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"And as to my own Sex": The Unifying Behaviors, Social Connections, and Values Between Female Stationers in the 17th Century

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“And as to my own Sex”:

The Networks and Rhetoric of Unity Between Female Stationers in the 17th
Century

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Abstract

Impressed upon the record of history are the marks of many accomplished and varied female printers and booksellers. Patriarchal systems of power created challenging hurdles for women competing with male printers. This paper will delve into the more specific and problematic ways women were figured in the print industry and how these women printers found ways of exploiting prejudices leveled against them. Additionally, this paper investigates how the exploitation of sexist stereotypes within the industry suggests that women had greater gender consciousness —and gender solidarity—than critical literature concedes to them. This paper centers this claim around two case studies of female printers active in London in the late 17th century. Elizabeth Cellier, active between 1668 and 1688 as a midwife, a devout Catholic printer and pamphleteer printing subversive work in favor of the Papacy, was known for her work *Malice Defeated*, in which she documented her commitment to the Catholic church following her unjust imprisonment, a document that would result in her once again being sent to prison. Margaret White, actively printing between 1679 and 1683, was a Quaker who printed an almanac and a series of important sermons given in front of the House of Commons, but who otherwise leaves no certain information pertaining to her life in the historical record. Some of her printed work highlighted the work of the authors she printed, drawing attention to issues of truth and woman's place in the fight for authentic representation in print through subtle decisions,

including font style and title page design. A final section uses the archives to show that these shared values across these case studies and different groups of women can be traced through shared social connections, illustrating that female solidarity may have been felt by these women more than previously believed.

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“And as to my own Sex”: The Networks and Rhetoric of Unity Between Female Stationers in the 17th Century

Introduction

At the center of the constant upheaval and change that marked the 1600s in England was the printing industry and those who worked within it. Anthony T. Grafton claims in his essay “The Importance of Being Printed” in *The History of the Book in the West: 1455-1700* vol. 2 that “the protagonist in [the English Renaissance, Reformation, and Scientific Revolution] is the master-printer, a pioneer both as businessman and as intellectual” whose “opposition to authority, almost inherent in the nature of his calling [...] turned networks of printing-shops into the relays along which ran messages of change,” positioning printers as key societal figures going into the 17th century (Gadd 94). While Grafton refers to this archetype of printer as male, impressed upon the record of history are the marks of many accomplished and varied female printers and booksellers whose presence and importance has only begun to be appreciated and studied as of the early 1980s.

Patriarchal systems of power did not make it easy for women to thrive equally with their male peers in this competitive industry. This paper will delve into the more specific and problematic ways women were figured in the print industry later on, but more importantly, it will focus on how these women printers found ways of exploiting prejudices leveled against them. In a changing print world where official censorship was on the decline in the 1640s and 50s (Barnard 63) and political and religious controversy was ever-

present, women used the figuring of their gender to their advantage. There is a small amount of scholarship that touches on the ways women manipulated these stereotypes to their advantage already, but scholars have yet to chart how these responses might suggest that women had a collective understanding about their position as women in the print industry.

Women's exploitation of sexist stereotypes within the industry suggests that they had greater gender consciousness —and gender solidarity —than critical literature currently concedes to them. Most critical scholarship argues that women writers and printers of this period did not necessarily identify as a part of a larger community of women, and the women they do seem connected to are often part of shared religious or class communities. However, the ways women twisted the same gender stereotypes into subtle yet pointed weapons for their own defense unifies women across class, religion, and neighborhood.

To connect women as public figures, we must first define what we mean when we refer to "the public." While the public and public sphere have been defined in any number of ways, within my paper I will expand Jurgen Habermas' definition of the public sphere as "a domain of social life where public opinion can be formed" (398) to include identifiable and navigable spaces that were vital to London's print landscape, such as the area surrounding St. Paul's churchyard. In contrast to the domestic, which I discuss below, the public will work on three key levels in my paper. The first is the physical public space, or rather, how we see women printers moving

through space, traveling, expressing knowledge of printing neighborhoods, workshops, and bookselling sites. The second is public presence: how we see women positioning themselves in public debates, taking up legal matters, and putting their names and identities on the works they print. In the third level, I look at how these public presences might be connected, addressing the social mechanisms that link these public voices and that take us from an abstract “public” to a recognizable and tangible “public sphere.” How do these women printers interact with other printers or become engaged with public figures and writers? How do these social groupings connect them to a public? These three combined facets of our defined “public” will be used to challenge the role of woman printer as purely a domestic one.

To illustrate how women used and overcame the biases they faced, I will be centering my paper around two case studies of female printers active in London in the late 17th century. Elizabeth Cellier, active between 1668 and 1688 as a midwife, a devout Catholic printer and pamphleteer printing subversive work in favor of the Papacy, was known for her work *Malice Defeated*, in which she documented her commitment to the Catholic church following her unjust imprisonment, a document that would result in her once again being sent to prison. Cellier fought the distrust women often faced in the legal system by creating her own uniquely formatted record of all of her experiences in and out of court that resulted in her imprisonment and her commitment to truth. She used her work to portray herself as a model caretaker and domestic figure by highlighting her role as a mother and her

reform work in prisons while simultaneously illustrating her public knowledge.

Margaret White, actively printing between 1679 and 1683, was a Quaker who printed an almanac and a series of important sermons given in front of the House of Commons, but who otherwise leaves no certain information pertaining to her life in the historical record. Some of her printed work and design played off of the work of the authors she printed, drawing attention to issues of truth and woman's place in the fight for authentic representation in print through subtle decisions, including font style and title page design. While the printer's influence is not as obvious in her works as those by Cellier, —some don't even contain her full name— they reflect how visual style could express similar values like truthfulness and trustworthiness that shaped the complex politics of printing as a woman. These texts also convey to us a history of collaboration and a surprisingly diverse set of connections despite the fact that most of her limited body of work is connected in some way to her Quakerism and the Stationers' Company. Margaret White's printing helps us create a portrait of her that other historical records have so far been unable to, and the story they tell is of a woman who followed what may be deemed a very typical domestic path for a woman printer and managed to use it to subtly push the limits of what a female printer could accomplish in the society in which she worked and lived.

A final section will also use the archives to show that these shared values across these different groups of women can be traced through their

shared social connections, illustrating that female solidarity may have been felt by these women more than previously believed. While scholars may continue to believe that women printers did not have a sense of collective identity, I hope that after examining these two case studies and the connections between them that we might consider more carefully the amount of credit we give these successful female printers and their awareness of their social and professional world.

Print Industry, Culture and its Relevant History during the 1600s

Understanding the chaotic, evolving structure and history of print culture as a whole is imperative to understanding the role of women in it. Though printing began in England in the mid-1400s with the work of William Caxton, it took off in the late 1500s, when the industry gained greater commercial value (Gadd 36). The amount of books, pamphlets, and sermons printed increased dramatically. For one to “consult different books it was no longer necessary to be a wandering scholar” (Gadd 41). This commercial push within the industry, and the resulting increase in literacy, led to greater diversity in the kinds of works that were being printed.

Guidebooks, almanacs, religious treatises, and ballads were stamped and delivered into the hands and homes of the growing number of individuals who were obtaining and reading more material than ever before in England, including women. This growing female audience led to an increase in material aimed at English women, like guidebooks on domesticity, married life, cooking, child-rearing, and childbirth (Gadd 76).

The demand for such works opened doors for women as writers, printers, and booksellers in this period.

As printing came into its own, so did the Worshipful Company of Stationers, also known as the Stationers' Company, a collective body representing and steering the culture and future of printing. The Stationers' Company was established in 1403 but granted a royal charter in 1557 (Lyons). Its monopoly over the printing industry was solidified after its absorption of the Oxford University Press in 1691 (Johnson 129). It acted as record keeper, censor, and legal system for the printing industry and appointed a board to act as managers and judges on matters such as ownership and rights cases, selling and negotiating of printers rights, and political censorship and law-making. The Stationers' Company had the power to control who had access to what material, who could be apprenticed to whom, who could be deemed a master printer and more (Smith 117). This group had the power to confer credibility or inflict punishment upon any printer, and this could be all the more important to the survival of a female printer's business.

While the Stationers' Company and its relationship to the crown did result in censorship, of all the industries in England at the time, the printing industry was considered one of the more accepting of people who may have possessed unique ideas or come from a non-English background. This was in large part due to the relative youth of English literary culture. Much of what was printed in early English print culture was translated from the Greek and

Latin canon in an attempt to model and introduce Classical literary traditions into English. This work required printers and apprentices who understood other languages, starting with Greek and Latin, but moving into French, German, and Dutch, as well. Often, the best way to do this was by employing foreigners who traveled to England from the Continent, but who had knowledge of the printing industry from their work in their home countries (Gadd 67). This is how we see the first female printers arrive in England, as wives of foreign printers. The first female printers we know of were women who came from other countries, like the Netherlands, and may have helped to change attitudes in England, where most women lacked “any academic training beyond elementary instruction in conversational English and religious exercises” (Warnicke 3). These men and women set up shop in their new homes, bringing with them new technologies and techniques that would help develop print culture in England.

The structure of printing in the home is particularly important to the understanding of how women have been figured in it. Certain larger shops, particularly those that included forges and metalworking for creating new stamps, may have operated independently, but most printers set up shop in their own home (Smith 94). The presses and other shop operations would be located in one room or on one floor of a family home. Printers could receive printing rights from the Stationers’ Company or purchase them from the authors of the work. They then could choose to sell the printed product to the public themselves or sell them to a bookseller. Women, whether they

identified as printers or not, often played key roles in the business of printing, as the managers of the domestic space. However, it is important to recognize that women did not just operate in a domestic print space, but a public one as well, and therefore we must familiarize ourselves with that space.

Communal gathering spaces like churches and universities and certain streets associated with religious and social groups were the backdrop for the print world, with which we know women engaged. Printed works were hawked on the street or sold in particular neighborhoods known for being print hubs, such as the area around and within St. Paul's churchyard (German 2). The churchyard at St. Paul's was, at the time, "a hive of political radicalism, the very centre of the printing industry" and contained the homes of many stationers and their print shops (German 2). Outside of the churchyard, booksellers and pamphleteers sold their printed works in booths and on the street (German 2). This churchyard had been the home of bookmakers and booksellers since the 1390s and came with a deep history and community linked by literature, intellectual pursuits, and financial wealth (Schoeck 129). Women writers like Isabella Whitney incorporated references to this important print site in their work, even talking about the business and relationships behind their texts (Whitney In. 229-236). Not all print communities and neighborhoods wanted to be so public, however. Outsiders trying to avoid persecution, like Catholics and radical Protestants, worked in alternative and more furtive neighborhoods. Political and religious turmoil

meant secret Catholic publishing was not uncommon and by 1581, many secret printing areas had appeared in London alone, including Greenstreet House, Gunpowder Alley, Clerkenwell Green, Holborn, and Fetter Lane (Schoeck 45). The knowledge of these spaces and the way they operated would have been essential for success in the print industry, and therefore even more critical for women, but understanding the history that helped shape them is perhaps even more critical.

Not only was there distrust in the legal and political world, largely a result of the social turmoil resulting from the English Civil Wars and constantly shifting seat of power, but there was also distrust in print. Printers had edited, emended, or misprinted texts since Caxton began printing in England, and as the monopolization of print culture made accountability a real issue of legal and personal safety, women find themselves at the forefront of this issue, particularly with the growing amount and diversity of print material available.

This resurgence that printed material experienced in the late 1600s after a period marked by censorship and relative dearth during the 1660s can be traced back to specific historical moments and movements linked to the Restoration period under both Charles II and James II. Following the establishment and dissolution of the Protectorate ruled by Oliver Cromwell after much political turmoil, Charles II took the throne. While he supported and stood by Anglicanism publicly, he harbored Catholic sympathies, as did his brother, which made him unpopular. The Anglican Parliament attempted

to keep James from taking the throne as the next legitimate heir by passing an act in Parliament, leading to what is known as the Exclusion Crisis. The Exclusion Crisis divided the English government and the English public into two clearly recognizable political parties, the Whigs and the Tories, and added fuel to the already glowing flames of public discourse and debate ("The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century, 1660-1785"). The Exclusion Crisis helped propel women like Elizabeth Cellier and Elinor James to their places as some of the most recognizable female printers of the period (Suzuki 13). This massive debate, which reinforced a fear of persecution, violence, or death in many Catholics and radical Protestants and which had dominated public discussion throughout the 1600s, brought new individuals that shaped religion in society into the public sphere, some of whom were women.

Women in Printing

Women become particularly visible as important voices in the public sphere in the 1640s (Lake 280). The 1600s created new opportunities for women to enter public spaces in print, particularly the years after 1640, in which 90% of works printed by women between 1550 and 1700 were put into circulation (Barnard 433). Mihoko Suzuki writes in *The History of British Women's Writing, 1610-1690* that while "traditional divisions of literary scholarship [...] have discussed together Elizabethan and Jacobean writings and grouped together those of the Restoration and the eighteenth century," addressing women writers and printers of this time requires cutting "across

boundaries of periodisation to treat the period 1610-1690" (20). As pamphlet production radically increased in this period, so, too, did pamphlets that explicitly addressed issues of sex, with male writers often advocating for more restrictions upon women's voices and rights in print, either legally or socially, and women writers often resisting this categorization.

Religion was a gateway many female stationers used to enter the public sphere and earn credibility as stationers and writers. Much of the writing done by women of this time addressed the religious conflicts that had escalated as a result of the English Civil Wars and the Restoration. Religious discourses were some of the earliest in which women could participate, given that religion was nearly always part of whatever minimal education they had at the time (Springer 13). As religion became more important in the public sphere, so, too, did the voice of women.

The entrance of women into the public sphere through religious discourse also resulted in theological and social conversations that made gender a vital social conversation topic. Women created works as early as 1617 that addressed Eve as a religious figure and representative of women (Gilbert). As a result, gender became a more frequent topic in print, resulting in the Jacobean Pamphlet wars on gender (Bailie 14). Men and women went head to head in the public arena in clashes of wit around a woman's rights and place in society. This public debate was especially striking when one considers that only 100 years previously, women had been outlawed from reading work aloud (Bailie 14). Women in the 1600s who voiced their

opinions in public forums, therefore, still bore the social pressures that lingered from this earlier period which classified their work as indecent and potentially criminal (Bailie 14). This distinction in consequences and expectations for men and women who produced printed work shows that there was inherently an understanding of gendered groups, even if individuals during this period considered their religion or class more central to their identity. It is hard, then, to consider a world in which women did not have some understanding of collectivity relative to the collective force of men in this print culture, whether they were printers or not. After all, had society not already taught them to see themselves as separate?

The most common figuring we see imposed on female printers and women in general during this period, particularly by men, though occasionally women, as the result of a patriarchal culture,¹ is that of women as domestic beings, confined and defined by the physical space of the home and their roles as wives, mothers, and caretakers. The domestic here concerns aspects of life tied to marriage, family, reproduction, and the dwelling of the family. It can refer to the physical restrictions put on women that told them or forced them to remain in the home or can mean the greater social system which suggested that women's skills, abilities, and responsibilities were relegated mainly to matters of the family. For women printers, this was particularly true. Simply by looking at the Stationers' Register, or the collection of Company records and documents, alongside A

¹ Dowd, Michelle M. *Women's Work in Early Modern English Literature and Culture*. Springer, 2009.

Chronology and Calendar of Documents Relating to the London Book Trade:

1641-1670, we are able to see that the most common way for women to enter the industry was through marriage, or, more likely, the ending of one. Written into these records are the names of many husbands who left their printing businesses to their wives in the wake of their deaths. Women would often take over their husbands' shops under the same name, but others chose to alter the seal of their printing house by adding "Widow of" to the seal, or, occasionally, altering the seal altogether (Smith 93). In fact, because women were not allowed to work in labor, and therefore were excluded from certain parts of printing and production, women were often left in charge of the business-side of printing when they worked with their husbands or family members (Smith 93). As a result, the domestic sphere and business sphere began to be seen as potential points of overlap in the industry (Smith 94). This may be seen as further proof that women in printing did operate within a domestic space, but managing the business of printing at this time required a public knowledge for investing.

The English Stock, which functioned as the Stationers' Company's own publishing sector and controlled the rights to very popular works, like almanacs, for example, which will be important in my analysis of Margaret White, gave a significant portion of its shares to women. Though printer's widows who remarried outside of the trade had to sacrifice all of the rights that had belonged to their husbands, while they remained unmarried they were allowed to hold shares in the English Stock, and by 1644, women held

over 25% of the stock in the Company (Smith 95). One potential method that the Stationers' Company implemented in 1637 could have helped cripple certain female printers, however. The Company decreed that the number of recognized master printers in London would be limited to twenty (Smith 117), an action that would have automatically excluded most, if not all, women outright. This would have made it much harder for female printers to compete financially with their male counterparts, despite their business acumen and social connections.

Many women, following the death of their husbands, found themselves in a precarious place. While they retained their husband's printing rights, many often sold them to be economically secure or married other printers. In some cases, women who wanted to sell their rights and ensure there was a fair trade would go before the courts (*A Chronology and Calendar of Documents Relating to the London Book Trade 1641-1700: Volume 1, 1641-1685* 70, 104). In other cases, women would come before the court to file a claim against another printer for illegally printing a work to which she had the rights (*A Chronology and Calendar of Documents Relating to the London Book Trade 1641-1700: Volume 1, 1641-1685* 63, 66). While it is important to note that women in England at the time had few rights, especially legal ones, and therefore the ability to present a case to a governing body in the industry was significant, it is also important to know that cases like the ones described above often undermined the woman's status and role as a printer.

Mrs. Waterson, Mrs. Seile, and Mrs. Lilliecrap were all female printers who filed a complaint of this nature between the years 1673 and 1675. The courts chose to resolve this problem the same way for all women—they were told to give up their printing rights for the stolen work to the printer the claim was filed against in exchange for a small settlement (*A Chronology and Calendar of Documents Relating to the London Book Trade 1641-1700: Volume 1, 1641-1685* 76-77, 80, 83). In this way, women who fought for their own rights as printers were often punished rather than rewarded, had their products taken from them, and their voice in society as a whole reduced. The Stationers' Company, who held the rights to distinguished works or works pulled from the archive, rarely would have bestowed upon a woman the honor of printing one of these works ("Nature and Scope"). This may be important to consider when we look at women who did end up in legal battles where they had to use assumptions about their gender, such as their natural yearning for a domestic life, the necessity for modesty, or lack of intelligence, to avoid harsh punishment, performing a role that would garner pity or sympathy from men.

Finding a way to stress a one's adherence to the role of domestic, modest, and subordinated womanhood was often key for women in legal cases. During this period, women were often considered inferior in matters of intellectual study (Barnard) and were given fewer educational opportunities. Some women at this time might even have been forbidden from reading altogether due to this unfortunate figuring (Gadd 72). Many women were

able to avoid prosecution because they stressed their role within their families, their lack of intelligence, or their ignorance as women (Chedgzoy 193). Abigail Dexter, for example, claimed on the 27th of November, 1642, that she had printed the work of a late King thinking it harmless, a crime “committed from imbecility and ignorance,” and that she requested a pardon from prison time on the grounds “that her family not be ruined and all her customers lost” (*A Chronology and Calendar of Documents Relating to the London Book Trade 1641-1700: Volume 1, 1641-1670* 76). Some husbands even had their wives print subversive works, rather than themselves, because they felt it would be easier for them to receive a pardon or a lesser punishment (Chedgzoy 193). This unique position afforded women the opportunity to risk printing certain texts that men would not touch, a risk Elizabeth Cellier took when writing and printing *Malice Defeated*.

While this is important, it is to be noted that this could not be executed without extreme care or without consequences that shaped how society viewed the capabilities of women printers. Along with property ownership restrictions, women were often deemed incapable or untrustworthy when it came to amending texts, either because of judgments about their intelligence or their moral character and modesty. During this period there was a social association between women who spoke out in the public forum and women who were branded as promiscuous. Female printers were often branded with a scandalous sexual label. According to Wendy Wall, “the sexually invested phrase ‘pressing the press’ inscribed print with an air of

scandal,” connecting it to a kind of sexual act that would result in procreation of the printed work (Wall 35). While this sexualized figuring of women printers can be linked to the desire to keep women silent and present only within a domestic space, it may also be connected to what K.E. Maus explores in her essay “A Womb of his Own: Male Renaissance Poets in the Female Body”: that the literary world was often thought of as reserved for men during this period and the creative act considered a kind of masculine birthing. We might then draw the connection between women and printing as one of hypersexuality, of a kind of extension of their physical ability to procreate that may have been frowned upon in a society that expected women to be devoted to their domestic space and their family and that wanted to serve print and writing production for men.

A delicate balance had to be struck between character and connections, modesty and public presence for women to be trusted in the small social world of print. This played out particularly clearly for women in instances where they were brought before judges or a legislative print body. According to Rachel Weil, the character of witnesses in legal cases was often more important than evidence, and what “did make for credibility was up for grabs” (193). Wealth and virtue could play a role, but so could the relationships one forged with one’s communities and neighbors (190). Women managed to link the views of their intellectual inferiority, the social connections, and their need for moral purity by stressing their role as purely transcribers, not editors, of texts they put into print.

I touched earlier on how many printers throughout print history had changed, altered, or created critical errors in texts they printed, which resulted in a distrust towards printers and the voices they were slyly sliding into public discussion. There was, however, “little evidence of women Stationers emending copy or penning interpretive paratexts” (Smith 88). This may have been for two reasons. One, women were not often given a public, legal, or political voice. Though this had begun to change as a result of the Jacobean Pamphlet Wars on gender (Suzuki 20), it was still thought that women’s voices should not be present in the public sphere the way men’s voices were. Secondly, though, women were often thought of as less intelligent (Gadd 72), and therefore could not be trusted to edit or emend texts. While they may have been capable of reading and copying a text, any additional changes would have been frowned upon. Regardless of the reason, women managed to turn this negative figuring into a positive opportunity. Rather than being unable to edit print works, women “chose” not to and thereby claimed a greater faithfulness to the text.

I have been describing the context of print culture and women’s role in it and now I shift towards viewing conventional figurations of women and their appropriation of these figurations. Here begins the work of framing how women twisted this dialogue and used their intelligence to argue instead that texts should not be amended by their printers. I want to look also at how the lack of trust in women’s abilities as printers paradoxically led them to become central in the conversations surrounding authenticity of printed

work. They challenged social depictions of themselves as untrustworthy and marked themselves as bearers of truth by not editing texts as men were deemed capable of doing and not producing new text that would align them with a promiscuous or reproductive aspect of print culture. On the level of the print community as a whole, women's print construction, their editorial letters, their trial documents, their self-publishing of their own legal experiences, and their loyal consistency in acquisition of rights from particular writers and speakers helped fuel conversations about the role and integrity of the printer as the industry grew rapidly.

Print authority or print integrity will be thought of as three-fold here. Firstly, it is the printing of a text that is unaltered by the printer and whose visual style reinforces rather than challenges the content of the work. Secondly, it is the presentation of a trustworthy speaker, be that a printer, writer, or bookseller. This can be seen in claims to truth by the speaker, documentation by the speaker, or acknowledgement by the printer of issues surrounding the creation of a printed work. Thirdly, it is the oversight of printing as governed by bodies like the Stationers' Company. Within the production of print authority, women claimed to bring candor and trust. I posit that this claim is and was supported by evidence that suggests that few women ever edited the works they printed. In addition, the legal battles women fought and the individuals they worked alongside suggest a desire for institutional oversight. As a result, these women printers became central

figures in the debate surrounding print integrity and authority in the 17th century.

The Critical Background on Female Printers

Scholars like Maureen Bell, Helen Smith, and Paula MacDowell have produced recovery work in the last few decades that is vital to understanding what the print industry was like for women in the 17th century in England. They have paved the way for the discovery of many unique women printers from various backgrounds. While I will be using their findings as a foundation for analyzing particular women printers, I hope to assess in this paper the potentially problematic views of women as domestic and disconnected from one another in critical works addressing female printing. This is particularly true of critical analysis that has resisted the possibility that female printers were even aware of their relationship to and shared experience with other female printers, whether or not they had a stronger sense of affiliation with other groups.

Most critics, like Helen Smith, argue that while female printers were aware of each other as they were free members of the Stationers' Company and more numerous than our current historical records may make readily known to us, they did not identify as a group or with one another on the basis of their gender and profession alone. Smith says this early on in her paper "'Print[ing] your royal father off': Early Modern Female Stationers and the Gendering of the British Book Trades":

From a modern perspective it is easy to identify women in the print trades as a distinct group within the Stationers' community --- a group whose members, thanks to the vagaries of the historical evidence, often seem to occupy a very tenuous position, surfacing only briefly, if at all, in the records. [...] To themselves, however, and to their contemporaries, I'm convinced that these women appeared neither as a specific and separate community, nor as particularly marginal figures. (165-166)

Following Smith's conclusion, most scholars avoid using a feminist lens to discuss these women, instead taking a path articulated clearly in *Women and Literature in Britain, 1500-1700* by Helen Wilcox, who suggests critics delve into "women's collaboration (and rivalries) at every level of textual production" (442) and seek to find unrecognized connections between women. Finding these connections is a key piece of the work I am doing and texts like this reinforce the importance of that work, however this recovery also presents us with an important question. Why are we willing to track these connections at a great distance in time and so unwilling to acknowledge that these intelligent women may have been aware of their shared experiences or values as women in their own time?

According to current scholarly work, early modern women related much more to those within their same religion or social class than they did

with other women, or rather, did not view themselves as a collective group the way second wave feminism may desire. While it may be true that women were connected more through religion or social classes than through gender, I will argue that there are certain values shared by women of the time from very different spheres that can be found in the linkages they felt and hinted at between them in their work.

In addition, and in some ways, in connection, I hope to challenge the belief that female printers existed purely in and because of the domestic space. While some scholars have begun to edge away from the claim that women were merely domestic figures within the industry, many scholars, such as Anne Lawrence-Mathers and Susan Wiseman, have dedicated whole works to women's presence in print culture during this period as a result of print's domestic nature. While we know from the history and the archives that the domestic space was certainly important to women in print, it is also clear that successful female printers navigated public space in a highly skilled manner. These female stationers often had to balance conforming to domestic ideals for personal safety with challenging these imposed beliefs, something I plan to explore in both case studies I undergo.

In considering matters of domesticity and social ideals around gender, we have to consider the divisive effect it would have had between men and women. Based on the legal and social history of this period, we know that society enforced the expectation that women

live, work, and center their efforts around the home. Would this expectation not have created an automatic awareness of gender divides that could have made it possible for women to have some kind of collective understanding through shared experience? Have scholars internalized social prejudices about women's intelligence perpetuated by this period or do we really have grounds for so underestimating the awareness of women in the past relative to our own? While scholars may say we do have such grounds, I hope to take this opportunity to probe what we might discover about women printers in the late 17th century if we credit them with greater insight of their connections to one another.

Elizabeth Cellier

Elizabeth Cellier was a midwife, writer, printer, and bookseller in London. Her historical presence is most notable between 1668 and 1688, during which time both her writing and political, legal, and religious ideals became matters of great public debate. Cellier does not have much work attributed to her name as a writer and printer, but the conversation and print material it inspired in response is surprisingly vast for a woman of this period given the controversial nature of her work as a Catholic midwife and advocate for prison reform.

Early work

As I delve into the ways Cellier understands and engages with the sexist figuring of women in her day, it is important to convey that from the start she understood the importance of using these gendered constructions to her advantage, rather than discarding them entirely. Cellier got her start in print by using her knowledge as a midwife to contribute to a guidebook (King), but her earliest personal work is a broadsheet printed in 1670 entitled *The Ladies Answer to that Busie-Body Who wrote 'the Life and Death of Du Vall'*. The pamphlet is written in verse composed of rhyming couplets, a style we do not see Cellier adopt again, which might be thought of as a kind of alignment with the many broadsheets women printed and sold to address religious issues and conflict. Women printers "were more likely to participate in newspapers and periodicals; religious and political writings such as prayerbooks and tracts; schoolbooks, almanacs, and chapbooks; printed visual materials such as engravings, woodcuts, and music; and even the 'everyday' stuff of the print trades, job printing such as posters, tickets, and handbills" (McDowell 136-37). Broadsides and related materials reached "a wide-ranging purchasing public of women as well as men at the middle ranks" (Jones 270). Clare Brant also argues that although conventional and easy to generate, broadsides belong to a genre that despite its supposedly "marginal" status, "had some advantages-indeterminacy, informality-and should not be read simply as the consequence of patriarchal disempowerment" (Jones 285). Cellier's poem fights against a writer who attacks the sympathy of women for a particular convict named Du Vall,

which makes Cellier's choice seem all the more deliberate. Though Cellier boldly criticizes a man and defends women in print, she uses a lyrical style that shows that she is not breaking all societal norms. This form solidifies her conventional alignment with certain expectations of women despite Cellier's bold engagement in public discourse, which may have made her work more palatable to a wider audience.

Cellier's diction also creates complex layers of meaning around gender and invites readers to question her relationship to societal pressures for women. In *The Ladies Answer to that Busie-Body Who wrote 'the Life and Death of Du Vall,'* she writes "Only poor *Ladyes*, that have no defence, / Nothing to guard them, but their Innocence" are publicly judged for feeling sympathy for those convicted of crimes and sentenced to harsh punishments. Innocence has a revealing double meaning given the legal battles we know Cellier would have seen and would eventually face herself. "Innocence" may be read as legal innocence versus guilt, but also as a virginal or pure innocence. By presenting the reader with this intertwined meaning, Cellier's text presents a nimble and complex legal and social awareness. Here, a woman's legal innocence relies on whether she is perceived as innocent in a virtuous sense. Virginal innocence does not exculpate women in Cellier's poem. She does not write something akin to "Nothing to exonerate them" but rather "Nothing to guard them." Innocence is not passive for women, something they possess that is left to be uncovered by others, likely men. Innocence, instead, is active, a kind of

external shield, possibly representative of a performance of traditional femininity that could protect women from legal and social consequences related to printing. Cellier's loaded linguistic choices, therefore, might be thought of as models for women in print because they allow women to see the social structures designed to hinder them turned to their advantage.

***Malice Defeated*: Introduction**

Cellier's largest, most important, most infamous, and most widely debated work is *Malice Defeated*, a work that documents Cellier's personal experience of being on trial for treason after she is accused of being involved in the so-called Mealtub Plot. One Thomas Dangerfield, a criminal who had been offered aid by Cellier and a Lady Powis while in prison, claimed that he had been offered a reward by Cellier and Powis to kill the king, the Earl of Shaftesbury, and others. The proof of this, he said, could be found in a series of forged pamphlets that would be used to pass blame onto leading Protestants. He said these forged documents could be found in a mealtub in Cellier's home. Upon a search of her home, documents matching the description were found. Cellier's pamphlet, mounting her self-defense, also addresses her personal history and devotes considerable space to discussing the injustices that Cellier encounters within prisons where she did charitable work, provided midwifing services for imprisoned women, and encountered her own personal mistreatment.

It is unclear whether Cellier was ever involved in such a plot. Some critics agree with Cellier's claim that she was set up, that Dangerfield, after

being denied further aid by Cellier and Powis due to rogue and illegal behavior, decided to take revenge (Kenyon). Others are keen to point out the holes in Cellier's story and the ways she appears to go back on some of her own details (Weil 190). While truth and trustworthiness in this work is a topic we will be addressing in detail, I am not concerned with whether or not Cellier's claims are true. Rather, my interest is in exploring the ways in which Cellier presents herself as a figure of truth, how that figuring is tied in central ways to her gender, and how her text speaks to and even presses for a female audience.

While it is clear that Cellier wrote this text, it is unclear whether she had it printed for her or printed it herself. This question helps us understand Cellier's relationship to the print community and culture, helping determine the multifaceted roles she may have inhabited in print culture that could alter how we see women relating to one another within it. The title card of *Malice Defeated* states that it was "Printed for Elizabeth Cellier" rather than "Printed by Elizabeth Cellier." There are three factors, however, that allow us to look at Cellier as the primary printer for this text. No other printer is listed, which is significant. Beginning in the 1660s, the King's official censor for all print-related matters, Sir Roger L'Estrange, strove to make it more difficult to have works printed and written anonymously. It was expected and increasingly enforced that those responsible for both writing and printing decisions have their name upon their works, though it is true that this was often ignored (Robertson 133). Whether or not there was another printer

involved in *Malice Defeated* who chose to hide their name, Cellier would have received the weight of those choices as the only listed name. This is evident when, in a later record named *The tryal and sentence of Elizabeth Cellier for writing, printing and publishing a scandalous libel called, Malice defeated*, she is listed as the printer within the title of the text. Many of the decisions, from marginal citations, to illustrative plates, to font choices, also seem to be deliberate and well-organized as a part of Cellier's writing process as well, showing that she was thinking as much as a printer as she was a writer. In addition, Cellier sold this work from her own home and was responsible for its relatively widespread circulation, making her a printer, publisher, and bookseller. For these reasons, I will be attributing the printing of *Malice Defeated* to Cellier.

I will chart the ways that Cellier's work at once plays with, reinforces, and challenges the figuring of women and women printers during this period. I will also show how *Malice Defeated* functions as a work meant to address women directly and cultivate a sense of shared association and identification.

***Malice Defeated*: Embodying and challenging the figure of the domestic female printer**

Though Cellier had to carefully balance her public connections with her domestic life as a female printer in this period, she makes it apparent that she places her domestic life and marriage in a position of priority in conforming with social standards for women. "The separating a Wife from

her Husband, and all manner of friends and Relations” is one of the very first mistreatments Cellier witnessed, experienced, and detailed in her record of the injustices of the prison system in her work (*Malice Defeated* 6). Having both “friends and Relations” and “Husband” linked in this statement shows the critical balance women maintained in navigating both public and domestic spheres. Cellier argues here that the removal from either is an injustice, a critical statement for establishing women as public figures during a time when they were often encouraged to remain out of the public sphere. She does, however, put “Husband” first and foremost. Cellier also discloses that she manages her family’s estate and keeps them from financial ruin (*Malice Defeated* 31), a role which her imprisonment threatened. Cellier appeals to the figuring of women as domestic, but she does so by stressing that she is essential to the economic survival of the home.

Spiritual survival, however, was just as important as economic survival, and Cellier introduces and takes advantage of religious dialogue frequently in her text. While religious discourse is one women could and often did occupy in the domestic space as the caretakers of children, Cellier takes that space and expands its power onto the page, giving her a voice larger than her own. On page 20 of *Malice Defeated*, Cellier presents the dialogue of her trial in a script-like fashion, having an italicized name against the left margin before a period, which is then followed by the dialogue of that individual. This formal choice is meant to suggest a lack of authorial interpretation or presence in the text, something I will discuss more later. What is important

here is that she does diverge from her script-like formulation at one point on this page and allows her voice to run fluidly out of her separated dialogue and become more domineering on the page as she invokes religious allusions. In a rebuke to Dangerfield, Cellier writes:

But I laugh'd at all this, and receiv'd his proffers as they
deserv'd, and said, *Cowardly Wretch*, you are worse than your
Elder Brother *Judas*, for he having betray'd one Innocent, left
those that hired him, to seek false Witnesses for themselves, and
repented, and brought again the Thirty pieces of Silver. (20-21)

Cellier frames religion in her work as a realm in which women have the power of education and authority that allows them to take up physical space in a way that would have countered many domestic ideals she would have encountered in her life. Here, scriptural knowledge informs public speech not just private devotion or motherly instruction.

Though Cellier's text seems to align itself in some ways with the moral rightness of feminine domestic life, there are many ways in which it directly wrestles with and discards that social correctness for women. Cellier presents herself as a public female figure and she establishes her knowledge of physical space outside of the home. She specifically lists places with important social and political ramifications in print to show her connections and knowledge. Almost immediately in the text, she cites a particular witness and refers "to the Party himself now living in *Gunpowder-alley* in *Shoe-lane*" (*Malice Defeated* 4). Gunpowder Alley was a key printing

neighborhood in London, one that was particularly known for its seditious Catholic printing. While this may seem like self-incriminating evidence, it seeks to reinforce her trustworthiness and her detailed record of witnesses by giving her audience a social realm they could use to cross-check her work and establishes her as a woman with greater clout than if she were merely present in her own domestic space.

Malice Defeated: Finding intersections between sexuality and knowledge

While work by critics like Wendy Wall has helped establish the sexual taboos associated with printing as a woman, Cellier's position as a female printer coupled with her role as a midwife meant she would have born two labels often associated with the corrupt sexual woman. Midwives were considered keepers of secrets pertaining to women's bodies and sexuality and while as "a woman, Cellier was excluded from formal participation in the political system," her position as a midwife would have raised "issues about non-official kinds of 'political power' which hinge on the knowledge of secrets and the ethics of telling them" (Weil 194). Cellier's critics used this sexual slander to discredit her. Her attempts to defend herself in *Malice Defeated* led her opposition to say she had delivered "plots and lies as monstrous births" (Weil 202). While this is a particular jab at her profession as a midwife, it is also interesting because it may be read as an indictment of the work she gave birth to, shaming both her role in serving women and her own literary creation. Weil breaks down how these attacks create a pertinent linkage between women and their work:

What stands out in these attacks is not just the fact that they centre on Cellier's sexuality, but the slippage they involve between Cellier and her book. They link an attack on her sexual character with an attack on the truthfulness of her book, but the direction in which the link is constructed is not always clear [...] It is hard to tell whether the authors of these attacks are saying that *Malice Defeated* should not be believed because Cellier is a whore, or whether that are saying that Cellier must be a whore because her book is untruthful. (205)

This quite clearly ties back to attitudes of the period I discussed while addressing women's position in print that linked printing with a kind of birth, a grossly excessive reproductive ability for women, but not so for men. What is fascinating about Cellier's approach to these criticisms and patriarchal constraints of her period is that she manages to manipulate this stereotype to show that she can be modest without being naive. Though she cannot fully escape the stereotypes of her day, Cellier uses them to establish her intelligence, a virtue not often recognized in or granted to women during this period.

At one point during the dialogic recording of her trial in *Malice Defeated*, a witness against Cellier who goes by Mr. Adams mentions that Cellier told an inappropriate joke so scandalous it could not be told in court. Cellier presses for the joke to be told and once she recalls the incident, finishes telling it herself. The joke goes that Cellier knows as a midwife she

will always have work so long as men always kiss their wives. Those hearing this testimony have different reactions, but at least in the way Cellier frames them within *Malice Defeated*, they all seem in some small way to work in Cellier's favor. One witness notes that she speaks "bawdy." According to the Oxford English Dictionary, bawdy means "of, pertaining to, or befitting a bawd; lewd, obscene, unchaste,"¹ but the history of this word is more complex. A "bawd," prior to 1700, was a term associated with men who were procurers of prostitutes,² and the term "bawdy-basket" was used to refer to hawkers of licentious literature.³ This term, then, links Cellier both to the public selling of print material and a kind of socially connected or at least knowledgeable masculinity. Therefore, while being able to speak "bawdy" may seem like a label to be avoided at all costs, it also conveys a particular social knowledge capable of crossing social and gender divides.

The most telling moment of this scene, however, is the moment in which Cellier responds, with an almost patronizing subtext, to the individual who referenced the joke. She quotes herself saying, "Mr. Adams I am sorry for your Ignorance, --I beseech your Majesty let me be enlarged" (*Malice Defeated* 28). For one, she uses this joke that was meant to further sexualize and degrade her moral character to make her appear more knowledgeable

¹ "bawdy, adj.2." *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, March 2019, www.oed.com/view/Entry/16363.

² "bawd, n.1." *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, March 2019, www.oed.com/view/Entry/16346.

³ "Special Uses: bawdy-basket." *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, March 2019, www.oed.com/view/Entry/16363.

at the expense of the individual testifying against her. For another, the word “inlarged” here is also worth examining for its meaning during this period. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, “inlarge” means without restraint, freely, or boldly. She asks that she be granted a kind of linguistic, mental, and perhaps even sexual freedom as she fights for her bodily freedom from incarceration. “Inlarged” here could, in the context of this dialogue, invoke images of conception, creative or physical. She may have understood that there were some assumptions she would not be able to escape due to her professions, but her text suggests that what she sacrificed in virtue as a public woman in complex and charged fields she made up for in intelligence. Once she established her intelligence, her audience was much more likely to believe her logical train of reasoning discrediting her accusers. It is ultimately this knowledge, therefore, that helps to exonerate her, despite its potential cost to her modesty. Her portrayal of herself in relation to her sexuality, however, is only one piece of what makes this text so powerful.

Malice Defeated: Truth and integrity in print

One of the values that Cellier stresses the most in her work is truth and trust. If we are to think of Cellier’s work as one that seems invested in its female audience, which I believe it is, then it is worth considering how she and other female printers may have taken up these values as a collective. It is important, first of all, to understand why this was such a vital issue. As Weil puts it, Cellier’s choice “to publicize her story is symptomatic of the

pervasive uncertainty among the English public as to the untrustworthiness of official authorities” (189). Possibly because women were simply deemed not intelligent enough to edit texts or because of their vulnerability in society should they suffer the consequences, women twisted this issue to their benefit and often centered some part of their work around truth in print.

This is something I will return to with both of the women I use as case studies, beginning with Cellier characterized by Rachel Weil as a “martyr for the sake of truth” (195). Critics are quick to point out that Cellier does not always tell the truth (Weil 195). In fact, there are moments where she owns up to inconsistencies in her record, establishing the importance of context in telling the truth. For example, there are matters of record and integrity in both print and in court, she says, that demand honesty, while other casual public settings like a tavern might not demand the same level of truth (*Malice Defeated* 29). What is more telling about Cellier, however, as a printer, is the integrity with which she treats the accounts of others. As a printer handling the works of an author, this is the trait that is perhaps the most vital to her and others of the period fighting for print integrity, even as her work for Truth unmasks her as a person who is not always perfectly honest.

While it is debatable how well Cellier read the times, especially in publishing a pamphlet as controversial as *Malice Defeated* immediately after her exoneration, positioning herself as a woman of truth in print was socially savvy. In the text, the word “truth” is used 66 times, and she writes, “My

Lord, nothing of Truth can do me any harm" (*Malice Defeated* 18). She provides detailed records of witnesses, produces much of her text like a script free of authorial interruption, and often acknowledges when even her accusers are being truthful (13). These are all conscious choices meant to illustrate her trustworthiness. Should she be willing to faithfully recount the words of her foes and acknowledge their truth, certainly she could do so for others in print, almost as though she were implementing a kind of marketing into her text. This is also an important position, however, due to the effect politics were having on print culture. Harold Weber notes how attempts by the crown to regain control over the mass amount of printed material, including new laws, trials, and positions for royally sanctioned censors, began "shifting responsibility for the economy of printed matter from the publisher and printer to the author" (Richards 418). Richards notes that Cellier "was clearly deeply committed to this publication" when she "circumvented a move by the Privy Council, who stopped her first printer (name unknown) midway through printing" but it is important also to note how Cellier's choice to continue printing and be recognized as the only listed printer on the text might have been a result of her awareness about this shift in print culture. Was her printer not to receive any shared responsibility or consequences for the text as he may have once had to, it is in the interest of Cellier's text that operates on a belief in her truthfulness and her narrative for the work to be entirely created and controlled by her, from writing to printing to selling. Cellier, therefore, was not merely utilizing the bias that

women were not intelligent enough to edit or understand the material they were printing to her benefit and helping establish women as figures of integrity. She was also taking advantage of a cultural shift that protected printers.

We see Cellier's commitment to the role of truthful recounter in the very methodical and even dry ways she relates the accounts of her witnesses beginning on page five in the text in comparison with moments of her own recorded speech. For example, we have already seen her split away from her dialogue format when dictating her speech about religion, which I addressed on page 24 of this paper, but the printed format applied to the accounts given by others is deeply consistent and meant to invoke a sense of realist immediacy. If we look at images of Cellier's text, she introduces dialogue within her trial using a script style. When pointing to letters sent from witnesses, she recreates them in the format of a letter on the page (*Malice Defeated* 11-12,33). We feel as though we are reading these letters and records as she would have, hearing the conversations as she would have, and so on. Her citations show that she is so confident in her recordings of their statements that she can reference them in connection with specific pieces of information, noting that "The Persons whose Names are on the Margent, either are or have been Sufferers in this [prison injustices], or some part of this kind, which may be easily produced to give Testimony according to the Truth, and no more" (*Malice Defeated* 7). Even when claiming that those testifying against her are lying, she admits to moments when they tell

the truth and provides records that corroborate them, noting that she is “induc’d to Credit” them (*Malice Defeated* 15). She also at one point writes, “as the Father of Lyes did once tell truth, so he hath inserted *this one truth* in his lying Narrative. But since it is the reward of Lyes, not to be believ’d when they do tell truth: That [this witness] may be Credited this once, I Print the Copies of the four following Depositions” (*Malice Defeated* 10). She describes the figure of lying as male, but notes that even his truth might be preserved by the record keeping and integrity of a female printer. Here, her role as female printer is directly referenced and shown to be a role that is about preservation of truth in the face of a male dominated industry rife with works being altered.

While her format and tone may indicate a very serious approach to honoring the voices of others, her personal motto reflects this as well. Cellier’s motto “I Never Chaing” reinforces a commitment to the works of others, her steadfast consistency to life as a domestic woman, and the adoption of tradition from her parents and her own domestic background. But this phrase could be applied directly to printing. While it is debatable how variable her character is within this text, it might be more apt to say that she does not change or alter the words of others. Additionally, however, this line implies a constant commitment, whether that be to her family, her king, or her religion, that is reinforced by language and form related to inheritance. It is a consistency not always afforded women as a result of patriarchal values and the presentation of women as the unfaithful Eve

(Gilbert). Here, however, Cellier proves it by noting that it was “a motto [her] Parents had used” (*Malice Defeated* 17). This shows not only that she respects familial tradition, but that the motto itself has not changed. As if to combat the patriarchal fear of female creation in print brought up by Wendy Wall, K.E. Maus, and Helen Smith, Cellier symbolically gives up that creative power, and as a printer only claims to faithfully copy those whom she loyally serves. Other critics and scholars like Penny Richards have also charted the many influences that shaped Cellier’s writing, and Richards in particular notes how she modeled parts of her style off of seventeenth-century female prophets, reinforcing a female-centered work (416). This might be thought of as yet another symbolic formed of inheritance, but this time from a female tradition within English literary culture, and it is this inheritance that becomes vital in the conversation surrounding whether women could identify themselves within a recognizable group of female stationers.

***Malice Defeated*: Defining and addressing a collective group of female stationers**

This linkage between Cellier and other female stationers, for me, begins a critical extension beyond the ways that women manipulated the patriarchal powers of the day to how they communicated or shared this manipulation with other women. Women like Cellier seem to speak to a specifically female audience and more importantly, to a female audience that is experiencing similar hardships in the public sphere, whether that be as writers, reformers, religious outsiders, or fellow printers and booksellers,

which I take as my focus. Weil notes that at times it is unclear if Cellier is celebrating justice being served or simply her own skill in manipulating the justice system by discrediting a witness and using prison injustice to at least in the mind of the public put the court on trial in *Malice Defeated* (Weil 196). However, Weil and other scholars do not consider that while this may simply be Cellier's own victory lap, perhaps it also is meant to serve both as a model to other women for how to outwit the system and as an acknowledgement of female solidarity that we see in Cellier's specific address to women in her text.

It is worth recognizing, however, that Cellier has a unique position compared to other women writers of the period. Ros Ballaster explains that most Popish Plot writings like Cellier's were not published under any individual's name (57), and this choice does set her apart in her presentation of herself within the text as a recognizable model for women. However, other women like Aphra Behn "are remarkable in their consistent advertisement of the relevance of their female authorship to the position they take on the 'truth' of the plot and the sexual dynamics of its representations" (57), suggesting that while these women certainly stand out as exceptional, they are not singular in their representations of women. Also, while this role as printer, writer, and bookseller may have been vitally important to Cellier – after all, she is later imprisoned and almost pilloried to death for writing *Malice Defeated* (King) – it is clear that there were other groups towards which she may have felt a stronger affinity. Specifically, she

“unapologetically presents herself as a person with political opinions and defines herself as part of a community of loyal subjects” (Weil 198) under a Catholic King. Having taken this into consideration, however, *Malice Defeated* in many ways still seems invested in reinforcing the power of groups of women and women in public spaces.

Though I have already discussed how Cellier challenges the confinement of domesticity, she also wisely tackles the boundaries women faced outside of domesticity alone. While she was “confined two and twenty weeks” as she went through her trial for treason, she writes that many also accused Dangerfield of treason and “Yet the Gentleman [walked] abroad undisturbed” (*Malice Defeated* 44). Though we know “the Gentleman” refers to Dangerfield, this particular phrasing can also hint at the public and physical freedom men experience as a whole that women are often denied. This positioning puts men and women at odds, and therefore creates a sense of collective womanhood.

Malice Defeated addresses women as a collective—she directly writes, “And as to my own Sex” (*Malice Defeated* 33)—and also records and immortalizes groups of women in print, highlighting that Cellier prioritized the promotion of other women, even if they were women from different backgrounds or who held different beliefs. One of the most apparent instances of Cellier using a group of women as support for her case happens almost immediately in the text when Cellier describes how during her prison reform work, she entered one of the prisons “with five Women, of which,

three were Protestants, and [they] all heard Terrible Groans and Squeeks which came out of the *Dungeon*" (*Malice Defeated* 3). Here, Cellier proclaims her association with other women outside of her Catholic faith. More than that, however, she associates with them in the work of revealing the truth about prison injustice and serving others, which will connect back to my belief that values of truth and integrity were mantels taken up by other female printers and women more broadly. Cellier's statement provides a strong challenge to what other scholars in this realm have suggested about women of this period being divided by their loyalties to their religious, familial, or class groupings. In fact, Cellier shows that by crossing these divides, women can perhaps help one another not only avoid conviction but spread important messages of social change. These women and others are cited throughout her text as witnesses to the horrors of mistreatment and torture in prisons, a topic that normally would have resulted in imprisonment for them. Here, however, the text protects them, though it did not protect Cellier in the long term, as she was arrested for treason for printing this material (King). By having these Protestant voices reinforce her claims, even as she is on trial for allegedly creating an anti-Protestant plot, however, she is able to insert a social claim that cannot be ignored and which undermines the legitimacy of the legal system by connecting it to civil rights abuses. It is through a female presence that spans social boundaries that these women are able to spread these messages not simply farther into the public sphere, but also directly to the courts and seats of power, as well.

Cellier's choices in her print style also paint a picture of a woman surrounded by a group of other supportive women. In the text, Cellier uses marginal citations to assign names to the different pieces of evidence she provides. While this structure is already reflective of Cellier's commitment to presenting an image of trustworthiness and accountability, it becomes more pertinent to this dive into female association and trust when one begins to analyze the list of names Cellier provides. The majority of the names on this list are women. In a court of men, it is worth considering why Cellier seems so keen to provide a long list of women to support her case. The presence of these names in the margins also creates a wall of mostly women's names around Cellier's text, as though creating a protective field through the unity of women committed to truth. While this may seem to wax too poetic, Cellier herself addresses all women and seems keen to rally them to her side even as she admits that she may not be flawless in presenting her sex on the public stage.

Malice Defeated challenged women of the period to consider the cost of using malicious criticism of sexuality against other women in the public sphere, as well. At one point in the text, a woman named Susan testifying for the prosecution accuses Cellier of adultery (39). While this might seem damning, she is deemed innocent because it was her own question about her sexual modesty that prompted this allegation, a conclusion Cellier prompts:

*[Cel.]My Lord, I appeal to your Conscience, as you sit there,
whether you think any thing but Innocence durst ask that*

*Question; And to prove it is so, there is a Wo|men has served me
26 Years, be pleased to examine her.*

*A Lawyer within the Bar, said, To me it is a plain proof of her
Innocence as to that point. Serj. Maynard then made some
malicious reflections thereupon. (39)*

Those judging her deem this worthy evidence that she is not hiding anything and is in fact innocent because she calls attention to it. Cellier undercuts the social ideal that only a silent woman is an innocent one, which was reinforced by New Testament teaching that women should not speak in church or in public, forcing women to cloak their public voices and opinions in apologies should they wish to be heard (Bailie 54-55). Rather, Cellier shows that by speaking up and confronting the figuring, she is shown to be knowledgeable and deemed trustworthy. It is this willingness to confront the characterizations of women in English society that gives Cellier credibility.

This initial claim about adultery did not stop there, however. Susan goes on to accuse Cellier of pawning her own daughter off to the man Cellier was sleeping (39). This accusation, however, is not received well by the court:

L.C.J. What would he have Mother and Daughter too?

Susan, then prated very impertinently.

*Judge. Will that Impudent Wench never have done prating? Turn
her out.*

Then she went and stood among the Clerks, Prating, and behaving her self impudently, till they scoft at her, and thrust her out of Court.

Then the Lord Chief Justice made an excellent Speech, of what sad Consequence it would be to admit such profligated Wretches to give Evidence; and that the three Kingdoms might have cause to rue such a days work, and that it would be an in-let to the greatest Villanies, to destroy our Lives, Li|berties and Estates, with much more to the like purpose. (40)

The inclusion of this moment seems to go beyond Cellier's need to document her case. Instead, it also shows the devaluing of Susan's public voice and embarrassment, illustrating the deeply discomforting consequences for women who attempt to use the biases established by the patriarchy against one another. It is true that Cellier is fighting not for her gender here, but rather for her own life. Still, this moment illustrates that the struggle Cellier is up against is not unique to her or even unique to women on trial by showing that all women run the risk of speaking publicly in a way that allows men like the Lord Chief Justice and his fellow judges to criticize women as witnesses, halting or hindering women from progressing further and more loudly into the public sphere. It is a struggle all women who dare step into the public sphere encounter, especially in print. All women, she seems to say, are likely to be deemed untrustworthy and "prating" unless they expand their awareness and find ways to outwit and manipulate the social constructs

already in place. Cellier does not sell out Susan, but she is very willing to use the judge's word "prating" to describe her, as if to say she would rather align herself with justices in the search of truth than a woman who would turn on another woman. This particular aspect of Cellier's testimony showed that women divided can only injure all women and helped advocate for collective unity amongst women.

Near the end of the main section of her text, Cellier addresses women directly, providing a powerful conclusion that seems to suggest that much of the text is aimed at an audience of women. She writes:

And as to my own Sex, I hope they will pardon the Errors of my Story, as well as those bold attempts of mine that occasion'd it, [...] though it may be thought too Masculine, yet was it the effects of my Loyal (more than Religious) Zeal to gain Proselytes to his Service [...] And in all my defence, none can truly say but that I preserv'd the Modesty, though not the Timorousness common to my Sex. And I believe there is none, but had they been in my Station, would, to their power, have acted like me; for it is more our business than mens to fear, and consequently to prevent the Tumults and Troubles Factions tend to, since we by nature are hindered from sharing any part but the Frights and Disturbances of them" (*Malice Defeated* 32)

Here, Cellier addresses her entire sex, a powerful move that suggests that she hopes to find acceptance, or perhaps even forgiveness, among all

women, regardless of belief or association, as another woman in the public eye. Not only is this a powerful moment in a text that spends so much time watching a woman defend herself in front of an audience of men, but it also invokes a community of like-minded printers, if only virtually. When Cellier writes that had anyone been in her “Station” they would have done the same, we can see her calling attention not only to her defense in court, but also this printed work she is now writing and printing as a result. Similarly, it is hard not to see a double meaning in the word “Station,” whether intended or not, that calls us back to the Stationers Company, reminding us of the other women in the Company who have faced their own legal battles, both victorious and disheartening, with regards to printed material and their place in the public sphere. At one moment in the text Cellier writes that she told her judges, “let them that desire my life, assault it of England in a Court of Judicature, let them that desire my life, assault it there, and though I cannot defend it like a man, yet I will not part with it in complement to your Lordships” (*Malice Defeated* 30). Though she admits she cannot defend her life as a man would, we see the implication that there is a way a woman might defend her life, perhaps by manipulating the ideals of domesticity, sexual modesty, and lack of intelligence attributed to women of the day as Cellier has.

If such an idea is at work in Cellier’s text, it seems flawed to suggest that other women of the day could not have made a similar connection and

witnessed a kind of solidarity in her self defense. One such exchange that illustrates this is recorded by Cellier here:

"Same Lord. You say so [that she is pregnant] in your Letter, and that it will keep you from any stricter examination.

Cel. No my Lord, I have no reason to think so, this is a time in which no Compassion is shewn to Sex, Age, nor Condition"

(Malice Defeated 24)

Cellier places sex before age or condition and while doing so is perhaps necessary for addressing issues of pregnancy, Cellier separates gender and the condition of being pregnant in this syntactical formulation. Cellier also does not prioritize class here, though socio-economic status was a determining factor in the way she was treated under the law. Lady Powis, for example, a woman of a higher class accused in this scandal, is not incarcerated as Cellier, nor is she exposed to the same kind of trial process. Yet Cellier seems to stress gender repeatedly in *Malice Defeated*, and addresses women directly. To me, this conveys that this work is for women, offering a model for how to operate as a female printer.

There is one moment above all in this text that suggests this text is aimed at women the most powerfully and it connects back to the very title of *Malice Defeated*. In the record of the trial, Cellier's servant Margaret comes forward, and while she speaks highly of Cellier, it is unclear at points if she will provide testimony against her. Cellier writes that she said before the judges, *"if she accuse me of any thing, it is the effect of her Malice"* (*Malice*

Defeated 25). This is the first reference to “malice” that we get in the text outside of the title. Is the malice being defeated, then, not the malice exhibited by the men on the court or by her accuser Thomas Dangerfield? Instead, could we think about the malice being defeated as that which separates and divides women? There are only two other uses of this work in the body of the text. The first is a quote of another individual, and the second is used to say how certain men were tasked with managing her accuser’s malice. While this, too, may be a malice defeated, it seems to be “defeated” by these other men, not Cellier. I think that this first positioning of “malice” connected to her servant and the capitalization and italicization of this section shows its importance to Cellier, her message, and her personal victory. Cellier makes a deliberate choice to highlight the importance of female unity and in doing so opens up the possibility of thinking about how women might have viewed themselves as connected to, accountable to, and responsible for the collective success of other women.

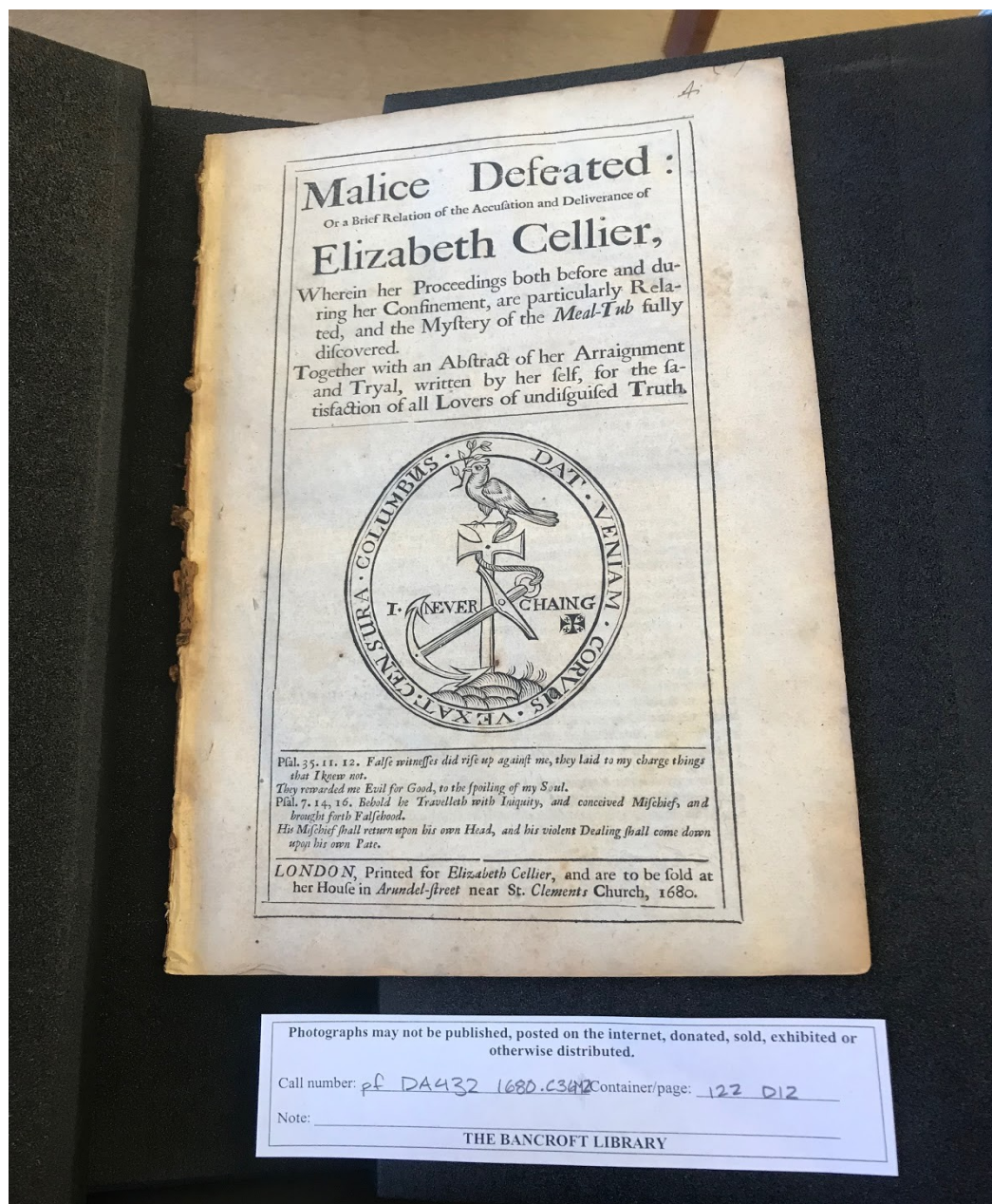
It is no surprise then that even her critics seem to think of Cellier as a leader of women. Accompanying a print that is part of a series of plates illustrating Cellier, her involvement in the plot, and her subsequent trial is a description that reads “In the Sixth, The Manner of Mrs. Cellier’s (one of the Pope’s *Amazon*) going to do that Great Work herself” (Intro to *Malice Defeated*). Her association with an Amazon cannot help but call forth images of a woman’s martial heroism and victory over her foes, reinforcing her power and public voice. She serves in this allusion as a model for the

strength of a woman's voice. If even her critics find this association apparent, how might other women who supported Cellier have envisioned themselves as Amazons as well, a part of this image of success in a male-dominated industry?

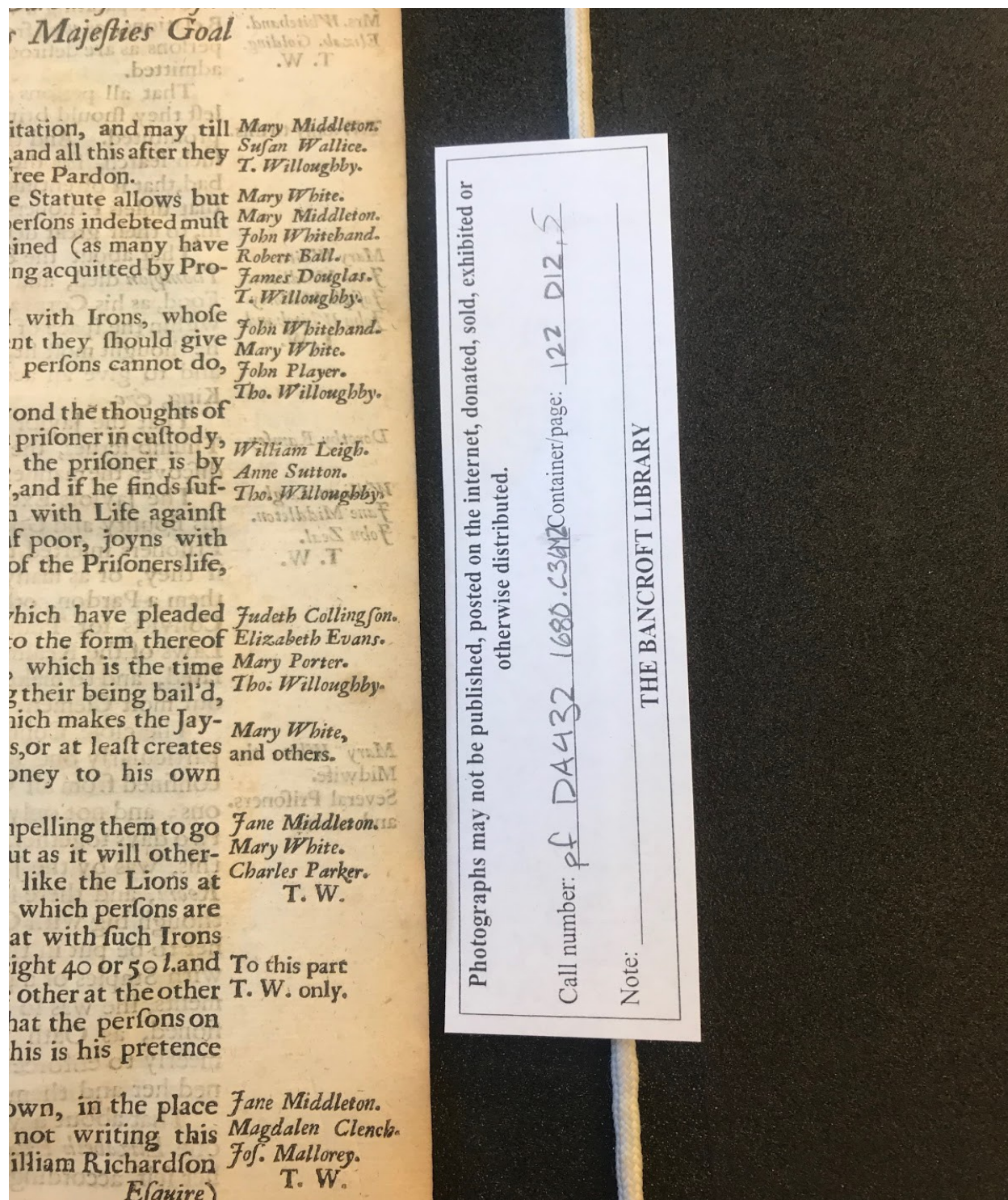
***Malice Defeated*: Conclusion**

Cellier did not provide the perfect model for escaping unscathed, however. Although *Malice Defeated* describes how she was able to avoid prosecution, Cellier was later reimprisoned and this time charged for libel against the king and his ministry as a result of her claims about prison injustices and torture within *Malice Defeated* (Richards). She was fined £1,000 and pilloried three times (Richards). After nearly dying following her first stand, she was allowed to hold a shield to defend herself from objects being thrown at her by an angry crowd for her second two stands (King). In 1687, she submitted a proposal for a College of Midwives, which was issued a patent in September of that year (King). She later defended this proposal with a pamphlet entitled "To Dr.--" in January of 1688, arguing that such institutions had existed in the past even before there were colleges of doctors (King). She believed King James II, a Catholic whose wife she was aiding and would assist through childbirth in June of 1688, would back her proposal. The Glorious Revolution in November of that year, however, removed her connection to the monarchy and effectively ended her presence in the English historical record. She likely fled into exile with the royal family and other loyal Catholics (King).

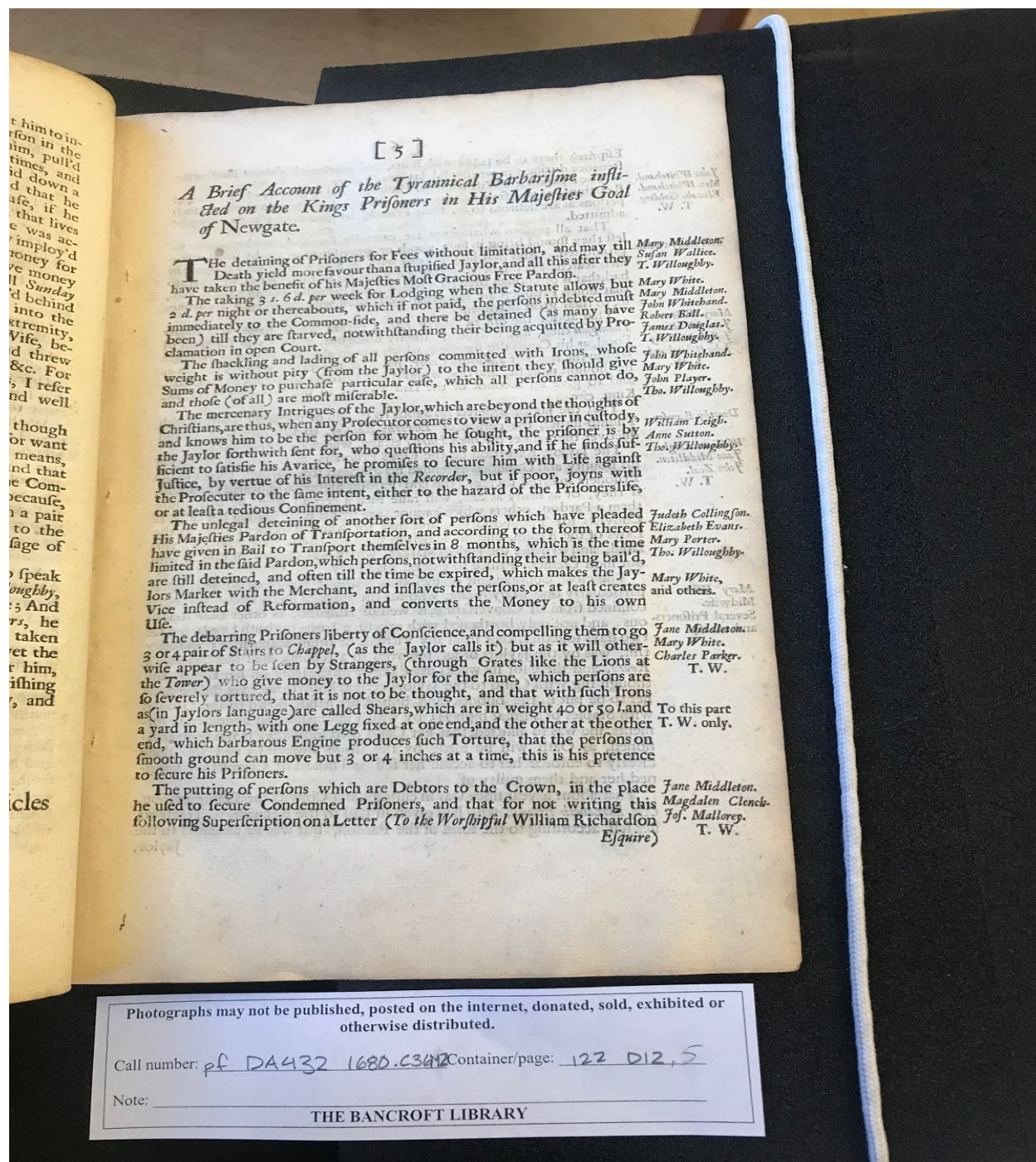
Though Elizabeth Cellier's body of work is not large, it is very well known and the way she entered the public sphere both in her trial and following *Malice Defeated* made her infamous. Effigies of her were burned in the streets (Richards), illustrations of her were printed, and she has been remembered by many scholars, books, and essays, some dedicated to her and others to the Popish plot she was engulfed by. While her more dominant historical presence and infamy is beneficial for those of us looking to understand the presence of women in print, and the vast amount of legal documentation associated with her provides many perspectives on how her contemporaries viewed her, there were many other less radical women working behind the press. Helen Smith addresses this issue in the critical field when she notes how scholar Maureen Bell, a pioneering researcher in the field, mainly focused on these extreme female figures. Smith, instead, felt it important to recognize the normalcy of women in the print industry; women did not exist as "marginal" figures in the way contemporary readers and researchers might imagine (165-166). This stance has always been important in my research given that the first female printer I stumbled onto in the archive was one with no concrete historical information attached to her other than the works she printed: Margaret White.



Title page of *Malice Defeated*



Marginal citations from sample page of *Malice Defeated*

Sample page from *Malice Defeated*

Margaret White

Using Margaret White as one of my case studies has always been an important step in my dive into female printers because of her relative obscurity. It is difficult to read Cellier's writing and look critically at her printing style without taking into account the broad amount of personal and outside information we have about her as a public figure. Approaching Margaret White, a woman without any recognizable historical record, let alone dramatic characterization, is a very different dive into female printing. I believe that White's work can be used to show that the important historical portrait we can create of someone like Cellier need not necessarily depend upon any historical record outside of her own body of work. By analyzing stylistic print choices the way other scholars and I have done for Cellier's work, I hope to show that similar meaning and value can be pulled from White's texts. Should these analyses broaden our understanding of how women perceive themselves as stationers, and I believe they do, we can begin to question whether the pedestrian or common role of female printer in a divided society necessarily precludes any sense of collective identity or awareness.

For five short years, White cultivated important social relationships within the print world, and the kinds of texts within her body of work reflect this. White's three earliest works were printed in 1679. The first two are titled *The touchstone of sincerity, or, The signs of grace and symptomes of hypocrisie* opened in a practical treatise upon Rev. 3. 17, 18, and *A sermon*

preached on the fast-day, November 13. 1678. At St Margarets

VWestminster, before the honourable House of Commons (EEBO), but it is the third work, which in many ways dominated White's print career, that I want to address first. This is an almanac written by a Thomas White, possibly a relation of hers, though this cannot be confirmed, that was printed every year of her active printing life from 1679 to 1683. While I will touch on the sermons, religious treatises, and philosophical works that Margaret printed, I want to begin with the almanac because of the weight that such a document carried within the print world at the time.

Though modern-day audiences may think very little of this small work, "no book in the English language had as large a circulation as the annual Almanack" during this period (Gadd 68). Almanacs were so popular, in fact, that individuals began printing them illegally and without the knowledge or permission of the Stationers' Company (Weale). As a result, the Company limited the number of people granted permission to print a yearly almanac ("Nature and Scope"). Just before White begins printing, in 1671, a Mrs. Maxwell and her servant were arrested for selling copies of an almanac without a license and new laws and guidelines were passed to further restrict the production and sale of Almanacs on September 14th of the same year (*A Chronology and Calendar of Documents Relating to the London Book Trade 1641-1700: Volume 1, 1641-1685* 4). White, however, maintained the rights to print an almanac, and while they were most likely passed down from her husband upon his death, fighting to keep them would almost certainly have

been difficult. The Stationers' Company controlled who printed such works and could revoke rights at any time ("Nature and Scope"), but White manages to keep a firm grasp on this particular edition, illustrating her strong social and legal status. Not only that, but on her copy of the almanac is inscribed, "Printed by Margaret White for the Company of Stationers" (*White, 1680, a new almanack for the year of our Lord God 1*), a ringing endorsement for any printer, but especially for a woman. Based on what we know about how the law treated women whose rights were stolen and the pressures placed on women to remarry or give up their businesses, this is an impressive accomplishment. If her absence in the historical record is any indication, Margaret White appears to have escaped the heavy fist of censorship under the Stationers' Company, while her legal and social skill seems all the more evident. Possessing at least a basic legal understanding would have made it much easier for White to hold on to the rights to many of her works, but particularly one of such value as an almanac.

To further analyze this almanac, we must know more about its and Margaret's history based on the material found in the text itself. Simply by looking at the Stationers' Register, or the collection of Company records and documents, alongside *A Chronology and Calendar of Documents Relating to the London Book Trade: 1641-1670*, we are able to see that the most common way for women to enter the industry was through marriage, or, more likely, the ending of one. Though all accessible copies of the *Stationers' Register* only cover years that would have been too early to shed

light on Margaret White's personal entry into the industry, there are signs that point to Margaret's marriage as being largely responsible for her induction into the world of print.

Most of the archival documents that can be confidently attributed to Margaret were printed for bookseller Henry Mortlock. We will look at Mortlock more later as a key figure in the industry and as a prime example of the importance of connections between female printers, but for now, his name acts as a puzzle piece that connects us to a larger part of Margaret's life. This is because Mortlock was also named as the seller, or distributor, for many documents printed by a Robert White (also listed as R. White, or R.W.). While the name Robert White was probably quite common, just as Margaret White is, looking at the chronology of archival documents we are provided through the *Early English Books Online* database, a powerful pattern emerges. The earliest work printed by a Robert White, in the neighborhood in which Margaret printed, was dated 1642 (Reynolds). Interestingly, this document is a copy of a sermon delivered at St. Margaret's Church before the House of Commons. The first work that can be clearly attributed to Margaret White is also a copy of a sermon offered at this same church before the House of Commons (*A sermon preached on the fast-day, November 13. 1678.*). Robert White prints another sermon of this nature as the first text he creates for Mortlock in 1666 titled *A sermon preached before the honourable House of Commons at St. Margarets Westminster, Octob. 10, 1666 being the fast-day appointed for the late dreadfull fire in the city of London*. The author

of this text is Edward Stillingfleet, who would also be the writer of the first text Margaret White prints. The coincidences between their printing histories and their chronological alignment would suggest that in the portrait we are uncovering of Margaret's life, Robert was probably her husband.

In 1678, Robert White publishes the first copy of the almanac by Thomas White. Up until that year, Robert printed multiple works a year. Following the printing of this almanac, no other work linked to his name appears until a year later in 1679, but there is a catch—Robert White is not the printer. The work, *The history of the reformation of the Church of England. of the progress made in it during the reign of K. Henry the VIII* (Burnet), was originally printed by Robert White, and so his name is still linked to the document, but another in the industry under the initials T.H has reprinted it. This can only mean one of two things within the industry at that time: either another printer stole the work or the rights to print this work had been sold to another printer. Given the inscription on the inside cover, in which the work is lauded and “the Honourable Mr Secretary Coventry doth therefore allow it to be Printed and Published,” the second is the more likely (*The history of the reformation of the Church of England* 1). All works connected to Robert White's name after this date similarly do not have White listed as a printer. It would seem logical, therefore, to suggest that in 1678, Robert White dies.

It is important to consider the evolution of this almanac when looking at White's career as a printer, as well. The almanac itself does not change

drastically from the last copy her husband printed to her last printed copy in 1683. Most of the components, fonts, and structure remain the same. This alone shows an integrity granted to the work, but also a potential labor-saving choice in the execution of the print. A few changes may show something impactful about Margaret's ability to navigate the social networks of the day, however. Between Robert White's last printing and Margaret's first printing of this almanac, the most noticeable change is that two pages talking about how to predict weather are cut. In addition, earlier editions of White's almanac had maps and a greater array of charts which have not been brought back for this edition. Four years later however, Margaret has managed to reincorporate these intricate maps and charts that seem to have been lost. This is particularly compelling because publications by women rarely contained imagery, "likely the product of both a lack of resources and the inability to procure or commission woodcuts" (Bailie 44). White's use of images, therefore, can be read many ways. One potential explanation is that Margaret may have improved her skills as a printer and learned how to print a wider array of material. Another might be that Margaret was able to print more pages because she had a larger revenue, signaling more success in the industry as she persevered and continued her work. White may have worked in a well-stocked, and therefore well-funded, print shop with many sets of type given that her works included portions of text in English, Latin, French, and even Hebrew on the title page of *The touchstone of sincerity* (1). Access to type used for particular languages may suggest something about White's

social connections, as well, leading us to our third option about White's printed images. The third option relies on the knowledge that printers often exchanged print blocks and type with one another (Lucas 35). Perhaps, Margaret was able to use her social and business acumen to reacquire certain print blocks lost late in her husband's life that were necessary to print certain images in the full almanac.

This social manipulation and skill that Margaret possessed is clear in the work she printed in 1679 entitled *Order and disorder, or, The world made and undone* (EEBO), written by Lucy Hutchinson, though for hundreds of years it was wrongly attributed to her father, Sir Allen Apsley. Inside the front cover of this work, there is a license issued by L'Estrange, the king's censor of print, verifying White's right to print this work. This is quite the accomplishment seeing as White belonged to a group of Quakers, a group not often accepted by the crown or most of English society. For her to be trusted to print the work of a woman like Hutchinson who was raised in a Royalist household shows either a kind of trust in her integrity as a printer or a preference by Hutchinson for White to print her work, yet another instance of female connectivity across social divides. Though White was a woman who had to fight the prejudice surrounding a woman's intelligence and public presence in the Quaker community as much as any other woman fighting similar biases in her social realm,¹ she creates a wide-reaching body of work for writers of many backgrounds, many of high social status, that would have

¹ Baker, Schofield

allowed her to access audiences outside of her community and better ensure her success as an independent female printer.

The cast of characters White worked with is truly astounding in its breadth and various layers of acceptability and scandal. Lucy Hutchinson, daughter of naval officer Sir Allen Apsley, who had been part of a royalist plot at the peak of English Parliamentary rule during the Protectorate period of the English Civil War (Seaward), was a gifted writer, memorialist, and translator who tricked her husband into denying his republican sympathies after his life was put at risk during the Reformation as a result of his signing Charles I's death warrant (Norbrook). Edward Stillingfleet, whose work Margaret published on more than one occasion, was a bishop who worked his way up through the church and Protestant political spheres, was a residentiary canon, and a writer who participated in pamphlet debates that led to his taking an advisory role that granted him power to influence legal and constitutional issues (Till). His writings and sermons stirred up their fair share of controversies, particularly works like his *Irenicum* (1659) and his sermon titled the *Mystery of Separation* (1680) (Till). Many of his closest friends, in contrast with Apsley, were Parliamentarians (Till). White also printed two works by a John Flavell, a preacher who worked at a dissenting academy after being ejected from a parish in Dartmouth, who was known to dress as a woman to sneak back into his old stomping grounds and maintain his audience (Kelly). White's ability to print works by controversial figures that worked on both sides of the aisle is undoubtedly powerful, and the

works that she chose to print clearly addressed large audiences and important contemporary topics. The works she prints also seem to advocate for balance between secular exploration and religious piety, as in Hutchinson's work where she writes how those "that will be wise above what is written, may hug their philosophical clouds, but let them take heed they find not themselves without God in the world, adoring figments of their own brains, instead of the living and true God" (Hutchinson 2). While her connections are clearly diverse, this belief expressed by Hutchinson and printed by White is just the first part of this work that makes exploring this relationship an intriguing one for addressing female connectivity.

While I have been focusing on the relationships between female printers, it may also be worth considering how this sense of female connectivity exists between female printers and female writers. *Order and Disorder* is a rare and precious opportunity for this that may help us understand female association in print culture. Hutchinson writes in her preface:

and how imperfect soever the hand be, that copies it out, Truth loses not its perfection, and the plainest as well as the elegant, the elegant as well as the plain, make up a harmony in confession and celebration of that all-creating, all-sustaining God, to whom be all honour and glory for ever and ever. (*)

This reference to the hand "that copies [the text] out" is one that might be worth considering. This is not a writing or crafting of the text, but simply a

re-creation of it. Hutchinson seems to echo the sentiments of many other female stationers of the day by acknowledging the responsibility and fallibility of the printer in being truthful to the work which they have been given. This text is a religious one, however, so it is worth considering if Hutchinson is referring to herself here as a copier, perhaps of divine wisdom or inspiration. Even if this is the case, there is a connection drawn here between female writers as a kind of printer or copier of religious wisdom imparted by God. The debate about the role of the printer in a work, therefore, might be just as present to women who write print culture as those who translate it into printed text, widening our understanding of female connectivity.

While this analysis does not reflect White as a printer writing a preface, we do have other examples of women stationers writing prefaces that touch upon Truth and accuracy in printing, much like Hutchinson's. Joan Broome, who had been married to a printer and continued to operate his press, work as a bookseller, and translate works after his death, is one of these figures. In the copy of John Lyly's *Endymion*, which Broome had printed with John Charlewood and sold herself, there is a very brief preface. Helen Smith in *'Grossly Material Things': Women and Book Production in Early Modern England* theorizes that this preface was written by Broome (88). This preface reads as such:

Since the Plaies in Paules were dissolued, there are certaine
Commedies come to my handes by chaunce, vvhich were

presented before her Maiestie at seuerall times by the children
of Paules. This is the first, and if in any place it shall dysplease, I
will take more paines to perfect the next. I referre it to thy
indifferent iudgement to peruse, whom I woulde willinglie
please. And if this may passe with thy good lyking, I will then
goe forwarde to publish the rest. In the meane time, let this
haue thy good worde for my better couragement.

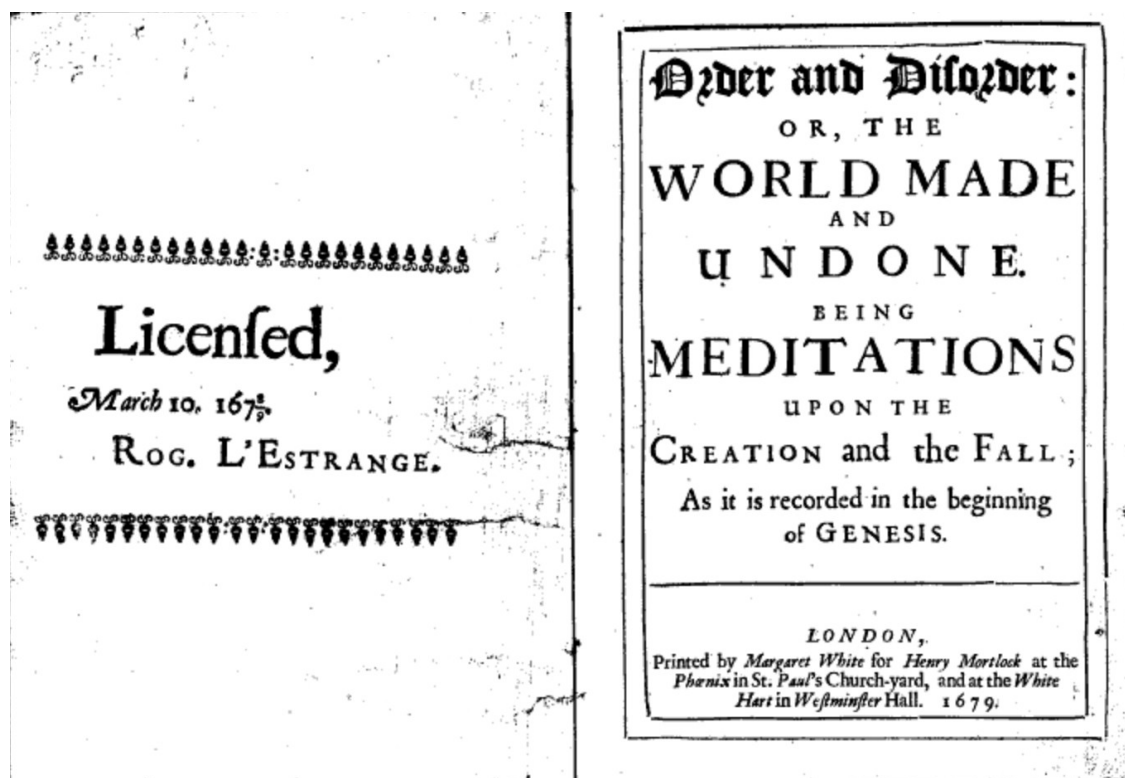
It seems sensible to me to conclude that this preface mirrors the sentiments present in *Order and disorder*, stressing the imperfect hand of the printer and showing dedication to honestly creating the work entrusted to them. This preface also stresses that anyone with “indifferent judgment” might find value in and critique the results of the work. Cellier also seems to mirror this statement in her work when we see her add a postscript to her text addressed to “impartial readers” (*Malice Defeated* 44). It is difficult to imagine what indifferent judgment or who impartial readers might be in a time where writing, printing, and one’s political, religious, and moral beliefs are so deeply intertwined. I speculate this call by Broome is an earlier stage of the work we see Cellier taking up later when she references her associations with women of different religious backgrounds and addresses women as a collective: the work of crossing social boundaries for the sake of truth for the public. These boundaries may be seen purely as beliefs about religion or print culture, but they could also be thought of as those that divide women. The preface in Broome’s work, therefore, seems to subscribe

to a larger philosophy of printing, one that ties apt critique to the search for truth as a community of creators and readers of print alike. With women as central figures in this quest for truth from “indifferent judgement,” we are presented with the opportunity for a greater sense of unity between them, one without the many delineations placed on them by their time and scholars of ours.

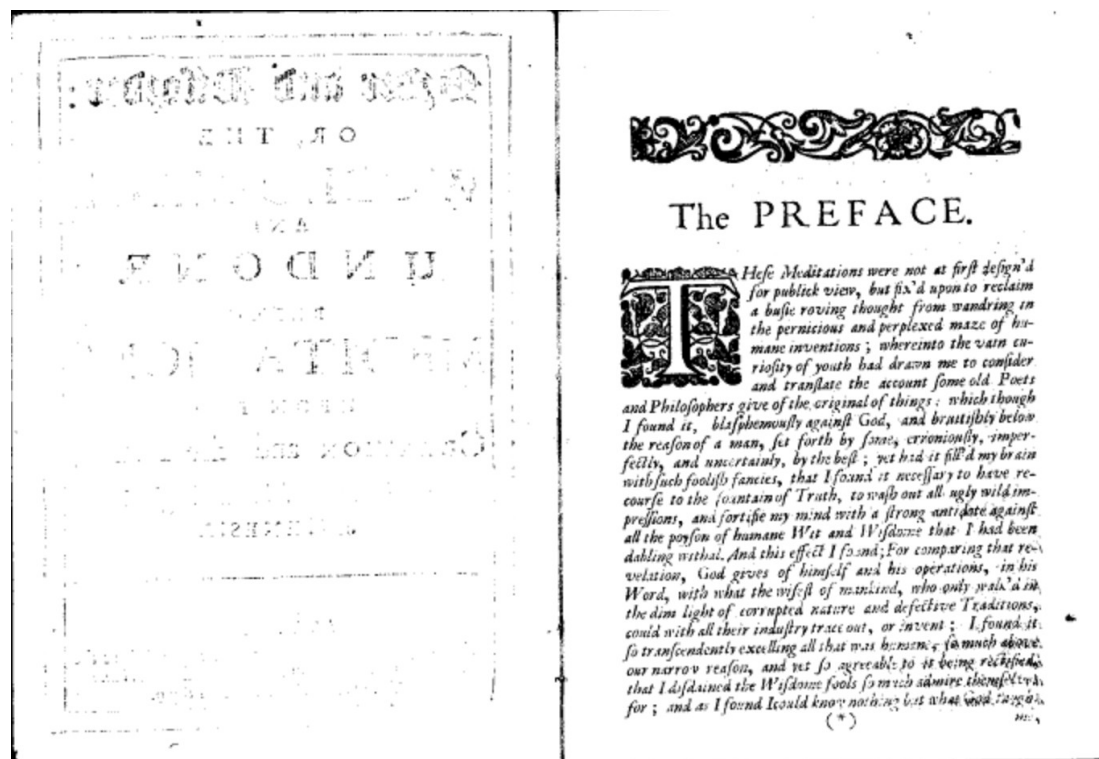
There are stylistic pieces to consider in comparing these two prefaces as well. The preface also bears a header that reads “The Printer to the *Reader*.” This italicizing of the reader stresses that the reader and the material given to them is of greater importance than the Printer’s relationship to the text or its creators. That being said, we might consider how the merging of italic type and roman type in this header reflect a balanced and important dynamic like the one stylistically and textually stated in White’s work. Yet another reason to look at Broome’s work is its style and its position in time relative to Hutchinson’s preface. Broome’s piece was printed in 1591, nearly ninety years before White would print *Order and disorder* in 1679. Might we think of Joan Broome as a guiding example for White’s preface? Both prefaces, bearing their illuminated letters and messages of truth, espouse a responsibility to and for the text that connects them across the span of nearly one hundred years as women.

White’s approach to printing mirrors the many overarching themes and patterns we have seen in female stationers of this period, but her choices also show that she understood the stereotypes she was up against. She

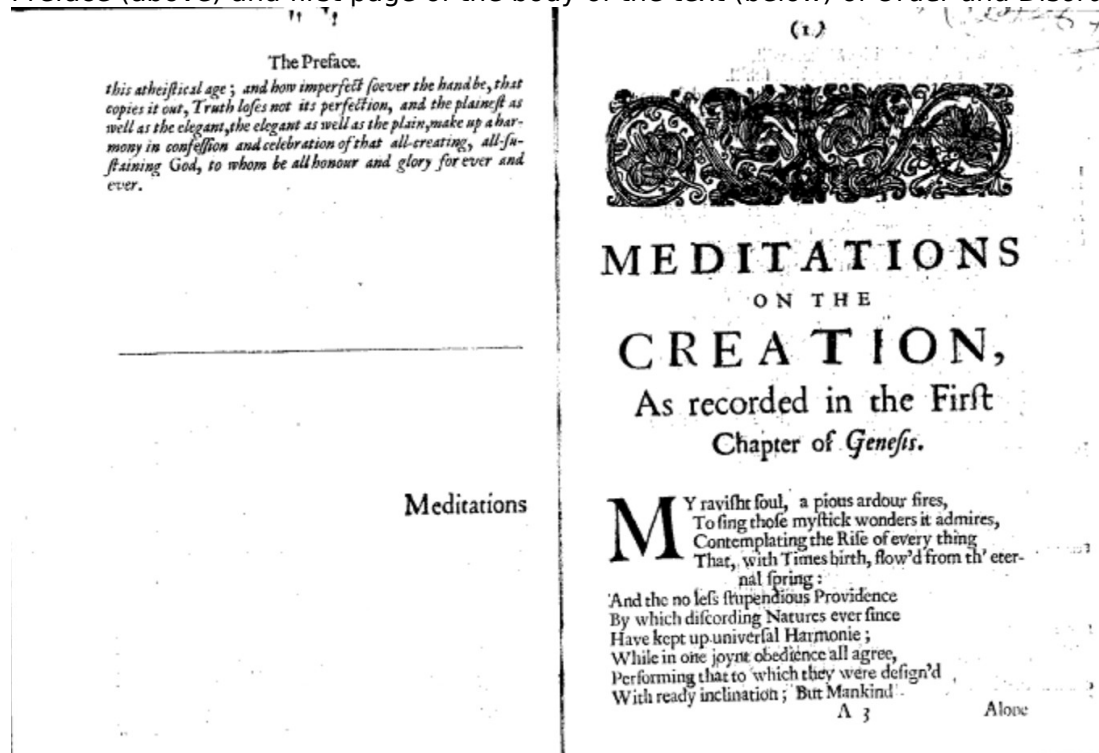
fought to hold onto the rights to an almanac whose design she had little say in shaping, realizing its value to her position as a printer and potentially as a widow. She navigated a diverse spectrum of work and stylistically championed Truth through print integrity and a light editorial hand. As an unknown figure with no full personal writings like Cellier's, how White may have addressed women specifically is something we cannot necessarily read, but if we take her typographical choices and accept the potential of her having written the preface to *Order and disorder*, we can see how she may have presented an image of greater unity between women in print culture, both printers and writers alike.



Title Page of *Order and Disorder*



Preface (above) and first page of the body of the text (below) of *Order and Disorder*



Connecting the Dots

I believe these shared values and methods of operating do affect how women may have identified with a collective community, but they do not replace the connections we might be able to trace physically that can reinforce these more abstract strands tying female stationers together. In a paper about the importance and connectivity of women, there is a certain amount of irony in using a male figure to reinforce this point, but this is what I will be doing here by addressing a figure known as Henry Mortlock.

Henry Mortlock was a bookseller who worked in St. Peter's Churchyard, but his influence within the Stationers' Company is much larger than his title. He created what might be considered a small bookseller's union, petitioning the Stationers' Company for rights that protected their access to street space for selling merchandise (*To the Honourable House of Commons*), and he was one of a few central figures responsible for bringing the Oxford Press under the oversight of the Stationers' Company, monopolizing and creating unified standards for and access to printing rights and materials (de Monins Johnson 116). As a result, he was one of three printers granted the status of lessee of privilege for the Stationers' Company, giving him enormous power. All of this being said, what is most crucial about Mortlock for me as a researcher of female stationers is his connection to so many of these women, especially some of the most famous among them.

This is not a moment I want to use to glorify Mortlock or pin him down as the pivotal point about which female connectivity in my argument turns. I want to use him, rather, to argue that seeing physical links between these women in the archives does not require major leaps in deductive reasoning, and as such it seems odd to suggest that the women during this period did not view themselves as related to each other simply because of their religious or political differences. The values they share about authentic reproduction and accessibility to printing rights and the public print sphere as a whole tend to bridge these connections, as well, which supports an argument for their own awareness of each other and the creation of a collective understanding about what it meant to operate as a female stationer at this time.

By pouring through archives on *Early English Books Online* and analyzing Stationers' Company Records, I discovered Henry Mortlock worked with and connected female printers like Margaret White, Elizabeth Wingfield, Elizabeth Redmayne, and Elizabeth Calvert. He also sold works specifically addressing women's issues and work, like *A friendly apology, in the behalf of the womans excellency*. He also serves as a potential connection between Margaret White and Elizabeth Cellier, two women on seemingly polar opposite sides of the female stationer spectrum: one Catholic and one Quaker, one with connections to royalty and the other with more profound connections to clergy, one infamous and one unknown. Mortlock commissioned the printing of *Order and disorder*, printed by White and

written by Lucy Hutchinson. Hutchinson would likely have worked with White in formulating the work as a result. Cellier also knew Hutchinson's father, Sir Allen Apsley and ran in similar circles of influence, which we see in *Malice Defeated* when she is told to implicate him but does not, writing that she was told to say she "received a Thousand pounds in Gold of Sir Allen Apsley to pay him for the Murthering the Earl of Shaftsbury" and when "Sir *John Nicholas* came that Night to search and examine [her], [she] told him the Truth, but conceal'd that part which related to the Duke, the Earl of *Peterborough*, and *Sir Allen Apsley*" (*Malice Defeated* 21-22). Although she protects him in the trial, Cellier feels it is important to cite him here as a kind of character reference, and invokes his name to stress the trustworthiness of her work. This trustworthiness appears in Hutchinson's work as we have seen. Regardless, scholars claim these women were divided by class, religion, and social spheres, yet here we see them inextricably linked: engaging in a similar debate, associating with figures who were instrumental to massive changes in the print and political worlds of the time, and bridging the gap between ideological chasms widened by English conflict in the fifty years prior.

Understanding female stationers' relationship to the collective and its importance for future scholarly work

Given my journey through the archives, I understand the hesitation of scholars to draw conclusions about these women having a collective identity.

Most of these printers don't have any identifiable works of writing that might hint at such a principle. There were more female printers than previously thought, making it difficult to believe in a kind of collective group understood by these women. There was no vocabulary associated with a recognizable feminist wave that might have engendered such a dynamic, and women were often relegated to a domestic sphere ruled by economic, religious, and political affiliation. All of that being recognized however, there are historical inklings that it is not this simple. By looking at the stylistic choices and unifying themes within the works created by these women, their subtle choice of words or their position in relationship to the wide array of works they created, I believe there is an early feminist vocabulary to be uncovered, one buried beneath significant social divides, certainly, but not one we can ignore.

These women I have looked at here were clearly well-versed in their industry and had meaningful connections that would have made them aware of print's political power and innermost workings. It is for this reason that I believe even scholars seem to wrestle against their own claim about female connectedness. They argue that rather than think about women stationers understanding their relationship to other women stationers, it is our job to see what they could not in their time by tracking their connections and understanding them. But how can we look at their work and not see that as businesswomen and political figures, they would have been more acutely aware of these connections out of necessity? Scholars admit that it is

tempting to group female stationers,¹ and it is this admission that tells me this temptation is not new. Rather than see this urge to consider how women may have been aware of their connectedness as a temptation, might we think about this urge as a part of a logical understanding that these women were battling similar prejudices and restrictions? Would not the industry, like society at large, have grouped them together as women under an umbrella of social codes?

I believe that the act of printing as a woman, regardless of how many female printers there were or how accepted they were, is still a radical and feminist act. For women to put their voice into the public sphere when the sense of what was meant by a “public sphere” was still young and women were expected to spend their days relegated to the domestic seems profound to me. I cannot help wondering if these women ever felt the weight of that, but women like Margaret White and Elizabeth Cellier, Joan Broome, Elizabeth Calvert, Anne Griffin, and so on continuously show a dedication to their work² that suggests they did feel a great sense of responsibility to their work. That responsibility and the gendered preconceptions these women faced resulted in patterns I think scholars should not ignore when asking what shapes social identification for these women. This paper is merely a

¹ Helen Smith

² Mihiko Suzuki in *Elizabeth Cellier: Printed Writings 1641-1700: Series II*, Part Three, Volume 5 explains how Elizabeth Cellier’s quality of prints far exceeded those who printed works against her. She utilized a portfolio style, quality paper, detailed prints, and a great deal of marginalia. In my own experience with her text in the archive, some pages have different sized fonts or slightly shifted orientations as though pages were reprinted, possibly for errors she encountered, of which there are strikingly few in her pamphlet for a time when print errors were common. (Routledge, 2017, pg. x)

scratch on the surface of this material, but I hope at the very least it challenges myself and others to consider why we value studying the connections between these women so much if we feel they were incapable of seeing or understanding them themselves. What are we denying these women when we deny this possibility or awareness in their work and what gendered notions still clinging to life from their era might we be absorbing in our own scholarly thinking? For a field whose true depths are still being probed, I hope to pursue questions like these and watch them evolve with each White and Cellier we encounter. Perhaps, like them, we can stress truth in honoring the work of these women whose importance is undeniable--to their communities, to each other, and to those of us so many years down the line who can be grateful for their pioneering work.

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