Perry then goes on to ask, "If, on the brink of the twenty-first century, the wife of the President of the United States still cannot perform in an authoritative role without questions being raised about the appropriateness of her behaviour, how could the women of the 1920s have stood a chance?"<sup>8</sup> We might ask even more, what about the women of the Renaissance?

Elizabeth I, who ruled England from 1558 to 1603, was a well-beloved, and in many ways a successful, monarch, but throughout her reign, and especially at moments of national crisis, the English records are peppered with people arrested for slandering the queen, and questioning her chastity. People named her supposed lovers, and accused her of bearing—and killing—illegitimate children.<sup>9</sup> Elizabeth's own mother, Anne Boleyn, was literally destroyed, beheaded on Tower Hill in 1536 when Elizabeth was less than three years old, for accusations, most probably false, that she was an adulterer who had taken five lovers, one of whom was said to be her own brother.<sup>10</sup>

Just as Anne Boleyn's reputation proved to be so damaging to her, Catherine de Médicis, widow of Henry II and mother to Francis II, Charles IX, and Henry III, was also known in France as a manipulative, Machiavellian poisoner who orchestrated the murder of thousands of Protestants. Yet women who stayed within the framework of approved behavior, such as Catherine of Aragon or Mary II, also did not find it easy to be in the public life. All of Catherine's virtues were cancelled by her failure to have a son. Mary II was also childless, and her obedience to her husband sometimes made her appear a faithless daughter.

Women in positions of power often carefully constructed the rhetoric they used to justify that power. Elizabeth elaborately crafted her rhetoric on the issue of whether she would marry. She rhetorically created for herself a family as she ruled England alone. But Elizabeth and other women had less control over what was said about them both in their own lives and later. Especially in the last part of Elizabeth's reign, her Privy Council was extremely concerned about anyone whose statements seemed to threaten the Queen's legitimacy. In 1587 and again in 1592, a woman named Anne Burnell came before the Privy Council for her claims that she was the daughter of the King of Spain. In 1592, the Council ordered her whipped through the streets of

London to punish her and warn others. Burnell's case is only one of a number of examples that demonstrate the significance of gender in the different reactions to power in the Renaissance. Examining the rhetoric used by powerful women, by both men and women about such women, and the literary and dramatic weaving together of the themes represented by their lives can tell us a great deal about gender and power in the Renaissance, and also about how these themes echo in our culture today.

The essays in this collection are wide-ranging in considering issues around Renaissance women and political rhetoric. Some deal with specific historical individuals and their rhetorical strategies. Other essays consider how other people both at the time and later regarded some powerful women. And still others look at specific authors, both male and female, and analyze their presentations of powerful women, and gender relations within political structures. Together these essays bring us to a greater understanding of questions of gender and power in the Renaissance, and, by extension, in our own age as well.

In Christine de Pizan's *"Cité des Dames: Toward a Feminist Scriptural Practice,"* Daniel Kempton explores Christine de Pizan's efforts in carving out space for her voice as a female author at the end of the Middle Ages, the beginning of the Renaissance. Kempton argues that de Pizan's *The Book of the City of Ladies* and *The Treasure of the City of Ladies* reveal three modes of a medieval woman writing. The first mode is "writing like a man/clerk" within the library. The second mode is self-reflexive and confronts the challenges of "writing like a woman" on the margins of discourse. The final mode constitutes feminist consciousness-raising as de Pizan addresses the material conditions that marginalize women in the City.

One woman whose place on the margin was deadly was Anne Boleyn. Retha Warnicke's essay asks us to rethink history from a feminist perspective as she argues for a gendered approach to studying the image and representation of Anne Boleyn in Tudor England. "Conflicting Rhetoric About Tudor Women: the Example of Queen Anne Boleyn" suggests that literary conventions in early Renaissance England constrained biographical accounts of Anne's life. Contemporary religious and social beliefs, including attitudes about gender roles, informed the approaches of her biographers, all of whom were male. They saw the Queen as a fallen woman—a harlot executed for sexual crimes. Warnicke concludes by proposing that analysis of conflicting

rhetoric about Anne's appearance, sexuality, and death must be framed in terms of Tudor gender relationships.

Anne Boleyn's daughter Elizabeth ruled for forty-five years as Queen. She, too, had to deal with the expectations for appropriate behavior for women. In the early years of her reign, the pressure on her to marry was intense. Ilona Bell's analysis of Elizabeth I's marriage speeches at the beginning of her reign counters the popular Petrarchan image of the "virgin queen." In "Elizabeth I—Always Her Own Free Woman," Bell turns to Elizabeth's rhetoric to argue that the Queen refused to succumb to patriarchal pressures to marry. She insisted that she had the capability and authority to rule England alone. Furthermore, Elizabeth's words expressed female desire and freedom of choice. In refusing to marry for convenience or political gain, Elizabeth reversioned marriage and political power from a female standpoint. She rejected the notion of courtship as duty and argued that she would resist marriage until a man appeared who pleased her.

Lena Cowen Orlin also argues that Elizabeth I subverted patriarchal expectations during her reign. In "The Fictional Families of Elizabeth I," Orlin examines Elizabeth's rhetoric on family relations to suggest that the Queen was "ever her own mistress." Elizabeth's rhetoric reveals that she recognized the constraints she faced as a ruler—her family's history, her birth order, her gender—and strategized to turn those constraints to her advantage. Because she lacked traditional family relationships, Elizabeth embraced the opportunity to rhetorically transform the kingdom into her family. Through familial tropes, Elizabeth became wife to the kingdom, mother of the people, cousin to the nobility, and sister to foreign princes.

In "Dutifully Defending Elizabeth: Lord Henry Howard and the Question of Queenship," Dennis Moore discusses one response to Elizabeth's rule and rhetoric. As Moore notes, the prevailing conceptions of womanhood in the sixteenth century echoed Knox in arguing that women were not suited to serve as rulers. *A Dutiful Defense of the Lawful Regiment of Women* (1590), written by Elizabeth's cousin Henry Howard, represents one rhetorical response to the debate over queenship. Although *A Dutiful Defense* was never published, it was circulated in manuscript. Moore argues that scholars have erred in overlooking the treatise; it provides a window on Elizabethan reasoning concerning female rule.

Just as there were many responses to Elizabeth, so, too, were there to her contemporary, Catherine de Médicis, Queen Mother of France during the sixteenth-century wars of religion. In "The Blood-Stained

Hands of Catherine de Médicis," Elaine Kruse argues that misogynistic attacks on women—from Catherine to Marie Antoinette to Nancy Reagan to Hillary Rodham Clinton—reflect patriarchal discomfort with female power. Women have been cast as "other"—defective males—in efforts to exclude them from roles in public life. The charges against Catherine, that she was a Wicked Queen, dangerous foreigner, evil woman, and political manipulator constitute a patriarchal litany that greets women who seek to exercise political power.

"Expert Witnesses and Secret Subjects: Anne Askew's *Examination* and Renaissance Self-Incrimination" analyzes one autobiographical response to misogynistic rhetoric. Elizabeth Mazzola proposes that the autobiographical account of Askew, a sixteenth-century Protestant martyr, represents a voice that refused to be marginalized or repressed by the authorities who charged her with heresy. *Examinations*, the first person account of her trials, indicates that Askew *chose* silence in refusing to "play the game" as defined by her accusers. She understood the line of reasoning used by her accusers and declined to supply them with answers to their questions. Instead, she responded with questions to them that provided her with the opportunity to explain her beliefs.

We know about Anne Askew in large part because of her arrest and trial. In the Tudor period we hear the voices of two other more obscure women, Mary Baynton and Anne Burnell, whose actions, statements, and beliefs led to their arrests. Carole Levin analyzes their rhetorical strategies in "Mary Baynton and Anne Burnell: Madness and Rhetoric in Two Tudor Family Romances." In the 1530s Mary Baynton claimed to be Henry VIII's eldest daughter Mary and actually convinced people to give her money as a result. Over fifty years later, Anne Burnell was convinced that she was the daughter of Philip II of Spain. These delusions and/or impostures gave these lower-class women a voice, though at great cost.

A number of essays have considered actual queens. Jo Eldridge Carney's "Queenship in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*: The Issue of Issue" explores the representation of queenship in Shakespeare's play. Analysis of *Henry VIII* and Samuel Rowley's *When You See Me, You Know Me*, a literary source for Shakespeare's play, reveals circumscribed patriarchal definitions of queenship. Queens, including Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, and Elizabeth, are critical to dramatic events, but do not exercise political influence as rulers. Queenship is associated with pageantry, superiority to other women, and reproduction. All the queens share the obligation to produce an heir to the throne—preferably a male heir.

Gwynne Kennedy examines Elizabeth Cary's efforts to make a revision in the meaning of wifely submission and queenship. *The History of the Life, Reign, and Death of Edward II* is probably the first prose history written in English by a woman. "Reform or Rebellion?: the Limits of Female Authority in Elizabeth Cary's *History of Edward II*" analyzes Cary's ambivalent responses to Queen Isabel, Edward's wife. The focus of the history gradually shifts from Edward to Isabel and reveals conflicting judgments about female authority. Although the *History of the Life, Reign and Death of Edward II* suggests that women have the right to protect their own interests in a household, it also implies that Isabel, as a servant of the commonwealth, had a responsibility to uphold the political order by obeying her husband. "Wits, Whigs, and Women: Domestic Politics as Anti-Whig Rhetoric in Aphra Behn's Town Comedies" also centers on a female writer's ambivalent responses to female authority. Arlen Feldwick accounts for apparent contradictions between Behn's feminism and her political convictions. Although Behn's commitment to the Stuart monarchy and its patriarchal rhetoric appears to undercut her commitment to feminism, Feldwick argues that these seemingly disparate threads are reconciled in the playwright's philosophical opposition to the Whigs. The author concludes that a Restoration woman, even a progressive Restoration woman such as Behn, could not visualize true female autonomy.

In some ways paralleling Warnicke's argument about Anne Boleyn, William Spellman identifies problems with biographical accounts of Mary II—accounts that fail to recognize the presence of female autonomy. In "Queen Mary II: Image and Substance During the Glorious Revolution," Spellman revises the history of the joint monarchy of William and Mary. He argues that patriarchal scholarly biases have eclipsed the role of Mary in the reign. Although many scholarly accounts depict Mary as obedient and submissive, Spellman argues that such views overlook the period of time when the Queen exercised executive authority. He concludes by urging scholarly awareness of patriarchal biases in primary texts, biases that inform historical accounts.

In "The Politics of Renaissance Rhetorical Theory by Women," Jane Donawerth answers Joan Kelly's famous question with the assertion that yes, women did have a Renaissance, or at least, that in the seventeenth century women appropriated Renaissance ideals, especially the rebirth of classical rhetorical education, to argue for the education of women. In using the myth of the Renaissance to their advantage, female rhetoricians spoke of women's rights to education

and speech as rights that had existed in the past, and could be reclaimed. A new rhetorical theory was generated in the seventeenth century in works by Madeleine de Scudéry, Margaret Cavendish, Margaret Fell, Bathsua Makin, and Mary Astell.

In the fifteenth century, Christine de Pizan began to articulate the rhetoric of a feminist consciousness as the new age of the Renaissance was emerging. Two hundred years later the women rhetoricians looked back to the Renaissance and saw the changes women had made. Actual women—Anne Boleyn, Mary Baynton, Anne Askew, Anne Burnell, Elizabeth I, Catherine de Médicis, and Mary II had attempted to recreate models for women in the political realm. Both male and female authors—Henry Howard, Shakespeare, Elizabeth Cary, and Aphra Behn—also explored these issues. What we see in all of these essays is both the triumphs but also the difficulties for women who wanted a powerful, articulate voice. The difficulties—the cultural as well as personal ambivalences—are still with us today.

### Notes

1. Henry VII had acquired a dispensation from the pope so that his son Henry could marry Catherine, since according to Leviticus it was against Biblical law for the two to marry. By the 1520s, Henry may well have believed that the fact he had no living male heirs was divine punishment for breaking this Biblical law. Historians A. F. Pollard and J. J. Scarisbrick have argued that for Henry it was indeed, at least in part, a matter of conscience. A. F. Pollard, *Henry VIII* (1902; new edn. London: Jonathan Cape, 1970), p. 143. J. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), p. 152.

2. John Knox, *Works*, ed. David Laing (Edinburgh: James Thin, 1895), IV, pp. 366–67, 369, 375, 415, 380, 353.

3. *New York Times*, 30, Aug 1992, p. E3.

4. See Margaret L. King, *Women of the Renaissance* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), and Retha Warnicke, *Women of the English Renaissance and Reformation* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Publishing, 1983), for a thorough discussion of women's roles during this period. On the subject of women and religion, particularly valuable is Patricia Crawford's *Women and Religion in England, 1500–1720* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993). See also, Margaret P. Hannay, ed., *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985).

5. For a discussion of female honor in the Renaissance, see especially, Linda Woodbridge, *Women in the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540–1620* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984), p. 53. For a discussion of the impact of Protestantism on the concept of honor, see also, Mervyn James, *English Politics and the Conception of Honour, 1485–1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). It is also useful to look at proverbs about women in the Renaissance to see the linking of sexual misconduct and generally dishonorable behavior. Morris Palmer Tilley, *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950), pp. 741–49.

6. Ann Rosalind Jones, *The Currency of Eros* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 1.

7. Mary Douglas argues in *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (1966; reprint, New York: Routledge, 1992) that “unchaste” or “dirty” behavior has been associated with transgressions against the social order. In *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), Sander Gilman explores the relationship between maintenance of the social order and stereotypes. He notes that “when systems of representation are used to structure the projections of our anxiety, they are necessarily reductive. Often the very appeal to a set system of images is a sign of the observer’s awareness of the absence of difference. . . . The anxiety present in the self concerning its control over the world directly engenders a need for a clear and hard line of difference between the self and the Other” (27).

8. Elisabeth Perry, “Why Suffrage for American Women was Not Enough,” *History Today*, 43 (September, 1993), p. 41.

9. See Carole Levin, *“The Heart and Stomach of a King”: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), for a thorough discussion of these rumors and their significance.

10. As well as Retha Warnicke’s essay in this collection, see her book length study, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).