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## OPPOSITION TO ANTI-POPERY IN RESTORATION ENGLAND\*

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What caused the political crises of the 1670s and 1680s in England? In the accounts of many historians, these crises were caused ultimately by resurgent Counter-Reformation Catholicism, as embodied in the political and military agendas of Louis XIV, Charles II and James II. Repeated acts of aggression by Catholic or crypto-Catholic rulers, from the Third Anglo-Dutch War to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes to the prosecution of the seven bishops, caused English Protestants to fear that their embattled faith was about to be overwhelmed. Along with popery came arbitrary government, as the English royal brothers sought to expand their powers at the expense of parliament. The result was a series of political crises, from the parliamentary outcry over Charles II's Declaration of Indulgence, to the popish plot and exclusion crisis, to the Revolution of

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1688-9. This problem of popery was resolved only when resurgent Catholicism was rebuffed, a Protestant prince and princess were installed on the thrones of England and Scotland, and Protestant England went to war with Catholic France.

From another perspective, the crises of the 1670s and 1680s were caused not by popery, but by anti-popery. Repeated acts of aggression by anti-popish politicians fed English fears that their embattled faith was about to be overwhelmed. The royal brothers, Charles and James, reacted to ascendant anti-popery with alarm, seeking to repel anti-popish ideas and politicians. In so doing they chose to exercise their prerogative powers in ways that could easily be seen as arbitrary. The prolonged crisis could be resolved only if resurgent anti-popery was rebuffed, anti-popish politicians were discredited, and Catholics were no longer seen as a threat to the survival of protestantism in England. The problem to be solved, in this view, was one of English perceptions rather than English realities.

The first account of the 1670s and 1680s is associated especially with the work of Jonathan Scott, who has provided several authoritative investigations of the period.<sup>1</sup> The second account has not been described as extensively in modern scholarship, but it is based on claims that were often advanced at the time. Many people in later Restoration England saw anti-popery, rather than popery, as the leading threat to political stability. The solution to this problem, in their view, was something that we might call *anti-anti-popery*, a critique of anti-popery that was designed to lay the troubles of the Restoration

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<sup>1</sup> See especially Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge, 2000), 24, 29-30, 56-7, 166-73, 208-11, 412-13, 428-31, 455; idem, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677-1683* (Cambridge, 1991), 3, 7-10, 16-17, 26-32, 126; idem, "England's Troubles: Exhuming the Popish Plot," in Tim Harris, Paul Seaward and Mark Goldie, eds., *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England* (Oxford, 1990), 108-118.

to rest by countering their root cause.

Historians, not least Jonathan Scott, have recognized that different diagnoses of the ills of England drove different phases of the crisis of the 1670s and 1680s. Thus the fears of popery and arbitrary government of the late 1670s were replaced by the fears of popular disorder that drove the so-called ‘Tory Reaction’ of the early 1680s. The ‘Tory Reaction’ was then followed by rising popular fears of popery and arbitrary government under James II in the later 1680s, which in turn drove the Revolution of 1688-9. Despite the broad recognition of these different phases in the troubled history of later Stuart England, historians have tended to see both sides in the national debate, the whig and the tory parties, as bound together by a shared anti-popery. This is what enabled the two sides to come together to repel James II in 1688. Most historians of later Stuart religion and politics have focused on tory adaptation to anti-popery rather than any outright opposition to anti-popery. Tory polemicists may have opposed some of the anti-popish narratives advanced by whigs, but they developed their own brand of anti-popery to supplant it, historians have observed. Tim Harris described this phenomenon as “the tory exploitation of fears of tyranny and popery”. Both Scott and Harris have investigated the ways in which tories and loyalists turned anti-popery against whigs and nonconformists by accusing them of being in league with papists.<sup>2</sup>

The focus of historians on whig and tory anti-popery has tended to obscure the

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<sup>2</sup> Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II: Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration until the Exclusion Crisis* (Cambridge, 1987), 129-44 (quote at p. 131); Harris, *Politics under the Later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society, 1660-1715* (London, 1993), 99-101, 108, 122; Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms, 1660-1685* (London, 2005), 245-50; Jonathan Scott, *Sidney and the Restoration Crisis*, 46-9; Scott, *England's Troubles*, 427-8, 435-7, 441-2, 445-6; see also John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (New Haven, 1991), 78.

expression of opinions critical of anti-popery by member of both parties.<sup>3</sup> Charting these critiques of anti-popery from the beginning of the 1670s the end of the 1680s enables us to see how popular and widespread the critiques were and how much influence they had at the time, first within the emergent tory party and later in an offshoot of the whig party. Opposition to anti-popery was in many ways less sensational than anti-popery itself; it did not result in any revolutions, and it manifested itself in rhetoric that was often less bellicose. It is easily dismissed as a kind of crypto-Catholicism; although it is important to note that anti-anti-popery was not at all the same thing as pro-popery. It is difficult to see it as a coherent ideology, in part because many of the writers who deployed anti-anti-popish rhetoric also deployed anti-popish rhetoric at other points in their careers. Its existence, however attenuated and provisional it may have been, helps to illuminate the nature of anti-popery itself. If anti-popery could be explicitly rejected and opposed, then it was not a fixed attribute that invariably dictated behavior; rather, it seems to have been a polemical strategy that was used by certain English Protestants in pursuit of a given set of ends. As a polemical strategy, it could be both adopted and discarded.

Opposition to anti-popery was not merely opposition to anti-Catholicism. Many Protestant thinkers and writers had long been willing to concede the humanity and integrity of certain Catholics, while condemning the pope and the political influence of ultramontane Catholics. Opponents of anti-popery developed a broader critique of both anti-Catholicism and anti-popery. Like many English Protestants, they were willing to

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<sup>3</sup> On the supposed universal appeal of anti-popery among seventeenth-century English Protestants, see Scott, *England's Troubles*, 29, 56, 184; J. R. Jones, "James II's Whig Collaborators," *Historical Journal*, 3 (1960), 73; idem, "The Road to 1688," *Groniek*, 101 (1988), 58; Robert Beddard, "Anti-Popery and the London Mob, 1688," *History Today*, July 1988, 36.

see the good in many Catholics. They went further, however, in critiquing the widely-expressed anxieties about the political influence of “popery”. The manipulation of these anxieties, they contended, could lead to civil war, if anti-popish rhetoric was not countered by collective action. Writers and thinkers who sought to counter anti-popery were not themselves pro-popish; indeed, it is unlikely that anyone would defend “popery”, given that the term was so laden with opprobrium. Rather, these writers criticized the divisive, destabilizing effects of anti-popery.

As Anthony Milton has shown, critiques of anti-popery reached a high-water mark in the late 1620s and 1630s, when Laudians opposed the vehement anti-popery of the Puritans.<sup>4</sup> The reappearance of such critiques in the later Stuart period has not been analyzed as extensively, despite ample evidence from contemporary sources that these critiques were even more urgently expressed after the Civil Wars than before. Historians have occasionally investigated tory critiques of particular anti-popish narratives at the time of the popish plot crisis in the late 1670s, but no historian has investigated the rise of critiques of anti-popery among certain whigs in the late 1680s.<sup>5</sup> Later Stuart critiques of

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<sup>4</sup> 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* (Basingstoke, 1999), 86-91, 110; idem, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge, 1995), 55, 60-72, 77-83, 529-530; idem, *Laudian and Royalist Polemic in Seventeenth-Century England: The Career and Writings of Peter Heylyn* (Manchester, 2007), 68, 89-90; see also Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: The Episcopate of James I* (Oxford, 1990), 269-70.

<sup>5</sup> For discussions of tory critiques of particular anti-popish narratives, see Mark Knights, “The Tory Interpretation of History in the Rage of Parties,” *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 68 (2005), 360-2; Mark Goldie, “Roger L’Estrange’s *Observer* and the Exorcism of the Plot,” in Anne Duncan-Page and Beth Lynch, eds., *Roger L’Estrange and the Making of Restoration Culture* (Aldershot, 2008), 76-8, 87. For a discussion of the sympathies held by some Anglican tories toward Catholicism in the Restoration

anti-popery were invested with greater power than the earlier examples because anti-popery had proved to be more disruptive than the Laudians could ever have imagined. It was possible for authors to attribute the chaos of the 1640s to the disruptive power of anti-popery, and many chose to do so.

Anti-popery was a polemical weapon. It had been developed by the Puritans and honed by the whigs; the opponents of these groups, whether Laudians or tories, had to neutralize this weapon by either opposing it or adapting it for their own ends. At the time of the popish plot and later during the unsettled reign of James II, tory writers often accused their whig opponents of using anti-popery to promote themselves, of being seditious under the guise of being zealous, and of inventing popish plots to serve the interests of their faction. Whig authors often accused their opponents of failing to appreciate the popish threat and thereby falling in league with that threat.

In the 1670s, Andrew Marvell's well-known *Account of the growth of popery and arbitrary government* was countered by Sir Roger L'Estrange's debunking *Account of the growth of knavery under the pretended fears of arbitrary government and popery*.<sup>6</sup> The former was a classic anti-popish tract; the latter was a key anti-anti-popish tract. Only the first is cited regularly by historians, while the counter-argument remains little known.<sup>7</sup>

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period, see Geoff Baker, "William Blundell and Late-Seventeenth-Century English Catholicism," *Northwestern History*, 45 (2008), 268-70.

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Marvell, *An account of the growth of popery and arbitrary government in England* (Amsterdam, 1677, Wing M860); Sir Roger L'Estrange, *An account of the growth of knavery under the pretended fears of arbitrary government and popery* (London, 1678, Wing L1193).

<sup>7</sup> Even in a work as comprehensive as Tim Harris's *London Crowds*, Marvell's work appears in the bibliography while L'Estrange's does not. See also the bibliographies of Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles*; Spurr, *Restoration Church*; John Miller, *Popery and Politics in England, 1660-1688* (Cambridge, 1973); and Gary S. De Krey, *London and the Restoration, 1659-1683* (Cambridge, 2005). An exception to this is Mark Knights,

Both tracts gained their potency from their usefulness in framing definitions of the collective self. As Peter Lake has observed, for anti-popish writers, “popery worked as a unifying ‘other’, an inherently un-English or alien force”.<sup>8</sup> For writers who opposed anti-popery, it was anti-popery itself that became a defining characteristic of the unifying “other”. After the furor over the so-called “popish plot” began, L’Estrange described “a sort of men, that under the Countenance of This Plot advance another of their own, and ‘tis but the Rubbing of a Libel with a little Anti-Popery, to give it the Popular smack”. By warning his readers against a “sort of men” who used “Anti-Popery” as camouflage for libeling and plotting, L’Estrange was describing his opponents as a rebellious faction against which his loyalist readers ought to define themselves.<sup>9</sup> As he had mused in a letter two years earlier, “perhaps the danger of Popery it selfe is not much greater, then the danger of possessing the people w[i]th an apprehension that they are in danger of it”.<sup>10</sup>

And yet L’Estrange was not averse to using the language of anti-popery himself, when it suited his cause.<sup>11</sup> During the heated political debates regarding the popish plot, the same controversialists could be found deploying the rhetoric of anti-popery and anti-anti-popery at different moments. In the conceptual toolkits of these authors, the two

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who cited L’Estrange’s tract in his *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678-81* (Cambridge, 1994), 17n, and in his “Tory Interpretation of History,” 360.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Lake, “Anti-Popery: The Structure of a Prejudice,” in Richard Cust and Ann Hughes, eds., *Conflict in Early Stuart England* (Harlow, 1989), 94.

<sup>9</sup> Sir Roger L’Estrange, *The case put, concerning the succession of his Royal Highness the Duke of York* (London, 1679, Wing L1206), 37; see also the critiques of anti-popery in Peter Heylyn, *Cyprianus Anglicus* (London, 1668, Wing H1699), 93, 129, 178.

<sup>10</sup> Beinecke Library, Osborn MS File 8998, Sir Roger L’Estrange to ?, 23 Aug. 1677.

<sup>11</sup> Sir Roger L’Estrange, *Compendious history of the most remarkable passages of the last fourteen years* (London, 1680, Wing L1228).

devices lay side by side. Anti-anti-popery was as much the companion of anti-popery as it was its opposite. It was just as variable as anti-popery, and in the hands of different thinkers it could be used in different ways.

Some of this variability can be explained by the shifting winds of political patronage. The development of opposition to anti-popery in England was spurred by James Stuart, first as duke of York and later as King James II, who took the position articulated at times by Roger L'Estrange, that the destabilizing populism of anti-popery was at the root of England's troubles. He implored his friends not to focus on "the imaginary dangers of Popery", noting that the number of Catholics in England was too small to pose any real threat to the Church of England. After his accession he instituted several measures to limit the scope of anti-popish rhetoric. In March 1686 he issued directions to the preachers of the Church of England commanding them to steer clear of controversial matters, including critiques of popery.<sup>12</sup> Beginning in 1685, and continuing through his reign, he issued dispensations from the Test Acts enabling Catholics to take offices in the army and at court. James showed no desire to bow to anti-popery; instead, he was determined to attack anti-popery head on. He has been criticized by historians for taking these provocative measures, but these more skeptical assessments of the king's policies have tended to assume that his measures had little popular support because of the overwhelming popularity of anti-popery. If there was in fact a popular critique of anti-popery in Restoration England, then the king's reign looks quite different in retrospect. The crisis that preceded the Revolution of 1688-9, in this reading, was driven not only by

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<sup>12</sup> J. S. Clarke, ed., *The Life of James the Second* (2 vols, London, 1816), 1:656; James II, *To the most reverend fathers in God* (London, 1685/6, Wing D1529A), 4; see also Andrew Clark, ed., *The Life and Times of Anthony Wood* (5 vols, Oxford, 1891-1900), 3:239.



a conflict between “popery” and anti-popery, but also by a conflict between anti-popery and anti-anti-popery, as rival interpretations of the nature of England’s troubles clashed more furiously than ever before.<sup>13</sup>

## I

James II’s accession in February 1685 brought with it a spate of patriotic unity, but it was a spurious unity overlying deep divisions. In the early days of the new reign, most Englishmen and women celebrated the accession, while the discontented kept close counsel. The bishop of Carlisle urged the Westmorland gentleman Sir Daniel Fleming to seek election to parliament, exhorting him privately that “all true sons of the Church of England were bound in Conscience to help now to defend her, when she was very likely to be in great danger”. Brian Fairfax, the equerry to the king, resigned his position, surmising that he had been treated coldly upon the accession because he was a “free speaker in all company against idolatrous Popery”. But Fairfax’s resignation was unusual, and most of the deceased king’s former officers remained in service. The precarious unity of the early months of the reign continued to hold during Monmouth’s Rebellion, a rising that was swiftly defeated. It was strained by a rancorous session of parliament in the autumn when a majority in the Commons voiced opposition to the king’s employment of Catholic officers in the army raised to defeat the rebels.<sup>14</sup> When

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<sup>13</sup> For my critique of the interpretation of Steve Pincus, who provocatively argued in his *1688: The First Modern Revolution* that religiously-based ideologies such as anti-popery were not a significant cause of the Glorious Revolution, see my forthcoming review article, “Pantomime History,” in *Parliamentary History*, vol. 30, no. 2 (June 2011).

<sup>14</sup> Scott Sowerby, “Tories in the Whig Corner: Daniel Fleming’s Journal of the 1685 Parliament”, *Parliamentary History*, vol. 24 (2005), 167-71, 175; Clements R. Markham, *Life of Robert Fairfax of Steeton* (London, 1885), 146.

the king responded by promoting more Catholics at court and in the armed forces, the kingdom divided as different camps responded to the king's policies in different ways. Some prominent Anglicans and nonconformists expressed their discontent and eventually joined the Glorious Revolution. Others were inclined to support the royal policies, especially when James announced his plan to secure religious toleration for Protestant nonconformists as well as for Catholics.<sup>15</sup>

These differing responses fractured many of the religious and political groups in England, revealing pre-existing fissures within them. Anglicans, who made up at least ninety percent of the English population, were not united in their responses to James II's policies. Many took the position articulated by Sir Willoughby Aston in 1685: "I had often sayd [sic] that I feared either Popery would bring in Presbytery, or Presbytery, would bring in Popery... and that the Church of England was the only bulwark against both". Anglicans like Sir Willoughby saw separate threats coming from popery, by which he meant Catholicism, and presbytery, by which he meant Presbyterians or nonconformists.<sup>16</sup> Other Anglicans discounted the popish threat while highlighting the dissenting, or "fanatic", threat. As the bishop of Peterborough declared to Roger Morrice in 1687, "there is no danger at all of Popery, but only of the Fanaticks and therefore it concernes them [the Anglicans] to make themselves as strong as they can against

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<sup>15</sup> Mark Goldie, "John Locke's Circle and James II," *Historical Journal*, 35 (1992), 558-9; Gary S. De Krey, "Reformation and 'arbitrary government': London dissenters and James II's polity of toleration, 1687-1688," in Jason McElligott, ed., *Fear, Exclusion and Revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s* (Aldershot, 2006), 17, 29-30.

<sup>16</sup> Liverpool Record Office, 920 MD 173, Diary of Sir Willoughby Aston, entry for 31 Mar. 1685. See also Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, 314-16, 345, 364; Spurr, *Restoration Church*, 267-8.

them”.<sup>17</sup> A third group saw popery as the real danger and attacks on dissenting groups as a divisive distraction. The House of Commons took this position in 1681, resolving that “the Prosecution of Protestant Dissenters upon the Penal Laws is at this Time grievous to the Subject, a Weakening of the Protestant Interest, an Encouragement to Popery”.<sup>18</sup>

The Anglicans who felt most threatened by Catholicism behaved differently under James II than did those who felt most threatened by Protestant nonconformity. Those in the latter camp tended to see anti-popery as a tool of the refractory nonconformists, and the use of this tool often suggested to them an unwillingness to trust a Catholic king.<sup>19</sup> Although they might occasionally make anti-popish comments, this was not their more common rhetorical stance during the reign of James II. The so-called “latitudinarian” ministers, by contrast, led an onslaught on “popery” in their sermons and pamphlets in the early years of James II’s reign. Although they had criticized dissenters during the reign of Charles II, they drew back from such criticisms after 1685, when the danger from resurgent Catholicism seemed more extreme.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *The Entering Book of Roger Morrice*, ed. Mark Goldie, John Spurr, Tim Harris, Stephen Taylor, Mark Knights and Jason McElligott (7 vols., Woodbridge, 2007-9), 4:9.

<sup>18</sup> *Journals of the House of Commons*, 9:704, entry for 10 Jan. 1680/1; see also Harris, *London Crowds*, 122-3.

<sup>19</sup> See, for instance, Robert Grove, *Seasonable Advice to the Citizens, Burgesses, and Free-holders of England* (London, 1685, Wing G2158), 22-4; William Durrant Cooper, *Trelawny Papers* (London, 1853), 14-15, which reprints a letter of Jonathan Trelawny, bishop of Bristol, to the earl of Sunderland, dated 21 May 1686. For the hostility of Grove to many dissenters, see his *Short Defence of the Church and Clergy of England* (London, 1681, Wing G2160), 74-6; for Trelawny’s hostility to dissent, see his charge to the clergy of the diocese of Winchester in 1708, printed in *Sermon by the Rt. Rev. Sir Jonathan Trelawny, Bishop of Winchester* (London, 1876), 52-4.

<sup>20</sup> Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet’s History of his Own Time*, 2nd ed. (6 vols., Oxford, 1833), 1:342-3, 3:104-6; E. S. de Beer, ed., *The Diary of John Evelyn* (6 vols., Oxford, 1955), 4:504, 516, 520, 538-9; Simon Patrick, *A Sermon Preached on Saint Mark’s Day* (London, 1686, Wing P844), 15-17, 26-7; Edward Stillingfleet, *The Doctrines and*

The dissenters themselves were also divided, both confessionally and in their modes of self-definition. Many dissenters were both anti-popish and anti-clerical, attacking the Church of England for its vestiges of “popish” rituals. This form of anti-popery was common among Presbyterians and some Congregationalists, the heirs to the Puritan tradition in Restoration England.<sup>21</sup> Other dissenters were anti-clerical to such a degree that they saw Anglican persecution as the main problem in England, and, when Catholics disavowed persecution, they were accepted as allies. Quakers, for instance, opposed Catholicism when it countenanced persecution, but their writings lacked the full panoply of anti-Catholic rhetoric. The main distinction drawn in Quaker writings was not between Protestants and Catholics, but between the “persecutors” and those who “had a tenderness”. Quakers jealously policed their use of language to keep out alternative modes of dividing the world, going so far as to prohibit the words “whig” and “tory” in conversation. When James worked to free Quakers from prison, first as duke of York and later as king, he attracted the friendship of leading Quakers such as William Penn, George Whitehead and Robert Barclay, who praised him for his willingness to support freedom of conscience.<sup>22</sup> Some dissenters developed a critique of anti-popery after the

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*Practices of the Church of Rome Truly Represented* (London, 1686), 96, 102, 106, 145-161; Edward Gee, *The Catalogue of all the Discourses Published Against Popery* (London, 1689), 2-3, 5-8, 10-12, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26-7, 30-31; W. M. Spellman, *The Latitudinarians and the Church of England, 1660-1700* (Athens, Ga., 1993), 49-50; John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (Harlow, 2000), 28-9, 37-8, 209.

<sup>21</sup> Mark Goldie, *Roger Morrice and the Puritan Whigs* (Woodbridge, 2007), 148-50; De Krey, *London and the Restoration*, 311-12.

<sup>22</sup> *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. Norman Penney (2 vols., Cambridge, 1911), 2:1-2; Library of the Society of Friends, London, Friends MSS, Book of Cases I, 98; William Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (London, 1919), 179; Mary Maples Dunn and Richard Dunn, eds., *Papers of William Penn* (5 vols., Philadelphia, 1981-1987), 1:367-8, Robert Barclay to William Penn, 20 July 1676; George Whitehead, *Christian*

king issued his *Declaration for liberty of conscience* in 1687. By opposing anti-popery, they sought to defend the king's campaign for toleration against the anti-popish attacks that threatened to derail it.

These fractures among English Protestants, combined with easy access to the printing press, resulted in a cacophony of polemics. Just as anti-popery came in different guises, articulated variously as an attack on the political power of Catholics, an attack on surviving elements of Catholicism in the Anglican liturgy, or an attack on persecution, so too opposition to anti-popery came in different forms. Opposition to anti-popery could be used by Anglicans as a means of criticizing the influence of "factious" dissenters, or by dissenters as a means of forming an alliance with a Catholic king, or by Catholics as a means of defending their own group.<sup>23</sup> Each form of opposition to anti-popery envisioned an "other" against which it defined itself, whether that "other" was factious dissenters who were attempting to revive the "spirit of 1641," or Anglican "persecutors," or a more vaguely defined group of "blind zealots".<sup>24</sup>

Despite this complexity, Protestant opposition to anti-popery during James II's reign can be reduced to two main types: one that was articulated by Anglican Tories who

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*Progress* (London, 1725), 569-89, 618-30; William Penn, "Fragments of an apology for himself," *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*, vol. 3, part 2 (1836), 240-2; *The speech of William Penn to His Majesty, upon his delivering the Quakers address* (n.p., [1688], Wing P1372A).

<sup>23</sup> For Catholic opposition to anti-popery, see *A remonstrance, by way of address* (London, 1685, Wing R974B), 1-2; Sowerby, "Tories in the Whig Corner," 182.

<sup>24</sup> On references to "41 again" as a staple of loyalist polemic in the late 1670s and early 1680s, see Harris, *London Crowds*, 134-5; idem, *Restoration*, 238-9; Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles*, 26-7, 435-40; idem, "Exhuming the Popish Plot," 123-5; Miller, *Popery and Politics*, 178-9; Knights, *Politics and Opinion*, 320-1, 362; R. A. Beddard, "The Retreat on Toryism: Lionel Ducket, Member for Calne, and the Politics of Conservatism," *Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine*, 72-73 (1977-78), 100.

supported the king's policies because they believed it was their duty to do so, and another that was articulated by dissenters and whigs who supported those policies because they believed it was in their interest to do so. The first type was a new variant on an older genre of opposition of anti-popery, expressed with greater intensity now that the king himself was leading the attacks. The second type was more innovative; it represented an abandonment by certain whig authors of their prior positions. The two types of rhetoric, tory and whig, used similar methods for different aims. Both used the words "fears and jealousies" to refer to anti-popery. Both were torn by competing impulses: the desire to extinguish "fears and jealousies" altogether, thereby ensuring peace and prosperity for the kingdom, and the desire to retarget the "fears and jealousies" of the populace onto their enemies. The tory instinct was often to reorient public fears away from the king and Catholicism and toward rebellion and nonconformity. The whig writers who opposed anti-popery often sought to vilify the Anglican "persecutors" who were said to be fomenting these fears of popery.

The phrase "fears and jealousies" was not a new coinage. It appeared regularly in pre-Civil War polemic and then gained greater currency in the early 1670s when it was commonly applied to fears about popery. In 1672 Samuel Parker, the future bishop of Oxford, issued a work titled *A preface shewing what grounds there are of fears and jealousies of popery* in which he argued that grounds for those fears were lacking. This provoked a furious debate with Andrew Marvell, who responded with his *Rehearsal transpros'd, or, animadversions upon a late book intituled, A preface, shewing what grounds there are of fears and jealousies of popery*. Parker and Marvell continued the debate with further salvos, thereby bringing greater attention to the "fears and jealousies"

of popery.<sup>25</sup> The phrase was occasionally truncated to “jealousies” and occasionally lengthened to “groundless fears and jealousies”, as in John Dryden’s allegorical poem in defense of James II’s religious policies, *The hind and the panther*:

With groun[d]less Fears, and Jealousies possest,  
As if this troublesome intruding Guest  
Would drive the Birds of Venus, from their Nest.<sup>26</sup>

Over the course of the 1670s and 1680s, “fears and jealousies” became a common meme: a quick handle by which an author could refer to the concept of “anti-popery” in an era when the word itself was not in common use.

The expression had a disparaging bite to it. References to “fears and jealousies” tended to be counterpoised against more positive and desirable qualities, such as “peace and quiet”, as in the preamble to the order of the Privy Council of Scotland to the borough of Dumfries on 26 December 1688: “His Majestie’s Privy Council understanding that, in the late nominatione of magistrats and counsell for your brugh, Papists have been employed in offices of power and trust among you, which may

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<sup>25</sup> John Bramhall, *Bishop Bramhall’s vindication of himself* (London, 1672, Wing B4237), with preface by Samuel Parker; Andrew Marvell, *The rehearsal transpros’d* (London, 1672, Wing M878); Samuel Parker, *A reproof to the rehearsal transposed* (London, 1673, Wing P473); Andrew Marvell, *The rehearsall transpros’d the second part* (London, 1673, Wing M882). On Parker’s views on Roman Catholicism, see Gordon J. Schochet, “Between Lambeth and Leviathan: Samuel Parker on the Church of England and Political Order,” in Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner, eds., *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 1993), 200, 208; idem, “Samuel Parker, Religious Diversity, and the Ideology of Persecution,” in Roger D. Lund, ed., *The Margins of Orthodoxy: Heterodox Writing and Cultural Reponse, 1660-1750* (Cambridge 1995), 122.

<sup>26</sup> John Dryden, *The hind and the panther* (London, 1687, Wing D2281), 132 (part 3, lines 1062-1065).

occasion fears and jealousies, to the indangering of the peace and quiet”.<sup>27</sup> The expression suggested the possibility of imminent social unrest. One pamphleteer writing in 1681 argued, “The fears and jealousies of Popery, as well then [during the Civil War], as now, was the Stock on which the Ambitious, the Covetous, and the Revengeful grafted all their Treasonable designs”.<sup>28</sup> The House of Commons used the expression “Apprehensions or Jealousies” in 1685 to describe the concerns of their countrymen about the king’s employment of Catholic officers in the army.<sup>29</sup> Alarmed by the political import of this expression, a whig member of the House of Lords objected to its use by the tory Lower House, contending that “the question was not reduced, as the House of Commons alleges, to the healing of jealousies and apprehensions, which have their basis in uncertain things; but that which is now happening is not [an uncertain thing], there is an army on foot which endures, and which is full of Catholic officers”.<sup>30</sup> The description of anti-popery as mere “apprehensions and jealousies” did effective service as a polemical device. It slighted those concerns, implying that they were either overwrought or ill-intentioned.

By employing this polemical tool, a writer or speaker could reframe the issues surrounding anti-popery. In this new diagnosis, the problem to be solved was no longer

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<sup>27</sup> William McDowall, *History of the Burgh of Dumfries* (Edinburgh, 1867), 511. See also James II’s speech to the parliament of 1685, from *Journals of the House of Commons*, 9:756, entry for 9 Nov. 1685.

<sup>28</sup> *The Protestants remonstrance against Pope and Presbyter* (London, 1681, Wing P1345), 14. This tract is often attributed to William Penn, but Mary Maples Dunn has cast doubt on that attribution: see *Papers of William Penn*, 5:530.

<sup>29</sup> *Journals of the House of Commons*, 9:758, entry for 16 Nov. 1685.

<sup>30</sup> Thomas Babington Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second*, ed. Charles Harding Firth (6 vols., London, 1913-15), 2:693, fn 2, my translation of the French ambassador’s report on this speech. The speaker was Lord Mordaunt, who later went into exile in Holland and joined William of Orange’s invading fleet in 1688.



popery but fears of popery. As one anti-anti-popish author wrote, striking a theme that would recur in modern history, “We have now nothing to Fear, but the Dismal Effects of Popular Fears”.<sup>31</sup> Mitigating those fears might involve countering popular anxieties rather than restricting the political activities of Catholics. Thus the solution to the problem of anti-popery was not necessarily the same as the solution to the problem of popery. The whig journalist Henry Care, a supporter of James II’s religious policies, took this line of argument in April 1688: “Who cries out POPERY and ARBITRARY GOVERNMENT, now, Gentlemen? . . . Who are they that repine and mutter, and would be clapping Dutch Spectacles on People’s Noses, (tinctur’d with Fears and Jealousies,) to represent all Actions of the Government in false Colours, and frightful Shapes?”<sup>32</sup> In this metaphor, anti-popery was depicted as a pair of tinted lenses that colored the perceptions of those who wore them. Care’s description of these spectacles as “Dutch” in design was a reference to the pamphlets, many with anti-popish themes, printed in Holland and smuggled into England in 1688. The Dutch agenda, according to Care, was to alienate Englishmen and women from their government by deploying anti-popish “Fears and Jealousies”.<sup>33</sup>

Care’s metaphor of “Dutch Spectacles” indicates that in his understanding of contemporary political discourse, anti-popery acted like a lens that colored an

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<sup>31</sup> T. D., *Fears and jealousies ceas’d: or, an impartial discourse, tending to demonstrate, from the folly and ill success of the Romish politics, that there is no reason to apprehend any danger from popery* (n.p., [1688], Wing D1884), 8.

<sup>32</sup> *Publick Occurrences Truly Stated*, no. 8 (10 Apr. 1688).

<sup>33</sup> For similarly-worded assertions that the Dutch were stirring up “fears and jealousies” in England, see Giles Shute, *A new naked truth, or, the sandy foundation of the sacramental test shaken* (London, 1688, Wing S3709), 24-6; Folger Shakespeare Library, V.a.469, memoirs of William Westby, fo. 34.

individual's perceptions. As an artificial lens, it could be displaced. If the lens were to be removed, Care alleged, then people would cease to see the "Actions of the Government" in "frightful Shapes", but instead would see them as they really were. Care's goal was to counter popular fears by encouraging his readers to support a general liberty of conscience, which would diminish any anxieties that one religion could dominate all the others. Misperceptions of Catholics would vanish. As he put it in another tract, a general liberty of conscience would eliminate the "Fears and Jealousies" of "All Parties".<sup>34</sup>

Tory critics of anti-popery often sought to retarget "fears and jealousies" rather than eliminate them entirely. The tory dean of Durham, Denis Granville, wrote near the end of James's reign that he had long been appalled by "Caballs to encrease Fears, & Jealousyes". These cabals had encouraged English subjects to rebel against their lawful lord. Granville believed that "a great number of Roman Catholicks in England have been highly loyall to their King", unlike the dissenters, "whose principles are Antimonarchicall, and destructive of Kingly Government". As a consequence, he averred, "my Fears & Jealousyes, runne [sic] quite a contrary way to most Men's with whom I converse, i.e, I am more affraid of the Subjects running into Rebellion, then I am of my Princes Exercising Tyranny, and more Jealous, that People, who call themselves sons of the Ch[urch] of England, will, rather than their King, destroy their Religion".<sup>35</sup> Granville denounced the widespread fears that the Catholic King James would destroy

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<sup>34</sup> Henry Care, *Animadversions on a late paper, entituled, a letter to a dissenter* (London, 1687, Wing C505), 37.

<sup>35</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, Rawlinson MSS D850, fo. 38v, D852, fo. 229-v.

the Church of England, but he did not condemn fear itself, which could have its place. For him, the proper object of “fears and jealousies” was not Catholicism, but rebellion.

The tory dean of Durham criticized anti-popery on prudential grounds as a source of instability, faction and caballing. As he warned the clergy of Durham in a speech shortly after William of Orange’s invasion, there was a type of person who had “suck’d in sedition with his milk, [and who] is Antimonarchicall (whiles hee pretends to be Anti-papisticall) in his nature”. Three months earlier he had expressed his forebodings that the government and the Church of England might suffer ill consequences from anti-popish fears: with people “now agitated more than ever by an intemperate zeale against Popery”, many were caught up in “an excessive fear that Popery will come in”.<sup>36</sup> For Granville, the invasion was the fulfillment of those fears. Shortly after preaching against the invading forces and decrying the influence of the “Anti-papisticall” republicans, the dean of Durham departed England for exile in France.

Opposition to anti-popery of the sort expressed by Granville was a polemical strategy with a long heritage. It had been a staple of anti-exclusionist rhetoric during the crisis of 1678-81 and of anti-nonconformist rhetoric before then. The centerpiece of this argument was historical in nature, relying for its persuasive power on an analogy between current forms of anti-popery and the forms of anti-popery that had been common in England on the eve of the Civil War. According to this line of reasoning, anti-popery had led in the past to rebellion, disloyalty, faction, strife, and the horrid killing of the king; if

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<sup>36</sup> Denis Granville, *The resigned & resolved Christian*, 2nd ed. (Rouen, 1689 and 1691, Wing G1940), 2nd pagination, p. 21, 4th pagination, pp. 43-4.

permitted to propagate itself it might do the same again.<sup>37</sup> To be a certain kind of high tory was to oppose exclusion, rebellion, and revolution and to reject explicitly the anti-popish tropes that underpinned these political maneuvers. This form of critique helps to explain the continuity of high tory support for James II, from the successful efforts by loyalists to defeat any attempts to exclude the duke of York from the throne, to the willingness by many ultra-loyalists in the 1685 parliament to endorse the king's employment of Catholic officers, to their defense of James during the Glorious Revolution, to their tendency to become nonjurors and Jacobites after the Revolution.<sup>38</sup>

Such a man was Thomas Cartwright, dean of Ripon and later bishop of Chester. In the 1670s and early 1680s, he published a series of loyalist sermons that brought him to the attention of the court and led to his elevation to the episcopate. He supported the religious policies of the king who elevated him, James II, including the suspension of the penal laws against nonconformity and of the Test Acts that barred Catholics from serving in public office. He was friendly with Catholics but hostile to some dissenters. Upon the Revolution, he fled to France and then followed James to Ireland where he contracted dysentery and died in 1689. There was some expectation that he would convert to Catholicism upon his deathbed, but he defied these expectations by remaining an

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<sup>37</sup> See L'Estrange, *Account of the growth of knavery*, 9-10, 18, 21, 23-4; *Journals of the House of Lords*, 13:222, entry for 23 May 1678; Fabian Philipps, *Ursa major & minor, or, a sober and impartial enquiry into those pretended fears and jealousies of popery and arbitrary power* (London, 1681, Wing P2019A), 1; Thomas Cartwright, *A sermon preached at Holy-Rood House* (Edinburgh, 1682, Wing C704), 18; Granville, *Resigned & resolved Christian*, 1st pagination, p. 26.

<sup>38</sup> On this group of ultra-loyalists, see Andrew Barclay, "James II's 'Catholic' Court," *1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries into the Early Modern Era*, 8 (2003), 161-71; Sowerby, "Tories in the Whig Corner," 160-1, 170-1; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Cavendish, Henry, second duke of Newcastle upon Tyne (1630-1691)" and s.v. "Bruce, Thomas, second earl of Ailesbury (1656-1741)".

Anglican.<sup>39</sup> In his published writings during the reign of James II, he excoriated anti-popery as both impolitic and disloyal:

Railing therefore against Popery cannot produce any good Effect, and at this time it may easily produce many bad ones; among which none can be worse, than the Contempt which it will throw upon the King himself, on whom all Ill Language against his Religion, does ultimately redound to the debasing of him in the esteem of his Subjects.<sup>40</sup>

He contended that “A Papist may be a Friend to Liberty, and a known Enemy to Persecution”, pointing to the king himself as a prominent example of this. Anti-popery, he argued, “tends not so much to arm the Hearers against Popery, as to possess them with an hatred of their Sovereign for professing it” and was a form of “Sedition under the disguise of Zeal”. The ill effect of “the groundless Jealousies of Popery’s coming in” was that it “alarums [sic] the Rabble”. Attacks on Catholics might be expected from “Anabaptists or Presbyterians”, but should not be heard from “any True Son of the Church of England”, who must not forget that Roman Catholics “are Englishmen and good Christians”. As he informed the fellows of Magdalen College in 1687, “Our Nation is in greater danger of being destroyed by Prophaness [profaneness], then Popery”.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> R. A. Beddard, “Bishop Cartwright’s death-bed,” *Bodleian Library Record*, 11 (1984), 220-30; *The Diary of Dr. Thomas Cartwright, Bishop of Chester* (London, 1843), 9, 44-8, 52, 80-1; British Library [hereafter BL], Stowe MS 746, fo. 111, James Bonnell to John Strype, 19 Apr. 1689. For Cartwright’s Erastian submissiveness to civil government, see Kenneth Fincham and Stephen Taylor, “Episcopalian conformity and nonconformity 1646-60,” in David L. Smith and Jason McElligott, *Royalists and Royalism during the Interregnum* (Manchester, 2010), 36-7; Mark Goldie, “The Political Thought of the Anglican Revolution,” in Robert Beddard, ed., *The Revolutions of 1688* (Oxford, 1991), 135-6.

<sup>40</sup> [Thomas Cartwright], *An answer of a minister of the Church of England* (London, 1687, Wing C696), 23. This pamphlet, though anonymous, is attributed here to Cartwright due to the numerous parallel passages it shares with his *Sermon preached upon the anniversary solemnity of the happy inauguration* (London, 1686, Wing C706).

<sup>41</sup> [Cartwright], *A modest censure of the immodest letter to a dissenter* (London, 1687, Wing N76), 9; idem, *An answer*, 24-25, 47; idem, *A sermon preached upon the*

These proudly loyalist arguments were echoed by Edmund Elys, another tory cleric who, like Cartwright, refused to endorse the Glorious Revolution and did not take the oaths to William and Mary. Elys lacked the meteoric arc of a Cartwright and remained the lowly rector of East Allington in Devon until his deprivation after the Revolution. In a pair of pamphlets published in 1687, he advocated the repeal of the laws penalizing Catholics on the grounds that the Catholics were “Persons very Ingenious, very Well bred” who had proved their loyalty to the king by helping to suppress Monmouth’s Rebellion. He exhorted his readers not to “be Affrighted by the Pharisaicall Multitude from Acknowledging All the Truth we find Profest, and all the Virtue we find Practiced by Papists”. He argued that the Church of Rome is “a True Church” and that all Christians must, therefore, “exercise towards Persons of that Communion, not only Common Charity, but Brotherly Love”. For these reasons Elys urged the members of the Church of England to support the king’s campaign against the penal laws.<sup>42</sup>

In opposing anti-popery, the ultra-loyalists were following King James’s lead. The king relied heavily on the trope of “fears and jealousies” in defending his religious policies. In a letter to the archbishops, he gave his rationale for his instructions of 1686 forbidding controversial preaching: he was concerned that some “men of unquiet and Factious Spirits” might preach in such a manner as would stir up “Fears and Jealousies”

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*anniversary*, 22; Nathaniel Johnston, *The king’s visitatorial power asserted* (London, 1688, Wing J879), 59; see also *Diary of Cartwright*, 30. On Cartwright’s authorship of *A modest censure*, see West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds, WYL156/51/16, Nathaniel Johnston to Sir John Reresby, 5 Nov. 1687; *Diary of Cartwright*, 85; Mark N. Brown, “Bishop Cartwright’s Answer to Halifax’s ‘Letter to a Dissenter’ (1687),” *Notes and Queries*, 21 (1974), 104-5.

<sup>42</sup> Edmund Ellis [Elys], *An epistle to the truly religious and loyal gentry of the Church of England* (London, 1687, Wing E674), 6, 8; idem, *The second epistle to the truly religious and loyal gentry of the Church of England* (London, 1687, Wing E693), 6.

in their hearers. When John Sharp, dean of Norwich and rector of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, preached an anti-popish sermon in defiance of the new orders, James ordered the bishop of London to ban him from preaching on the grounds that Sharp had insinuated “Fears and Jealousies to dispose them [his audience] to Discontent”.<sup>43</sup> The bishop refused to comply and was called to account by the newly formed Ecclesiastical Commission, which eventually suspended him. This strategy might have worked if the anti-popish preachers had been a few “men of unquiet and factious spirits”, as the king alleged, but they were in truth a considerable group of the most talented preachers in the Church. They had substantial support among the episcopate and were not easily marginalized. Heavy-handed efforts to restrict their preaching would only incense their supporters. Nevertheless, the king pressed ahead with his campaign, telling the Scottish Privy Council to take “care that there be no Preachers or others suffered to insenuate [sic] into the people any feares or jealousies”.<sup>44</sup>

The king also employed less coercive means of persuasion. When he heard that the dean of Peterborough had been accused of preaching on controversial matters, he summoned him to a private audience and told him that he “desired only that fears and jealousies might not be stirred up in people’s minds, for they were the beginning of troubles”. He instructed the high court judges sent out on circuit to “remove as much as may be all Fears & Jealousies that are endeavour’d to be insinuated by Persons ill affected to the Governm[en]t”. His agents in Wales were told to “remove as much as

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<sup>43</sup> James II, *To the most reverend fathers in God* (London, 1685/6, Wing D1529A), 4; *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, James II, 1686-7*, 56; John Sharp, *The Works of the Most Reverend Dr. John Sharp* (7 vols., London, 1749), 7:123-47; *An exact account of the whole proceedings against the right reverend father in God, Henry lord bishop of London* (London, 1688, Wing E3591), 7.

<sup>44</sup> *Entring Book of Roger Morrice*, 3:281.

may be all feares and jealousies out of the peoples minds by telling them his Majestie only designs the universall happinesse of his people". The king's charm offensive was strengthened by his suspension of the penal laws. In his *Declaration for liberty of conscience*, published in 1687, he expressed his hope that "the Freedom and Assurance We have hereby given in relation to Religion and Property, might be sufficient to remove from the Minds of Our Loving Subjects all Fears and Jealousies in relation to either". He proclaimed his intentions to seek a permanent repeal of the penal laws. The king was aware that his actions were not interpreted charitably by all. He told a group of Presbyterians after they thanked him for his *Declaration*, "I understand there are some Jealousies among my Subjects, That I have done this in a Designe".<sup>45</sup> His enactment of a broad-based and inclusive toleration was seen by many nonconformists as a disingenuous bid to attract their support, but it did have the effect of swinging some nonconformists and whigs into his camp.

James II's whig supporters, like his tory supporters, sought to defend the king's policies by opposing anti-popery. For the king's tory supporters, opposition to anti-popery was merely a continuation of their prior modes of argument, as they had long associated anti-popery with rebellion. This was not the case, however, for the whigs. Some of them shifted markedly. Henry Care, one of the most dedicated exponents of anti-popery during the popish plot crisis, became a vocal proponent of the king's religious policies in 1687 and 1688. The man who had formerly edited stridently anti-

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<sup>45</sup> Alexander Taylor, ed., *The Works of Symon Patrick* (9 vols., Oxford, 1858), 9:502-5; Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MSS, A289, fo. 129; *Entring Book of Roger Morrice*, 4:312; James II, *His Majesties gracious declaration to all his loving subjects for liberty of conscience* (London, 1687, Wing J186), 4; *The humble address of the Presbyterians* ([London], 1687, Wing A2912), 7.



popish serials, the *Popish Courant* and the *Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome*, founded a newspaper that criticized anti-popery, *Publick Occurrences Truly Stated*. He had switched from being a leading anti-popish polemicist to being a leading voice against anti-popery. In this political journey he was accompanied by the dramatist Elkanah Settle, who penned some of the most vicious anti-popish satires and pamphlets published in Charles II's reign, but then succeeded Care as editor of *Publick Occurrences* after the latter's death in August 1688.<sup>46</sup> Another volte-face can be seen in the career of the Congregationalist minister Stephen Lobb, who denounced popery in 1682 and later criticized denunciations of popery as he came to champion James's toleration policy.<sup>47</sup>

Whig critiques of anti-popery were similar in form to their tory counterparts. Both sets of critiques alleged that anti-popery was a mask used to disguise a malevolent agenda. Whereas James II's tory supporters saw anti-popery as a cover for rebellion, his whig supporters saw it simply as a cover for self-interest. Care and Lobb argued that Anglican "persecutors" were seeking to dissuade nonconformists from joining the king's toleration campaign. According to Lobb, these "persecutors" were more afraid of losing their ability to marginalize nonconformists than they were afraid of popery. They had alleged that the king's *Declaration for liberty of conscience* was a popish design to divide English Protestants before conquering them. This allegation, according to Lobb, was

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<sup>46</sup> Lois Schwoerer, *The Ingenious Mr. Henry Care, Restoration Publicist* (Baltimore, 2001), 23, 44-75, 210-16, 222-3; F. C. Brown, *Elkanah Settle: His Life and Works* (Chicago, 1910), 21-6; Bodleian Library, MSS Eng lett c 54, fo. 97, Philip Madox to Sir Robert Southwell, 28 Aug. 1688; Harris, *London Crowds*, 120.

<sup>47</sup> Stephen Lobb, *The harmony between the old and present non-conformists principles* (London, 1682, Wing L2726), 54-5; Public Record Office, PRO 30/53/8/64, letter to Lord Herbert of Cherbury, 16 June 1688; National Library of Wales, Ottley Correspondence no. 1467, account by Adam Ottley of events in 1688; Bodleian Library, MS Eng. Hist. c.711 (diary of Roger Whitley, 1684-97), fo. 91v; *Entring Book of Roger Morrice*, 4:44, 205, 212.

levied against the king not “out of Kindness or Friendship” for nonconformists, “but of Hatred, Mischief, and Design, viz. That since they can no longer turn the Edge of those Penal Laws against you [nonconformists] to your Ruine, they create Fears and Jealousies, to the end that thereby you may become so Useless and Ungrateful [to the king], as to turn the King’s Favour into Displeasure”.<sup>48</sup> The Congregationalist minister thus sought to trump the allegations of a popish design by charging that the allegations were themselves a “design”. According to Lobb, a group of Anglicans were pursuing this design out of a desire to persecute dissenters, an appetite they could not fill if the dissenters supported the king’s program.

Henry Care argued along similar lines that anti-popish authors were motivated by antipathy to toleration, not antipathy to popery. Their dislike of toleration stemmed from their self-interested desire to monopolize political power. As he wrote in the fifteenth number of his *Publick Occurrences*:

Nor indeed is this their Apprehension of Popery, more real than their concern for the Illegality of the Declaration [for Liberty of Conscience], yet both conveniently serve the Ends designed: For tho[ugh] it would be much more honest, yet it would not be so decent nor so politick, to say bluntly, “We have got a jolly number of Laws on our sides, whereby we have Engrossed to our own Party, all the Preferments of the Nation, with Power to Crush all other [religious] Perswasions . . . We have found the sweets hereof for many years, and made the Dissenters of all sorts tremble before us”.

By “a jolly number of Laws”, Care was alluding to the discriminatory acts, including the Corporation Act of 1663 and the Test Act of 1673, that he had enumerated in his *Draconica*, a published compendium of the penal laws then in force. Those laws had been designed to bar non-Anglicans from public office, so that Anglicans might preserve

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<sup>48</sup> [Stephen Lobb], *A second letter to a dissenter* (London, 1687, Wing L2729A), 5, 10. See also the same argument repeated by the anonymous author of *Two plain words to the clergy* (London, 1688, Wing T3527). 9-10.

the “Preferments of the Nation” for themselves.<sup>49</sup> Anti-popish attacks on King James’s *Declaration for liberty of conscience* were, in Care’s view, nothing more than a cover for selfish ambition.

Elkanah Settle had made a similar argument five years earlier when he had issued, in 1683, a dramatic recantation of his prior views on anti-popery. In his recantation, Settle had argued that anti-popery was an avenue of advancement for ambitious politicians: “tho’ Religion and Property are the pretended Quarrel against the great Pilots above, their real Greivance is that their own hands are not at the Rudder”. His own anti-popish writings, he now averred, had been motivated by his “Malevolent spirit of Revenge” rather than by any true belief in the popish plot. The crisis surrounding the popish plot of the late 1670s had been a “False Fear” whipped up by the leading whigs to gratify “their own Revenge or sinister Interests”. If they had really believed the tales of dire popish plots they were spinning, they would have abandoned their houses in the vulnerable, flammable parishes of the metropole and moved to safety in the American colonies.<sup>50</sup>

These spectacular reversals provoked much jaundiced commentary. In the eyes of skeptical observers, a few propagandists had simply found better patronage and adjusted their principles accordingly. Thus Anthony Wood charged Care with being “drawn over

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<sup>49</sup> *Publick Occurrences*, no. 15 (29 May 1688); Henry Care, *Draconica: or, an abstract of all the penal laws touching matters of religion*, 2nd ed. (London, 1688, Wing C511), 10, 15-17, 21. See also *Publick Occurrences*, no. 8 (10 Apr. 1688), no. 17 (12 June 1688), no. 19 (26 June 1688), no. 23 (24 July 1688); Care, *Animadversions on a late paper*, 5-7, 13-15; Folger Shakespeare Library, Newdigate newsletters, L.c.1862, 27 Sept. 1687.

<sup>50</sup> Elkanah Settle, *A narrative* (London, 1683, Wing S2700), preface and pp. 24-5. See also *Publick Occurrences*, no. 32 (25 Sept. 1688).

so far by the R[oman] Cath[olic] party for bread and money sake, and nothing else”.<sup>51</sup> Similar aspersions were cast upon Settle.<sup>52</sup> Care referred to these charges as “that stale Witticism, That H[enry] C[are] Writes for Bread”. But it was indeed the case that he was in receipt of royal patronage: his printer received funds from the secret service money, and his widow received a payment of one hundred pounds after his death in August 1688.<sup>53</sup> There are two ways in which one might interpret Care’s reversal. He might be deemed to have abandoned his authentic principles for the sake of a salary. Or it could be argued that anti-popery had never been his authentic ideology; instead, it had been a rhetorical strategy that he had deployed when it suited his purposes and that he abandoned when it no longer suited him.

In responding to his detractors, Care was unwilling to grant that he had changed in any fundamental way. He depicted his disparate political maneuvers as different tactics designed to reach a consistent goal: “Whatever I have heretofore written . . . was mainly design’d against the Spirit of Persecution, which where-ever it appears, I take for a Badge of Antichristianism”. A sympathetic elegy published after Care’s death noted that he “unto Persecutors prov’d a Scourge: This he himself affirm’d to be his Station”.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, ed. Philip Bliss (4 vols., London, 1813-20), vol. 2, col. 469; see also *A letter from a clergy-man in the city, to his friend in the country, containing his reasons for not reading the declaration* (London, 1688, Wing H308), 8; Thomas Brown, *Heraclitus ridens redivivus* (Oxford, 1688, Wing B5060), 4.

<sup>52</sup> *Remarks upon E. Settle’s narrative* (London, 1683, Wing R943), 1, 3-5, 11; *Reflexions upon a late pamphlet intituled, a narrative* (London, 1683, Wing R716), 3-5; see also Elkanah Settle, *A supplement to the narrative* (London, 1683, Wing S2720), 17.

<sup>53</sup> John Yonge Akerman, ed., *Moneys Received and Paid for Secret Services of Charles II and James II*, Camden soc., old ser., 52 (London, 1851), 199, 213; *Publick Occurrences*, no. 18 (19 June 1688).

<sup>54</sup> Care, *Draconica*, 40; *An elegy upon the most ingenious Mr. Henry Care* (London, 1688, Wing E483).

At the end of his career, Care continued to see a world divided in Manichaeian terms between the persecutors and the tolerant. His earlier anti-popish arguments had been based on the assumption that papists were persecutors. Once Care was persuaded that this assumption was not invariably correct, he refocused his critiques purely on persecution. He became willing to admit “that there are many worthy Gentlemen and Lords, that are Roman Catholics in the Land; and as they are English Subjects, they have English Hearts” and would not sacrifice their own interests to the dictates of their priests or the pope.<sup>55</sup> His new goal was not to exclude Catholics from public life, but rather to assist in promoting a nation-wide pact whereby “all Parties may be secured from Fears and Jealousies”. The way to accomplish that was, in his view, for parliament to enact a law declaring “that Liberty of Conscience is part of the Constitution of this Kingdom; The natural Birth-right of every English Man”. Passage of this act would take away from any group the power to persecute any other, and hence the “persecutors” would wither away, as the “persecuting principle” was replaced by tolerance. Since the king also wished to pass such a law, the king was his ally.<sup>56</sup>

Opposition to persecution could serve as a solvent of anti-popery among nonconformists, as many of them came to embrace King James as their ally against the “persecutors”. The Quaker George Whitehead had an audience with James in 1687 during which he discussed the king’s *Declaration for liberty of conscience*. Whitehead told the king that, although many people had feared his accession, his behavior since then

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<sup>55</sup> [Henry Care], *A Discourse for Taking Off the Tests and Penal Laws about Religion* (London, 1687, Wing D1593), 29-30, 36. For the attribution of this pamphlet to Care, see Folger Shakespeare Library, Newdigate newsletters, L.c.1859, 20 Sept. 1687.

<sup>56</sup> [Henry Care], *The legality of the court held by His Majesties ecclesiastical commissioners, defended* (London, 1688, Wing C527), 38, Care, *Animadversions*, 37.

had “convinced many of their Mistake therein, and given them Cause to lay aside their former Fears and Jealousies of that Kind”. The Quaker William Shewen drew a clear distinction between the king, who was tolerant, and other Catholics who might not be tolerant, contending that the king, though he practiced the Catholic “manner of worship”, had rejected “the worst parts” of Catholicism, which were “force, violence and persecution”.<sup>57</sup> William Penn argued that fears of popery before the king’s accession had been based on misguided “Apprehensions that they [the Papists] strove for all at our Cost”, but that the king’s offer of a permanent and unalterable religious toleration had “secur’d [us] against such Jealousies”. During the reign of James II, Penn frequently belittled the notion that English Protestants had anything to fear from English Catholics.<sup>58</sup>

When James lost his throne and went into exile, some Quakers continued to express a feeling of attachment to him. Robert Barclay, the Scottish Quaker and leading theologian, wrote in 1689 that “I Love King James, That I wish him well, That I have been and am sensibly touched with a feeling of his misfortunes, And that I cannot excuse my self from the duty of praying for him”. For Barclay, the king had become one of “us”, to be opposed against the persecuting “other” who hounded the king from his throne, just as they had hounded Quakers for the past quarter century. As he noted, “I say as I never hated the person of a papist because of his Religion, so I have justly esteemed

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<sup>57</sup> Whitehead, *Christian progress*, 622; William Shewen, *A brief testimony for religion* (London, 1688, Wing S3419), 17. Publication of the latter pamphlet was approved by the London-based “Morning Meeting” of the Quakers: see Library of the Society of Friends, London, Morning Meeting Minutes, vol. 1, p. 85 (minute for 13 Feb. 1688).

<sup>58</sup> [William Penn], *A third letter from a gentleman in the country* (London, 1687, Wing P1381), 11; idem, *Good advice to the Church of England* (London, 1687, Wing P1296), 9, 49; idem, *A second letter from a gentleman in the country* (London, 1687, Wing P1361), 11, 14, 16; idem, *The reasonableness of toleration* (London, 1687, Wing P1352), 36-7, 40; idem, *A third letter*, 8, 14; Nottingham University Library, Portland MS, PwA 2129/1, James Rivers to [Hans Willem Bentinck], 13/23 Jan. 1688.

and do several of them for their Moral virtues, and other valueable qualitys, which the ignorant people in a blind Zeall [sic] may startle at".<sup>59</sup> With these statements, Barclay was implicitly criticizing those who used an anti-popish frame of reference, or "a blind Zeall", rather than an anti-persecution frame, to distinguish virtue from vice. As William Popple, a friend of Penn's, put it, the "tru[e] Ground of the Matter" was not popery, but persecution. Popple neatly deployed an anti-persecution frame of reference to counter an anti-popish frame, arguing that laws should be erected which would prevent "Persecuting Papists", along with all persecuting Protestants, from holding public office in England, while those Catholics and Protestants who had "a Spirit of Moderation and Charity" would be permitted to enter into public office.<sup>60</sup> This sort of reframing was a key maneuver in anti-anti-popish rhetoric.

## II

It remains an open question how much popular attitudes shifted as a result of these writings against anti-popery. The Glorious Revolution did not lack for "fears and jealousies". Anti-popery had proved to be highly resilient in the face of criticism, and the

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<sup>59</sup> Swarthmore College, Safe 1006, Box 34, MSS 050 (Robert Barclay's "Vindication of his apology"), pp. 5, 9; this has been published as John Pomfret, "Robert Barclay and James II: Barclay's 'Vindication,' 1689," *Bulletin of Friends Historical Association*, 42 (1953), 33-40. See also Barclay, *Universal love considered* (London, 1677, Wing B741), 13-14. For other evidence of Quaker attachments to King James after 1688, see Library of the Society of Friends, London, Portfolio 15.104, Isaac Sadly to Joseph Knight, 2 July 1689; Library of the Society of Friends, Dublin, 1/2 YM A2 (Minutes of the Half-Yearly National Meeting, 1689-1706), pp. 1-3, 5; Mary K. Geiter, "William Penn and Jacobitism: a smoking gun?" *Historical Research*, 73 (2000), 216-17.

<sup>60</sup> [William Popple], *Three letters tending to demonstrate* (London, 1688, Wing P1383), 21. For Popple's authorship of this pamphlet, see Caroline Robbins, "Absolute Liberty: The Life and Thought of William Popple, 1638-1708," *William and Mary Quarterly*, III, xxiv (1967), 190, n.1.

weeks after William of Orange's invasion saw episodes of anti-popish rioting across the country. As one of the critics of anti-popery had ruefully put it, recognizing the daunting nature of the task at hand, "Mens heads are much easilier [sic] laden with, then unladen of suspicions".<sup>61</sup> This kind of pessimism was a leitmotif of anti-anti-popish rhetoric. The editor of the *London Gazette*, Robert Yard, had expressed a similar sentiment over a decade before, "It is hardly credible how strangely jealous people are of popery, and doubtless without any reason, but yet it will be no easy thing to convince them of their mistake."<sup>62</sup> Critics of anti-popery were the first to note the strength and persistence of the phenomenon they were combating. But the evident durability of anti-popery does not mean that the opposition it attracted was insignificant. Critiques of anti-popery did possess a degree of popular influence in later Stuart England.

This can be deduced from the evidence of the published critiques themselves. Many announced their opposition to anti-popery in the title, suggesting that this theme was considered a way of attracting readers.<sup>63</sup> Some went through multiple editions.<sup>64</sup> The number and variety of these pamphlets suggest a market for this sort of writing. Not

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<sup>61</sup> *An Answer from the County to a Late Letter to a Dissenter* (London, 1687, Wing A3278), 15; see also *ibid.*, 5, 8-11, 25, 38.

<sup>62</sup> Robert Yard to Sir Joseph Williamson, 24 Nov. 1673, in W. D. Christie, ed., *Letters Addressed from London to Sir Joseph Williamson* (2 vols, Westminster, 1874), 2:82.

<sup>63</sup> In addition to the pamphlets cited in the notes above, see also *The present state of England in relation to popery, manifesting the absolute impossibility of introducing popery and arbitrary government into this kingdom* (London, 1685, Wing S2711); reprinted without a preface as *Salus Britannica: or, the safety of the Protestant religion, against all the present apprehensions of popery fully discust and proved* (London, 1685, Wing S511).

<sup>64</sup> Thomas Cartwright, *Sermon preached upon the anniversary solemnity of the happy inauguration* (London, 1686, Wing C706), reprinted three times in 1686 (Wing C706A, C707, C708); Fabian Philipps, *Ursa major & minor* (London, 1681, Wing P2019A), reprinted once in 1681 (Wing P2019B).



all of the tracts critical of anti-popery were lengthy treatises; some were briefer works that would have been suitable for coffeehouse reading.<sup>65</sup> One example of this genre is a brief dramatic dialogue between two Anglicans, one named William and the other, Francis. In this pamphlet, William takes the anti-popish position and Francis criticizes it. Over the course of the dialogue, Francis gradually persuades William to reject anti-popery and to abandon his misguided, hasty “Fears and Jealousies”.<sup>66</sup> This short, pithy, anonymous pamphlet with its undisguised agenda appears to have been intended as propaganda for a popular audience. Printed propaganda could penetrate to a popular level in this period given increasing levels of literacy, especially in London, and the practice of reading pamphlets aloud in coffeehouses. Twenty thousand copies of the anti-popish tract *Parliamentum Pacificum* were ordered up by James to be distributed around the country at his own expense in the spring of 1688.<sup>67</sup> Opposition to anti-popery was proclaimed from pulpits in Cambridgeshire, Worcestershire and Yorkshire, reaching a popular audience among the hearers. The political and theological debates regarding

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<sup>65</sup> *The Weekly Test-Paper* (London, 1688), no. 4. Copies of this newspaper, which may have been edited by Charles Nicholets, are held in the Nichols newspaper collection at the Bodleian Library.

<sup>66</sup> *A dialogue between two Church of England-men* ([London], [1687], Wing D1339A), 8. For another dialogue of this type, where one interlocutor takes the anti-popish position and the other critiques it, see *A friendly debate upon the next elections of Parliament* ([London], [1688], Wing F2218A).

<sup>67</sup> Harris, *London crowds*, 98-100; J. R. Jones, *The Revolution of 1688 in England* (London, 1972), 227; Nottingham University Library, Portland MS, PwA 2162/1, James Rivers to [Hans Willem Bentinck], 23 May 1688; [John Northleigh], *Parliamentum pacificum: Or, the happy union of king & people* (London, 1688, Wing N1302), 3, 29, 33, 46-50, 68.

anti-popery were not conducted solely within the elite; they were also directed at a wider audience.<sup>68</sup>

The circulation of these pamphlets demonstrates the diffusion of these ideas, but it need not indicate their acceptance. The consumers of popular propaganda were not passive. It may be that pamphlets criticizing anti-popery created a stir precisely because the ideas contained within them were considered to be abhorrent. Many observers at the time, however, drew the opposite conclusion, worrying that critiques of anti-popery might be widely credited. The future bishop Richard Kidder wrote of his dismay upon finding that in Norwich during the reign of James II:

It was given out (I wish I could not say from the pulpit) that there was no danger of Popery; That we had a Prince that never brake his word; That those men ought to be watched who did either speak or insinuate that we were in danger of Popery.

Kidder argued that this tory Anglican opposition to anti-popery was dangerous. It stemmed, he alleged from “a certain sort of very hot men in the city that were drunk or mad with Loyalty”, and it served to “make way for the entrance of the popish Religion”.<sup>69</sup> A similar argument was made by an unidentified correspondent who, after reading the critique of anti-popery published by Edmund Elys, wrote to him and charged him with having been “carryed in the stream of secular Interest” and desiring that “our

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<sup>68</sup> John Fitzwilliam, *A sermon preach'd at Cotenham* (London, 1683, Wing F1106), 29; Daniel Kenrick, *A sermon preached in the cathedral-church of Worcester* (London, 1688, Wing K307), 21, 25, 34-6; Cartwright, *A sermon preached upon the anniversary*, 22; Christopher Wyvill, *An Assize-Sermon Preached in the Cathedral-Church of St. Peter in York* (London, 1686, Wing W3783), 25-6. For a critique of anti-popery that appears to have been directed mainly to a learned audience, see *How the members of the Church of England ought to behave themselves under a Roman Catholic king* (London, 1687, Wing H2961).

<sup>69</sup> Amy Edith Robinson, ed., *The Life of Richard Kidder, D.D., Bishop of Bath and Wells, Written by Himself* (London, 1924), 38-9; see also *A Letter to a Gentleman at Brussels* (London, 1689, Wing L1658), 8.

Church [of England] should fall". Another author described William Penn's critique of anti-popery as "Sophistry" and accused him of writing on behalf of popery as part of a secret deal struck when he was granted the proprietorship of Pennsylvania by Charles II.<sup>70</sup> William Penn and Henry Care were both accused of being Jesuits in disguise, and Care's newspaper was described as a "jesuites Pisse pot thrown by Henry Care in the church of England men's faces".<sup>71</sup> It seems likely that these responses to Elys, Care, and Penn were so vehement precisely because of concerns that their opposition to anti-popery could gain a broad purchase among the public.

Indeed, there is evidence that the language of opposition to anti-popery was being taken up by men who did not make their living from writing or preaching. Several addresses sent to the king in 1687 and 1688 thanked him for his *Declaration for liberty of conscience*, referring to it as the edict that took all "fears and jealousies" away. Residents of Northamptonshire wrote that the king's declaration left no "room . . . for fears and jealousies in any [persons]". A group of dissenting merchants and tradesmen of London wrote that James's edict of toleration banished "all Fears and Jealousies" from the "Hearts" of his subjects. The Painter-Stainers' Company of London informed the king that the "long Experience of your Majesties Justice and Goodness hath been a sufficient security against the least Jealousie". The corporation of Portsmouth advised the king that

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<sup>70</sup> Elys, *The second epistle*, 8; *A Letter Containing Some Reflections*, (n.p., [1688], Wing L1357A), 4, 1-2.

<sup>71</sup> William Popple, *A letter to Mr. Penn, with his answer* ([London], 1688, Wing P2964), 2; *The Fourth (and Last) Collection of Poems, Saytrs, Songs* (London, 1689, Wing F1684), 25; BL, Add. MS 34727, fo. 157, letter to William Penn, n.d.; American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, William Penn papers, 974.8 P365, vol. i, p. 120; BL, Add. MS 4292, fo. 8, letter from John Hough, 9 Oct. 1687; Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time*, 2nd ed. (6 vols, Oxford, 1833), 3:140; marginal notation in Bodleian Library, Nichols newspapers, *Publick Occurrences Truly Stated*, no. 12 (8 May 1688).

his declaration of toleration had “dispersed all the Fears and Apprehensions of Fire and Fagot, under Your Majesties Reign, which the wicked Enemies of Your Sacred Person and Religion, had maliciously distilled into the Minds of too many of Your credulous Subjects”.<sup>72</sup> The corporation of Portsmouth, unlike many other English corporations at this time, was not regulated or reformed by the king, and the authors of this statement were its usual borough officials. The evidence of these addresses suggests that the language of anti-anti-popery had reached a wide audience by 1687 and had modified the rhetorical practices of some segments of the populace.

### III

With the accession of William and Mary, the polemical battles between anti-popery and anti-anti-popery largely abated. There could no longer be any real fear that anti-popery would bring with it a new civil war in England, because English anti-popery was no longer an oppositional doctrine. Instead, it served as an animating force underlying both the revolution settlement and English foreign policy, as the Bill of Rights forbade any Catholic, or anyone married to a Catholic, from holding the English throne, and William took England into war with France. Anti-popery was less of a menace to

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<sup>72</sup> *London Gazette*, no. 2259 (11-14 July 1687), no. 2270 (18-22 Aug. 1687), no. 2323 (20-23 Feb. 1688), no. 2318 (2-6 Feb. 1688); see also Clarke, *Life of James the Second*, 2:170; *London Gazette*, no. 2238 (28 April-2 May 1687), no. 2359 (25-28 June 1688). Although several of the addresses sent to the king in 1687 and 1688 were based on a set form sent down from above, there is no evidence that these four addresses were penned by anyone other than the groups who sent them, and the diversity of their language suggests they were not centrally dictated. On this point, see Marquess of Halifax, *A Letter to a Dissenter* (London, 1687, Wing H311), 3-4; Henry Care, *Animadversions on a Late Paper Entituled, A Letter to a Dissenter* (London, 1687, Wing C505), 24-5; Douglas Lacey, *Dissent and Parliamentary Politics in England, 1661-1689* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1969), 180-1; Tim Harris, *Revolution: The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy, 1685-1720* (London, 2006), 216, 219-20.

English stability now that it had become a pillar of the constitutional settlement. As a consequence, fewer Englishmen and women were alarmed by its power and influence. Anti-popery in fact proved to be a powerful integrative agent in Britain and in North America, bringing together Anglicans, Scottish Presbyterians, and New England Congregationalists under the banner of a common opposition to popery and French power.<sup>73</sup>

Opposition to anti-popery, as a consequence, became a more isolated phenomenon, articulated mainly by Jacobites. Its role in Jacobite polemic was far different than it had been in loyalist polemic during the Restoration period, for it was now deployed not to defend the English government, but rather to critique it. Denis Granville, from his exile in France, returned to his former themes with relish. He attributed the revolution that had overthrown James to anti-popery combined with Francophobia: “The English were Overwhelmed with Jealousies of introducing Popery & promoting the Int[er]est of France”. He suggested that those fears of popery had been groundless: he himself had long thought the English nation to be “nearer a Rebellion, than the Introducing of Popery”. Recent events, he contended, had proved that he had been right to fear rebellion. In seeking to free themselves from popery by overthrowing a Catholic

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<sup>73</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, 1992), 53–4; Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, ‘The Trials of the Chosen Peoples: Recent Interpretations of Protestantism and National Identity in Britain and Ireland,’ in Tony Claydon and Ian McBride (eds.), *Protestantism and National Identity: Britain and Ireland, c.1650–c.1850* (Cambridge, 1998), 26–9; Owen Stanwood, ‘The Protestant Moment: Antipopery, the Revolution of 1688–1689, and the Making of an Anglo-American Empire,’ *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 46 (2007), 481–91, 505–8.

king, Englishmen had only made themselves vulnerable to “Tyranny & Presbitery”.<sup>74</sup> All of his warnings, he believed, were coming true.

Not all of the critics of anti-popery after the Revolution were simply repeating their former prophecies in a new situation. The pamphlets of the Scottish radical Robert Ferguson underwent a more startling and extensive transformation. Over the course of the 1680s he had published a series of notoriously anti-popish pamphlets, while participating actively in both Monmouth’s invasion of 1685 and William’s of 1688.<sup>75</sup> For much of this period, when he was not in the process of invading England, he was in exile in the Netherlands. After the Revolution he became disillusioned with William’s government and turned Jacobite. He became as fierce a critic of anti-popery as he had been its advocate, publishing in 1695 the anti-anti-popish pamphlet, *Whether the Preserving the Protestant Religion was the Motive Unto, or the End, that was Designed in the Late Revolution?* Whereas before the Revolution, Ferguson had depicted Catholics as untrustworthy, bigoted and threatening, he now had nothing but kind words for them:

we ought to own and respect them as Christians, and to pay them the deference that is due unto them, not only upon the score of the Condition and Quality of many of them, but upon the account both of their moral Accomplishments and of their natural and acquired Parts, in which great Numbers of them are remarkably Eminent.

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<sup>74</sup> Denis Granville, *The resigned & resolved Christian*, 2nd ed. (Rouen, 1689 and 1691, Wing G1940), 3rd pagination, p. 25, 4th pagination, pp. 4, 18; see also 4th pagination, p. 27.

<sup>75</sup> [Robert Ferguson], *A Letter to a Person of Honour, concerning the Black Box* (n.p., [1680], Wing F749), 4-5; idem, *A Letter to a Person of Honour, concerning the Kings disavowing the having been Married to the D. of M. ’s Mother* (n.p., [1680], Wing F750), 15-18; idem, *An Enquiry into, and Detection of the Barbarous Murther of the Late Earl of Essex* (n.p., 1684, Wing F737), 13-16, 19-20; idem, *Representation of the Threatning Dangers* (n.p., [1687], Wing F756A), 1-21; idem, *A Brief Justification of the Prince of Orange’s Descent into England* (London, 1689, Wing F733), 19, 22-3.

He criticized the anti-popish arguments that had fueled the Revolution, describing them as “those noisy and clamorous Suggestions, which were so industriously spread”. These “fictions of Knaves to impose upon Fools” had been designed “to mislead a credulous and unthinking People”. In fact there had never been anything for Protestants to fear from Catholics, because England never could have been Catholicized, either by persuasion or by force. Catholic efforts at proselytizing under James II had proved a dismal failure, the English Catholics were outnumbered by Protestants a hundred to one, and the English army had remained largely Protestant throughout the king’s reign. And yet the king had been unable to persuade the English to abandon their “Jealousies and Fears of his harbouring Intentions against our Religion”. The reason for this, according to Ferguson, was that many English Protestants were “People of very weak and shallow Understandings” whose “Zeal is much greater than their Knowledge”. They had been too eager to listen to “a few Demagogues” who had been “bribed by the Prince of Orange”.<sup>76</sup> Ferguson neglected to mention that he had been one of those demagogues himself.

The Scottish polemicist had an opportunistic approach to anti-popery, using it or critiquing it depending on what served his purposes best. His shifting polemical strategy was seen again in his next series of rhetorical moves. In his 1706 *History of the Revolution*, he first repeated his critique of revolutionary anti-popery, arguing that “it was not in King James’s Power to introduce Popery”, but that “Fears and Jealousies” of popery had nevertheless “drowned our Reason”. He then added a startling claim, which was that the pope had covertly engaged William to invade England in order to undermine the Church of England. In return for the support of the pope and other Catholics,

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<sup>76</sup> [Robert Ferguson], *Whether the Preserving the Protestant Religion was the Motive* (n.p., 1695, Wing F766), 11-13, 9, 19, 26.

Ferguson alleged, the prince of Orange had converted secretly to Catholicism. After his accession, William had worked to fracture the Church of England from within by promoting toleration in England.<sup>77</sup> Thus the Glorious Revolution, in this fanciful retelling, was itself a kind of popish plot. Over the course of two decades, Ferguson had gone from espousing anti-popish arguments against James, to critiquing those same arguments, to redeploying them as a critique of the Revolution. Anti-popery was not an indelible aspect of Ferguson's outlook; rather, it was a polemical tool he alternately used and abandoned.

#### IV

Both anti-popery and anti-anti-popery were conspiracy theories. Each theory had similar structural features: the identification of a malevolent force that was plotting to disrupt the state; a series of alarmist claims about the activities of the plotters, who were said to be disguising their true motives; and the assignment of a key role in fighting the plot to a perceptive narrator who could expose the hidden agenda underlying these deceptive pretenses. Titus Oates's self-assigned role in unravelling popish plots in the late 1670s was paralleled by Henry Care's self-assigned role in unravelling anti-popish plots in the late 1680s. The goal of these conspiracies theories was to identify an "other" against whom a political movement could rally itself.

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<sup>77</sup> Robert Ferguson, *The History of the Revolution* (n.p., [1706]), 7, 11-13, 23-4, 27, 32. On Jacobite critiques of anti-popery, see also Mark Goldie and Clare Jackson, "Williamite Tyranny and the Whig Jacobites," in Esther Mijers and David Onnekink, eds., *Redefining William III: The Impact of the King-Stadholder in International Context* (Aldershot, 2007), 189.



Conspiracy theories often have a double-edged power, able to serve as both disruptive and productive forces. Anti-popery was seen as a divisive force by many English Protestants in the decades before the Glorious Revolution. But, as has already been observed, it was also a powerful integrative force that served to knit together the eighteenth-century British empire. Anti-anti-popery, likewise, could be both a divisive or an integrative force. It was used by Jacobites to sow divisions in England in the 1690s. But it is also possible to imagine a British empire that could have rallied around the broader toleration championed by James II, one that would reintegrate Catholics and nonconformists into the political system on an equal basis with Anglicans. Such a vision, underpinned by critiques of anti-popery, would have had profound effects in Ireland, which was, for obvious reasons, never integrated adequately into the anti-popish ascendancy of the eighteenth century. It is no surprise to find that the political economist Sir William Petty, always a proponent of Anglo-Irish integration, was also a critic of anti-popery.<sup>78</sup> The exclusion of Catholics from British political life in 1689 had its costs as well as its benefits, and anti-popery was not the only possible way of consolidating an expanding British empire.

There is no question that opposition to anti-popery could benefit Catholics, and it is hardly surprising that English Catholics would criticize anti-popery. But opposition to anti-popery could also benefit Protestants, by underpinning a broad toleration that would encompass all major Christian groups in the British Isles. It was not necessary to be

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<sup>78</sup> BL, Add. MS 72888, fos. 92-99v, “A Remedy to the fears & Jealousys, w[hi]ch the King of England's Non:papist subjects, may conceive concerning their being forc't from their Religion”; *The Economic Writings of Sir William Petty*, ed. Charles Henry Hull (2 vols, Cambridge, 1899), 2:550, 578, 591-2; Ted McCormick, *William Petty and the Ambitions of Political Arithmetic* (Oxford, 2009), 248-58.

sympathetic to Catholic doctrines to be disturbed by the disruptive power of anti-papery, especially when anti-papish ideas were being used to target the reigning monarch, as in the reign of James II. England's political troubles in the Restoration period had more than one persuasive diagnosis; those crises could be blamed either on papery or on anti-papery. The diversity of these diagnoses helps to explain the political fracturing that bedevilled Restoration England.