CUCKOLDS OR COLONISTS:

EARLY-MODERN ENGLISH MASCULINITY AND CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

by

JEFFREY CHISNELL JONES

(Under the Direction of Jennifer L. Palmer)

ABSTRACT

This thesis traces the evolution and development of English masculinity and manhood in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in order to elucidate the construction of an Early Modern English identity and sense of nationhood. Because of political and social instability wrought by the English Reformation, crises in dynastic succession, and successive attempts at constructing a unique nationhood, English masculinity experienced a general crisis in the seventeenth century with recurring fears of emasculation and cuckoldry. This thesis surveys an archive of popular print culture and published sources which captured and contoured these debates. It argues that a discourse of cultural imperialism developed in the seventeenth century that overcame this masculinity crisis.

INDEX WORDS: Early Modern England, British Atlantic, Gender and Sexuality, Popular Print Culture, Imperialism, Cultural History

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JEFFREY CHISNELL JONES

B.A., Georgia College and State University, 2016

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2019

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JEFFREY CHISNELL JONES

Major Professor: Jennifer L. Palmer

Committee: Benjamin G. Ehlers
Jan N. Pendergrass

Electronic Version Approved:

Suzanne Barbour
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
May 2019

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated with love and everlasting affection to my grandparents,

Frank and Marie Castellana & Fred and Evelyn Jones.

Acknowledgements

This thesis marks the culmination of two years' worth of writing, reading, and research. Far more important than any of that are the countless number of human interactions I have had throughout my time at the University of Georgia. In my mind, the basement floor of LeConte Hall will always be a beautiful, loud, hectic, hilarious, and loving place filled with friends, both fellow graduate students and our distinguished faculty. I can think of no other place that more resembles an intellectual Arcadia where academic debates rage in front of the vending machine just outside of my office door and someone is always willing to suggest a book or article of interest or listen to my newest rambling. I owe a great deal of thanks to all these dear friends who made this experience truly fun and worthwhile.

I had the privilege of studying under a wonderful array of faculty in the Department of History as well as the Departments of Romance Languages and Religion. Each of my professors deserves credit for constantly challenging my thoughts and assumptions and introducing me to new constellations of ideas. In particular, I must thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Jennifer Palmer, who, from our first meeting in March 2017, has always offered immensely helpful advice and reassurances at every stage of this process. Dr. Palmer consistently strove beyond the expected call of an advisor and without her support this project would not have been possible. Dr. Ben Ehlers and Dr. Jan Pendergrass each taught two of my favorite classes during my M.A. studies (and both in the same semester, lucky me!) and have provided invaluable advice and suggestions throughout the long process of classwork and thesis drafting.

The University of California Santa Barbara's English Broadside Ballad Archive, the British Library, and the Society of Antiquaries of London provided me with the corpus of primary sources upon which this project sits. I must acknowledge the generous financial support of the Gregory Family whose endowment in the Department of History allowed me to finance a research trip to London in the summer of 2018.

Finally, I must thank the whole of family for their tireless support and interest in my studies. In particular, my parents, Sammy Jones, Sr. and Joanna Jones, have never once questioned my desire to pursue an undergraduate or graduate degree in history. Whenever I doubt the viability of my decisions, they do not hesitate to point out the wonderful opportunities that I have been gifted and that I should appreciate them for their full worth. My older brothers, Sammy Jones, Jr. and Joseph Jones, have always offered genuine interest in my work and have always had concern for my progress.

This thesis is something of which I am immensely proud, but much more importantly than that, I am so thankful for the lifelong friendships and memories that its production has forged.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Introduction: "My Cuckold at home all the reckoning shall pay"

"There was a stout Seaman / as I understand, / That lately came Sayling / into fair England, / And for to be merry / it was his intent / And now you shall hear / he has cause to repent."[1]

Early Modern English discourses on sexuality were performed in a decidedly public environment combining intimate concerns with national and imperial rhetoric. This discourse was portrayed most notably in popular print culture whose forms both reflected and refracted a social history of Early Modern life. For instance, the lamentations of a stout Seaman as told through a 1686 broadside ballad, "The Seaman's Folly," would not have transpired in a private, intimate drama away from peering eyes and wagging tongues but in the bustle of a London coffee shop or tavern. Just as the literary Seaman and "His Mess-Mates and he / did together agree / To go to the Tavern / some pastime to see," actual men and women in England's burgeoning imperial metropole gathered in public to discuss sex, marriage, adultery, impotence, and cuckoldry.[2] It was in the midst of this revelry that the Seaman met his "lass…that so pleased his mind" and absconded to an assignation where they spent "some howrs in pleasure." Enraptured in the tryst's afterglow and fortified by his drink, the Seaman promised to save this maid from a spinster's life and proposed marriage. This Englishman who had braved "all the Seas / the Rocks & the storms" willingly abandoned this adventurer's life to a promise of married bliss. Wasting no time, the couple married as quickly as possible but conjugal bliss soon

[1] Joseph Martin, "The SEAMANs Folly / In Marrying One so quickly; and for which he has / Cause to Repent at leisure," published c. 1686 in London and Printed for P. Brooksby, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive* R228543.
[2] Ibid.

disappeared as the Seaman found his new wife had "made him a Cuckold / the very next day." His pride slighted and manhood endangered, the Seaman contrived a cunning plan to disguise himself in the tavern and seduce his wife. The Seaman's emboldened wife proudly beckoned her incognito seducer to "come lets drink a health / without any delay / My Cuckold at home / all the reckoning shall pay." Hearing his wife boast of her appetite, the Seaman fled the tavern and jumped on the next ship bound to sea "taking his leave / he bid England adieu / Since one has proov'd false / he did think had been true."

Early modern popular print culture like pamphlets, broadsides, manuals, and books enabled a hybridization of both printed text and oral performance which challenged power structures around gender and sexuality. The most notable among this array were broadside ballads containing poetic narratives set to popular songs with accompanying woodcut illustrations. Performances like "The Seaman's Folly" serve as examples of this print culture that would adorn a tavern's walls and demonstrate the duality of public performances around clearly intimate discourses. In this seeming maelstrom of dangers and opportunities, popular print culture found a ready-made market to extol and critique gendered norms, sexuality, and relationships. The traditional ballads of the middle ages had generally dealt with mythical and lyrical topics designed to evoke a sense of pastoral placidity, while newly-developed broadsides concentrated on the more bawdry and boisterous events of daily life.[3] Sixteenth and seventeenth-century broadsides were published to not merely record daily events, like the later developed newspaper, but to provide judgements, advice, and warnings to a mass audience based around the most high-profile news of the day.

[3] Alan Bold, *The Ballad*, The Critical Idiom Reissued (New York: Routledge, 1979), 4-5.

Analyzing Early Modern gender and sexuality through this unique cultural discourse illuminates performative dualities that were at once both reality and fiction, truth and illusion. This print archive provides a remarkable insight into aspects of daily life and comments on sensational political and foreign events. As possible as it is to capture popular emotion from over four centuries ago, surviving broadsheets illuminate at least the penumbra of thought and feeling. By comparing broadsides in relation to other items of print culture such as legal guidebooks or marriage advice pamphlets, it is possible to analyze a spectrum of viewpoints on topics of gender and sexuality by comparing legal perspectives with social opinions and mores. The different components of this print culture developed organically and socially and so introducing further varieties of perspective helps to complicate and mature this analysis.

Broadside publishers specifically targeted a mass audience of both men and women who primarily listened to their news rather than read it.[4] This characteristic is crucial to employing broadsides as a corpus for historical analysis as publishers identified a market wider and more diverse than any previous form of manuscript or early incunabula. Broadside publishers, sensing their product's popularity and explosive growth, increasingly targeted both men and women situated in a diverse and cosmopolitan London market. Although male literacy outstripped female levels significantly during this period, research points towards a more equitable level in "the urban upper classes [while] lowest among the rural peasantry."[5] Crucially, as this urban environment was the primary center of production for broadsides, feminine subject material was as equally profitable as male-centered compositions. The archives contain a vast array of

[4] Jenni Hyde, *Singing the News: Ballads in Mid-Tudor England* (New York: Routledge, 2018).
[5] Merry E. Weisner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, Third Edition, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 148.

material detailing feminine topics concerning both women in their individual lives and their relationships with men. Topics concerning the relationship between the sexes, and their influence on social order, were deeply popular in both England's cities as well as later in its colonial settlements. Constructions of an English masculine identity were made in parallel with developing ideals of English femininity and populate hundreds of publications.

Broadsides developed as an urban and mass-marketable product by the mid sixteenth century and an estimated four million ballad-sheets had been printed by 1600.[6] Production was mainly concentrated within London's urban center with distribution taking place throughout other major cities. Eric Nebeker, who has mapped the geographic location of production and distribution during the Early Modern period, argues that commercial interests "affected [not just] what ballad sellers sold, but also where they sold it."[7] There were routine attempts by the state to regulate and censor the broadsides, but scholars generally agree this was largely fruitless with unlicensed publications dwarfing approved government stock five-to-one by the 1630s.[8] Comparatively, theater censorship was relatively more successful as playhouses were an easier public space for the authorities to regulate than any number of public or private locales in which broadsides could be distributed.[9] The broadside's persistent popularity as a form of communication and culture against state-sponsored censorship helps to justify its usefulness as a body of historical literature and demonstrates its continuing significance among the English population throughout the Early Modern era.

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[6] Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 226.
[7] Eric Nebeker, "Geography of the London Ballad Trade, 1500-1700," *University of California Santa Barbara Early English Broadside Archive*, http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/balladprintersite/lbp_discussion.html
[8] Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, 226.
[9] Barbara Fuchs, *The Poetics of Piracy: Emulating Spain in English Literature* (Philidelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 28.

Early Modern print culture did not exist only as a printed record of events of the day but was produced as a culturally organic discourse depending on oral performances and visual stimulation.[10] The introduction of the moveable-type printing press in the early part of the sixteenth century to a mass market provoked a fundamental cultural transformation as masses of pamphlets, newspapers, broadsides, plays, sermons, and books could be produced both rapidly and cheaply, and, crucially, in the English vernacular. The seventeenth century marked the broadside's heyday, with the medium becoming nearly ubiquitous to any of London's social hubs from ale and coffee houses to workplaces.[11] This active culture of performance was dependent on a largely illiterate audience congregating in public spaces and communing over popular music and imagery caught in a perpetual dance constructing and deconstructing gendered illusions. By 1600, perhaps one in four men were functionally literate and by the end of that century, this had risen to just over two in five. Women's literacy stood significantly further behind at less than one in ten and rose to less than a quarter by 1700.[12] This print culture was then dependent on performers able to read a broadside and an audience lively interacting and signing along.[13] As literacy levels grew gradually towards the end of the seventeenth century, this cultural phenomenon which was paradoxically fed by a desire to perform and ritualize items to an audience which could not be understand them, began to break down. New print forms, and in

[10] My work builds on Walter J. Ong's studies of the transition of European oral culture to a literary culture; see *Orality and Literacy* (New York: Routledge, 2002). Ong proposes an "inner turn" in the sixteenth century where the transition from manuscript culture to print hardened and solidified constructed identities of both individuals and societies. Ong charts the decline of hearing-orientated communication and the emergence of a sight-orientated culture which associated the printed page with a definition, singular meaning.
[11] Eric Nebeker, "The Heyday of the Broadside Ballad," University of California—Santa Barbara Early English Broadside Archive, https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/heyday-of-the-broadside-ballad
[12] W.B. Stephens, "Literacy in England, Scotland, and Wales, 1500—1900," *History of Education Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (Winter 1990): 555; Early Modern literacy is generally defined as person able to read and sign his or her name.
[13] Gerald Porter, "The English Ballad Singer and Hidden History," *Studia Musicologica* 49, no. 1/2 (2008): 127-142.

particular newspapers, created a different cultural discourse which was less focused on performance and group involvement. Gendered debates did not end at the conclusion of the seventeenth century, but this hybridized method of cultural performance which captured these debates became increasingly marginalized.

Constructions of both masculinity and femininity in Early Modern England were fluid with different components of English society stressing differing attributes but fundamental definitions focused on a desire to prove both an Englishmen's independent and cultured nature. These attributes were not always easily reconcilable with examples ranging from the rugged hypermasculinity and anti-statist nature of pirates ridiculed as barbarians to cultured and emotional court officials labeled effeminate and cuckolds. Men at the English court were intimately connected with a sophisticated, continental culture most clearly embodied in the Spanish whom they attempted to emulate. At the same time, the broader English population actively rebelled against perceived Spanish influences in domestic affairs and any rapprochement (perceived or otherwise) with Madrid. Popular tracts portrayed rugged Englishmen willing to practice piracy on the high seas and prove their manliness by venturing to the Americas.

England's fear of Spain's growing imperial power stoked the fires of resentment and fanned the flames of xenophobia. While persistent threats of subversion against the new Protestant state legitimated many of these concerns, the Anglo-Spanish relationship was consistently ambivalent well into the 1600s. These competing masculinities were multifaceted and shifted throughout the Early Modern era with no definitive resolution by the end of the seventeenth century. This demonstrates an active crisis in defining English masculinity during the Early Modern era as the Spanish model which was the basis of the English imitation became

increasingly unacceptable to growing imperial discourses while other masculine alternatives were condemned as either feminine or barbarous.[14]

This thesis build upon the work of scholars from both the social and cultural turns by tracing intimate and public relationships as equal parts of a gendered debates which intersected every strata of English society and thought. By studying the cultural performances captured in Early Modern print culture, this thesis gender and sexuality as inherently performative.[15] Historians of both the English metropole and colonial periphery increasingly have approached gender and sexuality as a fundamental component in understanding nascent imperial structures and thought. Whether outwardly, or furtively through their footnotes, scholars began to critically reappraise gender and sexuality not simply as a means within itself but as a way to understand seventeenth-century views of power and especially imperial discourses. In so doing, scholars working within the field generally begin with Foucault's definition of sexuality as "an especially dense transfer point for relations of power: between men and women, young people and old people, parents and offspring, teachers and students, priests and laity, an administration and a population."[16] Analyzing gender and sexuality in this fashion does not produce a monolithic structure which limits the scholarship to specific areas most generally cosigned as "feminine" or "masculine." This approach rather produces a launch pad which enables scholars to conduct a

[14] For an overview of different and competing varieties of Early Modern masculinities see Mark Breitenberg's *Anxious Masculinities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Breitenberg argues that "masculinity is inherently anxious" as anxiety is both "a negative effect that leads us to patriarchy's own internal discord, but is also an instrument (once properly contained, appropriated or returned) of its perpetuation." Additionally, see contribtions on "violent masculinities" in Jennifer Feather and Catherine E. Thomas's edited work *Violent Masculinities: Male Aggression in Early Modern Texts and Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2013).

[15] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990).

[16] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, translated by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 103.

comprehensive analysis of imperial societies by employing the most multi-faceted and useful technology of power.

The implicitly wide scope of this field, dealing with English encounters with European empires and a developing English Atlantic, presents difficulties in arriving at a generalized theory which defines a single approach to imperialism as a gendered construct. Consequently, the general goal for most scholars has been to develop a common terminology to describe not a single phenomenon but a spectrum of gendered thought which evolved throughout the seventeenth century in differing but connected forms. Much as with Foucault's own theory of sexuality, scholars are not in the main searching for "a discourse on sex [but rather] a multiplicity of discourses produced by a whole series of mechanisms operating in different institutions."[17] This thesis takes this approach further by following cultural discourses which developed in the English Early Modern era and forged a new imperial identity focusing around questions of masculinity and femininity. This developing imperial identity is illuminated through flashpoints of deep conflict between the English population at large and the English state with both cultivating competing and contradictory visions of gender, sexuality, nation, and empire.

While aspects of femininity, female relationships, and indeed defining the seventeenth-century female itself have been actively studied, there has been a dearth of scholarship looking to critically reevaluate and challenge Early Modern masculine identities.[18] This thesis traces masculinity as both a fiction and a reality: something created by social relationships and marketed in print, but equally understood as a potent and potentially explosive identity. At the

[17] Ibid., 33.
[18] Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch, and Power in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003); Gowing has argued that previous scholarship has been too confined within our modern language of biological duality to appropriately characterize Early Modern gender and sexual norms, or the lack thereof, in England.

inception of the seventeenth century, masculine and feminine roles and identities were not easily bifurcated but rather slid along an unpredictable spectrum. Masculinities from the mid-sixteenth century until the end of the seventeenth century run the gambit from a Protestant hero vanquishing the whorish personification of Rome, to an erudite, effete courtier cultivating a distinctly continental identity, to "cuckolds by consent" emasculated by their wives and mistresses, and daring adventurers crossing the Atlantic in order to secure England's glory and prove their manhood. These masculinities developed in concert with divergent femininities which are classified in this thesis as including virtuous, godly women, sexually voracious schemers, and the crone or nag.

The social upheaval produced by the English Reformation and a series of queens regnant in the latter half of the sixteenth century, generated a general crisis in English masculinity. This crisis permeated through all sections of English society from the court down to millers' marriages and undulated along the convulsions of the seventeenth century. A nascent religious identity prompted the English to embark on a mission of nation building which was fundamentally flawed through the lack of consensus about what it meant to be an Englishman. This compound identity might seem self-evident to a modern observer, but the English grappled with defining not only who could be English in their new world order but what qualities defined a man and separated him from the indolence and impotence they sought to escape. In other words, an anatomical male could not lay unrestricted claim to manhood and neither could a person merely living in the Kingdom of England claim to be properly English.

Many broadside authors clearly write with the intention of cultivating celebrity and attention upon their English homecoming. Initial stories of heroism, harrowing adventures, and

escapades were certainly formulated by a relatively elite grouping of intrepid travelers ranging from Raleigh, Drake, and a score of other contemporary celebrities but were brought to life and greater cultural importance through the interest the consumer masses of English society placed in them. Their deeds and mystique produced a form of instant celebrity. Ironically, a culture defined by what it found and captured across the sea was given life by a people who would have likely not sailed a day in their lives. Tales of heroic gentlemen securing the queen's treasure or shipwrecked sailors navigating perilous and far-off lands took up a life all their own among a populace thirsty for news and adventure. By reading print culture through a trans-Atlantic perspective, concerns dealing with both high politics and intimate relationships are given a comparatively equal focus across the oceanic divide. Publications ranging from travel journals to broadside ballads comment on issues of deep political importance from trade, piracy, and war, to intensely personal matters of infidelity and illegitimacy. Many of these publications survey these themes with equal importance allocated to both monarchical alliances and marital bliss. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the personal was thus always political and vice versa. Rarified political debates were constructed with the same language and imagery used in the bawdiest tavern brawl. Debates over gender and sexuality travelled vertically through the social strata and produced a unified national identity.

This thesis traces the evolution and development of English masculinity and manhood throughout the Early Modern era in order to elucidate the construction of an early English identity and sense of nationhood. Section One delimits the variety of personas created in the wake of the English reformation, and, in particular, new approaches to sexual relationships and marriage. Section Two builds upon those religious identities to showcase the formulation of an

English national identity which had to carve out its primacy within the state for its survival. Section Three illustrates that a distinctly masculine imperialism developed as a solution to these crises of faith, nation, and the self by showcasing the ability of an imperial venture (or adventure) to hone manhood. This imperial identity was strictly gendered and gender-segregated to allow men the chance to help construct England's colonial vision and to satisfy their own yearning to secure their manhood.

1. "Against stragling Sotts": Remaking Men

"'Tis not 'gainst Marriage that our Passions Swell, / We ever thought it just and Hon'rable. / But against stragling Sotts that we appear, / Who hate their Beds, because their Wives are there. / Who all the day time at the Ale-House lye, / And make no Night, to shun their Company."[19]

Debates over marriage and sexuality formed a constant backdrop to the cultural and political debates of Early Modern England. Much popular interest in this period has focused on the notorious, and often calamitous, marital alliances and scandals produced by English monarchs. From Henry VIII's famous "great matter" in pursuing an annulment against his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and his five succeeding marriages, to Elizabeth I's calculated political negotiations surrounding her virginity, or James I's reorientation of English foreign policy in pursuit of Spanish marital alliances, the scandals of the royal bedchambers remain highly entertaining material for modern popular adaptations and scholarship. The development of a new Protestant orthodoxy and the pressures from the political battles surrounding three queens, the Catholic Mary I, her Protestant half-sister Elizabeth I, and their Catholic cousin Mary, Queen of Scots, metastasized over the second half of the sixteenth century and provided the first link in the chain for a crisis in masculinity.

Elizabeth's gender, and disagreements on the basic character of Protestant manhood, confounded attempts to create an easy distinction between English Protestantism and Catholicism based on sexuality. The English could not lambast the pope and Rome through feminine caricatures if their queen was also feminine, or, more precisely, they could not employ

[19] *The Womens Complaint Against their Bad Husbands, Or the good Fellows Anotamized by the Wives*, Printed for T.M., London, 1676, The British Library 8415.e.30.

the same general definition of femininity. Likewise, Englishmen could not wholly adopt an aggressive, muscular form of masculinity if they wished to show their cultural and moral superiority as contrary to Rome's purported corruption and lasciviousness. If these distinctions were confined to simply creating an English femininity and masculinity then the conundrum would not seem so insurmountable. However, within those broad categories a litany of different identities emerged trying to be the most English and the most Protestant. A patriarchal system broke down around these differences and was unable to effectively reassert its authority until the dying days of the seventeenth century.

Examining the enormous amount of print culture regarding Early Modern marriages and sexual relationships illustrates the potency of these issues and the anxieties which the population held in the Early Modern period.[20] A central component of this analysis concentrates on the production of popular print literature for both men and women concerning a spectrum of topics examining and detailing married life. These sources vary from marriage guidebooks, to legal opinions, and broadside ballads, all of which targeted a growing market among both men and women in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This print culture concentrated on the definition, boundaries, responsibilities, and consequences of marriage. Examining this variety of material illustrates the pervasive impact of the masculinity crisis in everyday life but also shows a distinct variance in approaches between different types of publications.

Legal guidebooks and marriage advice manuals depicted gender roles and sexuality in fairly traditional forms as black-letter law. Many scholars have concentrated on these legal publications in studying the Early Modern era, but by doing so they ignore or fail to fully capture

[20] The English Broadside Ballad Archive catalogues 1,700 holdings concerning "love," 1,194 concerning "marriage," and 1,097 concerning "sex/sexuality" between the years 1550 and 1700.

the gender and sexual fluidity and discourse which runs through broadsides and other quotidian examples.[21] Though not completely frozen out of Early Modern family law, seventeenth-century women were certainly bound by a tightly prescribed set of legal impediments which tilted court action consistently in favor of the concerned male party. Unlike much of Europe, England's legal system did not adopt aspects of Roman law and developed its common law system with a wife "subsumed within the legal identity of her husband."[22] Merry Wiesner-Hanks writes that English magistrates began to develop some allowances for married women in recognition that presupposed marital dependence did not always equate to economic realities.[23] *The Lawes Resolutions of Womens Rights*, first published in 1632 by Thomas Edgar, presents a compendium of common legal complaints suffered by women in their daily lives and what recourse, if any, they could seek.[24] Marriage is defined as "a continuation of man and woman, containing an inseparable connection, and union of life."[25]

Edgar's volume catalogues common misconceptions and old wives' tales which he says female clients would frequently present to their counsel and attempts to swat away mischaracterizations of marital law. Advising that the while the "Civil Law hath many causes of Divorce...by Divine and Common law, the only sufficient cause is adultery and fornication" which are proof of a husband's soul being both religiously and legally irredeemable.[26] Despite obvious and vociferous public interest and opinion on the matter, Edgar finds that impotence, or

[21] See Gowing, *Common Bodies*, for instance, or Heidi Brayman Hackel and Catherine E. Kelly's *Reading Women: Literacy, Authorship, and Culture in the Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).
[22] Wiesner-Hanks, 44.
[23] Ibid., 45.
[24] Thomas Edgar, *The Lawes Resolutions of Womens Rights: or, The Lawes Provisions for Woemen*, London, 1632, Hargarett Rare Books & Manuscript Library (LHD KD734 .L35 2005).
[25] Ibid., 51-52.
[26] Ibid., 64-65.

"disability of procreation," is only a valid cause for divorce if the impediment was known to exist before the marriage had been legally contracted. Otherwise, if the "impediment" only presented itself after the marriage had been officiated and consummated, the wife would be "compelled to beare the discommodity...as well as any other ill fortune."[27] If we read Edgar's advice in conjunction with contemporary broadsides, it is obvious that couples did not simply accept this approach to impotency. Couples were constantly attempting to undermine and fight against being caught or cuckolded into marriages which brought them no pleasure. Edgar's advice that the only way to ensure a person was not trapped in an impotent marriage was to test out the arrangement before the wedding showcases a society which constructed strict barriers around sexual relationships and then completely ignored them in practice.

In contrast, an early iteration of English femininity within broadsides presented women as pure and virginal who personified the purity of the new Protestant faith. Steven Peele's 1571 publication, "A proper new balade expressyng the fames, / Concerning a warning to al London dames," extols the threats posed to women of London and the care with which they should preserve their virtue even as their own beauty proves to be thoroughly mortal.[28] Peele addresses the ballad directly to "You London dames" whose "beauties kyndley grace" is renowned the world where no "dearer or fayrer dames" can be found. The lyrics do not merely mention Christendom, or Europe, but insist that London, and therefore English, women are unique against a panoply of other religions and nations the world and nature over. While the audience would assume that English women were reliably pious, the ballad moves their qualities beyond spiritual

[27] Ibid., 66.
[28] Steven Peele, "A proper new balade expressing the fames, / Concerning a warning to al London dames, / To the tune of the blacke Almaine," published in 1571 and imprinted in London, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive*, Huntington Library – Britwell, EBBA ID: 32413.

genuflection into temporal manifestations of their good deeds. At this stage, femininity is presented as a dichotomy as London's dames "doe excell...[in] Vertues lore, and other things more" compared to European Catholics who are impure and corruptible. This rough bifurcation of the feminine became increasingly complicated progressing into the seventeenth century as the masculinity crisis forced the development of a broader spectrum to understand both men and women than simply positive or negative caricatures.

Evidence of this increasing complexity emerges in Peele's work as he introduces the possibility of corruption and the stark reality of sexual catastrophe. Just as the dames seem ensconced in their lifestyle, Peele's poetry takes an abrupt turn and warns that death will, like the frost to flowers, "come and nip the top / And lop them and crop them, not one to be seene." Death and the judgement of the soul are constant companions throughout the remaining verse as Peele warns that just as beauty came quickly and effortlessly, so will death "with his breath comes stealing neare." It was vital for women to preserve their sexual virtue as while their own looks would begin to decay with age, their soul would be judged before God when that "dreadful day approcheth nye." In preparation for the rapture, Peele advised a certain degree of charity and "pitie on the poor / With some parte of your store." Young women were warned that charity was an indelible part of their virtue and should comport themselves in a Godly manner. Here Peele interposes an additional dichotomy of sex and death, and, by implication, the final judgement of England and English souls before God. Proving the chastity and purity of Englishmen and women was doubly vital for an individual's salvation as well as that of the country at large.

The counterpoint to English femininity as tender and pure shows Englishwomen as licentious, greedy creatures constantly wishing to emasculate their husbands. The Reformation

witnessed the shuttering of brothels throughout first Protestant and later Catholic Europe with religious leaders adopting ever-more negative views of prostitutes.[29] This movement promoted the developed of the generalized term "whoredom" as descriptive of the social threat posed by sexually corrupted women.[30] The emergence of this additional discourse moves the broadsides into a new direction which capitalizes on these fears and revels in the discord they produce. Llewellyn Morgan's humorous "A pleasant new Ballad, both merry and witty, / That she weth the humours, of the wives in the City" depicts a call-and-response dialogue between a frustrated "Husband" and recalcitrant "Wife."[31] Morgan's Wife is the essential and personified opponent of Peele's London Dames: she represents the fall of English women which Peele so strenuously campaigned against. When beckoned by her Husband, the Wife condemns him as a "blockheaded Clowne" and not only would she never sit by him but he would never be allowed to even "touch the worst hem of [her] / Gowne." The Wife laments that her "neighbors exceed [her] in dressings and / Lace" leading to her own disgrace. The forewarned impermanence and transitory nature of beauty and possessions has not made an impact on the Wife as she demands "a silke Gowne, a Maske and a / Fanne" while the Husband offers her only a kiss. The Husband beseeches the Wife that he will provide her with her desires with "horses and Coach, and a man / To drive for [her] pleasure." The Wife avers that she will certainly ride in a horse and coach and "never walke abroad without [her] man" who "shall be handsome to, with a good face" unlike her "Clowne" of a husband.

[29] Merry E. Weisner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe,* Third Edition, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 121-122.You've already given complete citation for this, so can just say Weisner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, 121-122.
[30] Ibid., 122.
[31] Llewellyn Morgan, "A pleasant new Ballad, both merry and witty, / That she weth the humours, of the wiues in the City.," published c. 1630 and imprinted in London, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive,* Magdalene College - Pepys 1.376-377, EBBA ID: 20174.

This broadside casts true Englishmen as firm and forceful men who expect that their marital and natural rights will be respected. Morgan's second part illustrates the only proper response for an Englishman. The Husband declares himself at the end of his rope with his "Huswife" and will soon teach her to "use [her] tongue better." The Wife begins to crumble before the verbal onslaught wondering what made her husband "grumble so like a / Curmudgeon." The Husband declares that he is not only the head of the household, but his wife's head as well, and she should be "ready at board, or in bed, / To give [him] content" or every pleasure and joy which she has pestered him for will disappear. The Wife protests that all of her remonstrations were merely her "humour and will" and that the Husband should feel credited for having such a headstrong wife. The Husband dismisses such an idea out of turn and scorns those men which might prefer such a high-minded wife. The Wife, reminded of her duties as a woman, crumples before her newly-resolute spouse and pleads for his forgiveness. The Husband beckons his "Wench" to finally come kiss him and to snuff out the candle light and "make thee amends." While the natural and proper order had seemingly been restored, this would prove to be only a façade masking deeper disagreements. The slighted Husband illustrates a direct reference to the Common Law presumption that a woman in subsumed into her husband's legal identity yet women are constantly testing and pushing against those boundaries. These episodes illustrate a chipping away at traditional English patriarchy and attempts to either plug the leaks or open them wider.

Just as femininity evolved into a more complicated and multifaceted idea in the early seventeenth century, masculinity could no longer be easily categorized. Attempts to create a solidified patriarchy around which Englishmen could revolve and repair the masculinity crisis

ran aground against accusations of moral corruption and denigration. *The Contention Between Three Brethren: The Whore-Monger, The Drunkard, And the Dice-Player*, a short book first published in London in 1608, profiles a Father on his death bed surveying his three villainous sons and reflecting on who among them has led the most damnable life.[32] The deceased Father, long suffering, ordains in his will that his sons should present themselves before a court to determine which among them led the most "wicked and vicious" life and leave the one chosen to that dubious honor disinherited.[33] The brothers proceed in turn to declaim and defame their siblings providing little positive argument for their own rectitude. The brothers' rampant lasciviousness, intemperance, and profligate lifestyles personify particularly masculine vices which are damaging the character of Englishmen more generally. At the conclusion of this spectacle, the narrator advises the reader to accept the "teaching of all men…to be careful of themselves, and not to thinke or imagine anything prejudicial or hurtfull to their neighbor."[34] The Brothers' attempts to judge and destroy one another did them no service and only cheapened their own lives. Viewed through a wider lens, these social ills consumed popular concern at the beginning of the seventeenth century and did not present themselves with easy solutions.

The Three Brothers' vices proved to be direct impediments to resolving the masculinity crisis as they displayed a broader cultural neurosis regarding an Englishman's character. For example, the anonymously printed "A Cuckold by Consent," published in the early 1680s, forewarns the fate of a Miller who enticed a Maid into his bed so that she could have her "Grist

[32] *The Contention Between Three Brethren: The Whore-Monger, The Drunkard, And the Dice-Player*, printed in London for Robert Raworth by Henry Gibson, 1608, The British Library C.40.d.33.
[33] Ibid., A1.
[34] Ibid., A1.

Tole-free."[35] The miller believes he has established his dominance over the young woman for "Sweet Soul I prithee be content, / With Maidens silence gives consent." Taking the young Maid home, the Miller instructs his Wife to prepare their guest in the finest room available where he will make haste to visit her. Unwilling to play along to the Miller's lechery, the Maid alerts the Wife of his intent and they design a plot to switch rooms. The Miller, returning from his toil in the black of night, pays no attention to the body occupying his bed and unwittingly sleeps with his wife. Grateful, the Wife thanks the Maid for allowing her the chance to reclaim her own marital rights. Meanwhile, the Maid, wily of the rewards which she can extort from the cuckolded Miller, convinces him that she has fallen pregnant through their illusory assignation. Eventually, the subterfuge is revealed for all to see, leaving the Miller shamed before his fellow men, including a young worker who also visited his wife's bed.

Broadsides like "A Cuckold by Consent" expose the social stigma that cuckoldry exemplified in the seventeenth century but also underlined that failing to resolve the masculinity crisis left England itself liable to emasculation.[36] These broadsides place a degree of agency onto their female characters, with wives reminding husbands of their conjugal rights and mourning the milksop quality of men who bored their wives to tears. The wronged wife of "My Husband has no Courage in Him" nightly prepares her bed "thinking to get some Venus sporting" while her feckless "Husband lyes by [her] a Snorting."[37] Despite her obvious attempts at seduction from tickling her husband to rubbing his shins, the wife fails to produce "any courage in him." Foiled

[35] "A Cuckold by Consent: Or, / The Frollick Miller that intic'd a Maid, / Ar he did think, to lodge in his lawless Bed; / But she deceived him of his intent, / And in her room his Wife to bed she sent," published in c. 1681-84 and printed for I. Wright, I. Clarke, W. Thackeray, and T. Passenger, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive*, Pepys Ballads 4.124

[36] The English Broadside Ballad Archive catalogues 224 holdings employing the term "cuckold" from 1550 to 1700.

[37] "A / Rare new Ballad, / Entituled / My Husband has no Courage / in Him," accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive* Ry.III.a.10(53).

in every attempt, the dejected wife's last hope is public humiliation, "Hoping [their] Neighbours will be so kind, as to make a Cuckold of him." The broadside concludes with the wife advising any young maiden to ensure that she knows about her potential husband's deficiencies before their marriage, just in case it might be necessary to consult Edgar's *Resolutions of Womens Rights*.

On the other hand, Alexander Niccholes warns men of the perils in navigating the uncertain and dangerous waters of marriage with his *Discourse of Marriage and Wiving*, a quarto first published in 1620.[38] Niccholes portrays his work as a guidebook to both young men and women so as to avoid unfortunate marriages, but he particularly singles out the "Youth and Batchelery of England, [or] hote bloods at high Revels."[39] Niccholes equates any man who chooses a bachelor's life as desiring "a simple life...viewing how others Shipwrack on the seas...and have no venture on the waves that split the life of peace."[40] Niccholes's employment of sea-fairing imagery here is by and large a classical analogy with Scylla and Charybdis making appearances further down the lines. However, the dire warnings of choosing a wife unwisely do correspond to the general crisis of masculinity observed in the seventeenth century. Men are incomplete without a wife and must marry to fully assume their station in life, yet the quality of women on display only leads to instances of cuckoldry and emasculation. Niccholes, who was a life-long bachelor himself, wryly notes that the only real solution is to wait for a "better age and women."[41]

[38] Alexander Niccholes, *A Discourse of Marriage and Wiving: and Of the greatest mystery therein contained: how to chuse a good Wife from a bad*, Printed by G. Eld in London, 1620, British Library 8415.bbb.29.
[39] Ibid., B.
[40] Ibid., B2.
[41] Ibid., B2v.

Disgust with the state of English masculinity is evident in *The Womens Complaint Against their Bad Husbands*, a short book of six pages published in 1676, which does not directly condemn the institution of marriage but decries the lamentable quality of English husbands.[42] The book's front matter has the wronged wives proclaim that "'Tis not 'gainst Marriage that our Passions Swell, / We ever thought it just and Hon'rable. / But against stragling Sots that we appear / Who hates their beds because their Wives are there." The book's feminine narrative voice complains to its female readers of their bad lot in life being landed with inebriated husbands incapable of providing the most basic duties of matrimony and fatherhood. The narrator, speaking to the reader as a "Sister," opines that they would have had a better lot of "leading Apes in Hell, then to be thus abused by Sots upon Earth, who neglects our Endearments [and] dispises our Favours."[43] This rank injustice boils over as the narrator observes "how indecent it is to behold her scrapeing for Bread to stop the mouths of her outragious Children, whilst he troubles himself with nothing but how to get drink to piss against the Walls."[44]

The hijinks of a "Cuckold by Consent" or the lamentations of *The Womens Complaint* illustrate the social structure and order associated with both men and women satisfying their marital duties and responsibilities. Attempts by men to subvert or undermine this system apparently lead only to humiliation and notoriety as a cuckold and abandoned women and children to poverty and squalor. An overview of this Early Modern print culture demonstrates the sheer size and scope of concerns about marriage, sex, and relationships. Many of these publications, ranging from the mundane to the fantastic, demonstrate that English society

[42] *The Womens Complaint Against their Bad Husbands, Or the good Fellows Anotamized by the Wives*, Printed for T.M., London, 1676, The British Library 8415.e.30.
[43] Ibid., 4.
[44] Ibid., 5.

continually grappled with the basic purposes of marriage and the role that both women and men were to play. Real fears of adultery, abandonment, emasculation and cuckoldry haunted both husbands and wives and provided easy material to market. The burgeoning masculinity crisis began to intersect every facet of the English world as the sixteenth century drew to a close and a change of sovereign loomed. This section has highlighted the social and intimate side of this crisis which threatened individual families and relationships. This crisis was concerned not just with the individual characteristics of Englishmen but also with those of the new nation they were attempting to construct. The masculinity crisis ensured that these questions of faith, politics, and nation swirled together in a vat of uniquely English origin.

2. "The Lamentation of Englande": Making the Nation

"And where the Lord of Lords hath set / his Handmaide pure and cleene:/Annoynting her my rightfull Prince, / to reigne a royall Queene. / Indued with wisedome from above, / and storde with knowledge great: / That flying Fame throughout the world, / her praises doth repeate."[45]

Early Modern English society was remarkably fractious and seethed with persecution and intolerance of any religious dissenters who were viewed as posing a threat to society and good government.[46] Tellingly, the majority of executions conducted during the reigns of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) and James I (1603-1625) did not concentrate on the crimes of "blasphemy" or "heresy" but rather "treason…for 'seditious' religious activities."[47] Religious fault lines between the newly-established Church of England and the English Catholic population were more routinely phrased in the guise of social and political unrest than in spiritual sacrilege. As a result, gendered debates over topics like marriage, patriarchy, infidelity, and cuckoldry took on direct social and political implications. Gendered religious rhetoric did not solely concentrate on interpretations of scripture or rituals but struck at the heart of the English state and a formulating national identity.

The first half of the sixteenth century had seen massive social upheaval as Henry VIII broke with Rome and dissolved England's monasteries, thus collapsing a major artery of medieval knowledge as well as employment for men and women alike. Henry's fears that

[45] W.M. "The Lamentation of England," published in 1584 and imprinted in London, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive,* National Library of Scotland – Crawford, EBBA ID: 33815.
[46] John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558—1689* (New York: Longman, 2000), 24-27.
[47] Ibid., 26.

religious reform had progressed too far near the end of his reign saw the persecution of evangelists and Calvinists and drawing back of major church reforms. The ascension of Henry's nine-year-old son, Edward VI, as king in 1547 saw England governed by a highly reform-minded regency council intent on purging Catholicism from the country and fashioning a fully-reformed state religion. Edward's death in 1553 saw an attempted coup in the form of the young Lady Jane Grey against Henry's elder daughter Mary I who returned the state religion to Catholicism and began dismantling the Protestant state's infrastructure. When Mary died without an heir in 1558, her half-sister Elizabeth I attempted to navigate a middle way between her own Protestant faith and reform-minded tendencies and a still large Catholic minority. This balance proved impossible to maintain as political threats from internal dissidents and external Catholic powers grew across Elizabeth's reign.[48] However, a persistent whiggish view of the Early Modern Era contends that the period was filled with a surprising degree of religious toleration compared to the middle ages. Recent scholars have shown this to be patently untrue as these tumultuous religious debates deeply divided society and imperiled social order in every home.[49]

By demonstrating the desperate and dangerous nature of political and social debate in this period we can construct an understanding of the masculinity crisis that reaches both the English state and home life and unifies them into a coherent analysis. The interpersonal navigation of the masculinity crisis should not be as a separate occurrence from an external or national response but rather as two sides of the same coin. As these men and women attempted to redefine their identities they did not only turn introspectively towards themselves but also collaborated and disagreed over the nature of England. Concerns over the succession of Mary Stuart as a Catholic

[48] Ibid., 1-41.
[49] Ibid., 1-2.

queen of England in the 1570s and 1580s attuned Protestant nationalism into interdependent religious and gendered descriptions as a return to the papacy could be easily illustrated with a foreign woman's body.[50] Publications could readily fuse "misogyny and anti-Catholic sentiment" into the stanzas as had proven so popular during Mary Tudor's reign. However, the real challenge focused on providing a workable counter-description of appropriate Protestant femininity as exemplified in Elizabeth I.[51] While this developing nationalism was predicated on an exultation of masculinity, it could not express women and the ideals of womanhood in such equal generalities. Broadsides during the second half of the sixteenth century routinely gendered the state as female and beseeched its citizens to "graunt Englande her request" and maintain God's choice of a "chosen Vessell pure" upon the throne.[52] The pope and Catholicism were routinely attacked with equally sexualized rhetoric, with particular regard to women's biology. The pope's soul was ridiculed as a "menstruous rag" embodied with the poisonous touch of menstruating women who were accused of spoiling meat with their mere touch.[53] Medieval and Early Modern scholars have argued that the religious debates of the sixteenth century proved fundamental in constructing an idea of an English nation-state.[54] These religious debates were understood and

[50] Anne McLaren, "Gender, Religion, and Early Modern Nationalism: Elizabeth I, Mary Queen of Scots, and the Genesis of English Anti-Catholicism," *American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002): 740-741.
[51] Ibid., 470.
[52] W.M. "The Lamentation of Englande."
[53] Merry Weisner-Hanks, 59.
[54] Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1997). Hastings establishes his definition of nationalism as existing at the confluence of religion, politics, and culture where these three elements "can never be understood within a box of its own" but rather naturally influence and determine one another as separate concepts and as a unified, national consciousness; that definition is essential employed in this thesis. Hastings argues against the grain of Modernists like Benedict Anderson (see *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism Give whole citation here*) by positing that England had met the basic qualifications of a nation-state by the sixteenth century. Namely: the paramount importance of a vernacular corpus of literature, the concept of ethnicity as "a group of people with a shared cultural identity and spoken language," a definable nation possessing greater self-awareness than an ethnic group, a nation-state possessing citizens of a "horizontally bonded society to whom the state in a sense belongs," a

prosecuted through a highly gendered and sexualized discourse increasingly complicated by the masculinity crisis.

Just as the private struggles of Englishmen and women in their sexual relationships personified a broader struggle for English identity, these nationalistic debates rely on a gendered and sexualized discourse to establish a new Protestant English national identity. Sexual licentiousness and innuendo presented a ready-made quiver of attacks within the broadsides. Negative imagery is usually employed with a feminine characteristic and voice with improprieties ranging from infidelity to orgies equitable to treason and sedition. The fragmentary "Plucking Down of the Romish Church" from 1566 extolls Protestant bravado decrying the harlotry of the papacy.[55] The church is personified as seemingly a wastrel or prostitute residing in "that cage alone" and reveling in a "filth and stinch [which] doth smel very strong." A counterpoint is then presented in an "Angel" beseeching people of all generations to remove themselves from the sight "spedely, / Least ye be partakers of the beastes iniquity." The Catholic Church's sin was characterized in phrasing evoking whoring and a particularly feminine lasciviousness. Catholic women were held with particular contempt and mistrust in the late sixteenth century as they regularly harbored priests in their homes and, in a priest's absence, even performed the Catholic sacraments themselves.[56]

This gendered inversion troubled both the new English Protestant state as well as Rome as women were seemingly transgressing a clearly gender-segregated responsibility and

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double-meaning of nationalism as a theory and as a practice, and religion being apparent as "an integral element of many cultures" in conceptualizing a nation.

[55] "The plucking down of the romish church", published in 1566 and imprinted in London, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive,* Houghton Library - Miscellaneous, EBBA ID: 34447.

[56] Frances E. Dolan, *Whores of Babylon: Catholicism, Gender, and Seventeenth-century Print Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 50-51.

simultaneously subverting the new Protestant faith as well as Catholic dogma.[57] The vision of a Catholic crone poisoning the well takes on an ever-more apocalyptic tone as the broadside details that "her fornication, / Hath made almost all princes commit adultery." The fault is laid squarely at the feet of a female temptress beguiling all of Christendom to become "dronke with her superstition" while "the blood of gods saints, she dranke plentifully." The church was seemingly ravenous in her desires by sparing no monarch but rather "placed and displaced, as pleased thys Dame." Images of the Old Testament and acts of castigation are conjured to the reader as "God now descry[s] her whole shame" and repels the "Romish Babell."[58] Again, there is a direct allusion to a lustful and fallen society destroyed by the same sexual corruption which has polluted Rome and the wider world.

Print literature from the 1550s onwards aggressively employed a gendered and sexualized discourse to understand the nationalist and religious fault lines crisscrossing Europe and England. Prints routinely exemplified Catholicism's wretched state through a wickedness of the flesh while the forces of Protestant Europe were roused in a sense of brotherly comradery. This new alliance of Protestant nations evoked masculine fraternity and a developing "band of brothers." Lutherans and "Hugonites, with the Beggers together," aligned to smash the corrupt and lavish "shop which enriched our purse" through the practice of selling indulgences. Protestant rhetoric routinely targeted Catholic superstition with "pardons & relickes which was our beginning / Is nought now regarded, and found all but lyes." Print literature ranging from

[57] Laura Gowing further unifies feminist theory in studying ideas of English nationhood and women's place both within and outside of the nation. Gowing's *Common Bodies* examines seventeenth-century conceptions of the female body and the obsession among its regulation by the law and church. The female body is shown as a contestable form of thought through which women's agency can be both gained and surrendered. Gowing formulates her research mainly around legal texts and court proceedings, while I employ Hastings's tenet of nationalism being rooted within material produced in the vernacular like broadsides.

[58] "The plucking down of the romish church"

pamphlets to broadsides portray the Protestant forces of Europe as acting with a manly reason and firmness intent on tearing down the edifices and practices of the church such as its "hie steple" which "they so pulled, that the tip they have broken." Protestants who had spent the reign of Mary I in continental exile imbued their identities as English Protestants with a dose of European internationalism which helped to define their cause both at home and abroad.[59] A sense of belonging within a larger religious community helped to accentuate English nationalism at home by providing a feeling of cross-national legitimacy and recognition while English Protestants could heartily trumpet England's apparently "privileged status [which gave] rise to national pride."[60]

The publication of the papal bull *Regnans in Excelsis* by Pope Pius V in 1570 excommunicating Elizabeth I and calling for the overthrow of English Protestantism, served as a fulcrum for the development of English national identity within popular culture. Pius charged that Elizabeth had corrupted the designs and officers of the church and had "abolished the sacrifice of the mass, prayers, fasts, choice of meats, celibacy, and Catholic ceremonies" which were so representative of moral turpitude to the Protestants.[61] Even though Catholics had already been demeaned through insinuations of witchcraft, adultery, and perversion, the bull's declaration that any Englishman or woman who continued to follow the "pretended" queen would be "include[d] in the like sentence of excommunication." An increasing number of English Protestants, and the English government, could point directly to Catholics both in

[59] Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 15-17.
[60] Stefanie Rück, "Patriotic Tendencies in Pamphleteering during the Reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI," in *Writing the Early Modern English Nation: The Transformation of National Identity in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. Herbert Grabes (Amsterdam and Atlanta, Georgia: Rodopi, 2001), 36-41.
[61] Pope Pius V, *Regnans in Excelsis*, Henry Bettenson and Chris Maunder, editors, *Documents of the Early Christian Church*, Fourth Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 256-257.

Europe and England as a threat to not only the nation's borders and sovereignty but to their own individual liberty and security. This Catholic double threat allowed for Protestants to create a clear and discernable other against whom their own values and characteristics could be judged. The extent of the nation itself was a contestable term and by excluding a large portion of English society, the Protestants strengthened their own nationalist identity.[62]

Shortly after the bull's publication, the streets of Northampton were filled with controversy as Thomas Knell published his "Answer to a Papistical Bull."[63] The broadside is laden with sexual innuendo caricaturing both Protestant and Catholic priests for their flagrant improprieties. Knell's text is divided into a call and response between a rival "Protestant" and "Papist," assessing both on the changing marital lives of churchmen and the reality behind their dogma. Knell first goads the Protestants on clerical celibacy, one of the many church doctrines Pius had accused Elizabeth of violating, by querying their thoughts on the bull which might cause them to "forsake [their] / wicked lyves" and cast their "wyves...to / the stewes." Visions of the Old Testament come forward as Protestants are accused of leading "Sodomite lives" filled with moral decay. The broadside's Catholic priest questions why women should take any notice of propriety since "every preaching knave must have / A whoore in house to treade" under the Church of England. As the new church removed the priesthood's vow of chastity, Knell argues that "Priests which wer whormongers / Must now marry wife or maide" in order to make good Christian marriages. The Papist laments the quality of whores themselves with not a "strumpet" one to be found; rather, they have all been "snatched up, / With some *Geneva* knave" care of

[62] Coffey, 91-92.
[63] Thomas Knell, "An answer to a Papisticall Byll, cast in the / streetes of Northampton, and brought before the Iudges / at the last Syses," published in 1570 and imprinted in London, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive,* Huntington Library - Britwell, EBBA ID: 32399.

John Calvin. The Protestant and Papist descend into greater attacks ad hominin on both Geneva and Rome where "the whoores were all well sene." The two combative men of God eventually cast each other away with sanctimonious flourish as the Protestant charges "Idolatrie and adulterie, / For them you take no care." Knell's concluding section is delivered in prose with the broadside charging that the Pope allowed priests to conduct "knavish absolucion" of whores within their confessionals as a parting shot towards Catholics. Knell spares no criticism for either church but does seem to draw out an important distinction between Anglicans who openly acknowledge their corruption while Catholics commit a double sin of hiding their crimes through insidious means.

Continuing civil unrest throughout the 1580s routinely saw broadside authors employ rhetorical devices that equated Elizabeth's feminine virtues and virginal qualities as synonymous with the English nation. The presence of a female on the throne necessitated that the state's body politic should itself be dressed in feminine attributes and attitudes. If the state were to be gendered as a maiden, its characteristics had to exemplify those of a Protestant Englishwoman and be easily contrasted against the insidiousness of Catholic femininity. Just as the English attempted to create a model of a new, pure Protestant Englishwoman, they feminized both their new nation-state and its enemies. In particular, even as the English government held Mary Stuart under house arrest, her living example of a Catholic female sovereign presented an unacceptably prescient counter-example to Elizabeth's own reign. The broadsides from this period are not merely concerned with religious and political differences between the two women and the larger religious forces which they represented, but the ways in which they were in fact different kinds of women.

Conspiracies and rumor abounded through the English court in the mid-1580s as successive Marian plots were unearthed by Elizabeth's redoubtable spymaster, Francis Walsingham, and the likelihood of Catholic invasion increased. Sir Francis Throckmorton, a relative of one of Elizabeth's courtiers, was arrested on suspicion of treason in 1583. Under torture on the rack, Throckmorton confessed to plotting with English and continental Catholics to assassinate Elizabeth and place Mary on the throne; he was executed in July 1584.[64] The "Lamentation of Englange," quickly published in celebration of Throckmorton's death and set to the melancholic dirge "Weepe, weepe," illustrates the virtues shared by both England and its queen.[65] The broadside is obviously concentrated on the threat to the queen's life but makes it clear that her survival was vital to the lifeblood of a Protestant nation. England is personified as the narrator of the piece "brinish[ing] tears and sobbing sighs" at hearing of "such secret Sectes" among her people. England remarks that she is now occupied within her "golden prime / where *Nectar* sweete doth flowe." The broadside serenades the reader with sensual and explicit imagery tied to both the queen, extolled as a "Handmaide pure and cleene," and the state's institutional bodies which are shown as the queen's living body politic. An attack on the queen's life is equivalent to an attack on the life of every Protestant in England and the very idea of England itself. Plots against the English nation are not merely cases of political machination but direct attempts at matricide against the state and infanticide against the nation.

"The Lamentation" impresses upon its audience that the lives of both individual subjects and the collective nation are as physically interdependent as a newborn child is to its mother.

[64] Jasper Ridley, *A Brief Introduction of The Tudor Age* (London: Robinson, 2002) 86-87.
[65] W.M. "The Lamentation of England," published in 1584 and imprinted in London, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive*, National Library of Scotland – Crawford, EBBA ID: 33815.

Both the queen and her government's institutions act as a mother to the populace in more than figurative allusions but in practical deeds. The state as a narrator reproaches her subjects for any thoughts of treason just as a mother would scold her children. England laments as to why any of her people would plot against her as she has provided them with "foode, / which Nature bringeth foorth" and had "fed [them] dayntily, / with Milke and Hony." England's breast nourished her people with "Peace and Plentie both" and imbued them with "worldly pleasures store" as foreign nations jealously watched from afar. Throckmorton's plot was not merely to dispossess Elizabeth of her throne, but to "spoyle the state of all [the] Realme" and ravish its body of both material and spiritual pleasures. In other words, the plotters intended to rape England and destroy its virtue. The broadside conveys sexualized and gendered imagery which presented a highly visceral and relatable example of treason against the state and crimes against nature and God. To poison the mother would be to poison her children and destroy the very soul of the nation. The legal punishments for any attempted abortion in the sixteenth century would have been well-known to men and women alike and its rhetorical use here strengthens the development of a sexual discourse concerning nationhood. Infanticide was a serious criminal offense in Early Modern England with women only executed in higher numbers for suspected witchcraft.[66] In some cases, the former crime would have been seen as a logical continuation from the latter, with women resorted to such a level obviously corrupted by magic and evil inclinations.

Devising Elizabeth with maternal qualities equates with her own political rhetoric of the preceding three decades in eschewing marriage and children. Indeed, one of Elizabeth's first speeches as queen in 1559 was in response to a petition of the House of Commons begging her to

[66] Merry Weisner-Hanks, 67-68.

marry where the new queen declared that she was "already bound unto an Husband, which is the Kingdome of England."[67] Further to claims that it was her duty to produce children and an heir, Elizabeth reproached her subjects for forgetting that "every one of [them], and as many as [were] English, are [her] Children, and Kinsfolkes."[68] Sustaining this imagery into the 1580s was of particular importance while Mary Stuart continued to live and her son represented the strongest claimant to the English throne. The broadsides argue that while Mary might have succeeded in the physical expectations of motherhood, Elizabeth displayed them on a national level in both temporal and spiritual matters. The proto-nationalist argument relied on the argument that there were demonstrably different characters of femininity and acceptable forms of womanhood which could either destroy the English nation-state or nurture it. Its male leaders claimed that Protestantism provided women with a cleaner and purer form of life which worked for the betterment of society and of their nation. Catholicism allowed for a rapacious and whorish Babylon which perverted sexuality under the auspices of Rome.

The bloodless transition of power to the Scottish king James I in 1603 following Elizabeth's death initiated new attempts at refining English nationhood around masculine principles. James's court was filled with young men as favorites attempting to navigate homosocial power structures founded on pederasty.[69] The system of subservience operated around physical distance to the sovereign which emphasized erotic male performance and friendship.[70] Thomas King argues that penetration into the king's love evoked a multi-sensory

[67] William Camden, *Annales, the true and royall History of ... Elizabeth Queene of England*, translated by Abraham Darcie (1625), 28.
[68] William Camden, 28.
[69] Thomas A. King, *The Gendering of Men, 1600—1750, Volume One: The English Phallus* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 22-23.
[70] Ibid., 26.

relationship which constituted "penetration through the eye and ear, via the spectacle and the text."[71] This multisensory spectacle taking place in the king's most intimate spaces mirrors the raucous and public performance that print culture evoked in the seventeenth century. Just as public houses held raucous spectacles singing and performing broadsides surrounding all matter of sexual discourse, so too did the monarch's most intimate spaces. This change in administration secured the second link in the chain of the masculinity crisis as political rhetoric and tangible definitions of identity had to be realigned yet again.

A flashpoint in these early constructions of English manhood occurred in 1613 with the publication of Thomas Overbury's salacious poem "A Wife, Now the Widow", his imprisonment in the Tower of London, and his subsequent murder. Overbury, baptized in 1581, was one of several young men competing for preference as a royal favorite in James I's court.[72] Overbury, while claiming to be dealing with caricatures and models of English women, intended "A Wife" to be a direct denunciation of Frances Howard (or, Lady Essex), a recently divorced courtier who was attempting to marry Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset. Somerset was one of James's premier favorites and Overbury's friend and ally. Overbury viewed Howard as an existential threat to his influence at court and as part of a larger conspiracy among scheming and pernicious women in public life who were seeking to sabotage England's government through malicious maternalism.[73] In "A Wife," Overbury characterizes Howard's scheming as a carnal lust for power:

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[71] Ibid., 25.
[72] Considine, John, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Overbury, Sir Thomas," Oxford: Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 2008. http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-20966
[73] Bruce McIver, "'A Wife Now the Widdow': Lawrence Lisle and the Popularity of the Overburian Characters," *South Atlantic Review* 59, no. 1 (1994): 27-44

For wandring *lust*; I know 'tis infinite,
It still begins, and addes not more to more:
The *guilt* is everlasting, the *delight*,
This instant doth not feele, of *that* before.
The *taste* of it is only in the *sense*,
The *operation* in the *conscience*.

Overbury continues that this hunger for power is a uniquely feminine objective festering in a sinful lust which entices obsequious men. Overbury insists that men operate under the nobler pursuit of love which places them on a higher moral plane than women but equally leaves them open to deceit. In these terms, women are the sirens to England's ship of state, prepared to wreck it upon a bluff of concupiscence:

Love is a kind of *superstition*,
Which feares the idoll which it self hath fram'd:
Lust a desire, which rather from his *owne*
Temper, then from the object is inflam'd:
Beauty is loves *object*; *woman* lust's to gaine
Love, love desires; *lust* onely to *obtaine*.

Quickly following his poem's publication, Overbury was held in the Tower as punishment for its character attack upon Howard. While imprisoned, a guard, supposedly in Howard's employ, poisoned Overbury's drink and murdered him.[74]

For many, this episode legitimated a fear that the cuckolding or emasculation of the English state and nation equally impacted the highest offices of power and the most quotidian household relationships. Overbury's poem was published in five separate editions in its first year of print and was repeatedly republished in the following decades. The rapidity of "A Wife's" republication was certainly designed to capitalize on Overbury's sensational death, but it also attempted to feed a market hungry for debate regarding the place of the sexes within English

[74] Bruce McIver, 30.

society. "The Poysoned Knights Complaint," published in the aftermath of Overbury's death, features an imprinting at its mast of the poet's skeleton prostrate upon a catafalque watched over by the twin sirens of time and justice who proclaim that "time revealth truth" and that "justice will right all wrongs."[75] Overbury's epitath reads that:

> Within this house of Death, A dead man lies,
> Whose blood like Abels up for vengeance cries:
> Time hath revealed what to trueth belongs,
> And Injustice Sword is drawne to right my wrongs:
> You poysoned mindes did me with poyson Kill,
> Let true Repetance purge you from that ill.

This episode illustrates a burgeoning crisis in defining and preserving a national English masculine identity in the seventeenth century as the nation's enemies could no longer be easily categorized as subversive Catholics or foreigners. Episodes like Overbury's death suggested to Englishmen that the feminine threat no longer resided cleanly in an effete Rome or in Catholic women harboring priests, but in Protestant Englishwomen at the highest levels of state power. The literature profiled here routinely characterizes English masculinity as morally upright and wise but undermined by an aggressive counter-femininity which will stoop to any end to achieve its goals. Englishmen are portrayed as brave and adventurous, but they are also trusting, gentle, and disposed to love rather than the corrupting lust which leaps from feminine hearts. With this definition of English masculinity as inherently vulnerable and susceptible to destruction, familiar problems which confronted individual masculinities reappeared to plague the nation at large. We have now traversed both sides of the English neurosis as it grappled with several internal and external masculinities and attempted to reconcile them. Reconciling these disparate masculinities

[75] "SIR THOMAS OVERBURY, OR THE POYSONED KNIGHTS COMPLAINT," imprinted at London for John White, Society of Antiquaries of London: Broadsides (Bound), series 108-201.

and defining that vexed category of Englishman remained elusive in the seventeenth century so long as the debate continued in a stalemate. The panacea would have to emerge outside of this deadlock—beyond the metropole—and reorient these newly-christened Englishmen towards an external solution.

3. "I must sail upon the Flood": Englishmen and Empire

"TIS for Promotion and for Honour, / that I must sail upon the Flood, / I'le venture under Englands Banner, / although I loose my dearest Blood: / For unto danger I am no stranger. / when stormy winds aloud do blow, / I'le not forget thee, my dearest Betty, / though I must to Virginia go."[76]

By the mid-seventeenth century, the masculinity crisis penetrated both private relationships and England's position as a nation-state. Previous attempts at resolving the crisis had focused on internally demarcating proper English masculinity and femininity from its corrupted, sinful counterparts in Catholic Europe. This rough dissection between a positive force, Protestant masculinity and femininity, and a negative, image of Catholic whores, vagabonds, or lechers, became increasingly difficult to sustain. Englishwomen complained and protested against the sorry state of supposedly honorable Englishmen and Englishmen lamented the horrendous selection of wives from a supposedly noble and pure stock of maidens. Politically, the English court had labored to create a positive feminine state during Elizabeth's reign which could counter the feminized attacks cast against Rome. This system was then promptly assassinated by male courtiers recasting the state through homosocial relationships in the early 1600s and claiming that Englishwomen, and not Catholic whores, were plotting to destroy the nation. The solution that developed over the remainder of the 1600s was rooted in England's burgeoning colonial ventures across the Atlantic Ocean. This imperial discourse produced hope

[76] "A Voyage to Virginia: / OR, / The Valliant Souldier's Farwel to his Love. / Unto Virginia he's resolv'd to go, / She begs of him, that he would not do so; / But her Intreaties they are all in vain, / For he must plow the curled Ocean Main: / At length (with sorrow) he doth take his leave / And leaves his dearest Love at home to grieve," published c. 1690, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive* British Library C.20.f.8.580.

that the masculinity crisis could be resolved through the difficult and daring exploits of male colonists.[77]

By the final decades of the seventeenth century, broadsides consistently evoked stories of English imperial ingenuity backed up by resolute and confident Englishmen. "The Treachery of the Spaniards of Porto Rico" is an entertaining and engaging slice of late seventeenth-century nautical life complete with heroes, villains, immoral imprisonment, and high-wire escapes that conveyed a true adventure of the HMS *Dartmouth* and demonstrated a new English imperial manhood. With his ship running low on supplies of wood and water after making an Atlantic crossing in 1686, the captain of the HMS *Dartmouth* decided to seek temporary repose in the Spanish imperial trading hub of Puerto Rico.[78] The *Dartmouth* was a thirty-year-old, fifth-rate frigate ranking it second-to-last in both size and firepower among the Royal Navy. It compensated for these shortcomings through maneuverability and the apparent ingenuity and fearlessness of its crew. The *Dartmouth's* crew, including one Hovender Walker, were initially invited to dock by the Spanish authorities "without all Fear / [who] said it should be their only Care / Whatever [the crew] wanted to prepare."[79] Walker, already an aspiring poet, soon

[77] See especially Bruce McLeod's *The Geography of Empire in English Literature: 1580—1745* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999). McLeod navigates between feminist and cultural geographers by focusing on the "colonization of the body" through imperial forces which employ "metropolitan nature" that classified women as both coveted, consumable property and a "covert danger" rendered by unruled space. McLeod argues that his literary archive present women as "the ebb and flow of empire, its lightening conductor and handmaiden, its Britannia as well as its Errour and Sin." In the early modern, McLeod posits, the feminine is synonymous with the colonial and this is evidenced through seventeenth-century texts equating misogyny and imperialism. The streets of London were filled with "degeneracy, seduction, and chaos" reflected through a panoply of Irish, Indian, and Native American women churning along a colonial network.

[78] John R. Adnams, "The *Dartmouth*, a British frigate wrecked off Mull, 1690," *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology and Underwater Exploration* 3, no. 2 (1974): 269-274.

[79] Hovenden Walker, "THE / TREACHERY OF THE SPANIARDS OF PORTO RICO / TO THE / DARTMOUTH FRIGOT / AND HER COMPANY," published in 1686, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive*, Pepys Ballads 5.374; lines 6-8.

published his crew's exploits at the hands of Spanish perfidy as a broadside ballad in London later that year.[80]

Apparently beguiled by their hosts' hospitality, the *Dartmouth's* crew disembarked at the port and found their trust had been misplaced. The "Governour's promised Honour," upon which they had entrusted their faith, proved to be illusory and the Spanish authorities proclaimed the crew "shall ne're be free...[their] ship [had] become a Forfeiture" and would be sunk at the first stirring of trouble. The captain and crew of the *Dartmouth* handled their imprisonment with cool aplomb and adjudged their traitorous hosts with typical Hispanophobia. The *Dartmouth's* captain argued that his crew were clearly men composed of the highest character of English honor and the Spanish would soon find them "As brave English Hearts as e're saw the Sea."

Unperturbed by the Spanish guns, which the English feared little more than the "barking of Currs," the crew broke free from their bondage, retook their ship, and grinned as the "fat General" attempted to sink the *Dartmouth* with cannon fire. The Spaniards had failed to grasp that the sun was setting against their favor as their cannon balls sank harmlessly into the harbor. While the gun fight continued for some three hours, the crew "shew'd...that they were true Englishmen" and sailed off with little more than a scratch on their hull leaving their captors mired in shame. Walker demonstrates that by their general nature as Englishmen, the crew had exemplified a resolute masculinity which outwitted and outmuscled their Iberian captors. Passing through Bermuda, the *Dartmouth* entered Boston harbor on September 6, 1686, allowing her

[80] Gerald S. Graham, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 2, s.v. "WALKER, SIR HOVENDEN," University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/walker_hovenden_2E.html.

crew the chance to detail their adventures and soon see them in print.[81] Walker published his account of the *Darthmouth's* adventure quickly upon returning to London and fed into a market hungry for tales of manly adventure and resolve. The ballad casts Englishmen into distinctly masculine stereotypes of honor and fearlessness while the Spanish are slightly more than one-dimensional stock villains. While Walker delivers a one-sided take on historical events, likely embellished to capture his readership, his broadside demonstrates evolving English understandings of masculinity and male honor in the context of Atlantic interactions.

Over the course of the seventeenth century, the sea and sea power developed as a fundamental cornerstone around which the English state sought approval for its claims on imperial power and fledgling colonial aspirations. In nearly every quantifiable way, the sixteenth century had seen an island nation outstripped in naval exploration, commerce, and conquest. The infamous Roanoke colony represented little more than a commercial flop and brought poor tidings for a kingdom on the outskirts of Europe that was a century late to the colonial game. In a similar vein, the seemingly divine defeat of the Spanish Armada of 1588 represents more of an aberration of English luck with the remainder of the century falling into a pattern of military quagmires between increasingly cantankerous monarchs, Elizabeth I and Philip II.[82] England's fear of Spain's growing imperial power stoked the fires of resentment and fanned the flames of xenophobia. While persistent threats of subversion against the new Protestant state legitimated many of these concerns, the Anglo-Spanish relationship was consistently antagonistic well into the 1600s. The gendered discourse of this relationship can be complicated by employing the idea

[81] Samuel Sewell, "Diary of Samuel Sewell, Volumes 1-3," in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, vol. 5 (Boston: 1878), 151.
[82] Barbara Fuchs, *The Poetics of Piracy: Emulating Spain in English Literature* (Hanley Foundation Series), Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press (2013), 15-16.

of a "gendered frontier" for the Atlantic and New World as proposed by Kathleen Brown.[83] Doing so contextualizes seventeenth century attempts at nation and empire building as a directly focused around gendered concerns and debates.

An early indication of the dawning masculinity crisis came with the saga of Captain M. Thomas Stutely, a mid-sixteenth-century explorer who personified the awkward ways in which the fault lines of religion, nation, and masculine identity could run. A broadside first published around 1563 by Robert Seall details Sutley's journey in "the Land called Terra florida."[84] The captain and crew's reported acts of English heroism demarcate the early use of the broadside in advancing a masculine English identity composed of inherit qualities of bravery and selflessness. Seall praises Stutely's "valiant noble hart / [which] In travail, pain & daungers great" forsook its own safety for the glory of England. The redoubtable captain "ventreth bothe his goods and life" with no desire of personal enrichment, but only that of his country. Stutely, an unreformed Anglo-Catholic, eventually defected to the Spanish court and participated in an aborted Catholic uprising in Ireland later in the sixteenth century.[85] Rather unexpectedley, Stutely's life produced two English stage plays in the later part of the century which insisted on his status as a hero of

[83] Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia*, Chapel Hill and London: Omohundro Institute and University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
See also Laura Brown's *Ends of Empire: Women and Ideology in Early Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993). Brown argues that the seventeenth century saw the "feminization of imperial accumulation." The seventeenth-century female body is conceived as a guidebook which can lead to either "the rewards of colonization or into depravation." Building on Brown's thesis, Bruce McLeod's *The Geography of Empire in English Literature: 1580—1745* posits that literary characters examined from the period channel contours of imperial power because the female body is portrayed as a spatialized forum of thought and communication. McLeod finds that the characters' "whereabouts and orderliness" foretell how the social order of the colony or metropole is either holding up or falling apart.
[84] Robert Seall, "A Commendation of the adventerus viage of the wurthy Captain .M. Thomas Stutely Esquyer and others, towards the Land called Terra florida," published c. 1563 and imprinted in London, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *Early English Broadside Archive* HEH 18336.
[85] Brian C. Lockey, "Elizabethan Cosmopolitan: Captain Thomas Stukeley in the Court of Dom Sebastian," *English Literary Renaissance* 40, no. 1 (2010): 3-32.

English nationhood, even as his character denounced Elizabeth I's Protestant government.[86] Stutely proves his manhood by his moral and religious convictions and desire to bring glory to England even if he was a traitor to its government. Brian Lockey's study of Stutley's later literary adaptations points to the cosmopolitan nature of the Atlantic as an arena in which fidelity to the state was not synonymous with a continuing identity with one's nation.[87] Stutely could not be easily feminized as a Catholic traitor while he was celebrated as the epitome of English masculinity: brave, valorous, and loyal to his beliefs at the expense of his own career.

By the end of the seventeenth century, broadsides regularly claimed that England had settled its scores with its Catholic rivals and was emerging as a new imperial superpower. Celebrating a naval victory over the French in May 1692, a broadside proclaims, "in our Channel the Battel was fought, / And so the French Fleet in a Net was caught."[88] The skirmish was of a historical significance "far greater, than that of Lepanto, / And merits alone a whole Noble Canto," to commemorate the seamen acting "like the Old Britains...[or] Furies, with flames in their hands." The conflicts in question were the Battles of Barfleur and La Hougue which averted the possibility of a French invasion of England's southern coast during the Nine Years' War and the attempted restoration of the Jacobean monarchy.[89] The battles were romanticized as the century's equivalent of the defeat of the Spanish Armada roughly one hundred years previously in that they affirmed England's position as a world power and proved that its internal government would be free from foreign domination. Placed into perspective, Barfleur and La

[86] Ibid., 5.
[87] Ibid.
[88] "A / Merry New BALLAD, / On the Great Victory over the French Fleet, / MAY the 19th. 1692," published in 1692 for R. Baldwin in London, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive*, Pepys Ballads 5.382-383
[89] Richard Harding, *Seapower and Naval Warfare 1650—1830* (London: UCL Press, 1999), 154-155.

Hougue did scuttle any hopes of a direct land invasion of England, but their overall strategic importance for a war fought throughout Europe and North America proved only slight.[90] Setting aside a tendency towards rather dramatic and patriotic flair of which a victorious populace would approve, such confidence in the innate strength of Englishmen, and England's internal fortitude, illustrates a reestablished confidence in a masculine identity. Once again, it was clear who an Englishman was and what he could do.

A tenant of the masculinity crisis was the perceived failings of men to properly understand their duties as fathers and husbands. The trans-Atlantic imperial narrative constructed a redemptive journey for squandered manhood and was perceived as a way to honor and serve one's family and country. "A Voyage to Virginia," published in 1690, demonstrates the sense of masculine duty and loyalty to one's country, rather than merely oneself, which drove journeys across the Atlantic.[91] The Soldier, pining after his sweetheart, laments that "the Drums doth summon [him] away" to the forests of Virginia before he might marry her. He is not acting in his own self-interest, but rather to "venture under Englands Banner" so he can acquire "Promotion and...Honour." Distinct from the blurred lines encountered between pirate culture and some English sailors, this broadside cultivates a sense of masculine responsibility and duty both to one's nation and to one's family. Sorrowfully, the sailor must "plow the curled Ocean Main" but remains sure that Betty will remain true to him. He must travel to Virginia to prove himself as a man, and more importantly an Englishman. This journey is necessary through purely egotistical desire, however. The sailor here wants to be a better Englishmen for the honor that it will bestow upon his nation and the family waiting for him which is part of that nation.

[90] Ibid., 155.
[91] "A Voyage to Virginia."

Upon hearing her lover's farewell, Betty begs him to "Leave bloody wars, and wounds and scars, / to them who love did never know." More surprising than this emotional invocation to remain on England's placid shores, Betty declares that she will disguise herself as a man and join her lover's same regiment "and never stay at home to mourn." The thought of having a cross-dressing fiancé fight at his side in Virginia to claim her own manhood is hardly appealing to the Soldier who warns his lady that "Upon the Seas are dangers Cruel / and many Storms arise." Ostensibly to preserve Betty's safety, but also to save his own manhood, the Soldier leaves her with a ring and his heart. Mollified for a time, Betty "Then home returned and there she mourned / whilst he did to Virginia go." Regardless of how seriously Betty's desire to don a uniform seemed, the broadside reinforced to its audience that the journey to the colonies must be a solitary and lonely one, exclusively for masculine endeavor and fulfillment, even if it is achieved aboard a cramped, crowded, and boisterous ship. Indeed, those qualities reinforce a particular masculine environment suited for forging Englishmen. "A Voyage to Virginia" illuminates the resolution of the masculinity crisis as patriarchy, heterosexuality, and firm gender boundaries restored to English daily life and concepts of England as a nation.

While the masculine transformation provided by this Atlantic corridor was deliberately gendered and segregated, London's imperial metropole provided ample material for women to bemoan their choice of men and long after a proper Englishman who had secured his identity on the sea. Several broadsides which seemingly invert traditional gender roles and see women challenging male authority actually reinforce this new model of masculine imperialism which could be acquired at the nearest London dockyard. Not content with visiting public humiliation on the impotent or lascivious husbands which they already had, the women exemplified in "The

Maydens of Londons brave adventures" reject the poor quality of men whom they find at home in England and instead set their sights on English sailors leaving dock for exotic and unknown ports of call.[92] The young city girls are tempted with a "Voyage now at hand, / [which] will save [their] feet from gravel," aboard a ship filled with good food, beer, and amorous company. The broadside promises any of the women unsure of the cost that "there are Gold and Silver Mine / and treasures much abounding" in the New World, just waiting to jump into their pockets. The broadside assures the ladies sailing away "inhabit that fair Land / and make a new plantation," that their young men, pining after their sweethearts, will surely pursue them across the sea. Just like the valiant solider, these forgotten beaus will "crosse the curled Ocean main" to find their loves and "[get] into their favor." Without fear of "Jack Spaniard Jeer[s]," and confident of their place as Englishmen and Christians, English men and women saw the Atlantic and the New World as a vehicle to recapture, or to newly establish, their own sense of identity.

By the close of the seventeenth century, the masculinity crisis had been superseded by an imperialism that solidified a concept of English nationhood and reoriented English identity outwards towards active adventure and colonialism across the world. By the first decade of the eighteenth century, negotiations were underway between England and Scotland towards establishing a unified Kingdom of Great Britain culminating in the Acts of Union of 1708. This new state continued the development of a masculine imperial discourse through colonization and exploitation across the globe. Scholars such as Linda Colley have studied this long eighteenth

[92] Lawrence Price, "The Maydens of Londons brave adventures, / OR, / A Boon Voyage intended for the Sea, / Some gone before, and some to follow: / Their Sweet-hearts are resolv'd also / This noble Voyage for to go. / Because they hold their Love so dear, / As in this Ditty you shall hear," published c. 1623-61 and imprinted in London, accessed through the University of California Santa Barbara's *English Broadside Ballad Archive* C.20.f.9.224-225.

century as pivotal in the development of a British national identity and gender roles.[93] By demonstrating that English society experienced a fundamental crisis around its masculine identity in the preceding century and a half, this imperial and national narrative is more effectively foregrounded and woven into Early Modern cultural studies. Over the next two centuries, the British Empire developed a superstructure of patriarchy over vast stretches of the globe and one-fourth of the human race. The antecedents of this superstructure can be traced directly back to the gendered debates of the English Early Modern Era and its remnants continue to shape, haunt, and plague the modern United Kingdom and its colonies' successor states the world over.

[93] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707—1837*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press (2009).

Conclusion

A masculine imperial identity developed as a salve for intense social undulations in England and the fledgling English colonies in North America. This imperial identity evolved as a cultural production among the state, printers, and consumers and was forged by the inflections between them. It is no coincidence that the broadside's heyday aligned with the masculinity crisis. This unique hybridization of textual narrative and oral performance allowed for an expansive discourse concerning gender and sexuality as part of individual relationships and as defining characteristics of a nation. The broadsides expose persistent fears of cuckoldry among Englishmen by their wives, mistresses, and imperial rivals, portraying the threat posed by them all in similar terms. The solution, however, proved less easy to identify Initially Englishmen imitated Spanish mannerisms, behavior, and colonial goals. The Spanish proved particularly appealing models on both personal and political fronts as the strongest and most successful imperial power in Europe. By following the Spanish along their exploratory routes into the Americas, Englishmen immersed themselves into a world of exotic intrigue and exploits where they could prove their masculine worth. Yet ultimately the Spanish model proved insufficient. Rather than simply replacing Spaniards with Englishmen, the English increasingly sought their own model of masculinity whereby they could not only equal but also exceed the Spanish. A century later, examples like the *Dartmouth* demonstrate that this clear, if begrudgingly-earned, respect was no longer adequate or necessary and was superseded with an unrestrained imperial outlook showcasing England's claimed rightful place as a premier European power.

Resolving the masculinity crisis was not the sole factor in the development of English (and later British) cultural imperialism, but by doing so it stabilized the internal political situation and created new mores and identities which could be employed in sanctioning and justifying imperial expansion. Understanding this new English and British cultural imperialism through attempts at resolving an internal crisis of masculinity demonstrates the power of sexualized discourse and debates in the Early Modern period. As we have seen, these debates drove to the very heart of what an English identity meant and what a new English state could look like. Additionally, by fundamentally troubling English society's understanding of masculinity, theories and definitions of femininity are equally complicated and diversified. Understanding the development and resolution of this crisis helps to create a unifying view of two centuries plagued by social, religious, and political upheaval.

Popular print culture, especially broadsides, unified printed text, oral performance, and visual representations in ways that challenged power structures around gender and sexuality and consistently troubled attempts at reestablishing traditional gender roles and English patriarchy. Growing literacy rates in the seventeenth century encouraged wider publication of printed materials, but the active culture of performance was dependent on a largely illiterate audience congregating in public spaces and communing over popular music and imagery. This cultural phenomenon was paradoxically fed by a desire to perform and ritualize texts which could not be read by much of the population but covered issues with which they were intimately familiar. As the masculinity crisis dissipated at the close of the seventeenth century, so too did the broadside begin to yield to other forms of print like newspapers. The masculinity crisis of the English Early Modern age was a unique product of its time, produced by incredible circumstances and events.

The crisis was captured and recorded in a hybridized form of culture which existed only as a fleeting, diaphanous sparkle that crested upon an imperial sea.

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