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‘The ghost of Jane Shore’: Cultural representations of the past in the Early Modern period

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‘The ghost of Jane Shore’: Cultural representations of the past in the Early Modern period.

Contents

'A sinner comes before you […] She has committed the acts of falsehood and fornication. She has confessed her sins, and begged for forgiveness […] She comes before you with a solemn heart, shorn of secrets, naked before the eyes of gods and men, to make her walk of atonement'.[1]

The parallels between George R.R. Martin's *Game of Thrones* novels and the medieval dynastic struggle 'The Wars of the Roses' is well known. However, this 'walk of atonement' was inspired by a lesser known historical figure of the period: Jane Shore.[2] Jane, originally known as Elizabeth Lambert, was from a relatively humble background; the daughter of a city merchant and the wife of a goldsmith.[3] However, her status, power and influence rose exponentially as a result of her longstanding romantic liaison with King Edward IV. After Edward's death, Jane was accused of conspiracy and underwent a humiliating public penance. Consequently, she was forced to live the rest of her life in poverty and obscurity. However, after her death, Jane increasingly became characterised in literature throughout the Early Modern period. This work proposes to study Early Modern representations of Jane Shore and situate them within their historical context.

Mary Steible commented that Jane's tale is only worth telling because of her association with King Richard III.[4] Despite the fact that Jane was a notable character throughout one of the most contentious periods in English history, she is often lost in the footnotes. Literary representations of Jane have largely been overlooked due to an academic reluctance to study history and literature in combination. There have been some attempts to reconcile this, with Richard Helgerson writing an in-depth account of Jane's literary representation throughout the sixteenth century and Brett Wilson's discussion of Nicholas Rowe's *Tragedy of Jane Shore* and the Jacobite movement.[5] However, aside from these studies, Jane is often discussed briefly and awarded only a few pages of discussion within a broader narrative. Discussions of Jane also frequently fall victim to periodisation. This is especially noticeable within the dearth of historiography on broadside ballads of the seventeenth century, of which Jane was a frequent subject. Due to this limited historiography, it is necessary to shape our understanding of these literary sources by examining discussions of broader issues throughout the Early Modern period. In this regard, there is a wealth of material.

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[1] 'Mother's Mercy', *Game of Thrones* (HBO, 14 June 2015).
[2] George R.R. Martin quoted in James Hibberd, 'George R.R. Martin talks 'Dance with Dragons'', *Entertainment Weekly* (July 21, 2001).
[3] Jones DeRitter, "Wonder not, princely Gloster, at the notice this paper brings you': Women, Writing and Politics in Rowe's Jane Shore, *Comparative Drama,* 31:1 (Spring 1997) 89.
[4] Mary Steible, 'Jane Shore and the Politics of Cursing', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900,* 43:1 (Winter, 2003) 6.
[5] Richard Helgerson, 'Weeping for Jane Shore', *The South Atlantic Quarterly,* 98:3 (Summer 1999); Brett Wilson, 'Jane Shore and the Jacobites: Nicholas Rowe, the Pretender, and The National She-Tragedy', *ELH,* 72:4 (Winter 2005).

The continual popularity of cultural history has led to a diversification of approaches. Historians such as Paulina Kewes and Matthew Neufield have examined the importance of history and memory in Early Modern mentalities and how the past could be used to influence contemporary opinions.[6] This approach has led to an examination of the literary afterlives of prominent historical figures. These have included works such as Kavita Mudan Finn's study of the women of the Wars of the Roses and Michael Dobson and Nicola Watson's discussion of Elizabeth I.[7] These works have explored the posthumous fascination towards these women and how cultural discourses affect their representation.[8] As the focus has been solely upon women of a higher social standing, a more diverse perspective could be beneficial. This dissertation aims to contribute to the growing body of historical scholarship in the examination of the creation of a post-Reformation culture and the role of the past in Early Modern mentalities. This work will therefore examine representations of Jane Shore, how they have changed over a prolonged period of time and how contemporary context affects her literary portrayal.

Discussions of Jane can be found in an extremely wide and diverse range of sources; ranging from plays, broadside ballads, historical chronicles and diary entries. It is not possible for this to be an exhaustive account of all literary representations of Jane in the Early Modern period. Primarily, the sources included in this discussion have been found by undertaking 'key-word' searches on historical databases, using phrases such as 'Jane Shore', 'Mistress Shore' and 'Shore's wife' all of these being common ways to describe Jane. Methodologically these sources come with certain restrictions. Sullivan discusses the 'hidden dangers' of using databases such as *Early English Books Online* and *Broadside Ballads Online* when finding sources.[9] These resources are not complete and the sources themselves are often incomplete versions of a text and an awareness of these limitations is therefore necessary. This is not the only methodological issue; historical realities also have to be considered. Broadside ballads, due to their affordability and availability, often fulfilled purposes other than edification.[10] Many ballads were likely to have been destroyed having been used for more mundane

[6] Paulina Kewes, 'History and Its Uses: Introduction', *Huntington Library Quarterly,* 68:1-2 (March 2005); Matthew Neufield, 'Introduction Putting the Past to Work, Working through the Past', *Huntington Library Quarterly,* 76:4 (2013) 488.
[7] Kavita Mudan Finn, *The Last Plantagenet Consorts: Gender, Genre and Historiography 1440-1627* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Michael Dobson and Nicola J. Watson, *England's Elizabeth: An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[8] Mundan Finn, *The Last Plantagenet Consorts,* 6-7.
[9] Ceri Sullivan, 'Literary Sources', Laura Sangha and Jonathan Willis (eds.), *Routledge Guide to Using Historical Sources* (London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2016) 101.
[10] Christopher Marsh, 'Best-Selling Ballads and their Pictures in Seventeenth Century England', *Past and Present,* 223 (Nov. 2016) 53.

purposes such as fuel for fires and toilet roll.[11] Therefore, the broadside ballads discussing Jane Shore that have withstood the test of time may not be fully representative of all that were initially published.

This dissertation will begin its discussion in the 1500s and will end it in 1715. The choice to end in 1715 was not an arbitrary decision, as discussions surrounding Jane's legacy could have continued into subsequent centuries. The fascination surrounding Jane Shore continues into the 1800s, as Jane's public penance was the inspiration for William Blake painting (Image 1) and in more recent years, Cersei Lannister's 'Walk of Atonement' in the extremely popular *Game of Thrones* novels.[12] However, this dissertation is consciously grounded in the Early Modern period and therefore the end of Queen Anne's reign and the Stuart dynasty provides a moment of finality.

Taking as its subject the literary representations of Jane Shore, this dissertation will take a tripartite structure. The first section will examine early representations of Jane Shore in the Tudor period and her representation as a political victim of Richard III. The second chapter will examine post-reformation culture and how representations of Jane developed to encompass an elite emphasis on morality and a reaction against those who were perceived as a threat. Finally, the third chapter will examine how Jane's character began a moral rehabilitation as a consequence of dynastic threats and upheaval. This dissertation will continually question how and why context affects Jane's representation and to what extent these portrayals permeated into the common consciousness.

[11] Christopher Marsh, 'The Sound of Print in Early Modern Europe: The Broadside Ballad as Song', Julia Crick and Alexandra Walsham (eds.), *The Uses of Script and Print, 1300-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 171.
[12] George R.R. Martin quoted in James Hibberd, 'George R.R. Martin talks 'Dance with Dragons''.

Image 1: William Blake, 'The Penance of Jane Shore in St Paul's Church', *Tate* (1793)

Chapter One
The Tragic Victim

This chapter will explore early representations of Jane Shore and how she was portrayed throughout the Tudor period. During this time Jane becomes embedded within Tudor literature and her potential for aiding the creation of a 'Tudor myth' was exploited.[13] In 1485 Henry VII was crowned King of England after years of dynastic upheaval. Jason Scott-Warren has stated that, upon his coronation, symbolism was necessary in order to aid Henry's somewhat tenuous claim to the throne.[14] Furthermore, as the sixteenth century progressed, the tumultuous Protestant Reformation in England reinforced this need for symbolism. Much of the Tudor propaganda centred around the vilification of Henry VII's predecessor Richard III. As a perceived victim of Richard's cruelty, Jane was a sympathetic figure and powerful weapon in the vilification of Richard.

'I doubt not some shall think this woman too slight a thing to be written of and set among the remembrances of great matters'.[15]

The Tudor period saw a re-emergence of historical chronicling, popularised by writers such as Polydore Vergil, Edward Hall and Sir Thomas More.[16] Chroniclers were often employed by the monarch to write sympathetic versions of history and therefore played a significant part in the creation of 'the Tudor myth'.[17] Chroniclers often employed the rhetoric of the past, to offer both an explanation of events and perhaps impose moral judgements. Therefore, it is perhaps no surprise that, in Vergil's chronicle, he included a description of Henry VI meeting Henry Tudor and declaring that it was 'he unto whom both we and our adversaryes must yeald and geave over the domynion'.[18] However, it was in their discussions of Richard III, where Tudor chroniclers held the most polemic power.

Sir Thomas More was one of the first writers to discuss 'Mistress Shore' in *The History of King Richard the Third*. It is interesting that Jane is mentioned in these historical chronicles and provided writers with the ammunition to further discredit Richard, despite some regarding her as 'too slight a thing to be written of' in historical texts. There has been much academic debate surrounding the validity of More's account and his credentials as an historian. However, accuracy in a text such as this is perhaps

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[13] Steible, 'Jane Shore and the Politics of Cursing', 3.
[14] Jason Scott-Warren, *Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005) 164.
[15] Thomas More, *The History of King Richard the Third by Master Thomas More Undersheriff of London* (c.1513) 50.
[16] F.J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought* (California: The Huntington Library Press, 1967) ix.
[17] B.P. Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London: Methuen, 1981) 4.
[18] Henry Ellis (ed.) *Three Books of Polydore Vergil's English History, Comprising the Reigns of henry VI., Edward IV., And Richard III* (London: Camden Society, 1844) 135.

unimportant. A.F. Pollard claims that More's history is 'literary art, and not historical science'.[19] More's text is undoubtedly polemic and designed to vilify King Richard III, presenting him as 'malicious, wrathful, envious, and from before his birth, ever perverse'.[20] More's tyrannous, 'crooked-backed' Richard has withstood the test of time and was copied into all the major chronicles of the period, earning infamy in Shakespeare's *Richard III*.[21]

'Shore's wife', as More calls her, was still alive at the time of his writing and More shows an awareness that his readers may object to such a woman who had 'lay nightly' with the King, to be presented in a text such as this.[22] However, Jane is presented largely sympathetically, suffering in a 'beggarly condition' and 'without friends' as a consequence of Richard's treachery.[23] More devotes little time to Jane within his chronicle; however, aside from Richard, she is the most memorable figure as a consequence of the empathy and imagination that her character evokes.[24] Jane provides a charismatic counterpoint and almost a 'literary foil' to the villainous Richard that More describes. Richard's cruelty towards Jane is emphasised by More, describing him of having 'spoiled her of all that ever she had'.[25] However it is the implication that Richard only did this 'as if it were for anger' which perhaps emphasises Jane's vulnerability.[26] More also recounts the public penance that Richard imposed upon Jane for her adultery with Edward IV. Despite the immorality of her liaison, More reports that 'Shore's wife' maintains her dignity and goes 'in such countenance and pace demure and so womanly' that 'her great shame won her much praise'.[27] Jane's tragedy is mirrored by her loss of beauty over time, Jane was described as 'attractive', delighting men with her beauty and 'pleasant behaviour'.[28] However, in her older age More describes her as 'withered and dried up, nothing left but wrinkled skin and hard bone'.[29] More presents Jane as a kind, but more importantly, an ordinary woman of the realm who 'never abused to any man's hurt, but to many a man's comfort'. This perhaps exaggerates Richard's apparent heinous crimes and provides the Tudor public with a more sympathetic and empathetic figure than some of his nobler victims.[30]

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[19] A.F. Pollard, 'Sir Thomas More's 'Richard III'', *History,* XVII (1933) 320, 318.
[20] More, *The History of King Richard III*, 5.
[21] More, *The History of King Richard III*, 5; F.J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought,* 72.
[22] Helgerson, 'Weeping for Jane Shore', 453; More, *The History of King Richard the Third,* 46.
[23] More, *The History of King Richard the Third,* 50.
[24] Helgerson, 'Weeping for Jane Shore', 455.
[25] More, *The History of King Richard the Third,* 47.
[26] More, *The History of King Richard the Third,* 47.
[27] More, *The History of King Richard the Third,* 48.
[28] More, *The History of King Richard the Third,* 49.
[29] More, *The History of King Richard the Third,* 49.
[30] More, *The History of King Richard the Third,* 49.

My grievous fall beare in your mind, and behold me: How strange a thing, that the love of a King Should come to dye under a stall'.[31]

F.J. Levy argues that the Elizabethans were more historically minded than previous generations.[32] This is reflected in the upsurge of historical texts written throughout the period, including *The Mirror for Magistrates*. Traditionally these poems have been ignored and often disliked by historians, C.S. Lewis even remarked that 'no one lays down the Mirror without a sense of relief'.[33] However, scholarly interest has been reinvigorated in recent years.[34]

The Mirror for Magistrates has been described as an example of 'de casibus' poetry, a tale of ancient history describing the downfall of prosperous men and women.[35] These poems were intended to provide moral guidance to those that read them through the use of historical examples.[36] *The Mirror for Magistrates* was not an entirely novel concept in the Tudor period. Throughout the Medieval period, didactic texts established this 'mirror for princes' tradition, promoting virtues and offering observations on Kingship.[37] Previous examples of these included Sir John Fortescue's *De Laudibus Legum*, written for the instruction of King Henry VI's son Edward of Westminster. Therefore, *The Mirror for Magistrates* can perhaps be regarded as a Protestant revival of this genre, albeit aimed for a wider audience. Significantly, *The Mirror* was an extremely popular contemporary text that seemingly exerted a profound influence on its readers.[38]

The second edition of *The Mirror for Magistrates* included the poem 'Shore's Wife'. Similar to More's *The History of King Richard the Third,* the vulnerability of Jane is emphasised. 'Shore's Wife' stands alone in the collection amidst the tales of politically powerful men, with Jane anxious for

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[31] Thomas Deloney, 'The Lamentation of Shore's Wife', *The Garland of Good-Will* (London, 1678) 12.
[32] Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought,* 202.
[33] C.S. Lewis, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954) 240.
[34] Paul Budra, *A Mirror for Magistrates and the de casibus Tradition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Scott C. Lucas, *A Mirror for Magistrates and the Politics of the English Reformation* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009).
[35] Jessica Winston, 'Rethinking absolutism: English de casibus tragedy in the 1560s', in Harriet Archer and Andrew Hadfield (eds.) *A Mirror for Magistrates in Context: Literature, History and Politics in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016) 200.
[36] Harriet Archer, *Unperfect Histories: The Mirror for Magistrates, 1559-1610* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017) 3.
[37] Ruth Lexton, 'Kingship in Malory's Morte Darthur', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology,* 110:2 (April 2011) 190.
[38] Archer and Hadfield (eds.), *A Mirror for Magistrates in Context,* 1.

her own 'tragedy' to place 'among the rest'.[39] This poem contributes to the continuation of the characterisation of the demonic Richard.[40]

In this poem, Jane is first given her own 'voice'. It is also in this poem that the influence of the Protestant Reformation becomes apparent in Jane's characterisation. Although Jane presents her fall from grace as a moral tale and an example to 'both mayde and wyfe', her story undoubtedly reflects badly on Richard.[41] This poem presents Jane as a political victim of those with more power than her. Richard is described as wanting to 'procure her fall' and has 'this wretched man to blame' for her penance as 'this raging wolfe would spare no giltless blood'.[42] However, perhaps the most significant passage is the advice that Jane offers to other rulers:

'Ye princes all, and rulers eurychone,
In punishment beware of hatred's yre:
Before yee scourge, take heede, looke well thereon:
In writhes ill will, if malice kindle fyre,
Your hearts will burne in such a hote desire,
That in those flames the smoke shall dim your sight,
Yee shall forget to ioyne your iustice right.[43]

William Baldwin, editor of the 1563 edition, noted that 'Shore's Wife' was extremely popular and when read aloud it was 'so well liked, that all together exhorted me instantly, to procure Maister Churchyarde to undertake and to penne as manye moe of the remainder as might by any meanes'.[44] The popularity of 'Shore's Wife' led to further publications of what can be described as 'female complaints' in this period.[45] Jane's 'situation' as a royal mistress of course was not unique, but her popularity seems to have been. Samuel Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond* is undoubtedly an imitation of 'Shore's Wife'. However, interestingly in this tragic tale of the royal mistress, Rosamond describes bitterly how she is overlooked in history in comparison to Jane. Rosamond proclaims:

No Muse suggests the pitty of my case,
Each Pen doth ouerpasse my iust complaint,
Whilst others are prefer'd, though farre more base;

[39] Steible, 'Jane Shore and the Politics of Cursing', 7; Thomas Churchyard, 'How Shore's Wife, King Edward the Fourth's Concubine, was by King Richard despoiled of all her goods, and forces to doe open penaunce', in Joseph Haslewood (ed.), *Mirror for Magistrates, Volume II* (London: 1815) 463.
[40] Steible, 'Jane Shore and the Politics of Cursing', 10.
[41] Churchyard, 'Shore's Wife', 482.
[42] Churchyard, 'Shore's Wife', 476, 479, 477.
[43] Churchyard, 'Shore's Wife', 480.
[44] Quoted in Haslewood (ed.), *Mirror for Magistrates,* 53.
[45] Helgerson, 'Weeping for Jane Shore', 461.

Shore's wife is grac'd, and passes for a Saint;
Her Legend iustifies her soule attaint.
Her well-told tale did such compassion finde,
That she is pass'd, and I am left behinde.[46]

This is also seen in Drayton's *The Legend of Matilda*, in which the literary Matilda claims that the 'Wife of Shore winnes generall applause, / Finding a Pen laborious in her Prayse'.[47] This intertextuality would therefore imply that Shore was an established and recognisable character as she is being referenced within other texts on the assumption that Jane would be easily recognised.

'Ah me, unhappy woman, now misery is at hand, now my foes will triumph at this my fall'.[48]

As the end of the sixteenth century approached, Jane's narrative was finally brought to life on stage. The Elizabethan stage was extremely popular and estimates suggest that the two authorised acting companies were visited by approximately 15,000 people weekly.[49] It is difficult to determine the social composition of those who attended the theatre in the Elizabethan period; however, it is likely that it encompassed a broad spectrum of society. Thomas Platter, a Swiss man travelling in England in 1599, describes his experience of the theatre and the difference in admission prices:

'For whoever cares to stand below only pays one English penny, but if he wishes to sit he enters by another door, and pays another penny, while if he desires to sit in the most comfortable seats which are cushioned, where he not only sees everything well, but can also be seen, then he pays yet another English penny at another door.'[50]

This diversity of playgoers therefore implies that plays were an effective way of conveying a message as, not only would it reach a large amount of people, it would reach a broader spectrum than written texts would allow.

Mary Steible has argued that *The Mirror for Magistrates* was the last time that Jane was presented as a political victim and that later treatments transform her into a lamenting figure and a pathetic heroine.[51] However, in 1594 the anonymous play *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third* combines both of these aspects within the character of 'Shore's Wife'.

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[46] Samuel Daniel, *The Complaint of Rosamond* (1592) 22-8.
[47] Michael Drayton, *The Legend of Matilda* (1593) 36-7.
[48] *The True Tragedy of Richard III* (1594) 1.3.248-250.
[49] Quoted in Alfred B. Harbage, *Shakespeare's Audience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941) 22-34.
[50] Clare Williams (ed.), *Thomas Platter's Travels in England: 1599* (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1937) 166-7.
[51] Steible, 'Jane Shore and the Politics of Cursing', 7.

This play continues the historiographical tradition of making Jane the victim of the 'ill shaped, crooked backed' and 'tyrannous in authority' King Richard III.[52] Within the first scene, the character 'Truth' reinforces Richard's responsibility for Henry VI's death claiming he was 'cruelly murdered by Richard, Gloucester's Duke' and implicates him in the death of Edward V and his brother.[53] It is interesting that Jane's 'lamentable ende' is regarded significant enough to be included amongst this in the 'True Tragedie' of King Richard's reign. Writers throughout the sixteenth century continually recognised the empathetic power that Jane's character possessed and the profound ability she had to evoke sympathy in an audience. This is highlighted when Richard orders her open penance, proclaiming that 'none shall relieve her nor pity her; and privy spies set in every corner of the city, that they may take notice of them that relieves her'.[54] As a consequence of Richard's orders, Jane is left destitute and abandoned as 'none will relieve her, that hath been good to all'.[55] Jane's final appearance within the play shows her repenting her sins, praying that 'Though I have done wickedly in this world into hell fire, let not my soul be hurled'.[56] Despite Jane's character acknowledging the immorality of her past actions, the blame for her destitution is undoubtedly placed on Richard, as she proclaims 'all such usurping kings, as thy Lord is, may come to a shameful end, which no doubt I may live yet to see'.[57] This would be a rhetorically powerful and politically charged statement to close the first half of the play, as the audience would undoubtedly be aware of the nature of Richard's demise at Bosworth.

Significantly, this performance 'was play'd by the Queene Maiesties Players'.[58] The 'Queen Elizabeth's Men' was formed in 1583 by Elizabeth's spymaster Sir Francis Walsingham.[59] Cathy Shrank has stated that the Queen's Men established history plays as a staple genre of theatre and worked to promote a version of history that was acceptable to the monarchy.[60] The Queen's Men would carry the Royal Livery and as a consequence were viewed as figures of authority. The troupe could also prove to be valuable propagandists and also served to continue the cultural fascination concerning Jane Shore. Therefore, the nature in which *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third* portrays both Jane and King Richard are significant as it conveys an 'official' message to the population and one that aided the construction and consolidation of the Tudor dynasty.

There has been some scholarly debate concerning the influence of *The True Tragedy of Richard III* on Shakespeare's tragedy. It is Shakespeare's *Richard III* that is the pinnacle of Tudor vilifications

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[52] *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third* (1594), 1.1.57-58
[53] *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third,* 1.1.42.
[54] *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third,* 1.5.1012-4.
[55] *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third,* 1.1.1163.
[56] *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third*, 1.1.1187-8.
[57] *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third*, 1.1.1184-5.
[58] *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third*.
[59] Cathy Shrank, 'Crafting the Nation', in Keith Wrightson (ed.), *A Social History of England, 1500-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) 28.
[60] Shrank, 'Crafting the Nation', 28.

of Richard, but in this play Jane is never present on stage.[61] Helgerson argues that, as a consequence of this exclusion, Jane loses the pathos that had been established in previous depictions.[62] It is perhaps surprising, given the contemporary popularity of Churchyard's 'Shore's Wife', that Jane was excluded from Shakespeare's narrative. Perhaps, had Jane played a more prominent role in Shakespeare's *Richard III,* she would hold a more established place in the historical consciousness of the present day. The 'harlot strumpet Shore' is only mentioned in passing and perhaps loses her victim status within the play.[63] Perhaps, the contemporary fascination towards Jane was such that Shakespeare wanted to move away from this well-worn narrative. Instead, Shakespeare concentrates on Richard's nobler victims: Elizabeth Woodville and Margaret of Anjou.

However, despite the omission of Jane, there are some similarities in the way the victims of Richard are presented. Shakespeare's Margaret echoes Churchyard's 'Shore's Wife' in her cursing of Richard. Jane pleaded with God for 'vengeance' upon Richard and curses 'every cause whereof [Richard's] body came'.[64] Similarly, Margaret hopes that 'the worm of conscience' gnaws at his soul, hoping 'thy friends suspect for traitors while thou livest / And take deep traitors for thy dearest friends!'.[65] Margaret, like Jane, attacks Richard's very existence describing him as 'Thou elvish-mark'd, abortive, rooting hog! / Thou that wast seal'd in thy nativity / The slave of nature and the son of hell!'.[66] There is little to no evidence to suggest that Jane and Margaret cursed Richard, however the similarities between the presentation of these two women and their actions towards Richard is striking.

Throughout the sixteenth century, Jane was therefore a powerful weapon in the creation of a 'Tudor myth'. Jane's potential to serve as a victim of Richard's tyranny was exploited by writers and her presence was increasingly seen within the popular literature of the period. Although the politics of the period meant that Jane was primarily discussed in relation to Richard, the Reformation and a burgeoning interest in morality became increasingly evident in Jane's portrayal.

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[61] Marjorie Garber, 'Descanting on Deformity: Richard III and the Shape of History', in Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier (eds.), *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays on Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988) 81.
[62] Helgerson, 'Weeping for Jane Shore', 461.
[63] William Shakespeare, *Richard III* (1593) 3.4.70.
[64] Churchyard, 'Shore's Wife', 323,329.
[65] Shakespeare, *Richard III,* 1.3.687-689.
[66] Steible, 'Jane Shore and the Politics of Cursing', 2; Shakespeare, *Richard III,* 1.3.692-694.

Chapter Two

The Wanton Woman

At the turn of the seventeenth century, the number of historical texts being produced rose exponentially.[67] Jane Shore was again a prominent character within these historical discussions. However, as the period progressed, the portrayal of Jane shifted from a tragic victim of Richard III, into an immoral, wanton woman who was responsible for her own downfall as a consequence of her immorality. Again, this transformation was a consequence of the historical and religious context in which Jane was being discussed. Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford have discussed how women became representative of the societal fears of the period 'the scold, of the power of women's tongues; the whore, of unbridled sexuality; the witch, a mirror reversal of all that the patriarchy deemed good in a woman'.[68] In this instance, Jane would reflect the threat of unbridled sexuality.

'Ah! Gentle Jane, if thou did'st know, The uncouth paths I daily go, And woeful tears for thee I shed, For wronging thus my marriage-bed'.[69]

Paulina Kewes has argued that the early Stuart period was witness to overtly polemic historical examples as a means of expressing and justifying religious arguments.[70] The repercussions of the Reformation were still being felt long into the seventeenth century. Fletcher and Stevenson argue that the ultimate impact of the Reformation was that it was divisive and ultimately weakened the role of the church.[71] As a consequence of this weakness, the household became synonymous with harmony and discipline and this new emphasis on domestic life led to a growth in texts and advice on this subject. For example, William Gouge in his *Of Domesticall Duties* described how it is 'necessary … that good order be first set in families: for as they were before other polities, so they are somewhat the more necessary: and good members of a family are like to make good members of Church and common-wealth'.[72]

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[67] Daniel Woolf, 'Speaking of history: conversations about the past in Restoration and eighteenth century England, in Adam Fox and Daniel Woolf (eds.), *The spoken word: Oral culture in Britain, 1500-1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002) 120.
[68] Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) 69.
[69] *The Woful Lamentation of Jane Shore* (16th C.?).
[70] Kewes, 'History and Its Uses: Introduction', 24.
[71] Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson (eds.), *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 23.
[72] William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties* (London, 1622).

This emphasis on domestic harmony consequently led to a change in literary fashion and a re-appropriation of the character of Jane Shore.[73] Narratives moved away from discussions of Jane as a victim of Richard III and subsequently took a greater interest into her affair with King Edward, his usurpation of her home and Jane's relationship with her husband. An example of this genre was Thomas Heywood's *Edward IV* which seems to combine both historical chronicles and domestic melodrama.[74] In *Edward IV,* Heywood was the first to deem Mistress Shore as worthy of a first name.[75] Heywood calls her Jane, despite the fact that her real name was Elizabeth. This is interesting to note given that this is a discussion of how the character of Jane Shore was manipulated through history. Even the name she is given is an invention of those that wrote about her and by giving her a simplistic name: 'Jane', she becomes a more identifiable character.

Heywood moves away from a complete vilification of Richard and instead writes his narrative at the expense of Edward IV. It is implied that Edward was unworthy of his power, Jane describes him as the 'King [who] did cause her blame', rather than his brother.[76] Jane is instead here represented as victim to Edward's violent usurpation of the marital home. Edward's flirtation is described as aggressive, with Jane declaring that Edward 'with a violent siege / labors to break into my plighted faith'.[77] Unlike previous representations, where Jane is seen as flirtatious and accepting of Edward's advances such as Michael Drayton's poem *Edward the fourth to Shore's Wife*, in this she is reluctant.[78] Jane is seen to have no right of resistance against the King: 'If you enforce me, I have nought to say; / But wish I had not lived to see this day'.[79] Domestic harmony is stressed by the playwright, as despite all that happened to both Jane and her husband, in the play they reunite. Jane dies with her husband by her side and as a consequence she is celebrated by 'The people, from the love they bear to her / And her kind husband, pitying his wrongs'.[80]

Domestic discord is also demonstrated in a broadside ballad written towards the close of the seventeenth century, albeit with a less positive ending. In *The Woful Lamentation of Jane Shore*, Jane describes how 'lust brought ruine' to her life and declared that she 'wronged' her 'wedded husband' whom she had loved for ten years.[81] Interestingly, this ballad also gives a voice to Matthew Shore. Matthew is shown to lament being cuckolded and how 'unto publique Shame, / The wicked Life

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[73] Lena Cowen Orlin, *Private Matters and Public Culture in Post-Reformation England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994) 8.
[74] Orlin, *Private Matters and Public Culture in Post-Reformation England,* 121.
[75] Helgerson, 'Weeping for Jane Shore', 461.
[76] Baron Field (ed.), *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV. Histories by Thomas Heywood* (London, 1842) 185.
[77] Field (ed.), *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV,* 75.
[78] Michael Drayton, 'Edward the fourth to Shores wife' in *Englands heroicall epistles* (London, 1597).
[79] Field (ed.), *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV,* 79.
[80] Field (ed.), *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV,* 192.
[81] *The Woful Lamentation of Jane Shore.*

brought to my good name'.[82] By representing Matthew in this text, it perhaps emphasises the severity of Jane's usurpation of the marital home as it demonstrates the extent to which her transgressions had wounded her husband.

'What can sooner print modesty in the soules of the wanton, then by discovering unto them the monstrousnesse of their sin?'[83]

Historians have written extensively on the 'Reformation of Manners' and the emphasis on sexual morality throughout the period. The 'Reformation of Manners' was primarily associated with 'Puritans' who were scandalised by what they perceived to be the immorality and disorder of the period.[84] Puritanism; however, is not easily definable, often being a term of stigma imposed on them rather than by them.[85] Puritanism can be associated with an attempt to promote both liturgical and moral reform. However, there are perhaps many reasons why this was the case in the seventeenth century, aside from religion. Economic changes as a result of an ever-expanding population led to a short supply of land and therefore increasing levels of poverty and vagrancy.[86] Perhaps this emphasis on morality and the need for sexual regulation was a response to this.

Throughout the seventeenth century the ruling elite had a complex relationship with 'popular culture'. However, it is perhaps a misunderstanding to associate Puritans as entirely hostile towards the theatre as most solely objected to having performances on the Sabbath.[87] One of the first mentions of Jane in the 1600s occurs in Thomas Heywood's *An Apology for Actors*. This served as Heywood's intervention into the anti-theatrical debate of the period and employs Jane as a means of justifying the theatre.[88] 'Mistresse Shore' is used as an example of the edifying value of the theatre describing how, by using historical examples, 'the vnchaste are by vs shewed their errors'.[89] This may have been an influential intervention within this debate, as many Puritans did see this potential for edification. In his *Anatomie of Abuses* Philip Stubbes describes how plays can be 'very honest and very commendable exercise' in order to provide 'good example, and wholesome instruction; conducible to

[82] *The Woful Lamentation of Jane Shore*.
[83] Thomas Heywood, *An Apology for Actors* (London, 1612).
[84] Christopher Durston, 'Puritan Rule and the Failure of Cultural Revolution, 1645-1660', in Christopher Durston and Jaqueline Eales (eds.), *The Culture of Protestantism, 1560-1700* (London: Macmillan Press LTD, 1996) 210.
[85] Patrick Collinson, *English Puritanism* (London: The Historical Association, 1983)
[86] Sarah Williams, *Damnable Practices: Witches, Dangerous Women, And Music In Seventeenth Century Broadside Ballads* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 1988) 20.
[87] Margot Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre: Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) 21, 30.
[88] David Hawkes, 'Thomas Gresham's Law, Jane Shore's Mercy: Value and Class in the Plays of Thomas Heywood', *ELH,* 77:1 (Spring 2010) 28.
[89] Heywood, *An Apology for Actors*.

example of life and reformation of manners'.[90] It is interesting that Jane is regarded as a poignant and well-known historical figure within this debate. This is perhaps demonstrative of the changing nature of Jane's representation throughout this period and how she gradually became synonymous with tales of morality as a consequence of the Reformation. Jane provided an example to women in how not to behave. In a 1682 ballad, 'The Ghost of Jane Shore' appears to the 'D. of C.' and the 'D. of P.' presumably representing the Duchess of Cleveland and the Duchess of Portsmouth, two of King Charles II's mistresses.[91] Jane states:

'Perhaps you know me not, yet take a view,
See what I am, I was once as you
I was a whore a Royal Mistress too.
I was a woman of egregious fame
And like you two I gloried in my shame
Edward my Lord was, and Jane Shore my name.
I liv'd in splendour and enjoy'd delights,
Feasted all day and in Loves luscious rights'[92]

Jane issues a warning to these mistresses proclaiming that she lost her 'Riches Pleasures' and 'Pride' as a consequence of her relationship with a King and urges that 'You two great Women great in lust and sin / Repent, repent and to reform begin'.[93]

This continual emphasis on Jane's downfall in this period is perhaps a consequence of the growing belief in Providence in the seventeenth century. Providence was the belief that God's will was responsible for all, therefore Jane's downfall was the consequence of God passing judgement on her immoral actions. A poem of 1674 shows King Edward IV propositioning a woman whom he hoped would become his mistress. However, in response to Edward's 'wanton love' she declares:

From dignities I will refrain,
Lest courtly honour do undo me,
Like to Jane Shore and many more,
Who many happy daies did see,
But she did dye
In misery,

[90] Philip Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses* (London, 1583) x.
[91] *A Dialogue between the D. of C. and the D. of P. at their meeting in Paris, with the Ghost of Jane Shore* (London, 1682).
[92] *A Dialogue between the D. of C. and the D. of P.*
[93] *A Dialogue between the D. of C. and the D. of P.*

Jane's fall from grace is used by the narrator as a reason to decline Edward's proposition, as she does not want to meet the same fate as Jane, whose name requires no explanation.

The emphasis placed upon domestic life, consequently led to an interest in those who usurp this ideal of domesticity and what Jason Scott Warren describes as the fascination and predominance of the 'cuckold' in the Early Modern period.[95]

Representations of immoral women were often seen in broadside ballads of the period and Jane Shore was often mentioned within these works. Jane, becomes a literary trope in these texts, becoming synonymous with immorality. In a 1630 ballad *An Excellent Medley*, Jane Shore is discussed within the broader narrative of the disorder of the period. The author describes the 'sad dayes' when 'Our women cut their haire like men, / The Cock's ore-mastered by the Hen' and the ballad's author hopes that the 'wicked' will 'mend their wayes'.[96] Although the 'pretty woman' Jane is only mentioned in passing, it is significant that she continued to be associated with what the author perceives to be a 'world full of odious sins'.[97]

Throughout the seventeenth century, increasingly Jane was characterised in relation to sexuality and promiscuity (Image 2). A ballad of the late seventeenth century relays a conversation between a pregnant daughter and her mother. The mother chastises her daughter for being 'a dirty slut'; however, as the ballad progresses the mother's hypocrisy becomes clear when her daughter describes her past indiscretions.[98] Interestingly, the two women are ironically described to be 'as chaste as Jane Shore'.[99] This implies that Jane's association with immorality and unchaste behaviour is well-established by this period. Jane also becomes increasingly associated with the label 'whore'. However, this label should be treated with a degree of caution. Martin Ingram notes that 'whore' would not necessarily have the same connotations as its modern usage and was in fact a common means of expressing hostility towards a woman.[100] However, these ballads were often related to sexual deviancy. For example, a ballad thought to be produced between 1641 and 1700, describes a 'merry

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[94] 'The Fair Maid of Londons Answer to King Edwards Wanton Love' in *Cupids garland set round about with gilded roses containing many pleasans songs and sonnets newly written* (London, 1674).
[95] Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 3; Scott-Warren, *Early Modern English Literature,* 198.
[96] *An Excellent Melody, which you may admire at (without offense) for every line speaks a contrary sense* (London, 1630).
[97] *An Excellent Melody*.
[98] *The Mother and Daughter or, A dialogue betwixt them composed in verse, if you will attend, I will rehearse* (London, 1672-95?).
[99] *The Mother and Daughter*
[100] Martin Ingram, *Carnal Knowledge: Regulating Sex in England, 1470-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) 71.

conceited Young-man' in the company of a 'Proud, Scornful, Jeering Lasse' whom he hoped to wed.[101] In which, the 'simple youth' claims the woman may be 'rather like unto Jane Shore, / Which makes me think thoult be a whore'.[102] Similarly, a ballad of 1680 *A Hue Cry after Beauty and Virtue* the author laments that 'True Beauty's lost, or cover'd o're with Paint, / I sind a hundred Whores for every Saint' and that 'All sorts of People to a Whore prove kind'.[103] The author hopes that the readers of this poem 'As Rosamond, or as Jane Shore, go serve them, / keep back your Coin, and you'l be sure to starve them'.[104]

Image 2: Unknown Artist, 'Jane Shore', *King's College* (16th Century?)

[101] *The Young Lover, or, A New Way of Wooing* (London, 1641-1700?).
[102] *The Young Lover, or, A New Way of Wooing*.
[103] *A Hue and Cry after Beauty and Virtue* (1680).
[104] *A Hue and Cry after Beauty and Virtue*.

Cathy Shrank has discussed how broadside ballads were similar to plays in their ability to create a nationalist and cohesive feeling, as a consequence of their social and geographic reach.[105] Broadside ballads were primarily produced in London; however, the existence of a carrier service implies that there was a national market for cheap print and literature of the period typically depicts a ballad seller in a rural setting.[106] Cheap print such as broadside ballads, it has been argued, could act as 'an instrument of social cohesion' and they could often be used to impart a moral message.[107] These ballads have often been used to understand the religious, political and social context of the period.[108]

Unlike the chronicles and poems of the Tudor period, the accessibility of broadside ballads was not limited to the elite.[109] Perhaps the reason why broadside ballads were so effective at imparting a moral message was because their readership encompassed all levels of society. Previously, price had been a major constraint when it came to purchasing texts, as up to 75% of production was from the price of paper.[110] However, broadside ballads were inexpensive to produce, costing less than a pint of beer to purchase.[111] Aside from cost, the other major constraint was literacy levels amongst the population. It has been estimated that by the 1640s, only 30% of adult males in rural England and 78% in London were literate.[112] Margaret Spufford has argued that these statistics are likely to be an underestimate as a consequence of literacy being based upon the ability to sign one's name.[113] However, this historiographical debate is perhaps unimportant as broadside ballads permeated both oral and literate culture.[114] Ballads often were set to memorable tunes, with memorable rhyming schemes, meaning that it was easier for these texts to be disseminated across a largely illiterate society.[115] Not only were ballads 'stuck about the wall' at alehouses and sung 'in the streets by the vulgar', they were also seen in the houses of the nobility and 'sung at court'.[116]

Christopher Marsh argues that the melodies of broadside ballads were often extremely well known, thus allowing the meaning to be evoked merely through the tune to which it was set.[117] Thus, it is perhaps significant that a large proportion of the ballads depicting Jane Shore were set to the same popular tune: *Come live with me and be my love*. This standard tune is based on Christopher

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[105] Shrank, 'Crafting the Nation', 29.
[106] Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 28.
[107] Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety,* 5.
[108] Marsh, *Best-Selling Ballads and their Pictures in Seventeenth Century England,* 53.
[109] Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought,* 10.
[110] Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972) 177.
[111] Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety,* 6.
[112] Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety,* 7.
[113] Margaret Spufford, 'First steps in literacy: the reading and writing experiences of the humblest seventeenth-century autobiographers', *Social History*, 4 (1979) 407-35.
[114] Williams, *Damnable Practices,* 1.
[115] Shrank, 'Crafting the Nation', 29-30.
[116] Izaak Walton, *The Compleat* Angler (London, 1653) 49; Thomas Dyche, *A New General English Dictionary* (London, 1756); Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety,* 1; *A Maydens Lamentation for a Bedfellow* (London, 1615).
[117] Marsh, 'The sound of print in early modern England', 171.

Marlowe's poem of the same name. The latter is perhaps an ironic choice, as ballads depicting Jane often evoked sorrow, death and tragedy, whereas Marlowe's text depicts a feeling of optimism and romance. It is perhaps of greater significance that this tune is later described as 'the tune of Jane Shore'.[118] The appropriation of this standardised tune can be demonstrative of how the motif of 'Jane' had spread into the popular consciousness.

It is perhaps unsurprising, due to literacy levels, that there are few sources that reflect the opinions and thoughts of a broad spectrum of society. However, some works, largely comprising of diary accounts from middling and upper-class men such as Samuel Pepys and Nehemiah Wallington cover a large number of years in the Early Modern period. These diaries can be used to demonstrate cultural attitudes of the period and to what extent these literary sources actually captured the imagination. Samuel Pepys writes about Jane Shore on two occasions. Significantly, on the first occasion in 1662, Pepys is in discussion with Lord Crew and states that he had informed him 'how my Lady Duchess of Richmond and Castlemaine had a falling out', calling Castlemaine 'Jane Shore, and did hope to see her come to the same end that she did'.[119] This is demonstrative of how the character of Jane Shore permeated throughout the psyche in the seventeenth century. Furthermore, it implies that the association of Jane with immorality was not just discussed in broadside ballads, it also seems to have become part of a common parlance.

Following the Reformation, there was an increasing emphasis on morality and a reaction against those that were perceived to threaten this. Jane's character was thus re-appropriated by writers in an attempt to emphasise her moral transgression and to promote their own message. Furthermore, her presence in literary forms such as broadside ballads enabled this moral message to reach a wider audience than perhaps previously allowed.

[118] Peter Fancy, *The Age and Life of Man* (London, 1674-79?).
[119] Samuel Pepys, *Diary* (21 April, 1662).

Chapter Three

The Rehabilitation of Jane

Paulina Kewes has argued that the vogue for historical analogies had its heyday between the 1640s and 1670s.[120] However, this is perhaps questionable. The Marquis of Newcastle warned King Charles II upon his restoration that 'Ever man is now become a state man'.[121] Jürgen Habermas, in his treatise *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, discusses the rise of a 'public sphere' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[122] As a consequence of a more informed population, public opinion became increasingly important. The English Civil War and Restoration period were tumultuous decades in English history and consequently the past was often invoked in reference to contemporary events. This chapter will demonstrate how, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, writers again began to see Jane's 'tragedy' and the potential that her character provided to portray a political and religious message.

'A Tale, which told long since in homely wife, Have never fail'd of melting gentle eyes'.[123]

As this quote suggests, by the early eighteenth century, Jane once again became a character that evoked sympathy and compassion in an audience. This was perhaps a consequence of changing political circumstances.

As the seventeenth century progressed, Jane was occasionally used by ballad writers as a means to critique the politics of the period. However, these tended to continue the literary trope of the immoral Jane Shore. For example, in a ballad of 1659, the immorality of the Rump Parliament is described as 'A Rump had Jane Shore, and a Rump Messaleen, / And a Rump had Antonyes resolute Queen'.[124] Rump poems primarily described the parliament's immorality and often included analogies to cannibalism and scatological references.[125] It was perhaps a powerful tool for the Royalist propagandists to associate the Rump Parliament with immoral women such as Jane Shore. This is also seen in another critique of 1670; however, this is instead directed towards the King. In the satirical poem *The Kings Vows*, King Charles II is depicted describing his apparent misdeeds committed in his first decade as King. In this poem, Charles proclaims that 'But whatever it cost I will have a fine

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[120] Kewes, 'History and Its Uses: Introduction', 25.
[121] Thomas P. Slaughter (ed.), *Ideology and Politics on the Eve of Restoration: Newcastle's Advice to Charles II* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1984) 56.
[122] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society, trans. Thomas Burger with assistance of Frederick Lawrence* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1989).
[123] Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (London, 1775) 4.
[124] *The Re-Resurrection Of the Rump: Or, Rebellion and Tyranny revived* (1659).
[125] *A Proper New Ballad of the Divels Arse a Peake, Or Satans Beastly Place, Or, In plain terms of the Posteriors and Fag-End of a Long Parliament* (London, 1660).

whore, / As bold as Al'ce Pierce and as fair as Jane Shore, / And when I am weary of her I'll have more'.[126] The *Kings Vows* and the mention of Jane perhaps reflects contemporary uncertainty towards Charles' and the Restoration Court's religion and morals.

It is in Nicholas Rowe's *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* of 1713, in which Jane's potential to evoke sympathy is again re-explored as a means to promote a political message.

In 1713, Queen Anne was suffering with what was thought to be her final illness and, as she was childless, this led to concerns over the succession. Under the 1701 Act of Succession, it was agreed that the crown would go to Sophia of Hanover and her Protestant decedents. However, with James Stuart, King James II's Catholic son, living in France and Anne's personal preferences being less than clear, the succession was not a certainty.[127] Whig historiography has often dismissed the threat of James Stuart and the Jacobites. However, recent scholarship has argued that the exiled Stuarts maintained a large amount support in England, especially in the years leading up to 1716.[128] This is seen in contemporary accounts such as John Viscount Barrington who claimed that 'the increase of Jacobitism… has spread so much within this last three years among all sorts of people'.[129] Similarly, Nicholas Tindal's history describes this period as a 'dangerous situation' when 'the friends of the Pretender believed, that all things were preparing for his restoration'.[130] In these years of uncertainty, succession tracts of the 1680s were re-published discussing the threat of a 'popish successor' and 'arbitrary government'.

This debate over succession led to a resurgence of historical texts, including a new fascination towards Lady Jane Grey. Not only was Grey a victim of succession, she was also regarded by many as a Protestant martyr and had been included in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. This was perhaps especially pertinent given James Stuart's Catholicism. Jean Marsden has argued that Lady Jane Grey was a symbolic representation of the virtuous Protestant threatened by Catholic vice.[131] In Nicholas Rowe's play *The Tragedy of Lady Jane Grey,* even when faced with death, Grey renounces Catholicism hoping that a future monarch will 'save thy Altars from the Rage of Rome'.[132] This play's topical

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[126] Andrew Marvell, *The King's Vows* (1670).
[127] Paulina Kewes, ''The State Is Out of Tune': Nicolas Rowe's 'Jane Shore' and the Succession Crisis of 1713-14', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 64:3/4 (2001), 290.
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[128] Edward Corp, *A Court in Exile: The Stuarts in France, 1689-1718* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) 5.
[129] John Viscount Barrington, *A Dissuasive from Jacobitism: Shewing in General what the Nation is to Expect from a Popish King; and in Particular, from the Pretender* (London, 1713) 27.
[130] Nicolas Tindal, *The Continuation of Mr Rapin de Thoyas's History of England, from the Revolution to the Accession of King George II,* vol. 4 (London, 1751) 335-6.
[131] Jean Marsden, 'Sex, Politics, and She-Tragedy: Reconfiguring Lady Jane Grey', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900,* 42:3 (2002) 501.
[132] Richard James Sherry (ed.), *The Tragedy of Lady Jane Grey by Nicholas Rowe* (Salzburg: University of Salzburg, 1980) 345.

appeal led to it being performed for ten nights between April and May of 1715 and again in October to celebrate the anniversary of King George I's coronation.[133] However, an earlier play of Rowe's superseded this popularity: *The Tragedy of Jane Shore*.

Nicholas Rowe's *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* similarly represents Rowe's Whig sympathies; despite claiming in the play's prologue that it does not have a political message. This play re-introduces Jane as a tragic character, no longer solely associated with sexual immorality. Perhaps Richard might reflect the ultimate 'arbitrary' Catholic ruler and Jane as the innocent victim of his power. Jane may represent the threatened and vulnerable Protestant values. Though this would have been somewhat ironic, not only because of her Catholicism, but also due to the dramatic change from sixteenth century ballads where Jane was the antithesis of these morals. The play may have offered a perfect example to demonstrate contemporary fears should an arbitrary ruler gain power. Lord Hastings described Jane as 'Once a bright star, that held her place on high' but after the death of Edward 'Her waning form no longer shall incite / Envy in woman, or desire in man. / She never sees the sun, but through her tears, / And wakes to sigh the live-long night away'.[134]

John Loftis argued that *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* had little to do with politics.[135] However, this interpretation ignores the censorship imposed on the play. In Rowe's original version of the play, Richard's character describes wanting to alter 'the order of succession'.[136] However, this was deemed to be too controversial by the censors and was subsequently replaced with Richard's inquiry: 'What, if some Patriot for the public Good Should vary from your scheme, new mould the state'.[137] It is perhaps impossible to suggest that Rowe's play was apolitical, considering that these censored lines concerned the succession and Richard III's absolute power. It may also be relevant that the same actor, Colley Cibber, played Richard in both Rowe's play and in the most recent production of Shakespeare's *Richard III*. The appearance of the same actor perhaps draws Jane's character into the wider narrative and aligns her with Richard's more noble victims. Much like the tragic representations of Jane in the sixteenth century, it is undoubtable that Jane, in this period, is seen as the pawn of Richard and his machinations for the throne.

The advertising for *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* was minimal, perhaps because none was necessary due to its topical resonance.[138] Between the play's debut on 2nd February and the 16th March, it had been performed around eighteen times. Not only is the popularity of this play seen in the number of performances, but also in the upsurge of texts discussing the context of the play and Jane Shore's life that were produced during this period. Works such as *The Life and Death of Jane Shore*

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[133] Marsden, 'Sex, Politics, and She-Tragedy', 507.
[134] Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore,* 9.
[135] John Loftis, *The Politics of Drama in Augustan England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963) 44.
[136] Nicholas Rowe, 'The Exceptionable Passages left out in the Acting and Printing of the Tragedy of Jane Shore', *Poems on Several Occassions: By N. Rowe, Esq;,* (London, 1714).
[137] Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore,* 26.
[138] Judith Milhous, 'The First Production of Rowe's 'Jane Shore'', *Theatre Journal,* 38:3 (October 1986) 319.

were published, aiming to 'explain that which has been brought on the Stage by Mr. Row'.[139] These histories demonstrate this paradigm shift in representations of Jane from the sixteenth to seventeenth century. These texts aimed to 'redeem her Name from the Injuries of Penny Scribes'.[140]

Instead of the tawdry, immoral Jane seen in the broadside ballads, Jane once again is presented as the victim of the evil machinations of powerful men. The past is again invoked as a parable for the present. In the previous century, Jane had been primarily associated with promiscuity and sexuality. However, the rhetoric power of Jane's character, that had been exploited by sixteenth century writers such as More and Churchyard, was still apparent to those in the eighteenth century.

[139] *The Life and Death of Jane Shore* (London, 1714) 2.
[140] *The Life and Character of Jane Shore. Collected from Our Best Historians, Chiefly from the Writings of Sir Thomas More;… Humbly Offer'd to the Readers and Spectators of Her Tragedy Written by Mr. Rowe* (London, 1714).

Conclusion

This dissertation has studied literary representations of Jane Shore over the course of the Early Modern period. In so doing, it has attempted to provide an insight into how the literary character of Jane Shore both represented and hoped to influence contemporary attitudes. This dissertation has also intended to bridge a gap in discussions of the literary afterlives of women in the Early Modern period, by attempting to move away from discussions of women of a 'higher' social status.

Fundamentally, this work has supported traditional historiographical arguments of the Early Modern period demonstrating an emerging post-reformation culture and the apparent fragility of the new religion throughout the Early Modern period. Writers, as a consequence of this perceived fragility, looked to the past in order to rationalise contemporary events. Consequently, Jane Shore proved to be a charismatic figure that could be exploited within literature.

The initial instability of the Tudor regime in the sixteenth century meant that the Tudors employed all of the resources at their disposal to create a 'Tudor myth'. One of the easiest targets was the 'elvish-marked, abortive, rooting hog' King Richard.[141] Jane Shore, as one of Richard's victims, was therefore able to contribute to his demonization. More's representation of 'Shore's Wife' was reified in later Tudor texts, however as the century progressed the impact of the Reformation led to a greater emphasis on the morality of Jane Shore. The perceived social disorder in this period led to a reaction against women who were seen to transgress societal norms. Jane therefore became synonymous with tales of morality and was often used as a Providential warning to women. However, towards the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century, the character of Jane witnessed a rehabilitation within literary culture. Political circumstances and issues over the succession meant that it would be beneficial for writers to move away from previous characterisations of Jane and instead she once again became a 'victim'. Perceived threats towards religion and the potential for a 'popish' and 'arbitrary ruler' led to Jane's character again being repurposed as the victim of a Catholic King.

Despite being described as 'too slight a thing to be written of and set among the remembrances of great matters', by the end of the eighteenth century Jane's tale continued to provoke such emotion it caused 'the nerves of many a gentle being gave way'.[142] Jane is perhaps an example of how history is made, she demonstrates how a charismatic character can capture the public imagination. Due to this popularity, Jane could therefore be exploited by writers in order to comment on contemporary issues. Through her presence within literature, broadside ballads, spoken words and

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[141] Shakespeare, *Richard III,* 1.3.225.

[142] More, *The History of King Richard,* 50; James Boaden, *Memoirs of Mrs. Siddons, Interspersed with Anecdotes of Authors and Actors* (London, 1893) 195.

plays, Jane's tale has been woven through history. Despite living in the fifteenth century and dying in obscurity, Jane remains an influence for twenty-first century writers and her tale continues to be told.

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