Jane Anger Her Protection for Women and the Emergence of a Radical Female Voice in Late Sixteenth Century England

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Jane Anger Her Protection for Women and the Emergence of a Radical Female Voice in Late Sixteenth Century England

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts with a concentration in European History Department of History College of Arts and Sciences University of South Florida

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Abstract

This thesis explores how women authors responded to masculine discourses of dominance in late sixteenth-century England. Directly, it concentrates on the pamphlet Jane Anger her Protection for Women, written in 1589 and published under the pseudonym Jane Anger. I argue Anger’s pamphlet was a radical voice within Elizabethan print culture which lends a view into gender politics of the time in which this piece was produced. I also argue that though Anger’s target audience was the gentlewomen of England, she crafted her pamphlet for a broad audience that included any literate man or woman across social station. The importance and radical nature of this pamphlet is found in the author’s use of a female voice to speak out against what she perceived to be an unjust social hierarchy between men and women. She located anti-woman discourses within the male-dominant genre of rhetoric and then critiqued the discourses she found issue with. Anger questioned the validity of male dominance, responded with evidence of what she saw as women’s superior features, and then generated her own evidence to support her claims. Further, Anger issued a call to action for the gentlewomen of Elizabethan England to pen their own responses to these anti-woman discourses.
Introduction

This thesis explores women’s responses to masculine discourses of dominance in late sixteenth-century England through an analysis of Jane Anger her Protection for Women. Published in 1589 under the pseudonym Jane Anger, the pamphlet remains one of the earliest examples of a woman writing in defense of women in England. However, Protection is also known to be a contested document because of the author’s unknown identity within a genre that commonly saw men ventriloquize, or imitate, women’s voices in writing. However, the cultural meaning of this pamphlet remains and should be considered beyond the scope of the author’s sexed gender. The authorial choices of Jane Anger provide insight into gender and sexually based discourses that affected the people of England during the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries. Anger’s writing broke many of the unwritten, social rules that dictated women’s place within the world of writing and publication by not only responding to anti-woman rhetoric, but by also making a call to action for Englishwomen to express their contempt for the negative effects of anti-woman rhetoric and the unfair privileges of men.

The pamphlet reveals the author’s awareness of a system which subjugated women and discloses the author’s own ideas about the merits of women. This reversal of rhetoric indicates the author’s belief in the merits of women as authors and further argues for women’s abilities to partake in rhetorical debate, directly challenging centuries of masculine discourses which sought to prove men were superior to women in nearly every aspect of life from education to participation in politics. Few scholars have analyzed Protection for a better understanding of sixteenth-century English culture. In my thesis, I want to stress the pamphlet’s importance as a
radical female voice within the late sixteenth-century English debate about women. I argue that Anger’s pamphlet was a radical voice within Elizabethan print culture that contributed to the literary debate known as the *querelle des femmes*.

Also known as “the woman question,” or the “debate about women,” the *querelle* discussed women and their place within a society’s social hierarchy. This debate was fueled by both secular and religious influences that were the product of studying classically informed philosophies and traditions which reduced women to subservient positions to men. This debate fueled public discourse that discredited the merits and abilities of women as a collective group. These discourses kept women from knowledge resources by denying them an equivalent education to men, denied them the same privileges associated with autonomy that men had, and kept women in a position that was dependent upon the male figures in their lives.¹ By the early fifteenth century, many women (and some men) began to pen concerned and even strongly worded responses to anti-woman rhetoric in France and Italy. In England, however, the masculine-dominant literature continued to influence public discourse with little participation from women. Jane Anger utilized a flourishing pamphlet culture to combine the same classical and biblical influences of male-dominant discourses with a biting and witty language that rejected the denigrations of those discourses and called upon the women of England to defend themselves against these literary attacks.

The nuance of power relations between men and women varies tremendously dependent upon the given situation, and much of the scholarly work on the study of these power relations has grown from the Marxist-influenced, second-wave feminist studies of authors such as Joan Kelly. Her famous question and essay “Did Women Have a Renaissance?” sparked decades of

discussion and debate that still continues to shape the questions historians ask about women in history.\(^2\) Kelly assessed whether women achieved a “renaissance” of their own during the early modern period from four angles: she compared regulations on sexuality, economic and political roles of women, cultural roles of women, and ideologies about women. These questions pushed Kelly to compare how women fared politically and socially during the medieval and early modern periods. She argued that “rich inferential value” could be assessed from looking at a society’s cultural influences such as art and literature, which would reveal “the attitudes of the dominant sector of that society towards women,” and also give access to how women interacted with a society’s “cultural activities.”\(^3\) Her questions were not only about how women were oppressed, but how women interacted with the societies that sought to oppress them. In Kelly’s opinion, women did not have a renaissance during the early modern period, stating:

“The bourgeois writings on education, domestic life, and society constitute the extreme in this denial of women’s independence. Suffice it to say that they sharply distinguish an inferior domestic realm of women from the superior public realm of men, achieving a veritable ‘renaissance’ of the outlook and practices of classical Athens, with its domestic imprisonment of citizen wives.”\(^4\)

In her 1982 article, “Early Feminist Theory and the ‘Querelle des Femmes,’ 1400-1789,” Kelly would add to her argument about the importance of studying women’s writing in the context of locating the foundations of feminist thought and resistance to male-dominant discourses. Kelly argued that tradition of women writing in defense of anti-woman discourses produced by the *querelle* emerged well before the French Revolution, which is often considered the point of origin for feminism. She argued that the writing of women during this period showed


\(^3\) Kelly, 176.

\(^4\) Kelly, 177.
a “400-year-old tradition of women thinking about women and sexual politics in European society.”\(^5\) Kelly tied these early feminist origins to the works of Christine de Pisan, a French woman who published “Letters to the God of Love” in 1399 to refute decades of anti-woman discourses such as that of Jean de Meun’s *Roman de la rose*.\(^6\) Pisan’s 1404 *The City of Women* also rebutted anti-woman texts and questioned why women had not yet penned responses to the negative portrayals created by men. Kelly noted that Pisan recognized a continuity of anti-woman discourses in the rhetoric of “virtually all the philosophers, poets, and men of letters (rhetoricians) [Pisan] read.”\(^7\) Kelly argued that “the voice of literate women who felt themselves and all women maligned and newly oppressed by that culture…were empowered by it at the same time to speak out in their defense.”\(^8\) According to Kelly, Pisan sought to break down these negative images through her own poetry and writing, and in doing so created a foundation upon which women could build their defenses. In the following centuries, many humanists and other philosophers would expand this debate into fields of knowledge and science that expressed themselves in everyday life. Questions about the ability of royal and aristocratic women to rule coincided with the rise of other anti-woman tracts during this period as well.\(^9\)

One of many authors that have responded to Kelly’s work and expanded the study of women in history is Virginia Cox. Her 1995 article, “The Single Self” moved away from the concerns of feminism, and instead focused on how women expressed themselves through writing. Looking at the works of late-sixteen-century Italian authors Moderata Fonte and Lucrezia Marinella, Cox sought to understand how societal constraints on women, in particular

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6 Kelly, 9–11.

7 Kelly, 13.

8 Kelly, 5.

the marriage market of sixteenth-century Venice, motivated these women to write, showing that women succeeded in areas previously thought of as outside the realm of acceptability for women. Cox showed how the rising costs of Italian dowries at the turn of the seventeenth century forced women and their families to choose between poor marriage arrangements or the convent.\(^{10}\) Instead, Fonte and Marinella offered a third option, a life of independence as a single woman with the same social and economic freedom for women as men had, even if that option was not considered appropriate, and in several European countries it was even banned by law.\(^{11}\)

While a growing body of scholarship has explored the works of women’s writing within the *querelles des femmes*, Jane Anger’s pamphlet has not received a full analysis. Instead, it is often used as a point of comparison with other women authors considered contemporary to Anger even though most of the material compared with Anger was produced decades after *Protection*.\(^{12}\) The historical foundations and growth of women’s rights cannot be told in a linear fashion. Instead, movements and theories have grown from the fits and starts of women who fought to be heard and their stories vary and change across time and geography. Jane Anger, whether man or woman, expressed their belief that women were capable of partaking in conversations about themselves and how they fit into English society. *Protection* sought to engage an audience by offering ideas on how and why women needed to be a part of these conversations while also offering an example of how women could interact with male-dominant


\(^{11}\) Several authors have explored the ways in which women were kept from living separately from men. For one example of European regulations on women living and working together see: Ulrike Strasser, *State of Virginity: Gender, Religion, and Politics in an Early Modern Catholic State*, First (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2007).

\(^{12}\) For instance, the introductory section of *Half Humankind* contains references and a brief analysis of Anger’s text, but often compares the language with later authors. Henderson and McManus, *Half Humankind*. 
discourses which kept them from achieving the same social and cultural milestones as men in English society.

That women were socially restricted from certain aspects of society does not mean women did not act with their own agency, because they most certainly did so within, and even around, their stations in life. Women of all classes exercised some form of power and influence within their lives, women did have choices, they made them every day within the confines of what was socially acceptable in their society, or even by choosing to work against that society’s moral or political beliefs. The aim of this thesis is to consider how Jane Anger exercised agency through her writing and the implications of this radical female voice within the context of Elizabethan England.

Preface material, letters, and even diaries have shown that the women of England were already forming a voice well into the start of the 1500s. Anger is the first known defense written by a woman in England, but this designation should be given warily and with the awareness of its potential to lose that title as new findings come from the archive. She was listed as “Jane ANGER [sic], Gentlewoman” in the registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640. There were several women living in London by that name, but none have been connected

13 Danielle Clarke, *The Politics of Early Modern Women’s Writing* (Reading, Massachusetts: Longman, 2001), 13. Clarke argues that thinking of translation work, commonly cited as a genre that women were restricted to, as something that was oppressive to women is robbing those women of the agency they exercised in creating their works. Part of the power dynamic is missed in this conversation because translation, and especially religiously based translations were strictly censured by both the Catholic and Protestant churches during their reformations. Those women who translated, or even created their own works were often focused on religiously toned pieces to prove their piety and increase their reputation within their social circles. Mistranslating such an item and attempting to use that text as a mouthpiece for women would have been dangerous beyond social ramifications because governing bodies and the religious institutions had no separation, making blasphemy punishable on a level equivalent to treason.

to the pamphlet otherwise. The physical pamphlet, *Protection*, survives in one extant, original copy and is held at the Huntington Library in Los Angeles, California. The pamphlet that survived can be traced back to a bound collection of *querelle* texts from the collection of Reverend Cox Macro, born 1683. It was collected by Richard Heber sometime in the late-eighteenth to early-nineteenth century and was then sold in the early to mid-nineteenth century. Upon his death, his esteemed collection of at least 150,000 books was sold to numerous collectors across the globe via catalogs which accounted for his hoard of often extremely rare books. The impressive assemblage stretched over several European countries and was contained within eight grand estates. From there, the pamphlet passed to the Britwell collection, where it was listed as “extremely rare,” and was eventually purchased in 1923 by the Huntington.

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15 Helen Andrews Kahin, “Jane Anger and John Lyly,” *Modern Language Quarterly* 8, no. 1 (March 1, 1947): 31–35, https://doi.org/10.1215/00267929-8-1-31. Kahin made mention of these women in her 1947 article on the connections between Jane Anger and John Lyly. A. Lynne Magnusson has also repeated this in her articles, and since then other authors have settled to accept that Jane Anger is a pseudonym that might never be given a true name to. These names are validated in Ely, Gibbons, and Gibbons, *Ely Episcopal Records. A Calendar and Concise View of the Episcopal Records Preserved in the Muniment Room of the Palace at Ely*, St. George et al., *The Visitation of Cambridge Made in A.D. 1575*, Blagg and Phillimore, *Berkshire Parish Registers. Marriages*.

16 I have not seen this mentioned in previous research and find it very interesting as it was once bound with a collection of women’s defenses that were separated by Heber when he acquired the collection. Kahin connects a few of the items from the Macro II collection, but does not mention that this is where the collection came from. Clawson and Ricci, *A Catalogue of Early English Books in the Library of John L. Clawson*, 234, "Macro II" collection.


Several scholars have searched the literary contemporaries of Jane Anger in the hopes of connecting her with other writers. Irrefutably connecting Anger with any of her contemporaries would serve to solidify the implied conversation occurring between Anger and her audience. Proof of her rhetoric reflected within the writing of another author could serve to expand modern understandings of sixteenth-century ideas about sex and gender within the context of Elizabethan England. One of the scholars who considered the correlations of Anger’s pamphlet with that of John Lyly’s *Euphues his Censure to Philantus* was Helen Kahin.\(^{21}\) Her 1947 article argued that even though Anger was directly responding to a now lost book, *Boke his Surfeit in love*, the author of *Surfeit* may have copied *exempla* and debate points from Lyly, as was common in the 1500s.\(^{22}\) She further argued that the politics of Elizabethan court culture would have influenced Lyly to move away from his prior anti-woman rhetoric, emphasizing the prevalence of authors who wrote on both sides of the *querelle*.

Following Kahin, A. Lynne Magnusse’n article “*Jane Anger her Protection, Boke his Surfeit, and The French Academie*” compared the exempla from Thomas Bowes’ translation of Pierre de la Primaudaye’s *The French Academie* with what can be inferred about *Boke his Surfeit* within Anger’s pamphlet.\(^{23}\) Magnussen argued that Anger’s loose citations of the Surfeiter can be traced to *The French Academy*, which Magnussen contended was the source material for the Surfeiter’s book. As previously mentioned by Kahin, authorship did not carry the same meaning as today because the concept of quotation and plagiarism, were much more open to the early modern writer. It was common for writers to borrow from classical examples as well as from

\(^{21}\) Kahin, “Jane Anger and John Lyly,” 32.  
\(^{22}\) Kahin, 32–33.  
Magnussen noted that Anger’s was of “derivative quality,” and that Anger’s is “a work of imitation, and what it must inevitably imitate is male discourse.” Magnussen and other authors have noted the ventriloquism of the male-voiced rhetoric utilized by Anger. Magnussen noted that Anger’s pamphlet potentially influenced others within the querelle genre. While connections between other authors and Jane Anger are hard to prove concretely, the arguments still carry weight and are worth consideration within the context of the querelle. As Magnussen stated, Anger’s writing is notable simply for finding its way into print in the first place, especially in

26 Magnusson, 269–70.
27 Magnusson, 270.
29 Magnusson, 291–93.
consideration of the dominance of men in the industry of the printed word, let alone her use of rhetoric in “revising, correcting, reinterpreting and interrupting the texts of her opponents.”

The first chapter delves into the context of Protection, its place within the English debate on women, and the state of Elizabethan Englishwomen. The second chapter will analyze the preface material of Protection. The preface material consists of two prefaces, one for gentlewomen, and one for everyone else (that was literate), and they give heated calls to action that shift in tone based on the class of reader addressed. These prefaces were thoughtfully crafted to garner a specific reaction from the reader, not only to rile up the masses, but to bring the women of England into conversation with the greater European world by way of the *querelle*. The third chapter contains an analysis of the body of the pamphlet where Anger combined nearly two-hundred years of literary debate with the real social and cultural issues at hand. Anger sought to produce “a protection for women” for a reason, be it personal or of a larger scale. She must have considered the issues she presented to be of real importance and clearly sought to utilize the tradition of the *querelle* to make her issues known. Her choice of medium, pamphlet, as well as the language of rhetoric, and the courtly stylization of sonnets at the end of her pamphlet suggest potential connections within the upper echelons of society, while her tone and direction suggest familiarity with those who were from lower ranks of society.

*A Note About the Author and the Text*

The full name of the pamphlet is *Jane Anger her Protection for Women, To defend them against the Scandalous Reportes of a late Surfeiting Lover, and all other like Venerians that complaine so to bee overcloyed with womens kindesse*. Throughout this thesis I will refer to the pamphlet as “Protection.” Other authors have referred to the pamphlet in varying ways, some

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30 Magnusson, 300.
choose “Jane Anger” as the title, some may choose “her Protection,” following the capitalization of the original pamphlet. Instead, I refer to the pamphlet as “Protection” because this separates the title of the pamphlet from the author’s pseudonym while in discussion.

There are arguments within the literary studies field that suggest Jane Anger could have been a man writing as a woman simply because the pseudonym has never been tracked down to one person. A stemming argument from this is that the women of England did not begin to participate regularly in the *querelle* until later in the seventeenth century. Many authors have debated this issue to no avail, as I briefly discussed above, the identity of Jane Anger has yet to be settled with the evidence available from the archives. I have chosen to address Jane Anger by she/her pronouns because the information currently available lends itself to Jane Anger being a woman.31

All quotations will be in updated, modern English spelling with the original early modern English (EME) available in the footnotes, some will have notes as to why I chose specific spelling (such as vain or vein). I do this for the ease of the reader and strongly suggest the original EME be given attention as well. Anthologies often offer updated spellings, such as *Women Writers in Renaissance England*, however these anthologies often annotate the original. These annotations and updated spellings often leave behind subtle, yet important context clues that can only be found in reading the original words of the author. These anthologies are incredibly important for increasing accessibility to source material, but the original should be

reconsidered when at all possible. Pagination and citations will follow the original document’s format.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{32} Three versions of \textit{Protection} were consulted in the writing of this thesis. All three will be credited in the references section.
Chapter One: Elizabethan England and Women Authors

“FIE on the falsehood of men, whose minds go oft a madding, & whose tongues can not so soon be wagging, but straight they fall a railing. Was there ever any so abused, so slandered, so railed upon, or so wickedly handled undeservedly, as are we women?”

-Jane Anger33

Many texts produced by European women during the sixteenth and seventeen centuries show that women were considering how anti-woman discourses were creating a culture that subjugated women and held them to a position of subservience to men. These defenses carried a variety of tones and concerns, and where some women used stern language, others attempted to appeal to their audience with more honeyed tones. The continuity between these texts lies within the expressions of dissent as written by women, which show their concern with the effects male-dominant discourses had in reinforcing social and cultural constraints on women. Protection not only offered a blatant female voice of dissent, it also spoke to a broad audience of women and men, across social ranks of class and gender.

In France, debates about the merits of women were far from a novelty when Christine de Pisan penned a defense against anti-woman discourses in her 1399 “Letters to the God of Love.”34 In sixteenth-century Venice, Moderata Fonte and Lucrezia Marinella also wrote to speak out against the ways in which men sought to retain dominance within their society.35 These

33 Anger, Her Protection for Women, Second Preface. “FIE on the falshoode of men, whose minds goo oft a madding, & whose tongues can not so soone bee wagging, but straight they fil a railing. Was there ever any so abused, so slandered, so railed upon, or so wickedly handeled undeservedly, as are we women?”
women relied on tropes that allowed them to work within, but also against the male-dominant discourses of their societies. In their writing, women authors often relied heavily upon themes of morality and obedience, often striving to prove themselves as worthy to a literate male-dominant audience that believed religiously and secularly that women were naturally lesser than men in almost every single way.\footnote{Elaine V. Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1987), xiv–xv. Beilin states: “At the center of Christine’s thought [in writing The City of Ladies] is salvation, and we must recognize the close links in a Renaissance mind between the qualities of humility, patience, obedience, and chastity—and salvation.”} Poetry, letters, diaries, advice books, and other writing produced by women during the Renaissance showcase how women worked within the confines of what was socially acceptable for women while also expressing how they viewed the ways in which their society treated them based solely upon their gender as women. Jane Anger was one of many women in Europe who expressed dissent and simultaneously attempted to justify the right to make such observations through the very same systems that sought to suppress women’s voices. *Protection* is just one example, within one genre of women’s writing that was insubordinate to discourses of male dominance, but it was specifically unique for its context within Elizabethan England.

In sixteenth-century England, the debate about women was dominated by male voices, and in some cases ventriloquized female voices, which debated whether women were inherently good or evil, trustworthy of being in a place of centralized power, or capable of taking the same positions as men within a society. The debate about women gained popularity in England during the reign of Henry VIII (r. 1509-1547), but comparatively took on specific themes during the reigns of Elizabeth I (r. 1558-1603) and James I (r. 1603-1625) which reflected the concerns of the English court during those periods; specifically the right of a woman to rule.\footnote{Patricia Demers, *Women’s Writing in English: Early Modern England*, Women’s Writing in English (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 37–46.} More
specifically, during the reign of Elizabeth I, questions emerged that reflected her society’s fixation on the submission of women to men as they questioned whether Elizabeth I could or should continue to act with a majority rule once she married.38 The Tudor monarchy, and England with it, fell into a paradox whereby the country’s historically narrow focus on patrilineage had left the family dynasty with only women to continue Tudor control of England. While some male authors attempted to validate a female ruler that would continue the family’s exclusive control of England, others within both the secular and religious communities endeavored to suppress Elizabeth’s ability to rule in the same fashion and right as a king.39 These debates bled into public discourses about women, and the common tropes were clearly reflected in the rhetorical publications of the time.

A popular rhetorical trope of the debate during the latter half of the sixteenth century revolved around the biblical Eve with authors who discussed religious piety. Anti-woman authors often used Eve to symbolize sin and to argue that women carried the sins of Eve, but women’s defense authors chose to reverse this image in women’s favor. According to Elaine Beilin, these defense authors provided exempla, or rhetorical moralistic examples, of Eve which reinterpreted her to represent purity, and religious fortitude in women which women authors in turn used to validate themselves in their writing.40 These reversed biblical exempla were then used to argue that women were religiously equal, if not superior to men.41 For English women

38 Demers, 39.
39 Mihoko Suzuki, “Gender, Power, and the Female Reader: Boccaccio’s ‘Decameron’ and Marguerite de Navarre’s ‘Heptameron,’” Comparative Literature Studies 30, no. 3 (1993): 232. Mihoko Suzuki specifically stresses the significance of the consideration of women and their roles in positions of power in the debate about women during the reign of Elizabeth I. The English political theorist Robert Filmer was a stern critic of women’s rule. In Patriarcha or the Natural Power of Kings he stated that because the Power of kings was paternal, only men had the right to rule. John Knox’s The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regimen of Women is another example of anti-woman writing that specifically targeted a female rulership.
40 Beilin, Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance.
41 Beilin, 248–55.
authors, the use of Eve as a positive image strongly indicates that they perceived the negative influence maintained by the teachings of their religion and actively sought to debate the validity of male-dominant discourses that discredited women as sinful or inherently evil.\textsuperscript{42}

During the sixteenth century, English women began to move into the public realm of publishing, but this was a slow turn from their former private writings. English women authors were socially restricted by gender norms to certain genres, specifically the field of translation.\textsuperscript{43} However, it is also important to note that no woman outside of the English royal families published translations for a public audience until Margaret Roper produced her 1523 translation of Desiderius Erasmus’ \textit{Procatio Dominica}.\textsuperscript{44} This means that before 1523, the majority of women’s writing was not intended for a large public audience, which was not very large to begin with due to low literacy rates in England at the time.\textsuperscript{45} In England, women’s writings were kept from reaching a broad public audience due to strong beliefs that writing and education would create deviancy in women.\textsuperscript{46} Many scholars have viewed this as a suppression of women’s voices, however, it is important to also note that the contributions that women made in this field were contemporarily and post-contemporarily regarded by many men as beneficial to the English language and people.\textsuperscript{47} While women were constrained by the men who ran their churches, governments, and publishing companies, they found a way in which to work with agency within their societies.

\textsuperscript{42} Beilin.
\textsuperscript{45} Clark, \textit{The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular Moralistic Pamphlets, 1580-1640}, 19.
In the latter half of the sixteenth century, translation, alongside the writing of letters, prayer books, and religious testimonials were considered socially acceptable fields of writing for women of English gentry.\textsuperscript{48} Within these fields, women could protect their public reputation by generating their own discourses that revolved around their society’s associations with purity of character.\textsuperscript{49} In a society that placed the value of women within their worth to men, a woman’s reputation acted as her social currency; without a good reputation, a woman, or more importantly, her family could not hope to barter for the connections that came with a strong marriage alliance.\textsuperscript{50} By reassuring England’s literate classes that women would not always be corrupted by writing, women that wrote within the religious fields made room for those women who would publish within public genres.\textsuperscript{51}

English secular publications began to reach a broader audience at the turn of the sixteenth century, and topics that ranged from news to religion found an eager market within the literate classes.\textsuperscript{52} Many women authors questioned their positions within English society by recognizing themselves as capable, educated, and worthy despite what some of their audience might have assumed. Male-dominant discourses in England created a culture that felt the need to constantly question where women stood in relation to men within the social hierarchy. Within secular publications women authors began to hold their own discussions which provided discourses that validated women and, by association, invalidated male-dominant discourses. In a study of English women authors, Beatrice Righetti statistically analyzed how between 1560 and 1620

\textsuperscript{48} Demers, 98–100.
\textsuperscript{49} Demers, 99.
\textsuperscript{51} As a small aside, not all women that produced religious texts were revered. Anne Askew was put to death for her writings.
\textsuperscript{52} For more on the popularity of cheap(er) print, please see: Clark, \textit{The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular Moralistic Pamphlets, 1580-1640} and Voss, \textit{Elizabethan News Pamphlets: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marlowe & the Birth of Journalism}. 

17
Englishwomen used gender specific words, and she found that there were increased occurrences of gendered pronouns acting as a central focus of discussion.\textsuperscript{53} This significant shift showed that women authors believed in equality between men and women and showed a “literary awareness” that a connection existed between author and audience.\textsuperscript{54} This awareness, combined with how women authors discussed both men and women, indicates that women authors were writing in consideration of the position they held within society in relation to that of men and further suggests that women did not believe that men deserved a place above them in their social hierarchy.

These above-mentioned discussions on the merits and abilities of women have survived due in large part to the prevalence of Elizabethan pamphlet culture. Pamphlets gained popularity due to the ease and low cost of printing and because of this, pamphlet culture has often been thought of as catering to a lower social class, but many pamphlets also appealed to those educated in Latin and classical philosophies as taught within humanist circles.\textsuperscript{55} According to Sandra Clark, the new format of pamphlet, and the rates at which it was produced and consumed during the Elizabethan period offers a specific view into changes that were occurring within Elizabethan literary culture.\textsuperscript{56} Clark argued that the popularity of pamphlet culture can be attributed to a growing class of people who lived a semi-privileged life somewhere between gentry and peasant, a type of middle class that maintained just enough income and freedom of time to provide a higher quality of life than the majority of people in England.\textsuperscript{57} As the next chapter will show, Jane Anger specifically targeted this broad audience.

\textsuperscript{54} Righetti, 58.
\textsuperscript{55} Clark, \textit{The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular Moralistic Pamphlets, 1580-1640}, 21.
\textsuperscript{56} Clark, 18–33.
\textsuperscript{57} Clark, 18–20.
England’s general literacy rates during the tail end of the Tudor period have been a source of contention for many years. In her 2005 *Women’s Writing in English: Early Modern England*, Patricia Demers cites many areas where lower results of literacy rates tend to examine literacy through church and state records that would have typically overlooked women in the first place.\(^{58}\) Instead, women as readers can be seen in the increased number of books tailored to women.\(^{59}\) The combination of more affordable literature and literate women seems to have also increased the number of women authors, which also increased as women gained more access to education.\(^{60}\) For Tudor philosophers, literacy and authorship were deeply tied together and were viewed as physiological processes of consumption and reproduction.\(^{61}\) Helen Smith argued that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries discussions of women and reading suggests that many considered reading an act that was a “process of interaction and exchange between books, the body, and the world.”\(^{62}\) Taking this into consideration, Jane Anger’s argumentative pamphlet becomes all the more important within the context of Elizabethan pamphlet culture. If reading was seen as a process of consumption and reproduction, then how would an Elizabethan have viewed the reading of Anger’s pamphlet?

The radical voice of Jane Anger carried a tone of opposition to the men that sought to vilify the women of late sixteenth-century England. *Protection* spoke out against discourses of male dominance, calling them for what they were: a tool, a device that was designed and reinforced over time to keep women subservient to men; no matter their class, no matter the woman’s piety or personal success. As the following chapters will show, Jane Anger knew that

\(^{59}\) Demers, 23–28.  
\(^{60}\) Demers, 26–30.  
\(^{61}\) Helen Smith, “‘More Swete Vnto the Eare / than Holosome for Ye Mynde’: Embodying Early Modern Women’s Reading,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (2010): 413–32, https://doi.org/10.1525/hlq.2010.73.3.413.  
men targeted women in discourses of male dominance, further she disagreed with those
discourses and sought to generate discussion that would question the validity of male dominance
over women in England.
Chapter Two: A Tale of Two Prefaces

Gentlewomen, though it is to be feared that your settled wits will advisedly condemn that, which my choleric vein [or vain] hath rashly set down, and so perchance, ANGER shall reap anger for not agreeing with diseased persons: Yet (if with indifference of censure, you consider of the head of the quarrel) I hope you will rather shew yourselves defendants of the defender’s title, then complainants of the plaintiff’s wrong.

-Jane Anger

Jane Anger’s Protection contains two prefaces which show a radical female voice that spoke out on behalf of women and against the expectations placed upon Elizabethan Englishwomen. She showed great displeasure in how Englishwomen’s contributions to society were dismissed by anti-woman rhetoric, and blatantly called men untrustworthy and “diseased.” Further, she portrayed herself as a woman seeking to protect other women from the societal effects of anti-woman literature. Within both opening statements, the author attempted to garner both the attention and response of her readership with powerful language that expressed anger and disgust at men. Protection is radical for many reasons, but the preface material is exceptionally so for the broad audience it spoke to, as well as the strong language

63 Jane Anger, Jane Anger Her Protection for Women. To Defend Them against the Scandalous Reportes of a Late Surfeiting Louer, and All Other like Venerians That Complaine so to Bee Ouercloyed with Womens Kindnes., Early English Books, 1475-1640 / 165:21 (At London : Printed by Richard Iones, and Thomas Orwin, 1589., 1589), http://gateway.proquest.com.ezproxy.lib.usf.edu/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99840140 First Preface. The common reading of “vaine” is “vein” and is seen repeatedly in many anthologies with updated language. However, Anger could also be referring to the vanity (or sin) of her disobedient tone. “Gentlewome[n], though it is to be feared that your setled wits wil advisedly condemne that, which my chollericke vaine hath rashly set downe, and so perchance, ANGER shal reape anger for not agreeing with diseased persons: Yet (if with indifferencie of censure, you consider of the head of the quarrel) I hope you will rather shew your selves defendantes of the defenders title, then complainantes of the plaintiffes wrong.”

64 Anger, First Preface.
employed to strategically create two outcomes: a voice that would stand out and to reach a broad audience.

In a study of early modern Englishwomen’s writing, Julie Eckerle defined the preface as “something ‘extra’ or ‘outside,’” of a text.\(^65\) She stated that preface material is modernly considered something of little meaning when compared to the body of the primary text.\(^66\) However, Eckerle also noted that the preface was a place in which early-modern authors presented themselves to their audience, and she further reasoned that the preface was a place of strategy for the author to engage their audience and provoke further reading.\(^67\) Prefaces were utilized across genres and allowed authors to acknowledge a patron or to dedicate a work to a friend or family member. However, for women the preface became a strategic place for them to validate themselves as authors. Eckerle emphasized that prefaces provided women writers with a “space [which] enables original composition, not only by introducing and making way for such work in the primary text but also more significantly, by allowing for original argument within the preface itself.”\(^68\) For instance, a woman writer could make minor choices in translation to emphasize certain qualities of characters or to underscore a moral lesson, but they could not recreate the item being translated into something completely new and different for the purpose of speaking to societal or cultural issues from the point of view of a woman. Women made choices in what they translated and had published, but the preface acted a space for women writers to justify their choices.\(^69\)

\(^66\) Eckerle, 97.
\(^67\) Eckerle, 97.
\(^68\) Eckerle, 98.
\(^69\) Eckerle, 99.
“To the Gentlewomen of ENGLAND, health.”

The first preface speaks to a narrower audience, the gentlewomen of England. Even within this context, her exaggerated language indicated her awareness of issues outside of her own circle of family and friends. Her choice in tone suggests her appreciation of how far removed her behavior and frame of mind in writing was from the socially acceptable meek behavior that was expected of gentle-class women. Anger reaffirmed her tenuous position, stating: “I doubt judgement before trial, which were injurious to the Law, and I confess that my rashness deserves no less, which was a fit of my extremity.” This statement proposed to the reader an opportunity to formulate their own opinions, but she asked that they first read the entirety of the pamphlet before coming to their judgement. In this preface, she hoped that the reader would continue to read beyond the prefaces even though she was worried that the reader had already formed socially based judgements simply because she was an angered woman putting her thoughts to paper; and worse, she had chosen to publish her thoughts in a public forum for all to see. Anger intentionally wrote this pamphlet to garner a response from her audience, and both prefaces indicate a previous lack of such responses from women in England. Anger sought to engage her audience through shared emotion, and through this connection of emotion, she was making a bold statement to her audience. As Lynne Magnuson has noted, Jane Anger’s pamphlet showed a striking level of emotion that requires attention because it certainly would have been a key element to her readers at the time.

The reserved tone carried throughout the first preface reflected Anger’s later expressed desire to move the debate in a direction that would include the words of women. Further, her

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70 Anger, *Her Protection for Women*, 1589, First Preface.
71 Anger, *Her Protection for Women*, First Preface. “I doubt judgement before trial, which were injurious to the Law, and I confess that my rashnesse deserveth no lesse, which was a fit of my extremetie.”
72 Magnusson, “‘His Pen with My Hande,’” 272.
choice to address the gentlewomen first implies that Anger was specifically targeting the literate and more highly educated women of England who shared her thoughts and sentiments. Anger categorized herself a gentlewoman, as can be seen on the cover of the pamphlet when the author’s name is given as “Ja: A. Gent.,” as well as her entry in the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640.\textsuperscript{73} Anger’s tone carries a sense of familiarity with both the gentlewomen and the expectations of how gentlewomen were meant to compose themselves and speak to one another. This single observation cannot verify her gender or actual social status. However, when compared with the tone in the second preface it is arguable that Anger was interested in making an impression on any literate woman that would consume the pamphlet but was aware of the social stigma attached to her choice of expression in the context of being a gentlewoman of England.

In a show of familiarity with the gentlewomen, Anger further argued that they did not need a lengthy explanation for the emotions that justified the production of the pamphlet. While she felt her “rashness deserves no less” than to be judged, she also had no intention to “urge reasons” because she believed women’s wits to be “sharp.”\textsuperscript{74} The author reserved more belief in the reasoning ability of the women in her audience, than for “the diseased persons” she detested and spoke out against.\textsuperscript{75} The choice of rhetoric as the public route to express her distaste projects the image that Anger was interested in a debate about her complaints, and felt that there would be respondents despite the socially unacceptable emotions that she claimed were her inspiration.

\textsuperscript{73} Anger, Cover, updated "I” to modern "J” for clarity. Also, Stationers’ Company (London, Arber, and Rivington, A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London; 1554-1640 A. D. ..., 154. It should be noted that the colon is only present on the first two abbreviations of the pseudonym, while the third has a period. Standardizations of typesetting were still in their infancy at this time. It is unclear as to whether the colon was intentional, or if each abbreviation should read “Ia. A. Gent.” as the third print of the abbreviated name appears. Either way, it is clear that “Ia.” represents Iane (Jane), “A.” represents Anger, and “Gent.” is meant to place this person within the gentle class.

\textsuperscript{74} Anger, Her Protection for Women, First Preface. “rashnesse deserveth no lesse”

\textsuperscript{75} Anger, First Preface.
Anger seemed aware of the delicacy of her position and the chance of retribution her radical voice carried: “so perchance, ANGER [sic] shall reap anger for not agreeing with diseased persons.” Anger criticized anti-woman authors as, “diseased persons,” showing her concern for the spread of such “diseased” ideas and beliefs and the effects such a plague had on women’s abilities to participate as major players within her society social structure. She would later tie her complaints to England’s heavy reliance upon a debate form rooted in the philosophies of classical writers, and how it kept women from participating in such debates that could expand the social possibilities of women. Her perceived need for defense highlights the effects of rhetoric based in the teachings of classical writers such as Aristotle and Cicero, who are commonly cited as the largest influences for early modern anti-woman rhetoric as their rhetorical styles were the most followed. This defiance of classical teaching is expanded upon in the body of the pamphlet, and she was heavily implying this to her main audience, the gentlewomen who likely carried some amount of classical learning.

Anger’s tone in the first preface highlighted a self-awareness of how she would be perceived by the gentlewomen she addressed. The author showed a clear knowledge that her choice of tone would not appeal to the great masses because of its deviation from the expected formality of a woman’s written word, however, remained steadfast in confronting the issue at hand. Anger finished the first preface with a modest apology and commitment to the reader: “But (in a word) for my presumption I crave pardon, because it was ANGER that did write it: committing your protection, and myself, to the protection of yourselves, and the judgement of


the cause to the censures of your just minds.” At first glance, this final statement directed to the gentlewomen of England is typical of most Elizabethan apologetic language, but within the context of the entire pamphlet, some of her apologetic language becomes near comedic, almost sarcastic in nature. The way in which she emphasized the pun on her pseudonym spoke to the wit of the writer and informed her audience of how she intended to proceed in her ruminations. However, her choice to highlight her anger and frustration to her audience are what make this piece an example of radical female voice.

Anger’s use of “choleric” in her opening statement (shown at the opening of this chapter) was strategically planned. She blamed her indignant act on the complete and total emotional takeover she experienced while reading the now lost Boke his Surfeit. Anger used these emotions as a justification for writing in a fashion that was unseemly for a woman; a justification considered more appropriate for a man than a woman. The timing and placement of “choleric” and the all-capitalized “ANGER,” suggest a playful sarcasm between author and reader which is repeated throughout the body of the pamphlet. Someone who could not retain control of their emotions was considered to carry a weakness based in choleric humors. “Choleric” carried specific implications for women which were commonly tied to the image of an ill-tempered

78 Anger, Her Protection for Women, First Preface, “But (in a worde) for my presumption I crave pardon, because it was ANGER that did write it: committing your protection, and my selfe, to the protection of your selves, and the judgement of the cause to the censures of your just minds.”
79 Anger, Her Protection for Women, First Preface, “cholloricke”
80 Kahin, “Jane Anger and John Lyly.” Kahin suggested the connection between Boke his Surfeyt in love, as well as Euphues his Censure to Philautus as the most likely publications for Anger’s pamphlet to be a response to. It is now commonly believed that Boke his Surfeyt is the text that Anger was directly responding to in the fashion of the querelle, as well as the Elizabethan pamphlet wars.
82 Anger, Her Protection for Women, First Preface.
83 Here I am speaking of complexion in the humoral, pseudo-medical, early-modern European sense. For a more in-depth reading on medieval inspired, early-modern ideas on how complexions revealed the inner nature of a person, please see: Sharon Block, Colonial Complexions (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018). While the book is rooted in colonial America it reflects heavily upon the influence of medieval ideas on complexions.
woman’s humoral complexion. It is also important to note that choleric complexions could be and were tied to men as well, but it often represented a feminization when in reference to men.\textsuperscript{84} This play on words is just one way in which Anger sought to justify herself by twisting the expected wit of a rhetorical text with the unexpected justification of her anger. 

“To all Women in general”\textsuperscript{85}

A tonal shift occurred in the voice of the author between the first and second prefaces. In the first preface, Anger remained amiable and approachable in how she structured the preface addressed to the gentlewomen of England. In the second, the author takes on a striking and fierce tone that was meant to raise hackles and generate discussion on both sides of the debate. The new tone resonated with intensity in her secondary opening address “To all Women in general, and gentle Reader whatsoever.”\textsuperscript{86} While the dedication to “all Women in general” was not a definitive gesture to a monolithic “all women,” it suggests the pamphlet had the potential for a wide audience, more importantly she sought to reach any woman that was literate. In providing a tone for the gentlewomen, but also including “all women” Anger’s radical voice could reach more women and hopefully influence them to speak out against the issues she highlighted in the body of her pamphlet.

Jane Anger clearly perceived women as a select social group of people within her society and she plainly argued that women were being treated unjustly. In considering how English society viewed women, Anger asked:

Was there ever any so abused, so slandered, so railed upon, or so wickedly handled undeservedly, as are we women? Will the Gods permit it, the Goddesses

\textsuperscript{84} Block, 19–22.  
\textsuperscript{85} Anger, Second Preface. “To all Women in generall”  
\textsuperscript{86} Anger, Second Preface.
stay their punishing judgments, and we ourselves not pursue their undoing for such devilish practices?\footnote{Anger Second Preface. “Was there ever any so abused, so slandered, so railed upon, or so wickedly handeled undeservedly, as are we women? Will the Gods permit it, the Goddesses stay theyr (sic) punishing judgments, and we ourselves not pursue their undoings for such divelish practices?”}

This hyperbolic language continued throughout the second preface in a tone that can only be described as indignant, but this does not mean such proclamations were meaningless. Instead, her religiously based dialogic observations can be viewed as more than a simple passing comment during this period in England’s history due to the continuing religious tensions of the English Reformation.\footnote{The topic of religion, religiosity, and reformation are far to broad to fully incorporate here. There are several areas of contention surrounding these topics, but what can generally be agreed upon is that religion was taken relatively seriously due to heresy being likened to the crime of treason in many places during the early modern period. Please see: Duffy, \textit{The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580, Second Edition} for one of many views on the English Reformation and how the Reformation echoed through English society.} She invoked the names of classical deities while also invoking typical Judeo-Christian entities such as the devil:

\begin{quote}
Let the streams of the channels in London streets run so swiftly, as they may be able alone to carry them from that sanctuary. Let the stones be as Ice, the soles of their shoes as Glass, the ways steep like Ætna, & every blast a Whirlwind puffed out of Boreas his long throat, that these may hasten their passage to the Devils haven.\footnote{Anger, \textit{Her Protection for Women}, Second Preface. “Let the streames of the channels in London streates run so swiftly, as they may be able alone to carry them from that sanctuarie. Let the stones be as Ice, the soals of their shoes as Glasse, the waies steep like Ætna, & every blast a Whyrl-wind puffed out of Boreas his long throat, that these may hasten their passage to the Devils haven.”}
\end{quote}

Anger repeatedly used such mythological and religious provocations within the second preface as well as the body of the pamphlet. Within Elizabethan polemical discourses, this type of provocation was common, but by utilizing it as a ventriloquization of men’s rhetorical attacks, Anger highlighted the sincerity of her argument. Here, Anger was utilizing another common trope that tied these two themes of mythology and religion together to form an image of herself as the righteously angered. She continued the theme of justification of and through her uncontrollable anger towards the defamation of women by calling for righteous vengeance and
holy intervention. Even when gender is removed from the question, Anger’s statements remain firmly entrenched in sincere and blatant derision at anti-woman texts which is only further highlighted the way the author views the social position of women within their society.

Anger also lashed out with animalization as a tactic stating: “A halter hold al such persons.” By animalizing men and calling for them to be haltered as a cow, goat, or horse, Anger also copied the same insult-based tactics used in anti-woman texts, which further denotes Anger’s familiarity with rhetoric as well as the tactics used by the type of author she responded to. As Lynne Magnusson proposed, Anger was working in a field of writing dominated by men which Anger needed to navigate closely in order to represent an argument from a woman’s perspective which lead Anger to “appropriate the terms of contemporary stylistic debate.” However, Anger’s choices remain “a critique of a larger phenomenon within the writer’s culture and within male discourse about women.” Anger used her second preface to formulate her complaints and concerns with an appeal not just to the gentry, but to whomever would read it. Her strong language in this second preface was strategically planned to anger those who did not agree and encourage those who did to continue reading, and even further to respond to her pamphlet.

In rhetorical fashion, Anger questioned her audience’s stance on the issues she presented, proving in return her view: “Shall Surfeitors rail on our kindness, you stand still & say naught, and shall not Anger stretch the veins of her brains, the strings of her fingers, and the lists of her

90 Anger, Second Preface.
92 Magnusson, “‘His Pen with My Hande,’” 272.
93 Magnusson, 270.
modesty, to answer their Surfeitings? Yes truly.” Anger’s frustration is not only with anti-
woman writing, but with the other women who “stand still & say naught.” Anger clearly saw 
anti-woman tracts as attacks against the “modesty” of women, and her perception was that of 
consternation at the lack of rebuttal from the women of England, and in turn these literary attacks 
against women pushed Anger to overlook the importance of “modesty” and “stretch the veins of 
her brains,” and “the strings of her fingers.” The author left no question for her audience as to 
why she chose to risk her reputation and modesty in the face of such “falsehood,” and further 
asked her audience to support this choice. Protection’s second preface offered radical voice 
simply in how it was constructed, a question and answer that sought to provoke further debate 
that engaged women. Anger was prodding her audience, showing them that if she could risk her 
reputation, her “modesty,” then so could other women.

Anger called upon the general readership in the second preface to, “aide and assist me in 
defense of my willingness” just as she had asked the gentlewomen of England to, “commit your 
protection, and myself to the protection of yourselves.” This commitment indicates the author 
considered the strength of multiple women defending the pamphlet’s message, the potential 
results of multiple people joining in the conversation and felt that the risk to their modesty— 
collective and singular—could be worth the exchange if women could improve their lives and positions within their society. If the author was a woman, she knew that this pamphlet

94 Anger, Her Protection for Women, Second Preface. In this instance, I believe “vaines” to refer to “veins,” but again, Anger could be referring to the vanity within her mind which would suggest further awareness of her position and how she would be viewed by her peers. “Shal Surfeiters raile on our kindnes, you stand stil & say nought, and shall not Anger stretch the vaines of her braines, the stringes of her fingers, and the listes of her modestie, to answere their Surfeitings? Yes truly.”
95 Anger, Second Preface.
96 Anger, Second Preface.
97 Anger Second Preface.
98 Anger. Second Preface: “aide and assist me in defence of my willingness” First Preface: “committ your protection, and my selfe to the protection of your selves.”
represented something unique in England for women as writers and was aware that this “willingness” was a danger to her socially if her pseudonym was ever sourced back to her.\textsuperscript{99}

The danger lay in her radical voice and the choices she made in insulting men as social group. She strategically chose to start her harangue with an invective against men: “FIE on the falsehood of men, whose minds go oft a madding, & (sic) whose tongues cannot so soon be wagging, but straight they fall a railing.”\textsuperscript{100} This choice indicates that Anger was aware of the common tactics used in anti-woman texts. Yet she decided to dismiss such tropes as the prude, the nag, and the seductress by formulating similar insults against men.\textsuperscript{101} Anger was formulating a strategy within the preface, laying out how she planned to simultaneously attack anti-woman rhetoric, and how she would dismiss the “falsehood of men.”\textsuperscript{102} The insults typically hurled by anti-woman writing clearly influenced her authorial choices, as Magnusson argued:

> In the male-dominated cultural discourse of the sixteenth century, the minimizing and the maximizing of the products of the female tongue work together to deprive women of dignified speech. In choosing the voluble tongue as her synecdoche for the omnipresence and power of the male word, Anger turns back against its maker a discursive practice that itself rationalizes and preserves discourse as a male prerogative.\textsuperscript{103}

Anger’s use of insults against men in the prefaces shows that she was keenly aware of the typical tropes used in anti-woman tracts. More importantly, this tactic of reversing men’s insults implies that wanted to claim a position for the responses of Englishwomen within the debate about

\textsuperscript{99} Anger, Second Preface.
\textsuperscript{100} Anger, \textit{Her Protection for Women}, Second Preface. “FIE on the falsehoode of men, whose minds goe oft a madding, & (sic) whose tongues can not so soone bee wagging, but straight they fal a railing.”
\textsuperscript{101} Such tropes are the scrutinous study of many types of scholars, and the sources and meanings of those tropes are many. Please see: Harvey, “Early English Feminism and the Creation Myth,” Coletti, “"Did Women Have a Renaissance?,” and finally, I would present again that Rev. Cox Macro (born 1683) possessed the only surviving copy of \textit{Protection} of which he held in a bound collection that were specifically categorized as women’s defense pieces. These derogatory tropes were well known within the genre and are reflected in the titles from the collection, such as “A Merry Jest of a Shrewde Wife” and the “Proud Wife’s Pater Noster.”
\textsuperscript{102} Anger, \textit{Her Protection for Women}, 1589.
\textsuperscript{103} Magnusson, “‘His Pen with My Hande,’” 272–74.
women in England by showing that men were no better than women. The intentions of the author become more apparent when viewed in line with her questions about the absence of responses from Englishwomen. Combined with her choice of tonal shift, Anger generated an image that wittingly incorporated stereotypes of women and through this she processed how she saw the social position of women within her society. In working through these ideas, Anger formulated her unruly response in spite of the potential for ramifications that could have had long lasting effects on her reputation.

Despite this potential social danger for a woman of the gentry, Anger used her pseudonym to highlight the reason for her writing, which further validated her “rashness.” In making the choice to approach a rhetorical publication, to exercise logic and word play from a place of self-righteous anger the author had to step outside of the roles allotted to women writers. Her call for protection went beyond the common apologetic and repentant language of Elizabethan writing within preface material because Anger was asking the reader to support her whether in the form of open mindedness, or by partaking in the wider conversation about women.\textsuperscript{104} These calls to action enforce the theory that Anger was aware of the social implications of publishing \textit{Protection}, but also highlight Anger’s possible social position via her well-informed strategy to garner a response within this rhetorical literary debate. Anger could only possess this knowledge via access to a humanist education and awareness of the \textit{querelle} itself, as these are what gave social and cultural meaning to this publication not only for herself as the author, but for her audience as well.

The pamphlet’s formulaic strategy suggests that, regardless of the gender of the author, Anger felt that women were a group of people within English society that were being unfairly

\textsuperscript{104} Anger, Second Preface.
denied access to the same outlets, interests, and resources as men. Protection’s prefaces show that Jane Anger was aware of the issues at hand, and must have, at the very least, known of a small contingent of women that agreed with these points of view. Further, her tone, selection of audience, and authorial choices imply that she felt there were people in England willing to support her. These findings show that Anger’s authorial choices resonate with an express dissent to the boundaries her society placed around the abilities of women. Regardless of the gender of the author, Anger showed dissent in the face of those who would continue to withhold women’s voices from public debate.
Chapter Three: The Body of the Pamphlet

*Aut amat, aut odit, non est in tertio*: she loves good things, and hates that which is evil: she loves justice and hates inequity: she loves truth and true dealing, and hates lies and falsehood: she loves man for his virtues, & hates him for his vices: to be short, there is no Medium between good and bad, and therefore she can be, *In nullo tertio*.

-Jane Anger

Just as Anger used the two prefaces to engage the reader, and to validate herself to her audience, Anger used the body of the pamphlet to further recognize herself, and thereby other women, as capable of debating and discussing anti-woman discourses. She validated herself through her humanist education and her understanding of the longstanding debate about women within the literary culture of England. That Anger chose to make her critiques and arguments using rhetoric also implies that Anger did not want to tell her audience she was an educated gentlewoman, but rather, she chose to show her audience what she was capable of with wit and by capturing a tone and style similar to the texts and teachings she was debating. This chapter focuses on the ways in which Anger critiqued anti-woman discourses and argues that the ways in which Anger refuted male-dominant discourses emphasize a radical voice that emerged in the

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105 “*Aut amat, aut odit, non est in tertio*” Latin to English: “she either loves, or hates, there is no third [or middle] course.” Loughlin, Bell, and Brace, *The Broadview Anthology of Sixteenth-Century Poetry and Prose*, 611.

106 “*In nullo tertio*” Latin to English: “in no third [or middle] course.” Loughlin, Bell, and Brace, 611.

107 Anger, *Her Protection for Women*, B3. “*Aut amat, aut odit, non est in tertio*”: she loveth good things, and hateth that which is evill: she loveth justice and hateth iniquitie: she loveth trueth and true dealing, and hateth lies and falsehood: she loveth man for his vertues, & hateth him for his vices: to be short, there is no Medium between good and bad, and therefore she can be, *In nullo tertio*.

108 Clarke, *The Politics of Early Modern Women’s Writing*, 53–58 Clarke argues that Anger does not make unique authorial choices in her writing, as if this somehow detracts from the message presented by Anger. Anger most likely used a similar rhetorical style to men because of several reasons: One, Anger was publishing a response to rhetoric, which was typically done in a Ciceronian style in which it was not uncommon for authors to copy from one another. Two, Anger was entering into a type of publication that was reserved mostly for men because women were expected to stay within specific fields in both religious and secular writing, and none of those fields included commentary on perceived ills within society.
late sixteenth century. As mentioned in the introduction, *Boke his Surfeit* is generally believed to be the text Anger’s pamphlet was directly responding to, not only because she all but fully gives the title, but because the timing is very close between when each tract was written and published.\textsuperscript{109} Even though there are no surviving copies of *Surfeit*, previous analysis has gathered enough information for a general consensus to agree Anger was directly responding this text.\textsuperscript{110} *Surfeit* is shown in the Stationers’ Register as being published in November of 1588, while Anger stated her retort was written “in this year of 88,” as a response to the men who “are grown so fantastical, that unless we can make them fools, we are accounted unwise.”\textsuperscript{111}

By highlighting a lack of response from women, and choosing to emphasize the year she wrote, Anger’s statements contextualize a climatic build-up occurring in late sixteenth-century England between how women had commonly been represented in anti-woman literature, and how women felt about these representations. Her response is radical in its proclaimed solitude and would remain so until 1617 when Rachel Speght responded to the highly controversial and popular anti-woman tract by Joseph Swetnam.\textsuperscript{112} Anger wrote that men “think we wil not write to reprove their lying lips” because men saw women as weak and women felt that responding

\textsuperscript{109} Magnusson, “Jane Anger Her Protection, Boke His Surfeit, and the French Academie.” Magnusson notes that books like Surfeit were common during the Tudor era and it was not uncommon to see repeated themes and even direct quotes with no citations.

\textsuperscript{110} For two central arguments around *Surfeit*, please see: Kahin, “Jane Anger and John Lyly,” and Magnusson, “Jane Anger Her Protection, Boke His Surfeit, and the French Academie.” Both authors show the connections mentioned below as noted. The position that *Surfeit* is most likely lost to time is still widely held.

\textsuperscript{111} Anger, *Her Protection for Women*, C-C2. “are grown so fantastical, that unless we can make them fooles, we are accounted unwise.” Magnusson, “Jane Anger Her Protection, Boke His Surfeit, and the French Academie.” “It is generally agreed that Anger names her opponent’s text as ‘Boke his Surfeit in love’...and that title links it to the entry in the Stationers’ Register on 27 November 1588 of boke his Surfeyt in love. with a farewell to the folies of his own phantasie. But no known copy of that book exists, and writers on Anger have had more to say about the general context of a long-standing controversy over women than about the specific circumstances of this debate.” This issue remains. More focus has been given to the broader topic of the querelle than what *Protection* can say about the issues surrounding gender in Elizabethan England.

would bring into question their modesty. Her criticism of men suggests that women’s lack of response was only allowing the problem to worsen, and she wanted women to be aware that anti-woman rhetoric coming out of London had widespread influence on how women were treated in England as well as how they were viewed abroad.

When discussing Surfeit, Anger stated that such books were “sent abroad to warn [other Surfeiters]” about the follies of being involved with women, and part of Anger’s warning was that even if a woman tolerated a man’s rude behavior, he would “blaze abroad that they have surfeited with love.” Even if Anger was not a woman, the intention of the author still reverberates with a desire to show Englishwomen as more than what anti-woman rhetoric portrayed. Further, Anger wanted to underscore that the men who produced anti-woman literature would continue to do so if they continued to go unchallenged. Anger’s statements also suggest men must have been carrying this rhetorical debate into every-day speech because these men believed themselves “among themselves be thought to be of the game,” or rather part of a “game” that placed men above women. The first pages of the pamphlet’s body show how Anger considered the actions of men against women in this literary debate and further stressed how this type of literature was influencing discourses about women within English society.

Anger stressed the connection between the literature and how men treated women in both the

113 Anger, B. “Doubtles the weaknesse of our wits, and our honest bashfulnesse, by reason wherof they suppose that there is not one amongst us who can, or dare reprove their slanders and false repoches: their slanderous tongues are so short, and the time wherein they have lavished out their wordes freely, hath bene so long, that they know we cannot catch hold of them to pull them out, and they think we wil not write to reproove their lying lips: which conceites have already made them cockes and wolde (should they not be cravened) make themselves among themselves bee thought to be of the game.”

114 Anger, B-B1. “Among the innumerable number of booke to that purpose, of late (unlooked for) the newe surfreit of an olde Lover (sent abroad to warne those which are of his own kind, from catching the like disease)” “yet if we beare with their rudenes, and be somewhat modestly familiar with them, they will straight make matter of nothing, blazing abroad that they have surfeited with love, and then their wits must be showen in telling the manner how.”

115 Anger, B. “which conceites have already made them cockes and wolde (should they not be cravened) make themselves among themselves bee thought to be of the game.”
public and private realms. This chapter will focus on how Anger used a radical female voice to critique anti-woman rhetoric and its foundations, as well as how she refuted these discourses in a way that promoted a positive image of women within Elizabethan English society.

Despite modern claims of unoriginal structure, Jane Anger made a generous amount of authorial choices that presented a set of solid refutations in women’s favor for not only the period in which it was published, but also within the context of the genre she published in.\textsuperscript{116}

Since she worked within the popular style of English rhetoric, her writing was influenced by humanist men who, during the 1530s attempted to guide the English vernacular language towards a language capable of “civil conversation” similar to how the Latin and even French languages were viewed throughout nearly all of Europe.\textsuperscript{117} In true Renaissance fashion, inspiration was taken from the classically based philosophies, specifically Cicero and Aristotle, in order to develop a way in which courtiers could further their own interests at court via debate and discussion, verbally and in writing but in a manner that would be considered couth and respectable.\textsuperscript{118} It is widely noted that rhetoric was particularly popular with humanists, however, it is also important to highlight that humanism, and rhetoric, were not solely dominated by courtiers.\textsuperscript{119} This style of rhetorical debate quickly gained popularity, and the format tended to be

\textsuperscript{116} Clarke, \textit{The Politics of Early Modern Women's Writing}, 2001, 53–58. Clarke is only one of many to make this claim, and while in many ways it is valid observation, it fails to give credit to the female voice presented within the pamphlet. Rhetoric was not a genre that prized originality, in fact, as stated earlier, originality was not exactly a desired quality in writing to begin with and the idea of ownership within authorship in this period does not even slightly resemble modern ideas of ownership. What makes Anger’s statements unique is not their sustenance, but their topic of choice.

\textsuperscript{117} Richards, \textit{Rhetoric and Courtliness in Early Modern Literature}, 1–19.


\textsuperscript{119} Richards, 65–66.
repetitious, with many authors pulling their source material from the same pool of ancient and biblical sources.\textsuperscript{120}

However, it is in Anger’s choices of \textit{exempla}, Latin idioms, proverbial language, and reinterpretations of those items that her arguments gain a more unique and radical voice within the English debate about women. She critiqued the Surfeiter and provided creative responses and reinterpretations of classical and biblical \textit{exempla} that were commonly used against women. Her arguments show an express dissent towards the vilification and degradation of women in England, and further her concern with the safety of other women within the social networks and hierarchy of England. \textit{Protection} captured the radical voice of one woman who was aware of the issues presented by anti-woman rhetoric both for herself, and the rest of the women of England.

\textit{Anger’s Critique}

\textit{Surfeit} was not the sole reason Anger decided to write. She stated that \textit{Surfeit} was only one of the “innumerable number of books” that presented women in a negative light while showing men as either victims of women or as simply better than women.\textsuperscript{121} Anger emphasized that these “unlooked for” books were being “sent abroad to warn” men about the dangers and untrustworthiness of women, but Anger did not clarify how far these books potentially travelled.\textsuperscript{122} However, it has been shown that books and pamphlets frequently traveled with those who journeyed with trade routes and festivals across England and even throughout Europe, broadening the range of possible travel far outside the boarders of London, let alone England.\textsuperscript{123}

\textsuperscript{120} A. Lynne Magnusson, “Jane Anger Her Protection, Boke His Surfeit, and the French Academie,” \textit{Notes and Queries} 36, no. 3 (September 1989): 311.
\textsuperscript{121} Anger, B-B2. “Among the innumerable number of bookes to that purpose, of late (unlooked for) the newe surfreit of an olde Lover (sent abroad to warne those which are of his own kind, from catching the like disease)”
\textsuperscript{122} Anger, B1. “sent abroad to warne those which are of his own kind,”
\textsuperscript{123} Clark, \textit{The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular Moralistic Pamphlets, 1580-1640}, 19. “Undoubtedly, the general level of literacy was higher in London than elsewhere in the country; it seems safe to assume that at this time at least half of the adult male population of the city could read.” And on page 21, Clark discusses the variety of these
The ability of these texts to travel and the ways Englishwomen were represented by books similar to *Surfeit* created an image that was less than acceptable to women of the gentry who relied so heavily upon reputation of modesty and character. Anger’s critique of *Surfeit* shows a very real response to the ways Englishwomen were being portrayed in such a monolithically destructive manner both at home and abroad.

Anger’s need to justify even encountering *Surfeit* shows that Englishwomen were not expected to read rhetoric, let alone participate by publicly responding. She stated that it “came by chance to my hands” because “as well women as men are desirous of novelties.”\(^{124}\) In stating this, she reassured her readers of her modesty in stating she was not actively seeking out such reading material, but rather that she happened upon it. This may just be Elizabethan apologetics at play, but it does highlight the need of even this radical voice to retain some ounce of modesty, further highlighting the importance the author felt for her public reputation should her true identity be discovered. Anger’s need to retain an image of respectability further reinforces the radicalness of *Protection* because it shows that the author was concerned with showing themselves as a reasonable and educated gentlewoman that believed her audience would look past the indecency of her language to listen to her message. As she dissected *Surfeit*, Anger indicated that the book spoke on two topics, men’s folly with women, followed by an “invective against our sex.”\(^{125}\) Her critique centered on the structure and formulation of the book, arguing that while the book held the style of rhetoric, she found that she could not maintain interest throughout the book because the author’s arguments and points were weak, stating: “I was quite

pamphlets as well as how varied the audience for pamphlets were. On 22 Clark also discusses how even the people modernly assumed to be illiterate still purchased and consumed these types of material. Despite most textual items originating in London, they easily travelled to rural areas via salesmen and fairs.  

\(^{124}\) Anger, *Her Protection for Women*, 1589, B.  

\(^{125}\) Anger, B. “invective against our sex, their folly proceeding of their own flatterie joined with fancie, & our faultes are through our follie.”
out of the book before I thought I had been in the midst thereof.” Anger saw *Surfeit* as tired and uninspired in its rhetoric, and that the insults hurled by the author of *Surfeit* were all the more insulting in their poor formulation. The dismissive attitude of Anger suggests that anti-woman rhetoric was potentially seeing an oppositional discourse in England, or at the very least, Anger, and perhaps even her social circle saw such publications as not only demeaning to women, but a self-defeating action of the men who published the tracts. If, as Anger claims, such texts were gaining popularity in print culture, it could be that Anger saw the entire field as bloated and was calling out such poor authorship as she found in *Surfeit*. Such a critique shows connections between Anger’s dismissal of the Surfeiter and the Swetnam debate of the seventeenth century (mentioned above), in which multiple women joined to argue not only against the content of Swetnam’s book, but to complain that, despite its popularity, it was also poorly written.  

Anger’s stance against anti-woman texts shows that the author believed publications that looked to belittle women as a social group were gaining popularity in production, and her writing shows that she was aware of a long-lived, and continuing trend of public denigration aimed at women. It also shows that Anger must have had (in the very least) a passing knowledge of the *querelle* and its English rhetorically based counterpart because she utilized common rhetorical trends and then reworked them to suit her argument within the framework of the debate by adding an Englishwoman’s perspective. Anger recognized that the anti-woman discourses within these rhetorical publications carried a heavier weight than words, and that the rights and roles of

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126 Anger, B. “I was quite out of the booke before I thought I had bene in the middest thereof.”
128 Magnusson, “Jane Anger Her Protection, Boke His Surfeit, and the French Academie,” Anger quote referenced, B-B1: “Among the innumerable number of booke to that purpose, of late (unlooked for) the newe surfeit of an olde Lover.”
women within English society were negatively impacted by the images generated by these discourses.\textsuperscript{129}

In recognition of these effects, Anger critiqued many aspects of the debate about women. She chastised the men who had the desire to “show [their] true vain in writing…[who] run so into Rhetoric, as often times they overrun the bounds of their own wits, and goe they knowe not whether.”\textsuperscript{130} Anger’s statements indicate that by the 1580s the genre of rhetoric had become something of a vainglorious attempt to show oneself as wealthy and educated, depicting the genre as jumbled and ambiguous.\textsuperscript{131} By arguing that men were overstepping themselves within the genre of rhetoric, Anger was denouncing the fashionable form of argumentation while contradictorily utilizing the same genre to make her argument. However, Anger’s position as a self-assured rhetorical author also shows an aspect of education commonly unthought of for Englishwomen during the sixteenth century. Women were usually denied the education and exposure to classic literature required to properly participate in this style of debate. Therefore, in stating that men “run so into Rhetoric, as often times they overrun the bounds of their own wits,” Anger went beyond an insult to the men who wrote rhetoric, she claimed to know and understand more than them, to be better educated and therefore more logical in her assertions.\textsuperscript{132}

\textsuperscript{129} For more on how women came to respond to anti-woman tracts, and how these women were fighting against a loss of social standing please see: Kelly, “Early Feminist Theory and the ‘Querelle Des Femmes’, 1400-1789,” 1982; Joan Kelly, “Did Women Have a Renaissance?,” in Women, History, and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Theresa Coletti, “‘Did Women Have a Renaissance?’ A Medievalist Reads Joan Kelly and Aemilia Lanyer,” Early Modern Women 8 (2013): 249–59.

\textsuperscript{130} Anger, Her Protection for Women, B. “shewe [their] true vaine in writing…[who] run so into Rethorick, as often times they overrrun the boundes of their own wi ts, and goe they knowe not whether.” This is another quote where “vaine” can be interpreted as “vanity,” and one of the main reasons I included this possibility in updated spellings.

\textsuperscript{131} Richards, Rhetoric and Courtliness in Early Modern Literature Richards argues that self-interest was one of the core reasons for courtiers to participate in rhetoric and the art of “civil conversation.”

\textsuperscript{132} Anger, Her Protection for Women, 1589, B. “shewe [their] true vaine in writing…[who] run so into Rethorick, as often times they overrrun the boundes of their own wits, and goe they knowe not whether.”
Her argument extended beyond the men who created anti-woman rhetoric to encompass the source material used as justification and inspiration not only for how women were viewed in this type of literature, but as the very source of rhetoric itself. She argued that had the ancient philosophers decided to explore the faults of men, then perhaps women’s “follies” would make little difference in the face of men’s wrongdoings. It is intriguing that Anger would go beyond questioning the aggressors she responded to, and instead point to the source material of her aggressors as the tainted well from which anti-woman rhetoric was pulled. Anger’s connection of ancient philosophies with her contemporaries illustrates a level of logical thinking many men would have assumed impossible for a woman, but also connects with how she chose to highlight the barriers her society had explicitly raised against women.

Anger further critiqued the way in which exempla was characteristically used to show women in a negative light, that these examples “do plainly show the flattery of men’s false hearts...If we stand fast, they strive: if we totter (though but a little) they will never leave until they have overturned us.” She wanted to show that the moral standards to which women were being held were inequitable to the standards held to men. She highlighted how she saw an unjust social hierarchy placed on women by critiquing examples of anti-woman rhetoric that underscored the effects of those discourses on women. She reasoned men would, “through studying for matters to indite off” search the women in their lives for faults and then write about those faults as if all women had them. She then critiqued the uneven balance of power

133 Anger, C. “busied their heades about disciphering the deceits of their owne Sex,”
134 Anger, *Her Protection for Women*, B1. “do plainly shew the flatterie of mens false heartes...If we stand fast, they strive: if we totter (though but a little) they will never leave til they have overturned us.”
135 Anger, B-B1. “If they may once encroach so far into our presence, as they may but see the lyning of our outermost garment, they straight think Apollo honours them, in yeelding so good a supply to refresh their sore overburdened heads, through studying for matters to indite off…”
between men and women, arguing that no matter how a woman conducted herself, she was likely to fall victim to a man:

“If we will not suffer them to smell on our smocks, they will snatch at our petticoats: but if our honest natures cannot away with that uncivil kind of jesting then we are coy: yet if we bear with their rudeness, and be somewhat modestly familiar with them, they will straight make matter of nothing, blazing abroad that they have surfeited with love, and then their wits must be shown in telling the manner how.”

Anger portrayed the position of women as constantly having to juggle an awkward social currency of modesty based in respectful aloofness in the hopes that they would not become the subject of scorn or study in the next anti-woman publication. By clearly expressing exasperation with these double standards, Anger displayed dissent and called attention to the way women were affected by anti-woman discourses as they travelled from page to spoken word, and from there into daily life. Anger’s dissent was radical within the context of Elizabethan rhetoric, but the *exempla* she provided to combat the negative images created by anti-woman discourses provided her audience with material to expand the debate further. In providing her own interpretations of biblical and classical literature, as well as her own creative forms of *exempla*, Anger provided a chance for other voices to take a radical stance against male-dominant discourses.

**Inspired Responses**

Defiantly contradicting anti-woman rhetoric, Anger showed her audience that she was well-read in the woman debate. Anger argued that the men who wrote anti-woman rhetoric were participating in tired tactics and did so because they lacked the creative ability to produce unique

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136 Anger, B-B1. “If we will not suffer them to smell on our smockes, they will snatch at our peticotes: but if our honest natures cannot away with that uncivil kinde of jesting then we are coy: yet if we beare with their rudeness, and be somewhat modestly familiar with them, they will straight make matter of nothing, blazing abroad that they have surfeited with love, and then their wits must be shoen in telling the manner how.”
debate points or reinterpretations of *exempla*. Anger discussed the “bounteous words” of the Surfeiter and gave responses to his rhetorical ponderings in a clear attempt to express her issues with his portrayal of women.\(^{137}\) Anger critiqued the Surfeiter’s interpretations of mythology to argue that Ninus, as well as Sardanaphalus and Menelaus, were *exempla* with which to explore the faults of men, and not the wives and women that the Surfeiter focused on. Such depictions commonly showed men as superior and women as sinful, immoral, or untrustworthy using classical myths, stories, and philosophies as evidence. Anger conditionally agreed with some judgements made by the Surfeiter against these kings of legend yet felt compelled to critique how “he had misplaced and mistaken certain words.”\(^{138}\) Again, Anger sought to show herself as more capable than the Surfeiter of retaining and understanding the teachings of classic philosophers. Within such a statement, Anger boldly confirmed the ability of women to gain a noteworthy education and further showed her audience that woman deserved to express themselves to offer differing opinions and understandings. She was not only critiquing this man’s understandings of classical *exempla*, but she was also critiquing English society’s view of women through her critique of the Surfeiter. These refutations with the Surfeiter served as a foundation upon which Anger could validate her responses with her own *exempla*. Anger argued that the male characters of these stories were the source of corruption for the female characters, just as she would argue “we are contrary to men, because they are contrary to that which is good.”\(^{139}\)

\(^{137}\) Anger, B1. Here Anger is discussing the Surfeiter’s *exempla* of mythological kings and their relationships with women: “The bounteous wordes written over the lascivious kinge Ninus his head, set down in this olde Lover his Surfeit…”

\(^{138}\) Anger, B1. “save onely that he hath misplaced and mistaken certaine wordes.”

\(^{139}\) Anger, B3–4. “Wee are contrary to men, because they are contrarie to that which is good”
Anger located the root of gender-based inequality in England with the hold that classical studies had upon educating men and how the anti-woman discourses within those teachings effected women. She wished that the ancient men’s voices who dominated humanist theory had given a fair exploration of men alongside women, had showed a sense of equity, and allowed women to at least be on an even playfield with men in the arena of morality and sensibility.

Speaking on the teachings of Socrates, Anger argued:

But let Socrates, heaven and earth say what they will, Man’s face is worth a glass of dissembling water, and therefore, to conclude with a proverb: Write ever, and yet never write enough of man’s falsehood…

Her reinterpetations questioned the inequity of the judgements passed on women by belittling male-dominant discourses to nothing more than “a glass of dissembling water.” Anger questioned how it was that these debates continued, but women had yet to respond in the contrary. Anger made asides directly to women, referring to her association with women as a collective “we” or “our selves” when referencing women’s place within the Surfeiter’s exempla and judgements:

If Hesiod had with equity as well looked into the life of man, as he did precisely search out the qualities of us women, he would have said, that if a woman trust unto a man, it shall fare as well with her, as if she had a weight of a thousand pounds tied about her neck, and then cast into the bottomless seas...

Anger’s argument extended beyond gender roles and into the realm of social equity.

Anger’s statements emphasized inequity between men and women in Elizabethan England, not

140 Anger, C. “But let Socrates, heaven and earth say what they will, Mans face is worth a glasse of dissembling water: and therefore to conclude with a proverbe, Write ever, and yet never write ynough of man falshoode, I meane those that use it. I would that ancient writers would as well have busied their heades about deciphering the deceites of their owne Sex, as they have about setting downe our follies: and I wold some would call in question that nowe, which hath ever bene questionlesse: but sithence all their wittes have bene bent to write of the contrarie,”

141 Anger, B3–4. “If Hesiodus had with equity as well looked into the life of man, as he did presissely search out the qualities of us women, he would have said, that if a woman trust unto a man, it shal fare as well with her, as if she had a weight of a thousand pounds tied about her neck, and then cast into the bottomless seas: for by men are we confounded though they by us are sometimes crossed.”
only because they served as a warning to women, but because she questioned the foundations of the rhetoric that fueled male-dominant discourses. Anger’s sense of injustice is palpable, highlighting an attempt of comradery between her and her audience. Anger’s refutation of anti-woman rhetoric allowed her audience to possibly consider other options, which strategically aligned with Anger’s reasons for women’s superiority. Anger underscored the connection between herself and her intended woman-based readership, then created within her dialogue to the reader a sense of privacy of one woman speaking directly to another, confiding in one another, supporting one another.

Anger offered different perspectives on the women and men in the tales and exempla offered within anti-women writing. For instance, Anger reinterpreted the stories on Helen of Troy, arguing that Helen was not to be blamed for her husband Menelaus’ lack of a male heir: “the case with Menelaus, he running abroad as a Smell-smock, got the habit of a Cuckold, of whom thus shall go my verdict.”142 Anger argued that had Menelaus not run “abroad as a Smell-smock,” and engaged in sexual relations with his slaves then Helen would not have willingly left him, thereby making him a “cuckold.” While this showed her audience that Anger was educated in classic mythology, it also implied that she knew how to critically analyze sources for the lessons they provided in morality, and further the ways in which she could infuse these lessons into debate. Anger did not simply look to classic literature for the given lessons as broadly taught, instead she considered other options and how these alternative interpretations could impact the image of women. Her short response told the reader that she was aware of the struggles of women by relating the story of a “Smell-smock” husband as evidence that “their Sex

142 Anger, B2. “the case with Menalus, hee running abroade as a Smel-smocke, got the habit of a Coockhold, of whom thus shall go my verdict.”
are so like to Bulls,” categorizing men as unfaithful and untrustworthy. Anger’s allegory of men and bulls suggested that patrilineal societal pressures were more likely to punish women, especially gentlewomen, for adultery because women were expected to maintain the purity of their family’s heritage via religious piety and monogamy. These ideals were reinforced by such interpretations as the ones Anger refuted. In her reinterpretation, Anger argued that it was men, not women who were sinful, and that men should be held to higher standards.

Anger targeted an all-woman audience, but was also aware that men would read the pamphlet as well: “And now (seeing I speak to none but to you which are of mine own Sex,) give me leave like a scholar to prove our wisdom more excellent then theirs, though I never knew what sophistry meant.” Despite Anger’s claims to have “never knew what sophistry meant,” she discussed and moved through Latin, exempla, and proverbial language with such ease that her dismissive attitude is quite obviously a dissimulation. Anger showed familiarity with Latin, classical forms of refutation, and the ongoing debate about women within at least England, if not Europe. Her claim to the position of “scholar” gains complexity when she provided exempla which showed how women were subject to the whims of men:

The Lion rages when he is hungry, but man rails when he is glutted. The Tiger is robbed of her young ones, when she is ranging abroad, but men rob women of their honor undeservedly under their noses. The Viper storms when his tail is trodden on and may not we fret when all our body is a footstool to their wild [or vile] lust: their unreasonable minds which know not what reason is, make them nothing better than brute beasts.

143 Anger, B2. The implication here is that men acted like bulls by being unfaithful to any single woman, as a bull in a pasture of cows would go from mate to mate, yet the cow or in this case, the woman, was expected to remain with a single mate.
144 Ingram, Carnal Knowledge, 93 Ingram states the offence of adultery, while seen as an equal sin in the eyes of God, if committed by a married woman “caused greater harm because it threatened to confuse inheritances and caused strife between men.”
145 Anger, Her Protection for Women, C1-C2. “And now (seeing I speake to none but to you which are of mine owne Sex,) give me leave like a scoller to prove our wisdom more excellent then theirs, though I never knew what sophistry meant.”
146 Anger, B3. The word “vild” here most like would translate to a modern “wild,” but it could also refer to “vile.” “The Lion rageth when he is hungrie, but man raileth when he is glutted. The Tyger is robbed of her young.
Anger’s animalization of men and women here is a repetition similar to her reference of men as bulls, but instead of highlighting men’s likelihood to infidelity, she is instead outlining how men could easily steal a woman’s honor or damage her reputation, but she also indicated that the act of stealing a woman’s honor was a purposeful act of violence by men against a woman. While animalization was a common rhetorical attack strategy, in these expressions Anger’s implications show how intrinsically tied women were to their honor and reputation within English society.\textsuperscript{147} Further, her question of “may not we fret when all our body is a footstool to their wild lust,” incorporated images of sexual violence into the conversation which further questioned women’s safety in the presence of men.\textsuperscript{148} These comments clarify Anger’s contention that women were not safe around men for many reasons, whether through stolen honor via gossip or disparagement via anti-woman discourses, or even worse, through the act of actually stealing a woman’s honor through physical or sexual violence. Anger’s \textit{exempla} captured an image of men as violent, misbehaved beasts who would not only assault women with words, but with physical violence to get what they wanted, only to then complain that women were at fault for the misdeeds of men. This type of male-dominant discourse blamed women for the misdeeds of men, and Anger not only wanted to warn women about this, but she also sought to debate the very root of the issue with a radical voice.

Anger did not just draw attention to the flaws within male-dominant discourses, she also sought to encourage a positive image of women. In Anger’s arguments against anti-women ones, when she is ranging abroad, but men rob women of their honour undeservedlye under their noses. The Viper stormeth when his taile is trodden on, & may not we fret when al our bodie is a footstool to their vild lust: their unreasonable mindes which knowe not what reason is, make them nothing better then bruit beasts.”


\textsuperscript{148} Anger, \textit{Her Protection for Women}, B3.
discourses, she sought to raise up the status of women and show them as capable and worthy of an education, and even to show that women were capable of a higher level of moral purity than men. While this morality trope was not new to the European *querelle*, it does suggest that Anger may have had prior knowledge of women like de Pisan who spoke out in defense of women due to the popularity of religiously based arguments for women.\(^{149}\) Common themes amongst women’s defense pieces typically revolved around biblical themes such as Eve and Mary. Anger herself rooted the productive value women placed on their ability to reproduce within this trope of moral purity, linking women with Mary as the vessel by which Christian salvation was made possible, further linking women to a more positive image of Eve and Mary.\(^{150}\) The women Anger targeted held important positions within their households to act as an early tutor to their children in their religious education, linking the education of the women with the education of their children. These women, who were relied upon to guide their children through religion at an early age, would have picked out the themes of Eve and Mary in Anger’s argument, and they would have easily seen Anger’s attempts to overlay the importance of these women with that of all women.

In the same vein as Eve and Mary, Anger discussed the mythological and Catholic virtues, specifically mentioning the Latin Fidelity, or *Fides*, to draw attention to the fact that women were often used in portrayals of virtues. She wondered why women were used as representations of morality if they were truly so sullied:

> “…if we women be so so [sic] perilous cattle as they term us, I marvel that the Gods made not Fidelity as well a man, as they created her a woman, and all the moral virtues of their masculine sex, as of the feminine kind, except their

\(^{149}\) Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance*.

\(^{150}\) Beilin. This is in reference to Anger, C. “Our bodies are fruitefull, wherby the world encreaseth, and our care wonderful, by which man is preserved. From woman sprang mans salvation. A woman was the first that beleeved, & a woman likewise the first that repented of sin.”
Deities knew that there was some sovereignty in us women, which could not be in
them men.”151

She questioned the validity of such assertions by noting the contemporarily existing imagery of
dwomen. She showed her audience how at odds these images were. She wanted her audience to
question how it was that women could both represent purity and sin within these discourses that
projected men as the hapless victims of the sinfulness of all women.

The seriousness of her topic did not sway Anger from wit or humorous remarks. She
reflected upon how anti-woman literature touted the dangers of an angry woman, often
portraying them as violent or simply annoying nags. She dissected another view of women held
within male-dominant discourses, questioning how it was that women could be at once sinful and
weak, but also dangerous.

Our boldness rash, for giving Noddies nipping answers, our dispositions
naughty, for not agreeing with their wild [or viled] minds, and our fury dangerous,
because it will not bear with their knavish behaviors. If our frowns be so terrible,
and our anger so deadly, men are too foolish in offering occasions of hatred,
which shunned, a terrible death is prevented.152

Anger understood that women were cornered by these discourses but responded with humor and
wit to dismantle these portrayals. This wit is reflected by her desired rhetorical effect, similar to
that used by many male authors to belittle or vilify women.153 Anger used this humor to reflect
on how these anti-women arguments did not make sense, thereby disqualifying male-dominant
discourses. She wanted her audience to consider the flaws in the logic of anti-woman rhetoric.

151 Anger, Her Protection for Women, 1589, B2–3. “if we women be so so [sic] perilous cattell as they
terne us, I marvell that the Gods made not Fidelitie as well a man, as they created her a woman, and all the morall
vertues of their masculine sex, as of the feminine kinde, except their Deities knewe that there was some soverainity
in us women, which could not be in them men.”

152 Anger, Her Protection for Women, 1589. “Our boldnesse rash, for giving Noddies nipping answeres, our
disposistions naughtie, for not agreeing with their wildl [or viled] minds, and our furie dangerous, because it will not beare
with their knavish behaviors. If our frownes be so terrible, and our anger so deadly, men are too foolish in offering
occasions of hatred, which shunned, a terrible death is prevented.”

153 Gwynne Kennedy, Just Anger: Representing Women’s Anger in Early Modern England (Carbondale,
Conclusion

Anger depicted her response to the Surfeiter and his peers as coming from a place of reason and logic, as a true defense to the honor of Englishwomen. What it presents to the modern reader is a radical voice that went beyond typical women’s writing in England in the sixteenth century that was a direct response to discourses of male dominance and female subjugation. The spread of Aristotelian and Ciceronian based classical teachings throughout Europe during the Renaissance contributed to anti-woman discourses within humanist-based education which influenced secular as well as religious beliefs. The negative expressions of clerical and secular men reveal their desires to control women through slander and defamation and are reflected in Anger’s response to their rhetoric. Anti-woman discourses marked women as a social grouping and allowed for the creation of sub-sects within social classes that would define the rights and roles of women based on anti-woman discourses so that women, no matter their class, were never above their male peers. Anger’s response is discordant to anti-woman discourses and clearly sought to disrupt these negative images. Anger stated the provenance of her publication held a special place in that women were not publicly responding to male-dominant discourses in England. Further, she showed awareness of her existence outside the socially safe genres of publication within the London publishing industry.

Kelly, “Early Feminist Theory and the ‘Querelle Des Femmes’, 1400-1789,” 1982. Again, more nuanced studies have found that some women were capable of working within the confines of their societies to achieve varied levels of success, but the overwhelming evidence of societal pressure on women to remain within the domestic sphere and to be kept from politics is undeniable.
The very essence of the English debates about women can sometimes twist the intersections of gender, class, and suppression because of the varied ways in which English society chose to respond and interact with the debate. By asking the gentlewomen of England to respond to anti-woman rhetoric, Protection exposes the potential connections between women and how they could have used the power their positions gave them, via family, wealth, or courtly politics, to make a statement about how women understood male-dominant discourses.\textsuperscript{155} While some men made rebuttals to anti-woman tracts, religious and secular reform sparked conversations about gender roles that echoed through both arenas, informing the male populace as to how their secular and religious leaders wished men to maintain respectable households. Classical Ciceronian rhetoric and debate styles gained an interest with the general literate as influences shifted and debates became more popular outside of the English courts.\textsuperscript{156} Rhetoric as an approach to debate did not play a large role in the European querelle until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when humanist education and practices became more common, and the price of printing became more affordable, while in the fifteenth century the querelle produced more poetry-based debates about women.\textsuperscript{157} In essence, the debate about women was shaped over time and place depending on the concerns of the people in correlation to their ruling parties.

Anger dismissed the historically assumed implications of anger as a form of brief madness or illness when the emotion came from a woman, and instead, she decisively began her pamphlet with a reversal of gender norms which informed her audience that she wanted to question preconceived notions of women and their anger.\textsuperscript{158} She reversed the role of querelle

\begin{footnotes}
\item[155] As Cox points out in “Single Self,” women often utilized what power they held to validate their writing.
\item[156] Jennifer Richards, \textit{Rhetoric and Courtlines in Early Modern Literature} (New York: The Press Syndicate fo the University of Cambridge, 2003), 2. “This speech form [civil conversation or rhetoric] is derived from that same classical republican culture: that is, from the philosophical writings of the orator Cicero. Recognising this will allow us to recover a lost discourse.”
\item[157] For instance, Christine de Pisan mainly worked in the form of poetry.
\item[158] Kennedy, \textit{Just Anger}, 2000, 32.
\end{footnotes}
rhetoric to question the worth of men instead of women, and to help propagate a positive image of women as capable of logic and education. She sought to create an image of women as intelligent beings capable of competing with men in the world of rhetorical writing. The importance of such a statement cannot go unconsidered.

Protection, as well as other such pamphlets and literary pieces, offer many pathways for historical research to expand into areas that remain somewhat untapped in the context of drawing out cultural meaning as it is relevant to our understanding of history. Pamphlets and other literature can provide routes into nuanced understandings of cultural influences on gender politics in Elizabethan England. Considering this pamphlet as an object allows for considerations of how only one copy survived and would encourage archival research to further expand understandings of women’s writing during this time and question how they interacted publicly within the less than welcoming atmosphere of London’s print culture. In researching this paper, I encountered many questions about the publisher, Elizabethan vernacular, the connections between men and women, men ventriloquizing women’s voices, and the history of the pamphlet as it travelled from 1589 London to where it currently resides in the Huntington Library in California.
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