THE 'POPISH MIDWIFE':
PRINTED REPRESENTATIONS OF ELIZABETH CELLIER AND
MIDWIFERY PRACTICE IN LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND

By

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the role of print culture in the re-definition of English midwifery practice during the seventeenth century. The printed representations, both visual and textual, of the Catholic midwife Elizabeth Cellier in The Popish Damnable Plot (BM 1088, 1680), The Solemn Mock Procession (BM 1085, 1680), and The Happy Instruments of England's Preservation (BM 1114, 1681) will serve as a basis for my analysis.

As part of a larger body of Whig imagery produced in London during the Exclusion Crisis of 1679-81, Cellier's representation consistently referred to her alleged role in a 'popish plot' perpetrated by Catholics to kill King Charles II. In defining Cellier as part of a treasonous threat to the nation, this representation not only targeted her supposed involvement in criminal activities, but also focussed on her midwifery as being an integral aspect of her criminality.

Licensed by the Church of England since 1534, midwifery practice was exclusively the province of women. Cellier's representation as a 'criminal midwife' occurred at a time when the traditional societal role and organization of midwifery were being questioned. Increasingly, midwives during this period were criticized both by nonconformist groups critical of the Anglican
rituals of birth, and by medical practitioners interested in controlling the supervision of childbirth.

My aim in this thesis, then, is to explore how Cellier's representation, while purporting to report a crime quite separate from her profession, would in fact serve to represent midwifery as a potentially criminal and dangerous practice. In Chapter One, I will examine both the political motivations behind her representation, and the conditions in London for the production and distribution of this type of printed imagery. Chapter Two will deal with how the genres representing Cellier were used to construct her as a 'popish' threat to English national unity, while addressing nonconformist audiences over the issue of exclusion. Finally, in Chapter Three I will analyze how this criminalized representation of Cellier as 'popish' involved and coincided with both nonconformist critiques of Anglican birthing rituals and attempts in medical discourse to transform previous childbirth practices into a written form of 'professional' medical knowledge. The overall aim is to show how Cellier's representation was part of the process whereby traditional midwifery practice in England was re-defined, a process which ultimately resulted in the marginalization of women from midwifery practice.
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I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Rose Marie San Juan, and my second reader Dr. Maureen Ryan, for their guidance and assistance during the preparation of this thesis. In addition, I would like to thank my friend John for his on-going support. Lastly, I would like to thank my parents, my sister Maya, and my brother Matthew, for their encouragement and understanding.
Science and medicine played a crucial role in the rise of liberal political thought, because their methods seemed to be the only ones which would displace the 'artificial' notions of human nature derived from metaphysical speculation and religious orthodoxy.

INTRODUCTION

The Popish Priests serve their Laity, so do our Physitians serve the commonality of this Nation; namely Hide al from them they can, for they know... that should the vulgar but be a little acquainted with their Mysteries al their jugling and knavery would be seen.

--Nicholas Culpeper, A Directory for Midwives (1660)

Thus Nicholas Culpeper, a Puritan apothecary interested in promoting his skills as a new 'man-midwife' in London, criticized his professional 'betters', the physicians, by comparing them to 'popish priests', the Anglican clergy. Culpeper's midwifery manual was one of many new medical texts on midwifery produced during the seventeenth century which was part of a movement to re-define the midwifery profession.

For seventeenth century readers, this criticism of doctors as 'popish' within the context of a midwifery text may have been easily understood. However, several questions pose themselves to twentieth century readers unfamiliar with such seventeenth century terminology. Particularly, what could the term 'popish' have signified for readers that it was used to denounce the traditional medical practice represented by physicians? And what did the tacit statement that the 'vulgar'--in
this case midwives—were ignorant have to do with this notion of 'popish' medical practice?

Culpeper's criticism brings to light the issue I will examine in this thesis: namely, the re-definition of traditional midwifery practice into medical terms through its popular representation as 'popish' in printed imagery.

It is well-established in social and medical histories on English midwifery that during the seventeenth century the profession underwent profound changes which still affect the way childbirth in England is defined, regulated and supervised today. What is rarely considered in such histories, however, is the process whereby such changes to midwifery would successfully question and transform previous assumptions about the profession.

Printed popular representations of midwives and midwifery of the period provide evidence that this

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1 For an account of how such historical changes still affect contemporary English birthing practices see Caroline Flint, "On the brink: midwifery in Britain," The Midwife Challenge, ed. Sheila Kitzinger (London: Pandora, 1988) 22-39.

2 Two such works are Irving S. Cutter and Henry R. Viets, A Short History of Midwifery (Philadelphia and London: W.B. Saunders, 1964) and Audrey Eccles, Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Tudor and Stuart England (London: Croom Helm, 1982). While Irving and Cutter examine the 'rise' of the medical profession, Eccles discusses the effects of such changes on women midwives and the medical practice generally.

It should be noted that two recent studies have attempted to investigate this process of re-definition of midwifery. Elizabeth Harvey, in "Matrix as Metaphor: Midwifery and the Conception of Voice", in her soon to be published Ventriloquized Voices: Feminist Theory and English Renaissance Texts (London: Routledge, 1992) 140-285, examines how metaphorical references to childbirth and midwifery in English Renaissance poetry were linked to the creation of a new medical discourse on childbirth, and the re-definition of the practice. L.J. Jordanova, in "Gender, Generation and Science: William Hunter's Obstetrical Atlas," William Hunter and the eighteenth century Medical World, ed. W.F. Bynum and Roy Porter (Cambridge, New York: CUP, 1986) 385-412, analyzes the anatomical illustrations of a man-midwife's atlas with a view to establishing how the institutionalization and distribution of such imagery contributed to changes in the societal perception of childbirth.
transformation of midwifery practice was by no means a straightforward, linear 'development' of scientific progress—a point often argued in medical histories. Instead, political broadsides and pamphlets, as well as midwifery manuals and medical illustrations, were important sites through which new kinds of knowledge about midwifery sought legitimacy in an attempt to discount older assumptions of childbirth.

Three prints representing the alleged criminal Elizabeth Cellier as the 'Popish Midwife'—The Popish Damnable Plot, 1680 (Figs. 1 and 2), The Solemn Mock Procession..., 1680 (Fig. 3), and The Happy Instruments of England's Preservation, 1680 (Fig. 5)—will serve as a focus for this investigation, for they provide a particularly good example of how popular representation functioned to question previous societal perceptions of midwifery and birthing practices. These representations reveal that the societal anxieties around the transformation of midwifery practice created

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3 Cutter and Viets in A Short History, are quick to assume that the changes to midwifery were caused by the ignorance of midwives and by scientific 'advancement' in the field. However, we know that during the seventeenth century, the very period when men were entering the birth chamber for the first time, the bills of mortality document that death at childbirth had actually risen. See Elizabeth Cellier (written Celleor), To Dr. --- An Answer to his Queries, concerning the Colledg of Midwives (London, January, 1688) 6.

4 A large number of medical manuals of the period still exist; see for example, Nicholas Culpeper, The Directory for Midwives (London, 1660); Sir Theodore Mayerne, Dr. Chamberlain, Mr. Nicholas Culpeper, etc., The Compleat midwife's practice enlarged (London, 1698); The English midwife enlarged (London, 1682).

5 Elizabeth Cellier was not the only midwife to be stereotyped as a criminal in the press during this period. See the representation of an anonymous 'popish midwife' in a set of playing cards representing the Revolution of 1688 and attributed to Francis Barlow reproduced in David Kunzle, History of the Comic Strip (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), Fig. 5-20. Kunzle suggests that this anonymous woman may be Mary Aubrey who also figures in a print reproduced by Fuchs-Kind, Weiberherrschaft II, Fig. 630, 42.
much tension between different perceptions of knowledge about childbirth.

Elizabeth Cellier's representation as 'popish midwife'—while part of a particular political news production aimed at London nonconformist audiences during the early 1680s—appeared at a time when traditional midwifery practice was being called into question by both nonconformist groups and medical practitioners. Licensed by the Church of England since 1534, traditional midwifery practice until the seventeenth century had exclusively been the province of women. Midwives' duties had included emergency baptism of the mother or child if they died during birth, as well as supervision of the Anglican ritual of 'churching' or purification of the new mother. In addition to such rituals of birth, midwives were responsible for the determination of (il)legitimacy, abortion and fertility, which, under midwives' jurisdiction, were thus subject to control by the Church. Increasingly, however, nonconformists would denounce the Anglican rituals of birth and the midwives who practiced them. Nonconformists were opposed to this licensed midwifery and the rituals it promoted (which they condemned as 'popish'), for it was a means through
which the Anglican Church attempted to exert its authority over matters of private morality.\footnote{Keith Thomas, \textit{Religion and the Decline of Magic} (London: Peregrine Books, 1978) 172.}

In addition to the nonconformist critique of licensed midwifery, the English medical community of physicians, surgeons and apothecaries during the seventeenth century would also begin to criticize the ability of midwives to supervise the birthing process; these criticisms would increasingly threaten traditional midwifery practice.\footnote{Ornella Moscucci, \textit{The Science of Woman: Gynaecology and Gender in England, 1800-1929} (Cambridge: CUP, 1990) 6.} This intervention in childbirth was linked to professional competition amongst the various medical practitioners themselves. Surgeons and apothecaries began to challenge the authority of the physicians, who had held sway at the top of the medical profession's internal hierarchy since the medieval period. Physicians, who dealt with the more theoretical aspects of medicine, had held the authority to dictate the mandates of the more practical professions of surgeons and apothecaries. One way in which surgeons and apothecaries attempted to define their own professions as different from, yet equal to that of physicians, was to claim they had a more valid, 'scientific' knowledge of birth. Physicians, who assisted at births only if the mother or newborn were dying, had previously held little authority over the
birthing process itself, and therefore could not easily control the movements of surgeons and apothecaries, who, like Nicholas Culpeper, the London apothecary, began to practice as so-called 'men-midwives'.

As a result of this medical intervention in the birthing process, not only would the religious aspects of birth be radically re-evaluated, but the requirements and qualifications for the practice of women midwives would also change. While previously women had undergone an apprenticeship under other senior midwives, and had acquired their knowledge of the practice on an oral basis, medical practitioners would increasingly insist on the qualification of women for the profession through the reading of medical texts and anatomy. As one doctor stated in a midwifery manual of 1698, it was his purpose to:

> correct the frequent mistakes of most midwives, who resting too boldly upon the common way of delivering women, neglect all the wholesome and profitable rules of the art... which concern the anatomical parts of the body.

Although not directly related to the specific nonconformist critique of the religious functions of midwifery, such practitioners would attempt to define midwifery in medical terms, and by such definition deny

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the ritualistic—or 'popish'—aspects of midwifery.

While the impetus for changes to the religious function of midwifery had its origin in a nonconformist critique of the Anglican Church, the formation of a new strictly medical discourse on midwifery was part of a process whereby the different medical professions asserted their authority over the birthing process. Both critiques of midwifery manifested themselves in a condemnation of midwifery as a 'superstitious' and outmoded (ignorant) practice. The ritualism of traditional midwifery was detested not only by dissenting groups, but ran counter to the scientism of new developments in medical discourse.

My aim in this thesis, then, is to analyze how, at a time when older notions of midwifery were being repudiated by both nonconformist groups and medical practitioners, Cellier's representation was part of this larger process of transformation of the practice. I shall argue that the printed images of Cellier, while purporting to report a crime quite separate from her profession, would in fact to serve to represent midwifery as a potentially criminal and dangerous practice.

I will investigate in Chapter One both the political motivations behind Cellier's representation, and the conditions in London for the production and distribution of this type of printed imagery. In
Chapter Two I will discuss how the genres representing Cellier constructed her as a 'popish' threat to English national unity while addressing nonconformist audiences over the particular political issue of exclusion of the Duke of York from succession to the throne in 1680. I will then analyze in Chapter Three how this criminalized representation of Cellier as 'popish' involved and coincided with both nonconformist critiques of Anglican birthing rituals and attempts in medical discourse to transform previous childbirth practices into a written form of 'professional' medical knowledge. This analysis will establish how Cellier's representation was part of the process whereby traditional midwifery practice in England was re-defined, a process which eventually resulted in the marginalization of women from midwifery practice.
CHAPTER ONE
PRINTING, POLITICS, AND THE 'POPISH MIDWIFE':
THE CONTEXT OF REPRESENTATION

During the years 1680—1682, a number of prints, broadsides and pamphlets were produced in London which claimed that Elizabeth Cellier, a well-known local Catholic midwife, was involved in a failed plot to kill King Charles II.1 The standard press account of this event stated that Cellier, while providing relief to convicts in Newgate prison, met Thomas Dangerfield, who, upon his release from prison, had requested that she store some documents in her Meal Tub until he came to trial. Through an anonymous tip, however, one Sir William Waller is reputed to have searched Cellier's Meal Tub to discover that what Dangerfield had claimed were his trial papers were in fact documents, allegedly produced by Catholic plotters, which falsely accused local Whigs of a conspiracy to kill the king.2 Cellier, who contested this account of what came to be called the 'Meal Tub Plot', was arrested in June of 1680 for her

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1 A large number of pamphlets documenting Cellier's alleged crimes still exist. See, for example: The New popish sham-plot discovered, or, The cursed contrivance of the Earl of Danby, Mrs. Cellier... (London: Printed for T. Davies, 1682); The Newgate salutation, or, A dialogue between Sir. W.W. and Mrs. Cellier (London: Printed for the use of the students in Whittington's Colledge, 1681?); The midwife unmask'd, or, The popish design of Mrs. Cellier's meal-tub plainly made known... (London: Printed for T. Davies, 1680).

2 For a rendition of this standard press account see The Triall of Elizabeth Cellier, at the Kings Bench Barr, on Friday June the 11th, 1680 (London: Printed for Randal Taylor, 1680).
supposed criminal role in the event. She was acquitted, however, then re-arrested for libel in September 1680, found guilty, and convicted when she attempted to publish her side of the Meal Tub Plot story in a pamphlet entitled Malice Undefeated... Of course, such press reports of the time cannot be relied upon as accurate representations of 'historical fact'. There is no evidence--outside of the press documentation--that Cellier ever met with Dangerfield; nor is there anything to suggest that Cellier was ever involved in a conspiracy to kill the King.4

The subsequent representation of Cellier's alleged crimes in the London press after her conviction, however, would invariably focus on the Meal Tub Plot. This representation of Cellier was part of a larger output of Country Party street literature produced during the Exclusion Crisis of 1679-81. The Country Party (or Whig Party, as it came to be called), having the support of many London nonconformists and Broad Church advocates, had held a majority of the local London government seats since the Act of Indulgence in 1672, which had granted

3 Elizabeth Cellier, Malice Undefeated: Or a Brief Relation of the Accusation and Deliverance of Elizabeth Cellier (London: Printed for Elizabeth Cellier, 1680).

4 Many historical accounts of The Meal Tub Plot assume that Cellier was responsible for the plot. See, for example, John Kenyon, The Popish Plot (London: Heinemann, 1972) 190, and Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic (London: Peregrine Books, 1979) 371. In "Cellier, Elizabeth," The Dictionary of National Biography, 1937-38 ed, however, it was claimed that the plot had been the creation of Dangerfield, who alleged he had been employed to concoct the 'sham plot'.

dissenters the right to participate in political life.\textsuperscript{5}

The Exclusion Crisis came to a head when supporters of the Country Party attempted to pass a bill in the House of Commons which would have excluded the Catholic Duke of York, (in the absence of a legitimate Protestant heir to King Charles II), from succession to the throne. It was generally feared by nonconformists that the Duke (if ever crowned) would introduce a more authoritarian form of government similar to that of France, which was known to be intolerant of Protestant minorities. This assumption, that Catholicism led to the instatement of absolute monarchy, was common in England at this time. In the words of Sir Henry Capel:

\begin{quote}
From popery came the notion of a standing army and arbitrary power...Formerly the crown of Spain, and now France, supports this root of popery amongst us; but lay popery flat, and there's an end of arbitrary government and power. It is a mere chimera, or notion, without popery.\textsuperscript{6}
\end{quote}

The exclusion of the Duke of York, a converted Catholic known for his indifference towards dissenters, then, was deemed necessary by Whig politicians whose main concern was to maintain a nonconformist London government.

As a result of fear of the political consequences of a Catholic monarch, much of the Whig nonconformist street

\textsuperscript{5} The term nonconformists generally refers to those various dissenting Protestant groups outside of the established Church of England. Presbyterians, Baptists and even Quakers actively supported and belonged to the Whig Party. N.H. Keeble, \textit{The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Late Seventeenth Century England} (Leicester: Leicester UP, 1987) 60.

\textsuperscript{6} Quoted in Kenyon, 2.
literature and imagery of this period, in arguing for the exclusion of the Catholic Duke from succession to the throne, was characterized by a continual anti-Catholic bias. As Cellier's representation was part of this larger pro-Exclusion and anti-Catholic Whig news production, her status as a Catholic became a dominant feature of her public criminal image. However, in addition to her Catholic religion, Cellier was also denigrated by frequent references to her position as a midwife. Indeed, because of the repeated allusions made to midwifery, she became known locally as the 'popish midwife' or the 'meal tub midwife'.

What was so significant about midwifery that it became a dominant feature of her representation? After all, it had ostensibly nothing to do with her alleged crime. One explanation can perhaps be found in the conventions of satirical representation of early modern England. It was common practice in popular satirical representation to characterize and stereotype an individual by referring to their profession. Thus it is not surprising that Cellier was represented in satirical

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8 See, for example, the pamphlets The Tryal of Elizabeth Cellier, the Popish Midwife... (London: Printed by A. Godbid, for I.C., 1660), and A True copy of a letter of consolation sent to Nat. the printer...from the meal-tub midwife... (London: Printed for W. Johnson, 1681).

texts through references to her livelihood, nor that her
visual image would be referred to in descriptive texts as
that representing the 'popish midwife'. What this
conventional form of popular representation provided,
then, was an established means through which Cellier's
midwifery profession became associated with her alleged
criminality. I therefore intend to analyze how this
association of Cellier's 'popish' crimes with her
midwifery practice was constructed. My analysis of the
popular representation of Cellier in The Popish Damnable
Plot (Figs. 1 and 2), The Solemn Mock Procession... (Fig.
3), and The Happy Instruments... (Fig. 5) will establish
how the different religious, political and medical
discourses on popery and midwifery came together in the
image of the 'popish midwife' to depict midwifery as a
criminal practice and thus operate as an implicit attack
on the profession of midwifery itself.

The Popish Damnable Plot, (Fig. 1) is a large
broadside engraving (13 1/4 x 19 in), the upper portion
of which is composed of twelve numbered images;
originally a text appeared directly below the image (Fig.
2).\footnote{BM 1088, December 20, 1680. M.D. George, Catalogue of Prints and Drawings in the
British Museum, Political and Personal Satires (London: Chiswick Press, 1870) 641; David Kunzle, in his The Early Comic Strip (Berkeley: University of California Press,
1973) states that the top portion of the print is now located at the British Museum
and the lower at the British Museum Library, Luttrell Collection, iii, 142 (press-
mark: C 20f).} This engraving claimed to document particular
crimes committed by Catholics against various officials
of the local London government. Cellier's participation in the Meal Tub Plot is depicted in the sequence of images numbered V-VIII. Similar in format but larger is The Solemn Mock Procession... (19-20 in), a broadside containing an image in the upper portion of the print with a commentary below (Fig. 3). This broadside represents a particular event in London, the pope-burning procession of November 17th, 1680. Cellier is represented on the first pageant float of the parade. These processions were put on by local Whig and nonconformist elites in an attempt to rally support for exclusion.12 The Happy Instruments..., is a smaller print (10 1/2 x 13 7/8 in), composed largely of an image with a small explanatory text at the bottom of the page reminiscent of the broadside format (Fig. 5).13 The engraving is a fabricated and mocking representation of a 'popish plot' to reinstate Catholicism in England. Cellier is shown in the lower left of the image as an accomplice, both to the plot and the pope's attempts to recover England from Protestantism.

In my analysis I will discuss how these images used particular contemporary conventions of visual political

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11 BM 1085, November, 1680. George, Political and Personal Satires 632.


13 BM 1114, George, Personal and Political Satires 682.
satire to represent Cellier on the one hand as a 'popish' criminal, and on the other as a deviant midwife. Whereas today, visual political satire in newspapers might criticize an individual by emphasizing particular physical attributes in the form of caricature, seventeenth century English visual political satire identified an individual through such things as their dress (frequently denoting their profession), or represented them partaking in a particular activity. In some cases, a specific object (represented with the figure) would serve as a means of recognition of the individual, and of the act for which they were well known. In each of the images representing Cellier, she appears in the standard dress of a gentlewoman (she is shown with her head covered, as was the custom for gentlewomen who appeared in public) but can be identified in two ways: Firstly by her actions (plotting against the King), and secondly by the fact that she is always represented with her Meal Tub (see Figs. 1, 3 and 5). Represented repeatedly in the press, these attributes would have signified to the informed viewer that this image of a gentlewoman depicted Cellier.


15 Other images of Cellier were also produced. See, for example, BM 1071, George, Political and Personal Satires; see also Catalogue of British Drawings, 135 for designs drawn by Francis Barlow for a set of playing cards now lost representing the Meal Tub Plot.
During this period, broadsides and single sheet prints (composed of both image and text) representing 'popish plots' were one of the main forms of printed representation used for the purposes of arguing for the Duke's exclusion. I will establish the differences and similarities of these prints representing Cellier with a view to assessing how such forms may have dictated the audiences' understandings of their content. Indeed, by analyzing how the different genres of prints made visible a discourse on midwifery, we can come closer to assessing how these different representations functioned to construct meaning and consensus about the definition of midwifery among their viewers and readers. As Roger Chartier claims,

understanding...discourses in their...particular rationalities all presuppose...that the constraints and demands of the very forms in which they are to be read be taken into account. Hence we must...trace the shifts from one genre to another when a given form becomes invested with issues that are normally foreign to it or with themes that are generally expressed elsewhere in other ways.16

Like many of the broadsides and single sheet prints produced during the Exclusion Crisis, those representing Cellier were composed of a basic title-image-text format. All three of the prints representing Cellier are introduced by a title which acts as a short synopsis of the engraving (see Figs. 1, 3, and 5). In each case, the

image is located below the title and above the
description or 'explanation', which dictates to the
viewer the intended meaning of the print. I shall
consider how this format of representation operated not
only to depict Cellier as a 'popish' criminal and
midwife, but how these conventions were used to bring
together these two aspects of her public image as a tacit
criticism of the midwifery practice she represented.

In order to understand how these representations
could have been interpreted by London viewers, I will
first establish the precise context in which they were
produced. The two questions I will ask in this first
chapter are: Firstly, what were the political
motivations behind the prolonged representation of
Cellier as a 'criminal' midwife? And secondly, what were
the conditions in London during this period for the
production and distribution of printed political imagery,
such as that representing Cellier? A detailed analysis
of the images themselves will follow in the next two
chapters.

The Restoration of the English monarchy in 1662
included the re-instatement of the Licensing Act, and
with it the imposition of a rigorous censorship on
English printing. This Act stated that all press
publications were to be licensed by either the Secretary
of State, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of
London, or the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford or Cambridge.\textsuperscript{17}
Thus it was that the \textit{London Gazette}, which represented a
generally pro-royalist and pro-Church of England point of
view, was the only licensed newspaper in London during
the 1660s and 1670s. Consequently, political information
which questioned the authority of both the Anglican
Church and government could only be printed in non-
licensed texts (the publication of which was sporadic),
or circulated in hand-written newsletters or
manuscripts.\textsuperscript{18} However, in 1679, when Charles II
prorogued parliament because of its insistence on a
number of occasions to re-introduce the Exclusion Bill,
this restrictive Licensing Act was temporarily lifted.
The King dissolved Parliament at the very moment when the
Licensing Act was due for renewal by the House of
Commons, and thus Parliament could not renew the Act
until 1681.

As a result, the lifting of censorship coincided
with the highly emotive and complex political situation
brought about by the Exclusion Crisis. By 1679,
nonconformists and Whigs in London had grown increasingly
uneasy over the issue of exclusion because of the gradual
increase of Anglican Court party members in the London

\textsuperscript{17} Christopher Hill, \textit{The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714} (New York: W.W. Norton and

\textsuperscript{18} Harris, 100.
city government in the late 1670s. Many of those affiliated with the Court Party supported the Duke of York as legitimate heir to the throne, and their presence in local government was seen as an attempt to retrieve local control from dissenters. Nonconformist fears were not restricted to the Anglican Court Party. Charles II's dissolution of Parliament had been supported not only by Court Party supporters, but by members of the High Church. The issue of exclusion for nonconformists, therefore, had both a religious and political focus. As Gary De Krey has stated, exclusion was considered essential for nonconformist local government "because it would preserve intact the civil supremacy over the church...The popery of the anglican prelacy...had to be guarded against as much as that of Rome".19

With the lifting of censorship, these conflicts could suddenly be articulated in the London press. Many of the local London printers during this period were nonconformists, and those who favoured Exclusion took full advantage of the relative freedom of the press (unlike their Court Party adversaries who printed relatively little) in order to disseminate their political opinions to larger audiences.20 Generally


20 Harris, 97.
speaking, Whig street printing documented two related events during this period. The first was the political problem of Exclusion and the second was the 'popish plot' of 1679 and subsequent plots of 1680.

The first so-called 'popish plot' to occur during the Exclusion Crisis was in 1678, when Titus Oates, an adventurer who had converted from Catholicism to Anglicanism, confessed to Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey, a Whig Justice of the Peace in London, that he knew of a 'popish plot' to kill the King and take over England. Godfrey was found brutally murdered several days after this confession, and newspapers claimed that his timely death was part of the plot as had been recounted by Oates (for an example of this event's representation in the press see The Murder of Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey, Fig. 6). This event fuelled local anxieties about exclusion and for several months panic is said to have raged in London.21

Producers of nonconformist street literature could exploit fears of the 'popish plot' and the Meal Tub Plot in an attempt to convince audiences of the need to exclude a Roman Catholic from the throne. Certainly, this would explain why Cellier was continually referred

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21 Families living in London armed themselves, while two thousand men of the trained bands patrolled the city every night. Particular streets in the city were roped off in order to control the movement of people while daggers bearing Godfrey's name were sold and carried by those worried of attacks by 'papists'. Fear of the Catholic attack was also felt at the governmental level: Before Parliament was dissolved in 1679, it passed a law banning Catholics from sitting in either House. See John Miller, Popery and Politics in England 1660-1688 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1973) 161.
to in anti-Catholic terms. In the textual commentary for
the engraving of The Popish...Plot, for example, Cellier
is called "one of the Pope's Amazons", and a "Popish
Adversary" whose "Mercies are Cruelty" (see Fig. 2).
This characterization of Cellier as a threat to the well-
being of England was representative of the notion put
forward in the Whig press during this period, that
Catholicism constituted both a political as well as
religious tyranny with the potential to affect all of
English society. Indeed the following verse, in The
Happy Instruments... (Fig. 5), describes the intentions
of Cellier and other 'popish' criminals to supposedly
conquer the English nation:

Assasinate the King, Subvert his Laws,
They cry'd, and on their Ruin build our Cause...
And this secure, their Plotts went briskly on,
Against our fixed Laws, and settl'd Throne

In addition to the political threat that Catholicism
represented, English Protestants were also educated from
an early age to regard Catholicism not as an alternative
form of worship, but as "essentially the debasement of
Christ's teaching; a total and blasphemous perversion of
Apostolic practice" which because of its emphasis on
ritualistic aspects of worship, was denigrated as a
"religion devised by man and not ordained by God". 22

Anti-Catholicism prejudice and fear (a fear which,

22 Robin Clifton, "Fear of Popery," The Origins of the Civil War, ed. Conrad Russell
according to J.R. Jones, "was to be found in every section and class of English society") was fuelled in the press by the continual reference to alleged horrors of 'Bloody' Mary's reign, the Armada of 1588, and the Gunpowder plot of 1605.23 This 'history' could be used to demonstrate that the threat of Catholicism, and the religious and political tyranny that it had come to represent was a foreign menace, whose success within England could be facilitated only by local English sympathizers to the Catholic cause. Indeed, it is largely because of the perception that 'popery' was an extreme local danger, that fear of 'popish' crimes against the nation could be exploited in the accusation of a particular person or group for religious or political sedition.24

Probably the largest institution to face such accusations during the reign of Charles II was the Church of England. Increasingly during this period, dissenters criticized the Church of England in anti-Catholic terms. This was not because Anglicanism was necessarily a threat to the whole nation (although nonconformist rhetoric characterized it as such); rather Anglicanism was thought


24 During the Civil War, the anti-Catholic tradition had been taken up by Puritans who attacked the Church of England as 'popish' for its pseudo-Catholic emphasis on religious ritual. While Anglicans, because of the threat to institutional religious stability that dissent represented, had also returned the insult, condemning Puritans as 'popish'.

to be a more specific threat to the political life (in London especially) and religious freedom of English dissenters. As Tim Harris states, "Nonconformist criticisms of the Church of England were thus typically expressed in the rhetoric of anti-Catholicism...Anglican ceremonies...could be condemned with the cry of 'no popery'."\textsuperscript{25} Indeed, while the Exclusion Crisis had first arisen from fears of a Catholic monarch, anxiety over 'popish' tyranny was exploited by Whig nonconformist elites (politicians and printers) in order to criticize the institution of the Church of England at home.

In other words, the Whig rhetoric about the 'popish plots' in the London press during the Exclusion campaign, while overtly anti-Catholic, also contained an implicit criticism of the local political activities of the Church of England. Furthermore, as Harris states: "a clear bias towards a nonconformist audience can be found in Whig propaganda" which was used to criticize the Anglican establishment.\textsuperscript{26} Thus the construction of Cellier in the nonconformist press may have been an effective form of critique of the established church. Midwives licensed by the Church of England played an important role in ecclesiastical and civil courts as witnesses in illegitimacy cases, and because of this could be

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{25}{Harris, 73.}
\footnote{26}{Harris, 97.}
\end{footnotes}
perceived by those outside of the Church as a threatening agent of church social control. However, such criticism of the Anglican Church in the nonconformist press was never overt. For example, in the representation of Cellier in The Happy Instruments... (Fig. 5), Cellier is shown holding a sheet of paper on which is written "to turn the plot upon the Presbyterians", while The Popish...Plot (Fig. 1) speaks of a plot against "our Religion". Such representation left it ambiguous as to which groups of Protestants were being characterized as threatened by a plot and which established church--the Anglican or the Roman Catholic--was being accused of 'popish' tendencies.

During Exclusion and the 'popish plots', Whig printers used many different forms of street printing, as the ability to print and distribute political pamphlets and accounts of these events was considered vital to the 'Whig' cause. Henry Care, a dissenter and printer of The Weekly Pacquet from Rome, a news sheet with an anti-Catholic bias, stated that the dissemination of printed news in inexpensive pamphlets was necessary:

This good design may seem contemptible, by being Attempted in Pamphlet course...yet every Mans Purse will not allow him to buy, nor his Time permit him to read, nor perhaps his Understanding reach to comprehend large and elaborate Treatises. This Method is therefore chosen, as most likely to fall into Vulgar hands.27

Statements such as this attested to the importance of inexpensive and widely distributed street literature for the Whig cause. Indeed one Court Party writer is reported to have complained of the effect of excessive Whig literature on the people of London: "'Tis the Press that had made 'um Mad..."28.

Polemical political images were not produced on a regular basis at this time, and occurred—it has been argued by M.D. George—largely as a result of "civil strife, war, or near rebellion."29 Certainly, the presence of various different kinds of imagery during the years of the exclusion and 'popish plots', then, would have signalled the fact that London was in a state of unusual political crisis. Broadsides, single sheet prints, and playing cards—all of which were modes used to represent Cellier—were some of the most frequently printed forms of imagery for political purposes during this period.30

28 Sir Roger L'Estrange Observator in Question and Answer 1, 1680.
29 George, English Political Caricature, 17.
30 In addition to various kinds of political imagery, a large number of texts were produced in the format of news sheet weeklies such as the Domestic Intelligence, a single news sheet printed by the dissenter Benjamin Harris which documented news of "both City and Country" from a staunchly Whig point of view. Pamphlets were also printed and could be anywhere from two to fifty pages in length. The pamphlet format was usually used to discuss a particular issue, personality, or event in more depth than the news sheet format allowed. Such pamphlets had a wide readership, for not only were they inexpensive printed political information (indeed, they were some of the cheapest goods for sale at London markets), but locals spoke of how pamphlets were read and passed through so many hands that they would begin to disintegrate.
Broadsides were used to represent specific issues or events. Some broadsides contained only text, such as the satirical *To the praise of Mrs. Cellier the popish midwife...*[^31] The large format of broadsides like those representing Cellier (see Figs. 1,2 and 3) could conveniently accommodate the representation of both an image and text on one page, thus keeping the cost of such printing at a minimum. In the case of the *Popish...Plot* a series of different events expressing a common theme (in this case that of 'popish criminality') were represented in one engraving. The broadside of The Solemn Mock Procession... however, functioned not only as a form of news information, but also as a programme at the actual event.[^32] The single sheet print format (Fig. 5) was also used to represent visual political satires. In addition, playing cards were employed not only for gambling, but increasingly used to represent various aspects of 'popish plots', and, similar to single sheet prints, were composed of an image with a descriptive text in prose or verse.

Images with descriptive texts such as those representing Cellier were not inaccessible to those who could not read, as political information was often

[^31]: To the praise of Mrs. Cellier the popish midwife on her incomparable book (London: Printed for Walter Davis, 1680).

communicated orally.\textsuperscript{33} One satirical pamphlet documenting Cellier included a short ballad. Such political ballads representing a Whig perspective (of which many were produced during this period) were new songs sung to established local melodies, either by professional ballad singers in the streets or by those "hired to ball in coffee houses".\textsuperscript{34} Many Londoners however were literate, and for them, immediate access to descriptive texts in political imagery was possible. It has been estimated that in late seventeenth century London 76\% of shopkeepers and craftsmen could sign their names (given that most learned to read before they could write, the percentage of those capable of reading was probably even higher), while women's literacy is estimated to have risen from 10\% in mid century to 48\% at the end.\textsuperscript{35}

The fact that the images representing Cellier were more expensive to produce than pamphlets (because of the high cost of engraving) did not mean that they were seen by only those who could afford them. Because of the variety of methods used to circulate political imagery and texts during this period, the potential existed for several different kinds of audiences to view political

\textsuperscript{33} Harris, 102.
\textsuperscript{34} Harris, 100.
\textsuperscript{35} Burke, 49.
imagery. Coffee houses were a continual source of political news. One contemporary complained in 1681 that "we have the Coffee-House Tables continually spread with the noisome Excrements of diseased and laxative Scribblers". Political prints similar to those representing Cellier also circulated in coffee houses and were posted on coffee house walls where more than one person could view them at a time. It was also a custom that proprietors of coffee houses kept packs of playing cards illustrated with images of various 'popish plots' for their clients' use in games and gambling. And, for those who did not attend coffee houses, broadsides were sold in marketplaces and bookshops, as well as posted on the outside of buildings, thrown into coaches of passers-by, or, if the political message was important, simply given away.

But once Londoners came across the prints of Cellier, how would such works have been viewed? Although it is near impossible to assess individual responses to such prints, it is nonetheless certain that the political context and distribution of the prints documenting Cellier would have informed the meanings of such images as derived by their London viewers. In other words, the manner in which "interpretive communities" responded to

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36 Harris, 98.

37 Preface to Protestant Loyalty, quoted in Harris, 98.
the representation of Cellier as 'popish midwife' and the Whig political message it contained would partly depend on the local political context I have outlined above. With this context in mind, it is necessary to analyze how, to paraphrase Chartier, the Cellier images and the printed works by which they were conveyed organized a prescribed reading about both the issue of 'popery' and that of midwifery. How did the format and formal characteristics of each image of Cellier attempt to address their different viewing audiences and impose a particular reading on those viewers? Further to this, what function did such images serve in the formulation of contemporary opinions about midwifery? I will address these questions through a close analysis of the images in the following two chapters.

38 Chartier, 157-8.

CHAPTER TWO:
CONSTRUCTING ELIZABETH CELLIER AS 'POPISH':
THE PROCESS OF REPRESENTATION

In order to assess how the visual representation of Elizabeth Cellier operated to represent midwifery as a criminal practice, I will analyze in this chapter how Cellier was defined as a 'popish' threat to England.

In *The Popish...Plot* (Figs. 1 and 2), *The Solemn Mock Procession...* (Fig. 3), and *The Happy Instruments...* (Fig. 5), Cellier's representation was part of a complex criticism of the Anglican Church and its political elite, which used the rhetoric of anti-Catholicism (and the national danger it represented) in order to rally nonconformist Whig support for the Exclusion Bills. In this larger critique, Cellier would be associated on the one hand with treasonous acts allegedly committed by Catholics against the state, while on the other depicted as a criminal capable of acting on behalf of the Anglican Church elite in the destruction of the Whig opposition.

In my analysis of the three prints, I shall explore the ways in which Cellier's representation as 'popish' seemed to deem her (and the midwifery practice she represented) as part of a system of Anglican religious authority which presented a danger to the very survival
To do this, it will first be necessary to establish how the Cellier prints belonged to a tradition of printed political imagery of 'popish plots'. This tradition of representation would have provided London viewers with a 'previous knowledge' of the issue of 'popery' and its representation in the press; thus informing viewers' perceptions of both Cellier's alleged crimes and her midwifery practice.

In addition to this tradition of 'popish plot' imagery, the Cellier prints were also of a particular genre of political print. For the purposes of my analysis, I shall consider as belonging to this genre those pro-exclusionist prints of 1679-81, which represented various 'popish plots' from a Whig point of view, in the form of inexpensive broadsides and single sheet prints. My basic conception of this genre works on the premise that seventeenth century English viewers would have perceived such representations of 'popery' very differently than we do today. For, in the words of Michael Baxandall, such viewers would have been "equipped...with different visual experience and skill and different conceptual structures."¹ The second part of my analysis, then, will assess how this genre (both the subject matter and forms of these prints) created a

viewing context in which it became possible to perceive Cellier and the midwifery she represented as a perfidious element in, and potential threat to the social fabric of the English nation.

Thirdly, I will analyze how Cellier's 'popish' representation was part of a larger nonconformist critique of the Anglican Church which used the conventions outlined above to address Whig and nonconformist audiences, not only over the issue of Exclusion, but also in relation to the Anglican Church's (and midwifery's) involvement in matters of social and political control. This analysis will demonstrate how the construction of Cellier as 'popish' was politically and religiously motivated and will serve as a basis for my discussion in Chapter Three of how these prints functioned to criticize midwifery and construct consensus about its definition among their seventeenth century viewers.

Since the sixteenth century in England, popular street imagery in the form of single sheet prints and broadsides had been one of the main public forums which represented political events in terms relating to the danger of 'popery'.² Indeed, according to M.D. George:

² In addition to political prints, information about 'popish plots' during this period could also be acquired through Christian and astrological almanacs (which many households owned), playing cards, and emblem books. We know, for example, that the Meal Tub Plot was discussed in an almanac by John Gadbury in 1685. See Bernard Capp, Astrology and the Popular Press: English Almanacs 1500-1800 (London: Faber and Faber, 1979) 93-94. For the representation of 'popish plots' in emblem books, see M.D. George, English Political Caricature to 1792: A Study of Opinion and Propaganda (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959) 52.
"in the public mind recent history was largely a succession of plots" which had, at politically contentious moments during the early modern period, received much attention in the London popular press.3

Generally speaking, this tradition represented 'popery' as a shocking and serious threat to national and societal unity. Such accusations of 'popery' had often been used for the purposes of discrediting political and religious enemies in times of crisis. A particularly striking example of this is found in The Kingdomes Monster Uncloaked from Heaven (Fig. 7), a Civil War print which represented—in the shape of a monster—a constellation of Roman Catholics ('papist conspirators') and Cavaliers ('malignant plotters'). Through the combination of both image and text this 'monster'—a metaphorical construction depicting the dangers of Catholicism—is shown poised to destroy not only the Church and Parliament, but also the City of London and the entire Kingdom.

Previous representations of 'popery' such as this attest to the fact that by the 1670s London viewers would have been familiar with a general form of anti-Catholic visual rhetoric which combined text and images in a

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3 According to George, English fears of the re-instatement of Catholicism in England had been expressed in single sheet prints depicting the Spanish Armada of 1588, the alleged Gunpowder Plot of 1605, and the massacres of the so-called Catholic 'Bloody Mary's' reign. This phenomenon would continue until the early nineteenth century. See George, 16.
manner which was often metaphorical. This rhetoric depicted 'popery' firstly as an abstract threat to the Church and state, and secondly as a more localized threat to the safety of individuals. The Kingdomes Monster... (Fig. 7), which uses the construction of 'popery' as a means to criticize Anglican Cavaliers from a Puritanical point of view, also reveals that the nonconformist characterization of the Church of England as 'popish' was not a new phenomenon in 1680. In fact, according to Robin Clifton, seventeenth century English Protestants "were educated from birth to make certain assumptions about the nature of the Catholic religion and...it was within the framework of these beliefs that accusations of [Anglican] popish responsibility for the war were heard and believed."4

The characterizations of the established church as 'popish' in exclusionist prints, then, would have been particularly relevant to those Puritan viewers who had lived through the Civil War. In fact, many of the Whigs involved in campaigning for exclusion, whom Christopher Hill has called 'the old Presbyterian interest', came from Puritan families who had been politically active during Interregnum.5 Within the context of the Exclusion

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Crisis, the representation of 'popery' was therefore a powerful and well-established means by which to address nonconformist audiences both over the issue of the Catholic Duke's exclusion and with regard to the Church of England.

The Cellier prints, as part of this tradition of 'popish plot' imagery would represent 'popery' as both a national and individual threat. In addition, however, they also shared a number of characteristics common to the genre of the exclusionist print: Firstly, they represented many similar 'popish' crimes and figures in forms which would have signalled their Whig message of exclusion to nonconformist audiences; secondly, and as will be elaborated upon at a later point, they were printed by publishers known for their Whig and nonconformist leanings. These characteristics provided a familiar framework through which their Whig and nonconformist audiences could perceive Cellier and midwifery as 'popish' and criminal.

The subjects repeatedly represented in these prints were the London Fire of 1666, (a fire which had devastated much of the city), the murder of the Whig Justice Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey in 1678, the pope and devil, and various English plotters (such as Cellier).

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6 See page 50 below.
7 George, 52.
Similar to other political imagery of the period, these events were represented not for their individual importance, but rather for their typical significance. Indeed according to Sandra Clark, in a study of early seventeenth century popular representations, what was important in the representation of such events was "the belief that the individual life or the single sensational event could always be seen as typical exemplifications of some 'truth'".8 The representation of 'popish' crimes as an argument for the Catholic Duke's exclusion could therefore function differently depending on viewers' particular religious and political affiliations. Aimed at nonconformists and Broad Church supporters, the representation of these events was a warning call to vigilance (to vote for exclusion), while for those with Catholic sympathies (or allegiances to the Duke) it served as a forewarning, a means to discourage those who did not support exclusion.

I will now analyze how these events were constructed as 'popish' and, correspondingly, establish how they were part of a constructed Whiggish critique of the established church. This analysis will demonstrate how the representation of Cellier's crimes was

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8 Sandra Clark, The Elizabethan Pamphleteers, Popular Moralistic Pamphlets, 1580-1640 (East Brunswick, New Jersey: Associated UP, 1983) 89.
contextualized, the result of which was the definition of midwifery as a 'popish' practice.

The London fire of 1666, understood to have been caused by Catholics, was represented in The Popish...Plot (Fig. 1). The fire's representation in the press was not new; indeed it had been discussed in a series of anti-Catholic 'Fire Libels' since 1667. At first these circulated secretly, and then appeared in enlarged versions after news of a 'popish plot' had spread and censorship had been lifted in 1679. These libels blamed the London fire on Roman Catholics, claiming that it was the Duke of York who had plotted with Jesuit monks to bring destruction to London. Functioning as an example of 'popish' criminality (and as a reason for exclusion), the representation of the fire in the Cellier prints served to address not only those who had survived the fire, but also those who shared the view that the London fire had been part of a larger Catholic conspiracy.

In The Popish...Plot (Fig. 1), the fire is represented as the first image in an overall narrative of 'popish' crimes. The representation of the fire is described in the caption that accompanied the print:

9 George, 51.

10 This perception that Catholics were responsible for the fire was widespread; even the House of Commons believed it to have been started by papists. N.H. Keeble, The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England (Leicester: Leicester UP, 1987) 80.
The First describes the Burning of LONDON, which hath been proved undeniably by Dr. Oates...to be contrived and carried on by the Papists. A blessed Religion, that must be introduced by the ruin of so many thousand families!

It is clear that this caption is designed to dictate to the reader that the representation of the fire is not only an image of a past event, but, more importantly, a statement representative of the potential 'devastation' which could be brought on by the Catholic religion. Informed viewers of 'popish plot' prints during the Exclusion Crisis would therefore have been aware of the fire's status as the so-called beginning of recent 'popish plot' history. In The Popish...Plot (Fig. 1), the images of Cellier, positioned in the middle row (following the well-known image of fire in the first row) constructed her not only as part of a broader context of Catholic crimes, but also imbued her alleged crime and her status as a midwife with some of the danger felt by those Londoners who had experienced the fire.

The London fire is also alluded to in The Solemn Mock Procession... (Fig. 3), originally sold as programme for and promotion of the Whig pope-burning procession of November, 1680. November 17th, the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth I's accession, had long been regarded as a time of Protestant celebration. During the Exclusion Crisis it became a focal point for the pope-burning processions in 1678, 1680, and 1681, each of which was designed to
create popular sentiment for the Duke of York's exclusion. The processions and subsequent pope-burnings were considered a symbolic act of retaliation to the alleged burning of London by Catholics. ¹¹ These parades (of which nine occurred in 1680 alone) took place at night and circulated through many of London's nonconformist neighbourhoods in front of audiences of up to 10,000, and ended with the burning of effigies of the pope and other Catholic figures (such as Cellier) in a huge bonfire.¹² Such a dramatic scene would not have failed to conjure up strong anti-Catholic sentiment.

The circulation of procession prints such as The Solemn Mock Procession... in market stalls, book shops and coffee houses would therefore serve as a reminder, not only of the event, but also of what it represented for many Protestant Londoners: the symbolic destruction of those Catholics who had (as it was commonly thought) burned London to the ground just fourteen years earlier. The text introducing this engraving refers to the Fire of 1666 as one of the reasons why the procession took place:

You must first know the occasion of this Mock Procession to have been, that the Pope, Fryars, and their Abettors here in England, contrived the Lamentable Burning of London; some Protestant Gentlemen, partly in a thankful Commemoration of their Deliverance, and partly to raise a just


Abhorrency of such Popish practices, do now bring these Incendiaries in Effigie to the Fire they have better deserved.

Whig organizers of the procession therefore exploited the notion (which by this time had become a well-known myth) that the fire had been started by Catholics so as to secure the support of locals in their attempt to pass the Exclusion Bills. In doing so, they depicted the fire as one event in a larger conspiracy of so-called 'popish' crimes for which associated criminals like Cellier were deemed automatically guilty. The representation of Cellier within such a context deemed her as dangerous to the well-being of Londoners as the fire itself.

The murder of Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey was one of the most frequently represented events with which Cellier would be associated in exclusionist prints. After his murder in 1678, which had sparked local anxieties about a so-called 'popish plot', many prints were produced which advocated that Godfrey had been murdered by Catholics (see, for example, The Murder of Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey, Fig. 6). In The Popish...Plot (Fig. 1), Godfrey is depicted being murdered in image number 'II'. The description below claims a pro-Catholic motivation behind Godfrey's murder: "to deter all other Magistrates from intermedling with any Affairs relating to the Plot". The combination of text and image here functions as an ironic forewarning to all Protestants, that the ongoing 'popish
plot', should it be successful, could result in the murder of many more English Protestants. The representation of Godfrey, then, was a means by which to address and warn audiences that if they did not vote for exclusion, the murder of other Whigs was likely.

This use of Godfrey's image as a forewarning to Protestants is also evident in *The Solemn Mock Procession*... (Fig. 3) where he is depicted as the first in the procession. The dead Godfrey is carried by his so-called murderer, a Jesuit monk, and is introduced by a bellman who is described in the caption as "with a dolesome voice saying 'Remember Justice Godfrey'". That Godfrey's death was a warning against the murder of other Protestants is also advocated in *The Happy Instruments*... (Fig. 5). In the upper portion of the print, Mr. Prance, who had claimed to be a part of the plot to kill Godfrey, is represented saying: "Godfrey's murder did undoe the knot of all ye plotting crew". Upon his confession for this crime, Prance became a key witness in the state's case against 'popish plots', and a local hero in the Whig press.13 In this image of Prance, Godfrey's murder was thus represented here as the first in a series of murderous plots against Protestants. The idea of an inevitable Catholic massacre of Protestants was an established Protestant myth at this time. In the words of

Lord Chief Justice Scroggs, (the Whig Justice who presided at Cellier's trial) Catholics had:

indeed, ways of conversion...by enlightening our understandings by a faggot, and by the powerful and irresistible arguments of a dagger; but there are such wicked solecisms in their religion that they seem to have left them neither natural sense nor natural conscience, by their cruelty, who make the Protestants' blood as wine, and the priests thirst after it.14

The Protestant fear of a Catholic massacre, then, was exploited in order to convince viewers of the necessity for exclusionist policies. In the lower portion of the print this myth is reiterated in the representation. One cardinal is depicted whispering to another, with the caption indicating the dialogue as concerning the destruction of England "...by a general massacre". The image in conjunction with the text would have thus confirmed for viewers an already established notion that Catholics were dangerous to one's own personal safety.

In order to further convince viewers that the above 'popish' crimes had been committed by Catholics, The Solemn Mock Procession... (Fig. 3) and The Happy Instruments (Fig. 5) represented the pope with a devil whispering in his ear. Such a representation of the pope and devil together was a well-known Reformation image, which for many Protestants symbolized the anti-Christ.15

14 Lord Chief Justice Scroggs quoted in Kenyon, 4.
15 George, 5.
Thus its repetitive representation in these prints would have reinforced an already familiar Protestant perception of Catholicism as the antithesis of the 'true' religion—Protestantism.

I have discussed so far how the Cellier prints represented particular 'popish' crimes as pernicious threats to domestic English Protestantism. However, these prints also represented a number of local English sympathizers to the Catholic cause (of which Cellier was allegedly one). The notion of local English plotters' compliance in a larger Catholic conspiracy is perhaps most obvious in *The Happy Instruments...* (Fig. 5) where the focus of the viewer is drawn to the "Infernall Conclave". Here the pope is represented delegating orders to English plotters. Cellier, for example, holds a papal bull with instructions to "turn the Plot upon the Presbyterians". Her complicity is also made evident in *The Popish...Plot* (Fig. 1), where she is represented (in image 'VI') attempting to kill the well-known Whig, the Earl of Shaftesbury, and (in image 'VII') is depicted being arrested for her role in the Meal Tub Plot. Her actions as a plotter are also referred to in *The Solemn Mock Procession...* (Fig. 3), where she is depicted placing the treasonous plot papers in her Meal Tub. The representation of Cellier in these prints would have signified her as a key facilitator for the pope's
attempts to re-establish Catholicism in England. Because it was argued that Catholicism could only be reinstated in England through the agency of local sympathizers, Cellier's characterization as facilitator would have deemed her extremely dangerous to English society.\textsuperscript{16} Indeed in the words of one Whig Member of Parliament in an address to the (mostly Anglican) House of Lords, only when such English Catholics were completely removed from England would it be safe from the treasonous threat they represented:

\begin{quote}
You have not yet made any steps towards the safety of the kingdom. It is not removing popish lords out of the House (that will do it), nor banishing priests and Jesuits, nor removing the Duke from the King; but it must be removing papists from the nation. As long as such a body of men are here you must never expect that the Pope, with his congregation de propaganda fide, will let you be at rest. Till you do that, you do nothing; when that is done you need not trouble yourself with the succession.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

Typical of other exclusionist prints and in keeping with much seventeenth century political imagery, the well-known events in the Cellier works were depicted through a detailed combination of verse, text and imagery. Such a form of representation was a useful means by which to depict events and individuals in a way that could be metaphorical and often intentionally cryptic. For example, in The Solemn Mock Procession...

\textsuperscript{16} Kenyon, 92.
\textsuperscript{17} Quoted in Kenyon, 92.
(Fig. 3), the figures represented behind Cellier are referred to as 'Juglers in Masquerade'. These characters were dressed in the attire of Anglican parsons, and as such, they represented an Anglican Church elite who, although Protestant by denomination, nonetheless supported the Catholic Duke of York in his claim to succession. The representation of these figures could thus provide a synecdochical and metaphorical representation of the Anglican institution which, because it supported the Catholic succession, many nonconformists considered unrepresentative of the larger Protestant population which supported exclusion.

This representation of 'popery' during the Exclusion Crisis was also often satirical. To return to the example of the Anglican parsons as 'Juglers in Masquerade'; this satirical form of representation was a means of evoking attitudes of scorn towards these figures by making them appear ridiculous to viewers. Such political imagery, however, was rarely meant to be comic. Indeed, as stated in Chapter One, individual caricature of alleged criminals is unusual during this period. Instead, individuals were represented either participating in an act for which they had public notoriety or with a particular object with which their crime was associated. It is for this reason that Cellier's

[18 George, 10.]
physical characteristics, in all three of the prints under discussion, are not her distinguishing feature; rather, she was shown (with her Meal Tub) committing the criminal act of which she had been accused—the possession of treasonous papers.

What I have attempted to do to this point, is to outline how the Cellier prints belonged to a particular genre of exclusionist print which depicted a number of similar 'popish' crimes as forewarnings to future Catholic acts of treason in a readable form for seventeenth century viewers. The repetitive representation of these 'popish' crimes, then, would have signalled to viewers that they represented a pro-exclusionist point of view. While each of the Cellier prints were similar in this respect, they nonetheless emphasized different aspects of the 'popish plot' controversy. Because of this they took different forms which, as I shall demonstrate, would have been recognized by viewers as particularly Whiggish in their construction. Both The Popish...Plot (Fig. 1) and The Solemn Mock Procession... (Fig. 3) are particularly good examples of how the form of an exclusionist print could signal to viewers their Whiggish political message.

The Popish...Plot (Fig. 1) is constructed as a chronological narrative composed of a series of images representing particular 'popish' crimes. This form was
in fact created for the purposes of representing 'popish' plots and was increasingly used by Whigs during the Exclusion Crisis; (see also the print The Murder of Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey, Fig. 6). By only glancing at the structure of such prints, then, contemporary viewers would have known that this image was a Whiggish representation of 'popery'. In order to construct a convincing argument for exclusion, the alleged 'popish' crimes had to appear linked, as if parts of an overall Catholic scheme to take England. This narrative structure was therefore a useful form through which to represent unrelated events (such as the London fire and Cellier's crimes) as if they were causally interdependent. Thus the very structure of the image itself helped to construct Cellier's 'popish' persona, establishing her place in the purported Whig history of such plots.

The Solemn Mock Procession... (Fig. 3) was another print whose form would have expressed to viewers its Whiggish political mandate. The structure of The Solemn Mock Procession... was similar to other Whiggish procession prints as it represented the procession in three separate rows in the upper portion of the image.

19 We know that as early as 1627, this format was being used to represent 'popish' plots in Popish Plots and Treasons, from the beginning of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth (BM 13). This print depicted among other events, the reign of the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, the Spanish Armada, and the Gunpowder Plot. See George, 16.
with a descriptive text below. Similar to The Popish...Plot, this form created a structure in which different 'popish' crimes and figures could be represented together in one cohesive, chronological 'history'. However, its form was also reminiscent of previous official procession prints depicting the annual Lord Mayor's parade. Indeed, according to Peter Burke, these pope-burning pageants and their representation in print were "a kind of inverse Lord Mayor's Show, designed to criticise rather than to justify the authorities." By mimicking this previously 'official' form of representation, the Whigs could therefore bring authority to their political and religious claims concerning exclusion and the established church.

In comparison, the format of The Happy Instruments... (Fig. 5) was not so overtly Whiggish as the other two prints. It was produced in April of 1681, at a time when not only belief in the 'popish' and Meal Tub Plots was on the wane amongst the general public, but a well-known Whig engraver, Stephen College, had recently been found guilty and executed for libel in an Anglican
Church clamp down on censorship.\textsuperscript{23} Shortly after this coup, the King, with the help of the Anglican gentry, took control of the London corporation from local Whigs.\textsuperscript{24} Partly because of the recent execution of College and partly because of this political situation, this image was intentionally cryptic in its criticism of the established church. The whole engraving, which contained only metaphorical references to Catholicism, could nonetheless be interpreted as either a direct criticism of the Catholic Church, or as a parody of the institutional hierarchies that the Anglican Church represented for nonconformists.

Another characteristic of these exclusionist prints which would have further established their Whig message was the fact that they were printed by Whig supporters. This was because during this period a printer's name on broadsides and single sheet prints was an important indication to viewers of the political opinion they represented.\textsuperscript{25} For example, \textit{The Popish...Plot} was produced by an established Whig printer, Richard Baldwin, whose name appears on the bottom right of the broadside (see: Fig. 2). Baldwin's advertisements for political

\textsuperscript{23} Stephen College had been accused of libel by an Oxford University Doctor of Divinity (and friend to bishops). This high profile trial was considered a political turning point for Whigs, who shortly after began to lose much of their popular support. See James Sutherland, \textit{The Restoration Newspaper and its Development} (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986) 112.

\textsuperscript{24} Hill, 199.

\textsuperscript{25} Sutherland, 13, 19.
pamphlets and broadsides appeared frequently in London newspapers during the 1680s\textsuperscript{26}, and his name on this broadside would have informed viewers that this was a Whiggish representation of the 'popish plots'.

One of the printers of The Solemn Mock Procession..., Nathaniel Ponder, (whose names is in the bottom right of the engraving, see: Fig. 3) also had nonconformist connections. Ponder, the son of a nonconformist mercer, specialized in publishing nonconformist writings and literature.\textsuperscript{27} To dissenters, his reputation as a nonconformist printer would have been well-known, thus signalling to viewers that the political opinions this print advocated were of an anti-Catholic and anti-Anglican nature. Before actually reading these prints, then, viewers could have understood (only by knowing the printer's name) that they represented at once both an argument for the Duke's exclusion and a criticism of the established church.

Thus far I have outlined how the Cellier prints were of a particular genre of exclusionist representation which functioned to address nonconformist and Whig audiences. I will now analyze how these genres contained an implicit critique of the established church and how

\textsuperscript{26} "Baldwin, Richard," Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers who were at work in England, Scotland and Ireland, 1557-1775, 1977 ed.

\textsuperscript{27} "Ponder, Nathaniel," Dictionary. Ponder would have been well known to nonconformist audiences and readers of Puritanical literature as he was the original printer of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, a work so well-received that he produced three editions in 1678 alone.
this functioned to construct Cellier as part of the Anglican interest so feared by nonconformists. Perceived in this way, Cellier would be characterized as a danger not just to Protestants, but specifically to local nonconformist government control.

The association of Cellier with the Anglican elite was not arbitrary, precisely because of Cellier's status as a midwife. Midwives, licensed directly by the Church of England, could serve the interests of the established church by maintaining control over such social issues as illegitimacy and abortion, while playing an important political role (as legally recognized witnesses to such crimes) in both ecclesiastical and civil courts. It was this authority of the established church over private secular matters of which nonconformists were so critical.

Generally speaking, the nonconformist challenge to the authority of the Church of England in these prints took the form of either a direct association between the Anglican and the Catholic Churches, or the Anglican Church was represented in metaphorical terms reminiscent of the Catholic Church. This first form of representation is evident in The Popish...Plot (Fig. 1) in image 'IX'. Here, three criminals are represented attempting to murder the Whig Justice Arnold. Following this, the explanation informs us, a small image depicts these same criminals destroying their 'Treasonable
Papers' after attempting the murder; while the next image (number 'XI') represents one of these men delivering news to the pope of their attempt. Unlike other images in this print, these pictures are not accompanied by a specific textual description. In fact, the description of image number 'X' does not even refer to the man in the image: an Anglican parson who is supervising the conduct of these criminals. Thus the representation of this Anglican parson is somewhat ambiguous. The image is followed by one of the pope who is also represented advising these same criminals. The juxtaposition of these images creates a reference to the similarity of the authority (and tyranny) of the Anglican and Catholic Churches. As a result, both of these institutions are accused, through this representation, of working to the same ends—the destruction of the Whigs (represented by Justice Arnold), and by extension, the well-being of nonconformists.

This notion that there is little difference between the actions of those of the Anglican and Catholic Churches (that both are indeed 'popish') is also established in *The Solemn Mock Procession...* (Fig. 3). In this image, although many of the figures are obviously Catholic (such as the monks), not all of the church figures are representatives of the Catholic Church. For example, the bishops in the middle row wear vestments
almost identical to those worn by Anglican bishops. Although the explanation at the bottom of the broadside refers to these bishops as 'popish', the satirical verses below each float are critical of the local Anglican bishops as opposed to Catholic bishops abroad. The verse on the first float of bishops, "kings shall dread our Thunder and lie still", refers to the recent nonconformist claim that Charles II had been manipulated by the Anglican gentry in order to prorogue parliament and stop exclusion.28 Such a satirical representation thus ridiculed the idea that kings should bow to the institution of the Church, reaffirming the general nonconformist view that the issues of religion and politics were separate matters.29

This criticism of the Church of England's political authority continued in the next float which also represented Anglican bishops. The satirical verse describing this pageant referred to several of the ways in which the Anglican Church asserted its institutional authority over English society:

Wee are ye Father-champions and pfer
To be red-leter'd in the Calender
Before salvation or a second birth
We'l dam with Devils, to be Sts on earth.

28 Hill, 199.
Many viewers would have been familiar with this reference to calendars because of the insistence of the Anglican Church during this period to print specific church holidays and saints' birthdays in red letters in agrarian calendars. For nonconformists, this represented the unwanted expansion of the Church's temporal authority. Calendars were in common usage and such a reference would have been understood by nonconformists as representative of the Church's attempts to control the daily secular affairs of all Protestants.\textsuperscript{30} In addition, the term 'second birth' in this verse referred to the more radical nonconformist critique of the necessity of holy baptism. Indeed many dissenters rejected the notion that one had to be 'born again'; and Anabaptists believed baptism should only be performed on those who had chosen, at an adult age, to commit one's life to one's faith.\textsuperscript{31} Such references would have had an impact on dissenting communities wary that the rituals of the established church were representative of its asserted authority over all English subjects.

Following the floats representing the Anglican establishment is an image of the pope, enthroned and surrounded by more bishops. After the previous satirical verse on the bishops' float, the image of the king

\textsuperscript{30} Thomas, 738-9.

\textsuperscript{31} Thomas, 197.
attempting to kiss the pope's toe (and subsequently being stepped on) would not only have called into question the nature of the Church of England's temporal authority over English society, but also deemed the participation of the Church in political affairs inappropriate. This image could thus be interpreted as an allegorical representation of the power of the Church of England (and in particular the Anglican gentry) over the monarch regarding exclusion. This premise originated from the Protestant notion that the church's role was (in the words of Luther) one of 'caretaker of the souls', and not one of a powerful institution that 'interfered' in local politics. Such a message would have been especially significant in London during the Exclusion Crisis, when the largely nonconformist London Corporation feared attempts by the Anglican elite to win back their local political authority.

A similar although less overt criticism of the established Anglican Church is also found in The Happy Instruments... (Fig. 5). This image is constructed in a hierarchical fashion, mocking the baroque visual language used in imagery of the Catholic Church during this period. The Whig 'heroes' of the plot are represented in the glory usually used to depict heaven. The Catholic Church as anti-Christ is represented by the pope and

32 George, 5.
devil, who are surrounded by various prominent Catholic figures such as cardinals and Jesuits.

While the print contains no overt references to Anglicanism, the idea that the image is only a literal representation of the Catholic Church is put in doubt by the Papal Bull held by Cellier, which reads "To turn the plot against the Presbyterians". The choice of the term 'Presbyterians' instead of the more general 'Protestants' was significant. As an adjective it was used during this period by nonconformists to describe themselves as 'pious' (which implied by definition that they were not episcopal).33 Cellier's image here, then, constructed her as a 'popish' threat to specifically those--nonconformists--outside of the established church.

As is evident in The Happy Instruments... (Fig. 5), the implicit criticism of the Church of England in these prints could function to implicate Cellier in the actions of Anglicans. In The Popish...Plot print (Fig. 2) Cellier is referred to (in the explanation to image number 'VI') as "one of the Pope's amazons". This is in contrast to Shaftesbury, who is given the positive label of an "honourable person". The explanation describes at length Shaftesbury's virtues, claiming that all good Protestants had prayed that he would not fall into the hands of his "Popish adversaries", thus suggesting that

33 Keeble, 8.
Cellier was of a larger group aiming to destroy Shaftesbury. As unofficial leader of the Whig Party, Shaftesbury's religious and political opponents would generally have been Court Party Anglicans, who continued to stop the passage of the Exclusion Bill in the House of Lords. Although Cellier herself was a practicing Catholic, her representation, given this political context, nonetheless affiliated her with the Anglican threat to nonconformity.

Further to this, if one is to read the description 'popish adversaries' as referring to Shaftesbury's political enemies, Cellier in fact could be interpreted as a facilitator for the Anglican destruction of Shaftesbury, (he was in fact defeated by the Anglican elite when the Exclusion Bill was thrown out in 1681). As a Catholic criminal who had acted on behalf of the Anglican interest, this representation of Cellier could thus function to unite Whiggish Broad Church and nonconformist audiences over the issue of exclusion.

The image of Cellier was also used to blur distinctions between the institutional threats of Catholicism and Anglicanism in The Solemn Mock Procession... (Fig. 3). In this print, Cellier is represented on a pageant float with Anglican parsons (in 'piebald'--two coloured--habits, representing their 'two-faced' characters) who follow the Cavalier press censor,
Roger L'Estrange, depicted here as a fiddler. This image associated Cellier's Catholic criminal status with the Court Party views of L'Estrange and the alleged sympathy of Anglicans towards Catholics. The placement of this float in the front of the procession is also important for it implied that the actions of Cellier (and these other 'popish' figures) would lead to subsequent crimes or treacheries. After this representation of Cellier, the recent political conflicts between the Country and Court Parties are referred to in the representation of a man, his face painted black, shown riding an ass backwards. This was an old tradition of public ridicule which would have been known to local audiences of this image and the original procession. This satirical image is introduced by the title: "an Abhorrer of Parliament and Petitions". Such a statement associated this figure with the Court and high Anglican factions, who occupied the House of Lords and who had not supported the Exclusion Bill. Cellier's image, placed as an introduction to this notion of Anglican rejection of Whig petitions to parliament again constructed a link between her actions (here shown taking the plot papers out of her Meal Tub) with the political views of the Anglican Court Party.

34 Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe (London: Temple Smith, 1978) 188.
As the foregoing has indicated, the genres of print representing Cellier constructed her as a 'popish' threat for the purposes of addressing nonconformist and Whiggish viewers. This construction of Cellier's public image used established visual conventions for the purposes of portraying her as a treasonous, 'popish' Catholic, while deeming her part of a system of Anglican religious authority of which nonconformists were not only critical, but fearful. Such a representation, within the context of the Exclusion Crisis, would condemn Cellier as a political and religious danger to the very survival of the local nonconformist majority in the London Corporation.
CHAPTER THREE:
"AND SO DID SHE SUITABLY MIDWIFE [THE PLOT] INTO THE WORLD": 'POPISH MIDWIFERY' AS A CRITIQUE OF THE PRACTICE

In Chapter Two, I demonstrated how Cellier's criminal persona was represented as 'popish' in a manner which, through the use of anti-Catholic rhetoric, addressed Whig and nonconformists audiences. In addition to this characterization, however, Cellier's public criminal image was also constructed through frequent references to her profession—midwifery. The construction of Cellier as a 'popish midwife' in these prints would claim that midwifery was a criminal practice. For although Cellier's representation ostensibly related to her alleged role in the Meal Tub Plot, it was Cellier's position as a midwife that became the ultimate target of her representation in the popular press. It is therefore the aim of this chapter to analyze how, within the context of these pro-exclusion critiques of the established church, the visual representation of Cellier as criminal midwife would correspondingly function to criticize the midwifery profession itself. To do this I shall demonstrate how the printed images of Cellier served to associate her status as a midwife with her alleged 'popish' and criminal actions.
There are two parallel issues which will be addressed in this analysis: Firstly, I will analyze how this attack on midwifery in these exclusionist prints was part of the larger nonconformist critique of the Anglican Church's involvement in secular affairs (local politics, for example)—an area over which licensed midwives (through the ecclesiastical and civil courts) would have had a religion-backed authority. The second issue is how this specific political and religious representation of Cellier as 'popish midwife' coincided with a new medical discourse on midwifery—one which questioned the older forms of midwifery practice.

While these two types of discourse—the political/religious on the one hand and the medical on the other—functioned in different ways, they all served to change societal perceptions concerning childbirth. Representations of Cellier as 'popish midwife' could operate as an important means through which such perceptions could be questioned. For, although these engravings constructed their political message in an attempt to convince nonconformists of the need for exclusion, they would nonetheless have been visible to many different London viewers through such venues coffee houses and bookshops. Unlike medical texts on birth or religious texts concerning the authority of the church, many of which were designed to address educated elites,
the prints representing Cellier were accessible to a variety of different social groups. In the words of one contemporary, the availability of these kinds of popular prints was such that they "swarmed in ev'ry Street, and marched from Friend to Friend".¹ These engravings, then, could make claims about midwifery for their viewers in a way that erudite texts could not. With their familiar combination of both image and text, these representations of Cellier as midwife "were more imperative than [just] writing, [for] they imposed meaning at one stroke, without analyzing or diluting it"² I shall argue that it was the popular representation of Cellier which successfully comprised both kinds of criticism of midwifery--the political/religious and the medical--at once, thus operating as a public condemnation of traditional midwifery.

How could representations of Cellier as a 'criminal' have functioned as a critique of traditional midwifery practice? It has already been stated in Chapter Two that Cellier's representation was part of a traditional form of 'popish plot' imagery which depicted events in order to make exemplary statements about some 'truth'. In accordance with this form of representation Cellier was

depicted in these prints in metaphorical terms which acted as 'double' referents, combining the two features of Cellier's persona—her popish criminality and her midwifery profession. The characterization of a person through references to their profession was a conventional means of depicting well-known individuals in the press during this period. Such representations, while obviously critical of the actions of a given historical persona, could also operate to raise a framework of issues regarding the societal 'validity' of that persona's profession, or of the involvement of that individual (and his or her profession) in the political events of the period.

A particularly good example of the process whereby such references functioned in the identification of a particular personality is found in the representation of Roger L'Estrange in The Solemn Mock Procession... (see detail, Fig. 4). L'Estrange is represented on the same pageant float as Cellier. L'Estrange had been a staunch Anglican and Cavalier supporter during the Civil War. After the Restoration, he was appointed by the king to the position of 'Surveyor of the Imprimerie' and licenser of the press. In this capacity, L'Estrange controlled

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much of the government censorship over the English popular press. Because of this, L'Estrange was capable not only of controlling the flow of news information regarding the local politics of London's (largely nonconformist) city council, but he could also, as a key supporter of the Court Party, maintain an Anglican authority over political matters. During the Exclusion Crisis, L'Estrange was one of the few pro-Anglican journalists of the period who spoke out against Whig claims regarding exclusion. Nonconformist printers were therefore critical of his powerful role which allowed him to promote his rigidly pro-Anglican and Royalist views and he became a well-known (and disliked) figure in the Whig press, often represented in a derisive and mocking manner.

In order to be recognizable to viewers as the official press censor and Anglican Court Party journalist, L'Estrange was usually represented with the 'tools of his trade'. In The Solemn Mock Procession... (detail, Fig. 4), for example, he is represented with a pen, ink and papers under his girdle (this fact is also reiterated in the description of the pageant float so as to inform viewers of his identity). L'Estrange was also known at this time for his talents as an accomplished

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5 Sutherland, 2.
classical violinist; and as such he was often represented as a fiddler (for example, in The Solemn Mock Procession..., Fig. 4). This satirical representation of L'Estrange as an 'ordinary' fiddler was openly mocking of his upper-class origins, while at the same time it played on the notion that L'Estrange--as a powerful force behind the Anglican Court Party--was able to 'play a tune' to which many of his supporters were obliged to 'dance', (see: the description of his image in The Solemn Mock Procession...). In the context of this print, his position was also associated with other forms of Anglican religious and political authority (for example, the bishops represented in the fifth and sixth pageant floats, Fig. 3) of which nonconformists were critical. Thus L'Estrange's Anglican-backed authority over political matters (and, correspondingly, his profession as censor) were criticized through a series of references, either to his work, or to his well-known 'pretensions' as a violinist.

In a similar vein, the representation of Cellier as a midwife, while critical of her alleged criminal actions, also associated her profession (through metaphorical references) with her 'popish' or Anglican crimes and as such would serve to criticize the authority of licensed midwifery and its role in maintaining Anglican control over secular affairs.
How midwifery constituted a major element of Cellier's 'popish' criminality is most evident in The Solemn Mock Procession... (Fig. 3). Cellier is shown in this print bending over her Meal Tub, extracting the plot papers from inside (see detail, Fig. 4). In the actual procession represented by this image, the person playing Cellier's character would have performed the act of taking the papers from the Meal Tub during the whole parade, reinforcing continually her treasonous behaviour for the crowds. In the print, the satirical verse below her float refers to Cellier's movements: "Whilst midwife ore ye Meal Tub shows her art", implying that Cellier is not only facilitating the creation of the plot, but that such actions are similar to those of a midwife assisting with childbirth. That Cellier 'midwifed' the birth of the plot is established by the presence of the open Meal Tub which here fulfills a 'birthing' function reminiscent of a woman's womb.

This birth metaphor, given the changes occurring within midwifery practice and to childbirth itself, was by no means an arbitrary reference. As Elizabeth Harvey states in her discussion of the metaphorical references to childbirth and midwifery in Renaissance poetry of the period, the use of the birth "metaphor signals the beginnings of a cultural change, both in the management of childbirth itself and in the epistemological and
medical discourses surrounding the understanding of
gestation and birth."6 Within the context of changing
perceptions about midwifery and birth, this image of
Cellier and her Meal Tub represented an association of
criminality directly with traditional midwifery. As
facilitator of the birth of the plot, Cellier's criminal
identity and midwife status were inseparable.

The idea that Cellier 'midwifed' the birth of the
plot is also evident in the other two prints. The
Popish...Plot print (Fig. 1), for example, represents
Cellier in the process of being apprehended by Sir
William Waller (on her left), who has found her pulling
plot papers from her Meal Tub in an attempt to burn them.
The idea that Cellier's criminal actions are related to
the Meal Tub is also referred to in The Happy
Instruments... (Fig. 5), where Cellier is represented
holding papers, the function of which is designated by
the commentary: "To turn the plot against the
Presbyterians". These papers were those claimed to have
been found in the Meal Tub by Waller, thus here Cellier's
actions are again associated with the Meal Tub. In these
images, Cellier's relationship with the Meal Tub is one
of facilitator; she is aware of the secrets held within
the Meal Tub, and assists in attempting to bring them

6 Elizabeth D. Harvey, in her soon to be published Ventriloquized Voices: Feminist
either to fruition (as she is represented in *The Happy Instruments...*, Fig. 5) or to destruction (so they remain secret) in the *Popish...Plot* print (Fig. 1). This facilitating role is similar to the role that a midwife would play during birth. In fact, in a print published in 1681, Cellier is depicted actually assisting the birth of the pope from the Meal Tub while the devil oversees the proceedings.  

These metaphorical representations inferred, then, that like midwives who assist women during birth, Cellier was helping to bring forth the 'birth' of the Meal Tub Plot. Cellier's criminality as well as her midwifery were therefore represented in the three prints through a series of associations with the Meal Tub.

This representation of midwifery was by necessity complex: Cellier could not have been depicted at work assisting in actual childbirth in the popular press, because of the societal taboos surrounding the public representation of birth and the naked human body during this period. The representation of the human body for other than religious purposes was considered immoral at this time.  

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8 The representation of the human body in the popular press was governed by decorum during this period (as it is in contemporary newspapers today). For an account of such conventions during the Civil War period, see Tamyn Williams, "'Magnetic Figures': Polemical Prints of the English Revolution," *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, 1540-1660*, ed. Lucy Gent, and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, 1990) 86-110.
the process of childbirth itself was thought of as a private affair which took place in the presence of only the midwife and the new mother's 'gossips'. Men rarely witnessed birth--apparently for reasons of propriety--and as a result the knowledge surrounding the process of childbirth was primarily shared among women. Indeed, in a midwifery manual of 1635, Childbirth or the happy deliveries of women, the translator stated that he "doubted this matter [birth] could be expressed in such modest terms as are fit for the virginitie of pen and paper, and the white sheets of...Child-bed". Nevertheless, he promised his audience that he would endeavour to "be as private and retired in expressing all passages in this kind as possible as he could". Given the fact that representations of birth were still considered 'improper', the representation of Cellier as a midwife at work would have had to have been indirect.

The question remains, then: could it have been possible for contemporary viewers to perceive the metaphorical significance of Cellier with her Meal Tub?

9 'Gossips' were women friends or relatives of the labouring woman who assisted with preparations for the birth. The term was derived from the original 'god-siblings' which referred to their function of witnessing the birth and subsequent baptism. It is interesting that by the seventeenth century (the same period when midwifery practice was being re-defined) the term had also come to describe a woman's circle of female friends. The meaning of the term therefore changed when their role was no longer necessary, and came to be seen as intrusive. See Adrian Wilson, "Participant or Patient? Seventeenth Century Childbirth from the Mother's Point of View," Patients and Practitioners: Lay Perceptions of Medicine in Pre-Industrial Society, ed. Roy Porter (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985) 134.

10 English translation of the original French text, Jaques Guillemeau, Childbirth or the happy deliveries of women, (London, 1635) quoted in Audrey Eccles, Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Tudor and Stuart England (London: Croom Helm, 1982) 381.
The representation of Cellier and the Meal Tub in *The Solemn Mock Procession...* (detail, Fig. 4) made the metaphorical allusion that the Meal Tub was representative of a woman's womb and the plot papers of a newborn. While such an analogy may seem far fetched to twentieth century viewers, this reference would nonetheless have been fathomable to seventeenth century audiences. Popular perception of childbirth, not only among the general public but also among the learned medical elite, recalled the Aristotelian notion that women's biological role in the reproduction of children was passive. The woman's womb received the active seed of the man which then grew into a child. In this sense, women were not thought to biologically contribute to the formation of children, but instead were considered 'vessels' for reproduction. The idea of woman as 'vessel' was represented in midwifery manuals of the day. In *The Expert Midwife* of 1637 (Fig. 8), the womb was depicted as a round form with an opening at the top. Neither was such representation of the womb uncommon during this period; and given this perception of the womb, the metaphorical link of the Meal Tub as 'birthing' vessel was therefore possible to make.

Of course, it cannot be assumed that all viewers, nonconformist or otherwise, would have seen the Meal Tub as directly referential of a woman's womb. Rather, the image of the Meal Tub functioned as a visual reminder of Cellier's identity as a midwife, which further represented her ability to facilitate the birth of a dangerous plot. The Meal Tub could therefore create a conceptual link between the practice of midwifery and the national threat of 'popery' for its audience; and subsequently became invested with the meaning that Cellier had 'midwifed' the birth of the Meal Tub Plot into existence. As a representation, the Meal Tub therefore functioned to link the dangerous threat of 'popery' (represented by the plot papers) with the actions of an allegedly criminal midwife (represented by Cellier). This association, then, would have argued at once that her 'popishness'--her link with the threat of Anglicanism--provided the motive for her crimes, while her status as a midwife provided the means to bring to birth the 'popish plot'.

The notion that Cellier's status as midwife was the means behind her 'popish' criminality was further reinforced in Whig satirical pamphlets which claimed to document her crimes. Such inexpensive political pamphlets were widely read and circulated during this period, and were used to inform readers of a particular
political issue or criminal, in a format designed for more in-depth discussion than regular news sheets allowed. This satirical textual representation of Cellier would have been familiar to informed viewers during the Exclusion Crisis. The Tryal of Elizabeth Cellier... (1680) was one such satirical text describing Cellier's second trial (in which she was found guilty for libel); it described how local booksellers had purchased copies of her 'libelous' pamphlets:

so did she very suitably midwife it [her pamphlet] into the world with cheats and lies, sending for several booksellers to buy the worshipful copy and to everyone of them protesting on the faith of a Catholick woman, and the honour of her calling, that he had the maidenhead on it and was the first man she ever offered it to.  

Such satire produced a dual basis for Cellier's criminality, asserting that her midwife status, combined with her Catholic religion, was the reason why she committed treasonous actions. Maddam Celliers Answer to the Popes Letter (1680) was another satirical pamphlet, this time printed in the form of a (false) letter from Cellier addressed to the pope. In this pamphlet, Cellier's actions are described in terms referring to childbirth. Says Cellier's persona: "what birth I have laboured with, of which if they helped to deliver me, it would be meritorious (to every one)."  

13 The Tryal of Elizabeth Cellier, the Popish Midwife... (London: Printed by A. Godbid for L.C., 1680) 1-2.  
14 Maddam Celliers Answer to the Popes Letter (London, 1680) 2.
claimed that Cellier was responsible for the conception of the plot herself, while her Catholic cohorts were the ones placed in the role of 'midwife' in order to help her with the birth of the plot.

Because this reference to a criminal's profession was a conventional form of satirical representation during this period, the fact that Cellier was referred to in The Tryal of Elizabeth Cellier... as one who "talked abundantly, more like a Midwife than such a Politician and Stateswoman as she would be accounted"\(^\text{15}\) was far from unusual in the popular representation of criminals of the day.\(^\text{16}\) Nonetheless, this satirical representation functioned to make her status as a midwife central to her criminalization, and further underlined the connection between 'popish' criminality and midwifery that the image of Cellier with her Meal Tub represented. The representation of these two seemingly separate issues of 'popishness' and midwifery together in the image of Cellier and her Meal Tub claimed that the actions of a midwife were a dangerous threat to the stability of the whole nation. Not only did this representation reveal a certain social anxiety with the role of midwife who, "as custodian to reproduction and the cultural codes governing it made her a potentially dangerous figure", it

\(^{15}\) *The Tryal of Elizabeth Cellier, the Popish Midwife...*, 3.

also condemned the practice as criminal, thus functioning as a critique of the profession.17

We might ask ourselves: how was this conceptual relationship between 'popery' and midwifery possible? In order to answer this question, we can return to the idea that Cellier's representation as 'popish midwife' was part of a larger critique of the Anglican Church; and thus that her representation as a midwife would have further established her connection with the hierarchy of that institution. Licensed by the Anglican Church during this period, midwifery was perceived as an institutional mechanism whereby the Church maintained a certain amount of social control. As such, midwives were perceived by dissenting Protestant factions as part of a system Keith Thomas has described in the following terms:

the Church's tentacles stretched out through the ecclesiastical courts, [and] exercised a wide jurisdiction over marriage and divorce, defamation, the probate of wills and every conceivable aspect of private morality.18

Indeed, Cellier—as demonstrated in Chapter Two—was often represented as playing an important role in affairs of the Anglican Church or Court Party elite. In The Popish...Plot (Fig. 1, image 'VI') for example, she is shown attempting to kill the parliamentary opposition leader, the Earl of Shaftesbury. The representation of

17 Harvey, 149.
Cellier 'interfering' in the local political affairs of the Whigs is also evident in the next picture of this engraving (image 'VII'), where Cellier is caught attempting to burn the Meal Tub Plot papers. The 'explanation' of this image is specific in its description of these papers (supposedly written by Catholics): they are details of a 'sham' plot by Whigs to kill the king. Those accused of participating in this Whig conspiracy are some of the most important Whiggish politicians of the day: the Duke of Monmouth (the illegitimate Protestant son of Charles II—whom many Whigs regarded as the one suitable successor to the throne), the Earl of Shaftesbury, and other local Whig politicians (see Fig. 2). As one who is represented destroying Whig attempts of exclusion, Cellier is depicted interfering in the public affairs of the Whig politicians. That Cellier was considered a criminal who meddled in local politics is likewise made evident in the satirical text The Tryal of Elizabeth Cellier (1680), in which Cellier was described as one who "talked abundantly, more like a Midwife than such a Politician and Stateswoman as she would be accounted". This representation of Cellier as a midwife who interfered (dangerously) in the public issues of the Exclusion Crisis did more than just condemn Cellier's actions; rather, it questioned the previously assumed authority of midwives under the Anglican licensing system.
over issues concerning the well-being of local communities. Such previous authority through the licensing system had respectability and reliability as its ideals...Bastardy and infanticide were the concern of the civil authorities as well as the ecclesiastical ones, so the midwife's respectability was of considerable importance to a well-organized parish. The restoration of moral discipline after 1660 was primarily the concern of the Church of England through the system of consistory courts and the machinery of licensing and visitation. 19

Given that the Church promoted and regulated particular codes of moral behaviour in English society, the representation of Cellier as a midwife who acted on the behalf of the Anglican elite would have confirmed nonconformist fears of the institutional threat that licensed midwifery posed for those outside of the established church. Indeed the title for The Popish...Plot (describing the plot as being "against our religion and liberties") reiterates the notion that the Anglican Church (and midwifery) posed an institutional threat to nonconformist groups which was not only religious, but was also one that threatened the well-being of individual lives.

This kind of representation of the institutional threat of licensed midwifery to dissenters is also represented in The Happy Instruments... (Fig. 5). In this image, Cellier is represented as a facilitator and

local plotter of Catholicism's alleged plans to retake England. If this print were read as a critical and metaphorical reference to the hierarchical authority of the Anglican Church (see: Chapter Two), Cellier (as one who "turned the plot against the Presbyterians") was thus depicted as part of a hierarchical institution which threatened the ability of nonconformists to participate in public life.

The other local English facilitator to the plot shown in this image is Sir George Wakeman, the royal physician to the Queen Catherine Braganza (Charles II's Portuguese Queen, a practicing Catholic). Here Wakeman holds a paper which reads: "A Bill for 15000 pounds to Poyson the King". This image of Wakeman referred to a controversy represented in the press during the period of the 'popish plots'. Wakeman had been accused of attempting to plot with the Queen to poison the King in order to re-instate Catholicism in England. As Wakeman supported the Court Party point of view, he came under suspicion in the Whig press for such plotting.20

That Wakeman was accused of using his position as royal physician to knowingly administer poisons to the king, would have reflected a general societal suspicion that physicians were costly theoreticians of medicine, whose almost 'secret knowledge' on the subject (much of their

work was conducted in Latin and as such could be read only by the educated elites) offered little in the way of real practical medical advice or assistance. The fact that Wakeman was so readily accused of high treason attests to a deeply felt mistrust of the traditional profession of 'physic' which—in the words of Nicholas Culpeper the London apothecary and man-midwife—consisted of "jugling and knavery". Cellier's representation alongside that of Wakeman, the untrustworthy physician to the Catholic Queen, would clearly have associated midwifery further with the 'jugling and knavery' of the traditional profession of 'physic'.

Further to this, the representation of midwifery with the authority of the Church and the hierarchical and elite profession of 'physic' within this image represented midwifery practice as part of a hierarchical and outmoded social system, which relied on the 'jugling and knavery' of physicians and the Anglican Church bishops for the maintenance of social control.

But if Cellier's representation as a midwife would have signalled for nonconformists the unwanted authority of the Church over secular matters, what was at stake in the nonconformist critique of midwifery?

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22 See Culpeper's full quote and my discussion on pages 2-3 above.
Nonconformists had long questioned the imposed authority of the Church over a variety of domestic and private matters through licensed midwifery. This Church licensing system required that midwives be members of the Anglican Church and have the testimonials of a combination of clergymen, patients and medical practitioners. The Church, in fact, hardly seems to have been interested in the 'medical' capabilities of midwives as such, and midwives usually underwent an informal apprenticeship under the supervision of another licensed midwife. Instead, the Church required that midwives have some form of instruction in baptism, usually taught by the local clergymen. The role of midwives included: ensuring baptism according to Anglican rites should the mother or child die during childbirth; the supervision of the Anglican churching ritual; and the 'laying out' of the dead in the required Anglican fashion. The importance of the midwife's function is emphasized by one recent historian: "This very varied activity could not but give the midwife an important social role. She brought to birth and nursed a number of the inhabitants; she also attended to the laying out of the dead", and as such, as Gelis continues, "the midwife held both ends of


24 For a description of the various roles taken on by midwives, see Harley, 6-9.
the thread of life". Midwives therefore had a Church-backed authority on a number of matters which could touch the lives of many within a given community. In addition, midwives also played an important role in civil and ecclesiastical courts as witnesses in illegitimacy cases. There are two reasons for this: Firstly, civil authorities needed to know who was to pay for the child's welfare; and secondly ecclesiastical authorities were interested in ensuring that the father of an illegitimate child do penance. The midwife's ability to assess and establish things such as legitimacy and virginity, were thus important elements of the Church's practice of social control through the ecclesiastical courts.

The nonconformist critique of the Church's maintenance of social control through such devices as licensed midwifery is probably most explicit in The Solemn Mock Procession... (Fig. 3). Here Cellier is not only represented committing a crime in terms related to midwifery practice, but her image is associated with other (critical) representations of the Church's authority. As already demonstrated in Chapter Two, The Solemn Mock Procession... was a complex critique of the Church's authority over secular matters. The fifth pageant, for example, represented bishops who are

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26 Harley, 8.
described in the satirical text below, saying: "And kings shall dread owr Thunder and lie still". This image could be interpreted as a criticism of the Anglican elites and their interference in local politics. The following pageant also criticized the authority of the Anglican Church with regard to baptism (referred to in the text as 'second birth'). This reference to baptism, as a general nonconformist critique of the ritual, also operated indirectly to question what had previously been considered an important part of the midwife's religious function at birth (to perform emergency rites of baptism). Within the context of this engraving, midwifery was thus represented as part of a system of religious authority, deemed by nonconformists as unnecessary and 'superstitious'. This criticism of midwifery in the Cellier prints thus coincided with and was representative of a larger process whereby nonconformists questioned the necessity for licensed midwifery.

When it came to criticizing the authority of the Church's hold on midwifery, the nonconformist critique of the established church manifested itself in a criticism of the various religious roles and actions of midwives themselves. The institutional rituals of churching and lay baptism in which midwives participated, for example, were considered 'popish' by dissenters for they were
remindful of the rituals of the medieval Catholic Church. In the ritual of churching a midwife escorted the new mother (dressed in a white veil), to church, where the minister blessed her and welcomed her back into the holy community by reciting a particular psalm, (most often Psalm 121). Many nonconformists viewed this as "one of the most obnoxious Popish survivals of the Anglican Church". It was even claimed that it "breedeth and nourisheth many superstitious opinions in the simple people's hearts; as that the woman which hath born a child is unclean and unholy". The 'popish' rituals of the Anglican Church were therefore denigrated by dissenters who deemed such rituals a part of popular 'superstition'. The use of birth girdles, for example, (which imitated the Virgin Mary who was believed to have worn a birth girdle during the birth of Christ), as well as the chanting of charms and prayers which—according to Thomas—were "all common features of the country midwife's repertoire", were rejected by nonconformist Protestant groups. As late as the early eighteenth

27 Thomas, 42.
28 Many Puritans believed Psalm 121 (which would have been recited by the minister during the churching ceremony) encouraged 'superstitious' beliefs. In the words of one contemporary: "the ordinary women are hardly brought to look upon churching otherwise than as a charm to prevent witchcraft, and think that grass will hardly ever grow where they tread before they are churched." G.L. Kittredge, Witchcraft in Old and New England (New York: 1929, reprint 1956) quoted in Thomas, 43.
29 Thomas, 42.
30 J. Canne, A Necessitie of Separation (1634) quoted in Thomas, 65.
31 Thomas, 222.
century, one nonconformist writer warned that midwives and new mothers were not to use: "any Girdels, Purses, Mesures of our Lady, or such other Superstitious Things, to be occupied about the Woman while she laboureth, to make her beleve to have the better Spede by it". These various rituals were—in the minds of those who objected to them—the responsibility of midwives, and the nonconformist challenge to such rituals led to the condemnation of the midwives who practised them.

Given the critical stance of many dissenting groups towards the religious functions of midwifery, Cellier's representation in a larger nonconformist critique of the Anglican Church worked to associate not only her 'popish' criminality with her midwifery profession, but such a representation also questioned the professional legitimacy and necessity of that practice. On the one hand, Cellier's status as a midwife in this specific critique of the Anglican political elite objected to the fact that midwifery had become part of the secular authority of the Church—a mechanism of social control that nonconformists wanted to eliminate from the premise of that institution. At the same time, however, her representation as a 'popish midwife', because of her association (for example, The Solemn Mock Procession...,

Fig. 3) with the rituals and authority of the Anglican Church, also condemned the religious function of the practice itself. The representation of Cellier as 'popish midwife' linked the threat of 'popery' with the institutional authority of midwifery over secular affairs. The coupling of the term 'popish' with the profession of midwifery, then, was not only a critique of the authority of the established church over temporal matters through the licensing of midwifery, but such a representation of midwifery as 'popish' also questioned the necessity of midwives per se, dismissing them for their 'superstitious' religious functions.

This criticism of traditional midwifery practice as one which encouraged 'superstition' was also used by medical practitioners interested in promoting their 'scientific' ability to supervise childbirth. The previous practices of midwives came to represent the 'ignorance'—so it was argued—of the women that performed them. In the words of one doctor, in a midwifery manual of 1698, it was his intention to:

> correct the frequent mistake of most midwives, who resting too boldly upon the common way of delivering women, neglect all the wholesome and profitable rules of the art...which concern the anatomical parts of the body.\(^3^3\)

Increasingly, this kind of attitude became characteristic of how the medical profession perceived midwives. Such

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\(^3^3\) The Complete Midwife's Practice Enlarged (London, 1698) A3.
midwifery manuals would define midwifery as a medical practice, the knowledge of which, these manuals argued, was to be obtained through reading and the analysis of anatomy. In these manuals, women were considered ignorant, not because they did not know how to assist in deliveries, but because they lacked the kind of knowledge these manuals (and their doctor authors) promoted—i.e. a knowledge based on reading which was combined with the visual analysis of anatomical illustrations. Thus, in the words of Ann Dally:

> The power of the doctors as experts was not the power to heal or to demonstrate their knowledge: it was the power to give the appearance of knowing, therefore to judge. The doctors gained in stature not because of what they could do but because they could name, describe and explain.  

34

Medical knowledge, therefore, became linked to sight, literacy, and intellectual cognition. 35 What the format of these anatomical images did not represent was the older form of midwifery knowledge which had previously been learned orally between women midwives on an apprenticeship basis. The fact that Cellier was condemned as a 'popish midwife' through her representation would have reinforced (because the term 'popish' could be used to denigrate ritualistic practices


as 'superstitious') the medical argument that midwives were in need of re-education. When, in The Popish...Plot (Fig. 1), the actions of Cellier and the other criminals represented are considered the result of the "matchless Superstition of Popery", this accusation carries the traces of three separate but related condemnations—political, religious, and medical. Cellier's representation, then, although exclusionist in origin, became an integral part of these larger discourses on midwifery and their criticisms of the traditional practice.

Until the eighteenth century, licensed practitioners of medicine were either physicians, barber-surgeons, or apothecaries. Because they charged high fees, physicians usually served the medical needs of the aristocracy and the very wealthy; physicians diagnosed internal disorders and prescribed medications. Apothecaries on the other hand mixed and dispensed these prescriptions, but were not allowed to make private calls on their own.36 Surgical operations and all treatments of the outer body, such as eyes and teeth, were left to the barber surgeons who were not allowed to diagnose illness, nor were they to prescribe medicine, as this was the physicians' domain. Such regulations had been put in place by the College of Physicians in an attempt to tightly regulate

36 Loudon, 20.
the practices of their 'lesser' counterparts, but the licensing was not always successful. Because physicians were so costly, it was often the surgeons and apothecaries who supplied many of the less wealthy with medical services. This was increasingly the case during the seventeenth century as both surgeons and apothecaries (who in reality did much of the same work as that of physicians--but for a less wealthy clientele), became interested in having their practices recognized as professions of equal standing with physicians. Indeed one physician and contemporary critic of apothecaries' practice accused apothecaries of:

creeping into practice...of late years some Physicians took them along with them on their visits whereby they acquired a little smattering of diseases...until these ten years last past (they kept themselves within some bounds and limits); but since that time have daily more and more encroached upon our profession.37

It is evident that jealous rivalries existed amongst the different groups and many surgeons and apothecaries considered their regulation by physicians unjust. For, while physicians claimed to have much theoretical knowledge of all areas of medical practice, and therefore a premise to oversee the regulation of medicine, this did not necessarily translate into the ability to perform, hands-on, medical operations.

One of the areas in which this rivalry expressed itself, and where both surgeons and apothecaries asserted their medical authority, was the supervision of childbirth. Supervision of childbirth was still a private contract between practitioner and patient, and—if one attended the births of the wealthy—it could also be quite lucrative. For apothecaries and surgeons eager to enter general practice, attending a successful birth was also a method by which one could become the regular doctor of a particular family. Birth was therefore one way in which one could promote one's skills as a family practitioner.38 At first, the idea of having a 'man-midwife'—as they were called—became fashionable amongst the wealthy.39 Because most 'men-midwives' were usually surgeons or apothecaries, physicians soon felt, however, that men-midwives posed a potential threat to their own practices and clientele. But the claims to medical knowledge of these various practitioners by no means led directly to new 'scientific' developments in the practice. As Audrey Eccles points out with regard to the midwifery books produced by medical practitioners during this period:

Especially on the subjects of conception, sexuality, pregnancy and menstruation...it is often impossible

to tell whether a scientific 'fact' has passed into common knowledge and become a generally received opinion, or an existing popular belief or practice has been rationalised and authenticated by giving it a 'scientific' explanation.40

Indeed, from a twentieth century point of view, neither the oral knowledge of midwives, nor the written knowledge of medical practitioners seems to have been particularly 'better' than the other. Rather the one form of knowledge (based on the study of anatomy and texts) would transform and eventually replace the other. Such attempts by men practitioners to take over the supervision of childbirth from their women midwife counterparts did not go unnoticed by the midwives themselves. Indeed in 1688, Cellier herself wrote, in an open letter to an anonymous doctor:

I hope, Doctor...[you] will deter...from pretending to teach us Midwifery, especially such as confess they have never delivered Women in their Lives, and being asked What they would do in such a Case? reply they have not yet studied it, but will when occasion serves; This is something to the purpose I must confess, Doctor: But I doubt it will not satisfy the Women of this Age, who are so sensible and impatient of their Pain, that few of them will be prevailed with to bear it, in Complement to the Doctor, while he fetches his Book, studies the Case, and teaches the Midwife to perform her work, which she hopes may be done before he comes.41

This process of re-education of women midwives would have grave repercussions for the older practice, for not only would midwifery qualifications change, but the assumed

40 Eccles, 33.
41 Elizabeth Cellier (written Celleor), To Dr.---An Answer to His Queries, concerning the Colledg for Midwives (London, 1688) 6-7.
primary care givers of childbirth would no longer necessarily be women. The transformation of midwifery knowledge would eventually result in the marginalization of women from the practice. In a recent historical study on the role of women in midwifery, Harley points out that:

The numbers of...women...involved in midwifery appears to decline sharply during the eighteenth century and the rise of the men-midwives' practice amongst the middle classes may well have been reinforced by new attitudes towards the activities suitable for middle class women.42

As I have attempted to demonstrate, the seventeenth century term 'popish' used by Nicholas Culpeper (in his Directory for Midwives, 1660)43 to describe the traditional practice of midwives was a very specific yet complex criticism of what traditional midwifery practice had come to represent in the eyes of both nonconformist groups and the medical elite. Cellier's representation as 'popish midwife' demonstrated the dangers of a 'midwifery' licensed by the Anglican Church, while it simultaneously served to associate her criminality with the 'popish' ignorance of the previous midwifery practice. Cellier's representation as 'popish midwife', constructed through a complex series of associations, was therefore one part of an ongoing process whereby

42 Harley, 9.

43 See page 2, above.
midwifery was redefined during the seventeenth century. This process would involve the re-evaluation of previous societal perceptions of childbirth and the assumed role of midwives themselves. This criticism of the older practice would manifest itself through a variety of discourses--political, religious and medical--and was thus not merely the result of 'scientific development' in medicine as has been previously claimed in medical histories. Indeed, Cellier's representation attests to the complex and contradictory nature of the process whereby such changes to previous perceptions of childbirth and its supervision took place.

The representation of Cellier then, although primarily political and religious in motivation, would also have served to criticize traditional midwifery. Within the nonconformist critique of the Anglican establishment, the criticism of Cellier as 'popish' functioned to question the hierarchical authority of the Church over secular matters. Midwives, who had previously been "deemed competent, and even urged to be familiar with the rituals" of the Anglican Church, now stood "at the borderline between different groups who contended for the salvation of the patient: the clergy

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and the lay surgeons". As the preceding analysis has shown, Cellier represented a kind of midwifery which had been part of an earlier religion-based authority that "had laid its emphasis upon the regular performance of ritual duties". After the Reformation, however, it was assumed, as Thomas concludes, "that...[such]...popular ignorance was merely a hangover from Popery".

Cellier's association with other 'popish' crimes, conveyed in the three prints discussed in this thesis, deemed Cellier (and the kind of midwifery she represented) as dangerous and untrustworthy. Her criminal actions, associated with the metaphor of the Meal Tub as womb-like vessel deemed midwifery not only part of an outmoded hierarchy of the Anglican Church, but also a profession which promoted 'superstitious' practices. This so-called superstition or ignorance of women midwives would also be used by medical practitioners interested in promoting their own, more 'scientific' skills in the supervision of childbirth. Cellier's representation, which would have been most visible in and around the city of London (the place where the medical professions were most numerous and powerful) could be interpreted on several different levels, depending on the manner in which viewers perceived them.

46 Thomas, 196.
according to their professional backgrounds, as well as their religious and political beliefs. Regardless of the different political, religious and professional critiques that Cellier's image contained, however, one thing remained constant: her popular representation was part of a general critique of midwifery practice at this time. Moreover, perhaps the most potent form of condemnation of midwifery during this period was the inference that midwifery in its traditional form was 'popish'. Such a term encapsulated not only the nonconformist religious (and political) critique of midwifery, but also the professional condemnation of midwifery as a practice that promoted superstition and ignorance.
Fig. 1 The Popish Damnable Plot (London, 1680), upper portion of the broadside, British Museum, 1088.
The Explanation.

I. The First describes the Burning of LONDON, which hath been proved undeniably by Dr. Oates, Mr. Beding, and others, to be contrived and carried on by the Papists. A blessed Resurrection, that may be introduced by the Name of so many thousand Families! But Destruction would not content, unless Blood! For, in the next place,

II. We describe The Manner of their Murdering Sir Edmeston Gellibr, who took Dr. Oates's Depositions of the Plot, which was no more than every Gentleman in the Commonwealth of the Peace was bound to do: yet for this necessary discharge of his Duty, the Conspirators were so enraged, that they would not suffer him to go off, but rather, as may reasonably be supposed, to deter all other Magistrates from intermeddling with any Affairs relating to the Plot. The Persons actually present at this Murder were, Gerard and Kelly, two Priests; Green, Bury, and Hill, who were then executed for it. The whole discovered by Mr. Miles Francis, who was sent to act in it.

III. We come to describe The General Days of Humiliation appointed by His Majesty's Proclamations, on the Thirteenth of November, 1678, and on the Eleventh of April, 1679, to implore the Mercies of Almighty God, in the Protection of His Majesty's Sacred Person, and that he would interpose and defend the Counsell of the Papists, our Enemies.

IV. The next thing in order of Time was The Execution of several of the Plotters, viz. Coleman, Ireland, Green, Pickering, Whalley, Howick, Kennick, Gwon, Turner, and Lambourn, &c.

V. We come now to the Sham Plot. Their next great Design was to take off one of our great Benefactors, viz. the Right Honourable Anthony Earl of Shaftesbury. In this Fifth Division we give you the manner of Mr. Dangerfield's coming to attempt him; and,

VI. In the Sixth, The Manner of Mrs. Collier's (one of the Pope's Aunts) going to do that Great Work her self. (Mr. Dangerfield having fail'd in the Attempt) and of her turning down Stairs. Although frequently attempted, yet it hath pleased God otherwise for the good of the Nation, by his gracious Providence to prevent this Horrible Peril, and in the Prayers of all Good Protestant, That he may never fall into the hands of his Papist Adversary, whose tender Mercies are Cruelty.

VII. To shew the Papists would leave no Stone unturned, to blow off this Hellish Plot, their next Stratagem was to forge a Plot upon the Presbyterians, by Name but in Truth to involve the most zealous and active Protestant Nobility, Gentry, &c. throughout the Nation; which being fortified with bold Perjuries, and Specious Pretences, might gain Credit; and thereby they being destroy'd as a Sacrifice to Justice, it might seem probable, the Holy Plot was only their malicious Contrivance against the Catholics, who would then appear to have the King's best Subjects. The Model of this deficient Plot against the Presbyterians was found in Sir William Waller, in the House of Mrs. Collier, hid in a MANTLE, in a Paper Bag, tied with Red Ribbons: It purported to be only Remarks on his His-Is of Things and Papers to be charged; as, among the rest, there were named, the Lords Halifax, Shaftesbury, Radnor, Effix, Whatton, the Duke of Buckingham, and others, to be Counsel in this pretended Conspiracy. The Duke of Monmouth General; the Lord Grey, Lord Gresham, and Sir Thomas Armstrong, Lieutenant Generals in the Royal Army; Sir William Waller, and others, Major Generals; Colonel Daniel, Quarter-master General. By this whole Contrivance, it must evidently appear, that their aim was to raise all that were true Protestants, or honest Affectors of the Liberties and Property of the Subject; for, without these, there cannot be anything

VIII. Next we come to describe the manner of Mrs. Collier's sitting in State on the Pillory, near the Exchequer in the Strand, with her famous Wooden Shield, to defend her from the Fury of the People. She was most justly sentenced to this ignominious Punishment, for publishing an admirable Essay, entitled, Malice Defeated: A Book stuffed with many Lies, and various Eyewarnings, and with so much Malice and Envy to all Protestants in general, that the bag was never publicly sold.

IX. We describe the manner of Assaulting Justice Arnold, by Three notorious Ruffians; one of whom, viz. Giles, hath since been tried, and found Guilty, and accordingly deservedly punished for it.

X. We next describe The manner of their sealing their Treasurables Papers, for Fear of a Discovery.

XI. In the next place, we describe their Holy Fathers receiving comfortable Letters from England, (with Tears of Joy) of the likely Success of their Plot.

XII. Lastly, We describe The manner of the Execution of William Viscount Stafford, on Tower Hill, who was impeached by the House of Commons in 1683, for Treason, in Conspiring the Death of the King; and was accordingly brought to Tryal before the House of Lords, in Parliament, on Thursday the last day of November, and by them found Guilty, and sentenced to Death, on Friday following, viz. the Seventh of December, 1680, and accordingly executed on Tower Hill the 7th of December.

LONDON,
Printed for Richard Baldwin in Ball-Court, near the Black Bull in the Old Bailey. MDCLXXX.
The Sanctum Mock Processtion of the POPE CARDINALS Juxtaposion 8 through the City of London November the 1680

The EXPLANATION

... The explanation of the events of the mock procession and its significance, as described in the text.

The Pope, on the horse, being borne, the Presbytery, bishops, cardinals, &c. in procession. The procession was a satirical depiction of the pomposity and excesses of the Catholic Church, particularly during the reign of Charles II. It was a protest against the perceived corruption and abuse of power within the Church hierarchy.

The figures in the procession represent various aspects of the Church, such as cardinals, bishops, and other ecclesiastical figures. The procession was a form of protest against the Church's role in politics and its influence on the monarchy.

The procession ended at the Fleet Prison, where the Pope was to be imprisoned. The event was a significant moment in the history of the English Church, marking a shift in power dynamics and a challenge to the authority of the Catholic Church in England.
Fig. 4 The Solemn Mock Procession..., detail representing Elizabeth Cellier and Roger L'Estrange.
Fig. 5 The Happy Instruments of England's Preservation (London, 1681), print, British Museum, 1114.
Fig. 6 The Murder of Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey (London, 1678), broadside, British Museum, 1064.
Fig. 7 The Kingdoms Monster Uncloaked from Heaven (London, 1643), print, British Museum, 375.
and manners, and strives downward to the lower parts, that he might have passage to come forth into the light. For the membranes or caulés being broken by his striving & violence, and the Matrix being disclosed and opened, the humours doe begin to flow abroad, from which the Infant being freed and delivered, by and by feeleth the aire, and through desire of this life is rolled towards the out-passage of the Matrix, his head turned towards the mouth and entrance of the Matrix. And this is the forme and manner of a legitimate and most natural birth, if first the head proceed forth, the bands stretched downwards by the sides, and laid upon the hips, as the present Figure adjoynd doth shew and express. But the birth is said to be unnatural, if any of these conditions and properties shall...
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