

The Ties that Bind:  
Seventeenth-Century Scottish Families in Life-writings

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the early modern world advice literature showed the family as a reflection of the state, a miniature kingdom in which the husband, as family head, acted much as a ruling monarch, with his wife, children and servants rendered his subjects. Although many seventeenth-century individuals chose to uphold traditional social conventions about proper behavior, not all family relationships fit the mold. Therefore, in an effort to uncover the experiences of seventeenth-century families, this thesis will focus on the relationships formed between spouses, parents and children, and siblings. It is on this small sampling of middling and upper class Scottish families, that we can see many common characteristics that were likely present in many early modern family relationships.

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This work is dedicated to my husband, Leighton  
My parents, Norman and Patricia  
My siblings, Kristina, Kerrienne, Jonathan, Kathryn and Jeffrey  
And to all my extended family members who taught me the importance of our bond.

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## Introduction

The history of the early modern family in Europe has undergone serious re-definition in the last several decades, particularly surrounding historical assumptions about marriage, parent-child relationships and sibling interaction.<sup>1</sup> Prior to the recent work on early modern marriage, historians viewed marriage as a cold, calculating union based on the needs of the family not the individual.<sup>2</sup> However, most historians now agree that although marriage was a product of serious financial consideration on both sides, it usually involved the mutual consent of the couple.<sup>3</sup> Concerning parental-child relations, many historians working in the 1960s and 70s believed that the concept of childhood emerged from ideologies developed during the Enlightenment, prior to which, children were treated indifferently as small adults.<sup>4</sup> These conclusions are now being challenged by historians who claim that parents were aware of childhood and developed

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<sup>1</sup> In an attempt to create a concise study of the early modern family, I have narrowed our examination to husbands and wives, parents and children, and siblings. Due to page number and time constraint this thesis will not discuss the interaction of individuals with their extended family members, or servants. For an interesting look into the meanings of family see, Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, "Structures and Meanings in a Gendered Family History" in *A Companion to Gender History*, ed. Teresa A. Meade and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks (MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004): 51-69.

<sup>2</sup> See Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (New York: Vintage Books, 1962); Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977).

<sup>3</sup> See Catherine Frances, "Making Marriages in Early Modern England: Rethinking the Role of Family and Friends," in *The Marital Economy in Scandinavia and Britain*, ed. Maria Ågren and Amy Louise Erickson (London: Ashgate, 2005), 40; Diana O'Hara, *Courtship and Constraint: Rethinking the Making of Tudor England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 2; Roxanne Reddington-Wilde, "A Women's Place," in *Women in Scotland*, ed. Elizabeth Ewan and Maureen Meikle (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 204; Christine Peters, *Women in Early Modern Britain, 1450-1640* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 21; Joanne Bailey, *Unquiet Lives: Marriage and Marriage Breakdown in England, 1660-1800*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 6; Keith Brown, *Noble Society in Scotland: Wealth, Family and Culture, from Reformation to Revolution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 155.

<sup>4</sup> See Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (New York: Vintage Books, 1962); Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977); David Hunt, *Parents and Children in History* (New York: Basic Books, 1970); Miriam Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: The Verneys of Claydon House* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984).

affective relationships with their offspring.<sup>5</sup> Scholars have argued that sibling relationships were based on ‘calculated reciprocity’ with younger siblings approaching their eldest brother much like hungry vultures circulating the family’s wealth.<sup>6</sup> However, recent scholarly work and the re-assessment of primary sources have encouraged historians to reconsider former interpretations.<sup>7</sup> By re-examining the histories surrounding the early modern family, new perspectives have altered not only previously accepted perceptions about the family but also challenged historical approaches to early modern sources.

Several prominent scholars have been responsible for shaping historical concepts regarding the early modern family. Philippe Ariès, an influential French sociologist, was for some time the leading authority on early modern childhood. In his text, *Centuries of Childhood*, first published in France in 1960 and then in English in 1962, Ariès analyzed painted portraits in order to determine both the importance attached to childhood, and degrees of familial affection. Historians now studying the family argue against many of his interpretations, particularly his conclusions that early modern parents had no concept of childhood and remained emotionally detached from their infants due to high child mortality rates.<sup>8</sup>

The search for early modern family dynamics within diaries, autobiographies and memoirs found its most influential expression in the work of Lawrence Stone, a historian

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<sup>5</sup> Linda Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500-1900*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 97; Linda Pollock, “Parent-Child Relations,” in *Family Life in Early Modern Times*, ed. David Kertzer and Marzio Barbagli (London: Yale University, 2001), 192; Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, “Reciprocal Bonding: Parents and their Offspring in Early Modern England,” *Journal of Family History* 25 (2000), 291; Elizabeth Foyster, “Parenting was for Life, not just for Childhood: The Role of Parents in the Married Lives of their Children in Early Modern England,” *History* 86. (2001), 327.

<sup>6</sup> Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House*, 34.

<sup>7</sup> Linda Pollock, “Younger Sons in Tudor and Stuart England,” *History Today* 39 (1989), 23.

<sup>8</sup> Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, 39.



of early modern England, who argued in his well-known 1977 book, *Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*, that pre-industrial family units existed primarily for economic and political reasons.<sup>9</sup> Like Ariès, Stone based his conclusions primarily on evidence drawn from elite households, though unlike Ariès he drew from a vast array of documentary sources. Stone claimed that due to the pragmatic nature of marriage, spouses developed little or no affection for each other, an indifference that filtered down through the ranks of the family affecting spouses, parents, children and siblings alike. Due to this lack of cohesion between spouses, and parental indifference to their children, Stone insisted that “most children in history have not been loved or hated, or both, by their parents; they have been neglected or ignored by them.”<sup>10</sup> He claimed that high mortality rates and misguided child-rearing practices such as the swaddling of infants, wet nursing, and placing children in service or apprenticeships at early ages constitute further indications that parents cared very little for their children.<sup>11</sup>

Both Philippe Ariès and Lawrence Stone argue for what Steven Ozment describes as an “impersonal household, ruled over by an imperious patriarch to whom all members were subordinate and subject, and in which relatives and kin were as much family as the parent-child unit.”<sup>12</sup> For Ariès and Stone, the “psychic and moral costs of this domestic arrangement have been exceedingly high for subsequent history – an inability of household members to establish bonds of deep affection or relationships of true equality, regardless of degree of kinship or familiarity among the inmates.”<sup>13</sup> These

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<sup>9</sup> Stone, *Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*.

<sup>10</sup> Lawrence Stone, *The Past and the Present* (Boston: Routledge & K. Paul, 1981), 228.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Steven Ozment, *Ancestors: the Loving Family in Old Europe* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2001), 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

interpretations ruled into the 1980s, but have since been called into question, particularly in the work of Linda Pollock, a historian trained in psychology who completely contradicts the Ariès/Stone view of family dynamics.

In an attempt to reassess parent-child relations, Pollock has discovered to her delight that family dynamics were not as cold and indifferent as scholars from the 1960s-70s supposed. Her argument concerning parent-child relations was forcefully laid out in her 1983 book, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500-1900*. In opposing Ariès, Pollock argues that it would be impossible for adults not to recognize how different children were, since children are so dependant upon adult care for survival.<sup>14</sup> As for Stone, Pollock rejects his notions completely. She does so by highlighting passages from a similar but even broader array of diaries and correspondence, and shows that high mortality rates among children bred not indifference among parents, but deep anxiety when their children fell ill and profound grief when they died. As thorough as Pollock's examination of such sources is, however, she struggles to develop a historical interpretation using religiously centered life-writings, by far the most common form of autobiography before the eighteenth century, since such religious writings appear to "temper parental anxiety with faith, or at the least attempt to convince parents that they need to align themselves with God's will."<sup>15</sup> Thus, even Pollock's extensive study leaves a significant breach in the early modern family historiography.

By examining the existing historiography, historians are able to discern what questions have been asked of primary sources and what questions have yet to be studied. Going beyond the search for the "existence or absence of love in the past," Pollock

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<sup>14</sup> Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500-1900*, 97.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

suggests historians ask what love may have meant in a specific culture and time and how it was expressed.<sup>16</sup> Her questions have opened a discussion of gender-related interest in children. For example, what fatherhood may have meant to a man may in fact be viewed quite differently than what motherhood may have meant to a woman.<sup>17</sup> Rather than examine whether such love existed in family settings, it is necessary for historians to determine how men and women associated their roles in life in the context of their family responsibilities.<sup>18</sup> Pollock's investigation has raised many questions and identified numerous available avenues for historians to tread.

Surprisingly, for such a heated historiographical debate little work has been done on family life in Scotland. The limited information scholars have presented on early modern Scottish family has been gathered mainly through kirk session records rather than diaries, memoirs and other life-writings (sources less common in Scotland than in England, though still quite numerous), leaving unexamined a whole area of study that will contribute to our understanding of Scottish men and women in regard to family dynamics and their conceptual understanding of their mutual obligations to one another.

The few Scottish historians who have focused on family interaction have tended to rely on court records concerning marriage litigations to study family units, rather than

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<sup>16</sup> Pollock, "Parent-Child Relations," 201.

<sup>17</sup> Lisa Wilson demonstrates in her article how social and religious understandings shaped the way in which fathers expressed or displayed their affection, arguing that although affection has been present between fathers and their offspring throughout history, it was not until the eighteenth century that it became socially acceptable for fathers to articulate parental affection. See Lisa Wilson, "'Ye Heart of the Father': Male Parenting in Colonial New England," *Journal of Family History* 24, (July 1999): 255.

<sup>18</sup> In the many court records dealing with middle and upper class English society Elizabeth Foyster studied, she insists that due to different gender roles, spouses relied on their parents for different things. For example, wives often depended on parents for emotional and physical assistance, whereas husbands tended to rely on parents to resolve dowry problems and in matters of honor. See, Elizabeth Foyster, "Parenting was for Life, not just for Childhood: The Role of Parents in the Married Lives of their Children in Early Modern England," *History*, 86. (2001): 322.

personal accounts of family members.<sup>19</sup> Although legal records provide insightful information concerning personal expectations of family obligations,<sup>20</sup> by neglecting direct testimonial sources, Scottish historians have left open an entire area of family history to be examined. Historian Leah Leneman investigated Scottish marriages, focusing on unions ending in divorce, a legal option not available in England. She argued that the overwhelming reason for marriage in early modern Scotland was the “desire for companionship, affection and romantic love,” a radically different standpoint from that of Lawrence Stone – who also wrote books on divorce – and his followers.<sup>21</sup> Leneman’s examination has provided insightful information concerning spousal relationships, for example that the standard phrasing of divorce suits in Scotland stated that a husband or wife had “alienated his or her affections from their spouse,” indicating that love was of paramount importance in marriage contracts. However, because the bulk of her evidence and the focus of her study is on the eighteenth century, there is little information on the seventeenth-century, since from 1684 to 1700 fewer than twenty couples sought divorce and even less litigated for separation, thus restricting the amount of evidence available for this century.<sup>22</sup>

The limited information scholars have presented on the early modern Scottish family has been gathered mainly through kirk session minutes, wills and testaments, and civil court records, all sources that indicate society’s perceived standard of ‘normal’

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<sup>19</sup> Leah Leneman argues that court records document the relationship between husbands and wives in a way which no other source can rival. *Alienated Affections* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 1.

<sup>20</sup> Daniela Hacke argues that these records reflect ideas on domestic patriarchy, gender differences and their operation in daily life. Daniela Hacke, *Women, Sex and Marriage in Early Modern Venice* (London: Ashgate, 2004), 6.

<sup>21</sup> Leah Leneman, *Promises, Promises: Marriage Litigation in Scotland 1698-1830* (Edinburgh: NMS Enterprise, 2003), viii.

<sup>22</sup> Leneman, *Alienated Affections: The Scottish Experience of Divorce and Separation*, 13-14.

family relations while highlighting dysfunctional households.<sup>23</sup> By drawing primarily on a variety of life-writings, personal letters and a few civil court records, I hope to bring the direct testimony of seventeenth-century Scottish spouses, parents, children and siblings to light, and to add their experiences and their stated and unstated assumptions to our emerging portrait of early modern family life.

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The Reformation in 1560 Scotland altered not only the manner in which the Scottish worshipped, it also changed the very nature of their individual relationships with God as well as helping to shape Scottish identity.<sup>24</sup> Individual communion with divinity took precedence over the Church's position as mediator between God and the people, which had ruled in Scotland prior to the Reformation. As a result of this encouragement to build individual relationships with God, by the seventeenth century there was a marked rise in the appearance of mainly unpublished life-writings<sup>25</sup> in the forms of diaries, autobiographies and memoirs.<sup>26</sup> Due to the political situation of seventeenth-century

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<sup>23</sup> Some prominent Scottish historians who have based their studies on Kirk Session records include: Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002) and Michael Graham, *The Uses of Reform: "Godly Discipline" and Popular Behavior in Scotland and France, 1560-1610* (New York: E.J Brill, 1996). Scottish family historians who have likewise used Kirk Sessions as sources to discuss marriage are: Leah Leneman, *Promises, Promises: Marriage Litigation in Scotland 1698-1839* and *Alienated Affections: The Scottish Experience of Divorce and Separation, 1684-1830* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989); Janay Nugent, "Marriage Matters: Evidence from the Kirk Session Records of Scotland, c.1560—1650" (Ph.D., University of Guelph, 2006); while recent work done by Cathryn Spence, "'Given up by herself': Women's Wills in late Sixteenth Century Edinburgh" (M.A, University of Guelph, 2006), relies primarily on wills and testaments.

<sup>24</sup> Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland*, 64.

<sup>25</sup> For this thesis, the term life-writings has been borrowed from the work of Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson and consists of autobiographies, spiritual memoirs, diaries and other non-fictional writings that provide insights into family dynamics. Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 197.

<sup>26</sup> Elizabeth West wrote that her minister had encouraged her to "write down all her dealings with God (if she could write)." Elizabeth West, *Memoirs, or Spiritual Memoirs of Elizabeth West* (Glasgow: Printed by John Bryce, 1766), 6. Katherine Collace likewise mentioned the encouragement she received to keep a detailed account of her spiritual experiences. Katherine Collace, *Mistress Ross, "Memoirs or Spiritual Exercises of Mistress Ross. Written by her own hand,"* in *Women's Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 41.

Scotland - civil war, religious upheaval and governmental changes - these writings have been previously examined by historians with an eye for political issues. In their haste to assess the political atmosphere in Scotland and their general distaste for seventeenth-century religious discourse and fervor, historians have neglected examining the additional insights such writings contain regarding family relations. For example, the diary of Alexander Jaffray, provost of Aberdeen, active member of both the Scottish and English parliaments, and early convert to Scottish Quakerism, offers rare insights into Jaffray's family life. However, until the recent work of Gordon DesBrisay, this diary has been viewed by historians only as a source for the political history of the Covenanting and Cromwellian periods.<sup>27</sup> Due to limited political content, past historians have found it "very uninteresting reading for the most part" and "of little historical interest."<sup>28</sup> Shocking conclusions when one examines the wealth of information surrounding his upbringing, marriages and parenting.

Although it is difficult to glean routine family interaction from life-writings, they are a valuable source because literate seventeenth-century Scottish men and women used them as the medium through which they analyzed their own lives. In an analytical study of early modern autobiographies, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson concluded that "people tell stories of their lives through the cultural scripts available to them, and they are

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<sup>27</sup> Gordon DesBrisay, Elizabeth Ewan, and H. Lesley Diack, "Life in the Two Towns," in *Aberdeen Before 1800: A New History*, ed., E. Patricia Dennison, David Ditchburn and Michael Lynch (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2002), 53-56; Gordon DesBrisay, "Father knows Best? Patriarchy, Quakers, and Family" (Unpublished paper presented at the North American Conference on British Studies, Portland, October 2003), 1.

<sup>28</sup> A.M. Munro, *Memorials of the Alderman, Provosts, and Lord Provosts of Aberdeen* (Aberdeen, 1897), 158; Alastair Tayler and Henrietta Tayler, eds., *The Valuation of the County of Aberdeen for the Year 1667*, vol.4, Third Spalding Club (Aberdeen, 1933), 156.

governed by cultural structures about self-presentation in public.”<sup>29</sup> Smith and Watson’s conclusions reinforce the importance of life-writings which offer rare glimpses into how men and women interacted with one another and how they viewed their behavior and that of others. Through these vital sources historians can begin to assess how some men and women thought and felt about their interpersonal relationships.

Scottish men and women composing life-writings in the seventeenth century had very few models available to them, not only because most such works remained unpublished for several hundreds years,<sup>30</sup> but also because generally there were only two narrative styles available to them. These included the religious narrative, which appears to have been a common form of life-writings in Scotland, and the secular *res gestae* (the story of deeds done).<sup>31</sup> Interestingly life-writings indicate a specific gender boundary between these two forms of writing. In the sample we will examine, men often choose to write about their deeds in a matter-of-fact manner and appear less concerned with religious rhetoric and spiritual experiences. Men are more inclined to describe their feelings concerning their parents, spouses, children and siblings, conveying glimpses of emotion within the protected sphere of personal life-writings. However, as historians analyze these texts they should be aware that male writings were much more likely to be published during the early modern period. So even if individuals did not write for publication, they appear very much aware of the possibility, which might explain their focus on family rather than their political career.

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<sup>29</sup> Smith and Watson, eds., *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, 176.

<sup>30</sup> It is important to point out that although the majority of life-writings were not published in the seventeenth century, some may have been circulated while still in manuscript form.

<sup>31</sup> Smith and Watson, eds., *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, 93.

Unlike most male life-writers, many of the female diarists studied in this thesis centered their life-writings on their spiritual development by outlining their religious conversion through spiritual trials, offering historians a much different approach to early modern family interaction than their male counterparts. Because female writers deliberately composed spiritual memoirs as a means to engage in the public arena, they communicated their views through religious language and analogies – a form of acceptable expression for women in the early modern era. As spiritual memoir, female life-writing focuses primarily on spiritual sufferings and therefore only discusses family relationships within a dialogue of spiritual struggles. Although this often makes such writings difficult for historians to interpret, by using religious language female authors were able to justify their participation in literate society.<sup>32</sup> David George Mullan argues that Scottish women were able to share their inner selves with the public and found support to do so through their “religion which encouraged feminine piety no less than masculine.”<sup>33</sup> By framing their personal writings in a religious context, women could express their experiences as important spiritual contributions. Unfortunately, spiritual writing has its limitations. For example, if spousal relations were well-functioning, women generally neglect to mention anything until faced with their spouses’ death, which they could comment on in a context of spiritual trials. For that reason, it is necessary in our brief study of seventeenth-century Scottish families to understand the cultural framework that contributed to male and female writings.

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<sup>32</sup> Patricia Crawford, “Women’s Published Writings, 1600-1700,” in *Women in English Society, 1500-1800*, ed. Mary Prior (New York: Methuen, 1985), 221.

<sup>33</sup> David George Mullan, “Scottish Women’s Religious Narrative, 1660-1720: Constructing the Evangelical Self,” in *Women and the Feminine in Medieval and Early Modern Scottish Writing*, ed. Sarah M. Dunnigan, Marie C. Harker, and Evelyn S. Newlyn (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 183.



Since, as previously mentioned, most of the work done on Scottish family life has been based on court records, wills and kirk sessions, I have deliberately chosen to focus primarily on life-writings, as well as personal letters and a few civil court records concerning seventeenth-century Scottish men and women. Although it is likely that the relationships examined in this thesis have elements common to families throughout Scottish society, many of these writers were from Edinburgh and the surrounding area and therefore are representative more so of lowland than highland culture. Most of the male life-writings examined here were written by politically and religiously active men. Although all men examined in this thesis were wealthy or prominent to some degree, none enjoyed the wealth and power of James Drummond (1648-1716), fourth Earl of Perth. Several life-writers such as Archibald Johnston of Wariston (1611-1663), Alexander Jaffray (1614-1673) and Alexander Brodie (1617-1680) were friends, while others may or may not have known each other. The earliest author we encounter is Archibald Johnston of Wariston (1611-1663), the latest James Erskine (1679-1754). Our female writers tend to come from more humble backgrounds, eight were born to or married ministers while two were daughters of earls. Of these women, Katherine (1653-1697) and Jean Collace (d.1704) were sisters, while Margaret Cunningham (d. 1622) was Katherine Hamilton's (1662-1707) maternal grandmother's sister. Katherine Collace (1653-1697) counseled James Nimmo (1654-1709) on his marriage prospects, just as she received counsel from her friend, Alexander Brodie (1617-1680) on her marriage. Our earliest female author, Margaret Cunningham wrote during the 1620's, while the latest in our sample to write was Elizabeth Cairns who was born in 1685. Although our writers span more than a century, the way in which men and women approached their family

relationships do not appear to alter drastically (if at all) and will therefore be examined within the same historical context.

Although I believe that life-writings are historically valuable, some historians have identified the danger of relying on such sources. Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos urges historians to be wary because such “recollections can not be trusted as evidence of the true” experience had by authors who wrote their life-writing “years after the event.”<sup>34</sup> Likewise Linda Pollock reminds historians that although insightful, life-writings have likely been carefully censored or at the very least selectively written. Despite her concern, Pollock argues that diarists appear to have been “honest about their feelings” and “concerned with recording the truth as they saw it.”<sup>35</sup> Patricia Crawford recommends caution when approaching life-writings, arguing that “all literary sources need to be treated with caution, not least diaries, [and] autobiographies in which details of life are selected for comment. Such random and haphazard record of experience is limited.”<sup>36</sup> Although these are very reasonable concerns, life-writings convey how the individual writer understood and behaved in their interpersonal relationships. Although it is likely that life experience did encourage authors to shape and censor their comments as much as their awareness of the possibility of future audiences, life-writings illustrate the world as perceived by the individual writer. Therefore, with caution in mind, this thesis will rely primarily on life-writings. However, aware of methodological concerns as outlined above, it will balance life-writings with historiographical context by examining the power structures within seventeenth-century Scottish society that framed family

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<sup>34</sup> Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 49-50.

<sup>35</sup> Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900*, 76, 80.

<sup>36</sup> Patricia Crawford, *Blood, Bodies, and Families in Early Modern England* (New York: Pearson/Longman, 2004), 142.

relationships. It is hoped that this context will provide a better understanding of individual behavior.

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In order to provide the context surrounding these life-writings, it is necessary to examine religious doctrine and societal conventions as well as legal obligations that may have influenced the family relationships referred to by these life-writers. To do so, this thesis will examine seventeenth-century printed sources such as sermons, household and conduct books, religious pamphlets, and advice books. To avoid confusion all of these sources will be referred to as advice literature. The culture of print was extremely popular in the seventeenth century.<sup>37</sup> Although the majority of Scottish printed literature corresponded with the religious and political upheaval of the times,<sup>38</sup> low printing costs and relatively easy access to printers ensured that Edinburgh became a center of printing for Europe in later centuries.<sup>39</sup> For the purpose of this thesis it is necessary to note that although much of the circulating English-language advice literature was published in London, historians agree that the Scots participated in a wider literary culture that transcended political borders.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, this thesis will look at some of the more

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<sup>37</sup> R.A Houston has found that early modern European printing boomed and estimates that as many as 400 titles were printed in the 1500's, 6,000 in the 1630's and 21,000 in the early 1700's. These figures do not take into account manuscripts or imported publications. See R.A Houston, *Literacy in Early Modern Europe: Culture and Education 1500-1800* (New York: Pearson Education, 2002), 175.

<sup>38</sup> King James IV viewed Scotland's first printing press (1507-8) as instrumental in promoting his government through the printing of Acts of Parliament, legal texts, chronicles and service books, which established the pattern for Scottish printers. Houston, *Literacy in Early Modern Europe: Culture and Education*, 177. For a detailed list of texts printed in Scotland see Harry G. Aldis, *A list of books printed in Scotland before 1700; including those printed furth of the realm for Scottish booksellers with brief notes on the printers and stationers* (Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland, 1970).

<sup>39</sup> Ian Whyte and R.A Houston eds., *Scottish Society, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 33.

<sup>40</sup> In 1557 the English legislation granted the monopoly of English printing to the London Stationers' Company, which perhaps partly explains London's printing dominance. Houston, *Literacy in Early Modern Europe: Culture and Education*, 174. Despite advice literature being printed in London, it very likely traveled north to Scotland. For example, English and Scottish Quakers were known to actively circulate

popular English works known to have circulated in Scotland as well as any works that are Scottish. Although it is difficult to ascertain how influential English advice literature was on Scottish society,<sup>41</sup> it is clear that the audience of advice literature was not limited by political borders.

Seventeenth-century advice literature is often attributed to popular ministers whose sermons were rushed into print in order to supply the demand for advice literature. Throughout the seventeenth century, English ministers seeking to publish their sermons required approval from the Ecclesiastical Licensers whose duty was to carefully monitor and censor the content of published advice literature.<sup>42</sup> In 1621 Puritan minister William Whately (1583-1639) experienced a severe reprimand from the Court of High Commission on his published views of divorce.<sup>43</sup> Although Whately insisted that notes from a sermon he had preached eleven years prior to the 1621 publication of *A Bride Bush, Or a Wedding Sermon* had been misused by printers, a new edition appeared in 1623 recanting his original views on divorce and describing a much more structured line of authority in families.<sup>44</sup> In all early modern European countries, censorship existed in some form. However, lax governments ensured that censorship did not function perfectly.<sup>45</sup> Although Whately was forced to edit his text, it had already been published several times previous to his government approved edition in 1623.

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pamphlets and books for distribution throughout England and Scotland. Luella M. Wright, *The Literary Life of the Early Friends* (New York: Columbia, 1932), 82.

<sup>41</sup> Keith M. Brown, *Noble Society in Scotland: Wealth, Family and Culture from the Reformation to the Revolution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 136.

<sup>42</sup> Douglas A. Brooks, ed., *Printing and Parenting in Early Modern England* (England: Ashgate, 2005), 298.

<sup>43</sup> Whately shocked authorities when he stated that ill treated wives had a right to seek a divorce. In England, divorces were extremely difficult to attain, particularly since it required an act of parliament.

<sup>44</sup> Brooks, ed., *Printing and Parenting in Early Modern England*, 298.

<sup>45</sup> Houston, *Literacy in Early Modern Europe: Culture and Education*, 181-182.

Female authors of advice literature, although much fewer in number, tended, like male writers, to be from the middling to upper classes. In order to participate in the subculture of printed advice literature, women used their roles as mothers to justify their contribution to the public discourse. In 1616 English gentlewoman Dorothy Leigh's text, *The mother's blessing: or the Godly counsel of a gentlewoman*, was published for the first time, and it enjoyed 23 further editions, the latest in 1674.<sup>46</sup> Leigh claimed to write for her three young sons and structured her text accordingly. However, it is clear that she wrote for a wider audience. Printed advice literature appears to have enjoyed a period of popularity in the seventeenth century, and that accompanied by rising literacy rates allowed more women to write and publish during their lifetimes. English gentlewoman Hannah Woolley (d.1674) wrote numerous works on cookery, medicine and household affairs, publishing the first in 1661 at her own expense. This first effort was such a huge sensation that it was reprinted and quickly followed by several other publications.<sup>47</sup>

Despite the rise of advice literature in popular culture during the early modern era, Scottish literacy remained closely attached to occupation, educational opportunity and gender. R.A Houston has examined Scottish literacy during the seventeenth and eighteenth century and has found that skilled craftsmen, as well as middle and upper class men in urban centers were usually literate, while servants, peasants and farmers in rural areas tended to be illiterate, creating a society with a 32% illiteracy rate among men.<sup>48</sup> Women who had access to education, such as middle or upper class women were relatively literate, while between 81-90% of women in Scotland as well as most of

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<sup>46</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, "Dorothy Leigh".

<sup>47</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, "Hannah Woolley".

<sup>48</sup> R.A Houston, *Scottish Literacy and the Scottish Identity: Illiteracy and Society in Scotland and Northern England 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1985), 57.

northern Europe remained illiterate.<sup>49</sup> Scottish illiteracy rates are not unusual for early modern Europe. In England, France and Spain illiteracy rates paralleled Scottish numbers with men around 37% and women as high as 87-95% illiterate.<sup>50</sup> However, David Booy asserts that despite low literacy rates, historians ought not to under-estimate the power of printed literature or oral sermons on early modern society. He claims that advice literature printed in Europe enjoyed a wide readership in the middle class. While at the lower end of the social hierarchy, sermons were heard, containing much the same information,<sup>51</sup> especially since advice literature originated from popular sermons, printed in order to extend to a wider audience.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, because advice literature was rampant throughout seventeenth-century Scotland, this thesis will examine how such literature portrayed individual roles within the family and how it may have shaped interaction between spouses, parents and children.

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In keeping with the usual formation process of a seventeenth-century Scottish family, this thesis will open with a discussion of spousal relationships. In order to contextualize how spouses interacted with each other, Chapter One describes religious, social and legal ideologies that shaped seventeenth-century gender conventions<sup>53</sup> influencing the expectation, formation and behavior of spouses within marriage. Religious, social and legal structures of authority provide the context through which we

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>51</sup> David Booy, ed., *Personal Disclosures: An Anthology of Self-Writings from the Seventeenth Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 36.

<sup>52</sup> Susan C. Karant-Nunn, "Reformation Society, Women and the Family," in *The Reformation World*, ed. Andrew Pettegree (New York: Routledge, 2000), 144.

<sup>53</sup> The term gender refers to the rules which seventeenth-century society endorsed about relationships between men and women and their respective roles. Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, eds., *Women in Early Modern England, 1550-1720* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1998), 6.

will examine seventeenth-century Scottish life-writing. Chapter Two analyzes the relationship between parents and their children within an authoritarian ideology, which functioned, even in the absence of affective family relations, to direct parents and children towards their mutual responsibilities. It analyses life-writings from the viewpoint of authors who as adults comment on how their parents reared them, how they responded, as well as how they as parents reacted to challenges with their children. Following a brief outline of social expectations for interactions between parents and their offspring during particular life-stages, we will dive into issues of ‘fatherhood’ and ‘motherhood’ to explore the role of gender in the parent-child diad. Completing our examination of seventeenth-century family interaction, Chapter Three analyzes the nature of sibling relationships, which appear to have formed some of the closest and longest lasting relationships within the seventeenth-century family. Because early modern sibling interaction was influenced by gender, birth order, family situation and individual personalities,<sup>54</sup> this chapter provides several case studies that explore themes of authority and empowerment, constraint and reciprocity, gender, and affection. The thesis will conclude with a brief discussion highlighting several broad themes found in spousal, parent-child and sibling relationships.

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<sup>54</sup> Slater, *Family life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House*, 58.

## Chapter One

### Husbands and Wives

It is important to begin our examination of seventeenth-century families with an analysis of marriage, as marriage was considered the foundation on which Scottish families were built. Marriages were built on three structures of authority: the kirk, the community and the state. These three structures influenced the way men and women approached the marriage relationship. All Scottish spousal relationships were formulated on this authoritarian framework, and in order to understand the marriage experience, it is necessary to determine how these structures of authority helped to shape the expectations of both men and women. The Scottish kirk, like all early modern churches, was able to extend its influence into marriage through sermons and advice literature that relied on religious analogies to describe the roles of men and women, husbands and wives. The community influenced families by instilling and upholding social conventions of appropriate behavior. The state was reliant on stable marriages and therefore used the law to dictate a family structure that reflected the power hierarchy present in the state.<sup>1</sup> The abundance of scholarly work aimed at identifying the role and situation of early modern husbands and wives has created much debate over how spouses thought, felt, and operated within the social constructs of their prescribed gender roles. This chapter will examine how these elements combined to create a Scottish perception of marriage and

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<sup>1</sup> The institution of Kirk Sessions in every lowland Scottish parish was the prime agent enforcing the three legs of this power structure at a grass roots level. See Janay Barbara Nugent for a thought-provoking analysis of these structures of authority and their influence on marriage in her PhD thesis "Marriage Matters: Evidence from the Kirk Session Records of Scotland, c.1560-1650" (PhD, University of Guelph, 2006), 42.



spousal behavior, and how individualized factors such as personality, finances and social position affected the diverse experiences of Scottish men and women.<sup>2</sup>

The relationship between husbands and wives formed the bedrock of early modern society and was therefore carefully structured on a hierarchal concept of authority. The family was believed to be a reflection of the state, a miniature kingdom in which the husband, as family head, acted much as a ruling monarch, with his wife, children and servants rendered his subjects.<sup>3</sup> As a result of this age old power structure, wives were expected to be subservient to their husbands.<sup>4</sup> Printed advice literature detailed this hierarchal power structure, exhorting that “[t]he wife owes as much of that [reverence] to her husband, as the children and servants doe to her, yea, as they doe to him: only it is allowed that it bee sweetened with more love and more familiarity.”<sup>5</sup> Not surprisingly this idyllic representation of power relationships within marriage created complications, particularly in outlining the position of the wife who was expected, as a woman, to be subordinate to her husband, but who, as a wife, was to enjoy “love and more familiarity” from her husband.<sup>6</sup> To further complicate this relationship, following the Reformation in Scotland (1560), women and men were viewed as spiritual equals. This naturally led to a rather difficult balancing act for a wife who was taught to submissively accept the authority of her husband, but yet had to operate as a partner in child-rearing and household management. Likely in an attempt to temper these mixed messages, authors of advice literature stressed the need for complementary gender roles

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<sup>2</sup> Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (New York: B. Blackwell, 1988), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Nugent, “Marriage Matters: Evidence from the Kirk Session Records of Scotland, c.1560-1650,” 56.

<sup>4</sup> However, as Linda Pollock pointed out, wives were expected to obey their husbands and if unmarried their fathers, but not all men, or in fact any other man. See her article, “Rethinking Patriarchy and the Family in Seventeenth-Century England,” *Journal of Family History* 23.1 (1998), 6.

<sup>5</sup> William Whately, *A Bride Bush, Or a Wedding Sermon* (London, 1617), 37.

<sup>6</sup> Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, 41; Whately, *A Bride Bush*, 37.

in marriage, which they promised would create a working partnership.<sup>7</sup> Society responded to this complexity by creating notions of an ideal marriage in which the husband treated his wife with affection and equality while his wife in return fulfilled her role of helpmate while displaying deference to her husband's position within the family hierarchy.<sup>8</sup>

Although religious, social and legal constructs dictated the roles of husbands and wives, there was a certain expectation that the ideal marriage would result in a well-oiled working partnership. In theory husbands and wives assumed complementary roles: men were to provide for the family economically while women were expected to govern the household, manage domestic work and rear the children.<sup>9</sup> In an examination of the 'good' wife and her 'good' husband, Margaret Ezell argues that the notion of the ideal family did not originate in the seventeenth century, but was already extremely popular in the literature circulating throughout Europe at that time. She insists that images of the good wife and her good husband encouraged a division of labor, wherein husband and wife worked together through their gender specific roles to ensure the maintenance of the family.<sup>10</sup> The ideal family in this sense was the embodiment of the religious, social and legal framework since it represented the family as a united force, with the husband and wife combining their efforts to secure the future of their family.<sup>11</sup> This concept of spousal partnership in which husband and wife fulfill their mutual obligations for the success of the family is present in Rosemary O'Day's analysis of French, English and

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<sup>7</sup> Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, 43.

<sup>8</sup> Nugent, "Marriage Matters: Evidence from the Kirk Session Records of Scotland, c.1560-1650," 72.

<sup>9</sup> Mary S. Hartman, *The Household and the Making of History: A Subversive View of the Western Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 193.

<sup>10</sup> Margaret J.M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife: Literary Evidence and the History of the Family* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 38.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

American families. It is clear from her study that spouses were in many ways dependant upon one another.<sup>12</sup> Steven Ozment has discovered a similar situation in early modern German households, where despite male rule, authority was shared by husband and wife.<sup>13</sup> The goal of these three power structures was to ensure that marriage created relationships between husband and wife which although not equal were complementary.<sup>14</sup>

As a result of the intermingling of the kirk, the community and legal tradition, male and female gender roles were created from interwoven ideas streaming from these structures of authority. For example, seventeenth-century advice literature was often written by clergymen,<sup>15</sup> who based their depiction of the roles of husbands and wives on the creation story as well as other biblical interpretations. However, these ministers were working within the framework of socially and legally prescribed forms of appropriate behavior. Therefore, it is essential to remember that the lines carved out here are not as fixed as they may appear. In a study of religion and its influence on gender, Ursula King has argued that “the very construction of gendered identities in history is inherently linked to religious teachings, norms and values which have structured interpersonal relationships, the organization of communities and spiritual awareness.”<sup>16</sup> Unfortunately for women, their roles as wives were shaped by Eve’s early encounter with the Lord following her transgression, which involved partaking of the forbidden fruit in the

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<sup>12</sup> Rosemary O’Day, *The Family and Family Relationships, 1500-1900: England, France and the United States of America* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1994), 154.

<sup>13</sup> Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 99.

<sup>14</sup> Mary Abott, *Life Cycles in England 1560-1720: Cradle to Grave* (London: Routledge, 1996), 94.

<sup>15</sup> Susan C. Karant-Nunn, “Reformation Society, Women and the Family,” in *The Reformation World*, ed. Andrew Pettegree (New York: Routledge, 2000), 444.

<sup>16</sup> Ursula King, “Religion and Gender: Embedded Patterns, Interwoven Frameworks,” in *A Companion to Gender History*, ed. Teresa A. Meade and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks (Malden: Blackwell Pub., 2004), 72.

Garden of Eden. After reprimanding Eve the Lord said to her, “thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”<sup>17</sup> Early modern sermonizers, like their medieval predecessors, used this passage to reassure men and impress upon women that as a result of Eve’s part in the fall of humankind, wives were to submit to their husband’s authority.<sup>18</sup> Adam’s story was likewise significant for men, since it ensured their role as family patriarch and reinforced the societal notion that men needed to control their wives.<sup>19</sup>

As a result of religious analogies surrounding marriage, husbands were groomed as spiritual heads of households. Following the Reformation in Scotland (1560), this position was challenged somewhat as ministers encouraged women to be responsible for their individual spirituality, a transition which provided a forum through which women were empowered enough to engage with men as spiritual equals.<sup>20</sup> In an effort to curb this potentially dangerous situation,<sup>21</sup> ministers were quick to qualify women’s spirituality by stating that although men and women were spiritually equal, their duties on earth were different.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, because men and women had different duties, husbands as the “master of the house” were responsible for the “ordering and ruling of the house in wisdom, the providing of things needful with diligence and the giving of

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<sup>17</sup> Genesis 3.16. King James Version.

<sup>18</sup> Karant-Nunn, “Reformation Society, Women and the Family,” 442.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Patricia Crawford, “Women’s Published Writings 1600-1700,” in *Women in English Society 1500-1800*, ed. Mary Prior (New York: Methuen, 1985), 221.

<sup>21</sup> Seventeenth-century Scottish women often used spirituality as a means through which they asserted their authority. For example, Katherine Collace constantly reprimanded ministers she associated with as well as those she considered ungodly concerning religious doctrine. Similarly, Elizabeth West felt it necessary to lecture her father on his lack of religious instruction. In the hopes of spiritually reforming her apostate husband and possibly vocalizing her frustration with him, Margaret Cunningham wrote him several lengthy letters calling him to repentance, reprimands that could only be justified because of her concern for his soul. Although religion could limit women’s power, it also provided them with opportunities to assert themselves.

<sup>22</sup> Lyndal Roper, *The Holy Household: Women and Morals in Reformation Augsburg* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 266.

good example in all godliness and gravitie” as well as “the performance of all parts of familie exercise.”<sup>23</sup> These duties were so commonly reiterated that husbands would have been thoroughly familiar with their responsibilities.

In an effort to support religious notions concerning the prescribed duties of wives, minister-authors chose to incorporate their interpretation of Pauline teachings into conventional gender roles by carefully selecting passages that reinforced societal constructs. For example, in his letter to the Ephesians, Paul wrote “wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.”<sup>24</sup> This verse was widely used in seventeenth-century literature encouraging women to be submissive and obedient to their husbands. In order to reinforce wifely subordination, advice literature and public sermons also made regular use of the following verse in Ephesians which states that “the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church...therefore as the church is subjected unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.”<sup>25</sup> Religious analogies such as this legitimized the prevailing power structure within marriage by aligning women metaphorically with the carnal ‘body’ which required the guidance of the ‘head’ or husband.<sup>26</sup> In early modern Scotland where the core of the household was the wedded couple, these religiously enforced ideologies were bound to influence family dynamics.<sup>27</sup>

The community as a power structure influenced marriage through societal norms governing gender expectations. These gender roles acted as the embodiment of the

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<sup>23</sup> Robert Bryson, “Familie Exercise or the Service of God in families,” Acc. 3924 NLS, Edinburgh, 1641, 15/16.

<sup>24</sup> Ephesians 5.2. KJV

<sup>25</sup> Ephesians 5.23-24. KJV This verse can be found in the vast majority of seventeenth century advice literature.

<sup>26</sup> Suzanne Trill, “Religion and the Construction of Femininity,” in *Women and Literature in Britain 1500-1700*, ed. Helen Wilcox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 31

<sup>27</sup> Karant-Nunn, “Reformation Society,” 441.

conventional hierarchy, and their literary expressions resulted from centuries of discussion among male scholars.<sup>28</sup> In theory at least, a system built on traditional gender roles provided men with absolute authority over their wives, power which was supported both scripturally and legally in society.<sup>29</sup> However with great power comes even greater responsibility. As a result of this authority, men were expected as husbands to take responsibility for their wives, children and servants.<sup>30</sup> Concepts of manhood were informed by medical theory as well as by biblical, chivalric and civic traditions, all of which expected husbands to develop attributes ranging from “strength, valor, courage, magnanimity and liberality to virtue, reason, prudence, moderation, self-mastery, civility, honesty, independence, thrift, sobriety, and self-sufficiency.”<sup>31</sup> David Booy has argued that although advice literature urged husbands to establish themselves as the head of the family through benevolent authority, they were also meant to appreciate their wives. Husbands were urged to be loving, patient and mindful of their wife’s needs, not overbearing or physically violent.<sup>32</sup> Scottish historians R.A Houston and Ian Whyte have likewise argued that although the male position in society was consolidated by law and custom, the strong presence of patriarchal control in early modern Scotland did not result in husbands ‘lording’ their authority over their households.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Valerie Wayne, “Advice for Women from Mothers and Patriarchs,” in *Women and Literature in Britain 1500-1700*, ed. Helen Wilcox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 56.

<sup>29</sup> Elizabeth Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage* (New York: Longman, 1999), 65.

<sup>30</sup> Steven Nock, *Marriage in Men’s Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 130.

<sup>31</sup> Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 292.

<sup>32</sup> David Booy, ed., *Personal Disclosure: An Anthology of Self-Writings from the Seventeenth Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 35.

<sup>33</sup> R.A Houston and Ian Whyte eds., *Scottish Society 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 21.

Women, considered polar opposites of their male counterparts, were described as weaker vessels,<sup>34</sup> and as such were deemed prone to act on emotions rather than logic. Seventeenth-century understandings of women's physiological nature shaped ideas about their inherent mental and emotional natures. As a result of women's unreliable intellect and unruly passions, they were encouraged to develop seemingly feminine virtues, which included obedience as well as submissiveness.<sup>35</sup> However, in Scotland, historians Ian and Kathleen Whyte have found that Scottish epitaphs describe other important wifely attributes. For many Scottish men, piety was emphasized but closely followed by meekness and frugality.<sup>36</sup> James Nimmo (1654–1709), who was outlawed in 1679 for his brief military participation with the covenanters, expressed his delight that Elizabeth Brodie, his betrothed, was a “trewlie pious” woman.<sup>37</sup> It was Elizabeth Brodie's reputation for piety that initially caught Nimmo's attention, having heard about her prior to meeting and courting her.

Social conventions surrounding women's weaker mental abilities, physical strength and faithfulness shaped the experience of wives. Throughout seventeenth-century advice literature wives are often referred to as “yoke-fellows ... comforters ... helpers” indicating their role as wedded companion.<sup>38</sup> However, women were also

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<sup>34</sup> See Antonia Fraser, *The Weaker Vessel: Woman's Lot in Seventeenth Century England* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1984).

<sup>35</sup> N.H Keeble ed., *The Cultural Identity of Seventeenth-Century Women* (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1994), 96; Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England*, 65; Trill, “Religion and the Construction of Femininity,” 31.

<sup>36</sup> Ian and Kathleen Whyte, “Wed to the Manse,” in *Women in Scotland, c.1100-1750*, ed. Elizabeth Ewan and Maureen Meikle (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 228.

<sup>37</sup> W.G. Scott-Moncrieff, ed., *Narrative of Mr. James Nimmo written for his own satisfaction to keep in some remembrance the Lord's way dealing and kindness towards him, 1654-1709* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1889), 27.

<sup>38</sup> These are all common terms applied to wives throughout the printed sources cited in this thesis.

reminded by popular Puritan ministers like William Whately, (1583–1639),<sup>39</sup> that a married woman was “not her husband’s equall, yea that her husband is her better by faire.”<sup>40</sup> As subordinate to men, women were to “submissively learn of their husbands.”<sup>41</sup> Other manuals urged wives to “submit and subject herself to her husband, in all such duties as properlie belong to marriage.”<sup>42</sup> Wives as “fellow-helpers” to their husbands were to “order her household affairs so carefully that no exercise of religion may be hindered.”<sup>43</sup> In her internationally circulated conduct book *The Gentlewomen’s guide*, Hannah Woolley (c.1622-1674) a middle class Englishwoman, reminded her readers that “[m]an, of human-kind, was God’s first workmanship; women was made after man, and of the same substance, to be subservient and assisting to him.”<sup>44</sup> It would seem that these feminine traits were not limited to the wishful thinking of the male population, but rather were generally accepted by women themselves. However, the ideal wife as portrayed by social conventions could still enjoy positions of power within the family.<sup>45</sup> By examining early modern letter writing, James Daybell has found that in actuality, the degree of power exercised by women within their marriages was based on numerous factors, including age, wealth, personality and circumstance, all of which allowed women to move beyond the constraints of subordination.<sup>46</sup> Early modern Scottish women were able to operate beyond the narrow framework set out by societal

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<sup>39</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, “William Whately”.

<sup>40</sup> Whately, *A Bride Bush*, 36.

<sup>41</sup> Richard Baxter, *Mr. Baxter’s rules and directions*... (Printed by H. Brugis for J. Conyers, 1681), 1.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Cleaver, *A Godlie Forme of Household Government*... (London, 1630), 117.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>44</sup> Hannah Wolley, *The Gentlewoman’s Companion, or, A Guide to the Female Sex: containing directions of behaviour in all places, companies, relations and conditions, from their childhood down to the old age*... (London: Printed by A. Maxwell for Edward Thomas, 1675), 104.

<sup>45</sup> See Rosalind K. Marshall, *The Days of Duchess Anne: Life in the Household of the Duchess, 1656-1716* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1974); Lee Maurice, *The Heiresses of Buccleuch: Marriage, Money, and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Britain* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1996).

<sup>46</sup> James Daybell, *Early Modern Women’s Letter Writing, 1450-1700* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 9.



conventions and experience a more rounded relationship with their spouses.<sup>47</sup> This is particularly evident after marriage, when relations between the husband and wife were more flexible, allowing some women to experience considerable independence so long as they did not challenge underlying assumptions of gender roles.<sup>48</sup>

Scottish law reinforced the religious and social tradition by strengthening the power structure in families. Because marital arrangements involved complex financial transactions, Scottish law very clearly outlined the position and responsibilities of men and women within matrimony. Under *jus mariti*, a woman's moveable assets were transferred to her husband, who enjoyed the sole right of property and also of management.<sup>49</sup> This transaction ensured that although a woman lost her legal *persona*, it rendered her husband responsible for her behavior and well being. Therefore, despite giving the husband the upper hand, a married woman could enjoy a certain degree of financial security. On July 13<sup>th</sup> 1708, Alexander Davidson was taken to the Court of Session<sup>50</sup> for not paying the debts his wife, Lady Gight, had acquired prior to their marriage. During the procedures he was sternly reminded that "man and wife are understood to have entered in a society of well and wo, loss and gain, which implies an obligation to relieve one another of their debts and burdens."<sup>51</sup> Following which the prosecution reminded the court that the "husband covers the wife from personal execution, and therefore himself should answer for her."<sup>52</sup> Alexander was found liable

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<sup>47</sup> Rosalind Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos. A History of Women in Scotland from 1080-1980* (London: Collins, 1983), 104.

<sup>48</sup> Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, 133.

<sup>49</sup> D.M. Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland* (Edinburgh: W. Greens, 1988), 832.

<sup>50</sup> The Court of Session was Scotland's highest civil court, and as such dealt mainly with disputes over money and inheritance among the wealthy.

<sup>51</sup> Scotland. Court of Session. *A journal of the session. Containing the decisions of the Lords of Council and Session, ... from February 1705, till November 1713: and the acts.* (Edinburgh, 1714), 262.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

for all annualrents [i.e. interest payments] due by his wife.<sup>56</sup> Although the law upheld the social order, it could be used to favor indebted wives.<sup>57</sup> The law further benefited wives, demanding that a husband provide for his wife not only during his life, but also following his death. These provisions included one-third of his movables or in the event of a childless marriage, one-half.<sup>58</sup> Because marriage required the transferring of finances, all property involved in marriage was identified by contract which included important provisions concerning the tocher, the husband's provision for his wife when widowed, and other patrimonial questions.<sup>59</sup> However, the three structures of authority merged on what constituted legal marriages.

In Scotland marriage was closely supervised by the Church. However, due to the political and religious upheavals of the seventeenth century, marriages may have become more irregular as the Church structure changed from Presbyterian to Episcopal and back again. This instability ensured that couples not affiliated with the current policies arranged irregular marriages,<sup>60</sup> as was the case with James Nimmo and Elizabeth Brodie who were thrilled to have Thomas Hog, a non-conformist minister, marry them.<sup>61</sup> So what constituted an irregular marriage? Irregular marriages, *per verba de praesenti* and *per verba de futuro subsequente copula*, consisted of a promise to marry (either now or in the future) followed by sexual intercourse. These marriages could be performed either in

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<sup>56</sup> Scotland. Court of Session. *A journal of the session. Containing the decisions of the Lords of Council and Session, ... from February 1705, till November 1713: and the acts.* (Edinburgh, 1714), 263.

<sup>57</sup> See Karen Sander, "Women and Debt Litigation in Seventeenth Century Scotland: Credit and Credibility" (M.A, University of Saskatchewan, 2006), for an excellent examination of how Scottish women maneuvered in order to access credit and debt.

<sup>58</sup> Cathryn Spence, "'Given up by herself': Women's Wills in Late Sixteenth Century Edinburgh" (M.A, University of Guelph, 2006), 45.

<sup>59</sup> See Elizabeth Ewan, "'To the longer liver': Provisions for the Dissolution of the Marital Economy in Scotland, 1470-1550," in *The Marital Economy in Scandinavia and Britain, 1400-1900*, ed. Maria Ågren and Amy Louise Erickson (England: Ashgate, 2005), 193; Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland*, 655.

<sup>60</sup> Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland*, 657-659.

<sup>61</sup> Scott-Moncrieff, ed. *Narrative of Mr. James Nimmo*, 37.

the presence of a clergyman or as an intrinsically secular union between the individuals. Although such unions were not considered invalid, couples who arranged irregular marriages were often punished with a hefty fine meant to discourage the spread of unofficial arrangements.<sup>62</sup> A regular form of Scottish marriage, *in facie ecclesiae*, consisted of the calling of the banns for three consecutive Sundays, followed by the exchange of promises to accept each other as spouses in the presence of a legally recognized parish minister.<sup>63</sup> The legalities of marriage demonstrate how religious theology and socially constructed gender roles were interwoven to ensure that marriage was based on a power structure resembling the state.<sup>64</sup>

Since marriage was considered “the most serious transaction” in seventeenth-century society<sup>65</sup> and likely because it involved not merely two families but the wider community,<sup>66</sup> men and women were cautioned by advice literature to “choose rather by ear, than by eye.”<sup>67</sup> Robert Sibbald, (1641–1722) geographer and physician,<sup>68</sup> sought out Anna Lowers because “she was a virtuous, and pious and loving” woman who as a wife “had great kindness for all my relations and was much esteemed by them.”<sup>69</sup> Evidently the qualities embodied by the ideal wife were as important to courting men as they were in advice literature. Also, because marriage was an important aspect of a man’s progression towards manhood, men cautiously approached potential spouses making the

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<sup>62</sup> See Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland*, 657-659; Leah Leneman, *Promises, Promises: Marriage Litigation in Scotland 1698-1830* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), x.

<sup>63</sup> Leah Leneman, *Promises, Promises*, ix.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, viii.

<sup>65</sup> Anon, *Advice of a Father: or, Counsel to a Child Directing Him to demean himself in the most important passages of this life* (London: Printed by J.R., 1688), 30.

<sup>66</sup> Abbott, *Lifecycles in England 1560-1720: Cradle to Grave*, 95.

<sup>67</sup> Anon, *Advice of a Father: or, Counsel to a Child Directing Him*, 31.

<sup>68</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, “Robert Sibbald.”

<sup>69</sup> Francis Paget Hett, ed., “The Memoirs of Sir Robert Sibbald (1641-1722)” (Oxford: University Press, 1932), 72.

choice of whom to marry only after considerable consultation with friends.<sup>70</sup> Although Robert Sibbald initiated his courtship with Anna Lowers, it was only after “the recommendation of a friend” that Sibbald approached his prospective bride’s family, and after considerable negotiations he was happy to report that “the mariadge was concluded with the consent of all the friends.”<sup>71</sup> According to the outlawed covenanter James Nimmo, he was approached by a “godlie friend” who “proposed that an Elizabeth Brodie....wold be a fitt wife for me.”<sup>72</sup> In spite of this advice, James continued to drag his feet even after his friend and minister, Thomas Hog, “proposed the same person.”<sup>73</sup> However, after “some serious speaking” by Thomas Hog who “charged me to sett some time aparit to consider the matter” James eventually conceded to be married.<sup>74</sup> Lawyer, politician and co-author of the National Covenant, Archibald Johnston of Wariston, (1611-1663), felt that marriage was too serious an event to rely on recommendations from anyone below God. He lamented over the hassle of selecting the ‘ideal’ woman since he did not “trust [himself] nor [his] friends” who might be “deceived by thy passion for ane faire face, and thay for ane great touchergood.”<sup>75</sup> Although Wariston’s “slipperiness of affections” had occasion to fancy other somewhat more handsome women, he indicated in his diary that a man needed to “indifferently submit thyselfth to Gods providence and friends counsel,” thus pledging himself to the young and somewhat uncomely Jean Stewart towards whom he had “no hope of it nor great lyking.”<sup>76</sup> It is

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<sup>70</sup> Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England*, 65.

<sup>71</sup> Hett, ed., “The Memoirs of Sir Robert Sibbald (1641-1722),” 71-72.

<sup>72</sup> Scott-Moncrieff, ed. *Narrative of Mr. James Nimmo*, 27.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>75</sup> Archibald Johnston of Wariston, *Diary of Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston* (Edinburgh, University Press, 1911), 2.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

evident that men were not only expected to approach marriage seriously, but would often only pursue a specific young woman after being counseled by close friends.<sup>77</sup>

Although women generally tend not to refer to their courtship in their life-writings, they were regularly admonished by advice literature to be wary of qualities that would diminish over time. In his widely circulated text, *A Bride Bush, Or a Wedding Sermon* composed from his popular sermons on duties in marriage, William Whately cautioned women against shallow affection, since physical prowess and beauty diminish over the years. He wrote, “thy lovest thine husband, because he is a proper man, and hath an active and able body, is of good health, wit, carriage; because he is kind, loving, of fair condition, useth thee well. But where shall we finde thy love, if an alternation come to these things, as to all earthy things it may come?”<sup>78</sup> Seventeenth-century Scottish women like Elizabeth Blackadder (1660-1732), daughter of a non-conformist minister and later wife of Edinburgh lawyer James Young, chose to follow such practical advice and found that she was “very happily married...for I got a very religious, comfortable, kind husband.”<sup>79</sup> Both men and women were urged to “choose one that is truly lovely and proceed in your choice, with great deliberation, and avoid all things as tend to quench love.”<sup>80</sup> Perhaps because seventeenth-century society viewed choosing a marriage partner as one of the most significant decisions that an individual would make, women, like men, were cautioned to develop a love for their spouse that would last through the duration of their lives.

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<sup>77</sup> Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, 108.

<sup>78</sup> Whately, *A Bride Bush*, 8.

<sup>79</sup> Elizabeth Blackadder, Mrs. Young. “A Short Account of the Lord’s Way of Providence towards me in my Pilgrimage Journeys,” in *Women’s Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 390.

<sup>80</sup> Baxter, *Mr. Baxter’s rules and directions for family duties*, 1.

Seventeenth-century authors of advice literature were not satisfied with outlining the specific gender constructs of husbands and wives, and spent considerable time reiterating the importance of love between spouses. In an advice manual detailing filial obligations, William Whately admitted that the “love of yoke-fellowes, is a specially and peculiar love, farr more deare and inward than all” which should result in a couple who “love entirely.”<sup>81</sup> So significant was the relationship between husband and wife that couples were urged to “settle [their] very soule upon” each other.<sup>82</sup> It is likely that the element of love within marriage provided a forum in which early modern literature was able to illustrate the reciprocal obligations between husbands and wives as well as balance the power structure of seventeenth-century marriages.<sup>83</sup>

However, underlying the advice on spousal affection is a discernable tension in advice literature between the importance of mutual affection and a fear that to be too liberal with spousal affection would result in disorder and unseemliness.<sup>84</sup> One author cautioned his son, “[a]s thous lovest thy liberty, be not entangled in the Labyrinth of love; to be a slave to a woman, is the baset Bondage; thou canst not more unman thy self.”<sup>85</sup> Early modern society feared loving husbands might allow their affections to overcome their reason and by so doing undermine the very foundations upon which society was built.<sup>86</sup> Advice literature often argued that masculinity stood in peril when men allowed

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<sup>81</sup> Whately, *A Bride Bush*, 8.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> Booy ed., *Personal Disclosures*, 93.

<sup>84</sup> Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England*, 56-57; Keeble, *The Cultural Identity of Seventeenth-Century Women*, 145.

<sup>85</sup> Anon, *The Advice of a father*, 29.

<sup>86</sup> For a detailed examination on the danger marriage placed on masculinity see; Elizabeth A. Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage* (New York: Longman, 1999); Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Ruth Mazo Karras, *From Boys to Men: Formation of Masculinity in late Medieval Europe* (Pennsylvania:

emotion to overcome reason.<sup>87</sup> Consequently, men were often advised to maintain a sufficient distance from their wives, yet love between spouses was clearly believed to be centrally vital to a successful marriage.<sup>88</sup>

Due to the extensive financial negotiations involved in a marriage contract, individuals hoped for love, but recognized that labor and property were essential.<sup>89</sup> It would seem that although many unions developed mutual affection, men and women likely married because of long-term security rather than mere attraction.<sup>90</sup> For Robert Sibbald, marriage was a practical situation resulting because “bot my mother and sister being deade, and I left alone, and finding a necessity of keeping house, I yn in earnst determined I would engage myself in a married lyfe.”<sup>91</sup> Robert’s approach to marriage was pragmatic, he needed a wife to tend to the domestic duties previously fulfilled first by his sister and after her marriage, by his widowed mother. This practical approach seems to have provided satisfying results for many, and perhaps most marriages.<sup>92</sup>

Although Scottish women in the seventeenth century enjoyed a considerable degree of free choice concerning their potential spouse,<sup>93</sup> most marriages occurred only

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Pennsylvania University Press, 2003); and Steven L. Nock, *Marriage in Men’s Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

<sup>87</sup> Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage*, 139.

<sup>88</sup> Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, 83-84.

<sup>89</sup> Maria Ågren and Amy Louise Erickson, eds., *Introduction. The Marital Economy in Scandinavia and Britain, 1400-1900* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 3.

<sup>90</sup> Ian and Kathleen Whyte, “Wed to the Manse: The Wives of Scottish Ministers,” 227; Rosalind K. Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos. A History of Women in Scotland from 1080-1980* (London: Collins, 1983), 66.

<sup>91</sup> Hett, ed., “The Memoirs of Sir Robert Sibbald (1641-1722),” 71.

<sup>92</sup> Leah Leneman, *Alienated Affections: The Scottish Experience of Divorce and Separation, 1684-1830*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 13. It is important to note that it was not until the 1770’s that divorce became more popular in Scotland. During the seventeenth century fewer than twenty couples sought a divorce. In her thorough study of early modern Scottish marriage Elizabeth Ewan has found that although divorce was an option available in Scotland, most marriages (whether seemingly harmonious or not) were dissolved by the death of a spouse. See Ewan, “‘To the longer liver’: Provisions for the Dissolution of the Marital Economy in Scotland, 1470-1550,” 197.

<sup>93</sup> Ian and Kathleen Whyte, “Wed to the Manse,” 227.

after the couple consulted with parents or surrogate parental figures. This appears to have been a product of custom. Traditionally marriages involving financial transactions were too important to be left to the couple. Therefore, parents, relatives and ‘friends’ were actively involved in both contracting and preventing marriages.<sup>94</sup> Rosalind Marshall suggests that the only reason this custom was perpetuated was because the expectations of the bride and groom were often in line with their parents.<sup>95</sup> However, the involvement of one’s community and the use of kinship networking to ‘arrange’ marriages more likely signals the community aspect of marriage rather than similar purposes between young couples and their family. In the absence of her father, Elizabeth Brodie and James Nimmo consulted her oldest brother prior to concluding their marital arrangement.<sup>96</sup> However, this was not always the case. Some women who did not receive consent sometimes went ahead and were married according to their wishes anyway,<sup>97</sup> as Robert Sibbald found out when he learned that his sister, Geal, for whom he had “much tenderness and concern,” had contracted a marriage of her own, concluding it “against [Robert’s] will.”<sup>98</sup> Other marriages were discussed between parents prior to approaching the couple themselves. James Brodie was shocked when he was approached by his brother in-law who informed him of his son’s desire to propose to Katherin (Brodie’s daughter). As one might expect under the circumstances, Brodie pondered the issue prior to informing his daughter. Although the families discovered that the union was not quite unlawful, James Brodie remained troubled by the suggestion. However,

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<sup>94</sup> Leneman, *Promises, Promises*, 1; Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, 108.

<sup>95</sup> Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, 71.

<sup>96</sup> Scott-Moncrieff, ed., *Narrative of Mr. James Nimmo*, 34.

<sup>97</sup> Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, 71.

<sup>98</sup> Hett, ed., “The Memoirs of Sir Robert Sibbald (1641-1722),” 67.



likely because he was a doting father, he decided to “speak to my daughter” and leave the decision to her, and the couple were married shortly thereafter.<sup>99</sup>

Although couples were bombarded with often contradicting, or at the very least confusing, advice on what type of individual to marry and how to fulfill filial obligations, one ought to wonder how couples really did interact with one another. Scottish historian Roxanne Reddington-Wilde has found that, not surprisingly, once married, Scottish men and women were more likely to follow the norms of society than venture outside of them.<sup>100</sup> A conclusion contrary to what some might gather from advice literature, which usually emphasized ideal qualities that authors feared were lacking or behavior that was deemed inappropriate.<sup>101</sup> Scottish life-writers appear to have actively upheld socially constructed gender roles. For example, Archibald Johnston of Wariston, a very public lawyer and politician, describes a pact that he entered into with his young bride, Jean, on their wedding night. In return for his promise never to “gloume [i.e. frown or scowl] nor glunche [i.e. undermine her] on hir before folks,” Jean sustained Wariston’s authority by vowing never “to disobey [him] in any compaignie.”<sup>102</sup> Wariston clearly felt that his domestic authority could not be questioned in public, even as he tacitly accepts Jean who was questioning backstage. This marital pact demonstrates how husbands and wives recognized that the public face of their marriage ought to be aligned with proper displays

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<sup>99</sup> Alexander and James Brodie, *The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie, MDCLII-MCCLXXX: and of his son, James Brodie of Brodie, MDCLXXX-MDCLXXXV., consisting of extracts from the existing manuscripts, and a republication of the volume printed at Edinburgh in the year 1740*, ed. David Lang. (Aberdeen: Spalding Club, 1863), 471.

<sup>100</sup> Roxanne Reddington-Wilde, “A Women’s Place: Birth Order, Gender and Social Status in Highland Houses,” in *Women in Scotland, c1100-c.1750*, ed. Elizabeth Ewan and Maureen Meikle (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 207.

<sup>101</sup> Leneman, *Promises, Promises*, ix.

<sup>102</sup> Wariston, *Diary of Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston*, 10.

of behavior, yet realized that their relationship behind closed doors might allow for relaxed interaction.

Due to the differences between advice literature, which preached societal standards, and individual experiences, it is necessary to wonder how spouses in actuality felt about each other. Although life-writings shed some light on this question, Scottish historian R.A Houston has argued that it is difficult to reconstruct the nature of relationships because emotions are seldom directly expressed.<sup>103</sup> For Leah Leneman, marital discord often leaves more trace in the records, divorce litigation being more accessible to historians than an examination of marital harmony.<sup>104</sup> Although examining divorce might not at first glance appear to provide information concerning acceptable spousal behavior, Houston insists that relationships breaking down indirectly illustrate that people had “individual expectations and were prepared to act in order to realize them.”<sup>105</sup> When examining life-writings composed as spiritual memoirs, the experience is very similar to studying divorce litigation – during times of stress people tend to reveal, often indirectly, much about their interpersonal relationships. For James Brodie it was as his “wiff’s feaver encreased greatlie” that he revealed the depth of their relationship, writing that her death would “tak away the desire of my eyes.”<sup>106</sup> A worried Alexander Seaton exhibited concern for his wife when he wrote a letter to Robert Barclay on the 29<sup>th</sup> of February, 1695 in which he described how his wife’s “hard labour” put her in “some danger...she hath been very ill several times since which hath been a very near exercise

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<sup>103</sup> R.A Houston, “Women in the Economy and Society of Scotland, 1500-1800,” in *Scottish Society, 1500-1800*, ed. R.A Houston and Ian Whyte (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 143.

<sup>104</sup> See the introduction to both; Leah Leneman, *Alienated Affections: the Scottish Experience of Divorce and Separation, 1684-1830* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998); and Leah Leneman, *Promises, Promises: Marriage Litigation in Scotland, 1698-1830* (Edinburgh: NMS Enterprises, 2003).

<sup>105</sup> Houston, “Women in the Economy and Society of Scotland, 1500-1800,” 143.

<sup>106</sup> Brodie, *The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie, MDCLII-MCCLXXX: and of his son, James Brodie of Brodie, MDCLXXX-MDCLXXXV.*, 432.

to me...she is at present a little better though very weak and I hope may recover.”<sup>107</sup>

Katherine Hamilton suffered through her husband, John Murray’s, life-threatening illness, during which she spent many hours in prayer, pleading with God to heal John. Feeling it necessary to justify those long hours spent in prayer, Katherine assured the Lord that the concern she had for her husband was legitimate, insomuch that “thou hast not only allowed of a lawful love to my husband, but commanded me to have it. Therefore, it is lawful, and my duty, to pray earnestly to thee for him. Spare him.”<sup>108</sup>

It is likewise apparent in the life-writings of Scottish men and women who grieved the death of a spouse that couples often did develop loving relationships. Following the death of his young wife Jean, Archibald Johnston of Wariston lamented, “I loved hir so weal.”<sup>109</sup> When his wife, Katherine Hamilton died, John Murray called it an “irreparable loss.”<sup>110</sup> Alexander Jaffray, recalling the death of his first wife, Jane Dun, wrote of how he had “enjoy[ed] the sweet contentment of my wife” throughout their marriage.<sup>111</sup> During a deadly illness that struck Elizabeth Blackadder’s “greatest earthly comfort,” her husband James Young, she was so overcome with grief and sorrow that she nearly miscarried their unborn child.<sup>112</sup> Lilius Dunbar recalled how her “husband’s

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<sup>107</sup> Robert Barclay, *Correspondence of Colonel David Barclay and Robert Barclay of Urie, and his son Robert, including Letters from Princess Elizabeth of the Rhine, the Earl of Perth, the Countess of Sutherland, William Pen, George Fox, and others; also the Act of the Scotch Parliament of 1685, settling Urie upon Robert Barclay and his descendants, and Robert Barclay’s Vindication of his connexion with the Stuarts* (London, 1870), 100-101.

<sup>108</sup> Katherine Hamilton, “Memoirs of her grace, Katherine, duchess of Atholl, in form of a Diary,” in *Women’s Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730*, ed, David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 381

<sup>109</sup> Wariston, *The Diary of Archibald Johnston of Wariston*, 16.

<sup>110</sup> Katherine Hamilton, “Memoirs of her grace, Katherine, duchess of Atholl, in form of a Diary,” 381.

<sup>111</sup> Jaffray, *Diary of Alexander Jaffray*, 127.

<sup>112</sup> Blackadder, “A Short Account of the Lord’s Way of Providence towards me in my Pilgrimage Journeys,” 393, 394.

tender affection” was “one of the greatest mercies the lord had bestowed” on her.<sup>113</sup>

Evidently, for these men and women, affectionate marriages sprang from their marital unions whether or not their initial courtship was based on love.

Although many Scottish marriages were happy, marital discord often arose from a failure to meet individual expectations, a failure more often portrayed in civil courts than in life-writings. One might expect in a society where legally marriage was entirely dependant on mutual consent<sup>114</sup> to see happy well adjusted couples working together. However, this was not always the case. So great was Patrick Trail’s reliance on his future inheritance that when his father, John Trail, threatened to disown him if “he came in [his wife’s] company or any ways owned her as his wife,” Patrick immediately deserted his wife, Barbara, and went abroad.<sup>115</sup> Later when Barbara tried to secure aliment from Patrick through the Court of Session, she was told that it was the “duty of a wife to follow and live with her husband.”<sup>116</sup> Barbara retorted that she would be willing to do so, “but since he declines to let her know where he may be found, and to furnish her mony, to enable her to come to him, his offer to aliment her in Ireland, is but a sham and amusement.”<sup>117</sup> Barbara sought retribution from her father in-law by seeking aliment from him when it failed to arrive from Ireland.

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<sup>113</sup> Dunbar, Liliias, Mrs. Campbell, “Experiences of the Goodness of God, in his Word and Providence to me, who am the ill and unthankful,” in *Women’s Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 164.

<sup>114</sup> Houston, “Women in the Economy and Society of Scotland, 1500-1800,” 130.

<sup>115</sup> Scotland. Court of Session. *A journal of the session. Containing the decisions of the Lords of Council and Session, ... from February 1705, till November 1713: and the acts.* (Edinburgh, 1714), 395. On February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1710, Barbara took her father in-law to court for aliment in the absence of his son. John Trail was found liable to aliment Barbara since his letter to his son caused their separation.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 613.

<sup>117</sup> Scotland. Court of Session. *A journal of the session. Containing the decisions of the Lords of Council and Session, ... from February 1705, till November 1713: and the acts.* (Edinburgh, 1714), 613.

Although sparse in life-writings, marital discord is nonetheless evident.

Edinburgh schoolmistress and active covenanter, Katherine Collace (c.1635-1698) was a bitterly unhappy wife who counseled with her friend, Alexander Brodie, concerning her desire to divorce her husband whom she declared, “bred me twenty-four years grievous afflictions.”<sup>118</sup> Throughout her spiritual memoirs, Katherine neglects to mention further details of her unhappy marriage. However from her sister, Jean Collace, we learn that Katherine’s husband, John Ross, was a “wicked man” who gave Jean “no peace” while she stayed with them.<sup>119</sup> Jean later informs us of John’s death, an event that freed her sister from the need to divorce. As guarded as Katherine Collace’s spiritual memoir is, Margaret Cunningham parades the abuses she experienced at the hands of her husband, James Hamilton. Lady Margaret Cunningham (d.1623) daughter of the Earl of Glencairn and his wife Margaret Campbell experienced a dreadfully vicious marriage to James Hamilton, Master of Evandale.<sup>120</sup> Margaret’s life-writing, although short, conveys an image of matrimony that would have secured her a divorce if James Hamilton had not died prematurely. Among his many abuses, Hamilton refused to live with Margaret and would not provide for her material needs, or the needs of their ever-growing family. The pinnacle of his cruelty, however, occurred when he kicked his “naked” pregnant wife (and her servant) out of his house on a “foul” night and threatened that he “wold stryke

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<sup>118</sup> Katherine Collace, Mistress Ross, “Memoirs or Spiritual Exercises of Mistress Ross. Written by her own hand,” in *Women’s Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 44; 76 m.157; Brodie, *The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie, MDCLII-MCCLXXX: and of his son, James Brodie of Brodie, MDCLXXX-MDCLXXXV.*, 320-24, 349.

<sup>119</sup> Jean Collace, “Some short Remembrances of the Lord’s Kindness to me and his Work on my Soul, for my own use,” in *Women’s Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 99.

<sup>120</sup> Elizabeth Ewan, Sue Inner and Sian Reynolds eds., *The Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 89.

both our backs in two with a sword.”<sup>121</sup> So “foul” was the evening and so sickly was the very pregnant Margaret, that it is likely she suffered a miscarriage as a result of her husband’s cruelty. Although Margaret endured much hardship because of the thoughtless and at times brutal behavior of her husband, she did not choose to end their marital relations until he was outlawed for murder and had impregnated one of his several mistresses.<sup>122</sup> If the marriages depicted by both Katherine and Margaret are accurate to any degree, their husbands would have benefited from the reminder that the “common duty of husband and wife is to love each other.”<sup>123</sup>

Although the power structures of the kirk, the community and the legal tradition likely influenced the experience of husbands and wives, marital relations were governed as much by individual personality as by other factors.<sup>124</sup> Despite public awareness of didactic literature, husbands and wives did not necessarily align their behavior according to the rules prescribed through religious doctrine, social expectations or the law.<sup>125</sup> For couples like Alexander Forbes and Isobel Hackett,<sup>126</sup> marriage contracts and social conventions did not hinder their ability to alter their marital relations. Alexander and Isobel decided that they were no longer living “comfortably together” and mutually renounced their marriage, he by giving up his right of *jus mariti* and she by renouncing

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<sup>121</sup> Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe ed., *A Pairt of the life of Lady Margaret Cunningham* (Edinburgh: Ballantyne, 1827), 122. For an insightful analysis of Margaret Cunningham’s literary work see Pamela Giles, “Scottish Literary Women, 1560-1700” (PhD., University of Saskatchewan, 2004).

<sup>122</sup> Sharpe, ed., *A Pairt of the life of Lady Margaret Cunningham*, 122, 125.

<sup>123</sup> Baxter, *Mr. Baxter’s rules and directions*, 1.

<sup>124</sup> Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England*, 65.

<sup>125</sup> Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 172.

<sup>126</sup> Isobel and Alexander’s decision was supported by Isobel’s son (from her first marriage), John Abernathy, who promised to provide his mother with an annuity of 600 merks. Shortly after the arrangements were finalized John and Isobel renegotiated, resulting in an annuity of 300 merks. The case was brought to court on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1713 by Alexander Forbes who was pursuing his step-son John for the annuity payments that Isobel had not received during their separation. By the time this case reached the Court of Session, Isobel was already deceased.

any claim she might have had on him. By renouncing their legal claim to one another, Isobel and Alexander felt their actions rendered their marriage invalid, as if they had never been married. They seem to have happily lived apart for some time. However, at some point their decision was amended, as they “came to be reconciled and cohabit” until Isobel’s death years later.<sup>127</sup>

In the sphere of marriage, some historians insist that marital arrangements were often “warm and companionate, not simply cold and instrumental,”<sup>128</sup> while others argue that Scottish marriages were “a product of close negotiations to determine the assets of two families and arrange a transferal of these assets between generations.”<sup>129</sup> By analyzing what the couples themselves wrote about their marriage, it would appear that seventeenth-century Scottish marriages often involved a combination of affection and pragmatism. Recent scholarship has sought to determine how husbands and wives operated within a patriarchal society and whether their behavior mirrored that of advice literature, depicting women as subservient to men who were expected to behave as undisputed heads of their households. However, it is clear that despite the standard set by their culture concerning proper gender relations within marriage, spouses often experienced mutual interdependence even under the strain of an unequal set of power relations.<sup>130</sup> Many husbands and wives experienced marriages that were loving and successful just as others, sadly, experienced cold, calculating unions. Although the advice literature sets spouses firmly within a web of gendered power relations, life-writings depict many couples enjoying the fruits of their marriage.

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<sup>127</sup> Scotland. Court of Session. *A journal of the session. Containing the decisions of the Lords of Council and Session, ... from February 1705, till November 1713: and the acts.* (Edinburgh, 1714), 662.

<sup>128</sup> Houston, “Women in the Economy and Society of Scotland, 1500-1800,” 130.

<sup>129</sup> Reddington-Wilde, “A Women’s Place,” 204.

<sup>130</sup> Houston, “Women in the Economy and Society of Scotland, 1500-1800,” 141.

## Chapter Two

### Fathers, Mothers, Sons and Daughters

Since the 1960s historians have struggled to piece together fragmented depictions of the interaction between early modern parents and their children in order to discover whether love existed within these relationships.<sup>1</sup> From the life-writings of seventeenth-century Scottish individuals, it is clear that more often than not, love abounded between parents and their children. In fact, so great was the degree of love that flourished in families that many religious life-writers expressed concern that they loved their children beyond the limits permitted by God and society. However, this chapter intends to go beyond the search for love and examine the family itself - a structure based on the authoritarian hierarchy discussed in Chapter One -- which existed even in the absence of affectionate family relations.

Seventeenth-century parent-child interaction was meant to be reciprocal. Parents were to provide materially and spiritually for their children who, for their part, were taught early that their duties to their parents revolved around obedience and honor.<sup>2</sup> Although relations between parents and their offspring evolved as children grew into adulthood, the power structure, although occasionally challenged by grown children, remained intact and consistent.<sup>3</sup> Religious ideology, social conventions and legal traditions outlined the mutual obligations of both parents and children, creating an image

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<sup>1</sup> Even though historian Lawrence Stone made his infamous argument on the absence of love between parents and their children, the sources he relied on for his book, *Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1977) portray both distant and affective relationships.

<sup>2</sup> Linda Pollock, "Parent-Child Relations," in *Family Life in Early Modern Times 1500-1789*, ed. David Kertzer and Marzio Barbagli (London: Yale University, 2001), 199.

<sup>3</sup> Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, "Reciprocal Bonding: Parents and their Offspring in Early Modern England," *Journal of Family History*, 25 (2000), 292.



of the ideal family built on an authoritarian hierarchy which defined the context of their reciprocal duties.

The foundation of the parent-child relationship was firmly rooted in a traditionally prominent power structure that operated within seventeenth-century families. During the early modern period the family was viewed, at its most basic level, as a reflection of the state.<sup>4</sup> As discussed earlier, the father was deemed the head of the household, much like a smaller scale ruling monarch. His children were his subjects. However, a father's authority was connected with responsibility. As a result of their position in the family, fathers were responsible to provide for their children, much like a monarch was responsible to his subjects. Children in turn were obligated to obey and honor their fathers, as subjects were required to obey the laws of their monarch. Ideally, it was expected that mothers and fathers would co-govern their household in a balanced hierarchy that was structured to reinforce the father's authority without undermining the position of the mother.<sup>5</sup> Within this power structure, children, situated in an inferior position, were taught early to honor their father and mother and were instructed that their first duty as a child was obedience.<sup>6</sup> As a result of this carefully crafted hierarchy, parent-child interaction was not as simply constructed as one might expect, and intricate family dynamics were the result.

Religious doctrine reinforced the power structure of seventeenth-century Scottish families. Catechisms, intended for the barely literate, played a valuable role in the basic

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<sup>4</sup> William Gouge called the family a "little Church, and a little Common-wealth." See Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties* (London: Printed by Iohn Haviland, 1622), 18-19.

<sup>5</sup> Janay Barbara Nugent, "Marriage Matters: Evidence from the Kirk Session Records of Scotland, c.1560-1650" (PhD, University of Guelph, Canada, 2006), 65.

<sup>6</sup> Pollock, "Parent-Child Relations," 199.

education of Scottish children.<sup>7</sup> Parents were instructed to educate their offspring in the fundamentals of Christianity and often relied on catechisms to teach the letter of the doctrine through basic scriptural passages.<sup>8</sup> In order to produce a replica of the state within every family, Scottish kirks demanded the instructional use of catechisms in the home and punished parents who neglected this responsibility. By the end of the seventeenth-century catechisms were increasingly structured to encourage love between parents and their children, but they were also used to teach children social hierarchy.<sup>9</sup> The Scottish kirk adopted the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Confession in 1648, which illustrates the emphasis religious leaders placed on the hierarchal authority:

Q: Which is the fifth commandment?

A: The fifth commandment is, Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Q: What is required in the fifth commandment?

A: The fifth commandment requireth the preserving of honour and performing the duties belonging to everyone in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals.<sup>10</sup>

This catechism and others in use across Europe instructed children on the importance of their subservient position within the prescribed family order, a position children were taught they could magnify through obedience to and by honoring their parents.

Teachings such as this reinforced the notion that as the fundamental social institution, orderly families were both necessary for, and parallel to, order in the state.<sup>11</sup> However,

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<sup>7</sup> Scott Mandelbrote, "The Bible and Didactic Literature in Early Modern England," in *Didactic Literature in England, 1500-1800*, ed. Natasha Glasyer and Sara Pennell (England: Ashgate, 2003), 27-28.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>9</sup> Marilyn J. Boxer and Jean H. Quataert, eds., *Connecting Spheres: European Women in a Globalizing World, 1500 to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 40.

<sup>10</sup> Church of Scotland, *The A.B.C. with the Shorter Catechism: appointed by the General Assembly to be a directory for catechising of such as are of a weaker capacity* (Edinburgh: Printed by George Mosman, 1698), 7; John Bradford. "A Fruitfull Treatise full of heavenly consolation against the fear of death" [including a Shorter Catechism] Acc. 4102 NLS, Edinburgh, 1641, 29.

<sup>11</sup> Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (New York: B. Blackwell, 1988), 35-36.

catechisms did not limit teachings to the family. By outlining the social hierarchy -- superiors, inferiors, and equals -- the kirk attempted to socialize children through an understanding of their position in society as well as in the family. The use of catechisms also sought to embed in the very infrastructure of seventeenth-century families a sense of reciprocal relationships based on the responsibilities prescribed by one's position within the family.<sup>12</sup>

In seventeenth-century advice literature the duties of children to honor and obey their parents were repeatedly enumerated.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps recognizing the need for love to exist between children and parents in order for children to fulfill their family duties, in 1690, Scottish Presbyterian minister Daniel Burgess bluntly reminded children to develop affection for their parents: “you are bid to honour your parents, you are bid to love them. And so love them.”<sup>14</sup> The Puritan William Gouge,<sup>15</sup> reminded families that the “love which naturally parents beare to their children, ought in equitie to breed in children a love to their parents.”<sup>16</sup> Gouge advised that although the relationship between parents and their offspring was structured on a hierarchical line of authority (much like the state), love provided an important balance that led to a happy family.<sup>17</sup> Similarly Richard Baxter, a non-conformist English minister who wrote extensively during the seventeenth century, urged that a child's principal duty to parents was “to love them dearly.”<sup>18</sup> He went on to explain that this meant “to honour them in thought, words and actions and to

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<sup>12</sup> Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, 38.

<sup>13</sup> Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983.), 151.

<sup>14</sup> Daniel Burgess, *Advice to Parents and Children: the sum of a few sermons contracted and published at the request of many pious hearers* (London: Printed by J.R., 1690), 43.

<sup>15</sup> Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, 44.

<sup>16</sup> Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties*, 429.

<sup>17</sup> Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, 38.

<sup>18</sup> Richard Baxter, *Mr. Baxter's rules and directions...* (Printed by H. Brugis for J. Conyers, 1681), 1.

avoid all appearance of slighting, dishonour, and contempt.”<sup>19</sup> William Fleetwood, another popular English writer of didactic literature, defined honor as loving, respecting, obeying and supporting parents.<sup>20</sup> For these ministers, children were expected to love their parents because it was through affection that a child would be “pliable to his parents will.”<sup>21</sup>

While religious and social instruction repeatedly reminded parents and children of their mutual obligations to each other, Scottish law reinforced the concept of reciprocal relationships based on notions of authority. Parents, more particularly fathers, were bound by law to provide for their children’s material needs, which were included under the legal responsibility of aliment.<sup>22</sup> This “natural obligation for provisions” was only extended to legitimate children.<sup>23</sup> In Scotland the eldest son customarily inherited by right of primogeniture; in the absence of sons, daughters and their descendants all succeeded equally, apart from any specifications made by the father’s testament.<sup>24</sup> But legal obligations did not stop there. James Dalrymple Stair (1619–1695), lawyer and statesman, authored the treatise that laid the foundations of the modern Scottish legal system in which he discussed family obligations.<sup>25</sup> According to Stair, the main legal obligation of parents to their children revolved around “education and provision.”<sup>26</sup>

Parental obligations meant that seventeenth-century Scottish parents were expected to

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<sup>19</sup> Baxter, *Mr. Baxter’s rules and directions*, 1.

<sup>20</sup> William Fleetwood, *The Relative Duties of parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants, consider’d in sixteen sermons: with three more upon the case of self-murther* (London, 1705), 2.

<sup>21</sup> Gouge, *Of Domestic Duties*, 457.

<sup>22</sup> D.M. Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland* (Edinburgh: W. Green, 1988), 669.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 834.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 836.

<sup>25</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, “James Dalrymple Stair”.

<sup>26</sup> James Dalrymple Stair, *The Institutions of the law of Scotland deduced from its originals, and collated vvith the civil, canon, and feudal- lavvs, and vvith the customs of neighbouring nation* (Edinburgh: Printed by the heir of Andrew Anderson, 1681), 48.

raise their children “for some calling and employment, according to their capacity and condition.”<sup>27</sup> In return, duties of children towards their parents consisted “mainly in their obedience to them.”<sup>28</sup> Scottish law reinforced the power relationship between parents and their offspring by structuring legal obligations on the family hierarchy.

The family was viewed as the means through which good citizens and good Christians were raised, and as a consequence of this perception, seventeenth-century Europe was preoccupied with raising children properly.<sup>29</sup> Fathers, as the head of the household were often intrinsically involved in childrearing, but they were relegated to the periphery in advice literature which insisted that childbearing and rearing were a woman’s duties.<sup>30</sup> Seventeenth-century medical treatises and other forms of advice literature urged mothers to breastfeed their own children,<sup>31</sup> excusing only those whose “bodily imperfection, great weakness, or sickness...make it impossible, or very dangerous and inconvenient, both for her and the child.”<sup>32</sup> In an effort to reinforce the importance of maternal breastfeeding, Henry Smith, like other authors on the subject, argued that children were prone to “draweth the infirmities”<sup>33</sup> from wet nurses, suggesting that breast milk contained character traits as well as nourishment.<sup>34</sup> Although this did not seem to bother some Scottish parents who chose to select unwed mothers as

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<sup>27</sup> Stair, *The Institutions of the law of Scotland deduced from its originals*, 48.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 49, 50.

<sup>29</sup> Patricia Crawford, *Blood, Bodies, and Families in Early Modern England* (England: Pearson and Longman, 2004), 177.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 186.

<sup>31</sup> Valerie Fildes, *Breasts, Bottles and Babies: A History of Infant Feeding* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986), 98.

<sup>32</sup> James Kirkwood, *A New Family Book or the True Interests of families being direction to parents and children...* (London, 1693), 141.

<sup>33</sup> Henry Smith, *A Preparatiue to Marriage: the summe whereof was spoken at a contract, and enlarged after. Whereunto is annexed a treatise of the Lords Supper, and another of vsurie* (London: Printed by Thomas Orwin, 1591), 77.

<sup>34</sup> Gordon DesBrisay, “Wet Nurses and Unwed Mothers in Seventeenth-Century Aberdeen,” in *Women in Scotland c. 1100-1750*, ed. Elizabeth Ewan and Maureen M. Meikle (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 210.

wet nurses,<sup>35</sup> seventeenth-century advice literature campaigned for mothers to breastfeed their own infants, which some might have felt was a part of their godly duty.

For some women, the employment of wet nurses occurred from necessity rather than custom. Fervent covenanter Katherine Collace (c.1635–1697), memoirist and schoolmistress, sought wet nurses for at least several of her twelve infants. Although Katherine did not nurse her own children, she did seek to follow the popular advice early modern society supplied concerning the nature, character and physical appearance of potential wet nurses. As she sought wet nurses for her new born twins she required that both nurses be “men’s wives, when I would have no other.”<sup>36</sup> From Katherine’s writing it is clear that she was well aware of circulating advice literature, since she felt it necessary to explain that she was “unable to nurse them myself” due to her weak health and therefore required the use of wet nurses.<sup>37</sup> Fortunately for Katherine, the woman she hired was “content to come into my house, though she did not stand in need so to do” which made it easier for her to monitor the rearing of her children, especially since she had recently had “a young one overlaid by his nurse.”<sup>38</sup> Katherine, who would eventually lose all twelve of her children in their infancy, explained that although her maternal intuition had warned her of her son’s death, she had neglected to save his life and therefore, in her own mind, was responsible for the death of the child who was smothered by his wet nurse. Her continued reliance on wet nurses following this tragic accident must have added to her feelings of guilt. Although unable to nurse, Katherine

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<sup>35</sup> DesBrisay, “Wet Nurses and Unwed Mothers in Seventeenth-Century Aberdeen,” 210.

<sup>36</sup> Katherine Collace, *Mistress Ross, “Memoirs or Spiritual Exercises of Mistress Ross. Written by her own hand,”* in *Women’s Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 68.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

ensured that at the very least the wet nurses she hired would be god-fearing married women. Scottish physician and royal geographer, Robert Sibbald, (1641–1722),<sup>39</sup> indicates in his memoirs that the decision to have him wet nursed was only made upon the “advice of my uncle...Doctor George Sibbald.”<sup>40</sup> It would seem that Robert’s parents were advised on nursing as well as weaning since he wrote, “I sucked till I was two years and two months old, and could runn up and down the street, and speake.”<sup>41</sup> Clearly his parents followed the advice of Robert’s uncle concerning both the nursing and weaning of the young Robert. Parental decisions to have infants wet nursed were not as historians Lawrence Stone, Miriam Slater, and David Hunt argued, an indication of parental detachment,<sup>42</sup> but rather one of necessity, especially since many parents like Katherine Collace and the Sibbalds employed live-in wet nurses in order to closely monitor the health and progress of their infants.

Other women appear to have enjoyed their experiences breastfeeding. Katherine Hamilton, Duchess of Atholl (1662–1707),<sup>43</sup> was a noblewoman who although not nursed by her own mother took pleasure in breastfeeding her daughter.<sup>44</sup> Katherine sought to develop a deeper maternal bond between her daughter Anne and herself and recorded that this attachment was furthered when “[I] nursed her myself which helped to

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<sup>39</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, “Robert Sibbald”.

<sup>40</sup> Francis Paget Hett, ed., “The Memoirs of Sir Robert Sibbald (1641-1722)” (Oxford: University Press, 1932), 51.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> See Lawrence Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, c1977), 99-100; Miriam Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: The Verneys of Claydon House* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 19; David Hunt, *Parents and Children in History: Psychology of Family Life in Early Modern France* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), 82.

<sup>43</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, “Katherine Hamilton”.

<sup>44</sup> Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, 120.

engage me the more to her.”<sup>45</sup> After experiencing breastfeeding for herself, Katherine was quick to encourage her younger sister Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to nurse her children, and according to correspondence between Katherine and her mother, Anne, third Duchess of Hamilton, in 1688, Susan was indeed nursing her infant.<sup>46</sup> After receiving adamant advice concerning weaning,<sup>47</sup> Katherine wrote that it was around her infant’s six month mark that she weaned baby Anne.<sup>48</sup> When her infant daughter fell ill, Katherine immediately assumed the illness was due to her milk, where upon she lamented, “I feared I had brought this sickness on my child with the grieved milk she has sucked.”<sup>49</sup>

It was more likely the early weaning that contributed to little Anne’s illness. Although Scottish life-writers tend not to comment on weaning practices, Katherine Hamilton appears to have weaned her baby quite early in comparison to most seventeenth-century parents who followed recommendations to wean their children closer to their two year mark.<sup>50</sup> Some Scottish physicians, like Doctor George Sibbald, considered early weaning problematic, causing sickness and premature death in infants, and therefore encouraged weaning sometime after the first year mark.<sup>51</sup> It would appear that Scotland closely followed the Continental model, since according to Valeria Fildes, seventeenth-century weaning in Europe was usually recommended anytime after the first

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<sup>45</sup> Katherine Hamilton, “Memoirs of her grace, Katherine, duchess of Atholl, in form of a Diary,” in *Women’s Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 362.

<sup>46</sup> Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, 120.

<sup>47</sup> Although Katherine does not indicate the source of the advice she received about weaning in her life-writing, letters from her mother in which Anne detailed a discussion about weaning between Katherine’s sister and sister in-law suggests that her family might have been Katherine’s source of advice. Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, 121.

<sup>48</sup> By seventeenth-century standards six months is surprisingly early to be weaning an infant which suggests that Katherine received pressure to give up breastfeeding.

<sup>49</sup> Hamilton, “Memoirs of her grace, Katherine,” 362.

<sup>50</sup> Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, 121.

<sup>51</sup> Hett, ed., “Memoirs of Sir Robert Sibbald,” 51.



12 months.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, Scotland, like Continental Europe, used abrupt weaning practices unlike English families who generally chose to use methods involving gradual weaning.<sup>53</sup> Despite minor differences, seventeenth-century mothers were bombarded with advice on socially correct breast feeding and weaning practices through advice literature and appear through their own accounts to have been quite preoccupied with proper child-rearing practices.

Even though much advice literature was geared towards mothers, fathers were not altogether excluded. They were urged, for example, to encourage their wives to breastfeed.<sup>54</sup> Therefore, it is no surprise that any indication of problematic breastfeeding would have caused fathers like James Nimmo concern. Elizabeth Brodie (d. 1711), Nimmo's wife, had difficulty giving birth to their first child, John. As a result of the difficult and prolonged labour her health had deteriorated considerably and it was feared that she would be unable to breastfeed. However, Nimmo happily recollected in his diary that following John's birth, Elizabeth had an "abundance of milke for the child...beyond the expectation of some."<sup>55</sup> For other parents, breastfeeding was of no concern and therefore not worthy of mention. Marion Veitch, (1639–1722) the wife of a covenanting Presbyterian minister,<sup>56</sup> appears to have nursed all of her infants, but only comments in passing, "I went home to my children, having one upon the breast."<sup>57</sup> She makes no

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<sup>52</sup> Fildes, *Breast, Bottles and Babies*, 352.

<sup>53</sup> Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, 121.

<sup>54</sup> Lisa Wilson, "'Ye Heart of a father': Male Parenting in Colonial New England," *Journal of Family History* 24 (July 1999), 259.

<sup>55</sup> W.G. Scott-Moncrieff, ed., *Narrative of Mr. James Nimmo written for his own satisfaction to keep in some remembrance the Lord's way dealing and kindness towards him, 1654-1709* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1889), 60.

<sup>56</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, "Marion Veitch".

<sup>57</sup> Marion Veitch, "Memoirs of Marion Veitch," in *Memoirs of Mrs. William Veitch, Mr. Thomas Hog of Kiltearn, Mr. Henry Erskine, and Mr. John Carstairs*, ed. Committee of General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, Greig, 1846), 5.

further comment on the weaning process. However, her husband, William Veitch, mentions the breastfeeding and weaning of the couple's eighth child in passing. He claimed that "the weaning of her child Sarah" did not allow Marion to visit him while imprisoned.<sup>58</sup>

Parents were likewise counseled by popular advice literature on methods of child-rearing, which insisted that children required stern discipline and a thoroughly religious upbringing.<sup>59</sup> There was some confusion over the exact nature of "discipline" among advice writers, but most sanctioned limited physical correction while cautioning against overly severe punishments. Consistent with the genre of life-writings, seventeenth-century authors tend to comment on what they had come to regard as lax discipline in their own upbringing. These types of criticisms were made by religiously-fired adults whose powerful conversion experience led them to ponder why their parents were unable or unwilling to instill this zeal from childhood. Although Elizabeth Blackadder (1660-1732), for instance, praised her parents for her upbringing, she recognized that more discipline was needed to ensure that she had "sufficient to make me follow their example."<sup>60</sup> Alexander Jaffray (1614–1673) was rather less satisfied by the spiritual instruction he had received in childhood and was more inclined to blame his parents. His mother and father, he wrote, "not being themselves much acquainted with the great advantage there is in breeding young ones timely in the fear of God and keeping them closely and diligently at their studies" were as a result in "some way deficient."<sup>61</sup> Advice

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<sup>58</sup> William Veitch, "Memoirs of Mr. William Veitch," in *Memoirs of Mr. William Veitch, and George Brysson, Written by Themselves*, ed. Thomas McCrie (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1825), 85.

<sup>59</sup> Gouge, *Of Domestical Duties*, 555.

<sup>60</sup> Blackadder, Elizabeth, Mrs. Young, "A Short Account of the Lord's Way of Providence towards me in my Pilgrimage Journeys," in *Women's Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 386.

<sup>61</sup> Alexander Jaffray, *Diary of Alexander Jaffray* (Aberdeen, 1856), 42.

literature recommended strict spiritual guidance of children, cautioning parents that they had the “charge of children, to train them up in the knowledge, fear and love of God.”<sup>62</sup> However, ministers were not content to secure the future generation alone and explicitly reminded parents that instruction should be followed by parental example.<sup>63</sup> In an advice manual published in 1688 in London, parents, or at least fathers, were plainly told that their behavior should be a “pattern” for their children.<sup>64</sup>

A child’s development engaged the attention of both parents, but to ensure proper character development and sufficient education, a child’s education differed according to their gender once beyond infancy. On the path to manhood, boys around the age of seven wore britches and entered the sphere of men, at which point their education became more fully the father’s responsibility and less the mother’s.<sup>65</sup> As daughters grew older they were taught many skills from their mothers that they needed as future wives and mothers.<sup>66</sup> Despite this transition, both father and mother were expected to prepare their offspring to function within society by supplying adequate education, and arranging apprenticeship, employment and marriage.<sup>67</sup> These were parental duties that William Douglas (1634-1694), Earl of Selkirk and his wife Anne (1637-1716), Duchess of Hamilton, took to heart as they prepared their eldest son for the responsibilities of his vast inheritance, their younger sons for careers, and their daughters for prestigious

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<sup>62</sup> William Fleetwood, *A Sermon of the Education of Children: preach'd before the right honourable the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen at Guild-Hall Chapel on Sunday, Nov. 1, 1696* (London, 1696), 3.

<sup>63</sup> Crawford, *Blood, Bodies and Families in Early Modern England*, 181.

<sup>64</sup> Anon, *Advice of a Father: or, Counsel to a Child Directing Him to demean himself in the most important passages of this life* (London: Printed by J.R., 1688), 36-37.

<sup>65</sup> Anthony Fletcher, “Manhood, the Male Body, Courtship and the Household in Early Modern England,” in *History* 84 (1999), 422.

<sup>66</sup> Wilson, “Ye Heart of a Father”, 261; Crawford, *Blood, Bodies and Families*, 187.

<sup>67</sup> David Booy ed., *Personal Disclosure: An Anthology of Self-Writings from the Seventeenth Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 96.

marriages.<sup>68</sup> Because many authors of advice literature were ministers and the purpose behind life-writings was to examine the spiritual conversion of the individual, spiritual training appears to be a clear priority over secular education. Almost the entirety of this advice literature surrounds religious training in which a father was told to “educate his children in the best and most religious manner possible, to instruct them in all that’s [g]ood and warn them of all that’s evil.”<sup>69</sup> At the same time, mothers were reminded to “be constant helpers for the holy education of their children, for this is the most eminent service that women can do in the world, she must daily catechize them, and teach them to know God and remind them of the world to come, and teach them to pray.”<sup>70</sup> In passing, parents are urged to “choose an honest employment”<sup>71</sup> for their children, one that “ought to provide fit callings for their children, and fit places for them to exercise the gifts which by nature or education they have gotten.”<sup>72</sup>

In return for the care provided by their parents throughout their infancy, childhood and youth, grown children were expected to consult with parents prior to negotiating marriages. Although parental consent was not legally required to validate a marriage in Scotland, it was especially important for children of property to follow this practice, as marriage involved detailed financial transactions between families. Also, for Scottish families it was customary to have the marriage feast at a parent’s home, a tradition perpetuated by parental approval.<sup>73</sup> Likely because parents and children sought

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<sup>68</sup> Rosalind Marshall, *The Days of Duchess Anne: Life in the Household of the Duchess of Hamilton, 1656-1716* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1974), 148.

<sup>69</sup> Fleetwood, *A Sermon of the Education of Children*, 9.

<sup>70</sup> Baxter, *Mr. Baxter’s rule and directions for family duties*, 1.

<sup>71</sup> Kirkwood, *A New Family Book*, 148.

<sup>72</sup> Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties*, 559.

<sup>73</sup> See John Lamont, *The Chronicle of Fife; being the diary of Mr. John Lamont of Newton, from 1649-1671* (Edinburgh: printed for George Ramsay and Comp., 1830), for a regular account of the importance of the marriage feast which when a couple had married without consulting parents were not held, or was held at

similar qualities in future spouses, young adults often presented potential spouses of whom their parents would approve.<sup>74</sup> However, when vast quantities of wealth were at stake, sons and daughters often married spouses chosen by their parents.<sup>75</sup> Recognizing how vital parental consent was for the stability of families, William Gouge reminded young couples of their moral obligations,

By marriage children are put from their parents: for man must leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife. Is it not then great reason that they from whom children had their being, and by whom they have been maintained and trained up till the time of their marriage, should have notice of that kind of leaving them and consent thereto?<sup>76</sup>

Gouge was not alone in his insistence that children seek the approval of their parents in their marriage choices; likewise did Scottish life-writers (most of whom were themselves parents by the time they wrote), stress parental approval. James Nimmo told his fiancée that “it was not my interest to do any thing without my father’s consent.”<sup>77</sup> Two family friends, Robert Barrow and Robert Wardell wrote to a young Robert Barclay (1672–1747) from London on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1694, to urge him, in the absence of his recently deceased father, to “open [his] heart to [his] dear mother and desire her consent” when he decided to “change [his] life into a married state.”<sup>78</sup> Although their encouragement may

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the grooms home. The location of the marriage feast was important because it was indicative of family unity or disapproval.

<sup>74</sup> Crawford, *Blood, Bodies and Families in Early Modern England*, 185.

<sup>75</sup> Seventeenth-century Scottish couples, particularly those from wealthy families, experienced their fair share of arranged marriages. However, rushed marriages were considered suspect. For example, John Lamont described the hurried marriage between Robert Colvill and Margaret Weyms which he felt “was done very suddenly, for the bryde knew nothing of it till that morning.” Although some marriages were hurried in order to avoid ward-ship issues, Lamont clearly considers this marriage unusual. Lamont, *The Chronicle of Fife*, 193.

<sup>76</sup> Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties*, 449.

<sup>77</sup> Scott-Moncrieff, ed., *Narrative of Mr. James Nimmo*, 30.

<sup>78</sup> Robert Barclay, *Correspondence of Colonel David Barclay and Robert Barclay of Urie, and his son Robert, including Letters from Princess Elizabeth of the Rhine, the Earl of Perth, the Countess of Sutherland, William Pen, George Fox, and others; also the Act of the Scotch Parliament of 1685, settling*

have been due to their respect for Robert's mother, Christian Barclay, an active member of their Quaker community who would ensure through her counsel that Robert married a Quaker woman, it just as likely conveys the general expectation for young people to counsel with their parents concerning their marriage prospects.

Although adulthood altered the lives of children, it did not remove sons and daughters, married or single, from their parents' authority nor did it emancipate children from their responsibility to obey and honor their parents. Elizabeth Foyster argues that parents were often very influential in their grown children's life-choices.<sup>79</sup> This is evident in Alexander Jaffray's first marriage, which was arranged by both his parents and dominated, at least in its early years, by his father,<sup>80</sup> as well as in the marriage negotiations of all the children of the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton including the eldest James, who failed miserably in his attempt to secretly contract a marriage.<sup>81</sup> Foyster's conclusions indicate that despite the changes brought on by adulthood, grown children were rarely isolated from their parents, maintaining ever-changing parent-child relations. She argues that just as parents were instrumental in securing marriage unions for their children, they were likewise active during negotiations in dysfunctional or dangerous unions.<sup>82</sup> Advice literature supports Foyster's conclusions by stating that "the office of parent doth not cease after they have placed their children in marriage."<sup>83</sup> Such was the case of the newly married Margaret Cunningham (d.1622), daughter of James

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*Urie upon Robert Barclay and his descendants, and Robert Barclay's Vindication of his connexion with the Stuarts* (London, 1870), 80-81.

<sup>79</sup> Elizabeth Foyster, "Parenting was for Life, not just for Childhood: The Role of Parents in the Married Lives of their Children in Early Modern England," *History*, 86 (2001), 323.

<sup>80</sup> Jaffray, *Diary of Alexander Jaffray*, 46.

<sup>81</sup> Marshall, *The Days of Duchess Anne*, 177-180.

<sup>82</sup> Foyster, "Parenting was for Life," 322.

<sup>83</sup> Anon, *The Office of Christian Parents: shewing how children are to be gouerned throughout all ages and times of their life. With a breife admonitory addition vnto children, to answer in dutie to their parents office* (Cambridge: Printed by Cantrell Legge, printer to the Vniuersitie of Cambridge, 1616), 208.

Cunningham, sixth Earl of Glencairn and Margaret Campbell of Glenorchy. Margaret experienced a turbulent relationship with her husband who was “unkind, cruell, and malicious” towards her, which led her to rely on her parents<sup>84</sup> for material subsistence and moral support.<sup>85</sup> Despite being married, Margaret continued to live with her parents.<sup>86</sup> Margaret’s frustration over her constant reliance on her father indicates that these arrangements were the result of serious marital discord and did not constitute an ideal situation. During several of her pregnancies, Margaret was kicked out of her husband’s home and forced to flee to her father for safety, who naturally “dealt with” her husband, a man who after being reprimanded promised to reform but seemingly refused to alter his abusive treatment of her.<sup>87</sup> James Cunningham finally encouraged his daughter to seek a legal divorce which would not only secure her physical safety but also provide her with the opportunity to remarry.<sup>88</sup> During the terrors of this particularly dysfunctional marriage, Margaret’s parents were as involved in her marital breakdown, as they had been in its very formation.

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Although early childhood development was considered a mother’s terrain, fathers were an abiding presence in the lives of their children.<sup>89</sup> Responding to their paternal duties to prepare their children for the responsibilities of adulthood, fathers were often

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<sup>84</sup> It is important to note that although Margaret’s biological mother was deceased, she refers to her step-mother as “goodmother”, indicating that Margaret viewed her step-mother’s position in the family as co-parent with her father.

<sup>85</sup> Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, ed., *A Pairt of the life of Lady Margaret Cunningham* (Edinburgh: Ballantyne, 1827), 22.

<sup>86</sup> Although Elizabeth Foyster argues that “living with one or both sets of parents for a short period immediately following was not unusual,” it is apparent from Margaret’s autobiography that she felt it was not an appropriate living arrangement. Foyster, “Parenting was for Life not just for Childhood,” 315.

<sup>87</sup> Sharpe, ed., *A Pairt of the life*, 20, 23.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>89</sup> Bret E. Carroll, “I must have my house in order,” *Journal of Family History* 24 (1999), 277.

very aware of their children's progression. James Erskine, (c.1679-1754) judge and politician, recalled fondly how his young son, Jammie "had learn'd to spell very well" before he fell sick.<sup>90</sup> Fathers closely monitored their children's development and growth.<sup>91</sup> Aware of the influences affecting his children, Erskine fretted that Jammie was "kept more among the hands of women servants" and unfortunately picked up "their foolish notions," which Erskine worried would negatively affect his young son's development.<sup>92</sup>

During the early stages of childhood, gender does not seem to drastically alter the relationship fathers nurtured with their offspring. Despite the accusations of some historians that fathers were distant from their sons during childhood and their daughters throughout life, Elizabeth Cohen has found evidence that suggests that although custom and law limited the role of fathers in rearing their daughters, in actuality, fathers often developed quite close and loving relationships with their daughters.<sup>93</sup> Overall, life-writings suggest that Scottish fathers were as fond of their daughters as of their sons. James Erskine had nicknames for his daughters, Meggie, Frannie and Jeannie which he used whenever he wrote about them in his diary, which is perhaps an indication of his tender feelings towards them.<sup>94</sup> Similarly, when James Drummond, Earl of Perth, wrote to his sister who had the care of his young daughter Anne, he regularly inquired after his little Anny or Annie.<sup>95</sup> His use of pet names for his sickly daughter, which he did not

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<sup>90</sup> James Erskine, "Spiritual Diary of James Erskine." GD.124. 15. 1179. NAS, Edinburgh, 81.

<sup>91</sup> Wilson, "Ye Heart of a Father," 260.

<sup>92</sup> Erskine, "Diary of James Erskine," 81.

<sup>93</sup> Elizabeth Cohen, "Fond Fathers, Devoted Daughters?" *Journal of Social History* 19, (1986), 349.

<sup>94</sup> Erskine, "Diary of James Erskine."

<sup>95</sup> William Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James: Earl of Perth, Lord Chancellor of Scotland, &C., to His Sister, the Countess of Erroll, and Other Members of His Family* (London: Printed for the Camden society by J. B. Nichols, 1845), 89, 103.



employ for any other relative, suggests an affectionate bond with his adolescent daughter despite the geographical distance that separated them.

As children grew up, gender difference became more evident in their relationships with their fathers. As sons were being prepared for careers or inheritance, and marriages were being arranged for daughters, fathers seem to have experienced less conflict with their daughters than their sons. Although this lack of conflict with daughters may be excused as engendered differences -- girls were raised to be submissive, while boys were taught to be ultra sensitive about their manhood -- the father-daughter diad was not immune to quarrels. In his letters to his eldest married daughter, Mary, Countess of Marischal (1675–1729), Perth kindly rebuked her when he wrote, “I am troubled I should not hear more frequently from your self, for you know how tenderly I love you and how much I am concerned in all that relates to you.”<sup>96</sup> The Earl’s letters to his son were much more strongly worded. A young Elizabeth West was so upset over the lack of religious instruction from her father that she confronted him about it. Although he did not respond well, Elizabeth wrote that despite his lack of religion he was at least “a moral man.”<sup>97</sup> Although Helen Alexander had “difficulties in [her] father’s house” she claims that it was due entirely to his second marriage, an event that “prove[d] very hard” for the young Helen.<sup>98</sup> Despite her discomfort in her father’s home, Helen regularly visited him and later lived with him during his old age, suggesting that in spite of her misgivings about her step-mother, Helen maintained a close relationship with her father. As a married

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<sup>96</sup> Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James Earl of Perth*, 52.

<sup>97</sup> Elizabeth West, *Memoirs, or Spiritual Memoirs of Elizabeth West* (Glasgow: Printed by John Bryce, 1766), 25.

<sup>98</sup> Helen Alexander, Mrs. Curie, “Passages in the Life of Helen Alexander,” in *Women’s Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 190.

woman Elizabeth Blackadder (1660-1732), recalled her father as “being a most affectionate, kind, sympathizing parent,”<sup>99</sup> whose death she declared was a “very heavy affliction to me.”<sup>100</sup>

The relationship between fathers and their sons was based on obedience and respect on the son’s part and authority and control on the father’s. <sup>101</sup> Informed by notions of manhood, seventeenth-century discourse on the proper relationship between fathers and sons stressed the subordination of the son to the father until he enjoyed the status of an adult male.<sup>102</sup> However, that status could prove difficult to attain since fathers were in a position to cause difficulties, usually by withholding inheritance and/or permission to marry.<sup>103</sup> However, despite rising friction, these relationships did not preclude the development of a certain amount of affection.<sup>104</sup> James Nimmo (1654–1709) outlawed in 1679 for his participation with the covenanting insurrection,<sup>105</sup> reveals much concerning his turbulent relationship with his father. In an effort to appease his father, Nimmo records that “I did more to please him than my bodie could weel indure, yet because it was not done with that cheerfulness he became verie teart [i.e.tart] to me in quarreling with almost all I did [and] treated me rather as a servant then a son.”<sup>106</sup> However, what James felt so galling was likely deemed normal by his father, because during the seventeenth century sons under their father’s roof remained under their

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<sup>99</sup> Blackadder, “A Short Account of the Lord’s Way of Providence towards me,” 390.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Miriam Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 33.

<sup>102</sup> W.M. Aird, “Frustrated Masculinity: The Relationship of William the Conqueror and his Eldest Son,” in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. D.M. Hadley (New York: Longman, 1999), 43.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Slater, *Family life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House*, 33.

<sup>105</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, “James Nimmo”.

<sup>106</sup> Scott-Moncrieff, ed., *Narrative of Mr. James Nimmo*, 4.

sway.<sup>108</sup> Despite a particularly unpleasant quarrel between the two Nimmos when a youthful James confronted his father about several fornicating servants, whose behavior James felt reflected poorly on the family's reputation, James attempted throughout his adulthood to redefine their relationship through his obedience.<sup>109</sup> Even though Nimmo was convinced that his father, John, held no regard for him, the elder Nimmo actively supported his outlawed son even to the extent of being imprisoned for communicating with him.<sup>110</sup> John's behavior towards his son does not suggest a detached father radiating disapproval, but rather the opposite. Even though James was cautious about approaching his father concerning his pending engagement to Elizabeth, John was quick to support his son as well as assist in negotiating the marriage contract.<sup>111</sup> When finances were stretched for James, his father was always in the background supplementing his income. These are all actions that suggest John perceived his relationship with his son much differently than James did.

Alexander Jaffray claims he suffered (almost) silently in his submission to his oppressive father, who rushed him into an early marriage at the age of eighteen, while still controlling his finances as a minor.<sup>112</sup> The elder Jaffray sent his son to Edinburgh shortly after the wedding to learn law, while keeping his young bride tucked away under his jurisdiction. This forced Jaffray into a position where he was not free of his father's

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<sup>108</sup> Even though James is a man at this point, because he is still living within the confines of his father's household, he would still have been seen as a subordinate according to Ruth Mazo Karras, *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 2003), 1; Aird, "Frustrated Masculinity", 47; Anthony Fletcher, "Manhood, the Male Body, Courtship's and the Household in Early Modern England," 291; Keith M. Brown, *Noble Society in Scotland: Wealth, Family and Culture, from Reformation to Revolution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 166-169.

<sup>109</sup> Scott-Moncrieff, ed. *Narrative of Mr. James Nimmo*, 7.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>112</sup> Gordon DesBrisay, Elizabeth Ewan, and H. Lesley Diack, "Life in the Two Towns," in *Aberdeen Before 1800: A New History*, ed., E. Patricia Dennison, David Ditchburn and Michael Lynch (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2002), 55.

influence and not able to extend his own authority, a situation that caused friction between father and son, which this young man experienced as a form of frustrated masculinity.<sup>113</sup> For eldest sons it was not unusual to receive mixed signals from their fathers, as they were expected to establish a separate identity while at the same time obeying the fathers from whom they hoped to inherit.<sup>114</sup> Jaffray recognized how this awkward situation forced him to assume a neutral position with his father, because if “I had contended with him, he being a very passionate man, it is likely he might have disinherited me, or have taken some such course.”<sup>115</sup> Although Jaffray felt the pressures of his father’s authority, through prayer and forbearance he managed, or so he claimed, to remain on relatively good terms for the duration of his father’s life, thus securing his inheritance.<sup>116</sup>

Just as sons experienced friction with their fathers, fathers likewise were frustrated with sons who eagerly overstepped their position in the family in their attempts to prematurely secure their inheritance. During the marriage negotiations of his eldest son James, William Duke of Hamilton (1634-1694), wrote his wife to report that the two were experiencing “reckonings you have heard us have before.”<sup>117</sup> William’s frustration was largely a response to James, who refused to be placated by a sample of what he would one day inherit.<sup>118</sup> When James Drummond Earl of Perth, heard that his eldest son and heir James was on the brink of forfeiting the family lands because of his Jacobite activities, Perth wrote to ask his sister to, “advise your nephew to be exceeding wary

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<sup>113</sup> A term borrowed from Aird’s article, “Frustrated Masculinity”.

<sup>114</sup> Crawford, *Blood, Bodies and Families in Early Modern England*, 231.

<sup>115</sup> Jaffray, *Diary of Alexander Jaffray*, 53.

<sup>116</sup> DesBrisay, Ewan and Diack, “Life in Two Towns,” 55; DesBrisay, “Father Know’s Best: Patriarchs, Quakers, and Family Relations,” 7.

<sup>117</sup> Marshall, *The Days of Duchess Anne*, 179.

<sup>118</sup> Aird, “Frustrated Masculinity”, 51.

what he does, for all depends on that.”<sup>119</sup> Perth feared his son’s rash behavior would bring the entire family to ruin. These encounters demonstrate friction experienced by eldest sons as they tried to negotiate between their gendered role as men and their subservient role as sons within the family hierarchy.

Although relationships between father and child could be strained, fathers were clearly concerned over the health and well-being of their offspring. Upon hearing that his eldest son, James, was depressed, Perth turned to his sister again, urging her to “[t]ell my eldest son to be merry, for a pound of care will not pay an ounce of debt. I hear he is melancholy; it will afflict me much if it continues.”<sup>121</sup> If fathers were fond of their sons, how did sons perceive their fathers? According to the autobiographical genre used by seventeenth-century men and women, life-writings are composed late in life, as an act of reflection. Therefore, authors, often nostalgic, usually suggest a fondness between father and child. Robert Sibbald warmheartedly remembered that his father “was a man of a mild spirit, very civill and kind to his relations and acquaintances.”<sup>122</sup> Similarly, at the death of his father, Alexander Brodie, James Brodie mourned the loss of a “precious, worthie and dear father.”<sup>123</sup> Perhaps the love and esteem that James had for his father is best illustrated in the particular care which he took to dress his father’s body for his grave, “I put the body of my dear father in his cerecloth, and cause anoint with oyls, and powders, and spices.”<sup>124</sup> Sometime later, James and his sister wondered who could

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<sup>119</sup> Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James Earl of Perth*, 103.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>122</sup> Hett, ed., “The Memoirs of Sir Robert Sibbald,” 49.

<sup>123</sup> Alexander and James Brodie, *The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie, MDCLII-MCCLXXX: and of his son, James Brodie of Brodie, MDCLXXX-MDCLXXXV., consisting of extracts from the existing manuscripts, and a republication of the volume printed at Edinburgh in the year 1740*, ed. David Lang. (Aberdeen: Spalding Club, 1863), 425.

<sup>124</sup> Brodie, *The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie, MDCLII-MCCLXXX: and of his son, James Brodie of Brodie, MDCLXXX-MDCLXXXV.*, 427.

“make up the want of a dear father and instructor?”<sup>125</sup> It is clear that the interaction between fathers and sons was structured on power relationships -- both were men of similar class and rank often butting heads. This situation is not often found in father-daughter relations simply because daughters offered no threat, as daughters would only receive a portion from their father’s estate and rarely challenged their father’s authority. However, despite issues of masculinity, power and authority, many Scottish men claimed to admire their fathers.

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In seventeenth-century Scotland, married women’s lives revolved around their roles as wife and mother. As mothers, a woman’s primary function was to care for and rear children.<sup>126</sup> Therefore it is not surprising to find Scottish mothers taking an active interest in childrearing and thus developing close, intimate relations with their children.<sup>127</sup> Mothers were largely responsible for the early years of childhood, and therefore had considerable influence on the early formation of their children’s character.<sup>128</sup>

Female Scottish life-writers who were also mothers appear to have developed strong attachments during the early stages of childhood with both sons and daughters. Women usually discussed their children only during times of sickness however, their concern is evident as they struggled to resign themselves to what they believed was the will of God. Katherine Collace described the death of many of her twelve children as her

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<sup>125</sup> Brodie, *The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie, MDCLII-MCCLXXX: and of his son, James Brodie of Brodie, MDCLXXX-MDCLXXXV*, 426.

<sup>126</sup> Rosalind Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos: A History of Women in Scotland from 1080 to 1980* (Chicago, Ill: Academy Chicago, 1983), 115, 122.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.

<sup>128</sup> Booy, ed., *Personal Disclosures*, 100

“trials of affliction.” Following the death of her three year old daughter, Katherine mourned the loss of her “dearest child,” hinting at a deep attachment with that particular child.<sup>131</sup> Katherine Hamilton’s anxiety that she had “loved [her] child too dearly”, a sinful indulgence she feared resulted in little Anne’s premature death, clearly delineates her love for her child.<sup>132</sup> Although she remained relatively calm as she initially nursed her children through a particularly violent fever, Elizabeth Blackadder was thrown into a “great distress” when “it was concluded that [her son] was dying.”<sup>133</sup> Mothers clearly mourned for their young children during sickness and death.

In their relationships with older children (those who survived infancy and childhood) Scottish mothers were intimately involved in their education, career placement and marriage.<sup>134</sup> Therefore, not only were mothers responsible in shaping children for their individual and carefully constructed futures,<sup>135</sup> middling and upper class mothers also played a vital role in providing all the advantages of education, cultivation, careers and marriages for sons and daughters.<sup>136</sup> Robert Sibbald remembered his mother’s tutelage with fondness, and wrote that his mother was “a virtuous and pious matron of great sagacity and firmness of mynde, and very carefull of my education.”<sup>137</sup> Some of his praise stems from the fact that his mother was “carefull” about his education, indicating that she had fulfilled her duty in rearing him by attending to his educational progress. Similarly, William Veitch remembered his mother as a “pious and frugal

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<sup>131</sup> Collace, “Memoirs or Spiritual Exercises of Mistress Ross,” 55.

<sup>132</sup> Hamilton, “Memoirs of her grace, Katherine,” 363.

<sup>133</sup> Blackadder, “A Short Account of the Lord’s Way of Providence towards me,” 393.

<sup>134</sup> Marshall, *The Days of Duchess Anne*, 148.

<sup>135</sup> Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe*, 132.

<sup>136</sup> Marshall, *The Days of Duchess Anne*, 148.

<sup>137</sup> Hett, ed. “The Memoirs of Sir Robert Sibbald,” 50.

woman, very dexterous in housekeeping and educating of children.”<sup>138</sup> His wife was just as thorough in their son’s education. Although Marion Veitch remained in Scotland while her eldest sons were educated in Holland, she monitored their studies from afar. Upon receiving a letter from a “friend that my sons did not mind their books as they should,” Marion was quick to let them feel her displeasure in her correspondence.<sup>139</sup> However, despite her initial reprimand, her sons informed her of their change of career choice (from ministers to soldiers), a decision that devastated Marion’s future plans for them and sent her to her knees in prayerful supplication for a speedy change of heart.<sup>140</sup> Finding she could not assert her authority from afar, Marion had to satisfy herself by counseling with God. Similarly, Elizabeth West’s mother confronted Elizabeth in an effort to ensure she would accept an offer of employment from a family she had previously worked for. Although Elizabeth dreaded the thought of returning to this particularly ‘godless’ family, she wrote, “my mother also was very earnest I should go back [to this particular family], and told me, it would vex her to a degree, if I disobeyed her in this.”<sup>141</sup> Had it merely been at her mother’s insistence, Elizabeth might have refused, however, this incident closely followed the death of her father, and Elizabeth acquiesced, “knowing she had grief and sorrow enough already, was unwilling to give it a new addition; so consented to do it.”<sup>142</sup>

Mothers did not hesitate to direct the behavior of grown sons or daughters and maintained their position of authority, along with fathers, in the life choices of growing offspring. Following the death of her second husband, Margaret Cunningham sent her

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<sup>138</sup> Veitch, “Memoirs of Mr. William Veitch,” 3.

<sup>139</sup> Marion Veitch, “The Memoirs of Marion Veitch.” Adv. MS. 34.6.22. NLS, Edinburgh, 22.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>141</sup> West, *Memoirs, or Spiritual Memoirs of Elizabeth West*, 90.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.



last will and testament to her sister, Lady Anna Cunningham (1593-1647), wife of James, second Marquis of Hamilton. Although a formal document, Margaret Cunningham's testament sheds some light on the relations between mothers and their children.

Concerned that her three sons' insubstantial inheritance from their father's estate would not sustain the lifestyle to which they were accustomed, Margaret beseeched her sister to assist them pending her own death. Margaret's concern for her sons is best illustrated through her requests to her sister. For her eldest son, Margaret pleaded with her sister and brother-in-law to provide a "portion of heritage" that would allow the young man to be "more able to serve his" uncle.<sup>143</sup> Her second son, John, had acquired a small piece of land and only required guardians to ensure his tutors did not take advantage of it during his minority. For her third son, young Thomas, Margaret requested that he be installed as a companion to his cousin, Lord Arran, "to serve his Lordship, and let his Lordship do to him as his Lordship finds him worthie."<sup>144</sup> Margaret's requests are indicative of a loving mother, who although unable to financially support her sons, operationalized her kinship network in order to provide for their futures. Accordingly, she also looked to the needs of her daughters who were quickly growing into women by outlining for her sister how best to launch them into prominent marriages. Although her daughter Anna's "own geir will do her some good," Margaret asked her sister to "have her in your Ladyship's companie" which Margaret hoped would "do her more furtherance then all her geir."<sup>145</sup> Clearly Margaret hoped that despite Anna's small portion, her association with the prestigious Hamilton family would provide a profitable marriage. Her two younger daughters she entrusted to her eldest daughter from her first marriage, Jean Hamilton who

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<sup>143</sup> Sharpe, ed., *A Pairt of the life of Lady Margaret Cunningham*, 27.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

had married the son of Margaret's second husband, Sir James Maxwell of Calderwood. The success of Jean's marriage to young James allowed Margaret to hope that Jean would care for her younger half-sisters and through her position secure proper marriages for them as they grew older.<sup>146</sup> By trying to do all she could for her children, Margaret's testament reveals how as their only living parent, Margaret felt responsible for her children's futures and fulfilled her maternal duty as she attempted to secure the best possible prospects by entrusting her children to the most powerful family member she had, her sister. It would appear that although gender shaped the way mothers raised children it made little difference in how mothers perceived their responsibilities to them. However, during certain life experiences, mothers appear to have been more active in the lives of their daughters.

The relationship between mothers and their adult daughters revolved around shared experiences of womanhood. Although mothers remain in the periphery of life-writings, they appear actively involved during childbirth, sickness and death. During Katherin Brodie's lying in, her mother spent so much time with her, that James Brodie had to go to Katherin's home in order to administer to his heart-broken wife after their daughter delivered a stillborn infant. He wrote, "Katherin, being brought to bed of a dead child before the tym. My wife was unweil and affected with her daughter's condition and I went down there, and visited her at Granghil."<sup>147</sup> Times of sickness can also illustrate how a mother-daughter relationship could oftentimes be close even after marriage. Katherine Hamilton's mother, Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, remained with Katherine during periods of family illness, so it comes as no surprise that Katherine's

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<sup>146</sup> Sharpe, ed., *A Pairt of the life of Lady Margaret Cunningham*, 29.

<sup>147</sup> Brodie, *The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie, MDCLII-MCCLXXX: and of his son, James Brodie of Brodie, MDCLXXX-MDCLXXXV*, 484.

husband, John Murray, recorded that Anne was at her daughter's deathbed. In fact, Katherine's very last words were directed to her mother as she implored her to care for Katherine's husband and their young children.<sup>148</sup> Anne took this plea seriously and shortly after John sent his young daughters to be raised by their grandmother.<sup>149</sup> The shared experiences of mothers and daughters did not usually extend to sons, who likely did not require the same type of counsel or support from their mothers that their sisters might.

By examining seventeenth-century life-writings it is apparent that parents and their children experienced complex, fluid relationships often influenced by gender, age and birth-order.<sup>150</sup> Although relationships between parents and children were built upon the foundation of early modern understandings surrounding the family hierarchy and concepts of authority, parents and their offspring often experienced the benefit of mutual obligations, as parents prepared their children for successful futures and children in turn obediently accepted parental instruction. Although it appears that gender influenced relations between parents and grown children, as fathers dealt with frustrated sons and mothers raced to birthing chambers, it does not seem to have shaped affective relationships between them. For example, fathers often developed strong ties with both sons and daughters, while mothers although slightly more visible in the lives of their daughters, continued to be involved in the lives of both sons and daughters. The interaction between parents and children demonstrate that despite power structures, more often than not, parents and their offspring maintained lifelong affective relationships. Historians have and likely will continue to question the degree to which parents loved

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<sup>148</sup> Hamilton, "Memoirs of her grace, Katherine," 383.

<sup>149</sup> Marshall, *The Days of Duchess Anne*, 225.

<sup>150</sup> Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House*, 58.

their children in the past however, regardless of the means through which parents articulated their attachment to their offspring or vice versa, it is clear that despite occasional discord, most parents and children nurtured loving relationships throughout their lives.

## Chapter Three

### Brothers and Sisters

An examination of seventeenth-century Scottish family dynamics would not be complete without a thorough analysis of sibling relationships. Then as now, brother and sister interaction was influenced by gender, birth order, family situation and individual personalities, thereby differing from family to family.<sup>1</sup> However, amidst the differences created by these factors, elements of authority and empowerment, constraint and reciprocity, gender, and affection operated in the ever-changing dynamics of sibling relationships, shaping the way in which they interacted. Although brothers and sisters were as prone to societal expectations as spouses and parents, power relationships between them were not always based on the hierarchal structure seen in most seventeenth-century male-female relationships. Instead, the power relations found between siblings were a consequence of their situation – men and women of a similar class and age, who interacted without the underlying obligation of obedience.<sup>2</sup> Although it is clear from the private writings of early modern individuals that love was experienced in many families, it is likewise apparent that families, both functional and dysfunctional, revolved around notions of authority, reciprocity and gender, all elements rooted in the family power structure.

Oddly enough, seventeenth-century advice literature, much like seventeenth-century historians, tends to focus on husband-wife, parent-child, and master-servant

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<sup>1</sup> Miriam Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 58.

<sup>2</sup> Linda Pollock, "Rethinking Patriarchy and the Family in Seventeenth Century England," *Journal of Family History* 23.1 (1998), 6.

relationships, oftentimes neglecting this aspect of family interaction.<sup>3</sup> Advice literature rarely defined mutual duties between siblings, leaving historians to speculate that the general social expectation was a hope that they would love and support each other, particularly during life's major events such as birth, marriage, sickness, and death, recognizing that only subtle social pressure could be applied to ensure brothers and sisters acted as they should.<sup>4</sup> Steven Ozment's examination of early modern German families has uncovered siblings who called on one another in times of need, like Hermann von Weinsberg who legally and financially supported his sister, Sibilla, during her divorce and ensured the success of her litigation by taking over as her lawyer.<sup>5</sup> Historian Rosemary O'Day argues that brothers and sisters developed strong relationships with one another, and in some instances behaved as surrogate parents to younger orphaned siblings.<sup>6</sup>

However, not all families were loving or particularly supportive. Some siblings engaged in back-biting, and exhibited personal greed and outright hostility towards each other. Patricia Crawford agrees that quarrels often erupted between brothers and sisters,

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<sup>3</sup> See Rosemary O'Day, *The Family and Family Relations, 1500-1900* (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 93; Sylvie Perrier, "Coresidence of Siblings, Halfsiblings, and Step-Siblings in *Ancien Regime* France," *History of the Family*, 5 (2000), 299. Even recent thesis projects have neglected sibling interaction in their examination of the family structure. For example see: Cathryn Rebecca Spence, "'Given up by herself': women's wills in the late sixteenth century Edinburgh" (M.A., University of Guelph, 2006), 69.

<sup>4</sup> Patricia Crawford, *Blood, Bodies and Families in Early Modern England* (England: Pearson and Longman, 2004), 218. Robert Sibbald records the litigation he was involved in for over fourteen years in an attempt to wrestle his nephew, Robert's, inheritance away from young Robert's much older half brother. Francis Paget Hett, ed., "The Memoirs of Sir Robert Sibbald (1641-1722)" (Oxford: University Press, 1932), 68. Due to the importance of inheritance, which often served as a person's livelihood, it was relatively common for legal disputes to arise among family members, although pressure was likely applied from outside the family as well as within to settle these bouts of conflict. For example, Isabell and George Hume experienced this kind of pressure from their uncle who attempted unsuccessfully to settle their financial disputes. See George Hume, "Diary of George Hume of Kimmergham," GD 1. 649. vol 1. NAS, Edinburgh, 106). Because it often involved legal litigation, conflicts of this nature were dealt with through the legal system. Advice literature had little to say about such behaviour.

<sup>5</sup> Steven Ozment, *When Father's Ruled, Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 82.

<sup>6</sup> O'Day, *The Family and Family Relationships, 1500-1900*, 169.

but argues that siblings were quick to settle their conflicts in an effort to maintain a united family unit.<sup>7</sup> However, Linda Pollock argues against the notion of a united family, urging historians to be cautious about taking notions of family solidarity too far.<sup>8</sup> Miriam Slater's study of the Verney family, an early modern upper-class English family, has drawn conclusions that concur with Pollock's ideas about how brothers and sisters often calculatingly maneuvered within family dynamics. The deliberate, manipulative behavior of the Verney siblings had caused Slater to be quite critical of their relationship, so much so that she argues that brothers and sisters tended to focus their interactions around personal gain and individual achievement rather than developing affectionate ties.<sup>9</sup> In an effort to reinforce the idea that siblings did not cultivate friendships with one another, some historians point to the mobility and mortality of children during different stages of childhood and adolescence, arguing that brothers and sisters would have experienced a limited time in which to develop meaningful relationships.<sup>10</sup> Sylvie Perrier, an early modern French historian, has followed this further by examining guardian accounts of orphaned children which detailed the movement of children following their parent's death. She argues that because orphaned siblings in seventeenth-century France were frequently circulated among extended family members and guardians, brothers and sisters not residing together had limited opportunities to develop

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<sup>7</sup> Crawford, *Blood, Bodies and Families in Early Modern England*, 24.

<sup>8</sup> Linda Pollock, "Younger Sons in Tudor and Stewart England," *History Today* 39 (1989), 24.

<sup>9</sup> Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House*, 34.

<sup>10</sup> Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994). Ben-Amos discusses childhood and adolescent mobility in relation to parent-child relationships rather than determining how this may have influenced sibling relationships. Lawrence Stone claims that by the 1650s in England almost 40% of children died before the age of 15. In seventeenth-century France one half of peasant children died by the age of 10. By the 1640s, 21% of infants died in their first year. See Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977), 68. It can be assumed that similar percentages were present in Scotland, especially since every married life-writer examined in this thesis lost at least several and others all, children during infancy. For example, Katherine Collace lost all twelve children before the age of three.

strong emotional bonds.<sup>11</sup> Perrier likewise examines the situation of half-siblings and step-siblings, arguing that although blood ties were important in establishing lifelong relationships, more often it was a matter of continual interaction that was the deciding factor.<sup>12</sup> Although little work has been done to explore Scottish sibling interaction, historians examining early modern English, French, German and American family dynamics provide a contextual framework through which Scottish ones can be analyzed, especially since there are few visible cultural differences found in the interaction of Western European seventeenth-century siblings. Therefore, in spite of the diversity present in personal relationships, this chapter intends to explore the intimate dynamics between brothers and sisters by focusing almost entirely on their personal writings and family letters. It will do so by dividing this examination into three sections, paralleling the paradigms found in sibling relations: 1) authority and empowerment; 2) constraint and reciprocity; and finally, 3) gender and affection.<sup>13</sup> For each section we will examine a case study that demonstrates how elements of authority and gender influenced the relationship between brothers and sisters. It is necessary to state that although each case study is designed to illustrate a particular aspect of sibling interaction, more often than not there are several underlying paradigms at play.

Although there was little discussion of the duties of siblings within seventeenth-century literature, traditionally the eldest son became largely responsible for his younger brothers and sisters upon the death of their parents.<sup>14</sup> If any form of sibling hierarchy

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<sup>11</sup> Perrier, "Coresidence of Siblings, Half-siblings, and Step-Siblings in *Ancien Regime* France," 299.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Naomi J. Miller and Naomi Yavneh shape their discussion of sibling interaction through similar topics in their text *Sibling Relations and Gender in the Early Modern World: Sisters, Brothers and Others* (England: Ashgate, 2006), 5.

<sup>14</sup> Crawford, *Blood, Bodies, and Families in Early Modern England*, 211.



existed, then most likely the heir, who was expected to transcend sibling status by stepping into the role of the surrogate father upon the reception of his inheritance, found himself in a position of responsibility and obligation towards his younger brothers and sisters who would come to rely on him much as they did their parents. Linda Pollock has found that the heir's favored financial position within the family influenced his relationship with his younger siblings.<sup>15</sup> All children were reared in the knowledge that the eldest son would inherit the vast majority of the family's wealth, thereby distinguishing him from his siblings who would receive much lesser portions. In the absence of sons, girls usually inherited equal portions, a situation which perhaps limited the role and responsibility of the eldest daughter among her sisters. As heir his specific duty was to maintain and if possible increase the family wealth, a position that not only put him in a place of power among his siblings, but also added to his family responsibilities.<sup>16</sup> If their father died prematurely, the eldest son was suddenly responsible for his younger brothers' careers and the negotiation of marriage contracts for his sisters.<sup>17</sup> His inherent position in the family would naturally mold the relationships and terms of communication with his younger siblings, especially since the latter often relied on him for supplemented income and other forms of assistance, even during their adulthood.<sup>18</sup> Although inheritance and other family resources were set out through legal provisions, the head of the family still retained important discretionary powers over the

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<sup>15</sup> Pollock, "Younger Sons in Tudor and Stewart England," 24.

<sup>16</sup> Slater, *FamilyLife in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House*, 30.

<sup>17</sup> Although their mother may in fact be largely responsible for minor children, once adults, most eldest brothers were in a position to directly influence the lives of his younger brothers and sisters.

<sup>18</sup> Pollock, "Younger Sons in Tudor and Stewart England," 27, 29.

other members, creating and changing the power relationship between him and his siblings.<sup>19</sup>

Over the course of their lives, brothers and sisters adapted in order to operate within their prescribed family role. Younger siblings, much like their elder brother, entertained ideas about the extent of his duties to them as well as their obligations to him.<sup>20</sup> In Scottish law, if a father failed to set aside provisions for younger children, the eldest son as heir was deemed responsible not only to provide his siblings with their aliment<sup>21</sup> but also to aid his brothers in establishing careers and his sisters in their marriage prospects.<sup>22</sup> In return for aliment, younger siblings were expected to acknowledge and support their elder brother's authority and network extensively on his behalf.<sup>23</sup> However, gender played a key role in their relationship. For example, an elder sister might find herself in the uncomfortable position where she was expected to follow the wishes of a much younger brother. These reciprocal obligations were not merely gender based, but were usually also predicated on their respective positions in the family hierarchy.<sup>24</sup> For example, younger brothers expected their elder brother to help them secure their profession just as younger sisters would anticipate the assistance of an elder brother in their marriage negotiations, since as younger siblings they would not be sustained by the family income.

Sadly, seventeenth-century Scottish life-writings do not contain much information about brother relationships. However, Linda Pollock has examined brothers in early

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<sup>19</sup> Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House*, 30.

<sup>20</sup> Pollock, "Younger Sons in Tudor and Stewart England," 24.

<sup>21</sup> Aliment is defined as support given according to means and quality. See David M. Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland* (Edinburgh: W. Green, 1988), 663.

<sup>22</sup> Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland*, 669.

<sup>23</sup> Pollock, "Younger Sons in Tudor and Stewart England," 24.

<sup>24</sup> Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House*, 34.

modern England and found that the traditional interpretation of younger sons reaching adulthood in an inheritance system based on primogeniture has painted a picture of fraternal relationships based on rivalry and mercenary considerations, a popular image that she argues is inaccurate.<sup>25</sup> In a similar study of younger sons in early modern English families, Barbara J. Harris has discovered that upper class mothers worried about their younger sons and therefore tended to secure their future by ignoring their well established eldest son in their wills, and leaving their accumulated wealth in the form of personal possessions to younger children. This occasionally caused friction between the eldest son who viewed his younger brothers as a constant financial drain on the family, and younger brothers who resented their eldest brother's position as heir.<sup>26</sup> Traditional perception has argued that the relationship between eldest sons and their younger brothers revolved around finances. Although this is a reasonable interpretation given the importance of inheritance in the early modern world, it is not all-encompassing.

Brother-sister relationships demonstrate that structures within society were reproduced in the family and based on one of the greatest forms of power in the family, gender.<sup>27</sup> Lawrence Stone has argued that the relationship between brothers and sisters was often the closest in the family, since brothers and sisters did not foster an embittered sense of envy that he claims was often present in younger brothers.<sup>28</sup> Although many historians now argue against Stone's examination of the early modern family, there is

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<sup>25</sup> Pollock, "Younger Sons in Tudor and Stewart England," 23. An example of this traditional perception is illustrated in the text, Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977), 115, in which Stone argues that primogeniture "inevitably created a gulf" between the eldest son and his younger brothers.

<sup>26</sup> Barbara J. Harris, "Property, Power, and Personal Relations: Elite Mothers and Sons in Yorkist and Early Tudor England," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 15 (1990), 623.

<sup>27</sup> Janay Barbara Nugent, "Marriage Matters: Evidence from the Kirk Session Records of Scotland, c. 1560-1650" (PhD, University of Guelph, Canada, 2006), 54.

<sup>28</sup> Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800*, 115.

evidence in Scottish sources that suggest his conclusions on the brother-sister relationship are accurate. Opposing Stone, Miriam Slater has argued that the primary purpose behind sibling interaction was personal advancement, which was accomplished by avoiding disapproval and punishment.<sup>29</sup> Despite several examples of siblings who manipulated one another for personal gain, there is much evidence to suggest that brothers and sisters spent considerable time and money to aid one another and did not receive any visible benefit for their efforts. Furthermore, although many brother-sister relationships feature self-promoting agendas, such relations often also contained mutual affection, suggesting that personal advancement and sibling love could co-exist. In her examination of the wealthy English Barrett-Lennard family, Linda Pollock argues that siblings operated within the family network in an effort to assist one another as well as further their own interests. Therefore, personal successes were largely a result of individual relationships with particular members of the family and skillful maneuvering within the family during times of strife as well as harmony.<sup>30</sup>

The elements of authority and empowerment, gender and affection operated within both brother-brother and brother-sister relationships. The interaction between the Drummond siblings provides an intriguing insight into how these fluid elements influenced brothers and sisters and shaped their communication with one another. The Drummond family was by no means a typical Scottish family. Their wealth and influence enabled the politically savvy Drummond brothers to govern Scotland prior to their exile following the ‘Glorious Revolution’ of 1688/89 in which the Catholic King James was displaced in favor of his Protestant daughter Mary and her Dutch husband,

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<sup>29</sup> Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House*, 35.

<sup>30</sup> Pollock, “Rethinking Patriarchy and the Family in Seventeenth Century England,” 3-28.

William of Orange. Prior to 1688, James Drummond, fourth Earl of Perth had been established as Lord Chancellor of Scotland, a position he used to negotiate his younger brother's rise to power. Through extensive political maneuvering and a tremendously successful use of kinship networks, Perth ensured that his brother, John, Duke of Melfort, was appointed Secretary of Scotland, thus solidifying the brothers' control of Scottish government.<sup>31</sup> However, their conversions to Catholicism and their support of King James fractured their power base and eventually led to their removal from power.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout Perth's exile, he wrote regularly to family members, and it is this correspondence that provides insights into his relationship with his siblings. Although dynamics between the Drummond men by no means portray an accurate depiction of all seventeenth-century Scottish brothers, it does provide an intriguing analysis of some issues arising between politically powerful and wealthy brothers. This initial correspondence dates from his imprisonment following a failed attempt to flee Scotland in 1688. While under house arrest in Sterling castle and waiting for what he believed was his imminent execution, he wrote to his brother Melfort, by then safely in France, beseeching him to fill the family void left by his own likely death. This heartfelt letter pleads, "endeavor to comfort my wife, and assist her in her pious design. Strive to get my children educated Catholiques."<sup>33</sup> Melfort would become head of the family<sup>34</sup> if Perth died. That, and the brother's shared Catholicism explains why Perth would not entrust his family to their Protestant sister, Anne, Countess of Erroll, even though her situation

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<sup>31</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, "James Drummond, fourth Earl of Perth."

<sup>32</sup> Rosalind Mitchison, *A History of Scotland* (London: Routledge, 2002), 276-278.

<sup>33</sup> William Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James Earl of Perth, Lord Chancellor of Scotland, to his sister, the Countess of Erroll, and other members of his family* (London, 1845), 10.

<sup>34</sup> The family that James was concerned about was a result of his third marriage – following two fruitful marriages in 1686, James married his widowed first cousin Lady Mary Gordon (1653/4–1726). Mary was also Catholic and from their union they had two sons, William and Edward, born in 1687 and 1689 respectively, and a daughter, Theresa. See *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, "James Drummond."

was much more secure than that of her exiled brothers. Perth survived this ordeal and by 1693 was able to continue on his way to the Continent, so his requests never came to fruition.

Through the initial correspondence the brothers appear to have been quite close, especially when Perth further writes, “[m]y joy was great when I heard you had gone to France. I thought to have seen you there, but our Lord saw fit that it was not good for me.”<sup>35</sup> This letter shows that during crisis the brothers seemed loving and supportive, but once the shadow of imminent death lifted, they engaged in the kind of bickering and rivalry familiar to anyone with a brother. In a letter written from Rotterdam in 1694 to his sister the Countess of Erroll, Perth complained about Melfort, who had “left many and great enemies behind him,” but he still went on to assure his sister that “I’ll never fail him.”<sup>36</sup> Although Perth does not disclose in the letter what it was Melfort did to upset him, the timing of his letter coincides with Melfort’s first ‘retirement’ from the French and exiled Scottish court in 1694.<sup>37</sup> During their early exile, Perth traveled throughout Europe and served as an ambassador to the Pope, an alliance believed to be necessary in order to recapture Scotland and England for the ousted king. Meanwhile, Melfort remained a constant presence at the exiled court, which apparently caused the brothers some problems. The letters Perth sent to the Countess suggest that he was frustrated that their younger brother had incurred the wrath of the French court -- a serious problem for two exiles from Scotland who relied on the favor of the sympathetic French court, personally and for the financial and military backing required to invade Scotland under the Catholic King James. Likewise as brothers it is very likely that Melfort’s behavior

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<sup>35</sup> Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James earl of Perth*, 10.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>37</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, “John Drummond.”

would negatively effect Perth's standing. By the spring of 1694 Perth had the unpleasant duty of explaining to the Countess that because "the court could bear him no longer" their brother had gone to "Orlenace [Orleans]." <sup>38</sup> "You may easily imagine," Perth wrote to the Countess, "how much this procedure had been a disappointment to me." <sup>39</sup> Melfort's fall from grace was not an isolated incident; it redistributed the power within the French and exiled Scottish court away from the brothers and towards their rivals. Among other consequences, it caused strife between the brothers.

Following a particularly heated disagreement which sprang up when Melfort was 'retired' a second time from the French court for his political intrigues, the brothers experienced a number of falling-outs. After Melfort's second 'retirement' from the French court in 1696, <sup>40</sup> Perth angrily wrote his sister, "you shall be judge who is in the wrong when you hear how he is angry at me; but not daring to correspond with him I can not fully clear him; but I am persuaded I am not in the wrong." <sup>41</sup> Whether unwilling or unable to communicate with his brother, it would appear that this time around, Melfort was frustrated with his older brother. <sup>42</sup> Although the family correspondence does not directly reveal the power relationship between the brothers, it is clear that changes in their political positions caused serious disputes between them. Often these disagreements were so tumultuous that the Countess's help was enlisted to re-establish family unity by smoothing things over between her brothers. These encounters illustrate that during

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<sup>38</sup> Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James Earl of Perth*, 50.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, "John Drummond."

<sup>41</sup> Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James Earl of Perth*, 104.

<sup>42</sup> Jacobites tended to be wary of committing politically sensitive matters to paper, for fear their letters would fall into the wrong hands.

family disagreements, siblings were quick to garner support from one another, crossing the gender boundaries in order to secure moral support.<sup>43</sup>

The relationship between Perth and his sister the Countess stands in stark contrast to the bickering brothers. After being released from house arrest in Scotland, Perth left all his wealth and his two older Protestant daughters from his first marriage, Mary and Anne, in her care. Although his eldest daughter, Mary, married the Earl of Marischal in 1691, his younger daughter Anne was a sickly teenage girl who seems to have remained under her aunt's tutelage. If this alone is not enough to establish the closeness between brother and sister, the routine correspondence between the two demonstrates an interesting mingling of authority and empowerment as well as their mutual affection. The elder brother's position as head of the family rested on both his male gender and his birth order, but his sister was married and therefore beyond his jurisdiction, so any authority he held over her was much weakened. His authority was diminished further by his reliance on her to manage both his estates and his children. For the Countess, not only did marriage remove her from her brother's sphere of influence, but so too did her Protestant faith: both marriage and religion empowered her in her dealings with Perth. Using his travels as a device to half-heartedly convert his sister to the "light of the true faith," Perth hoped that she would "bend to a sweet compliance."<sup>44</sup> However, after failing through subtle hints and descriptions of the brilliance of all things Catholic (including the Pope), Perth utilized guilt to force his sister's submission to his will. During a particularly painful illness while in Rome, Perth explained that "had I hope for

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<sup>43</sup> Miller and Yavneh, eds., *Sibling Relations and Gender in the Early Modern World*, 2.

<sup>44</sup> Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James Earl of Perth*, 21.



your conversion before I dye it would be a great joy to me.”<sup>45</sup> Although we do not have the Countess’s reply, it is clear that she either rejected this rather pitiful plea or simply ignored it. Inevitably, Perth realized his gentle persuasion was getting nowhere and lamented that “you who see so far in all things else ... [can not]... see the unreasonableness of being a Protestant!”<sup>46</sup> Despite his regular and oftentimes forceful encouragement, the Countess continued to quietly resist the urgings of her brother and remained devotedly Protestant.

Perth further empowered the Countess, although indirectly, by entrusting her as his unofficial informant and messenger. Her secure condition in Scotland clearly strengthened her position in their relationship, while his political fall from grace undermined his power base within the family, a weakened position he felt acutely when the Countess was slow to respond to his letters. So great was his reliance on his sister, that when he did not regularly hear from her, he urged her to “write sometimes to me,”<sup>47</sup> claiming physical pain when he did “hear so seldom from you.”<sup>48</sup> After months of no communication from his sister, Perth responded with anger over her apparent neglect. In his next letter, Perth formally addressed his sister as “Madam,” a term he had never before used and never repeated in his correspondence with her, indicating his frustration with her lack of communication. “Madam, I have not had a letter of yours these many weeks.”<sup>49</sup> Perhaps fearing his initial address was too harsh, Perth was sure to conclude this letter with numerous declarations of affection. When the Countess responded to his prodding, Perth was quick to reward his sister for her diligence. Upon receiving the

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<sup>45</sup> Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James Earl of Perth*, 93.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

greatly desired letter, he responded “your letter is so full of kindness, I can not tell what to return to it.”<sup>50</sup> In return for her generosity, Perth reminds the Countess that, “if in anything my wife and I could serve you here, it would be a favour to us to receive your commands.”<sup>51</sup> Perhaps recognizing that her brother’s frustration stemmed in part from his dependence on her, the Countess was able to smooth his ruffled feathers with her quick response.

In an attempt to sustain his authority in the lives of his eldest children, Perth asserted his position as father through his correspondence with his sister. He repeatedly reminded the Countess that she was obliged to send him “full and frequent accounts both of your own family and all my children.”<sup>52</sup> Through his letters to her, Perth asked the Countess to “send word to all my children that I give them my blessing.”<sup>53</sup> Failing direct communication with his own children, Perth authorized her to act on his behalf for his children. He asked her to “[a]dvice your nephew to be exceedingly wary what he does... [and to] continue to love and give advice to Mary.”<sup>54</sup> Perth entrusted his oldest son to his sister’s husband, writing, “I hope my son has been with you before this time. Pray give him good advice.”<sup>55</sup> Despite his geographical absence from the lives of his children, through his sister, Perth was able to remain an active presence in his family.

It would seem that despite his lack of authority and her empowered situation, Perth and the Countess were on affectionate terms prior to their correspondence. Even if one were to discount the fact that he left her in charge of his minor children, Mary and

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<sup>50</sup> Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James Earl of Perth*, 10.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

Anne, as well as his vast estates, the terms of endearment he uses to express his appreciation for his “dearest sister” make it clear that their relationship was based on a form of sibling affection prior to his exile.<sup>56</sup> Every letter sent by Perth to his sister contains his heart-felt affection for the Countess and his gratitude for her efforts on his behalf. He reassures her that “your love to me is a pleasure I value infinitely. Believe me that none living can love you and your dear lord [i.e. husband] better than I do, nor so well neither, for none knows your merit so well.”<sup>57</sup> Perth was quick to remind her that his were letters from “the hand of a brother, who loves you according to the obligation of a relative and the duty of a friend, and honors you as one who knows your merite.”<sup>58</sup> However, their affection for one another was an extension of mutual support.

Although her letters to her brothers are not available for reference, the Countess demonstrates kindness to Perth by caring for his children and loyalty in her correspondence with others. She wrote occasionally to the family of Robert Barclay of Urie, a leading Scottish Quaker and a loyal client of her brother, Perth. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February, 1692 the Countess wrote to Christian Barclay, Robert’s widow, expressing her gratitude for the service the recently deceased Robert had provided for both her brothers. Robert had proven himself a friend to both her and her brothers:

I have often been very pleased to hear him mention them very affectionately even at a time when most of the world had a vainty in railing at them, but I can not deny him the Justice to own that I found his friendship for them rather encrease than diminish as their misfortunes grew upon them and I am sure they are both very sensible of their loss by being deprived of so worthy and dissinteresed a friend as he proved on all occasions.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James Earl of Perth*, 1, 13.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Robert Barclay, *Correspondence of Colonel David Barclay and Robert Barclay of Urie, and his son Robert, including Letters from Princess Elizabeth of the Rhine, the Earl of Perth, the Countess of Sutherland, William Pen, George Fox, and others; also the Act of the Scotch Parliament of 1685, settling*

Although the correspondence between Perth and the Countess does not document their daily interaction, her correspondence with the Barclay family demonstrates how the Countess often networked for her brothers, by nurturing friendly alliances on their behalf. Although a power structure existed between these siblings, as they negotiated around issues of authority and gender it is evident that they experienced a form of mutual empowerment throughout their interaction.<sup>60</sup>

Within the Hume family, an upper middle-class seventeenth-century Scottish family, it is clear that the eldest son, George, experienced elements of both constraint and reciprocity in his relationships with his two sisters. After the death of their father in 1678, George Hume adapted to his role as family patriarch and financial manager.<sup>61</sup> George's relations with his sisters revolved largely around their dependence on him to secure their financial situation.<sup>62</sup> The interaction between George and his unmarried sister, Isabell, is particularly enlightening since it illustrates the development of a petty conflict resulting from financial constraints placed on Isabell by George. Also, it depicts the situation in which sisters often found themselves during the seventeenth century. If daughters did not receive their marriage portion prior to their father's death, they were legally entitled to their portion from their father's estate. Beyond that entitlement, however, sisters were largely dependant on their eldest brother's good will for any further family resources, because legally he was not bound to provide for them.<sup>63</sup> Throughout

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*Urie upon Robert Barclay and his descendants, and Robert Barclay's Vindication of his connexion with the Stuarts* (London, 1870), 85.

<sup>60</sup> Miller and Yaneh, eds., *Sibling Relations and Gender in the Early Modern World*, 11.

<sup>61</sup> George Hume, "Diary of George Hume of Kimmergham" [NAS GD1/649], (vol I), 1.

<sup>62</sup> George had two sisters, Isabell and Julian, as well as one brother, David. George rarely mentions David in his diary and when he does they appear on good terms. Unfortunately, David joined the ill-fated Darien expedition and died of fever on his way out of port. Hume, "Diary of George Hume of Kimmergham," vol I, introduction.

<sup>63</sup> Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland*, 669.

George's diary he records run-ins with his sister, the often disgruntled Isabell, which centered on her perilous financial circumstances.<sup>64</sup> In 1694 Isabell wrote to her brother requesting some money since she "had things to buy."<sup>65</sup> This was not an unusual request in the early modern world, since eldest brothers were regularly petitioned for money from their younger siblings.<sup>66</sup> However, George appeared weary of her financial requests and ignored her note. Assuming that his moral obligation as her brother entitled her to financial support, Isabell refused to be ignored and promptly set out to confront George publicly. Although Isabell likely hoped that a public confrontation would force George to behave more generously, it was not the case. George was quick to remind her of the expenses he had paid earlier that should have come out of her allowance, to which she argued that there was "more due to her than that sum," especially since George had sent her to live with their Aunt Borthwick for two years and had not covered her expenses. Frustrated, George sternly replied that he was "not obliged" to supply for her needs. Not receiving the response she had anticipated, Isabell quickly reminded him of his natural obligation and replied that "she was sure, if [George] was not obliged to pay her, [he] would never have given her anything, and why was [he] not as well obliged to pay her as [her] brother?"<sup>67</sup> Isabell was not above reminding George of his responsibilities, which she clearly understood to include providing for his financially strapped sisters, as well as their brother. Derived from an instilled sense of entitlement which was fuelled by George's filial negligence, Isabell responded irately, "and said; 'well if you are not

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<sup>64</sup> It is important to note that the information gathered about the Hume family stems from George Hume's diary which he structured as a financial account record. Therefore, it is natural that due to the very nature of his diary that their family financial issues would rise to the surface more readily than daily sibling interaction.

<sup>65</sup> Hume, "Diary of George of Kimmergham," vol I, 10.

<sup>66</sup> Pollock, "Younger Sons in Tudor and Stewart England," 26.

<sup>67</sup> Hume, "Diary of George Hume of Kimmergham," vol I, 10-11.

obliged to give me anything, I will have nothing from you' I had rather win it with my hands.'"<sup>68</sup> Her threat to seek paid employment was meant to shame him into action.

Unfortunately for her, Isabell's attempt at coercion was less effective. George did not rise to the bait but instead prepared himself for potential litigation with his angry sister.

The on-going conflict between Isabell and George indicates that they understood their family's power structure somewhat differently, and it is those perceptions that are visible in their financial disagreements. Isabell perceived the situation through gender and rank. As the only living brother, George was in a position of authority and much like a surrogate father was responsible to provide for his unmarried sister, who as an upper middle class single woman had limited economic opportunities.<sup>69</sup> However, George seems to have approached his sister with a close eye on his legal obligations, which he believed he had more than generously fulfilled. As family heir, George's duty was to provide the necessities for his unmarried sisters however he felt that it did not require him to lavish excess on a sister determined to live beyond her means.<sup>70</sup> This adds an interesting aspect to sibling interaction. According to George,

[w]hen my father left them [his two sisters] their portions he left me in all appearance, in a very plentiful condition, but it soon changed, so that I'm sure, if he had foreseen it, he would have restricted the allowance; for he, himself, took 1000 off his brother, and another off his sister, upon Polwarth's evicting the lands of Peel from him, which was most rational for him to do, since it was in proportion to his estate his father left his children their portions. And I see not why I might not have done the same considering my loss by the estate of Aitone...[but]...I am willing to give them my bond, in the terms of my father's that one half shall be returned to me, the other to be divided amongst them. Or if

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<sup>68</sup> Hume, "Diary of George Hume of Kimmergham," vol I, 10-11.

<sup>69</sup> R.A Houston, "Women in the Economy and Society of Scotland, 1500-1800," in *Scottish Society 1500-1800*, ed. R.A Houston and Ian Whyte (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 134.

<sup>70</sup> To George, Isabell's lack of financial sense is evident "when she [Isabell] had the government of my house it is well known what needless waste she made, both of the furniture, and extravagant provision for the house, especially when I was from home." See Hume, "Diary of George Hume of Kimmergham," vol 1, 11.

they will, the one half to me, the other at their disposal.<sup>71</sup> I do not make use here of the strongest argument I have in law, to wit that legally I am not subjected to my father's debts – he never having been infeft in any of his lands, and his executry being less than his debts, for I never made use of it hitherto, nor I hope, ever shall, there being nobody can challenge me on that account.<sup>72</sup>

George's argument is legally sound since in Scotland, "bonds made after 1641, bearing only a clause of annualrent and no obligation to infeft...were deemed moveable as to a deceased's children...bonds were moveable as to the debtor who was neither obliged to pay annualrent nor to employ it."<sup>73</sup> In short, his sisters were receiving payments of their portion from their father's estate. Therefore although George was obliged to hand over Isabell's legally allotted sum, he was not bound to give her additional money. However, often because the portion younger siblings received was not sufficient to support the lifestyle to which they were accustomed, it was not unusual to see eldest brothers providing a supplemental income or at the very least arranging profitable careers or marriages for younger siblings.<sup>74</sup> Unfortunately, the on-going bickering between these two siblings over financial constraints continues throughout George's diary, building tension even during relatively peaceful times between George and Isabell.

Although Isabell uses her gender as an instrument in her attempt to secure additional financial support from her brother, she does not behave as her brother's subordinate. In her recent work, Linda Pollock argues that dependants were just as likely as patriarchs to respond irately when their rights, material and cultural, were threatened.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Here George is referring to the moveable goods (consisting of anything that could be moved such as personal effects and household goods). It is apparent that their mother had died before their father since legally one-third was given to the heir, one-third to the widow, and the final one-third to be divided among the younger siblings. In this case, the moveable bond would be divided as George had stated. See, Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland*, 834.

<sup>72</sup> Hume, "Diary of George Hume of Kimmergham," vol I, 10-11.

<sup>73</sup> Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland*, 832.

<sup>74</sup> Pollock, "Younger Sons in Tudor and Stewart England," 28.

<sup>75</sup> Pollock, "Anger and Negotiation of Relationships in Early Modern England," 575.

This is evident in Isabell's interaction with George. Although she expects him to behave as their family patriarch in matters of finances, she does not acknowledge her brother as an authority in the family nor as the superior in their power relationship. Instead, she publicly confronts him and in private sends numerous reprimanding letters, letters that contained "a number of reproaches for unkindness, cruelty, and hatred,"<sup>76</sup> according to George. However, Isabell did not reserve her strongly worded letters for her own requests alone but asserts herself on behalf of her younger and much more docile sister, Julian. Although Julian did not harp on George for delayed responses to her requests, Isabell took every opportunity to jump into the fray. When George was slow to provide Julian with a horse, Isabell reminded him that he "had promised" their little sister a horse which Julian expected to receive.<sup>77</sup> The power relations between the Hume siblings provide an interesting case study, as Isabell was eager to assert her power as George's equal just as often as she played on her vulnerability as a woman.

Although financial disputes shaped George's encounters with Isabell, his younger sister Julian was far more careful to use the reciprocity system of sibling interaction to her advantage. While Isabell argued over her legally allotted inheritance, Julian wrote to her brother asking for the use of his horses and to soften her request she sent him "a quarter of butter."<sup>78</sup> Julian's actions indicate that she was well aware that her brother was responsible for her welfare, but she likewise recognized that in order to acquire what she desired she would have to appear to be reciprocating his generosity.<sup>79</sup> Perhaps Julian and George got along better than George and Isabell, or perhaps they were more skilled

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<sup>76</sup> Hume, "Diary of George Hume of Kimmergham," vol I, 41.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*



in the game of reciprocity. Either way, they maintained a relationship that appears mutually beneficial. Likely as a result of their relationship, when George was widowed with a two year old son, Julian took over young Robie's care.<sup>80</sup> By this time, Julian was married and no longer living under her brother's roof or authority. Although their power relationship likely altered with her marriage, George's dependence on Julian to raise his young son is an indication of how even after brothers and sisters ceased co-residence they often maintained close relations.<sup>81</sup> It is apparent that Julian was mindful of the importance of her brother's trust and responded by dutifully informing him of Robie's progress. This is particularly evident in matters of health and education.<sup>82</sup> The influence of individual personality as well as issues of constraint and reciprocity is clearly illustrated by viewing their friendly interaction, in stark contrast to the turbulent relationship between George and Isabell.

Gender not only influenced the way in which brothers and sisters interacted but it likewise shaped the way sisters responded to each other. Going beyond the search for affection in sisters, Naomi Miller and Naomi Yavneh argue that sororal bonds enabled sisters to survive the social strictures that fought to contain them.<sup>83</sup> By banding together, and utilizing their kinship network, sisters were often able to empower each other.

Margaret Cunningham (*d.* 1622) was one of six daughters born to James Cunningham (*d.* 1631), Earl of Glencairn, and Margaret Campbell (*d.* 1610).<sup>84</sup> During her turbulent marriage an often pregnant Margaret was regularly left "destitute" by her unusually cruel

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<sup>80</sup> Hume, "Diary of George Hume of Kimmergham," vol II, 57.

<sup>81</sup> O'Day, *The Family and Family Relations*, 93.

<sup>82</sup> Hume, "Diary of George Hume of Kimmergham," vol II, 57.

<sup>83</sup> Miller and Yavneh, eds., *Sibling Relations and Gender*, 12.

<sup>84</sup> Although the exact date of Margaret's death is not known, it is assumed that she died after preparing her last will and testament, a document she sent to her sister shortly after her second husband's death in 1622.

husband. However, it was when she was homeless and without means to survive that she turned to her kin in order to provide for her and her four children. In 1602, when her husband took up with Jean Boyd, Margaret wrote that due to this “fancie” he would “neither speak to me, nor give me whereupon to sustain my selfe” leaving her to her own devices.<sup>85</sup> Their dysfunctional marriage prompted the speedy arrival of Margaret’s sister Sussana who attempted to reconcile the couple.<sup>86</sup> However, Sussana became so indignant with her sister’s poor situation that she “death earnestlie” with James who “gave her fair words and made her many fair promises” but sadly “performed none of them,” thus leaving Sussana with no choice but to abandon her efforts and take her sister away with her.<sup>87</sup> Sometime later, after a shaky reconciliation, Margaret was kicked out by both her husband and mother in-law. Once again “destitute” Margaret wrote to her other sister, Anne Marchioness of Hamilton. Anne quickly sent a servant to bring Margaret to Hamilton Palace. So concerned was Anne over Margaret’s situation that she urged her husband, the powerful Marquis of Hamilton and, conveniently for the sisters, a close relative to Margaret’s husband James, to assert his authority to deal with Margaret’s abusive spouse. The Marquis agreed and set up a meeting which included Margaret’s father and husband as well as himself.<sup>88</sup> The protective behavior of the Cunningham sisters demonstrates not only the close bonds that many sisters developed, but also and perhaps more importantly it illustrates how women, recognizing the limitations of their prescribed social roles, goaded their male relatives to action.<sup>151</sup> As women, Margaret and

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<sup>85</sup> Sharpe, ed., *A Pairt of the life of Lady Margaret Cunningham*, 120.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>151</sup> For a thought-provoking analysis of how women within Icelandic sagas goaded their male relatives to action see Kristina Bergen, “Cold Counsels and Hot Tempers: The Development of the Germanic Amazon in Old Norse Literature” (MA., University of Saskatchewan, 2007).

Anne had very little direct power to bring to bear on Margaret's abusive husband, James. However, the Marquis, as a powerful male relative, could easily extend his authority over James. Unfortunately even this effort failed, as James continued to behave unkindly towards his wife throughout their brief but painful marriage.

Sisters often appear to have enjoyed a sororal support system within early modern Scottish families. The relationships between sisters were often recorded in passing, likely because interaction between sisters, much like brothers, were not the subject of personal writings and therefore their relationships were often excluded from these records. In spite of the limited references, it is apparent in life-writings that sisters often had regular contact with each other, encounters which are only mentioned in life-writings to provide contextualization. Robert Sibbald's wife enjoyed regular visits with her sister which readers only discover because of Robert's frustration over the fact that after she "stayed some what late at night with her eldest sister" she returned home quite ill.<sup>89</sup> For a young Helen Alexander, her older sister provided a sanctuary when trouble brewed at their father's house over his remarriage.<sup>90</sup> Throughout the rest of her diary Helen merely mentions in passing that she visited her sister, as an explanation for her travels.<sup>91</sup> Despite these brief references in Helen's diary, they indicate moments of friendly sisterly behavior, and a sense that her sister provided a much needed sanctuary for Helen. For the rather fanatical covenanting Collace sisters, their relationship is conveyed in the context of their spiritual trials. During all too frequent illnesses, the sisters rushed to nurse one another. When young Jean was ill, Katherine hurried to her sick-bed, contracting the

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<sup>89</sup> Hett, ed., "The Memoirs of Sir Robert Sibbald (1641-1722)," 72.

<sup>90</sup> Helen Alexander, Mrs. Curie, "Passages in the Life of Helen Alexander," in *Women's Life Writing in early modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c. 1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 190.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

sickness herself.<sup>92</sup> The unmarried and childless Jean responded in kind, by hurrying to her sister's side in times of illness. During a particularly severe sickness as Jean cared for both her sister, Elizabeth, and their mother, she wrote, "I was tried with my mother's sickness and my sister's both together...the Lord strengthened my heart exceedingly and also my body for duty to them both."<sup>93</sup> Although it is apparent that sisters often developed close relationships and relied on one another, it is questionable whether their interactions were so vastly different than their relations with their brothers. Margaret Cunningham relied on her father more often than her sisters, and perhaps had she any brothers she likely would have sought out their support as well.

In sibling relationships boundaries of gender have been challenged by recent scholarship, questioning the common belief that sisters participated in a universal experience resulting in a creation of solidarity between women at the exclusion of men.<sup>94</sup> Linda Pollock questions the assumption that female experiences such as pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding afforded women a closer bonding that excluded the presence of men.<sup>95</sup> Some seventeenth-century Scottish brothers were able to participate in their own way during these female experiences. James Drummond Earl of Perth made a serious effort to inquire after his sister's health and stay up-to-date (through correspondence) on her family. Prior to her lying-in, he wrote, "I hope you will advertise

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<sup>92</sup> Katherine Collace, "Memoirs or Spiritual Exercises of Mistress Ross. Written by her own hand," in *Women's Life Writing in early modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c. 1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 62, 63.

<sup>93</sup> Jean Collace, "Some short Remembrances of the Lord's Kindness to me and his Work on my Soul, for my own use," in *Women's Life Writing in early modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c. 1670-1730*, ed. David G. Mullan (England: Ashgate, 2003), 116, 133.

<sup>94</sup> Linda Pollock, "Childbearing and Female Bonding in Early Modern England," *Journal of Social History* 22 (1997), 286.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

me when you are brought to bed; God grant you a safe delivery and a comfortable” one.<sup>96</sup> James Brodie (1637-1708), son of Alexander Brodie, likewise showed concern over his older sister, Gissel during her impending lying in, and recorded in his diary, “I visited my sister; found her apprehensive of death and danger at this tym.”<sup>97</sup> This display of brotherly involvement particularly at such a dangerous time as childbirth, not only strengthened bonds of trust between brothers and sisters, but allowed brothers to participate in an otherwise female event as they moved beyond gender boundaries to comfort their sisters. Despite the shared biological experiences of sisters, it does not appear that same gender contributed to vastly closer relationships than those established between sisters and brothers.<sup>98</sup> Although gender most assuredly influenced sibling dynamics, it did not limit brother-sister interaction to the power structure found in most male-female relationships, whereby women were subordinate to their male counterparts. Instead, sibling interaction indirectly subverted the traditional gender-based hierarchy, allowing men and women of similar age and class to interact without the underlying elements of male authority and female subordination.

Although the elements of authority/empowerment, constraint/reciprocity, and gender influenced sibling relationships, it is certain that brothers and sisters often experienced affective relations with one another. It is clear that underlying their interaction was a bond that, as Lawrence Stone argued, created one of the closest relationships in seventeenth-century families. Although gender did influence the

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<sup>96</sup> Jerdan, ed., *Letters from James Earl of Perth*, 84.

<sup>97</sup> Brodie, *The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie, MDCLII-MCCLXXX: and of his son, James Brodie of Brodie, MDCLXXX-MDCLXXXV.*, 456.

<sup>98</sup> See Linda Pollock’s article, “Rethinking Patriarchy and the Family in Seventeenth-Century England” for a brilliant examination of how brothers and sisters could operate without the overarching burden of prescribed social roles. Although gender was an underlying factor in the interaction of the Barrett-Lennard siblings, gender did not limit the way in which both brothers and sisters called on each other for help and counsel.

responsibilities of siblings to one another, it does not seem to have been a barrier to close ties, especially as brothers and sisters often nurtured fond relationships and frequently depended on each other. In the most visible display of affectionate obligation, siblings utilize all within their means to assist their brothers and sisters. Miriam Slater has argued that dynamics between siblings were largely based on calculated reciprocity, and therefore claims that it is very unlikely that siblings spent a great deal of time cultivating love.<sup>99</sup> However, these life-writings clearly show that even when seventeenth-century families revolved around understandings of reciprocal obligations based on a sibling power structure, there was no absence of sibling affection, which suggests that the presence of calculated reciprocity, much like the absence of love, is a mythical interpretation of seventeenth-century Scottish families.

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<sup>99</sup> Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House*, 34.

## Conclusion

The political and religious instability in the seventeenth century provides an intriguing backdrop through which to examine family life. During this time advice literature bombarded families, urging husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, to structure their individual families as a miniature of the state. At its most basic, Scottish society, like all nations, was fashioned by the family unit. Advice writers clearly understood the importance of properly structured families and therefore focused on the family hoping that by reaffirming the family, the state would regain its previous power and strength. However, because the family is a fluid, complex, dynamic unit,<sup>1</sup> advice literature only provides a framework for historians to understand how the early modern family was generally perceived and how individuals were expected to behave. Life-writings fill the gap between societal expectation and individual experiences within families. From life-writings, we learn that just as quickly as good relationships could sour, periods of conflict could be worked through and close relationships restored. Although men and women occasionally struggled in their family community, individuals generally defined themselves through their position and relationship with their family members. As a result, it is clear that although social traditions were instilled in Scottish men and women at a young age, each member of the family experienced a different yet long lasting relationship with their individual family members.<sup>2</sup>

From life-writings it would appear that men and women entertained specific ideas about proper behavior, particularly between husbands and wives. The vast majority of

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<sup>1</sup> Linda Pollock, "Rethinking Patriarchy and the Family in Seventeenth Century England," *Journal of Family History* 23.1 (1998), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Rosemary O'Day, *The Family and the Family Relationships, 1500-1900* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 162.

couples who kept life-writings appear to have lived within the bonds set by religious beliefs, societal conventions and legal prescriptions. Societal traditions, reinforced by religious analogies, advice literature and the legal system, expounded a working companionship in marriage, which many individual couples appear to have developed rather successfully. Marital discord tends to become apparent in life-writings when one or both spouses blatantly disregarded their individual responsibilities, much like the experience of Margaret Cunningham and her husband, James Hamilton. On the opposite end of marital life, happy couples, like Katherine Hamilton and John Murray, seem to have achieved the ideal marriage represented in advice literature.

Generally the relationship between parents and their offspring was a reciprocal one. Parents were responsible for the material and physical wellbeing of their offspring, who for their part were expected to honor and obey their parents. This type of relationship continued as children grew up, married and moved away from home. This on-going parenting is viewed easiest during childbirth, sickness and death when references in life-writings indicate that parents were quick to offer support and guidance. Although gender influenced the relationship and mode of communication between fathers, mothers, sons and daughters, it does not seem to have reduced the affective bonds that developed between them.

Perhaps the most unique and longest lasting relationship in the seventeenth-century Scottish family was established between siblings. Brothers and sisters were able to interact with no underlying obligation of obedience. They were men and women of similar ages, class and ideals that were able to empower one another through extensive networking. However, despite often congenial relationships, sibling rivalry surfaced



usually over inheritance, favoritism, and finances. Although sore spots arose between oldest and youngest siblings, these issues did not often eliminate their connection with one another as we see in the dynamics of the Hume siblings. In fact, sibling relationships evolved as brothers and sisters began their own families and seem to have extended to aunthood and unclehood – perhaps an area for future study on the Scottish family unit.

As the most basic unit of any society, the family provides fundamental teachings that shape individual communities. To better understand seventeenth-century Scottish history is to become acquainted with how people felt, thought and behaved - elements that were created and developed within the family. Although individual personalities render each family unique, some common traits are clearly depicted in these Scottish life-writings. During times of crisis, spouses, parents and siblings garnered support from one another. However, periods of amiable relationships did not exclude times of conflict between family members. Despite the fluid, complex and changing nature of individual family relationships, consistency lies perhaps in the continuation of the family unit itself. This is why it is imperative for historians to go beyond the search for affective relations within families and examine the dynamics between individual family members.

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