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Anti-Catholicism, Incurability and Credulity in the Warming-pan Scandal of 1688-89.

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The birth of James Francis Edward Stuart on 10 June 1688 was particularly significant, even as royal births go.¹ As male heir to the Catholic James II, James Francis Edward supplanted James's protestant daughter, Mary, Princess of Orange, and his birth conjured the possibility of extended Catholic rule in England. Mary, however, along with her husband William, Prince of Orange, went on to supplant both her father and her new brother by way of the revolution precipitated by William's invasion in November 1688. The warming-pan fiction, which built upon and focussed rumours already in circulation throughout the queen's pregnancy, had its basis in a piece of evidence given by Margaret Dawson, a midwife, in the depositions arranged by James II in October 1688 to prove his new son's legitimacy. Dawson stated that 'she saw fire carried into the Queen's Room in a Warming-Pan, to warm the Bed'.² This detail enabled an extraordinary allegation: that the new prince was not the issue of his mother, but a common child born in a convent adjacent to St. James's Palace, smuggled into the building via a series of secret passages, and finally into the queen's bed, inside the conveniently covered and roughly newborn-sized warming-pan mentioned by Dawson. It may seem that the midwife had already described the contents of the warming-pan (she saw 'fire'), and thus ruled out the possibility of a baby being secreted therein. However, an opposition pamphlet, *A Full Answer to the Depositions*, suggests that Dawson had used 'no more than a common Phrase of speaking': 'As suppose I had been in any room where this Warming-pan had gone through, and having no Suspicion [...] but in common phrase would say (though I see not the fire) there is fire or coals gone to warm to bed.'³ Thus, Dawson says 'fire' when she has only seen a warming-pan. There is no gap, in her mind, between the sign

(warming-pan) and what it normally signifies (fire). In the anti-Catholic imagination, this could be said to be typical of a ‘papist’, who is inured to such things as the transubstantiated host (which does not stand for but *is* God) or the idolised image of a saint, worshipped in place of that which it represents (as the saint is idolatrously worshipped in place of God). Anti-Catholic discourse, however, always insists on the gap between sign and signified. This piece of practical criticism, then, opens up a discursive space by keeping the lid of the warming-pan closed, and its contents indeterminate and obscure. That obscurity is at the heart of the propaganda surrounding this scandal.

It is difficult to write about this episode without also writing about the revolution of 1688-89 of which it is a part. One of the more recent historical studies of this revolution—Steve Pincus’s *1688: The First Modern Revolution*—attempts the inverse, by writing about the revolution without giving serious attention to the prince’s birth. Pincus argues that this ‘Glorious’ revolution was not a conservative preservation of the Anglican status quo, but the outcome of a clash between two distinct modernization projects: James II’s attempt to fashion a centralised absolutist state in imitation of Louis XIV’s France, and William of Orange and the Whig’s vision of a participatory political society founded on freedom of speech and information, consent, and religious toleration. Pincus sees the effects of this Anglo-Dutch revolution—the new credit finance system, massive land based European war—as being deliberately intended by the revolutionaries. Another major aspect of Pincus’s reassessment of the revolution is his insistence on its violence—he controversially compares it to the French Revolution in terms of blood spilt—and this is part of his contention that 1688 was, as his title suggests, a ‘modern’ revolution, comparable to later uprisings in France, America, Russia, and so on.⁴ For Pincus, 1688, as the first modern revolution, is a fundamentally secular event. As Rachel Weil has shown, this position leads to a downplaying of the importance of confessional dispute.⁵ Indeed, the secular emphasis of Pincus’s book has been a common sticking point for his reviewers.⁶ Weil takes issue with Pincus’s representation of the anti-Catholic violence following the revolution as politically (as opposed to confessionally) motivated. Johnston is uncomfortable with a similar separation of politics and religion when it comes to the language of James’s opponents.⁷ Likewise, I am arguing here that the combination

of politics and religion is central to the functioning of the warming-pan propaganda, and that these popular pamphlets and poems are deliberately using anti-Catholic tradition in order to make ideological arguments. Pincus makes a point of highlighting the differences between the Gallican Catholicism of Louis XIV (favoured by James II), and that of the papacy, and argues that English men and women were aware of such ideological distinctions within the Roman church.⁸ But such a sophisticated consciousness is not always borne out in the sources—the warming-pan scandal in particular is predicated on an unsophisticated lumping of Catholics of all stripes together.⁹ For instance, one of the stories of the new prince's illegitimacy discussed below accuses the papal nuncio Count D'Adda of fathering the child in a tryst with the queen. Yet Pincus points out that at the end of his reign, James (as a Francophilic Gallican) kept the papal nuncio 'at arms length,' and Count D'Adda is later numbered amongst the Catholic party opposed to James's modernizing policies.¹⁰ I am not claiming that Pincus is wrong about intra-Catholic politics at court. What I am saying is that these opposition poets and pamphleteers did not seem to care about it, and that their indifference is important. Theirs is an attitude that does not fit in with Pincus's view of the opposition: they do not distinguish between Catholics (who are all 'papists'), and they express their political views in language deeply inflected with confessional rhetoric. As Sowerby has argued in a painstaking and forthright review, it is not only these popular polemicists who had religion at the front of their minds, but the Prince of Orange, too. Pincus claims that a banner on William's invasion ship bore a secular motto; this is offered as evidence of the modern and non-confessional *intent* behind the revolution. However, Sowerby convincingly discredits the source Pincus quotes, and shows that William's banner was, in fact, explicitly confessional: 'I will maintain,' 'for the Protestant Religion,' 'for a Free Parliament,'¹¹

The dismissal of confessional conflict as unhelpful 'identity politics' explains Pincus's avoidance of the significant and widespread controversy surrounding the birth of James Francis Edward Stuart.¹² In his opinion,

James's political actions, not the birth of his son, provoked military action in 1688. This was because

English revolutionaries, Dutch politicians, and most of the rest of Europe understood that what was at stake was not the narrow question of succession to the English throne but the broader one of the political, economic, and ideological orientation of northern Europe.¹³

Unsurprisingly, this is where I take particular issue with Pincus's approach, and I am not the only person to do so.¹⁴ I agree with him, in fact, that the birth of the Prince of Wales did not (at least not on its own) 'provoke military action'; I am not going to attribute that kind of historical causation to his birth, nor to the warming-pan fiction. I welcome Pincus's stress on the broader context of the revolution, but I do not see why the question of the succession—narrow or otherwise—should be removed from the picture. Whilst I can concede that the birth may not have been essential to the revolution, I will not concede that it did not shape it. It had an effect.

The warming-pan scandal is causative only in a particular narrative of the revolution, a narrative that the scandal itself was involved in fabricating. Because this long-term anti-popery narrative did not need to have an anchor in historical fact, it was all the more potent as propaganda. This fabricated conspiracy is a fulcrum. It is not the fulcrum of Pincus's story of competing visions of modernity, but of a popular and bigoted confessional narrative of political struggle that reaches back to the Reformation and which appealed to a large segment of the English public in 1688. This episode is historically significant not because it got William III out of bed and onto his invasion ship, but because it reveals some ways in which the revolution was represented (as it happened, and after the fact), and how it was understood by some contemporaries. The prince and his alleged pre- and peri-natal conveyance were a focus for debate in 1688 and 1689. His birth, and even more specifically, Dawson's mentioning of the warming-pan, were political and discursive opportunities seized on, in different ways, by the Whigs, the Prince of Orange, James II's daughters, poets, and pamphleteers. They seized this opportunity because the prince's alleged illegitimacy, focussed through the detail of the warming-pan, opened a space for certain kinds of political and religious argument. This scandal reveals contemporaries working through ideological change in a popular medium, and shows how political

debate could be bound up with confessional identity.

This episode also reveals important things about the ways that propaganda exploits the unknowable. This story, which gives narrative form to James Francis Edward's alleged illegitimacy, is particularly useful to propagandists because paternity, like virginity, is ultimately indeterminate in an age without DNA analysis.¹⁵ That such theoretical irresolvability was important at the time is confirmed by the fact that William III didn't even try to deliver the parliamentary investigation promised in his declarations.¹⁶ Though unproveable, that did not mean that this fiction could not be made to seem probable, and even causative, as long as one was able to embed it in the right kind of political narrative, which anti-Catholic tradition readily supplied (narratives are rather good, after all, at manufacturing probability and causation, through what Carroll has termed 'narrative connections').¹⁷ So, whilst I am treating this episode as a fiction—I do think James Francis Edward Stuart was legitimate—I am not going to try to prove it.¹⁸ Even if someone were to go to the considerable length of commissioning DNA analysis of the Stuart's remains, it would not change the argument of what follows. The warming-pan fiction's utility as propaganda (and thus my interest in it) depends on indeterminacy; settling the issue one way or another will not change the quality and importance of what was said at the time. My interest in the affair centres on the use of obscurity and a (perceived) lack of evidence as the starting point for a kind of propaganda that relies on *faith*, on the suspension of disbelief; an assent that is (not coincidentally) akin to the surrender of political will required by Lockean contract theory. In this case, somewhat paradoxically, we are faced with propaganda that demands readerly faith in a sceptical, satirical, iconoclastic and sometimes pseudo-scientific deconstruction of an invented plot which ridicules Catholics for *their* implicit faith. This paradox exposes some of the central ironies of the revolution, and the Whig rationalisation of the events of 1688.

This narrative's preoccupation with obscurity—of bodies, and of political theories—is a sign of its involvement in ideological debate, if not the specific debates in which Pincus is interested. There is an important connection between divesting the monarch of his sacral authority (divine right), exposing that authority as hollow, and the divesting Mary of Modena's body—and its satirical metonym the

warming-pan—of its ‘real’ contents, exposing that as hollow too.¹⁹ This whole affair is held together by gaps and inscrutability, by the gaps in public knowledge of the royal body, by the inscrutability of the divine-right monarch, exemplified in his holding of the *arcana imperii*. These ‘state secrets’ were described by James I in 1610 as ‘the deepest mysteries of monarchy and political government that belong to the persons or State of Kings and Princes, that are gods upon Earth’.²⁰ One of the achievements of the warming-pan fiction is the conversion of *arcana imperii* into skeletons in the closet. This hollowing out—the tenor of the narrative’s central political metaphor—is achieved through the conversion of a miraculously-timed royal birth into a fabliaux of cushions-up-undershirts and how’s-your-father.²¹ In this way, as Harol has noted, the warming-pan fiction contributes to the delegitimization of absolutism by way of a kind of generic degradation.²²

The reticence of absolutist monarchs, or the female body, acts as a provocation for anti-Catholic and anti-absolutist polemicists. McKeon describes the warming-pan affair as a reaction against ‘the doctrine of the king’s two bodies’ which had ‘authorized the concealment of *arcana imperii* from public view’. For him, the scandal leads to a privileging of ‘the commonsense experience of private citizens’ over the ‘*arcana imperii* of royal authority’ in the determining of paternity. Thus for McKeon, this is an affair propelled by the paucity of information that is a consequence of *arcana imperii*, the inscrutability of a monarch’s motives.²³ In a sense, Weil argues along similar lines, but the source of obscurity is different. For her the affair is evidence of a triumph of a masculine, clinical, and more public standard of proof over the ‘authenticity’ that had belonged to female midwives, and she describes the way that Whig propagandists shift the evidentiary goalposts, demanding unprecedented (and unreasonable) levels of evidential detail.²⁴ They only made these demands in the knowledge that they could not be met, courting incorrigibility.²⁵

‘To see a Babe born, through Bed-Curtains *Close Drawn*.’

Opposition writers pretended that the queen’s pregnant body should have been on public display, continually decrying Mary’s refusal to submit to a sufficiently scientific and medical examination. One

pamphlet, *A Full Answer to the Depositions*, complains that the birth ‘ought to have been publick to extremity, but on the contrary it was private to a nicety.’²⁶ To compensate for this discrepancy, pamphleteers proceeded to make Mary’s privities public, affecting a fallacious intimacy with the queen’s body:

Her Monstruum’s [*sic*] continu’d their natural Course and Periods without any stop at the usual times, and that all the while she pretended to be with Child: or [*sic*] did she conceal the having her Terms upon the Road to the *Bath*. [...] Then again, in other Women, after four months being gone, there will be seen a visible swelling and Increase of the Breasts, together with a fair appearance of Milk: but all these Symptoms were also wanting in the Queen, nor did ever any Lady which was proper to be a witness ever see a drop of Milk in her Breasts which were still the same to the Eyes of all that view’d them, without any alteration of Bulk or Proportion.²⁷

Thus, Mary’s still-menstruating body and her unswollen breasts are paraded before the public as a proof of the falsity of her pregnancy, months after she had given birth. The apparent empiricism (here as elsewhere) serves as a screen for a foundational anti-Catholicism. The queen’s unwillingness to submit to bodily indignity was converted into a kind of overreaching of her prerogative, as if she were haughtily dispensing with Englishmen’s rights to ‘peep as it were under the Queen’s Cloaths’.²⁸ Opposition writers thus read the screening of the queen’s body as the kind of *arcanum imperii* preferred by popish regimes.

After the birth, proponents of the warming-pan scandal latched on to the fact that no-one had seen the child emerge from Mary’s womb. This area of doubt enabled the allegation of foul play. A child may have been ‘delivered’ from the bed, they would insist, but only in the sense that a letter may be ‘delivered’ by a post-boy. Opposition writers were relentless in their insistence that Mary’s body should have been exposed in St James’s.²⁹ Sometimes they stressed the unprecedented pressures surrounding this particular birth as a justification; but more often they implied that it was *customary* for

women to be on display during labour, and that the queen should have thought nothing of it.³⁰ Princess Anne, keen to discredit the pregnancy from the outset, insisted as early as March 1688 that she would not believe her brother to be legitimate unless she saw ‘the child and she parted’; a crucial moment she artfully avoided by absenting herself from the birth.³¹ The implication of the propaganda is that Mary’s modesty was not genuine, but *functional*: the queen had to be covered, these pamphleteers allege, so that the ‘bantling’ could be smuggled into the bed undetected. ‘The King’s introducing men’, insists the *Answer to the Depositions*, ‘was only to make a fair pretence of covering her, and not letting the Women see what is usual in true births.’³² It continues on the next page:

And whereas the Births of persons are properly proveable *a Principio*, by seeing the Child come out of the Womb; this is, what by their strange and close actings, rendered utterly incapable of any proof that way, and must be referred proved *a posteriori*, that is, lying in a month, seeing the Child took out of a Bed, &c. which are all such irregular, inconsistent, impossible, and frivolous actions to prove a real birth, that they absolutely, as we shall shew, prove the contrary.³³

They prove nothing, of course, and that is the point. The warming-pan fiction, and not just the alleged conspiracy it described, relied on a posteriori ‘proofs’, which might be better described as insinuations. As stated above, none of the opposition’s desired criteria were set in place before Mary’s labour, nor had they ever been for other royal births. These pamphlets use the tradition of anti-Catholicism to supply the motive for the Catholic monarchs. Establishing opportunity (the obscuration of Mary’s genitalia; the location of the birth; the ‘covered’ bed) is all that was necessary. By lifting the sheets, these Protestant commentators hoped not to expose the queen’s body, but the Catholic court’s machinations. This is a process which one pamphlet unifies with some indelicate wordplay, describing the attempts of Protestant sceptics to ‘peep more narrowly into the Scheme of her Contrivances’.³⁴

The demand that Mary be uncovered during labour was unprecedented, but the opposition pretended it was the least they could expect: ‘the labour was not like the usual and common labours,

that is, I mean on Pallets, in Chairs, or the Bed turned down, so as the Womb is apparent'.³⁵ However, a letter from the deprived non-juror George Hickes to a sceptical correspondent at the start of the eighteenth century claims that the queen was covered, and that the alternative would have been unthinkable:

you further say, that such Care was not taken at his Birth, as was requisit, to remove those suspicions, which is not true, for never Child was born in so great a Presence of Quality, or Number, whoe through a sheet & one thin blanket, saw all the motions ~~the Mother had~~ \of the midwifs hand/; Nor could more be done except he had bin born so as to expose his Mother's Nakedness to the Eyes of the Spectatours, which is never done in any except difficult births, for convenience of Manuall Operations.³⁶

The only difficulty with the birth of James Francis Edward Stuart was the quandary in which it placed Protestant subjects unwilling to endure extended Catholic rule. I do not present this evidence to establish exactly what happened in the birthing chamber that June (neither of these sources is unbiased, and neither is first hand). What it does establish, however, is the way that writing on the birth centres on the covered queen. For Hickes, who wants to stress the normality of the situation, the covering is necessary, but as 'thin' as could be; this thinness may itself be a result of Hickes's desire to stress publicity and visibility. Even the revision in this manuscript (~~'the Mother had'~~) betrays a reluctance to expose the queen's body. For sceptics, the blanket (however thin) could be made to cover not only the queen, but a substitution plot. This was an opportunity to insist that the personal whim of Catholic absolutist monarchs and their pathological reliance on secrecy was standing in the way of rational proof; exactly the behaviour that anti-Catholic discourse would expect of a 'papist'. Only a papist, inured to deception and the theatre of Catholic mass, would expect the nation "To see a Babe born, through Bed-Curtains *Close Drawn*."³⁷ There is a link here between the claim of Protestantism to perceptiveness—that it could metaphorically 'see through' Catholic plotting, look behind the curtain,

demystify the mysteries of state—and the continual complaints that Protestant subjects were not allowed to literally see through the Queen's petticoats. The 'perceptiveness' of Protestantism—actually a post-facto revision—is simply the habit of equating Catholic 'mystery' with ignorance and/or pernicious deception.

Writing of the vexed attempts of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century anatomists to locate and explain the hymen, Harol suggests that they transferred their own failure onto the female body, and women in general, citing their unreliability and treachery.³⁸ We can detect the same movement, I think, in the warming-pan scandal, in which an inability to 'see' through the queen's bedclothes is not attributed to the facts of early-modern childbirth, but the pathological secrecy of the Stuart court, and the axiomatic treachery of women (especially catholic women), exemplified by their mystifying bodies. Circumstance is imbued with intention. In her article on this scandal, Harol suggests that the story of the smuggled child is a means of getting around the epistemologically evasive question of paternity: here anxieties about paternity are externalised, shifted onto something that one *could* prove, 'a scandal of substitution'.³⁹ This is perceptive, but we might add that whilst in theory such a plot could provide hard evidence, in reality, it did not. This is not only because it was invented, but because of *when* it was invented; several months after the fact. As we have seen, the customs of early modern childbirth mean that the queen's body—and thus any potential chicanery—was hidden by curtains, sheets, and midwives. The warming-pan fiction, an ingenious response to the detail in Dawson's testimony, is not only a way of circumventing the problems of proving (or disproving) paternity, but also a means of shifting the responsibility for that incorrigibility ('The King's introducing men was only to make a fair pretence of covering her'). The theatricality of the scheme—their 'strange and close actings', after all, happen behind 'Bed-Curtains *Close Drawn*'—means that anti-Stuart writers can convert the conventions of early modern childbirth (privacy, female midwives, a covered patient) into deliberate obfuscations. In the same way, anti-Catholicism converts Catholic doctrine (papal supremacy) into evidence of treasonous intent (king-killing Jesuits), and Whig political theory converts the conventions of early-modern kingship (the king can do no wrong) into a guarantee of tyranny (the king will always do

wrong, and with impunity). As with the closed warming-pan, or the absolutist monarch's inscrutable intentions, the covering of Mary's body is in retrospect an opening, an opportunity, a *crux*. It is an opportunity for propagandists, because in their prejudicial narratives they can say that it is an opportunity for conniving papists. Both the invented conspirators and the inventors of the conspiracy rely on the insufficiency of evidence that basically inheres in early modern pregnancy and childbirth.

The (supposed) poverty of evidence that enables the invention of the warming-pan fiction is attributed by McKeon to the monarch's *arcana imperii*, and by Weil and Harol to the illegibility of the queen's body, of the birthing process. I share a sense of the historical and cultural importance of the warming pan fiction with all three writers, but my approach differs slightly. What I want to stress here is less the cause of that evidentiary shortfall, and more the fact that such insufficiency is necessary for the propaganda to function. These propagandists deliberately fabricate an incorrigible narrative because it demands of its readers the suspension of disbelief, faith, a submission of the will. Harol notes that an implication of these fictions of illegitimacy was that James was so unnatural as to prefer an impostor to the prejudice of the birth-rights of his biological daughters, the princesses Mary and Anne: the propaganda suggests that 'Catholics—represented by James and Mary—are not only intellectually and politically perverse, but they also engage in unnatural emotions about family, in that they allow their fictional plots to supersede biological and affective family ties.'⁴⁰ Quite so. But there is also a deep irony at work here, for this Whig propaganda actually exhibits the very same perversity that it associates with the Stuart monarchs. These narratives, demanding the assent of Protestant Whig readers, also demand the privileging of a fictional plot over biological ties. As the non-juror Thomas Wagstaffe noticed in a letter addressed to the new queen Mary after the revolution, this was exactly her sin. His tone is unremitting:

You are now possess'd of a Throne in prejudice to y^e Rights of y^r Royal Father & Brother, & y^e steps by w^{ch} you have ascended, have been by treading on y^e honour & safety (I had almost said y^e life) of y^r Father, y^e Innocence of y^r Bro.^r, y^e just rights of an hereditary Monarchy, & all justice, natural, civil

& religious

‘Y^e love of y^e Father’s Inheritances hath eaten up all y^e duty & reverence we owe to his person,’ he laments. What has led to the Princess of Orange behaving so badly? She has been misled by ‘corrupt Casuists:’ by misinterpretation, by fiction.⁴¹ So, as Wagstaffe indicates, one way of reading this revolution is of the triumph of fictions—of a prince’s illegitimacy, of a political society based on consent—over biological and affective family ties.⁴² This scandal is part of a revolution which leads to the Act of Settlement (1701)—legislation still in effect today—that explicitly puts confessional identity ahead of biology in determining political legitimacy. It is legislation that seems ‘modern’ in its foundation in Lockean contract theory, but decidedly early-modern in its abhorrence of Catholicism. Likewise, the things that Weil, McKeon and Harol note about the scandal—the appeals to ‘the public,’ the circulation of ‘information’ about the birth, the pseudo-scientific examination of ‘evidence,’ the subjection of the Stuarts to ‘a new politics of family values’—may well seem to fit in with Pincus’s view of the Whig modernisation project. But they are motivated and propelled by anti-Catholicism, by confessional prejudice, which gives them their substance, and supplies the Stuarts’ ‘intentions’. The ‘modern state’ that Pincus sees the Whigs proactively creating in 1688 was ridden with early modern concerns.⁴³

The Miracle

The warming-pan narrative capitalises on the obscurity of Mary’s body, *arcana imperii*, and the contents of the warming-pan itself. Before the depositions in October, when that particular propagandic vehicle became available, other stories of illegitimacy circulated. These stories did not, like the warming-pan fiction, decipher arcane spaces in order to make their political arguments, but concentrated on the more traditional problem of establishing paternity. Like the warming-pan fiction, however, these other fables use anti-Catholic tradition to delegitimize absolutist ideology and epistemology. The fabulisation of Catholic ‘miracles’ explored below is part of the same movement as the deconsecration of divine-right

monarchy and the transformation of the conventional circumstances of childbirth into materials for a plot.

From the announcement of Mary's pregnancy in late 1687, Catholic or royalist hopefulness for a male heir is read by opposition writers as evidence of a premeditated conspiracy. Aphra Behn's *Congratulatory poem to Her Most Sacred Majesty, on the universal hopes of all loyal persons for a Prince of Wales* (London, 1688), which appeared during Mary's pregnancy and whose title emphatically wished for a *prince*, will have provoked such derision.⁴⁴ The point, however, is that these were indeed '*hopes*' (although perhaps not so '*universal*' as Behn implies), not an indication of a conspiracy. It would have been odd for a panegyric poem addressed to the Queen not to wish for a male heir. As Clarendon noted in late 1687, not long before the pregnancy was announced, 'unless God grants a male heir to the King, the Catholics and their religion will be utterly ruined.'⁴⁵ Harol points out that Pope Innocent XI effectively told Mary of Modena that her job was to bear a male child, 'consecrating herself to the conversion of England'; her delivery was to enable the deliverance of English Catholics.⁴⁶ There was always tremendous pressure on queens to produce male heirs. The pressure on Mary, perhaps, was greater than normal. All of this was excellent grist to the propaganda mill: that Catholics wanted a male heir was already very well established; the opposition merely had to fill in the blanks about how they went about it. James Francis Edward Stuart was the answer to the prayers of some Catholics, and to many his birth and its timing could have seemed genuinely miraculous. Opposition writers, however, could always perceive intrigue and fakery lurking beneath such 'miracles'. In the 1689 pamphlet *A Melius Inquirendum*, a fictional account of a tribunal deliberating on the legitimacy of the Prince of Wales, a group of Catholic priests display the assurance so riling to opposition authors: 'in short, we have so well Sung for Six or Seven Months, that the Queen of *England* hath at length had a Son.'⁴⁷ According to this satire, their 'song' is not sincere prayer and divine answer, but a rhetorical deception. In this reading, James Francis Edward's conception and birth were not miraculous, but fabulous. These narratives shift agency from a providential (Catholic) God to conniving Catholics.

The Great Bastard, protector of the Little One draws a parallel between the disputed births of Louis

le Grand Dauphin and James Francis Edward Stuart. The Duke of Orleans, playing the role of an inquisitive subject admirably, closely observes proceedings at the birth of the Dauphin. He is, if nothing else, thorough:

The least Circumstance about the *Mother* and *Child*, did not escape his *prying Curiosity*, and the *Field of Nature itself* was laid open to his view; such is the misfortune of Princesses, when bearing Children, in prejudice of other Mens rights. *Monsieur* retiring himself to his Chamber, in a melancholly mood (as he had good reason) was asked of by *Espernon*, what he had seen: *Alas!* says he, *I am sure I saw it come out, but who the Devil put it in, I know not.*⁴⁸

The question of who the devil put James Francis Edward in Mary of Modena, (as opposed to the question of whether he was ever in her at all) occupied polemicists from early on in the pregnancy. These rumours—much more than the allegations of a fake pregnancy and supposititious birth—shaped Dryden’s poem on the prince’s birth, *Britannia Rediviva*. Polemicists could have simply accused Mary of infidelity with a member of the court, but they chose to bind up sexual transgression with the politico-religious sins of ‘popery’. Again, these writers latch on to an incidental detail, and reinterpret it. Gilbert Burnet describes their opportunity:

It was said, that, at the very time of [the Queen] coming to the King, her mother, the Dutchess of *Modena*, made a vow to the Lady *Loretto*, that her daughter might by her means have a son. And it went current, that the Queen believed herself to be with child in that very instant, in which her mother made her vow [...] A conception said to be thus begun looked suspicious.⁴⁹

We might take issue with Burnet’s ‘suspicion’ for lots of reasons, not least because of the fact that Mary’s mother died on 16 July 1687, nearly two months before the earliest of the two accepted dates

for conception (9 September; 6 October). A post-mortem pilgrimage would have been a miracle indeed. But the mock-annunciation narrative being crafted here depends on the simultaneity of prayer and intercession/conception ('that very instant'). In one anti-Stuart pamphlet, this 'miracle' is exposed as a cover for adultery. It was an easy step to take:

the Holy Ghost was to appear to her and make her Conceive, when she put on the pretended Smock of the Virgin *Mary*, which Apparition, they say, was in the likeness of the Pope's Nuntio, and so by an *Inuendo* [*sic*] give us to understand that he got it on the Queen, the known strength of his body making amends for all the failures of the King and Queen.⁵⁰

So Mary of Modena—who was already associated with the Virgin Mary—is accused of enacting a travesty of Christ's conception by way of a kind of bedroom role-play with Count D'Adda ('the Pope's Nuntio'), costumes and all. Implicating the papal nuncio—literally, the Pope's messenger, whose title is particularly apt for an annunciation narrative—is a means of implicating the Pope. By doing so, this narrative implies that this maculate conception is part of the effort to extirpate the Northern Heresy. There is no sign in these rumours of a consciousness of the difference between Gallicans and adherents of the Pope, the kind of consciousness Pincus declares is prevalent in England, because a fragmented Catholic church does not serve this propaganda's interests. This is partly because it is polemically effective to have the Pope's influence penetrate the house of Stuart so successfully (making them simultaneously weak puppets and dangerous tools), and partly because introducing the Pope enables the travesty of the annunciation, for which one needs an authority figure (God the Father/the Pope), an announcer (Gabriel or the Holy Spirit / the papal nuncio), and a receiver/receptacle (the Virgin Mary / Mary of Modena). D'Adda's conveniently paternal name could not have hurt, either.

Dryden's panegyric, *Britannia Rediviva*, was licensed on 19 June 1688, and published within about a fortnight of the prince's birth, but long before the depositions and the entrance of the warming-pan

into the debate.⁵¹ Public discontent regarding the pregnancy was significant enough for Clarendon to note it in his diary in January; Dryden, by now a veteran apologist for the Stuarts, will have been aware of how contentious his subject was, and he responds to accusations of illegitimacy delicately, but definitely.⁵² The poem as a whole relies heavily on sublimation and typology to distract attention from the opposition's focus on materiality and sex (the new prince is figured variously as the 'sun', a 'blessing', 'Alcides', 'Constantine'). Most striking, in the context of the travesty of the annunciation above, is Dryden's presentation of the heir's birth as an incarnation:

Fain wou'd the Fiends have made a dubious birth,
 Loth to confess the Godhead cloath'd in Earth.
 But sickned after all their baffled lyes,
 To find an Heir apparent of the Skyes:
 Abandoned to despair, still may they grudge,
 And owning not the Saviour, prove the Judge.⁵³

When Winn discusses these lines, it is in the context of the warming-pan fiction, and not the tale of adulterous incarnation.⁵⁴ However, it is telling that in one of the few times in the poem that Dryden explicitly addresses the 'Fiends' who cast aspersions on the Prince's legitimacy, he also figures him as 'the Godhead cloath'd in Earth' and the 'Heir apparent of the Skyes'. These lines dust off and re-appropriate the annunciation trope, reinvesting the opposition's fable with the miraculous, confronting their blasphemy, and giving agency back to the godhead. These are treacherous waters; the fact remains that the Virgin Mary's husband was not the father of her child. It is unlikely that Dryden would have waded in if he was not provoked by existing polemic. This rumour was certainly in circulation when Dryden was writing: *An Account of the Reasons* claims that 'the Fable of the Dutchess of *Modena's* request in Heaven or Purgatory was a matter of laughter and derision amongst the People, and a subject for Poets lampoons, which were so common that they were in *Whitehall* it self'.⁵⁵ More

decisively, the same annunciation travesty is found in an anonymous manuscript poem, entitled 'The Miracle' and scribally dated to January 1688 (about halfway through Mary's pregnancy). We hear of the Dutchess of Modena's prayer at Loretto, and then:

As soon as our Lady had heard her Petition,
 To *Gabriel* the Angel she strait gave Commission;
 She pluck'd of her smock, from her *Shoulders Divine*
 And Charg'd him to hasten to *England's* fair Queen

Go ~~tell~~ to th'Royal Dame,

And give her the same

And bid her for ever to praise my great name.

For I, in her favour, will work such a Wonder

As shall keep the most Insolent Heretick under.

Tell James, my best son, his Part in this matter

Must be, with this only to cover my Daughter;

Let him put it upon her wth his own Royal hand,

Then let him go Travel, & visit the Land:

And the Spirit of Love

Shall come from above

Tho not, as before, in the form of a Dove;

~~Yet~~ But down he shall come in some Likeness or other

Perhaps, /in\ ~~like~~ Count Dada's, & make her a Mother.⁵⁶

As the Catholic midwives' 'strange and close actings' took place 'Behind Bed-Curtains *Close Drawn*,' so Mary of Modena's alleged adultery takes place under the cover of the Virgin's smock. Metaphorically,

these lines point towards the anti-Catholic assumption that papists use the ceremonies and symbols of their faith (transubstantiation, the intercession of saints and the virgin) as smokescreens for their sexual-political deviancy. There is a feeling here that the Virgin is making things up as she goes along ('in some likeness or other...' 'perhaps in Count Dada's'). The *ad hoc* nature of this 'miraculous' explanation for the conception suggests that it is an afterthought, a post-facto revision: Count D'Adda impregnated Mary of Modena, and then the papists used the story of the interceding Virgin to 'explain' the queen's fortuitously timed pregnancy. The Virgin Mary is cast as a Catholic plotter, searching for the correct religious rhetoric in which to clothe a sordid plan. Of course, this 'explanation' of the adultery is in fact an invention of the opposition (recall that the Duchess of Modena's prayer was said to have occurred after she had died). They invent it so they can continue the practice of fabulizing Catholic miracles, insisting on Catholics' malicious intent.

The Virgin's plan is not a very good one; her smock is a flimsy cover for adultery. In this anti-Catholic discourse, papists are liable to come up with ill thought-out plans, because papists *en masse* are thought of as gullible and weak-willed, character traits derived respectively from their implicit faith and the doctrine of papal infallibility. This gullibility leads, in turn, to an assurance: Catholic plotters (and by extension absolutist princes) are so used to the gullible acquiescence of the laity that they do not bother covering their tracks. The whole point of absolutism or infallibility—the very thing that the propaganda explored in this article seeks to expose—is its vaunted incorrigibility. So, one manuscript poem ridicules the simple-minded view of one Catholic that 'If the Church does but say it, be sure 'tis a son.'⁵⁷ *The Amours of Messalina* reveals the assurance of papists when Pedro (based on the Jesuit Father Edward Petre, the king's advisor) asks the queen, 'who dares even suspect you? Who would presume to prove you? By your word, you create an Heir, and your command settles the Kingdom forever.'⁵⁸ Likewise, the fictional James II of *A Melius Inquierendum* splutters: 'I am a King and expect to be obeyed, without disputing, and when I say that the Prince of *Wales* is my Legitimate Son; this ought to suffice, and they ought to believe it.'⁵⁹ Thus, according to this writing, Catholic absolutist states rely on uninquisitive populations, adhering to a 'naive' epistemology that had been attacked in protestant critiques of

idolatry.

Idolatry is relevant here not only because part of this propaganda attacks the Mariolatry of shrines like Loretto, but because idolatry also depends on a drastic reduction—sometimes an obliteration—of the gap between representation and the thing represented (as when Mary is worshipped instead of God).⁶⁰ The anti-Catholic polemic surrounding the prince's birth insists on maintaining that gap, upholding the multi-directionality of signs. The anonymous author of the *Answer to the Depositions* complains, 'What was seen after relating to the Queen was no sign of any Labour or Delivery she had really undergone, but indeed there might be signs, that might be of any others Labour, as Clouts, &c. but this Lady could not say the Queens Body was the occasion.'⁶¹ The accusation here is that the Catholics expected the English nation to idolatrously conflate signs (soiled 'clouts') with signifieds (the queen's labour), to accept conventional meaning, or the authority of tradition. This, insists the polemic, might be expected of gullible papists, but not us. The warming-pan scandal is deeply confessional, but it is not *only* confessional. Its delegitimization of James Francis Edward Stuart is also a desecration of divine right kingship, and it deploys a resistant (one might say contrary) reading practice in opposition to a naive epistemology that is associated equally with absolutism and Catholicism. Again, we detect a heavy irony. Catholics are ridiculed for their irrational beliefs that have no evidentiary basis. Whig propagandists fabricate a deliberately incorrigible narrative, with no evidentiary basis, and suggest that a belief in that narrative is a marker of scepticism and resistance. For opposition writers, the legitimacy of James Francis Edward was unbelievable because it was inconvenient. Unwilling to credit it, they imbue the suspension of disbelief with political significance: to believe in the accounts of the birth promulgated by James II and the 42 deponents in October is to surrender the right to resist, and to submit to popery, slavery, and arbitrary government. Hickes described the events of 1688 as 'a trial of skill' between the 'Ly-makers' and 'Ly-believers'.⁶² The believers, as participants, are just as important as the makers. They are not participating in a modern representative democracy but contributing to the upholding of a set of early modern prejudices.

Lumpers, Splitters, and Birthers.

Six days after William's landing, James II echoed Elizabeth I's infamous reaction to the stagings of Shakespeare's *Richard II* in 1601: 'The King further said, that it would appear that the Prince of Orange came for the crown, whatever he pretended; but that he would not see himself deposed; that he had read the story of King Richard II.'⁶³ Already the providential or contractual explanations of the revolution are being challenged by Tory thought, casting William as a usurper and the revolution as a palace coup. What James is engaged in here is the divination of William's motives, which are at odds, he thinks, with the commitment to a free English parliament and the protestant religion found on his standard and in his declarations (these are the things 'he pretended'). James decides on William's intentions by putting him in a narrative, the shape of which is borrowed from the 'story of Richard II.' The progenitors of the warming-pan propaganda, like James, are concerned with the exposure of intentions. Like James, they expose those hidden intentions by placing the Stuarts in a narrative, the shape of which is borrowed from the history of anti-Catholic polemic. This kind of narrativization—giving the 'middle' of present events a beginning and an end—is a very good way of distributing agency, blame, or responsibility. It is one way of writing history.

These conspiratorial fictions are very literally prejudicial, in that the intentions of Catholics are predetermined and simplified by anti-Catholic feeling. For Sowerby, Pincus uses 'motives, rather than actions, to define groups,' and he 'begins with motive and reasons out the action.'⁶⁴ This is a consequence, perhaps, of Pincus's desire to show that the effects of the revolution were fully intended by William and the Whigs. As a result, Sowerby continues, Pincus's groups are 'static,' 'lack subtlety,' and are unresponsive to fluctuating circumstances. We might say the same of the Catholic protagonists in the warming-pan propaganda. The strength of Pincus's convictions, like those of the Whig propagandists, shapes his account of the revolution. Because he wants to argue that the effects of the revolution (credit finance, political representation, a labour-based economy) were not accidents, he downplays the prevalence of distinctively early modern aspects of propaganda produced in service of William and the Whigs. It is unclear to me, however, why modernity cannot be advanced (accidentally or otherwise) through pre-modern means, i.e. virulent confessional bigotry. It also seems to me quite

reasonable to conclude that there were plenty of participants in this revolution who did not care about the institution of credit finance, who understood what they were doing in confessional terms, and that their contribution to the revolution through propaganda is significant. It may even, accidentally, have produced the effects that Pincus delineates. William's confessional banner and his willingness to let these aspersions of illegitimacy remain uninvestigated suggest that he knew the importance of the 'narrow question' of the succession, and of religion, to some English men and women. This does not necessarily mean that he really saw himself as a Protestant saviour. Nor does it mean that he really thought James Francis Edward was illegitimate. It does mean, however, that he was happy for others to think that he did; he adapted to changing circumstances, and shaped them as best he could, for his own ends.

Some reviewers, borrowing J. H. Hexter's famous categories, have classified Pincus as a 'lumper' and not a 'splitter.'⁶⁵ But one of the objections this article is making is that Pincus's account of the revolution has ignored the lumpers—those popular polemicists deploying blunt anti-Catholicism and treating politics and religion interchangeably—in favour of the splitters, those who separate church and state, or stress division within the Catholic church. We need to listen to them both, because the history of this revolution needs to take into account the history of its representations and misrepresentations. The warming-pan fiction is only one of the politic fictions emerging in this period, but it is particularly potent, and particularly long-lived. As I have shown, it was metaphorically rich, and it enabled propagandists to popularise arguments about political and religious legitimacy, exposing along the way the constructedness and fictionality of politics. As time went on, this narrative became a reliable weapon in the Whig armoury, deployed continually against the Jacobites as they lurked on the fringes of the nation (sometimes literally). It continued to mediate understanding of the revolution in the late-Stuart and Hanoverian periods. *The Great Bastard, Protector of the Little One*, discussed above, was reprinted in French in 1702, when James II's death (in combination with the recent passing of the Act of Succession) led to Louis XIV's acknowledgement of the Prince of Wales as James III. In 1714, when the Hanoverian Succession fulfilled the 1701 Act's intentions and kept James Francis Edward off

the English throne, John Dunton quoted from the pamphlet.⁶⁶ Not only does this suggest the continued influence of the warming-pan scandal on political discourse, but the considerable staying power of the kind of popular writing this article has been examining, conventionally thought of as ‘ephemeral’.

Siting political legitimacy in the circumstances of birth is not a modern practice; worth is supposed to have triumphed over birth. Yet we do not have to look very far in Western culture to see that one’s birth can still be made to seem politically relevant, nor to find defenders of the idea that the public has a right to pry into the circumstances thereof. One can even now use these trumped-up charges of illegitimacy to irresponsibly exploit popular prejudices, and rely on those prejudices to give your story credence, as President Obama has discovered on several occasions during his first term.⁶⁷ Hicke’s ‘Ly-makers’ and ‘Ly-believers’ are as important now as they were in 1688, but that does not mean they were an indicator of nascent modernity. It might mean, rather, that our own political culture is not as modern as we think.

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1. British Library, Add. MSS 33954, fol.3.
2. James II, King of England, *At the Council Chamber in Whitehall, Monday the 22th of October, 1688* (London, 1688), p.6.
3. Anon., *A Full Answer to the Depositions* (London, 1689), p.14
4. Scott Sowerby accuses Pincus of deploying an evidentiary sleight of hand in this comparison ('Pantomime History,' *Parliamentary History* 30 (2011), p.238).
5. David Como, Rachel Weil, Steve Pincus, 'Modernity and the Glorious Revolution', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73 (2010), p.152.
6. See Jeremy Black, review of *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, by Steve Pincus, *The American Historical Review* 115 (2010), p.487; Warren Johnston, review of *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, by Steve Pincus, *English Historical Review* 125 (2010), p.996.
7. Como, Weil, Pincus, 'Modernity and the Glorious Revolution,' p.151; Johnston, p.996.
8. Pincus, *1688*, p. 122; p. 139; p. 142.
9. Weil points out that following the revolution, the penal laws made no effort to distinguish 'the supporters of Louis XIV–style Gallicanism from supporters of the Pope.' (Como, Weil, Pincus, 'Modernity and the Glorious Revolution', p.152).
10. Pincus, *1688*, p.124; p.210.
11. Sowerby, p.245. Black also points to an unsubtle reading of 'ambiguous sources'.
12. Pincus, *1688*, p.181-182; p.210.

13. Ibidem., p.327

14. David Como notes that ‘contemporaries regarded [the prince’s birth] as very important indeed’ (‘Modernity and the Glorious Revolution’, p.143). Melinda Zook attributes Pincus’s avoidance of the birth to his commitment to a revolutionary reading of 1688: ‘One can easily imagine why the baby is missing, however, since most historians believe that the so-called revolutionaries were willing to wait James out, knowing that his Protestant daughter, Mary, was next in line. Their patience was not very revolutionary.’ (review of *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, by Steve Pincus, *Journal of British Studies* 50 (2011), p.208).

15. For the epistemological evasiveness of virginity see Corrinne Harol, *Enlightened Virginity in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.4; p.122; and passim.

16. See, for instance, Robert Beddard, ed., *A Kingdom without a King: The Journal of the Provisional Government in the Revolution of 1688* (Oxford: Phaedon, 1988), p.148.

17. Noel Carrol, ‘On the Narrative Connection,’ in *Beyond Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), p.118-133.

18. Apart from their bigotry, there are several good reasons for discounting the aspersions cast on the birth. BL, Add 32096 contains a manuscript discussion of the affair by a lawyer, dispensing with a number of objections, including: that more proofs are necessary for a royal birth (fol.323v); that the child should have been seen to come out of Mary’s womb (fols.325r-v); that some of the deponents were women or Catholics (fol.325). The new prince had been owned by both of his parents, which was all that was necessary to secure his birthright. This is presumably why James II’s memoirs describe it ‘as a senceless story that would not be an obstacle to a man’s succeeding to the inheritance of an acre of land’ (J. S. Clarke, ed., *The Life of King James the Second, King of England*, vol. II, (London, 1816), p.196). The depositions of 42 witnesses to the birth attesting to the prince’s legitimacy are also significant. James St. Amand, the Royal Apothecary in 1688, insisted in 1703 that ‘[i]t was impossible the child he saw cd be ye issue of anybody but the Queen’s, because the blood in his navell string was then fluid,

wch, in as short a space of time as a child cd be conveyed from any part of the Lodgings wd have coagulated' (BL, Add. MS 32096, fol.41). Another medical professional and employee of James II's court, Hugh Chamberlen, quotes an avowedly anti-Catholic 'necessary women,' present at the birth, declaring in conversation that she was 'certain no such thing as the bringing a strange Child in a warming pan could be practised without my seeing it' (BL, Sloane 4107, fol. 150). That this anecdotal report of a Whig discrediting Whig propaganda is placed in a letter to the Electress of Hanover, a woman poised to benefit from the vaunted illegitimacy of the prince, makes its frankness striking.

19. 'divest, v.'. OED Online. September 2012. Oxford University Press.

<http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2277/view/Entry/56090?rskey=LtPTO2&result=2&isAdvanced=false> (accessed September 17, 2012). See especially sense 4.

20. James I, King of England, 'A Proclamation touching D. Cowels booke called the Interpreter,' in *Stuart Royal Proclamations* vol. 1, ed. James Francis Larkin and Paul L. Hughes (Oxford, 1973), p.243-244.

21. For cushions, see the rehearsal scene in Anon., *The Abdicated Prince* (London, 1690), p.45-7. The anonymous secret history *The Amours of Messalina* (London, 1689), in four parts, fabricates numerous sexual intrigues in the Stuart court. See also 'The Miracle,' below.

22. Corrinne Harol, 'Misconceiving the Heir: Mind and Matter in the Warming Pan Propaganda,' in *Vital Matters: Eighteenth-Century Views of Conception, Life, and Death*, ed. Helen Deutsch and Mary Terrall (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), p.130.

23. Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2005), p.556-557.

24. Weil, *Political Passions: Gender, the Family, and Political Argument in England, 1680-1714* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1989), p.86-104.

25. 'incorrigibility, n.'. OED Online. September 2012. Oxford University Press.

<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/93988?redirectedFrom=incorrigibility> (accessed September 24, 2012). See especially sense 'b'.

26. *Answer to the Depositions*, p.9.

27. Anon., *An Account of the Pretended Prince of Wales, and Other Grievances [sic]* (London, 1688), p.13-14.

28. Anon., *The Sham Prince Expos'd*. (London, 1688), broadside.

29. One pamphlet expresses concern that the insufficient scrutiny of the circumstances of the birth was tantamount to allowing 'the will of the King' to decide the succession (*An Account of the Reasons*, p.16). The *Answer to the Depositions* declared visual confirmation of the child 'com[ing] out of the Womb' from 'credible Modest persons' to be 'the best proof and answer' to its own allegations (p.17). *An Account of the Reasons* demands that women should have 'testified their Personal sight and perception of that very individual Child coming naturally out of the *Queens* womb' (p.12). According to another writer, these women should have been 'of spotless Integrity', and the observations were to be made 'by the Assistance of Physitians and Women of experience.' (*Account of the Pretended Prince*, p.10-11).

30. See *An Account of the Reasons*, p.12.

31. Sir John Dalrymple, *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland, from the battle of La Hogue till the capture of the French and Spanish fleets at Vigo*, vol. III, (London, 1790), p.172. Anne is determined to avoid being forced to acknowledge her brother's legitimacy at this stage. See Clarendon's interview with her (Henry and Laurence Hyde, Earls of Clarendon and Rochester, *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, and of his Brother, Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester*, vol, II, ed. Samuel Weller Singer (London, 1828) p.198), and Margaret Dawson's accusation that Anne 'used tricks not to be there time enough when the queen came to be big' (BL, Add 39822, fol.17).

32. *Answer to the Depositions*, p.9.

33. *Answer to the Depositions*, p.10.

34. Anon., *The Great Bastard, protector of the Little One* (London, 1689), p.21.

35. *Answer to the Depositions*, p.17-18. Jacques Gelis indicates that at childbirths in early modern France, 'generally the woman was decently clad and the midwife worked away under her petticoats.'

(*History of Childbirth: Fertility, Pregnancy and Birth in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Rosemary Morris (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), p.120); Lianne McTavish, again writing of France, insists that ‘the royal midwife asserted control of the lying-in chamber and reaffirmed the early modern belief that it was inappropriate for men to cast their eyes on the female genitalia.’ (*Childbirth and the Display of Authority in Early Modern France* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p.58; p.61). Weil holds that even the witnessing of the royal birth by men—from whatever distance—was unusual (*Political Passions*, p.96).

36. BL, Add 33286, fol.11. Hickes’s information comes from the midwife, Dawson. In her deposition, Lady Bellasis states that the midwife ‘was sitting by the Bedside, with her hands in the Queens Bed’, implying that Mary was indeed ‘draped’. (James II, *At the Council Chamber in Whitehall*, p.5). In 1689 Dawson said, ‘I did see the Pr. Of W. born. I may say see born, being at the medwife’s back so near as I could stand, and but one blanket being on the bed, I could see the medwife’s hands whenever she moved them.’ (BL, Add 39822, fol.5).

37. Anon., ‘A New Protestant Letany’, in *A Collection of the Newest and Most Ingenious Poems, Songs, Catches, etc. Against Popery, relating to the Times*. (London, 1689), p.16.

38. Harol, *Enlightened Virginity*, chapter 2.

39. Harol, ‘Mind and Matter,’ p.135.

40. Ibid., p.141.

41. Bodleian Library, Eng.Hist.d1, fol.1.

42. Victoria Kahn explores the fictionality of seventeenth-century contract theory in *Wayward Contracts: The Crisis of Political Obligation in England, 1640-1674* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004).

43. Pincus, 1688, p.3.

44. As Wagstaffe recognised in his letter, the gender was key: ‘There might have been a thousand supposititious daughters, & ye P[rince]. of O[range]. wd never have troubled himself about it’ (Bodleian MS Eng.Hist.d1, p. 4).

45. Martin Haile, *Queen Mary of Modena, Her Life and Letters* (London, 1905), p.166.

46. Harol, 'Mind and Matter,' p.133. It may be that this play on delivery / deliverance is somewhere behind the prevalence of 'litany' poems commenting on the birth and revolution, with their insistent liturgical refrain '*libera nos*' ('deliver us'). Opposition poems like 'A New Protestant Letany' (see note 38) are also punning on the etymological links between *libera nos*, 'deliverance', and 'liberty'.

47. Anon., *A Melius inquirendum into the birth of the Prince of Wales* (London, 1689), p.12.

48. Anon., *The Great Bastard*, p.20.

49. Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time* (London, 1724), p.749-50.

50. Anon., *Answer to the Depositions*, p.4.

51. John Dryden, *Poems*, ed. Earl Miner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), vol. III, 1685-1692, p.472. A fortnight may seem a long delay for a poem commemorating such a long-expected event, but Dryden may have been put on the back foot because of a miscalculation of the Queen's due date; she was expecting to go into labour in July. This also accounts for the court's sudden removal to St. James's Palace, which gave Whigs the opportunity to insist that the move was for the convenience of smuggling a supposititious baby in. See Haile, *Queen Mary of Modena*, p.188.

52. Clarendon records the less than enthusiastic showing at the 'thanksgiving day appointed for the Queen's being with Child', January 15 1688 (*Correspondence*, p.156). On 23 April 1688 the nuncio remarked upon satirical caricatures being produced in Holland declaring the prince to be a bastard. (Haile, *Queen Mary of Modena*, p.180).

53. John Dryden, *Britannia Rediviva* (London, 1688), p.5-6.

54. James Anderson Winn, *John Dryden and His World* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1987), p.431-432.

55. Anon., *Account of the Reasons*, p.9

56. Anon., 'The Miracle', Bodleian Library, Oxford, Rawl.Poet.159, fol.19. This page bears the date 'January 1687' at the head of the poem: this dating is using the legal, and not the calendar year.

57. Anon., 'Loretta & Winifred or The New Way of getting Children by prayers & Saints', Bodleian Library, Douce 357, fol.125v.

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58. *The Amours of Messalina Late Queen of Albion*, vol. II, (London, 1689), p.36.
59. Anon., *A Melius Inquirendum*, p.2.
60. See Harol, *Enlightened Virginity*, p.112.
61. Anon., *Answer to the Depositions*, p.17-18.
62. BL, Add 33286, fol.17v.
63. Clarendon, *Correspondence*, p.211. Elizabeth I, in conversation with the historian William Lambarde, reputedly remarked, 'I am Richard II, know ye not that?' (E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, vol. II, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p.326).
64. Sowerby, 'Pantomime History', p.252.
65. Ted Vallance, review of *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, by Steve Pincus, *The New Statesman*, accessed 20 September, 2012, <http://www.newstatesman.com/books/2009/10/1688-revolution-france-pincus>; Sowerby, 'Pantomime History,' p.251.
66. Matthew Gerber, *Bastards: Politics, Family, and Law in Early Modern France* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), p.221; Harol, 'Mind and Matter,' p.135.
67. I refer to the Republican 'birther' movement in the US, which questioned whether Obama had been born in the country. Even after his administration published the birth certificate, Donald Trump went as far as suggesting that the document was a fraud (see Paul Harris, 'Donald Trump's 'birther' questions overshadow Mitt Romney's Texas win,' *The Guardian*, accessed September 20, 2012 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/may/30/donald-trump-birther-mitt-romney?intcmp=239>).