Frances E. Dolan

Gender and the "Lost" Spaces of Catholicism

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION   *This essay treats the Reformation in England as a contest over space and its social meanings and uses. Concentrating on how space intersected with gender and religious affiliation, it examines struggles over several sites where these fraught ideologies collided: reformed or vandalized devotional spaces, the court (especially its royal chapels), the scaffold, the bed, the household, and the prison. Although Catholics had to relinquish many devotional, social, and political spaces in the wake of the Reformation, they also developed a tactical and adaptive relation to space that, this essay argues, fostered Catholic survival, but also created new valences for Catholicism and added new twists to misogynist discourses of the day. Catholics' strategic and fluid deployments of space complicated efforts to control them, and complicate scholars' efforts to place them on material and conceptual maps of early modern England. But, as this essay shows, bringing both gender and religious affiliation into a discussion of urban space not only deepens our understanding of how space is produced, but adds new depth to our understanding of both gender and religious struggles in this period.*

This article is an inquiry into the intersections of space and religious affiliation in seventeenth-century England. In this particular time and place, how were Catholics the products and producers of distinctive physical, ideological, and symbolic spaces? What restrictions defined their material, conceptual, perceptual, and representational relations to space? At the sites at which Catholicism became discursively, imaginatively, and materially possible in post-Reformation England, what were the practices in which Catholics engaged, and how did these practices, in turn, assign unexpected

Frances E. Dolan is Professor of English, Miami University. She is the author of *Whores of Babylon: Catholicism, Gender, and Seventeenth-Century Print Culture* (Ithaca, 1999); *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550–1700* (Ithaca, 1994).

and unstable meanings to these spaces? In the context of this volume, it is illuminating to begin by looking backward at the seventeenth century because the usefulness of "Catholicism" as a category of analysis emerges more clearly in retrospect.

"Catholicism" as an analytical category has a vastly different meaning in analyses of England after the Reformation than it does in studies of pre-Reformation Europe—the time and place addressed in most of the essays in this issue. The place of Catholics in post-Reformation England is not just a matter of shifting locations—as if Catholics were the majority before and the minority after, or at the center before and on the margins after. Rather, the relationship of Catholics and Catholicism to both conceptual and material space was disturbing because it was both embattled and murky. Catholics were everywhere and nowhere. In an influential review essay, Hibbard argued that existing frameworks for historical study make it difficult to attend to Catholics because we cannot "place" them. "In their religious lives as Catholics," gentry "were detached from the county and parish communities" on which historians have focused; they organized themselves by households or clusters of households and by "networks of priests, of schools, and of book distribution that were thriving in the seventeenth century" but cannot be rooted in any one place.[1]

Nor can the status of Catholics be generalized across the whole of England. Attitudes toward Catholicism in the abstract differed significantly from attitudes toward known, local Catholics; attitudes toward Catholics in Yorkshire, where many were members of families with long-standing ties to their communities, differed from those toward Catholics in London, where many Catholics were aristocratic, attached to the court, and/or foreign. Demonized obsessively from pulpits and in print, the specters of a repudiated and menacing past, Catholics were also ancestors, rela-

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1 The terms in which this article discusses space are informed throughout by Henri Lefebvre (trans. Donald Nicholson Smith), *The Production of Space* (Oxford, 1991). Caroline M. Hibbard, "Early Stuart Catholicism: Revisions and Re-Revisions," *Journal of Modern History,* LII (1980), 1–34, esp. 2, 14. For the complexity of attitudes toward Catholics and Catholicism, see Anthony Milton, "A Qualified Intolerance: The Limits and Ambiguities of Early Stuart Anti-Catholicism," in Arthur F. Marotti (ed.), *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts* (New York, 1999), 85–115. See also Peter Lake, "Anti-Popery: The Structure of a Prejudice," in Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (eds.), *Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics, 1603–1642* (London, 1989), 72–106.

tives, and spouses. They were married to the monarchs; at times, the monarchs themselves were Catholic or crypto-Catholic.[2]

Who precisely were the Catholics? Only those who were convicted of "recusing" themselves from Church of England services—a relatively small group? Or those with a lingering affection for repudiated rites and beliefs? Recusants were on the rolls, but most Catholics were not. Hence, it was difficult for contemporaries to estimate how many Catholics there were, and it is even more difficult for us. Furthermore, although Catholics were widely distrusted as potential traitors and servants who obeyed two masters, they were exiled only under exceptional circumstances; they could hardly be repatriated to Rome. Attempts to enforce a strictly one-way traffic between England and Catholic countries failed. Young men who went to the continent to train as priests were forbidden to return, but did. Books and ideas moved back and forth across national borders; relics of those martyred in England were smuggled out of the country; devotional articles were smuggled in. Hibbard argues that the government was particularly concerned with the traffic in Catholicism: "The crux would seem to be the distinction not between private and public, but between indigenous and imported (imported articles, imported priests)." By remaining in, or returning to, England, Catholics troubled the very notion of Englishness.[3]

Conversions and apostasies further confused the contours of Catholicism as a recognizable and controllable cultural identity: Prominent people joined the ranks, while others defected and published scandalous exposés of alleged Catholic beliefs, practices, and plots. Catholicism was an amorphous, capacious, and potentially engulfing category. Constructions of Catholics as both dan-

2   On the disparity between attitudes toward known, local Catholics and toward Catholicism in the abstract or foreign Catholics, see, among many others, Robin Clifton, "Fear of Popery," in Conrad Russell (ed.), *The Origins of the English Civil War* (New York, 1973), 144–167; Hibbard, "Early Stuart Catholicism;" David Underdown, *Revel, Riot, and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England, 1603–1660* (Oxford, 1988), 129.

3   On the traffic in relics, see Anne J. Cruz, "Politics, Piety, and Class: Luisa de Carvajal and the Formation of Female Subjectivity in Early Modern Spain," ms. in progress (Univ. of Illinois, Chicago); Marotti, "Manuscript Transmission and the Catholic Martyrdom Account in Early Modern England," in *idem* and Michael D. Bristol (eds.), *Print, Manuscript, and Performance: The Changing Relations of the Media in Early Modern England* (Columbus, 2000), 172–199. I am grateful to Cruz and Marotti for sharing their drafts with me. Hibbard, "Early Stuart Catholicism," 16, n. 41.

gerously strange and intimately familiar—foreign and local—ally them to women, who, like Catholics, tend to defy definition or category. Further, women and priests were often linked both in the Protestant imagination and in the spaces of Catholic survival. Gender thus comes into play as a third term in the analysis of Catholics and space.[4]

Whether the Reformation was gradual or abrupt, whether it emerged consensually from below or was imposed from above, it dramatically, if gradually, altered the control of property and the aesthetics of worship. The complex process of land transfer and desecration that is called "the dissolution of the monasteries" emerged out of long-standing conflicts and expressed multiple concerns, but it also, fundamentally, shifted the cultural meanings and uses of places. Buildings that had housed thriving monasteries and convents became "bare ruined choirs"; a devotional practice associated with ornate interiors and ritual paraphernalia was driven into clandestinity and transcience, relying on portable altars, the bare essentials for the sacraments, and crucifixes that could be hidden in a pocket. Catholics who had been in positions of power and control fled the country; nuns and priests married, found other forms of work, wandered the roads, or shifted from living in same-sex communities to lodging, disguised and hunted, in private homes. With no official place in post-Reformation culture, priests became servants and guests—and felons. Recusant households were reconfigured to accommodate them with hidden chapels, hiding places or "holes," and secret escape routes.[5]

4 Michael C. Questier, *Conversion, Politics, and Religion in England, 1580–1625* (Cambridge, 1996). For the relationship between Catholicism and women, see Dolan, *Whores of Babylon: Catholicism, Gender, and Seventeenth-Century Print Culture* (Ithaca, 1999). For different but complementary interpretations of the peculiar status of Catholics in post-Reformation England, see Jonathan Gil Harris, *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic: Discourses of Social Pathology in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1998); Alison Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy, and the English Literary Imagination, 1558–1660* (Cambridge, 1999); Raymond Tumbleson, *Catholicism in the English Protestant Imagination: Nationalism, Religion, and Literature, 1660–1745* (Cambridge, 1998).

5 This process happened in two stages: first the suppression of the monasteries in the 1530s and then the second wave of dissolutions and confiscations in the 1540s, which especially effected "intercessory institutions," such as chantries. See A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (New York, 1964); Alan Kreider, *English Chantries: The Road to Dissolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979). Mary Prior, "Reviled and Crucified Marriages: The Position of Tudor Bishops' Wives," in *idem* (ed.), *Women in English Society, 1500–1800* (New York, 1985), 118–148. On priest holes, or hiding places expressly built to conceal priests, and their emergence as an ar-

Churches were reformed for use through collective, brutal rehabbing: smashed windows, whitewashed walls, beheaded statues, and demolished altar rails. Duffy argues that, in objects such as images of saints, altars, brasses, and obit inscriptions, "the collective memory of the parishes was, quite literally, enshrined." Duffy depicts a reluctant populace, clinging to pre-Reformation beliefs, pieces of rood lofts, and hopes for a return to the mother church. He presents the process of stripping the altars as a violent and distressing break from the past. Other historians argue that this process was more consensual, popular, and untraumatic. In either case, for those who had a long association with devotional spaces that were purified or vandalized, the experience of inhabiting these changed spaces must have been either mournful or bracing. It can hardly have been neutral.[6]

However iconoclasm was motivated, and whatever it accomplished, it certainly did not create blank spaces. Instead, space remained articulate throughout the early modern period. In the discussion of lost places, the distinction between physical and discursive, actual and represented space, is always elusive, since these

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chitectural feature only after priests began to establish fixed residences, see Michael Hodgetts, "*Loca Secretoria* in 1581," *Recusant History,* XIX (1989), 386–395; *idem, Secret Hiding-Places* (Dublin, 1989). On the more general association of priests with both travel and hiding places, see Julian Yates, "Parasitic Geographies: Manifesting Catholic Identity in Early Modern England," in Marotti (ed.), *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism,* 63–84. See also Bede Camm, *Forgotten Shrines: An Account of Some Old Catholic Halls and Families in England and of Relics and Memorials of the English Martyrs* (London, 1936), illustrations facing 253, 254, 256, 258, 260.

6   Eamon Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1400–1580* (New Haven, 1992), 480. For the continued reverence for Catholic rituals and objects, see also Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993); Ronald Hutton, "The English Reformation and the Evidence of Folklore," *Past & Present,* 148 (1995), 89–116; *idem, The Rise and Fall of Merry England: The Ritual Year, 1400–1700* (Oxford, 1994), 69–110. Margaret Aston argued that the presence of monastic ruins in the English landscape often provoked nostalgia for the lost past and regret about the destructions of the dissolution, not just for Catholics, and, in turn, inspired antiquarianism and preservation ("English Ruins and English History: The Dissolution and the Sense of the Past," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute,* XXXVI [1973], 231–255). For the argument that the Reformation was, at least in part, "popular," see Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (New York, 1988); Lake, "Deeds Against Nature: Cheap Print, Protestantism, and Murder in Early Seventeenth-Century England," in Kevin Sharpe and *idem* (eds.), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Stanford, 1993), 257–283. For a complication of these alternatives, see Alexandra Walsham, "The Parochial Roots of Laudianism Revisited: Catholics, Anti-Calvinists, and

spaces are available for imagination and discussion only to the extent that they have been documented. Furthermore, recent scholarship bridges this divide in yet another way, revealing that the built environment was a written one. Women embroidered on textiles and samplers with which they decorated their homes. On their walls and furniture, men and women wrote proverbs, "posies," and biblical texts or painted narratives; they affixed ballads and painted cloths to walls as well. According to Watt, "Now that the churches were whitewashed, their visual richness had been transferred to secular interiors"—especially ale houses, inns, taverns, and homes. This visual richness was not only a matter of pictures and patterns but of words and texts literally inscribed onto living spaces.[7]

Devotional spaces also remained saturated with meaning; that meaning and, indeed, the ownership of these spaces were contested long after the Reformation. As Milton points out, the fact that Protestants worshipped in the same spaces in which Catholics once had, and that these spaces were not stripped of *all* traces of stained glass and other speaking ornaments until the 1640s, reinforced connections between the old and the new. For Milton, "it is vital not to let the language of violent change and sweeping Protestantization disguise the fact that many of the sermons that eulogized the newly Protestantized Church were delivered in parish churches that were still dominated by the images and physical structures of the Catholic past." Since these structures were only gradually emptied, and rarely razed, they were concrete reminders of the ground that Catholics and Protestants shared.[8]

'Parish Anglicans' in Early Stuart England," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* XLIX (1998), 620–651.

7   Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640* (Cambridge, 1991), 194. On needlework, see Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (New York, 1984); Susan Frye, "Sewing Connections: Elizabeth Tudor, Mary Stuart, Elizabeth Talbot, and Seventeenth-Century Anonymous Needleworkers," in *idem* and Karen Robertson (eds.), *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Woman's Alliances in Early Modern England* (New York, 1999) 165–182; Lena Cowen Orlin, "Three Ways to Be Invisible in the Renaissance: Sex, Reputation, and Stitchery," in Patricia Fumerton and Simon Hunt (eds.), *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday* (Philadelphia, 1999), 183–203; Dympna Callaghan, "Looking Well to Linens: Women and Cultural Production in *Othello* and Shakespeare's England," in Jean E. Howard and Scott Cutler Shershow (eds.), *Marxist Shakespeares* (New York, 2001), 53–81. On wall writing, see not only Watt but also Juliet Fleming, "Graffiti, Grammatology, and the Age of Shakespeare," in Fumerton and Hunt (eds.), *Renaissance Culture,* 315–351.

8   Milton, "A Qualified Intolerance," 104.

The mere presence of Catholics offered the threat that they might reclaim what had been taken from them, or displace the usurpers. Elizabeth Cellier was a notorious convert to Catholicism who was acquitted of treason in connection with the Meal Tub Plot, an offshoot of the Popish Plot, but later convicted of libel for a text that she wrote describing her imprisonment and trial. One of the points of dispute in her account of the trial was whether she had ever expressed the hope "to see *Westminster Abbey* full of *Benedictine Monks,* and the *Temple* with *Fryers.*" Although, in her case, testimony upheld that her words on the matter were more wistful than treasonous—"What if you should see *Westminster Abbey* filled with Monks again?"—other tracts of the time, such as *Reflections upon the Murder of S. Edmund-Bury Godfrey*—one of many pamphlets responding to (and constituting) the Popish Plot—described Papists as "allur'd by the recovery of their Abby-Lands, encourag'd and supported by great Interest in the Kingdom." In other words, Catholics wanted to "recover" lands and re-occupy buildings.[9]

Catholics' politically charged attitude toward space also manifested itself in the reverence for places of execution as sites of martyrdom. For example, Margaret Clitherow, herself a future martyr, apparently went on "pilgrimage" to Knavesmire, an execution site half a mile from her home in York, where priests that she knew had been executed: "She went barefoot to the place, and kneeling on her bare knees ever under the gallows, meditated and prayed so long as her company would suffer her." Clitherow had to make her visits under cover of night and only when her husband was out of town. She thus participated in what would later be called Catholics' "whole design of Canonizing those men for Saints, whom the Justice of the Nation hath Condemned for Traytors."[10]

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9   Elizabeth Cellier, *Malice Defeated: Or a Brief Relation of the Accusation and Deliverance of Elizabeth Cellier* (London, 1680), sig. Kv; *Reflections upon the Murder of S. Edmund-Bury Godfrey* (London, 1682), sig. E2v.

10   *Mr. John Mush's Life of Margaret Clitherow,* in John Morris (ed.), *The Troubles of Our Catholic Forefathers Related by Themselves* (London, 1877), III. 395–396. See also Megan Matchinske, *Writing, Gender, and State in Early Modern England: Identity Formation and the Female Subject* (Cambridge, 1998), 53–85; Marotti, "Alienating Catholics in Early Modern England: Recusant Women, Jesuits, and Ideological Fantasies," in *idem* (ed.), *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism,* 1–34, esp. 5–9. John Dormer, *The New Plot of the Papists: To Transform Traitors into Martyrs* (London, 1679), 5.

Even more notorious was the visit of Henrietta Maria, Charles I's young French wife, to Tyburn in 1626. Most accounts agree that the queen prayed before the gallows, but they disagree as to whether this prayer was a spontaneous response to the place or the climax of a planned pilgrimage, which the queen denied. Various sources elaborated on the more incriminating possibility of an intentional pilgrimage: The queen walked barefoot, while her confessor rode in a carriage, and then, at the gallows, she dropped to her knees with a rosary in her hands. What the controversy over this supposed pilgrimage revealed was not only distrust of this foreign, Catholic queen but a distrust of a theatricality that turned public spaces into performance arenas. At least for those who discussed this visit to Tyburn, Henrietta Maria revealed that the meanings mapped onto London were contested and shifting. As Lefebvre has argued of space more generally, although such sites are socially produced, they cannot be controlled or dominated. A gallows could be a shrine; the King's residence might include an elaborate Catholic chapel.[11]

The Catholic queen consort's troubling presence at court complicates and contradicts any generalizations about Catholics and space in post-Reformation England. The Reformation literally displaced Catholics and Catholicism everywhere except London, where some Catholics could worship collectively, publicly, and theatrically both in Court chapels and in those maintained by foreign ambassadors. One commentator explained in 1629 that Papists "flocked openly in hundreds and thousands both to the queen's and the foreign ambassador's chapels." Henrietta Maria maintained two chapels in London, at St. James' and Somerset House—both designed by Inigo Jones—at which not only her own circle but other Londoners could openly attend mass. Both were deceptively plain on the outside, but sumptuous within. The newer and more elaborate one at Somerset House included a mechanism for elevating and illuminating the Eucharist; it was also decorated with religious images. So many attended that the chapels could not accommodate the crowds. Privileged Catholics

11   John Verney, *The Life and Death of that Matchless Mirrour of Magnanimity* (London, 1669), 16; John Dauncey, *The History of the Thrice Illustrious Princess Henrietta Maria de Bourbon, Queen of England* (London, 1660), sigs. C9–C9v; John Pory, letter to Rev. Joseph Mead (July 1, 1626), in Thomas Birch (ed.), *The Court and Times of Charles the First* (London, 1848), II, 119–123, 121. Pory's account is often used as a source for the most incriminating version of the story in circulation. Lefebvre, *Production of Space,* 68–168.

could not only attend mass at these chapels, they could also marry, have their babies christened, and be buried in one of their cemeteries.[12]

Precisely because these chapels provided a site for Catholic community, they also became a focus for Parliamentary and popular hostility toward the queen and extravagant, unapologetic court Catholicism. As a result, attending these chapels carried some risk. London authorities occasionally raided the embassy chapels, or arrested departing worshippers; crowds sometimes attacked those on their way in or out. The king and his council repeatedly prohibited English subjects from attending mass. A notorious incident in October 1623 reveals both the public profile of Catholic observance in London and the hostility that it provoked. As Walsham explains, "a large garret adjoining the French ambassador's residence, in which a congregation some three hundred strong had gathered to hear a celebrated Jesuit by the name of Robert Drury preach, suddenly and dramatically collapsed." Drury, his fellow priest, and more than ninety of those in attendance plunged to their deaths, and bystanders verbally and physically attacked survivors. Among its many meanings, this gathering revealed that

12 On how Catholics were driven inward in post-Reformation England, see Lowell Gallagher, *Medusa's Gaze: Casuistry and Conscience in the Renaissance* (Stanford, 1991), 63–93; Elizabeth Hanson, "Torture and Truth in Renaissance England," *Representations,* XXXIV (1991), 53–84; Katharine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago, 1995), chaps. 1 and 4. Several scholars have shown that Protestantism was, in its own way, invested in the collective, public performance of devotion. See Ramie Targoff, "The Performance of Prayer: Sincerity and Theatricality in Early Modern England," *Representations,* LX (1997), 49–69; Richard Rambuss, *Closet Devotions* (Durham, 1998), 103–136. On the special position of London, see Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill, 1983), 40–42, 56–57. On how the Reformation transformed perceptions of London, see Lawrence Manley, *Literature and Culture in Early Modern London* (Cambridge, 1995), 159–162, 229. On London more generally, with little attention to Catholics, see Ian Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge, 1991); A. L. Beier and Roger Finlay (eds.), *London, 1500–1700: The Making of the Metropolis* (London, 1986); Jeremy Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1987), 284; Steve Rappaport, *Worlds within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London* (Cambridge, 1989). Mr. Beaulieu writing to Sir Thomas Puckering, in Birch (ed.), *Court and Times,* II, 67. See also *ibid.,* II, 302–303. Cyprien of Gamache, "Memoirs of the Mission in England of the Capuchin Fathers (1630–1669)," in *ibid.,* II, 306–316; John Harris, Stephen Orgel, and Roy Strong, *The King's Arcadia: Inigo Jones and the Stuart Court* (London, 1973), 123–124, 138, 148–149, 152–154; Martin Havran, *The Catholics in Caroline England* (Stanford, 1962), 59; Bryan Little, *Catholic Churches Since 1623: A Study of Roman Catholic Churches in England and Wales from Penal Times to the Present Decade* (London, 1966), 21–23. On the theatrical machinery at the Somerset House chapel, see Cyprien of Gamache, "Memoirs," in Birch (ed.), *Court and Times,* II, 311–312. See also *ibid.,* II, 432–433; R. Malcolm Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England* (Philadelphia, 1987), 228.

Catholics opportunistically adapted secular spaces to their devotional needs. Although Catholics were widely accused of investing too much in stocks and stones, their congregation in places like this garret threatened that they would persist even if unchurched. A floating and adaptive Catholicism was far more tenacious and disturbing than one rooted in property that could be defeated by displacement.[13]

The changing fortunes of Somerset House suggest a desperate desire to locate Catholicism, to find a target for the free-floating anxieties that attached themselves to this amorphous group. When Henrietta Maria fled from England, her chapel at Somerset House was ransacked, and later turned into a meeting house for Huguenots. But when Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660, his mother resumed residence in Somerset House, restoring and enlarging her palace and its chapel. One verse even personified Somerset House, describing from its perspective the experiences of being "rude[ly] defaced" then restored. The House first describes what it was like to be ransacked, then abandoned: "And Me, when nought for Robbery was left, / They starv'd to death; the gasping walls were cleft, / The Pillars sunk, the Roofs above me wept." The House then celebrates its facelift upon Henrietta Maria's return: "See how my face is chang'd, and what I am / Since my true Mistress, and now Foundress, came." In 1667, Parliament yet again ordered that "on account of the flocking, contrary to law, of persons of the Romish religion, to the chapel of the Queen, at St. James's, of the Queen-Mother at Somerset House, and to the houses of several foreign ambassadors,—that none, excepting the familiers of their said persons, and their children shall attend the said masses, on pain of prosecution." This strategy does not seem to have been successful, since in 1670 Catherine of Braganza, who took up residence in Somerset House

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13   Concerning hostility to the queen, see "A Message sent from the Queenes Majesty to the House of Commons," in *A Coppy of 1. the Letter* (London, 1641), 11–12. On how fashionable attendance at these chapels became, and how the new Somerset House chapel boosted conversions, see Gordon Albion, *Charles I and the Court of Rome: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Diplomacy* (London, 1935), 104, 196–197, and chap. 8, "Converts at Court," *passim;* Clifton, "Fear of Popery," 152–53. On riots, see Clifton, "The Popular Fear of Catholics During the English Revolution," *Past & Present,* 52 (1971), 23–55; *idem,* "Fear of Popery," esp. 156. Walsham, "'The Fatall Vesper': Providentialism and Anti-Popery in Late Jacobean London," *Past & Present,* 144 (1994), 36, 55–56.

after Henrietta Maria died in 1669, employed 28 priests; in 1680, as many as 300 people, mostly women, attended her chapel.[14]

One account of the Great Fire of 1666, circulated around the time of the Popish Plot, claimed that Jesuits had set the fire, and that their agents had plundered the burning city, transporting the goods to two warehouses, one of which was at Somerset House. Popish Plot witnesses also linked the murder of Sir Edmund-bury Godfrey to Somerset House. Titus Oates claimed that he had overheard Catherine plotting to murder her husband, Charles II, there. In 1688, some thought that the fact that Mary Hobry, a French Catholic midwife, stowed a part of her murdered husband's body in a house of office in the Savoy (near Somerset House), cast suspicion on Catholics. In short, Somerset House and its surrounding neighborhood continued to be a site of female occupation, Catholic persistence, and controversy, at least until Catharine of Braganza finally returned to Portugal in 1696.[15]

That Somerset House could so endure struck some Catholic sympathizers as miraculous. A Spanish account of the fire, which Bell describes as "one of the most interesting of the foreign accounts of the Great Fire of London" but also as of "the smallest value" because "so distorted by religious and political prejudice" dwells on the significance of the fact that the Somerset House chapel was untouched.

> It was observed that, in view of the direction in which the flames were extending, the first building on which they would have had to fasten . . . was the Roman Catholic Church which was allowed for the use of the Queen-Mother and her family and for the celebration of the Holy Sacrament. At this very point the onrush of the flames was arrested: and it is clear and certain that in this way the Almighty (who is Lord of all the elements) wished to rebuke the

14   *The Speech of Her Majesty the Queen Mother's Palace, upon the Reparation and Enlargement of It, by Her Majesty* (London, 1665), 1–2. See also *Upon Her Majesties New Buildings at Somerset-House* (London, 1665). *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic* (1667), 457; John Miller, *Popery and Politics in England, 1660–1668* (Cambridge, 1973), 22.

15   William Bedloe, *A Narrative and Impartial Discovery of the Horrid Popish PLOT Carried on for the Burning and Destroying the CITIES of London and Westminster* (London, 1679), sig. Ev. *Reflections upon the Murder; The Tryals of Sir George Wakeman* [*et al*] *for High Treason for Conspiring the Death of the King* (London, 1679); *A Hellish Murder Committed by a French Midwife, on the Body of Her Husband, Jan. 27 1687/8* (London, 1688).

blindness of those heretics, and to show in what respect he held the sovereign Sacrament of the Altar. A hundred and forty churches of the heretics, including St Paul's, and extending over thirteen of the principal parishes, were destroyed by the flames; but at the sight of a Catholic temple the fire acknowledged itself to be conquered. . . . it was only at the sight of . . . one that contained within its walls memories and the worship of our holy faith, that the flaming tempest, which involved so many in disaster, allowed itself to be subdued.[16]

This account greatly exaggerates the fire's destruction. But it also reveals that social prestige and prominence, national power, God's love, and divine providence were all transacted through concrete cultural spaces. These spaces focused, but did not limit, the play of meanings. Somerset House was both a royal residence and a place where people could be imagined to have been murdered, body parts stashed, and loot squirreled away.

Although Catholic devotion had exceptional outlets in London, many scholars argue that for most Catholics, the household was the crucial site of both observance and resistance. The suppression of the mass (except in the royal or embassy chapels in London), and the hunting of priests as felons, meant that clandestine observance at home—often motivated and fostered by women—was the only option for most Catholics. When priests were not available, as was often the case, the devotional spaces in Catholic households might have been as solitary as those associated with Protestantism. For Rambuss, what distinguished a quintessentially Protestant—and elite and masculine—prayer closet from the confessional was the absence of a priest, but the priest was also often absent for Catholics in post-Reformation England. Since Catholic wives were under the spiritual guidance of their priests, rather than their husbands, the absence of priests may have fostered increased independence. When priests were available, they lived in particular houses, straddling positions of dependency and authority. Sometimes they justified their presence in households by working as servants, which further compromised their prestige and emphasized their subordination. Although persecution and an economy of scarcity seem to have increased the rever-

16   Walter George Bell, *The Great Fire of London in 1666* (London, 1920), 326. For a detailed discussion of the fortunes of Somerset House, see Dolan, *Whores of Babylon,* 150–156, 159, 216.

ence for them, they were ultimately at the mercy of the families, especially the women, who lodged and fed them and who risked death to hide them. Harboring priests was the one offense under the penal laws for which women were executed.[17]

Since monasteries and convents were widely denounced as hotbeds of vice, which could seep into and corrupt the surrounding community, priests, in their forced diaspora, threatened to bring sexual disorder with them into households. Anticlerical satires in the seventeenth century frequently joked that the pursuivants looking for fugitive priests should look in women's beds. Anti-Catholic discussions of women's relationships with their confessors suggested, or openly stated, that these relationships were sexual. Although some critics have claimed that prayer closets in Protestant households were segregated by gender, in the secret spaces of the Catholic house, men and women were "very domestically and privily conversant." Priests administered sacraments to women; women brought priests food in their hiding places and supposedly secreted them in their beds. The language used to attack the alliances between authoritative women and hunted priests is usually sexual, but these alliances must also have been intellectual, spiritual, reciprocal, and political. Engaging in various schemes to evade and break the law, these "couples" transgressed in ways that went far beyond fornication.[18]

17 Marie B. Rowlands, "Recusant Women, 1560–1640," in Prior (ed.), *Women in English Society,* 149–180; Rambuss, *Closet Devotions,* 109. On the social status of priests, see John Bossy, "The English Catholic Community, 1603–1625," in Alan G. R. Smith (ed.), *The Reign of James VI and I* (New York, 1973), 51; Haigh, "From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* XXXI (1981), 138–139, 145; Hibbard, "Early Stuart Catholicism," 2. An Act of 1585 made it high treason to be a priest and a felony to help or harbor one. Three women seem to have been executed for aiding and abetting, all during Elizabeth I's reign: Those executed include Clitherow (1586), discussed above, who was pressed to death for refusing to plead to the charge of harboring priests; Margaret Ward, who was charged with helping a priest to escape from prison (1588); and Anne Line (1601). Five were convicted but not executed, although several of them died in prison. The most thorough account appears in Patrick McGrath and Joy Rowe, "The Elizabethan Priests: Their Harbourers and Helpers," *Recusant History,* XIX (1989), 209–233. See also Marotti, "Alienating Catholics," 9, 17; Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "The English Martyrs, 1535–1680: A Statistical Review," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* XXII (1971), 194; Rowlands, "Recusant Women, 1560–1640," 158–159.

18 On the relationship between clerical sexual transgression and space, see Alan Stewart, *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England* (Princeton, 1997), 44–52. Examples of anticlerical satires are Thomas Overbury, *New and Choise Characters, of Severall Authors* (London, 1615), sig. M5v; Richard Sheldon, *A Survey of the Miracles of the Church of Rome* (London, 1616), sig. S3v; *A Letter from a Catholick Gentleman to His Popish Friends, Now to be Exil'd from London* (London, 1678), 4. On assumptions about the sexual nature of priests' rela-

In some recusant families, the master of the house might have been an exile from public life. Men who were convicted as recusants or who refused to swear the oaths of allegiance and supremacy might have been excluded from public office or burdened by fines and confiscations. Such a man could not plead in a court of law; transact legal business; serve as a juror, executor, or guardian; testify as a witness; bring an action to recover property owed him; come to court, except at the king's command; practice a profession; or hold an office. Although men who were convicted of recusancy might be stripped of most of the rights and privileges of their gender, as well as financially penalized, or even ruined, recusant wives had few rights or privileges to lose. Even when the laws extended men's accountability for their wives, they charged husbands a cut rate for their wives' recusancy—half what they had to pay for their own. Paradoxically, the laws exacerbated gender inversion by leaving married women relatively unmolested while threatening to reduce Catholic men's legal rights to those of the average *married* woman, at least at the level of prescription.[19]

Thus, the woman in charge of a recusant house might cohabit with variously displaced men. The gendered division of labor in the early modern period clearly governed relations to space, although not by means of a simple dichotomy of wives inside and husbands outside. Some families who wished to maintain a Catholic identity extended their division of labor to religious practice: The husband would conform outwardly, attending church to protect property and maintain access to office, while the wife would oversee Catholic devotions in the home and maintain the family's Catholic identity at lower cost to its resources. Not all "church papists," or those who engaged in occasional and strategic conformity, had consistently nonconforming wives. Yet occasional conformity was often represented as a spousal agreement to disagree. While historians dispute how long, or how widely, couples

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tionship to women, see *Mr. John Mush's Life of Margaret Clitherow,* in Morris (ed.), *Troubles,* III, 414, 427; Antonia Fraser, *Faith and Treason: The Story of the Gunpowder Plot* (New York, 1996), 238; Marotti, "Alienating Catholics," 17–24; Jo Ann Kay McNamara, *Sisters in Arms: Catholic Nuns Through Two Millennia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), 463. On the gendering of closets, see Stewart, *Close Readers,* 161–188; Rambuss, *Closet Devotions,* 103–136. Orlin challenges this claim in "Gertrude's Closet," *Shakespeare Jahrbuch,* CXXXIV (1998), 44–67. This paragraph summarizes the argument of Dolan, *Whores of Babylon,* 85–94.

19   J. A. Williams, "English Catholicism Under Charles II: The Legal Position," *Recusant History,* VII (1963), 130; Miller, *Popery and Politics,* 52, 55.

engaged in what Walsham calls "division of labour in the management of dissent," many concur that such disagreement could be a survival strategy in which couples colluded.[20]

Such an arrangement did not confine women to the "private." Viewing the household as a base of operations for Catholics offers yet another challenge to the notion that the private was a distinctly separate or apolitical realm in the early modern period. Although some places were undoubtedly less heavily trafficked, accessible, or visible than others, the scrutiny, description, and regulation of Catholic conduct in what we might consider the most private of spaces—the household, the bed, and the closet—reveal these spaces to have been sources of risk, targets of surveillance, and subjects of speculation. Feminists have long argued that the personal is political. To say so is to challenge attempts to set certain spaces, relations, or concerns apart as beneath comment, outside of history, beyond regulation. In the words of MacKinnon, for instance, "If the private also 'most affects society as a whole' [Herbert Marcuse's definition of what is "'political' in the widest sense"] the separation between public and private collapses as anything other than potent ideology." The Catholic household—a seminary, it was feared, of popery and treason—was saturated with political significance, embedded in public life, central to the cultural imagination, and uncontainable.[21]

Catholic women enacted the connection between domestic spaces and political culture in specific ways. Women's absence from Church of England services was a public act that could invite scrutiny and prosecution. What we know about the phenomenon of the "church papist" comes largely from the hostile perspective of those who observed or suspected the practice. Furthermore, what Catholic women did at home, whether or not they were

20 Walsham, *Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity, and Confessional Polemic in Early Modern England* (London, 1993), 81; Janet E. Halley, "Equivocation and the Legal Conflict Over Religious Identity in Early Modern England," *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities,* III (1991), 33–52. On the prevalence and persistence of such arrangements, see J. H. C. Aveling, *Handle and the Ax: The Catholic Recusants in England from Reformation to Emancipation* (London, 1976), 187; John Bossy, *English Catholic Community, 1570–1850* (New York, 1976), 155–159; Hibbard, "Early Stuart Catholicism," 16–19.

21 Catharine A. MacKinnon, "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: Toward Feminist Jurisprudence," in Katharine T. Bartlett and Rosanne Kennedy (eds.), *Feminist Legal Theory: Readings in Law and Gender* (Boulder, 1991), 194. See also *idem, Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (Cambridge, Mass. 1989); Susan Moller Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family* (New York, 1989); Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, 1988).

ever convicted as recusants, was often illegal, sometimes danger-
ous, and certainly political. Women ran, or at least sheltered,
schools. They catechized children, and seem to have played a
significant role in smuggling them abroad to seminaries and con-
vents and then sending funds to them. Moreover, their relations
with seminaries and convents abroad engaged them in interna-
tional networks that also connected them to women from other
classes; women with more money and contacts seem to have
helped those with fewer resources to finance their children's
Catholic educations abroad.[22]

Women operated secret presses. Dame Cecily Stonor allowed
Robert Persons to set up a secret press in Stonor Park, where Per-
sons printed his *Discoverie of I. Nichols Minister* and Edmund Cam-
pion's *Rationes Decem* in 1581. Shortly after these two printings,
the press was seized. Cellier ran her household as a base of political
operations. She lodged, and perhaps coached, the thirty Catholic
boys from St. Omers' seminary who served as witnesses on behalf
of six men accused by Oates in 1679; she sold her texts; she em-
ployed scribes and secretaries; and according to her accusers, she
plotted treason and hid incriminating documents in her flour tub.
Catholic women also wrote and translated texts and offered
financial support as silent backers, acknowledged patrons, and
consumers.[23]

Catholic women thus joined the significant number of
Protestant women who, according to McDowell, produced and
disseminated political and religio-political ideas in print, despite
contemporary claims that women had no place in civic life. Exam-
ining the role of these "women of grub street," McDowell shows
that "the public sphere in England was not always already mascu-
line or bourgeois." Eventually, when the public sphere was con-
structed in the eighteenth century as, in Klein's terms, "a polite

22 Jane Owen, *An Antidote against Purgatory* (London, 1634), encouraged the practice of aid-
ing those less fortunate.
23 A. C. F. Beales, *Education under Penalty: English Catholic Education from the Reformation to
the Fall of James II, 1547–1689* (London, 1963), 208–215; J. H. Pollen, "Blessed Edmund Cam-
pion's 'Decem Rationes,'" *Month,* 487 (January, 1905), 11–26; Leona Rostenberg, *The Minority
Press & the English Crown: A Study in Repression, 1558–1625* (Nieuwkoop, 1971), 22, 24, 26,
101–107, 116, 204. On Cellier, see Dolan *Whores of Babylon,* 157–210; Rachel Weil, "'If I did
say so, I lyed': Elizabeth Cellier and the Construction of Credibility in the Popish Plot Crisis,"
in Susan D. Amussen and Mark A. Kishlansky (eds.), *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in
Early Modern England: Essays Presented to David Underdown* (Manchester, 1995), 189–209.

zone," women, especially nonelite ones, were excluded from something they had help to create. Women such as Cellier also show that the public sphere of print was not "always already" Protestant. Catholics, including women, played a prominent role not only as a frequent topic of attack and dispute, but as writers, printers, publishers, and readers.[24]

Harboring priests was Catholic women's most overtly political and dangerous domestic act. Clitherow kept spaces inside and outside her house furnished for harboring priests and for saying mass: "She prepared two chambers, the one adjoining to her own house, whereunto she might resort at any time, without sight or knowledge of any neighbours. . . . The other was distant a little from her own house, secret and unknown to any but such as she knew to be faithful and discreet. . . . This place she prepared for more troublesome and dangerous times." Anxiety about discovery permeates Mush's *Life of Margaret Clitherow.* Mush depicted Clitherow as simultaneously high-minded and foolish because she catechized neighborhood children and chastised her servants, despite the fact that both practices exposed her to risk. Children and disgruntled servants were potential witnesses against her. Indeed, a child (not her own) ultimately revealed Clitherow's domestic mission.[25]

The sense of danger that hangs over Mush's account of Clitherow's household business reveals that Catholic homes were neither safe nor private. The "private" space of the Catholic house, with its pockets of even greater privacy—its curtained beds, priestholes, and portable altars—was open to scrutiny from within and without; its inhabitants, including women and especially priests, were liable to be hauled out and fined, imprisoned, even executed. Servants and neighbors stood to gain a percentage of recusansy fines if they informed. Although, according to Rowlands, the House of Commons was much more comfortable prosecuting Jesuits and seminary priests than sanctioning "an intrusion by the state into the family," in Willen's words, the reli-

24 Paula McDowell, *Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics, and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678–1730* (Oxford, 1998), 6, 9; Lawrence E. Klein, "Gender and the Public/Private Distinction in the Eighteenth-Century: Some Questions About Evidence and Analytic Procedure," *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* XXIX (1995), 97–109. See also Hilda L. Smith, *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition* (Cambridge, 1998).

25 *Mr. John Mush's Life of Margaret Clitherow,* in Morris (ed.), *Troubles, III,* 388.

gious practices of recusants "were perceived as legitimate matters of public concern for the body politic." With the household serving as mission, school, church, and sanctuary, base of political operations, and center of communications, as well as the site of various criminal activities—from misdemeanors through felonies—women's authority therein often had far-reaching consequences.[26]

The private lives of the Catholic queens consort had an extraordinary resonance. Through their intimate relationship with the Stuart kings, they had a powerful base from which to intervene in public, political life. This influence was usually construed in negative terms. Henrietta Maria was accused of delivering "curtain lectures" to Charles I, advising him to raise troops and grant toleration to Catholics in Ireland; Catherine of Braganza was suspected of plotting both Charles II's assassination and his religious conversion. The bed of the royal couple was always a focus of scrutiny and discussion, since one of the chief obligations of a sovereign—and the primary function of a consort—was to produce a legitimate heir. In their especially politically charged beds, the Stuart queens consort gave equal offense whether they bred Catholic heirs or no heirs at all. One telling scandal involved the charge that the son apparently born to James II and Mary of Modena, thus a Catholic heir to the throne, was a pretender smuggled into the birthing chamber in a warming pan. Weil argues that this controversy "opened up a space where women's presumably superior knowledge about pregnancy and childbirth gave them the authority to speak on a matter of political importance," but also galvanized anxieties about this very authority. In this royal birthing chamber, both the queen consort, and the considerably less elite women around her, engaged in a process both intimate and political.[27]

26 Margaret Pelling, "Skirting the City? Disease, Social Change and Divided Households in the Seventeenth-Century Metropolis," in Paul Griffiths and Mark S. R. Jenner (eds.), *Londinopolis: Essays in the Cultural and Social History of Early Modern London* (Manchester, 2000), 154–175, argues that disease was a factor in closing the household against servants and apprentices. For some families, however, recusansy laws might have provided another reason to impose physical barriers against servants. Rowlands, "Recusant Women, 1560–1640," 154; Willen, "Women in the Public Sphere in Early Modern England: The Case of the Urban Working Poor," in Dorothy O. Helly and Susan M. Reverby (eds.), *Gendered Domains: Rethinking Public and Private in Women's History* (Ithaca, 1992), 185.
27 Weil, "The Politics of Legitimacy: Women and the Warming-Pan Scandal," in Lois Schwoerer (ed.), *The Revolution of 1688–1689: Changing Perspectives* (Cambridge, 1992), 75.

Although the public sphere, as localized in institutions like the coffeehouse and in practices like printing and publishing, was not exclusively masculine from the start, it became conceptually so during the early modern period, distinct from the domestic sphere. According to Shoemaker, "the period from roughly 1650 to 1850 witnessed the emergence of a separate spheres regime of gender roles in which women were increasingly confined to the home." For Shoemaker, men "retained considerable emotional investment, authority, and physical presence in the home," even if women came to dominate the domestic or private sphere, and women had some presence outside the home. Yet Shoemaker also argues that "the concept of separate spheres may be useful if we define it as a loose division of responsibilities between men and women within both public life and private life, and we recognize that the impact of ideological prescriptions on day-to-day practice was limited: the spheres were never truly separate, certainly not physically." Carefully balancing continuities and changes, conceptual categories and lived experience, Shoemaker ultimately argues that the separateness of the spheres became "accentuated" more than it "emerged" in this period.[28]

Attempts to accentuate a gendered distinction between public and private were motivated, in part, by the specter of the Catholic queens consort. Yet, these efforts also repressed the most potent source of anxiety about these queens (and about Catholic women in general). The problem was not that they intruded on public life but that they showed just how rooted in, and indebted to, domestic, intimate, bodily life the public sphere was. Seventeenth-century discourses often organized their anxieties about Catholic women through particular places: the bed in which a recusant woman hid a priest from warrant officers, Henrietta Maria's marital bed, or Somerset House. Given the fear that, at home, women poisoned their husbands, murdered infants, said

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28   Steven Pincus, "'Coffee Politicians Does Create': Coffeehouses and Restoration Political Culture," *Journal of Modern History,* LXVII (1995), 815–816. Most arguments about the formation of a public sphere in England are informed by Jürgen Habermas (trans. Thomas Burger), *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991). Robert B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650–1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres* (New York, 1998), 10, 306, 318. See also Jodi Mikalachki, *The Legacy of Boadicea: Gender and Nation in Early Modern England* (London, 1998); Bernard Capp, "Separate Domains? Women and Authority in Early Modern England," in Paul Griffiths, Adam Fox, and Steve Hindle (eds.), *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* (New York, 1996), 117–145.

the rosary, gave birth to Catholic sons, or smuggled papist pre-tenders in warming pans, the restriction of women to the private sphere was not necessarily reassuring. Women or Catholics could not be confined anywhere—conceptually or practically—where they would not pose a problem.

The bed did not become a public space only when it belonged to a royal couple or was occupied by a Catholic woman. Hindle argues that both the childbed and the sickbed were sites of women's gossip, and that gossip codified in church court deposi-tions became as much a matter of public record as what was shouted in a "street squabble." Wilson and Cressy document the childbed as a site of social connection among women, and Gowing discusses the childbed—especially that of an unmarried woman—as the site of fierce conflicts among women. The death-bed, especially as later represented in hagiographic literature, was the platform on which even the most humble woman could dem-onstrate her good character and ensure its remembrance. Anna Trapnel made her bed into a space of public prophesy and perfor-mance, preaching to large crowds through open windows and doors.[29]

Trapnel's strategic use of her doors and windows is a re-minder that most domestic spaces are multipurpose and accessible, open to more highly trafficked and widely shared spaces. These domestic openings further reveal the complex relationship be-tween women and their households and the complications of any analogy between a woman's bodily and architectural enclosures. Were a woman to be truly sealed within her household, she would be unable to perform such functions as going to market to sell and buy, attending church, or engaging in the life of the community.

Gowing maintains that women used their doorways as a base from which to make moral judgments of one another. From the doorstep, "women reinforced their position in the households from which stemmed their standing in the community." On the

29   Hindle, "The Shaming of Margaret Knowsley: Gossip, Gender, and the Experience of Authority in Early Modern England," *Continuity and Change,* IX (1994), 407; Adrian Wilson, "The Ceremony of Childbirth and Its Interpretation," in Valerie Fildes (ed.), *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England* (London, 1990), 68–107; David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Stuart and Tudor England* (Oxford, 1997); Laura Gowing, "Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past & Present,* 156 (1997), 87–115; Katharine Gillespie, "Anna Trapnel's Window on the Word: The Domestic Sphere of Public Dissent in Seventeenth-Century Nonconformity," *Bunyan Studies,* VII (1997), 49–72.

threshold, they were both "at home" and engaged with the world outside the home, able to observe and comment. "If the street is so dangerous a place for women's virtue, and the walls of the home such a safeguard of chastity, the doorstep of the house makes a particularly good position from which to call another woman whore." Orlin adds that, if women were authorized and empowered on the doorstep, they were more vulnerable at their windows. Gillespie, too, points to the early modern recognition of the window as a "structural flaw" in women's domestic enclosure.[30]

In a culture in which a space as apparently private as the bed could be a gathering place and the source of public speech, and in which many women experienced the household as a node in the network of social relations rather than as a wholly separate sphere, Catholic women's households were neither more secluded nor more open than other women's. Like religious dissenters whose preaching, printing, or participation in conventicles might provoke prosecution or prohibition, Catholic women were driven into clandestinity by legal prohibitions. Some of the restrictions under which they labored—such as laws that made priests and those who harbored them felons—were particular to them. But Catholic women were hardly alone in their relation to the household as a space of empowerment as well as confinement. According to Mendelson and Crawford, "The lower the social level, the more common it was for women to control their own cultural, physical, and ritual space, and to share, dispute, or invade space which was under the nominal control of men." The public spaces lost through the Reformation intensified this situation for Catholic women by endowing their households with even more functions.[31]

Notwithstanding this view of the household as a threshold onto other spaces, a gathering space, a publishing house, or a pulpit, the household might also be construed as a state of mind, a re-

30 Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford, 1996), 98; Orlin, "Women on the Threshold," *Shakespeare Studies,* XXV (1997), 50–58; Gillespie, "Anna Trapnel's Window," 52.

31 Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1998), 210–211. Mendelson and Crawford discuss the case of Anne Dormer who, when fighting with her husband, retreated into her closet as a place where she could be alone, safe from a husband who was constantly home (139). Anne Clifford also retreated into smaller, confined spaces, when she was not being confined in them by her husband. On the multiple functions and permeable boundaries of the household, see also Orlin, *Private Matters and Public Culture in Post-Reformation England* (Ithaca, 1994).

lationship to the world that could be internalized and transported. Witness the familiar image of the good housewife as a snail or tortoise, who always carried her house with her. The contemporary prescription that women should always bear themselves as if they were at home might have been enabling as well as constraining. Under this "cover," women could invoke the protections of privacy even in public to create space for thoughts and justifications for speech. Orlin and Gillespie suggest that the private realm was not just a place to be inhabited but a "process" or a "practice" that one might engage in anywhere.[32]

This notion is especially compelling for Catholics and other recusants. Although Catholicism was often castigated for its emphasis on works and rituals, it always fostered inwardness; Catholic devotion was driven further inward after the Reformation. Many scholars have noted that the more Catholics were associated with false display, the more was their interiority obsessively discussed, precisely because it was considered inscrutable. Penal laws may have focused on regulating conduct and observance, but concern persisted about that part of religious identity that was not amenable to observation and control. Equivocation, or the practice of mental reservation, whereby Catholics sought to avoid conviction by speaking only half-truths, provoked great anxiety. The possibility that priests had formal instructions not to tell the whole truth, even when giving sworn testimony, suggested that Catholics, in general, were not to be trusted.[33]

Although priests were at particular risk, this imperative to retreat inward, to conceal beliefs and practices, and to disconnect conscience from conduct also had a special relevance to women, for whom repression had long been extolled as a virtue. As presented in *The Life of the Blessed Virgin, Sainct Catharine of Siena*—

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32 On the image of the housewife as a snail, see, for example, Daniel Rogers, *Matrimoniall Honour: or, The mutuall crowne and comfort of godly, loyall, and chaste Marriage* (London, 1650): "Home hath her heart: She hath worke enough within doores, and dwells most within her selfe. She like the snaile, carrieth her house alway upon her backe. She builds it with her hands, and beares it up by her shoulders; never going abroad, but then when it were an offence to keepe at home" (sig.Nn3v). Orlin, "Three Ways to Be Invisible," 191, makes the point about women's comportment with regard to needlepoint. See also Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge, 2000), 134. Gillespie, "Anna Trapnel's Window," 59, discusses women's comportment and prophecy.
33 On equivocation, see Gallagher, *Medusa's Gaze;* Halley, "Equivocation and the Legal Conflict Over Religious Identity"; Maus, *Inwardness and Theater.*

one of many seventeenth-century lives of women saints written in, or translated into, English, and dedicated to English Catholic women—Catherine of Sienna offers inspiration tailor-made for English readers. Neither married nor in holy orders, Catherine lived with her parents, achieving extraordinary bodily and spiritual discipline "not in a wood, cave, or solitarie place, but in a citie, not in a convent of Nonnes, but in her fathers howse." When Catharine refused to marry, her parents punished her by forbidding "that she should have . . . anie secret chamber in the howse to resort unto." Instead, she learned to find special meaning in the idea that the kingdom of God was within her: Since "they had debarred her of that commoditie, which she was wonte to have, of a secret place to withdrawe her selfe unto, for praier and meditation," . . . God "taught her by the inward instincte of his holie spirite, how she should buyld a secret chamber, or oratorie in her owne hart, where she might dwell delitefully with her sweet spowse so long as she listed, and // never be plucked out, whatsoever befell."[34]

Exemplary lives such as Catherine's downplayed martyrdom to emphasize the importance of the daily struggles through which most Catholic women preserved and propagated the faith. These texts mapped out the conscience as a terrain beyond surveillance and regulation, transcending space. Catherine offered a model to the women who could not enter a convent and could rarely be alone. Dorothy Lawson's confessor described her as drawing directly on the model that she learned from the life of St. Catherine: "Amidst the distractions of the court shee was retired like a St. Catherine, within the closett of her heart att home: when she was abroad never less in company than when in company, nor alone than [when?] alone." For Lawson, as for the women that Orlin and Gillespie discuss, privacy was an attitude, a mental exercise, or a habit rather than a closed, unshared space.[35]

Some Catholics even managed to turn imprisonment to their own advantage. Clitherow found in prison "good time and opportunity to attend only to serve God, and the gathering of spiritual riches; other Catholics used imprisonment to make con-

34 Caterinus Senensis (trans. John Fen), *The Life of the Blessed Virgin, Sainct Catharine of Siena* (Dovai, 1609), sigs. D4v–D5, C7, C7v–C8.
35 William Palmes, *The Life of Mrs. Dorothy Lawson of St. Antony's, near Newcastle-on-Tyne* (London, 1855), 8.

nections and build community. Some anti-Catholic polemicists suspected that Catholics heard mass in prisons. Prynne, for instance, claimed that when authorities searched the chamber of Peter Milford, a priest imprisoned at Newgate, they "found about Masse time an Alter ready furnished in his Chamber, foure severall suites of Massing Vestments, with sundry Crucifixes, *Agnus Deies,* Reliques, Masse-bookes, and other such Romish trinkets." Cellier was funded by such privileged Catholics as the Countess of Powys to bring aid to Catholic prisoners. Cellier also brought letters and news into and out of the prison. She also took from prison the charge that Catholic prisoners were being tortured; her charge led to a conviction for libel. The prison, even more than the household, was a space of confinement that served simultaneously as the gathering space through which a community was sustained. Penal laws drove Catholics into hiding places and sometimes into prison, but it could not stop Catholics from using these spaces to create their own counter-public sphere. Catholics, like the congregationalists who eschewed churches to gather in homes, showed how uncontrollable and open to appropriation social spaces might be.[36]

Catholics certainly "lost" control over many social and devotional spaces in the gradual course of the Reformation and in the securing of a Protestant succession. Many of those material and discursive spaces that Catholics continued to occupy have been "lost" to progress, to fire and decay, and to time. Yet, although the presence of Catholics on the social landscape became more subtle, Catholics never disappeared. The unchurching or dislocation of Catholicism paradoxically promoted its survival by forcing Catholics into a more tactical and fluid relation to space and a more adaptive, transportable, clandestine, devotional practice. The incessant vituperations of Catholicism that animated and occupied print culture attest to the fact that Catholics persisted despite their displacements. They were always hiding in plain sight.

The Reformation, at least in England, was, among other things, a contest over space, especially space as defined in

36   *Mr. John Mush's Life of Margaret Clitherow,* in Morris (ed.), *Troubles, III,* 390, 410; William Prynne, *The Popish Royall Favourite: Or, A Full Discovery of His Majesties Extraordinary Favours to, and Protections of notorious Papists, Priests, Jesuits* (London, 1643), sig. E.

Lefebvre's supple and useful terms. According to Lefebvre, social space emerges and persists in the intersection between the material and the discursive, the physical and the ideological, and the experienced and the imagined. The controversies surrounding Catholicism in post–Reformation London provide a unique opportunity to contemplate these complex connections. The Reformation recreated the sites at which Catholicism became possible, driving Catholics from some sites and into others. In its attempt to remove Catholicism from its position of political and social dominance, it remade the faith as the central bogey of fear and fantasy. The restriction of Catholic access to public worship and public office is a legislative corrollary to Lefebvre's theoretical claim that space creates possibilities for action: Foreclosing access to certain spaces controls the actions produced by those spaces. Seizing churches prevented Catholic liturgy and sacraments; "dissolving" monasteries and convents curtailed clerical vocations. Yet Catholics' responses to these restrictions substantiate another of Lefebvre's insights—that social actors interact with, and produce, space unpredictably. Catholics created opportunities for community and resistance at the very spaces to which they were consigned: households, prisons, and closets of the heart. Examining these contests over space shows not only how productive Lefebvre's categories are; it also shows how much can be gained by introducing a concern that neither he nor any of the other contributors to this volume engages, gender. Gender connected the material and discursive, the physical and the ideological, the experienced and the imagined in these particular contests about space.[37]

37   Lefebvre, *Production of Space,* 352–400.