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The Irrelevance of Revisionism: Gender, Politics, and Society in Early Modern England

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ABSTRACT Revisionism's rise to prominence in the 1970s coincided with the emergence of feminist history. Yet the two shared little, and Revisionism's insistence on the autonomy of politics was at odds with the feminist analysis of power and politics in household and community relations; as feminist historians sought to expand the conception of the political, Revisionists sought to narrow it. Yet Revisionism had much in common with a strain of social history that focused on the particular and local as against broad narratives of change, and emphasized stability and consensus rather than conflict. However, both the social and political history of early modern England have to be able to account for the conflict that emerged in the mid-seventeenth century. This essay shows how gender—and, in particular, gendered inversion—provides a way to pull together social, political, and gender history. KEYWORDS: gender and political history; inversion as seventeenth-century trope; disorderly women and failed patriarchs; shaming rituals; elite politics and popular culture

THIS ESSAY WAS WRITTEN in response to a request to assess the significance of "Revisionism" in early modern British history. In many ways, I am an odd participant in this discussion, as my work could hardly have been farther, then or now, from Revisionist concerns. But Revisionist thinking has had a profound impact on all aspects of early modern British history, not just the political sphere that was its original focus. Revisionism privileged short-term causation over long-term analysis, and in doing so it narrowed the boundaries of political history to exclude the work that I did. While in its purest form it was of short duration, it has continued to structure discussion.

By Revisionism I mean the movement from the mid-1970s and early 1980s that sought to undermine the Whig narrative of the seventeenth century. Seeking to avoid the "high road to civil war," Revisionists argued that we should not be studying the early seventeenth century in light of what happened next but instead should be examining

how people at the time thought about politics.[1] Revisionists believed that, to avoid anachronism, any discussion of early Stuart politics should be "appropriate to a stable, aristocratic, *ancien regime* society." They offered a critique of the then dominant "neo-Whig" understanding of the period, presented most succinctly by Lawrence Stone in *Causes of the English Revolution.* Stone's view was that the English revolution (for Stone, the parliamentary actions of 1640–42) was the result of structural imbalances in English society caused by the increasing wealth of the gentry, itself a consequence of the redistribution of land after the dissolution of the monasteries, as well as the growth of population and the inflation common to all of Europe in the sixteenth century; this interpretation mapped on to an older, constitutionally focused view of the revolution as a response to the Crown's turn to absolutism. Revisionists instead viewed politics as an autonomous arena of action, not just irreducible to but often disconnected from social and economic history, and the purview of only the elite. They conceptualized causation as a direct process rather than a broad set of contexts. The subject of study in the middle of the seventeenth century was no longer a revolution (either in 1640–42 or in 1649) but a civil war.[2]

In its pure form, Revisionism had a relatively short life. Within ten years, there were post-Revisionists, and erstwhile proponents of Revisionism had sought new ways of thinking about politics that did resonate outside the confines of the court and Parliament. Politics, it turned out, was not to be independent of other social realms.[3] In the years since, studies of print and manuscript political culture, politics as theater, and news culture, among others, have all widened the lens of political history.[4] Social historians, who all along had been interested in local politics and riots, studied the development of the state—a topic that had more direct political resonances without being

1. G. R. Elton, "A High Road to Civil War?," in *From the Renaissance to the Counter-Reformation: Essays in Honour of Garrett Mattingly*, ed. Charles Howard Carter (New York, 1965), 325–47, not only encapsulates the argument, but also can be seen as the first blast of the Revisionist scholars.

2. The best overview of the field is Glenn Burgess, "On Revisionism: An Analysis of Early Stuart Historiography in the 1970s and 1980s," *Historical Journal* 33, no. 3 (1990): 609–27, quote on p. 612; Burgess actually does make use of the term *revolution*, but many more recent works focus on civil war; Lawrence Stone, *The Causes of the English Revolution, 1529–1642* (London, 1972); Elton, "A High Road to Civil War?," 325–47.

3. The "post-Revisionists" include Richard Cust, *The Forced Loan and English Politics, 1626–1628* (Oxford, 1987); Thomas Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution: English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621–2164* (Cambridge, 1989); and Ann Hughes, *Politics, Society, and Civil War in Warwickshire, 1620–1660* (Cambridge, 1987); their work came together as an intellectual statement in *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics, 1603–1642*, ed. Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (Harlow, U.K., 1989). For one attempt to widen the lens, see John Morrill, "England's Wars of Religion" and the essays that follow in *The Nature of the English Revolution: Essays* (London, 1993).

4. For a sample of relevant works, see Thomas Cogswell, "Underground Verse and the Transformation of Early Stuart Political Culture," in *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England: Essays Presented to David Underdown*, ed. Susan Amussen and Mark Kishlansky (Manchester, 1995), 277–300; Alastair Bellany, *The Politics of Court Scandal in Early Modern England: News Cultures and the Overbury Affair* (Cambridge, 2002); Adam Fox, "Rumour, News, and Popular Political Opinion in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England," *Historical Journal* 40 (1997): 597–620; and Kevin Sharpe, *Image Wars: Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603–1660* (New Haven, Conn., 2010).

"political" history.[5] Yet Revisionism has had an impact far out of proportion to its short life span and explanatory limitations because of the epistemological challenge it posed to the scholarly consensus of the 1950s and 1960s. Ironically for a movement that explicitly eschewed theoretical analysis, it raised fundamental questions of epistemology. The real debate was not just about the details of events but about what those events were (civil war vs. revolution), and about the norms of historical method and practice.

The broad methodological point the Revisionists made—that we shouldn't write the history of the period from 1560–1650 as if those events inevitably led to revolution and civil war—seems unarguable. It was sometimes taken further, though, with scholars trying to write as if *they* didn't know that something happened in 1640. (John Morrill confessed in the introduction to the second edition of his *Revolt of the Provinces* that he had been accused of "explaining why no Civil War broke out in England in 1642.")[6] In their critique of the neo-Whigs, the Revisionists focused on what worked in society, not its problems. As with so much of history writing, the disagreement was primarily an issue of emphasis: just as historians struggle with the tensions between continuity and change, we seek to balance the relative significance of conflict and consensus. But, as Morrill's apology suggests, a history of the period from 1560 to 1640 that focuses on stability, hierarchy, and consensus makes explaining—let alone teaching—the events of 1640, not to mention 1642 or 1649, a significant challenge: you are forced into a big bang theory of history. Therefore, rather than focus on the details of the Revisionist account of early seventeenth-century politics, I want to focus on the assumptions about historical practice embedded in it and the ways they have shaped the writing of history over the past thirty years. For these assumptions have had echoes across not just early modern British history but also historical thinking in general, and seem to me Revisionism's most important legacy; while the form Revisionism took in early modern British history is unique, its larger assumptions are not. And it is Revisionism's approach to historical explanation that I have implicitly argued against throughout my career. In the remainder of this essay, I will examine the historiographical context from which I view Revisionism and then show how we might begin to construct a coherent narrative of the early modern period.

～ Historiographical Contexts

Revisionism was a response to what its proponents thought had become reductionist accounts of politics, accounts shaped by Marxist and neo-Marxist thinking. In the old, discredited view, the English revolution was a critical part of modernization, whether constitutional or economic. The explanation that has replaced that view has been structural (the problem with multiple kingdoms, religious conflict) and particular, and has largely lost its connection to broader historical developments. In this, Revisionism

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5. Steve Hindle, *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, c. 1550–1640* (Basingstoke, U.K., 2000); Michael Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England, c. 1550–1700* (Cambridge, 2000).

6. John Morrill, *The Revolt of the Provinces: Conservatives and Radicals in the English Civil War* (London, 1980), x.

was part of, and contributed to, a turn away from overarching theoretical models—Weberian, Marxist or neo-Marxist, structuralist—as the basis for historical analysis.[7] In social history, many scholars also focused on continuity rather than change, and de-emphasized the differences of the early modern period. Margaret Spufford resisted linking Puritanism and social control; Alan Macfarlane argued that England was effectively "modern" by the thirteenth century; J. A. Sharpe's *Early Modern England: A Social History* focused on the broad continuities, admitting significant change only after industrialization. Critiques of the concept of a "crisis of order" or a "crisis in gender relations" reflect both this focus on continuity and a turn away from broad explanations.[8] At the same time, the linguistic turn in historical studies cast a suspicious eye on our ability to grasp the reality of the past: language came to be seen not as a transparent reflection of historical reality but as "constituting historical events and human consciousness." As a result, some historians doubted our ability to speak about a reality apart from its representation.[9] These developments were not unique to history: similar moves took place in anthropology, with a greater focus on the particular rather than broad theoretical explanations; equally, deconstruction and postmodernism in literary studies pushed away from broad aesthetic judgments. The shift in focus of Revisionism was thus reflective of the scholarly mind-set of the period. I will leave it to intellectual historians to explain this retreat from broad interpretive approaches and how it was shaped by both generational politics and the political and social climate of the period; this explanation will undoubtedly include the campus unrest of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the collapse of the academic job market in the U.S. and U.K. in the late 1970s, and the conservative ascendancy marked by the elections of Margaret Thatcher in the U.K. in 1979, and Ronald Reagan in the U.S. in 1980.[10]

7. That this is not limited to early modern British history is clear in Richard Vinen's review of *François Furet: Les chemins de la mélancholie,* by Christophe Prochasson, *Times Literary Supplement*, February 28, 2014, 12: "Nora's edited collection on the *Lieux de mémoire* (published in the late 1980s) seemed to mark an end to French history in two different senses. It implied that the sweeping and novel intellectual ambitions of the Braudelian *Annales* school to seek out profound causes of long term change had now been replaced by a collection of beautiful miniaturist essays, which sought to evoke rather than explain and which emphasized fragmentation rather than integration. It also implied that France itself had become a kind of museum."

8. Margaret Spufford, "Puritanism and Social Control?," in *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England,* ed. Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson (Cambridge, 1985), 41–57; Alan Macfarlane, in collaboration with Sarah Harrison and Charles Jardine, *Reconstructing Historical Communities* (Cambridge, 1979); Macfarlane, *The Origins of English Individualism: The Family, Property, and Social Relations* (Oxford, 1978); J. A. Sharpe, *Early Modern England: A Social History, 1550–1760* (London, 1987); Martin Ingram, "'Scolding Women Cucked or Washed': A Crisis in Gender Relations in Early Modern England?," in *Women, Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England,* ed. Jenny Kermode and Garthine Walker (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1994), 48–80; Marjorie Keniston McIntosh, *Controlling Misbehaviour in England, 1370–1600* (Cambridge, 1998).

9. Kathleen Canning, "Feminist History after the Linguistic Turn: Historicizing Discourse and Experience," *Signs* 19, no. 2 (Winter 1994): 368–404, esp. 370; a broader recent review of this approach is Judith Surkis, "When Was the Linguistic Turn? A Genealogy," *American Historical Review* 117, no. 3 (2012): 700–22, esp. 710–11.

10. The generational dimension is significant: historians whose experience had been shaped by the world wars—Christopher Hill, Lawrence Stone, T. K. Rabb, and David Underdown—generally

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Revisionism felt supremely irrelevant to me, and insofar as it was relevant, I thought it was a Bad Thing. To explain this, a bit of autobiography is useful. This will serve both to place my own thinking in a historiographical trajectory and as a useful reminder that historical judgments are embedded in particular moments and relationships; in my case, two teachers shaped my thinking. I was introduced to the history of early modern England in Lawrence Stone's History 368, "The First Road to Modernization: England, 1470–1690," in the spring of 1974. The narrative arc of that class would not surprise readers of *Crisis of the Aristocracy* and *Causes of the English Revolution*; looking back at the syllabus, I note that he was also previewing *The Family, Sex, and Marriage*. Readings included the newly published— Keith Thomas's *Religion and the Decline of Magic*—but also classics, like J. R. Tanner's *Constitutional Conflicts of the 17th Century*, first published in 1928. To this day, the political narrative in my head of the period from 1560 to 1640 is based on what I learned then. It's a compelling narrative, with conflict driven by the Harringtonian idea that the constitution needed to reflect the balance of property.[11] It was also a narrative, with its focus both on the development of capitalism and on theories of revolution, that placed early modern England in a central position in the development of modernity: understanding the period was vital to our ability to understand the modern world. It may be that 1974 was about the last time that narrative could be presented unproblematically, but that was what I heard. Two years later, I started graduate school at Brown University and was enrolled in David Underdown's graduate seminar; Underdown was scrupulously fair in structuring his teaching—he not only included key Revisionist texts in his syllabus but also impersonated its proponents to encourage class discussion—but his own interests were expanding to incorporate social and cultural history into the history of politics. Once I had finished my qualifying exams, my engagement with Revisionism was largely informal. I read it so that I could teach it, but my intellectual focus was elsewhere.

My goal when I started graduate school was to figure out how to write the history of women and gender in early modern England. As a senior in college, I wrote on the reign of Queen Mary, trying to incorporate feminist analysis, so I was certainly interested in political history. My turn to social history reflected two distinct pressures. First, contemporary feminist politics emphasized the lives of ordinary women. In addition, as I read current scholarship, social history—with its interest in family history and demography, as well as social structure and work—seemed to have more room for questions related to women and gender than other fields. That was where it would be possible to think about structures of patriarchy and the relationship between

remained committed to broader explanations of the civil war, while the leading proponents of Revisionism were a generation or more younger.

11. Harrington's influence is summarized in Lawrence Stone, *Social Change and Revolution in England, 1540–1640* (New York, 1965), xxiii–xxiv, and excerpts on 169–75; for a broader view of Harrington, see A. Reeve, "Harrington's Elusive Balance," *History of European Ideas* 5, no. 1 (1984): 401–25; Blair Worden, "James Harrington and the Commonwealth of Oceana," in *Republicanism, Liberty, and Commercial Society, 1649–1776*, ed. David Wooton (Stanford, Calif., 1994), 82–110.

patriarchy and capitalism. In those early years of feminist historical scholarship, we were struggling to find interpretive models that would include women and questions of gender: big theoretical models were necessary if we were to avoid what were sometimes called "add women and stir" approaches.[12]

In the mid-1970s, social history was in a major period of transition. There were older works, like Mildred Campbell's *The English Yeoman*, or for my purposes, Alice Clark's *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century*; while based on significant archival work, both were descriptive. The Annales school in France, which understood history as the confluence of "structures"—long-term economic, social, and cultural formations—and "conjunctures," or events, reshaped Continental historical writing, but its impact on British historical practice was oddly limited.[13] The 1970s saw the emergence of demographic history, and in the mid-1970s a new group of studies, mostly local community studies, began to be published. Some works of social history, like Keith Thomas's on magic and witchcraft, and Christopher Hill's on Puritanism and radical sects, were largely based on pamphlet and published sources of the period. A few archivally based studies, like Alan Macfarlane's *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England* and Margaret Spufford's *Contrasting Communities,* were available in 1976. In early 1978, one of my professors handed me David Levine's *Family Formation in an Age of Nascent Capitalism* with great excitement, and Wrightson and Levine's *Poverty and Piety* came out the next year. While the emerging social history of Britain was no more interested in gender than was political history—family history and demographic history were initially inclined to take gender for granted—it was a slightly better fit.[14] Women's history was itself an emerging field: the first Berkshire Conference on the History of Women was held in 1973, and most of those engaged in it did some form of social history. Natalie Davis, the only established scholar writing on early modern

12. The phrase is widely used formally and informally to describe adding women to a discussion without fundamentally changing the frameworks of historical analysis; see, e.g., Nell Noddings, "The Care Tradition: Beyond 'Add Women and Stir,'" *Theory into Practice* 40, no. 1 (2001): 29–34.

13. Mildred Campbell, *The English Yeoman under Elizabeth and the Early Stuarts* (New Haven, Conn., 1942); Alice Clark, *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1919); for an overview of the Annales school, see Michael Bentley, *Modern Historiography: An Introduction* (London, 2006), 103–15. Margaret Spufford, *Contrasting Communities: English Villagers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1974), notes that she has not made reference to the work of the Sixième Section or the work of Le Roy Ladurie "simply for lack of time" (xxii). My own article in *Annales,* "Féminin/masculin: le genre dans l'Angleterre de l'époque moderne," *Annales: Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 40, no. 2 (1985): 269–87, remains my least-read and least-cited work.

14. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England* (London, 1973); Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (New York, 1972); Alan Macfarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England* (New York, 1970); Spufford, *Contrasting Communities*; David Levine, *Family Formation in an Age of Nascent Capitalism* (New York, 1977); Keith Wrightson and David Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525–1700* (New York, 1979). For a recent review of the period, and the development of social history, see Steve Hindle, Alexandra Shepard, and John Walter, "The Making and Remaking of Early Modern English Social History," in *Remaking English Society: Social Relations and Social Change in Early Modern England,* ed. Hindle, Shepard, and Walter (Woodbridge, U.K., 2013), 1–40.

women, wrote social history, and she also wrote a key theoretical article arguing for the importance of studying gender, not just women.[15] So that was the direction I took.

Now, I would argue (as I have for more than twenty-five years) that the study of women and gender is central to understanding political history. This is not only because my work, and that of other feminist historians, is inspired by questions that emerge from our commitment to gender equity in the present. It is because its subject, gender and its interactions with other hierarchies, demonstrates the nature and operations of power in early modern society. The analogy between family and state, ubiquitous in the period, means thinking about politics is shaped by thinking about gender, and vice versa.[16] The slogan of the early feminist movement, "The personal is political," holds true for the past. And yet, just as I was trying to expand the definition of what *was* political, Revisionism was narrowing the field to focus on elite politics, primarily as played out at court and in Parliament. And a history focused on the political process had little room for gender. It was as if we were writing about entirely different societies. We worked in different archives, read different books, were influenced by different scholars; we attended different conferences or went to different sessions at the same ones. There were apparently no connections between Revisionists' work and mine. One of the most important—and negative—effects of Revisionism was to widen the gap between political history and social and economic history. (Gender was not even part of the discussion.) It left us with an understanding of politics that was disconnected from the rise in population, or the changing social dynamics of English communities, or the changing nature of the English economy. And it left at least some social history disconnected from politics.

I was more aware of developments in political history than I might otherwise have been because of my marriage to David Underdown. He began his career as a political historian, and even as he explored social and cultural history, he always saw it as connected to political history. For him, the civil wars and revolutions between 1640 and 1660 presented *the* question that early modern British historians had to take seriously, whether they were studying local communities or elite politics. He read Revisionist scholarship, and while he appreciated elements of it, he was frustrated by its polemics, because he did not think the program of archival research they demanded was that new. He had undertaken a vast prosopographical study grounded in extensive archival research in *Pride's Purge*; as he later noted, the recognition that popular allegiance and elite allegiance often differed led him to turn to social and cultural

15. "History," Berkshire Conference of Women Historians website, accessed August 31, 2014, http://berksconference.org/about/history/; Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Stanford, Calif., 1975), esp. chaps. 3, 4, and 5; Davis, "'Women's History' in Transition: The European Case," *Feminist Studies* 3, nos. 3 and 4 (1976): 83–103 (this paper, according to the note on p. 2 of the journal issue, was delivered at the Second Berkshire Conference on the History of Women in 1974).

16. I first made this argument when I linked political theory and family theory in "Gender, Family and the Social Order, 1560–1725," in *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England,* ed. Fletcher and Stevenson, 196–217; it was more fully articulated in the conclusion to *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1988). For the argument more broadly, see Joan Scott, "Gender, A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053–75.

history.[17] Furthermore, he was a lifelong adherent of the country and suspicious of those in authority: his favorite quote was from Sir Roger Burgoyne, "I have been taken for a country fellow, but never a courtier." He thought most Revisionist scholarship too uncritical of the court and naïve in its readings of contemporary texts. I was a sounding board for his musings about Revisionism and also listened as he discussed it with colleagues, with the combination of appreciation and eye-rolling that is common in informal conversations among historians.[18] While I was never engaged in the detailed debates in the field, I always thought it was important to understand how the political issues that were being debated were part of the same society as the villages I was studying.

My major concern, however, was to argue for the centrality of gender as an analytical category, while contributing to a history of women and gender in the early modern period. The theoretical framework of intersectional thinking, which has been vital to feminist scholarship since the late 1970s, meant that I always understood gender as connected to other social hierarchies. As I worked with ecclesiastical court records, wills, and quarter sessions, I was interested in what hierarchies were important and how people described them and, to the best of our knowledge, experienced them. The model for this work was in social history—the community studies of Alan Macfarlane, Keith Wrightson, and Margaret Spufford. Thus I was more likely to be in conversation with other social historians, and sometimes legal historians. Even with those connections, gender was decidedly a fringe concern: in 1979, Miranda Chaytor and I could open a bottle of wine at her kitchen table and call the meeting of the early modern women's history group open; a few years later we were joined by Lyndal Roper. While a growing number of historians engaged with gender, a very small group of historians met at the first Attending to Women in Early Modern England conference, held in 1990.[19] It was not until the mid-1990s that a significant group of historians in Britain started working with gender, and even then, gender was marginal to much social history, particularly in the U.K.: an excellent book like Steve Hindle's *The State and Social Change,* published in 2000, did not engage with it.[20] In the 1980s and 1990s, my intellectual concerns were marginal in the wider frame of early modern British history.

17. David Underdown, *Pride's Purge: Politics in the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford, 1971); Underdown, *Revel, Riot, and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England, 1603–1660* (Oxford, 1985), vii; for his view on Revisionism, see *A Freeborn People: Politics and the Nation in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford, 1996), 3–7.

18. He quoted Burgoyne in *Pride's Purge,* 55.

19. There were, of course, other historians working on gender in the period 1979 to 1980, but we did not have any way to know about them. *Attending to Women in Early Modern England*, ed. Betty Travitsky and Adele Seeff (Newark, Del., 1994); the featured historians included not just Retha Warnicke and me but also scholars who were either not early modernists (Judith Bennett) or not primarily interested in gender (David Cressy). Historians were greatly outnumbered by literary scholars!

20. Some sense of the distance between histories of gender and mainstream social history is visible in Keith Wrightson's response to Chaytor's "Household and Kinship: Ryton in the Late 16th and Early 17th Centuries," *History Workshop* 10 (1980): 25–60; Keith Wrightson, "Household and Kinship in Sixteenth Century England," *History Workshop* 12 (1981): 151–58; Richard Wall, "Letter," *History Workshop* 12 (1981): 199; Olivia Harris, "Households and Their Boundaries," *History Workshop* 13 (1982): 143–52; the extent of response felt like the establishment slapping down the outsider, as Chaytor was an independ-

From the 1980s onward, Underdown's major historiographical goal was to connect social, political, and cultural history: the project was explicit in his Ford Lectures and in the book he was writing at the time of his death.[21] In our conversations, political, social, and gender history were not separate or antagonistic fields. Yet it was equally clear that Underdown's attempts to think about politics as something engaging multiple levels of society and deeply connected to social and cultural values and practices were, initially at least, almost as marginal as was gender history: in a 1990 review essay on politics in the 1970s and 1980s, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion* was not even cited, nor was the social and cultural analysis it embodied mentioned.[22] Over the years, work on popular politics, riots, and culture and politics made deeper connections to Underdown's work, and a few scholars even tested his ideas about regional cultures.[23] My own trajectory took me further from engagement in questions relevant to Revisionism: in the early 1990s I started teaching in an interdisciplinary program with no opportunity to teach early modern English history; my next project moved into working on the later seventeenth century and English settlement in the Caribbean, so early Stuart political history was rarely relevant to either my teaching or my research.

I am now, however, both teaching early modern British history again and back in the earlier seventeenth century, picking up the project Underdown was working on before his death in 2009. At the center of that project was reconnecting the historiographical strands of early modern history. How can we make connections between social, cultural, and political history? How do we talk about the period as a whole, not making one aspect of society merely a byproduct of some other but understanding the experience of people whose lives were shaped by the intersections of social, cultural, or political dimensions of life? From the perspective of the seventeenth century, how did the various dimensions of society fit together? To put it another way, if we can't tell the story of the causes of the English revolution the way Stone did, how *do* we tell a story that puts the rise of population, the growth of London, the pauperization of smallholders, witchcraft, scolds, religious conflict, civil war, and revolution in one picture? The framework that Underdown chose to do this is the idea of inversion, of the world turned upside down. It was a staple of social life, of cultural production, and of political thinking. How is Revisionism relevant to this?

The simple answer is that it is not. It is unlikely that I will even mention Revisionism as a movement in the book; instead, I will focus on the work of many social,

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ent scholar; Susan D. Amussen, "Review: *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, c. 1550–1660," Social History* 27 (2002): 69–70; when I first met him, Hindle generously acknowledged my criticism.

21. Underdown, *A Freeborn People*.

22. Burgess, "On Revisionism."

23. Mark Stoyle, *Loyalty and Locality: Popular Allegiance in Devon during the English Civil War* (Exeter, U.K., 1994,) most explicitly took up Underdown's model of regional cultures. The work on riots is vast, but see, for instance, John Walter, including *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution: The Colchester Plunderers* (Cambridge, 1999); and Andy Wood, *The Politics of Social Conflict: The Peak Country, 1520–1770* (Cambridge, 1999). For an overview of the impact of the book, see Ann Hughes, "The 'Chalk' and the 'Cheese': David Underdown, Regional Cultures and Popular Allegiance in the English Revolution," *History Compass* 11, no. 5 (2013): 373–80.

political, and cultural historians whose work has, in the last twenty years, illuminated the early Stuart world. But this project represents a historiographical and pedagogical response to Revisionism. Ann Hughes has recently challenged us to "explore the social, cultural and ideological characteristics of early modern England that made civil war possible, and more particularly made possible the type of civil war that occurred."[24] Particular social, economic, political, and cultural constructs make political conflict, rebellion, and revolution more or less possible than others do. By examining different forms of inversion in relation to each other, we will begin to see the broader patterns. This book will not explain the causes of the civil war and revolution, but it will contribute to an explanation. But this is also a pedagogical response to Revisionism's separation of politics from other aspects of society. It is an attempt to write a coherent story about the period. My students, most of whom are first generation students from non-European backgrounds, enter my class with little knowledge of Britain in the period; unless I can provide a coherent narrative, it will make no sense to them. Furthermore, I have been sufficiently influenced by French Annales historians to think that *histoire totale* is a valuable, if unattainable, goal. So in the rest of this essay, I will use the inversion project to show how we can place gender and social change into the conversation about politics. As Ann Hughes has noted, such projects "are inevitably partial"; this one is also preliminary.[25] However, I hope it will allow us to begin to imagine a more integrated approach to the period.

Inversion in Early Modern England

The idea of the world turned upside down is familiar to historians of early modern Britain, if for no other reason than Christopher Hill's book of that same title.[26] But the broader pattern of inversion extends far beyond the radical sects that were the focus of Hill's work, and indeed it did not always represent a revolutionary perspective. By inversion I mean the ways in which people in early modern England used and understood the notion of a world turned upside down, of an inverted familial, social, or political order; this was among the most deeply ingrained features of the mental world of medieval and early modern European men and women. It was manifested both literally and symbolically: people's actions overturned the expected order in either ritual or daily life, while symbolic reversals of that order were a familiar trope in the cultural products of the day, often used to right the reversals that had already taken place. Responses to inversion were not uniform. Hill wrote of it as a hopeful aspiration: let's turn the world upside down to obtain political or religious freedom, economic or social levelling, gender equality, or simply to have fun by parodying official hierarchies and values. But as often it had negative connotations: our world has been turned

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24. Ann Hughes, "A 'lunatick revolter from loyalty': The Death of Rowland Wilson and the English Revolution," *History Workshop Journal* 61 (2006): 192–204 at 199; alert readers will note that this formulation echoes and expands Stone's model of preconditions, precipitants, and triggers.

25. Ibid., 199.

26. Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution* (London, 1972).

upside down by evil forces that are destroying the stable natural order ordained by God in family, church, and state, and we must turn it right side up by restoring the proper moral universe.[27] As Stuart Clark noted, "witchcraft is pure inversion"; rituals of skimmington and charivari are rituals of inversion. Concern with dominant women or unruly women or failed patriarchs was a staple of political gossip in the period.[28] Whenever things went wrong, people thought the world was turned upside down; often problems were corrected by rituals that used inversion to turn the world right side up again. As one studies inversion, it becomes increasingly clear that inversion is also about gender: most uses of inversion engage with gender, because so much thinking about hierarchy mapped itself onto the gender structure of the household. For purposes of analysis, I separate these concerns into those with disorderly women and those about failed patriarchs. These are, I recognize, flip sides of the same coin: a woman could only be disorderly if her husband, father, or master allowed it; however, people clearly separated the two and allocated responsibility accordingly.

It is easiest to make the link between inversion, gender, and politics if you start at the court. James I's reign is known for its high-profile political-sexual scandals. The best known is undoubtedly the Overbury scandal, which neatly combined two sets of issues: first there was the annulment of Frances Howard's marriage to the Earl of Essex and her swift remarriage to the Earl of Somerset, James's favorite; two years later came the discovery that Sir Thomas Overbury, Somerset's former secretary, had been poisoned while imprisoned in the Tower. Disorderly women seem to have been held largely responsible for both the divorce and the murder. At the time of the annulment and marriage, Howard herself was libeled as "A mayde, a wyfe, a Countesse and A whore," but that line was changed in 1615, after the murder came to be known, as "A wife, a witch, a murderer, and a whore."[29] The criticism of Howard was, not surprisingly, joined to contempt for Essex: in another libel, it was alleged it all happened "Because shee was nott truely mand"; such taunts persisted for many years.[30] While contempt for Essex was there, the significance of disorderly women is demonstrated by the parallel criticism of

27. For this, see, e.g., Underdown, *Freeborn People*, chap. 5; Susan D. Amussen, "Turning the World Upside Down: Gender and Inversion in the Work of David Underdown," *History Compass* 11, no. 5 (2013): 394–404.

28. Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford, 1997), 13; David Underdown, "The Taming of the Scold: The Enforcement of Patriarchal Authority in Early Modern England," in *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England,* ed. Fletcher and Stevenson, 116–36; Martin Ingram, "Juridical Folklore in England Illustrated by Rough Music," in *Communities and Courts in Britain, 1150–1900,* ed. Christopher Brooks and Michael Lobban (London, 1997), 61–82; David Underdown, "Yellow Ruffs and Poisoned Possetts: Placing Women in Early Stuart Political Debate," in *Attending to Early Modern Women,* ed. Susan D. Amussen and Adele Seeff (Newark, Del., 1998), 230–43.

29. This account is based on Alastair Bellany, *The Politics of Court Scandal*; David Lindley, *The Trials of Frances Howard: Fact and Fiction at the Court of King James* (London, 1993); for the libels, see the respective pages on the Early Stuart Libels website: http://www.earlystuartlibels.net/htdocs/essex _nullity_section/F1.html, and http://www.earlystuartlibels.net/htdocs/overbury_murder_section /H5.html, both accessed May 13, 2014.

30. http://www.earlystuartlibels.net/htdocs/essex_nullity_section/F3.html, accessed May 13, 2014.

Anne Turner, the countess's friend and confidant, who was even more publicly attacked—and ultimately executed for her part in the plot against Overbury. Turner had helped the countess approach Simon Forman, allegedly for the charms that would ensure Essex's impotence. But she was best known for introducing the yellow ruff—which combined Irish (Catholic) linen with the Dutch starched ruff. In her speech before her execution, Turner tearfully repented not only of having committed the crimes of murder and witchcraft but also of having been an exemplar of the sins of lust and vanity through the displaying of yellow ruffs. In 1620—five years after the scandal broke, and after her execution—the popular pamphlet *Hic Mulier: Or, The Man-Woman* attacked the fashion and named Anne Turner and the countess: Turner had adopted "the false armory of yellow starch," which according to the rules of color in heraldry depicted "baseness, bastardy, and indignity," but was now being used in true inversionary manner as a statement of fashion. The Countess of Somerset had set an example of a monstrous "deformity in apparel" by wearing styles that were shamelessly copied from those of men's clothing and were French into the bargain.[31] In the Overbury scandal, you had adultery, witchcraft, and poisoning—the behavior of not only disorderly but also corrupt women; the countess's status at court made her a leader of fashion, who thus corrupted other women.

How does this scandal, familiar as it is, help us think about the reverberations of politics in the social world? What were the resonances of this scandal beyond the court? One answer has already been suggested with the reference to *Hic Mulier*: this period is a time of vigorous debate in the "controversy on women." The Jacobean phase began with the publication in early 1615 of Joseph Swetnam's *Araignment of Lewd Idle Froward and Unconstant Women*; Swetnam went into at least ten editions in the next twenty years, and there were three responses published. He was also the subject of a play produced at the plebian theater, the Red Bull—*Swetnam the Woman Hater*. Swetnam argued that, by nature, "Lust and uncleannesse continually keepe them [women] company, gluttony and sloth serveth them at the table, pride and vaine-glory apparelleth them"; if a woman was unhappy with a husband's behavior, "her breast will be the harborer of an envious heart, her head will devise villainy, and her hands are ready to practice that which their heart desireth."[32] Certainly the Earl of Essex had learned this, to his chagrin. The divorce may have been a court scandal, but it was a public one as well: politics was not contained at court.

31. *Hic Mulier; Or, The Man-Woman* (London, 1620; STC 13375.5), sig. A4r–v; Underdown, "Yellow Ruffs"; Alastair Bellany, "Mistress Turner's Deadly Sins: Sartorial Transgression, Court Scandal, and Politics in Early Stuart England," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 58, no. 2 (1995): 179–210; Lindley, *Trials*, 148, 152, 179–82; Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge, 2000), chap. 3, esp. 66–69, 76–77; for the scaffold performance, see Katherine Royer, *The English Execution Narrative, 1200–1700* (London, 2014), esp. 83–84, 90.

32. Joseph Swetnam, *The Araignment of Lewd Idle Froward and Unconstant Women* (London, 1615; STC 23534), 15, 25–26. For the controversy on women, see Linda Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540–1620* (Urbana, Ill., 1986), esp. chaps. 4 and 6; *Debating Gender in Early Modern England, 1500–1700*, ed. Cristina Malcomson and Mihoko Suzuki (London, 2002).

Hic Mulier was not the only publication to frame women's sinfulness from the perspective of dress. Thomas Tuke, the vicar of St. Martins in the Fields, had published his *Treatise Against Painting and Tincturing of Men and Women* in 1616. Tuke added an appendix, "Of Poysoning and Murder," that included an attack on Anne Turner. Painting of faces, Tuke asserted, was "a provocation and incitement to lust" and led women inexorably to "practice love-potions by charms and sorcery," as Frances Howard had done, and in the end to murder by "Italian devices" such as poison. He added a lengthy passage written by the sixteenth-century Spanish physician Andrés Laguna de Segovia, who declared that cosmetics were "brought in by the devil, . . . to transform human creatures of fair, making them ugly, enormious [*sic*] and abominable." Tuke himself drove the point home, asking, "Is not this an inversion of nature, to dissemble and hide the natural visage with an artificial?"[33] Tuke's concern with women's appearance was followed in 1620 by *Hic Mulier*, which was itself answered by *Haec-Vir: Or The Womanish Man*. But these pamphlets did not appear in a vacuum: a month before *Hic Mulier* was published, Chamberlain reported that James I had ordered the clergy to preach "against the insolency of our women, and their wearing of broad-brimmed hats, pointed doublets, their hair cut short or shorn, and some of them [wearing] stilletoes or poinards and such other trinkets of like moment." A fortnight later, he noted that the royal orders were being obeyed: "Our pulpits ring continually of the insolence and impudency of women," he noted, and the Dean of Westminster prevented aristocratic ladies wearing yellow ruffs from entering pews in the Abbey.[34]

None of this is news to scholars of the Jacobean period, or indeed to historians of women. Gender and inversion here are hiding in plain sight, as are the links between elite politics and popular culture. Why were they missed? Revisionism contributed to this: just at the time that scholars were exploring inversion and gender was emerging as an analytical category, Revisionists turned away from theoretical and conceptual frameworks. But the court scandals of the period demonstrate that court politics cannot be understood without understanding gender and that they were never contained in the court. These disputes also connect court politics with both social change and popular practices and ideas about unruly women. Between 1500 and 1640, the population of England and Wales almost doubled; the expansion of the population was accompanied by an expansion of the number of poor and landless. There was enormous anxiety about disorder, even if its relative intensity is a matter of debate.[35] The extensive evidence of popular concern with unruly women is one sign of this anxiety. Rachel Weil has argued that prosecutions of scolds were designed to assert a proper gender order and that they were also political, reflecting "a desire for order and for

33. Thomas Tuke, *A Treatise Against Paintng* [*sic*] *and Tincturing of Men and Women* (London, 1616; STC 24316), sigs. A2, B3–B4v, 21.

34. *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. Norman E. McClure, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1939), 2:286–87, 289, 294.

35. Responses to Underdown, "The Taming of the Scold" include Ingram, "Scolding Women Cucked and Washed," and Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford, 1996), 28.

justice, and of conflicts about how to get order and justice."[36] While scholars have disagreed about the frequency as well as the significance of formal prosecutions of scolds, events in English communities—from defamation cases to charivari—certainly demonstrate lively concern with unruly women. While the charivari is directed against the household (and often more directly shames a husband rather than his wife), it is striking how often scolding is referenced within the ritual.

For instance, the riding directed at Nicholas Rosyer of Wetherden, Suffolk, and his wife responded to her beating of him. A neighbor who testified noted that they had enacted "an old country ceremony used in merriment upon such accidents . . . whereby not onely the woman which had offended might be shunned for her misdemeanor towards her husband, but other women also . . . might be admonished." In other words, the purpose of the riding was both to shame the Rosyers and to warn other women. Thomas Quarry, who lived "at the next house," was carried around the town on a cowlstaff dressed in women's clothing, telling "all wifes to take heede how they did beate their husbands." Rosyer and his wife, needless to say, did not enjoy the "merriment" and moved to the nearby village of Haughley, even though his family had been subsidy-men in Wetherden for two hundred years.[37] In several cases, participants in a riding planned to duck the wife: ducking was the standard punishment for scolding. In Quemerford, outside of Calne, Wiltshire, in 1618, the procession directed at Thomas Mills and his wife Agnes planned to "wash her in the cucking stool" at Calne.[38] Similarly, in 1653, a crowd of people came to the house of John Day in Ditcheat, Somerset, "hooping and hallowing"; one man was "ryding upon a cowle staffe," while another carried "a great payre of hornes." They called Day "cuckold, and threatened to throw his wife into the Poole."[39] The concern with unruly women, then, is connected to a range of social practices that are outside the formal political and legal process, and often engage people who are not involved in the formal political process. And such politics were not confined to riots and other political events: they were part of the normal fabric of life.

This concern with female disorder also reveals a link to the problem of failed patriarchs. As Alexandra Shepard has reminded us, patriarchal values "constituted attempts to discipline and order men as well as women."[40] The Ditcheat charivari is full of references to cuckolds. The cuckold is the epitome of the failed patriarch: while the offense is committed by the wife, it is the husband who is shamed by wearing the

36. Rachel Weil, "Politics and Gender in Crisis in David Underdown's 'The Taming of the Scold,'" *History Compass* 11, no. 5 (2013): 381–88, esp. 386.

37. The National Archives (hereafter TNA), STAC 8/249/19, Nicholas Rosyer v. James Quarry, Thomas Hammond, et al. 1604.

38. Martin Ingram, "Charivari and Shame Punishments: Folk Justice and State Justice in Early Modern England," in *Social Control in Europe*, vol. 1., *1500–1800*, ed. Herman Willem Roodenburg and Petrus Cornelis Spierenburg (Columbus, Ohio, 2004), 288–308, the complaint in this case is on 297–98; see also Underdown, "The Taming of the Scold," 130–31.

39. CQ3 1/86 (2), fol. 154, Somerset Record Office, Taunton.

40. Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), 1; John Dod and Robert Cleaver, *A Godly Forme of Householde Gouernement* (London, 1598), sig. A7.

horns. Being a cuckold had public as well as personal consequences. Thomas Why-thorne, writing in the 1570s, indicated that the "notoriowz cookkold" is barred from some employments "of estimasion" in the commonwealth, including serving on juries and inquests; there is no other evidence of this, but it is an interesting allegation. Whythorne suggested an early modern version of "don't ask, don't tell," saying that men should not try to know too much about their wives' activities—"it iz not good for a man to bee tow kiuriowz, and to serve tow naroly, to know the trewth of hiz wyvz folly that way"—so they could avoid being not only a cuckold but also a wittol. If they suspected adultery, and it was not publicly known, Whythorne advised men to "per-swad her and to kownsell her to a better lyf."[41] While there is no evidence of the kinds of formal restrictions Whythorne suggested, the Royalist mockery of the Earl of Essex during the civil war (mockery exacerbated by his second wife's infidelity) shows that being a cuckold undermined male leadership.[42]

Whythorne assumed that men could be cuckolds not only if their wives were unfaithful but also if they *expected* their wives to be unfaithful. In this he was not unusual. *Tarlton's Newes out of Purgatorie*, a book of jests "fit for gentlemen to laugh at an houre," by "Robin Goodfellow," tells stories of various men's afterlives. "A Tale of Three Cuckolds" offers an anatomy of cuckoldry. The highest ranked in purgatory was the wittol, the man who knew and accepted that his wife was unfaithful, but loved her so much that he did nothing. His emblem was a ram, with two large horns. Next was the man who trusted his wife and was unaware of her many betrayals. His emblem was a goat, as the horns were behind, and he couldn't see them. The final cuckold in *Tarl-ton's* catalog was the man whose wife was beautiful and honest; because of her beauty, he did not trust her and assumed she was unfaithful if she so much as looked at some-one else. His emblem was an ass: he thought the long ears were horns, but they were just ears.[43] This last provides a context for the final scene in Ben Jonson's *Volpone,* when Corvino is sentenced to be rowed through the canals of Venice, "wearing a cap with fair long ass's ears / Instead of horns."[44] Thus, paying attention to gender and inversion provides a link between political responses to a nobleman, shaming rituals, and literary culture.

There were many forms of shaming associated with cuckoldry in the period; we know about them because they are referred to in legal suits of various kinds: they mat-tered. Sometimes there is the simple use of the horns, the symbol of the cuckold: in 1591, when parishioners at Westwick, Norfolk, decorated the church at Midsummer,

41. Thomas Whythorne, *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne,* ed. James M. Osborn (Oxford, 1961), 26.

42. Bellany, *Politics of Court Scandal,* 271–72.

43. Robin Goodfellow, *Tarltons Newes out of Purgatorie: Onely such as iest as his jigge, fit for gentle-men to laught at an houre, etc,* (London, 1590; STC 23685), 21–24. For the role of credit, see Amussen, *Ordered Society,* 152–55; Alexandra Shepard, "Manhood, Credit and Patriarchy in Early Modern Eng-land," *Past and Present* 167 (2000): 75–106; for an economic focus, see Craig Muldrew, "Interpreting the Market: The Ethics of Credit and Community Relations in Early Modern England," *Social History* 18, no. 2 (1993): 163–83.

44. Ben Jonson, *Volpone,* 5.12.137–38.

George Elmer used two branches, "the one bowed one way, the other another way," at the seat belonging to Joan Holmes and her husband, to create a set of horns.[45] More aggressively, in the late 1580s, Richard Lamberd of Helions Bumpstead, Essex, placed horns in the chancel of the church, thus defaming the minister.[46] The horns were not always left to speak for themselves: in the midst of a conflict over church seats and other issues in Sithney, Cornwall, the minister William Robinson brought "a great and huge pair of goat hornes," throwing them against Edward Fosse's hall window and then "bragging what he had done."[47] And, of course, the horns themselves could just be referenced, as they were when Alice Phesey of London told William Dynes that "thy hornes are so great that thow canst scarce get in at thine own doores, take heede thou dost not breake a hole with thy hornes through thy neighbours wall."[48]

If the horn jokes are familiar, the London landmark Cuckold's Point, or Cuckold's Haven, is less so. On the Surrey side of the river, just east of the City, there was a pole topped with horns, signifying the ubiquity, if not inevitability, of cuckoldry: John Taylor, the Water Poet, notes that all men "Unto that tree are plaintiffs or defendants." This sense that being a cuckold was the inevitable consequence of marriage was common: as the foresters sing in *As You Like It,*

> Take thou no scorn to wear the horn;
> It was a crest ere thou wast born:
> Thy father's father wore it,
> And thy father bore it:
> The horn, the horn, the lusty horn
> Is not a thing to laugh to scorn.[49]

If being a cuckold was inevitable, why was it a source of shame? At least one reason is the pervasive analogy between the family and the state. Just as the king was expected to govern the state, so a husband should control his wife. Sir Anthony Weldon blamed the Overbury affair not on Francis Howard but on her second husband, Somerset, and the corruption of his relationship with the king: having "long wallowed in his Master's Bounty, and the Treasures of this Kingdome, he fell the foulest that ever Man did, upon the Rocks of Dishonor, Adultery, and Murder."[50] However difficult it was to control your household, good management of the household was critical to

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45. DN/DEP/26, Holmes con Elmar, fol. 315v, Norfolk Record Office, Norwich.

46. F. G. Emmisson, *Elizabethan Life: Morals and the Church Courts* (Chelmsford, U.K., 1973), 127.

47. TNA, STAC 8/140/29, Complaint of Edward Fosse, Yeoman.

48. Laura Gowing, "Gender and Language of Insult in Early Modern London," *History Workshop Journal* 35 (1993): 1–21 at 17.

49. William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, 4.2.13–18. For cuckolds, see also Claire McEachern, "Why Do Cuckolds Have Horns?," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 71, no. 4 (2008): 607–31; Douglas Bruster, "The Horn of Plenty: Cuckoldry and Capital in the Drama of the Age of Shakespeare," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 30 (1990): 195–216; and Katherine Maus, "Horns of Dilemma: Jealousy, Gender and Spectatorship in English Renaissance Drama," *ELH* 54, no. 3 (1987): 561–83.

50. Anthony Weldon, *A Cat May Look Upon a King* (London, 1652), 52.

good order, and households were crucial to the development of state apparatus: good management of the household was a key responsibility of men. It is not surprising that riots against forest enclosure repeatedly referred to skimmingtons, linking the disruption of the local economic order to the disruptions of the gender order. In the 1620s and 1630s, forest riots in the West Country evoked skimmington in multiple ways, including using the moniker "Lady Skimmington" for a trio of men who led the riots in Braydon Forest.[51]

Cynthia Herrup has reminded us that "Kingship and gender were both sites of considerable anxiety in early modern English society. Both reflected the belief that the 'natural' hierarchy . . . was necessary to ensure good order; both reflected as well the fear that such hierarchies were extremely fragile. . . . Disorder in either sphere was understood to have dire consequences—tyranny, chaos, even enslavement."[52] Observers needed to look no further than the household of James I for an example of the failure to govern the family well. James agreed with the usual expectations: in *Basilikon Doron*, he had argued for an authoritarian if loving relationship between husband and wife: husbands should "cherish her [your wife] as your helper . . . please her in all things reasonable." At the same time, the husband's superiority was unquestioned—he should "rule her as your pupil," for it "is your office to command, and hers to obey." All this should happen "with such sweet harmonie as shee should be as ready to obey, as you to command." But Anne of Denmark never provided the unquestioning obedience that James described. In the late 1590s, she had converted to Catholicism, so she was not a member of either national church that James headed. After about 1607, they lived primarily apart. She was more warlike than he and raised their son Henry to repudiate his father's pacific values. The masques she sponsored at court were often subtly subversive, emphasizing not female subordination but the way in which the queen's power complemented the king's. In the words of Michael Young, the relationship of James and Anne was "a surprising inversion of gender roles."[53]

James's relationship with Anne was not the *cause* of his political difficulties, but it was not unconnected to them. In traditional political terms, James faced structural problems, especially the inadequacy of revenue, which he made worse rather than better; he also made policy choices, particularly in religion and foreign policy, that put him at odds with a significant minority of the gentry.[54] But he was also judged as a patriarch, and while he was not a cuckold, he was not successful at governing his own

51. Underdown, *Revel, Riot, and Rebellion,* 106–12.

52. Cynthia Herrup, "The King's Two Genders," *Journal of British Studies* 45, no. 3 (2006): 493–510, esp. 496–97.

53. Michael Young, "Queen Anna Bites Back: Protest, Effeminacy and Manliness at the Jacobean Court," in *Gender, Power and Privilege in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Jessica Munns and Penny Richards (Harlow, U.K., and London, 2003), 108–22, esp. 118; Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, "Enacting Opposition: Queen Anne and the Subversions of Masquing," *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge, 1993), 15–43: the passage from the *Basilikon Doron* is quoted on p. 16; Leeds Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," in *The Mental World of the Stuart Court*, ed. Linda Levy Peck (Cambridge, 1991), 191–208.

54. The extent of disagreement with James's foreign policy is evident in the widespread celebration of the failure of the Spanish Match: Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution*, esp. 6–12; David Cressy, *Bonfires*

household. Leaving aside questions of his sexuality, he failed to govern his wife, who challenged his authority in symbolic and practical ways; his son and heir allied with his favorite against him; and he entrusted far too much power to upstart favorites. These political failures were also failures of patriarchal leadership. This can be summed up by Thomas Scott's assertion that "There was in England, a King Elizabeth, there is now a Queene James."[55]

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This discussion has taken us far from Revisionism. But it has not taken us far from politics. If gender is, as Joan Scott has argued, "a primary way of signifying power," then discussions of politics are frequently about gender.[56] What is historically specific is how gender is inscribed in politics. The idea of the world turned upside down depends on the idea of the world turned right side up. The early modern conception of order creates a very particular set of gendered expectations. Those expectations meant that both disorderly women and failed patriarchs were problems not just personally, but politically. We can trace these patterns in social practice in English communities, in print culture and theater, and in politics.

Any account of politics in the period leading up to 1640 must have room for many things. The policies and practices of the king are important: the king set the tone and framed the discussion, whether it was through his imposition of a new prayer book on Scotland or his collection of ship money. It must include the jockeying between courtiers who surrounded the king, and the opinions and actions of the gentry—most visible in Parliament, but also showing in their response to extra-parliamentary developments. These are the stuff of traditional political history, and these were the primary focus of Revisionist scholarship. Recent research has expanded the political in multiple ways. It has examined how the performance of authority—Elizabeth's progresses and the prescribed portraits of her, and the Stuart masques—links politics and theater.[57] It has also illuminated the circulation of news, which created a common store of information while expanding the political nation.[58] But the political tensions of the seven-

and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England (London, 1989), 76–77.

55. Thomas Scott, "Meditations," ca. 1626–27, U951/Z17, fol. 78, Kent Library and History Centre, Maidstone: I am grateful to Thomas Cogswell for this reference. This is Thomas Scott of Canterbury, not Thomas Scott the pamphleteer.

56. Scott, "Gender, a Useful Category of Historical Analysis," American Historical Review 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053–75, esp. 1067.

57. The literature on these subjects from both historical and literary perspectives is vast: for instance, The Progresses, Pageants and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I, ed. Jayne Elisabeth Archer, Elizabeth Goldring, and Sarah Knight (Oxford, 2007); Nanette Salomon, "Positioning Women in Visual Convention: The Case of Elizabeth I," in Attending to Women in Early Modern England, ed. Travitsky and Seeff, 64–95; Martin Butler, The Stuart Court Masque and Political Culture (Cambridge, 2008).

58. Cogswell, "Underground Verse"; Thomas Cogswell, "'Published by Authoritie': Newsbooks and the Duke of Buckingham's Expedition to the Ile de Ré," Huntington Library Quarterly 67, no. 1

teenth century were also experienced by men and women who were concerned about the social tensions that resulted from population growth and inflation, and the ways in which local notables responded to them. Those people heard and sang ballads, read chapbooks, and went to the theater. By rejecting broad interpretive models, the Revisionists made it more difficult to understand why these things matter. As a result, the work of social historians has been less fully integrated into the political narrative, but it clearly is vital: riots and popular unrest demonstrate popular political attitudes.[59]

An adequate political history must pay attention not only to social and cultural history but also to gender: to the ways in which gender was expected to uphold the social and political order and the anxiety when it failed to do so; to the conflicts in local communities around gender and the reactions they generate. These conflicts become models for political action, as well as frameworks for political debate and criticism. When a political account includes all these things, it incorporates all the dimensions of life in the seventeenth century. It allows us to tell an exciting story that is relevant to all historians of early modern Britain. Revisionism's failure to tell such a story rendered it—but not the politics it examined—irrelevant.

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(2004): 1–25; Richard Cust, "News and Politics in Early Seventeenth Century England," *Past and Present* 112 (1986): 60–90.

59. Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion*; John Walter has done more on this subject than anyone else; his works include "Politicising the Popular? The 'tradition of riot' and Popular Political Culture in the English Revolution," in *The English Revolution, c. 1590–1720: Politics, Religion and Communities*, ed. Nicholas Tyacke (Manchester, 2007), 95–110; *Understanding Popular Violence*; and "A 'rising of the people'? The Oxfordshire Rising of 1596," *Past and Present* 107 (1985): 90–143. See also Steve Hindle, "Imagining Insurrection in Seventeenth Century England: Representations of the Midland Rising of 1607," *History Workshop Journal* 66 (2008): 21–61.