



Messiah College
Mosaic

Honors Projects and Presentations: Undergraduate

2007

Favoritism in the Courts of Early Modern England: A Study of James I and George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham

Rachel Heeter

Follow this and additional works at: <https://mosaic.messiah.edu/honors>



Part of the [History Commons](#)

Permanent URL: <https://mosaic.messiah.edu/honors/272>

Sharpening Intellect | Deepening Christian Faith | Inspiring Action

Messiah College is a Christian college of the liberal and applied arts and sciences. Our mission is to educate men and women toward maturity of intellect, character and Christian faith in preparation for lives of service, leadership and reconciliation in church and society.

www.Messiah.edu

One College Avenue | Mechanicsburg PA 17055

“And yet I cannot content myself without sending you this present, praying God that I may have the joyful and comfortable meeting with you and that we may make at this Christmas a new marriage ever to be kept hereafter; for, God so love me, as I desire only to lie in this world for your sake, and that I had rather lived banished in part of the earth with you than life a sorrowful widow’s life without you.”¹

“A king is free and powerful who is able to defend his own people against enemies alien and native...but against his own oppression and plunder, even though his own passions and necessities struggle for the contrary. For who can be freer and more powerful than he who is able to vanquish not only others but also himself? The king ruling his people politically can and always does do this.”²

Favoritism in the Courts of Early Modern England: A Study of James I and George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham

From 1614 to 1625, George Villiers ascended to the highest rank of power and prestige in the court of James I of England. Within a mere nine years (1614 to 1623), Villiers advanced from a simple gentleman to Duke of Buckingham and James’s permanent favorite. He first caught the king’s eye and was sworn a Cupbearer of the Privy Chamber in the fall of 1614. By April of 1615, Villiers was knighted and made a Gentleman of the Bedchamber as his courtly role increased. In 1616, he became Master of the Horse, Knight of the Garter, Baron of Whaddon, and Viscount Villiers. Also by 1616, according to his close friend Francis Bacon, Villiers was “now the King’s Favourite, so voted, and so esteemed by all.”³ In 1617, 1618, and 1619 successively, Villiers was promoted to Earl of Buckingham and given membership in both the English and Scottish privy councils, then was elevated to Marquis of Buckingham, and subsequently was awarded the position of Lord High Admiral, all through James’s generous New Years’ presents. January 1619 also brought about a public dedication to Villiers in James’s

¹ Quoted in G. P. V. Akrigg (ed.), *Letters of King James VI & I*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p. 431.

² Quoted in Curtis Perry, “1603 and the Discourse of Favouritism,” ed. Glenn Burgess, Rowland Wymer, and Jason Lawrence, *The Accession of James I: Historical and Cultural Consequences*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, p. 160-1.

³ James Spedding (ed.), *Life and Letters of Francis Bacon*, London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1874, vol. VI, p. 14.

meditation on the Lord's Prayer. Finally, in 1623 Villiers reached the pinnacle of the peerage as he was made the Duke of Buckingham,⁴ the only duke in England without a trace of royal blood.⁵ Such an expedient rise to the top of the power chain is quite surprising considering that Villiers was born into a lower role as the third son of a knight. However, his ascent can be understood as a result of his role as James's favorite.

The notion of favoritism was not new to the seventeenth century courts of Europe; rather, monarchs have had a lengthy history of keeping a few select men as their personal confidants. As Bacon wrote to Buckingham, "It is no new thing for Kings and Princes to have their privadoes, their favourites, their friends. They have done it sometimes out of their affection to the person of the man (for Kings have their affections as well as private men), sometimes in contemplation of their great abilities (and that's a happy choice), and sometimes for their own ends, to make them whom they so stile, and are contented should be so stiled, to be interposed between the Prince and the People."⁶ Favorites were chosen solely by the monarch and were considered to be part of the natural cycling of court life.⁷

Queen Elizabeth favored Leicester and Essex in the latter part of her reign; however, she never gave her favorites anywhere near the amount of power that James granted to Buckingham.⁸ Unlike Elizabeth, James allowed his favorites full reign of power in both court and outside politics, as evidenced by Buckingham's rapid acquisition of titles. Due to such a significant allowance of power, Queen Anne, James's wife, pointedly remarked in regards to the position of favorite, "the King will teach him to despise and hardly entreat us all, that he may seem to be

⁴ His title Buckingham will be used for the remainder of this paper.

⁵ David Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers: King James of England and Scotland*, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991, p. 166-7.

⁶ Spedding, vol. VI, p. 14.

⁷ Linda Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*. London: Routledge, 1990, p. 49.

⁸ Wallace MacCaffrey, "Patronage and Politics under the Tudors," in Linda Levy Peck (ed.), *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 29.

beholden to none but himself.”⁹ By giving a favorite full power, he had no reason to rely on the support of others, but rather could become second only to the king in all regards. Thus, the existence of a favorite was understood by all, even the royal family, as a requisite of the court, but James’s extreme favoritism was not always deemed to be beneficial.

As the favorite, one was frequently criticized, yet this did not diminish the importance of the favorite’s role. In the early modern court, the favorite was the heart of the petitions for favor, which allowed the monarch to avoid incessant demands from nobility.¹⁰ Therefore, the favorite’s role was to “countenance, and encourage, and advance able men and virtuous men and meriting men in all kinds, degrees, and professions.”¹¹ Often these men were not only well suited for the position, but also part of the favorite’s patronage system, which included any family member, friend or ally. The favorite also acted as a substitute for the nobility, an entity that the monarch could not personally choose and consequently acted as a greater threat to his rule.¹² James was said to use this aspect to his advantage as he ‘strengthened himself ever with some favorite, whom he might better trust than many of the nobility tainted with this desire of oligarchy.’¹³ As the king’s “creature,” the favorite’s role was primarily to act in harmony with the king and his needs. Accordingly, Bacon wisely recommended to Buckingham to, “Above all, depend wholly (next to God) upon the King; and be ruled (as hitherto you have been) by his instructions; for that is best for yourself.”¹⁴ With roles that balanced the favorite carefully between the court and the king, each favorite had to negotiate his power in a way that best pleased the king yet did not turn the court against him.

⁹ Quoted in Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 49.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹¹ Spedding, vol. VI, p. 6.

¹² Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 49.

¹³ Quoted in Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 49.

¹⁴ Spedding, vol. VI, p. 7.

Buckingham's lengthy reign as James's favorite as well as the abundance of letters written between the two offers a unique window into the role of favorites in the royal court. Not only does their relationship allow for a more complete understanding of favoritism, but it also offers a more comprehensive view of the two at a time when revisionist historians are examining James in a more balanced light. As recent historians are reconsidering the view of James as the wisest fool in Christendom and repairing his reputation politically, in turn, they are dispelling the lasting impression of James as an incompetent, bumbling, and immoral ruler who ruined England. With a newly informed understanding of James based not on the negative stereotypes of late seventeenth century historians, but rather on a more thorough investigation of the writings by him and his contemporaries, the importance of James and his rule is being restored in British history today.¹⁵ Consequently, the role of Buckingham as James's favorite is also being analyzed in greater depth with the appearance of works, such as his biography by Roger Lockyer,¹⁶ that portray Buckingham as a greater asset to James instead of an ineffective and harmful courtier. Instead of continuing to ignore or demonize Buckingham's relationship with James, historians are now delving into the topic with greater focus as the sources show a relationship with political, emotional and physical aspects. However, the connection between these differing realms of their relationship has yet to be explored in depth, even though there is an imperative link between the emotional and political nature of James and Buckingham's relationship.

The emotional and sexual relationship initially captured James's attention and brought Buckingham to his court, which eventually resulted in a political relationship. Yet, even as their

¹⁵ See Pauline Croft, *King James*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, introduction; Malcolm Smuts, "Court-centered Politics and Roman Historians," in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (ed.), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993, p. 36.

¹⁶ Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham 1592-1628*, New York: Longman Inc., 1981.

relationship moved into the political sphere, the emotional and sexual ties between the two did not end. Later in his life, James declared his love for Buckingham and reminisced about their nights spent together.¹⁷ Surprisingly, the sexual and emotional aspects of their relationship were less problematic for England than the political implications. Buckingham lacked any true experience in the diplomatic or political realm, yet he was awarded complete control of court affairs, allowed financial leeway, and even diplomatic roles. Buckingham failed to produce anything of lasting positive value in any of these situations. Consequently, Buckingham was seen primarily as a political liability to James when judged solely by their political ties. However, with a greater understanding of their emotional relationship, Buckingham clearly provides a strong shoulder for James to lean upon, thus strengthening him, and making their relationship vital for James's success. With a focus solely on politics or solely on emotion, one misses the nuanced nature of their relationship in which Buckingham's emotional support of James led to his advancement in power, which in turn promoted a negative view of James due to Buckingham's political failures. By exploring English society's hierarchical order and its understanding of divine right as well as its views on sexual relations, James and Buckingham's relationship can be seen in its multifaceted light of power, sex, and emotion.

English society was structured around a single hierarchy of status and occupational groups, an organization known as "classical" hierarchy that was derived from the Great Chain of Being. The ideology of the Great Chain of Being assumed that the entirety of the natural world was ordered in a hierarchical scale that began with the angels and moved progressively down to man, which in turn had its own divisions, and then down to the animal kingdom in diminishing

¹⁷ See later in this essay (p.16) for a fuller description of this letter.

degrees of perfection.¹⁸ This understanding of divine order permeated the universe: “The heavens themselves, the planets and this centre / Observe degree, priority and place.”¹⁹ At the top of the hierarchy was the king, followed by the nobles or peerage, the gentry, the citizens, the yeomen, the artisans and rural laborers, and those who had “neither voice nor authority in the commonwealth but are to be ruled and not to rule each other.”²⁰ This structure created a society ruled by vertical relationships, in which “God hath so disposed every one’s severall place, as there is not anyone, but in some respect is under another.”²¹ Because everyone had a specific role in relation to the others, society was seen as an “organism of functionally interdependent, though unequal, parts.”²² These concepts of the social order provided an ideal of harmony, order, and degree in which each person had a fixed place in society; however, the reality of hierarchical relationships was much more complex.

In actuality, early modern England was in a period of transition between the aforementioned static social order and a more dynamic society that was apparent in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.²³ While each of the contemporary authors provided differing accounts of society’s breakdown, all produced a society similar in appearance in the end. Each author divided society into at least four main groupings within which each person fell, but the differences were due to the increasing amount of criterion for each individual evaluation

¹⁸ Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 60.

¹⁹ Spoken by Ulysses in Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida* quoted in Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume One: The Renaissance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, p. 239.

²⁰ William Harrison and Sir Thomas Wilson in Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson, “Introduction,” ed. Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson, *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 1.

²¹ William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties: Eight Treatises* in S. D. Amussen, “Gender, Family and the Social Order, 1560-1725,” ed. Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson, *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 196.

²² Keith Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1982, p. 18.

²³ Keith Wrightson, “The Social Order of Early Modern England: Three Approaches,” ed. Lloyd Bonfield, Richard M. Smith and Keith Wrightson, *The World We Have Gained: Histories of Population and Social Structure*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, p. 187.

of status. Jacobean England experienced the beginning of a shift from birth and blood as the decisive factors of rank to the increasing role of wealth in determining status.²⁴ By the end of the century, one's status was evaluated by a variety of contributing factors, which included: birth, inherited or conferred title, wealth and the nature of the wealth, occupation, form of land tenure, legal status, lifestyle, and the tenure of positions of authority.²⁵ This formula could be simplified to the sole consideration of birth, wealth, occupation, and the accompanying lifestyle.²⁶ Regardless, wealth was becoming a burgeoning factor in the status equations of the individuals in the Jacobean era.

During this period, there was also less emphasis placed on vertical relationships between master and servant as more people began to form horizontal relationships among their own status level. Consequently, each status level began to form a broader group specific to one's rank, which resulted in a less formally structured hierarchy. Fundamentally, social position was based on a vertical status hierarchy that was transforming into a clustering placement determined primarily on wealth.²⁷ By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the ideal language of societal degrees was in actuality a language of societal sorts.²⁸ Yet, during James's reign, England was still governed by the notion of a strictly ordered society, particularly among the upper echelon of society, and as a political nation, there were still distinct differences dividing members of each group.²⁹

²⁴ According to Braddick and Walter, lineage and wealth were the necessary prerequisites to be socially powerful in early modern England. See Michael J. Braddick and John Walter, "Introduction. Grids of power: order, hierarchy and subordination in early modern society," ed. Michael J. Braddick and John Walter, *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy, and Subordination in Britain and Ireland*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 15.

²⁵ Wrightson, "The Social Order of Early Modern England," p. 181; Wrightson, *English Society*, p. 22.

²⁶ Fletcher and Stevenson, p. 1

²⁷ Susan Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988, p. 151.

²⁸ Wrightson, "The Social Order of Early Modern England," p. 183.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

At the summit of the social and political hierarchy was the king, father to his people and divinely appointed. James was one of the most significant absolutist proponents as evidenced in his writings, in particular his *Basilikon Doron*³⁰ and *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*. According to James, God “made you [the prince] a little GOD to sit on his Throne, and rule ouer other men,” and the king “is their heritable ouer-lord, and so by birth, not by any right in the coronation, commeth to his crown.”³¹ As the leader of the land, the king was also often referred to as the father of his people because he was ordained for the sake of the people and would be accountable to God for his rule.³² Being the father of a country, a king’s duty was to create and execute fair laws, keep the peace, and maintain the welfare of the people, all of which would lead his children to prosper and love him.³³ The king, as defined by James, was to exemplify the good of mankind and act as the primary example of virtuous life as he was the pinnacle of the hierarchical chain.

While James initially argued for an ordered society under the control of a loving father king, his later writings and speeches shifted to an emphasis on the powerful nature of the God-like king. This shift occurred during the later half of his rule in England, conspicuously simultaneous with the years of his favorites, Carr and Buckingham. No longer could his writings stand solely for a fatherly king full of love, but in the face of controversy, James had to popularize the notion of a strong king who could not be limited. As James wrote in his *Basilikon Doron*, “It is a trew old saying, That a king is as one set on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures, all the people gazingly doe behold.”³⁴ Consequently, while his

³⁰ James’s *Basilikon Doron* is particularly important because expectations of behavior for particular roles were often described in advice given by fathers to their sons. Braddick and Walter, p. 13.

³¹ Sommerville, *Basilikon Doron*, p. 12, Sommerville, *Trew Law*, p. 82. See Johann Sommerville (ed.), *King James VI and I: Political Writings*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

³² Sommerville, *Basilikon Doron*, p. 20.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

relationships with his favorites were on a political stage, he had to provide some form of justification for his actions. In his previous writings, James urged his son, Henry, to “bee carefull to preferre none” and “vse not one in all things, lest he waxe proude, and be enuied of his fellowes.”³⁵ James also called Henry to “delight to be serued with men of the noblest blood that may bee had” and to “make your Court and companie to bee a patterne of godlinesse and all honest vertues, to all the rest of the people.”³⁶ These statements composed a philosophy of ruling in which James was successful at following at that time as king of Scotland, but as he became the ruler of England as well, his ability to follow his own teachings was severely hampered.

James’s inability to follow his own advice was exacerbated during the years of the favorites as his actions directly contradicted his earlier writings. As a result, he was forced to change the emphasis of his speeches to the declaration of a king who knew no earthly limits. As king, “they exercise a manner or resemblance of Diuine power vpon earth... they make and vnmake their subiects: they haue the power of raising, and casting downe: of life, and of death: Iudges over all their subiects and in all causes, and yet accomptable to none but God onely. They haue power to exalt low things, and abase high things, and make of their subiects like men at the Chesse; A pawne to take a Bishop or a Knight, and to cry vp, or downe any of their subiects, as they do their money.”³⁷ As this description clearly shows, the king had all of the power in the land and whatever he willed must be done as he was accountable to no man. Clearly, James was attempting to legitimate his relationships with his favorites as he promoted and favored men that went against the nature of the divine order, something he told his son to

³⁵ Ibid., p. 37, 38.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 37.

³⁷ Sommerville, “Speech to Parliament 21 March 1610,” p. 181. See also p. 182 for greater exposition of this subject. This quote can be understood as James’s first fight for favorites with Parliament as it refers directly to exalting those of low status.

avoid. Thus, as the head of the hierarchical chain, James had the royal prerogative to do what he pleased and he used his writings and speeches to support this notion of an omnipotent and divinely appointed ruler.

In England's ordered society there was a distinct notion of right and wrong in regards to each action and behavior. In the early modern era, all sins were considered to be directly against God's created order, in particular the sexual sins of buggery and sodomy.³⁸ Edward Coke defined buggery as "a detestable and abominable sin, amongst Christians not to be named, committed by carnal knowledge against the ordinance of the Creator and order of nature, by mankind with mankind, or with brute beast, or by womankind with brute beast."³⁹ Unlike buggery, the broad definition of sodomy could include both heterosexual and homosexual sin such as rape, adultery, and incest. In essence, sodomy was a collection of disordered sexual practices and desires, not exclusively male single sex desire or behavior; however, it was the preferred terminology for descriptions of homosexual behavior. Because there was not a strict definition of either term, buggery and sodomy were seen as actions performed by those who threatened social stability, not simply as a set of forbidden acts.⁴⁰ The common notion underlying both words was the idea of debauchery, a temptation that all were susceptible to surrendering. One who committed such a sin did not think of himself as different from his peers,

³⁸ Throughout this paper, I will use the terms "sodomy" or "buggery" in their legal sense, but in regards to same-sex desire or behavior, I will continue to use the term "homosexuality" or some appropriate variation. By "homosexuality," I do not mean to use our modern day understanding of sexuality as this would be achronistic; however, the terminology cannot be avoided. Thus, by the use of the term "homosexuality" I mean to use it in the most culturally neutral sense as possible and confine it solely to the directly physical sense of same-sex male relations. For a useful explanation of the difficulty with appropriate wording in regards to the sexual activity of this period, see the introduction of Michael B. Young, *James VI and I and the History of Homosexuality* (London: MacMillan Press Ltd, 2000).

³⁹ Kenneth Borris (ed.), *Same-Sex Desire in the English Renaissance: A Sourcebook of Texts, 1470-1650*, London: Routledge, 2004, p. 97.

⁴⁰ Jonathan Goldberg, *Sodometrics: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992, p. 17.

but rather would rebuke himself for falling into the depravity of man.⁴¹ Even though sodomy was a universal sin to which “men’s natural corruption and viciousness is prone,”⁴² it was still one of the most reviled sins one could commit. James himself deemed sodomy as one of “some horrible crimes that yee are bound in conscience neuer to forgiue” in his *Basilikon Doron*.⁴³ Thus, sodomy’s severity as a crime was not diminished although all men were capable of committing this sin.

The primary reason why sodomy was thought to be “the most detestable and unnatural Sin”⁴⁴ was because of its association with chaos and disorder; sodomy was a crime against the cosmos. Sodomy confused and blurred the distinctions of the social order, which was the worst crime one could commit, especially during this period of societal transition.⁴⁵ Due to the confusion of social structures at this time, the maintenance of order became even more vital and the denunciation of sodomy as the dissolution of society heightened.⁴⁶ Because of sodomy’s association with disorder, it became the explanation of various ills that were attributable to the judgment of God, such as Sodom and Gomorrah, as well as social problems. By placing blame on sodomites, one could avoid addressing other causes of social conflict, the unequal distribution of wealth and power; complaints of sex could be used as a critique of power.⁴⁷ In representing all that was evil and chaotic, sodomy only helped to strengthen the ideas of divine order reflected

⁴¹ Bruce Smith, *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare’s England*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991, p. 11.

⁴² John Rainolds quoted in Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, London: Gay Men’s Press, 1982, p. 17.

⁴³ Quoted in Sommerville, p. 23.

⁴⁴ Thomas Wilson, an early seventeenth century author, quoted in Alan Stewart, *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. xv.

⁴⁵ As sodomy was thought to fully negate the world of order, law, and nature, it was often grouped in the minds of the people as part of the mythical and legendary devilish trio: “sorcerers, sodomites, and heretics” (Edward Coke in Bray, p. 19).

⁴⁶ See Skinner’s comments about Shakespeare’s discussion of order on p. 239 and Bray, p. 23-25.

⁴⁷ See the later section of this essay on sex as a critique of power (p. 25-27). Thomas Betteridge, *Sodomy in Early Modern Europe*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002, p. 6.

in the early modern world. In essence, sodomy was a simple excuse for all social problems because sexual disorder reflected political, religious, and economic disorder as well.

Based on this understanding of sodomy as more evil than the devil himself, English society had an obvious need to keep sodomy “in its place” due to its threat to the established order.⁴⁸ Not surprisingly, the punishments for identified sodomites were severe. Throughout the early modern era, beginning in the 1533-1534 parliamentary session under Henry VII, sodomy was deemed a statutory felony punishable by hanging.⁴⁹ Very few people, however, were ever convicted of the crime. Based on a variety of court records, it appears that female sexual relations were largely ignored and males were rarely prosecuted, outside of cases involving anal rape of a minor.⁵⁰ For example, during the combined reigns of Elizabeth I and James I, merely six men were recorded as indicted for sodomy with only one conviction in the Home County assizes.⁵¹ This small number of prosecutions for such a “heinous” crime suggests that an immense disparity existed between legislation and actual practice in regards to sodomy. Thus, it seems that the true crime was not sodomy itself, but rather the disruption of the social order that such acts caused.

Whereas sodomy was associated with sin and disorder, male friendship enabled beneficial social connections for all involved.⁵² Homosexual acts were condemned, yet homosexual behavior was accepted and even encouraged in some instances by a variety of social institutions in the form of male friendship. For example, same-sex bedsharing was a common practice in early modern English culture as were intimate and expressive letters between friends

⁴⁸ Bray, p. 62; Betteridge, p. 60.

⁴⁹ Borris, p. 86. There was a short period under the reign of Queen Mary in which sodomy was not a felony punishable by death. See Bray, p. 62 or Borris, p. 89.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 77.

⁵¹ Smith, p. 48.

⁵² Valerie Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 18.

of the same sex; neither were explicitly homosexual acts even though these practices could lead to such relations.⁵³ While cultural norms of expected etiquette formed boundaries between friendship and romance, the loosely defined nature of the heterosexual sphere often encouraged the exploration of homosexual desire.⁵⁴ Early modern ideals did not preclude intimate and emotionally charged relationships between males. Contemporary literature, such as pastoral and war poetry, often celebrated intense emotional relationships between men rather than those between men and women.⁵⁵ Due to the intimate nature of male friendships, there was an unbroken social continuum between the homosocial (friends) and the homosexual (lovers) without explicit categories for each.⁵⁶ As social norms and contexts changed and evolved, the distinction between homosocial and homosexual shifted in the direction society deemed appropriate.⁵⁷

The popular understanding of male friendship can best be understood through two authors: Montaigne and Francis Bacon. Montaigne, in his essay “Of Friendship”, strictly described the delineation between male friendship and romantic interest: “In true friendship, it is a generall and universall heat, all pleasure and smoothnes, that hath no pricking or stinging in it, which the more it is in lustfull love, the more is it but a ranging and mad desire in following that which flies us... As soon as it creepeth into the termes of friendship, that is to say, in the agreement of wils, it languisheth and vanisheth away: enjoying doth lose it, as having a corporall

⁵³ David Bergeron, *King James and Letters of Homoerotic Desire* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999), p. 28.

⁵⁴ Claude Summers, *Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment England*, New York: Harrington Park Press, 1992, p. 1.

⁵⁵ Stephen Guy-Bray, *Homoerotic Space*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002, p. 20.

⁵⁶ The term “homosocial” refers to a primarily same-sex friendship base (i.e. males were often friends with other males and therefore expressed their friendly emotions within a male social atmosphere). See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in Guy-Bray, p. 11.

⁵⁷ Guy-Bray comments in regard to this idea: “romantic love and friendly love are not unchanging natural objects, but rather are frequently modified and always socially contextualized” (p. 12).

end, and subject to society.”⁵⁸ Montaigne understood friendship as a relational love without lustful desire; if this desire was to enter a friendship, then the relationship had to be abandoned as it verged on the boundaries of homosexual love. While he communicated the notion of a sexual continuum, Montaigne clearly recognized the necessary boundary between friendship and romantic love. Francis Bacon, on the other hand, only provided a requirement of love in his essay “Of Friendship”: “[i]t is friendship, when a man can say to himselfe, I love this man without respect of utility.”⁵⁹ While both Bacon and Montaigne understood that love and devotion were necessary components of every relationship, only Montaigne distinguished a fine boundary between friendship and romantic love.⁶⁰ Yet neither author seemed to express an overwhelming anxiety towards the blurred boundaries between the homosocial and the homosexual spheres of life. This lack of anxiety suggests that all male relationships had the potential to shift from the homosocial friendship to homosexual love due to the absence of clear categories; however, the social order would not have allowed this shift to occur in the public sphere.

Social relations did not take a specifically heterosexual or homosexual form as there were no distinct boundaries between the two. Alan Bray suggests that due to this absence, those engaging in homosexual behavior could overlook such relations in their lives outside of the strictly sexual sphere. Most individuals avoided making the connection between social pressures and sexual behaviors by keeping them at two separate ends of their lives; this helped them to avoid recognizing their relationships as ones of homosexual desire. Reconciliation between the two ends was uncommon and unnecessary because of the influence of social order. As long as one’s sexual activity was consistent with societal mores and did not disturb the peace of social

⁵⁸ Quoted in Betteridge, p. 56-57.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁶⁰ Some authors credit Bacon’s disregard for boundaries to his own homosexual nature. See Betteridge, p. 58.

order, it was generally left unquestioned and ignored. As maintained by Bray, even though there was extreme hostility to the idea of sodomy, the early modern culture was reluctant to recognize homosexual activity in concrete situations.⁶¹ While most of the community could have suspected a gentleman of sodomy, unless a large body of evidence was presented, no charges would have been pressed. England during this period operated strictly under a “no questions asked unless necessary” policy in regards to sexuality.

Oftentimes inquiries did not arise in regards to sexuality because most intimate same-sex relationships were strictly with friends and neighbors, not with strangers or casual acquaintances. This was due primarily to the ordered nature of the social system, which offered limited interaction between members of different ranks and classes outside of the household. What was true of the social sphere was often applicable to one’s sexual life. Thus most homosexual relations were limited by the local community and the household and, ironically, followed the overall social order.⁶² This is evident through the basic model of the patriarchal household, the influence of which was prominent in most homosexual relationships.⁶³ The patriarchal model was most common primarily because a majority of homosexual relations were matters of power exchanges. According to Alan Bray, “What determined the shared and recurring features of homosexual relationships was the prevailing distribution of power, economic power and social power, not the fact of homosexuality itself.”⁶⁴ Thus, power derived from the social hierarchy was the basis for the majority of same-sex relationships.

Homosexuality was most common among the gentry because the power from the patriarchal system transferred directly into same-sex relations . These men were masters of

⁶¹ Bray, p. 67-77.

⁶² Ibid., p. 43-44.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 55.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 56.

households and held power over a large number of servants, who they could use as they deemed fit. Homosexual relationships were also common in tutor-pupil relationships due to a similar understanding of power as that mentioned between masters and servants. Thomas Wilson, an early seventeenth century writer, commented on the prevalence of homosexual power relationships: “jealous women and some men also will be apt to think that any man useth it [sodomy] that hath but a boy or a yong man to serve him or that he useth his servants in his chambers.”⁶⁵ The most common homosexual relationships seem to have been those that were easily accessible. This meant that a variety of social institutions had the notions of secretive homosexual acts engrained in their nature, for example: the male power structure in general, educational establishments, festival occasions, religion, social class, and most importantly private life.⁶⁶ However, it was the institution of social order and common notions of power that kept homosexual relations secret within the patriarchal model.

Private sexual relations used as means of power were fundamental to the workings of the early modern English Court. John Donne commented on the secretive love affairs, writing, “who loves whores, who boys and who goats,”⁶⁷ when describing the Court in 1590. While among the gentry sexual relations were a means of power only for the superior partner, in the Court homosexual behaviors also represented a means to power for the socially inferior member of the partnership, an option that did not exist for commoners in general. Subsequently, homosexual activity was more common in the Court than in most social institutions. The most influential way for a courtier to influence a king was to submit to him, often in the sexual sphere.⁶⁸ However, in regards to courtly love, it was not the act itself that was significant, but rather the

⁶⁵ Quoted in Stewart, p. xv.

⁶⁶ Smith, p. 21.

⁶⁷ Bray, p. 14-16.

⁶⁸ Goldberg, p. 58.

disturbance of the power structures that the relationship symbolized.⁶⁹ When the desires of the person's body and those of the political body became indistinguishable and were carried out in the same physical and conceptual space, sexual activity was no longer safe or allowable.⁷⁰ This situation became particularly problematic when the homosexual activity was between the king and his favorite; the most influential and powerful positions in the land were affected.

While James and Buckingham's relationship did intermix the sexual and political spheres, the emotional side of their relationship comes through as the most important aspect. The mutually caring relationship between the two is demonstrated most clearly through their letters, which speak volumes about the multiple levels of their love. These letters portray Buckingham as James's lover, child, wife, and friend with endearing phrases including "my only sweet and dear child," "sweet heart," "bastard brat," and "sweet baby," and James as Buckingham's "dad and gossip."⁷¹ Along with these pet names, James referred to Buckingham most commonly by his nickname, Steenie, which is a Scottish nickname for Stephen referring to St. Stephen and his beauty.⁷² With their addresses to one another, the reader can see why Buckingham would say that their relationship is "of more tendernes then fathers have of children; of more frendship then between equals, of more affection then between lovers in the best kind, man and wife."⁷³ By fulfilling multiple roles in James's life, Buckingham was able to transcend the typical master-servant relationship by being a part of a caring and loving reciprocal relationship, which is shown clearly through their letters.

⁶⁹ Betteridge, p. 48-52.

⁷⁰ Gregory Bredbeck, *Sodomy and Interpretation: Marlowe to Milton* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 53.

⁷¹ G. P. V. Akrigg (ed.), *Letters of King James VI & I*, Berkley: University of California Press, 1984, p. 374, 376; p. 387, 436; p. 394; p. 409; See also Bergeron, *King James and Letters of Homoerotic Desire*.

⁷² Akrigg, p. 376n; Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers*, p. 162.

⁷³ George Villiers, *Letters of the Duke and Duchess of Buckingham Chiefly Addressed to King James I of England*, Edinburgh: Thomas G. Stevenson, 1834, p. 10.

The majority of the letters were written during Buckingham's voyage to Spain with Prince Charles in 1623, the longest period of time that James and Buckingham were apart. Prior to their leaving, James wrote Buckingham a touching letter in which he worries about their departure. He wrote, "I am now so miserable a coward, as I do nothing but weep and mourn; for I protest to God I rode this afternoon a great way in the park without speaking to anybody and the tears trickling down my cheeks, as now they do that I can scarcely see to write. But alas, what shall I do at our parting?"⁷⁴ Once Buckingham left for Spain, James was only able to console himself because "I wear Steenie's picture in a blue ribbon under my waistcoat next to my heart."⁷⁵ Buckingham replied with equal amount of longing: "myself is increased in revenue, decreased in expense, my unworthy picture worn next to the worthiest heart living, and all this in absence, which word goes down like a ill herb in a good sallett [salad], making the rest not so perfectly well tasted."⁷⁶ The letters continued between James and Buckingham and Charles, each with a sense of love, both familial and romantic. James clearly represented both of them as his sons as he closes many of his letters saying, "God bless you both, my sweet boys, and send you a happy journey and a comfortable and happy return to your dear dad."⁷⁷ His frequent references to their father-son relationship interweaved with themes of desire and longing show how Buckingham occupied the center of James's devotion. As Bergeron aptly comments, "Buckingham had become James's family, and everything that remained dear to him."⁷⁸

Other letters portray a much greater romantic side to James and Buckingham's relationship than the familial letters of the Spanish voyage. The most substantial letter is dated December 1623 in which the subtitle states, "King James declares his love for Buckingham."

⁷⁴ Akrigg, p. 386-7.

⁷⁵ Akrigg, p. 392; Bergeron, "Writing King James's Sexuality," p. 363.

⁷⁶ Bergeron, "Writing King James's Sexuality," p. 363.

⁷⁷ Akrigg, p. 393.

⁷⁸ Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers*, p. 178.

The letter reads: “And yet I cannot content myself without sending you this present, praying God that I may have the joyful and comfortable meeting with you and that we may make at this Christmas a new marriage ever to be kept hereafter; for, God so love me, as I desire only to lie in this world for your sake, and that I had rather lived banished in part of the earth with you than life a sorrowful widow’s life without you.”⁷⁹ James’s letter conveys the notion of genuine and conjugal love that emphasizes passion expressed through a committed relationship, marriage. James was not the only one who displays this commitment in their relationship as Buckingham too pledged that he “will live and die a lover of you.”⁸⁰ Another letter from Buckingham portrays another insight into their relationship: “Sir, my heart and very soul dances for joy; for the change will be less than to leap from trouble to ease, from sadness to mirth, nay from heaven to hell. I cannot now think of giving thanks for friend, wife, or child; my thoughts are only bent of having my dear Dad and master’s legs soon in my arms; which sweet Jesus grant me. And when I shall have the happiness to lie at your feet, you shall the know the truth of all, and no more.”⁸¹ Buckingham’s letter touches on similar notions that James writes about, in particular a romantic relationship with the language of familial love. Unlike typical letters between friends, James and Buckingham’s writings share a playful, saucy and witty dialogue that shows both intimacy as well as a secure relationship, especially considering Buckingham joked with such impertinence to the king of England. Within this reciprocal loving relationship, there seems to be a spark of sexual passion as well, not just romantic expression.

The pressing question in regards to their relationship appears to be that of sexual relations. Many historians have ignored or brushed over this question in their writings in the

⁷⁹ Akrigg, p. 431.

⁸⁰ Bergeron, “Writing King James’s Sexuality,” p. 364.

⁸¹ Quoted in Bergeron, *King James and Letters of Homoerotic Desire*, p. 135.

past; however, a few have brought this question to the forefront of their studies.⁸² One particular letter from Buckingham to James seems to address this question best: “All the way hither I entertained myself your unworthy servant with this dispute, whether you loved me now... better than at the time which I shall never forget at Farnham, where the bed’s head could not be found between the master and his dog.”⁸³ Initially this letter may not appear to be that different from those mentioned above; however, it provides a few clues to the sexual nature of their relationship. The reference to Farnham, according to many historians, is a direct comment about James and Buckingham’s “private relationship” first developed in August 1615 when the king and his court paused at Farnham Castle during the summer progress.⁸⁴ The mention of “the master and his dog” refers directly to James and Buckingham as both often referred to Buckingham as his “dog Steenie.” While some credit the pet name of “dog” to the Stuart family’s obsession with dogs, the word “dog” in Jacobean England was also a common denotation of a sodomite or male prostitute.⁸⁵ While such an approach may seem over analytical, it was typical for males to speak or write about such relationships using insinuations, suggestive associations, and circumlocutions because they were discouraged from discussing homosexual acts or thoughts in a direct way.⁸⁶ Thus, such references along with the coy comment that the head of the bed could not have been found leads one to believe that their relationship was indeed a sexual one as well as emotional. This letter in combination with other remarks, such as

⁸² Outside of Bergeron, Young, and occasionally Lockyer, the other authors do not discuss the sexual relationship between the two, except to comment on its inappropriateness or the lack of evidence. Many historians seem to be hesitant to discuss the issue whatsoever due to its highly controversial nature. As Young aptly comments, “There are many solid reasons why James’s reputation has steadily risen in recent years, but this rehabilitation has been achieved by emphasizing his talents and accomplishments to the exclusion of controversial topics such as his sex life and the generally scandalous nature of his court.” (p. 6). Consequently, as more studies on James’s court have been published recently, one can also expect (and hope) for more in-depth discussions of his sexual relationships, outside of the limited perspective given by political historians.

⁸³ Quoted in Bergeron, *King James and Letters of Homoerotic Desire*, p. 138.

⁸⁴ Lockyer, p. 22.

⁸⁵ Thomas, p. 103; Young, p. 63.

⁸⁶ Young, p. 39.

Buckingham's playful threat that when he "once gets hold of your bedpost again, never to quit it," enforces the likely possibility that the relationship provided both physical and emotional comfort. As Young poignantly comments, "To put it as baldly as possible, except for the obvious absence of offspring, there is at least as much evidence indicating that James had sex with his male favourites as there is evidence that he had sex with his wife."⁸⁷

With the understanding that this relationship was most likely one of a sexual nature, how would James be able to participate actively in such a relationship yet clearly condemn sodomy as an unforgivable sin simultaneously? This is due primarily to the absence of the notion of sexuality.⁸⁸ In other words, there was not a mindset of the homosexual versus the heterosexual, rather, men who had sexual relations with other men were still able to have similar relations with women as well.⁸⁹ As opposed to the three categories that exist today, the homosexual, bisexual, and heterosexual, there were not specific definitions that placed people into specific categories. James would not have been considered a homosexual or a bisexual even though he had relations with both males and females because such definitions did not exist. Bergeron correctly comments, "But in truth James simply saw nothing inconsistent between marriage and his own sexual practice, in part because sexuality did not define him."⁹⁰ This is evident in James's pressure on Buckingham to marry; his marriage was not considered to be an impediment to his relations with James. Nor was James considered to be a sodomite, being that the relationship did not involve rape or any form of violence, so there was no need for it to be brought directly into

⁸⁷ Young, p. 36

⁸⁸ This discourse on the development of sexuality can best be understood through Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990. Essentially, both Young and Bergeron, the main proponents of this theory in regards to James, argue that James was not bound by modern-day conceptions of sexuality primarily because these categories were undefined in his time. Other authors writing prior to the past thirty years either attempt to explain away James's relationships, condemn him for his "gay" actions, or even turn him into a bisexual. However, the understanding that modern-day conceptions of sexuality should not be applied to James seems to be the most historically accurate and appropriate.

⁸⁹ Young, p. 48.

⁹⁰ Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers*, p. 170.

the public sphere as an example of sodomy; such a relationship could stay solely in the private sphere and would not be discussed in regards to what particular type of relationship it was. Even if these categories were specifically defined, as king, James was above these simplifications. Being the chief patriarch of the realm, it was his prerogative to enter into sexual relations with younger and subordinate men due to his age and power.⁹¹ Consequently, James had no reason to even think about his sexual activities as they were simply one of the privileges that he was entitled to as king.

Even though James and Buckingham's emotional relationship existed primarily in the private sphere, James's private life, and their relationship, was often made public knowledge. Rumors and details of their relationship spread rapidly throughout the court, foreign ambassadors and most of the English countrymen as many noticed the emotional realm of their relationship. As early as 1616, Viscount Felton commented "his Majestie loves [Buckingham] beyond measure," and William Beecher mentioned that when Buckingham was created a Knight of the Garter, James had returned from the installation "of the knights or rather *his* knight."⁹² In 1617 George Gerrard noticed "the king was never more careful, or did more tenderly love any that he hath raised than this Ld. of Buckingham."⁹³ John Chamberlain mentioned in his letter to Dudley Carleton, also in 1617, that "I am sorry to heare that he [James] growes every day more froward, and with such a kind of morositie that doth either argue a great discontent in minde, or a distemper of humors in his body, yet is never so out of tune but the very sight of my Lord of Buckingham doth settle and quiet all."⁹⁴ Francis Bacon, a close friend of the king's, recognized Buckingham's love for James in a letter to the king: "It resteth that I express unto your Majesty

⁹¹ Young, p. 48-9.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁹⁴ Norman Egbert McClure (ed.), *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, Memoirs XII, Part I, Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939, vol. II, p. 121.

my great joy, in your honouring and advancing of this gentleman; ... your Majesty certainly hath found out and chosen a safe nature, a capable mind, an honest will, generous and noble affections, and a courage well lodged; and one that I know loveth your Majesty unfeignedly, and admireth you as much as in a man to admire his sovereign upon earth.”⁹⁵ Even the foreign ambassadors could not help but comment on the relationship between James and Buckingham. Horatio Busino, the Venetian ambassador mentioned in a letter home that, “Sometimes when he walks he likes, for display, to be supported under the arms by his chief favorites, but in riding he cares for nothing, never holding his reins in his hand.”⁹⁶ Another Venetian ambassador, Giorlamo Lando succinctly described their relationship when he commented that James “has given him [Buckingham] all his heart, who will not eat, sup or remain an hour without him and considers him his whole joy.”⁹⁷ Essentially the comments by the courtiers and the ambassadors speak for themselves; Buckingham was clearly seen as James’s love and the apple of his eye in a very public forum.

James himself made his love for Buckingham most apparent to his court through his own pronouncements. James stated in his 1617 speech to the Privy Council: “I, James, am neither a god nor an angel, but a man like any other. Therefore I act like a man, and confess to loving those dear to me more than other men. You may be sure that I love the Earl of Buckingham more than anyone else, and more than you who are here assembled. I wish to speak in my own behalf, and not to have it thought to be a defect, for Jesus Christ did the same, and therefore I cannot be blamed. Christ had His John and I have my George.”⁹⁸ When feasting after having bestowed Buckingham the title of “marquis,” James publicly toasted him halfway through

⁹⁵ Spedding, vol. VII, p. 7-8.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers*, p. 125.

⁹⁷ Quoted in David Bergeron, “Writing King James’s Sexuality,” Ed. Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier, *Royal Subjects: Essays on the Writings of James VI and I*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002, p. 347.

⁹⁸ Quoted in Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers*, p. 168.

supper, saying, "My lords... I drink to you all and I know we are all welcome to my George. And he that doth not pledge it with all his heart, I would the Devil had him for my part."⁹⁹ These public displays of affection only solidified Buckingham's position as James's favorite in the eyes of England.

James also publicly dedicated his *A Meditation upon the Lords Prayer* to Buckingham in January 1619, which he was to "receive then this New Year's gift from me as a token of my love." As explained in the dedication, James chose Buckingham because "it is made upon a very short and plain prayer and therefore the fitter for the courtier." James continued by listing more reasons why Buckingham deserved this dedication, in part because "for divers times before I meddled with it, I told you, and only you, of some of my conceptions upon the Lord's Prayer, and you often solicited me to put pen to paper." Also, this meditation is to the heavenly Father, but James offered it to Buckingham because he is "not only your politic but also your economic father, and that in a nearer degree than unto others." Finally, Buckingham deserved this gift "in not only giving so good example to the rest of the Court in frequent hearing the word of God, but in special in so often receiving the sacrament, which is a notable demonstration of your charity in pardoning them that offend you."¹⁰⁰ James's dedication to Buckingham was a clear announcement of his love, so much so that some historians have been offended, saying "what can be more incongruous than his introducing so sacred a subject to a gay and thoughtless courtier, whose complaisance, and pretended interest in his Majesty's pursuits, could surely only have originated in a desire to gratify the weak monarchy by the usual arts of adulation."¹⁰¹ While it may have bothered some, there was no doubt, based on this dedication, of the importance that Buckingham held in James's life.

⁹⁹ Lockyer, p. 33.

¹⁰⁰ Akrigg, G. P. V., p. 367-8.

¹⁰¹ John Jesse quoted in Bergeron, "Writing King James's Sexuality," p. 354.

Public opinions about James and Buckingham's relationship abounded in writings after James's death. James Oglander, who was knighted by James in 1615, wrote that James "loved young men, his favourites, better than any women, loving them beyond the love of men to women. I never yet saw any fond husband make so much or so great dalliance over his beautiful spouse as I have seen King James over his favourites, especially the Duke of Buckingham."¹⁰² Edward Peyton also commented that James was "more addicted to love males than females," which was evidenced because "the king sold his affections to Sir George Villiers, whom he would tumble and kiss as a mistress."¹⁰³ Arthur Wilson, another seventeenth century writer, stated that Buckingham reigned "sole *Monarch* in the Kings affection, every thing he doth is admired for the *doers* sake... the King is not well without him, his company is his solace."¹⁰⁴ These three descriptions seem to be congruent with those expressed during James's life; however, there is a greater emphasis on the spousal nature of the relationship as well as an undertone of effeminacy. These tones become especially clear with Francis Osbourne, who has the most impassioned assertions. He declared about James's favorites: "Now, as no other reason appeared in favour of their choyce but handsomnesse, to the love the king shewed was as amorously convayed, as if he had mistaken their sex, and thought them ladies; which I have seen Somerset and Buckingham labour to resemble, in the effeminate-nesse of their dressings... Nor was his love, or what else posterity will please to call it... carried on with a discretion sufficient to cover a lesse scandalous behaviour; for the kings kissing them after so lascivious a mode in publick, and upon the theatre, as it were, of the world, prompted many to imagine some things done in the tyring-house, that exceed my expressions to lesse then they do my experience."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Summers, p. 196.

¹⁰³ Quoted in Bergeron, "Writing King James's Sexuality," p. 349.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 350.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 349.

These declarations, had then been published during James's life, would have gotten Osbourne thrown into the tower; however, these were published during the civil war era in which many writers were defaming James and his rule. Unfortunately, these views have been the most utilized until the recent period in which historians are attempting to determine and describe fairly James's relationships and his rule.¹⁰⁶

For many contemporaries and historians alike, the prime Jacobean failure is James's constant fawning on his favorites, which signifies effeminate desire but also poor and weak-minded governing. Virtuous and effective English kings were valued in early modern England because of their ability to suppress their own will for the good of the country. Sir John Fortescue writes, "a king is free and powerful who is able to defend his own people against enemies alien and native...but against his own oppression and plunder, even though his own passions and necessities struggle for the contrary. For who can be freer and more powerful than he who is able to vanquish not only others but also himself? The king ruling his people politically can and always does do this."¹⁰⁷ Fortescue's writings can be easily applied to James's situation with his favorites: by not controlling his own desires with Buckingham, James could not be seen as a powerful ruler able to control others. In essence, the critique of James's sexual relationships can be seen as a discourse criticizing his failure as a ruler. As suggested by Perry, the political category of sodomy, especially in regards to James, "was less about desiring men than about desiring everything."¹⁰⁸ By connecting political misrule with the language of sin, James's

¹⁰⁶ See p. 4 of this essay for a more detailed explanation.

¹⁰⁷ Quoted in Curtis Perry, "1603 and the Discourse of Favouritism," ed. Glenn Burgess, Rowland Wymer, and Jason Lawrence, *The Accession of James I: Historical and Cultural Consequences*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, p. 160-1.

¹⁰⁸ Cynthia Herrup quoted in Perry, p. 157.

contemporaries could implicitly critique his rule through their complaints about his favorite, which has significantly influenced our views of him today.¹⁰⁹

The notion of sexual language as a form of political critique was not unique to James as many examples are evident from Elizabeth's reign as well. Gossip about her favorites has a similar form as that of James's favorites, showing that the tales themselves tell little about the relationship. Rather, the similarities indicate that the gossip acted more as an unofficial language of corruption rather than a specific description of actions.¹¹⁰ This gossip about favoritism seems to have developed from the popular questioning of monarchy in regards to its prerogative, its limits, and most importantly the increasingly uncomfortable fit between personal rule and law. Discussion of favoritism provided a useful means of exploring these questions about monarchy primarily because of the increasing conflict favorites caused in the separation of the private and public roles of the monarch. The gossip only intensified and took on new meanings during James's reign due to his insistence on absolutism. As the author of the *Basilikon Doron* among other instructional works, James was well known for offering advice to others, not receiving it. Sovereigns were expected to have counsel to help them, especially as a means of comfort and a shoulder to lean upon; however, James's attitude of self-sufficiency clearly contradicted the contemporary humanist notions of service and counsel, which were used to defend royal intimacy as fundamental to proper rule.¹¹¹ Consequently, James's contemporaries began to identify favorites not as necessities for a monarch but rather as evidence of corruption and poor policy.¹¹² The gaps between Jacobean policy and reality widened with these critiques and resulted in the ideological erosion of favoritism at a time when Buckingham was rapidly gaining

¹⁰⁹ Perry, p. 157-8.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 159.

¹¹¹ Perry, p. 171-2.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 168.

power, which only fueled the criticizing flame. Thus, to understand these commentaries of Buckingham as favorite, one must explore the consequences of this emotional relationship in the political realm.

As mentioned previously, Buckingham's rise to power was expedient and impressive as he went from being a nameless man uninvolved with the court in 1614 to indispensable in court as well as political affairs by James's death in 1625. Such a great increase of power is even more surprising considering Buckingham's less than perfect birth rights as the third son of knight. Granted that knights were higher than some, being that one must be from a family with monetary support as well as prestige, they were also not the highest of the gentry nor part of the peerage.¹¹³ As the third son, Buckingham would have been a mere gentleman with no opportunity for a political role. However, social mobility was a reality that Buckingham was able to use to his advantage after making an impression on the king in 1614. Initially, James did not intend to make Buckingham his new favorite, replacing Robert Carr; however, the anti-Howard faction in conjunction with Queen Anne was successful at promoting Buckingham. Rumor had it that James would only accept new appointments to the Privy Chamber if they were first approved by Anne, thus it was only through her influence that Buckingham was made Cupbearer.

As Cupbearer, Buckingham was given the opportunity to interact with James on a personal basis fairly often because his position was responsible for carrying out the actual table service. Many men in this position as well as the Carvers and Sewers of the outer Chamber went on to make spectacularly successful court careers.¹¹⁴ Buckingham's success as Cupbearer, which essentially meant the continuing promotion by Anne and the anti-Howard faction, as well as

¹¹³ Wrightson, *English Society*, p. 24.

¹¹⁴ Neil Cuddy, "The revival of the entourage: the Bedchamber of James I, 1603-1625," ed. David Starkey, *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, Longman: New York, 1987, p. 184.

James's continuing interest in him, led to his advancement to a Gentleman of the Bedchamber in 1615. As part of the Bedchamber, Buckingham was officially a part of the inside track at court as these men were James's closest companions and advisors. When traveling for hunting, the summer progress, Christmas, and the period between Christmas and Easter, James took with him a fairly small household, consisting of the Guard, the Privy Chamber, and most importantly, the Bedchamber.¹¹⁵ James controlled all appointments of the Bedchamber, but he was faithful to his intimates and rarely allowed new faces into to his inner circle; once one was a member of the Bedchamber, he could expect success at court. With previous monarchs, the Privy Chamber or Privy Council was responsible for all administrative duties; however, under James, the men of the Bedchamber utilized their intimate and direct access to the king, granted through their positions, to procure the royal signature on a variety of signet warrants. In 1614 alone, the Bedchamber was responsible for procuring one-sixth of all known signatures to signet warrants; by 1624, under Buckingham's rule as favorite, this increased to nearly one-half of the total signatures.¹¹⁶ The Bedchamber also received the richest patronage pickings and all favors passed either directly or indirectly through their hands. Such power led not only to political control but also financial prosperity and wealth. Thus, Buckingham's appointment as a Gentleman of the Bedchamber secured his status at court and prepared the way for his rise to royal favorite.

Buckingham's increasing influence in combination with Carr's implication in the Overbury murder resulted in Buckingham becoming the new and official royal favorite by 1616, one who reached greater political heights than his predecessor. Sir John Lenthall wrote, "as one falleth so another riseth, according to nature's course, Somerset being down Villiers is now up, and hath received that dignity, as never any man of his place and rank had before, he is made

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 193.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 187-8.

Master of the Horse which no man ever had, under the degree of an Earl, but he shall (I believe before you receive this letter, have a Viscountship or an Earldom made the supporter of this honor, it is not known which, but one of them he is sure of. These times can not want a Phoenix; fortune will have her favorite, and she hath now embarked Monsieur Villiers for the same.”¹¹⁷

Buckingham’s appointment to Master of the Horse was the outward symbol of his complete control of the court and constant presence with the king as he was no longer one among many gentlemen. This was a position that no other favorite had been able to obtain, in the case of Carr, not without lack of effort. His promotion resulted in unique and useful control of access for Buckingham as he ruled the Privy Lodgings with his role as favorite, yet he was also in direct attendance on James anywhere outside of the palace as Master of the Horse.¹¹⁸ Sir John Holles best portrayed Buckingham’s control of the king: “we all ar reeds, we bow with every breath, not oaks which withstand the most tempestous wynds; a blynd Jesuitical obedience beeing the naturall temperature of this clymate which, though peradventure worse for sum particulars, who covett to walk by the true rules of the Kings honor, and thir owne; yet mucche better for the generality, whose summum bonum is an ydle quietnes, purchased, and possessed, they ar not curious by what ways.”¹¹⁹ Even though this was written early in his reign as favorite, Holles mentions two facets of Buckingham’s rule that were fundamental to his patronage system: blind loyalty and purchase. These factors became the defining aspects of Buckingham’s reign as favorite and resulted in his overall political incompetence.

By 1616, Buckingham’s patronage system was in place; thus, in order to be in good standing with the king, one also had to be on good terms with Buckingham. While a few of Buckingham’s recommendations for court appointment were based on merit, many seem to have

¹¹⁷ Quoted in Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 81.

¹¹⁸ Cuddy, p. 216.

¹¹⁹ Quoted in Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 26.

had some ties of kinship and/or financial assets to make Buckingham their patron. Prior to Buckingham's rise, court favor revolved around competing factions and multiple patronage systems; however, the emergence of Buckingham as the favorite resulted in the ending of this factional competition as well as the monopolization of patronage.¹²⁰ Francis Bacon told Buckingham early in his reign that "the whole Kingdom hath cast their eye upon you, as the new rising Star, and no man thinks his business can prosper at Court, unless he hath you for his good Angel, or at least that you be not a *Malus Genius* against him."¹²¹ Those who had been clients of the previous favorite, Robert Carr, were no longer guaranteed advancement until they appealed to Buckingham's favor. All were pawns in a political game as the court was a "place of...servility in the getting, and ... uncertainty in the holding of fortunes."¹²² But, now Buckingham was in control. Bacon's statement that none could prosper without the support of Buckingham defined the nature of Buckingham's success within the court through his patronage.

As the favorite and most important patron, Buckingham's role was to encourage and advance able and virtuous men. John Chamberlain "cannot but commend that Lords good disposition in dooing goode to his kindred and frends," even though others did not appreciate Buckingham's actions.¹²³ Yet, he was successful in advancing the majority of his clients, particularly his family members. His brother Christopher became the first non-Scottish Groom of the Bedchamber to James in 1617 while his other brother John was made Groom of the Bedchamber and Master of the Robes to Charles in 1616.¹²⁴ Others, such as Francis Bacon, were also able to benefit from Buckingham's friendship as much as his kin as long as they were

¹²⁰ Peck, "Corruption at the Court of James I," p. 78, 82.

¹²¹ Spedding, vol. VI, p. 15.

¹²² Sir Henry Wotton quoted in R. Malcolm Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987, p. 77.

¹²³ McClure, vol. II, p. 52.

¹²⁴ Lockyer, p. 38.

willing to pledge their allegiance to him. Bacon wrote to Buckingham, "I am yours surer to you than to my own life. For as they speak of the Truquois stone in a ring, I will break into twenty pieces, before you have the least fall."¹²⁵ Continuing his fawning, Bacon found himself "infinitely bounden to you for your great favours," so much so that "now I have no great ambition than this... so I mought be found your best servant."¹²⁶ Bacon, like many others, knew exactly what to say to gain Buckingham's favor to aid his personal advancement. A patronage relationship was a wise decision by those who decided to enter into one, especially as Buckingham was known for fighting for his clients. By consolidating his power base through his control over the Bedchamber, he could not fail, especially with James's unwavering trust in him.¹²⁷ Buckingham's iron grasp on the court, in particular on the Bedchamber members, allowed for the advancement of many as he proceeded to pack the court with his relatives and clients.

For courtiers who were unwilling to enter a patronage relationship with Buckingham, they were not able to avoid his power altogether as they eventually had to defer to him later in some form. The prime example of this is with the appointment of Henry Yelverton to Attorney-General, who was not Buckingham's candidate, in 1617. Even though, Yelverton was still appointed to the position, due to James's preference for him, he had to acknowledge his dependence on Buckingham afterwards by giving him the warrant of appointment for James's signature. Buckingham declared that had Yelverton gone through him first, he would not have opposed the appointment. By not doing so, he caused people to think that Buckingham's favor was waning "and he not thought to be of the power he had been."¹²⁸ Luckily for Yelverton, he

¹²⁵ Spedding, vol. V, p. 245.

¹²⁶ Ibid., vol. V, p. 260.

¹²⁷ Cuddy, p. 218.

¹²⁸ Lockyer, p. 41; Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England* p. 52; Cuddy, p. 219.

was not dismissed from the court entirely like Arthur Brett, who Buckingham had removed from his attendance in the Bedchamber and his place as Groom of the Bedchamber in 1622 and 1623.¹²⁹ Each fall of a politician involved the unsuccessful attempt to unseat Buckingham, which only left him stronger. Lionel Cranfield, Lord Treasurer, was another victim of Buckingham's dissatisfaction. While he was initially supported by the favorite, his decision to oppose the war with Spain left him vulnerable to Buckingham's wrath. While James agreed with Cranfield, his favorite had spoken and Cranfield was removed from his position, which was not filled until Buckingham returned to court.¹³⁰ Even when absent from the court, Buckingham was still successful at controlling the king and thus the court as a whole. While Buckingham's patronage system was a means of security for himself as favorite, it was also a means to financial gain.

Typical sixteenth century practice did not require the exchange of money for favor; however, this monetary patronage system became systematized under Buckingham.¹³¹ For Buckingham to take on a client, one would have to recognize him as the sole patron in order to obtain financial gain and ensure dependence.¹³² The Crown's sale of titles began in 1611 with the introduction of a new gentry status, the baronetcy, and continued in 1615 with the sale of baronies. From 1615 to 1628, when these sales ended with the death of Buckingham, the king created 45 more peers and 38 more earls, reaching a new total of 126 in the peerage and 65 with earldom, twice the Tudor average.¹³³ The profit from the sale of these honors and offices went primarily to Buckingham, which by 1628 totaled more than a £200,000 profit.¹³⁴ In addition to

¹²⁹ Cuddy, p. 194.

¹³⁰ Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 52-3, 61, 64.

¹³¹ Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 26.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 10, 33; Pauline Croft, *King James*, p. 122.

¹³⁴ Peck, "Corruption at the Court of James I," p. 82.

the profit of these sales was his typical income from his personal offices, land, and pensions, which totaled approximately £18,000 in 1619.¹³⁵ His income provided him with a significant financial base; however, it was quickly depleted with his vast expenditures, which consisted of ostentatious displays of his power and wealth, such as masques, clothing, buildings, land, and various gifts to his clients.¹³⁶ By the end of his reign as favorite, Buckingham was able to keep his own architect and chaplain, support a ducal orchestra, create a pension for Orazio Gentileschi, a Florentine artist, produce various masques, and remodel York House, which most likely cost more than what Charles spent on the projects completed by Inigo Jones.¹³⁷ However, Buckingham's expenditures often outweighed his income, and this unbalanced bill was often picked up by England. As artist Paul Reubens noticed about the English court, "all the leading nobles live on a sumptuous scale and spend money lavishly, so that the majority of them are hopelessly in debt."¹³⁸ Being that Buckingham was admittedly indebted £100,000 to England by 1626, his misuse of finances only exacerbated England's existing economic troubles.¹³⁹

Regardless of his inability to manage finances, Buckingham was quickly gaining political power outside of the courtly realm, particularly in his later years as favorite. He became the acting Secretary for the king after the death of Winwood in 1617 and was more active at procuring the sign manual than any of the others.¹⁴⁰ Alongside his duties as Secretary, Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and Master of the Horse, Buckingham was also appointed Lord Admiral of the Navy in 1619. Even though he had a lack of experience with the navy, he was

¹³⁵ Lockyer, p. 61; Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 156

¹³⁶ His sale of offices and peerage were a few of the impeachment charges brought against Buckingham in 1626. See John Chamberlain's letters for an in depth look at Buckingham's expenses, in particular vol. II p. 127, 159, 173, 180-1, 210, 292, 396, 421.

¹³⁷ Smuts, p. 59.

¹³⁸ Quoted in Smuts, p. 55.

¹³⁹ Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 193.

¹⁴⁰ See McClure, vol. II, p. 113; Cuddy, p. 218.

not the first Lord Admiral with little sea time.¹⁴¹ His appointment was to implement reform as the navy had been crippled by corruption with its previous heads. Surprisingly, Buckingham was fairly successful in reducing this corruption as he led a commission with Lionel Cranfield and Sir John Coke.¹⁴² They managed to reduce the expenses from the initial £60,000 a year to £30,000 for four years with plans of building two new ships a year while repairing the old ones.¹⁴³ His first ship, Buckingham's Entrance, was beautifully decorated but was unseaworthy and had to be rebuilt. However, the second ship, Reformation, was seaworthy and served in the 1620s fleets against Spain and continued until the 1650s.¹⁴⁴ Buckingham also helped to fund his fleets by paying their expenses during the 1620s English war effort and with a £30,000 gift from James.¹⁴⁵ While cutting expenses, Buckingham also recommended and acquired promotions for subordinate officers who also were eager for reform. For the first five years of the reform commission, Buckingham was successful in reducing the corruption and aiding the navy; however, the still prevalent problems magnified with the outbreak of war in 1625 and the following attempts at reform failed. Most of the officers at this time had been trained during the period of peace and corruption in 1604 to 1618, thus when introduced to warfare, the situation reverted to its previous state.¹⁴⁶ Buckingham's most successful and positive change for Jacobean England was short-lived and overall unsuccessful.

The pinnacle of Buckingham's political career under James evolved in the 1620s with Spanish relations, in particular the situation of the Spanish match. Relations with Spain became an issue because of the tense situation between England and the Austrian Hapsburgs, the cousins

¹⁴¹ Lockyer, p. 50.

¹⁴² Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 106-7, 100.

¹⁴³ McClure, vol. II, p. 271.

¹⁴⁴ Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 106-7; McClure, vol. II, p. 271.

¹⁴⁵ Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 115, 156.

¹⁴⁶ Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, p. 126.

of the Spanish rulers. Supported by the Bohemian Protestants, James's son-in-law and daughter, Frederick and Elizabeth, invaded the Palatinate territories, accepted the Bohemian crown and became bitter enemies with the former archduke and current emperor, Ferdinand II. After initial ambivalence, Spain decided to offer its assistance to Ferdinand in 1618 against Frederick, and consequently began the Thirty Years War. James, as son-in-law to Frederick yet eternal peacemaker, was torn between the two sides, but attempted to stay uninvolved. Many of the English people encouraged James to assist Frederick, due to concerns about Elizabeth and royal succession, whereas James was convinced that a match between the Spanish and his son Charles would not only keep the peace between Spain and England, but could create a solution for Frederick. After calling the 1621 Parliament, his councilors seemed to be at a loss for an answer to this problem: how could one put pressure on the emperor yet keep peace with the Spanish? Finally, Sir George Goring proposed that they should petition James to declare war on Spain and the emperor to which the Lower House agreed with the inclusion of a clause that Charles should marry a Protestant. This solution only came about because Goring was a well-known client of Buckingham, and anyone who spoke for Buckingham was assumed to speak also for the king. However, this was not a solution that James desired or expected, and, due to the additional clause, he ordered Parliament to cease discussing mysteries of the state (i.e. the prince's marriage). The Lower House did not appreciate James's orders and appealed to their freedom of speech, which led James to dissolve Parliament in a fury. Consequently, Parliament was not only upset about James's views on Charles's marriage prospects but also at James's disregard for their positions.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷ See Pauline Croft, *King James*, chapter five for a more complete description of the war in Europe and the 1621 Parliament.

With the failure of Parliament and James to agree on an adequate solution to the Bohemian problem, James returned to the Spanish match as the best possibility. Charles was in agreement as he was convinced that he was madly in love with the Spanish Infanta and believed that Parliament was infringing on his royal rights to choose his own wife. With some possible encouragement by Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, Charles decided to travel to Spain in order to convince Philip IV of his desire to marry the Infanta. Yet Charles could not journey alone, so he and Buckingham decided to make the voyage together, traveling incognito as Thomas and John Smith in February 1623. Unfortunately for both James and Charles, the trip did not work as planned and their efforts at joining the two countries failed. The Spanish were not willing to send the Infanta unless the English put into place legal toleration for Catholics and the revocation of the recusancy laws,¹⁴⁸ which would not be passed by Parliament nor approved by the English people. Thus, Charles and Buckingham returned home in October 1623 without the Infanta, but to the celebration of the people, who clearly despised the idea of the Spanish match. James was now politically isolated, both by his people and by Buckingham and Charles as they returned convinced of the trickery of the Spanish and desiring for war.¹⁴⁹

Upon his return to England, Buckingham reached the height of political power as he had the favor of both James and Charles as well as the political authority from his trip to persuade Parliament and the king actively on matters with Spain. Prior to their trip, Charles and Buckingham were not amicable friends as Charles was often jealous of the relationship between James and Buckingham. In Buckingham's early years as favorite, Edward Sherburn wrote, "The King boxed the Prince's ears, for turning a water-spout on Sir Geo. Villiers in jest, in the garden

¹⁴⁸ These laws were enacted during the sixteenth century and deemed that English Roman Catholics who refused to attend services of the Church England were responsible for committing a statutory offense.

¹⁴⁹ See Croft for a more complete description of the Spanish match in chapter six.

at Greenwich.”¹⁵⁰ James spent the majority of his time with Buckingham, not Charles, which his son resented greatly. Buckingham was even given more political access than Charles as the favorite was allowed to participate in Parliament prior to the son. However, their friendship developed greatly with their trip to Spain, so much so that now Buckingham was guaranteed favor even after the death of James. Lennox commented in 1624, “it seems the duke of Buckingham engrosses the prince’s favour so far as to exclude all others both from the father and the son... he [Buckingham] stirs not from the king, but keeps close about him to cut off all access.”¹⁵¹ Francis Bacon also wrote to Buckingham about his security as favorite, saying, “wherein you are not so much to take comfort in that you may seem to have two lives in your own greatness, as in this, that you are hereby enabled to be a noble instrument for the service, contentment, and heart’s-ease both of father and son.”¹⁵² Now that Buckingham had captured the favor of both father and son, he had even greater political leverage in achieving his own political aims and was indispensable politically.

While both Buckingham and Charles desired war with Spain, James and his financial advisor, Cranfield, believed war to be a costly and ineffective solution. Even though most of England was anti-Buckingham prior to this period, his support of a cause that the people believed in restored their confidence in his power for a short period of time. Yet, James, supported by the Lord Treasurer, would not budge in his opinions; James was known for his ability to keep the peace and he would not give up this virtue. While Buckingham and Charles were unable to sway James’s opinion to declare war, Buckingham was able to destroy the Lord Treasurer for acting against his policies. Initially, Cranfield had been Buckingham’s star client as he achieved great power, aided in administrative reform, and obtained financial wealth for Buckingham; however,

¹⁵⁰ Quoted in Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers*, p. 155.

¹⁵¹ Quoted in Starkey, p. 223.

¹⁵² Bacon, vii, p. 448.

Cranfield's treasonous acts destroyed their relationship and led to his rapid downfall. Even though James supported Cranfield and his policies, his love of his favorite led to his quiet submission to the inevitable. After charging Cranfield with corruption and eventually impeaching him, Buckingham won his own personal battle and proved that he was still the most powerful man in politics.¹⁵³

Emotionally, Buckingham was a wonderful support for James; yet politically, he was a liability. For a man who seemed to be suffering from a lack of love, Buckingham was a godsend. Unlike Robert Carr, Buckingham loved James, not necessarily as deeply or intensely as James loved him, yet they were able to create a strong bond between them. For James, Buckingham was an emotional support as a friend, son, and lover. As the favorite, Buckingham was expected to help support and comfort James, though not necessarily in a sexual manner. Their sexual relationship was not as accepted as their emotional one, yet neither was denounced as a sodomite. Rather, the critiques of sex were alluding primarily to the corruption of power that resulted from their relationship. Thus, while their romantic relationship was not problematic as long as it was contained to the private sphere of life, it created problems as it emerged and conflicted with the public sphere in the area of politics. Because Buckingham was not simply James's lover but his favorite, he reaped the rewards of a showering of titles and a heaping of power. Consequently, Buckingham advanced from a lowly gentleman to a duke in a period of nine years and obtained positions such as Lord Admiral of the Navy. By the end of James's reign, Buckingham was at the forefront of all political decisions, along with Prince Charles. Yet, politically and diplomatically, Buckingham was not helpful as he drove the country into further financial hardship and an impractical war that England was unprepared to fight. Even his

¹⁵³ See Croft, p. 122-125 for more details on the fall of Cranfield.

greatest accomplishment, reforming the navy, was unsuccessful in the long run. Therefore, while Buckingham was officially the most influential courtier, due to James's love, his lack of experience in the political realm only dissatisfied Englishmen and promoted a more negative image of James. Yet, for James the emotional comfort was apparently preferred over political utility and support that Buckingham could not bring to the table.

Because of the profound effects that Buckingham had on James emotionally, one must examine their political relationship in light of its emotional origins. The political effects were merely an outgrowth of their emotional foundation and cannot be understood without this background. Had James not been attracted to Buckingham initially, Buckingham would not have been promoted to such a position of a power. Their relationship was composed of multi-faceted levels, each of which provides a new insight into the two characters. Consequently, with a new understanding of the political and relational realms working in conjunction, one can grasp fully both the political and personal sides of James and Buckingham and how these aspects played out in their daily lives. By looking solely at the political or solely at the emotional, the historian avoids seeing a more accurate picture of the past because political events never occur in an emotional vacuum, just as emotional relationships can have substantial consequences that affect political life. Thus, historians must shed themselves of the notion that the political and relational aspects of history are not intertwined and instead embrace the idea of cooperation between the two specializations in order to create a more balanced and telling view of the past.

Bibliography

- Akrigg, G. P. V. (ed.). *Letters of King James VI & I*. Berkley: University of California Press, 1984.
- Amussen, Susan Dwyer. *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988.
- Amussen, S.D. "Gender, Family and the Social Order, 1560-1725." Ed. Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson. *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Bergeron, David. *King James and Letters of Homoerotic Desire*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999.
- Bergeron, David. *Royal Family, Royal Lovers: King James of England and Scotland*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991.
- Bergeron, David M. "Writing King James's Sexuality." Ed. Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier. *Royal Subjects: Essays on the Writings of James VI and I*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002.
- Betteridge, Thomas. *Sodomy in Early Modern Europe*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002.
- Borris, Kenneth (ed.). *Same-Sex Desire in the English Renaissance: A Sourcebook of Texts, 1470-1650*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Braddick, Michael J. and Walter, John. "Introduction. Grids of power: order, hierarchy and subordination in early modern society." Ed. Michael J. Braddick and John Walter. *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy, and Subordination in Britain and Ireland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Bray, Alan. *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*. London: Gay Men's Press, 1982.
- Bredbeck, Gregory. *Sodomy and Interpretation: Marlowe to Milton*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991.
- Croft, Pauline. *King James*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Cuddy, Neil. "The revival of the entourage: the Bedchamber of James I, 1603-1625." Ed. David Starkey. *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*. Longman: New York, 1987.

- Fletcher, Anthony and Stevenson, John. "Introduction." Ed. Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson. *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction*. Robert Hurley (trans.). Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990.
- Goldberg, Jonathan. *Sodometrics: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992.
- Guy-Bray, Stephen. *Homoerotic Space*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.
- Lee, Maurice Jr. *Great Britain's Solomon: James VI and I in His Three Kingdoms*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990.
- Lockyer, Roger. *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham 1592-1628*. New York: Longman Inc., 1981.
- McClure, Norman Egbert (ed.). *The Letters of John Chamberlain*. Memoirs XII. Part I. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1939.
- Peck, Linda Levy. "Corruption at the Court of James I: The Undermining of Legitimacy." Ed. Barbara C. Malament. *After the Reformation: Essays in Honor of J.H. Hexter*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980.
- Peck, Linda Levy. *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Peck, Linda Levy (ed.). *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Perry, Curtis. "1603 and the Discourse of Favouritism." Ed. Glenn Burgess, Rowland Wymer, and Jason Lawrence. *The Accession of James I: Historical and Cultural Consequences*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Sharpe, Kevin and Lake, Peter (ed.). *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.
- Skinner, Quentin. *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Volume One: The Renaissance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- Smith, Bruce. *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- Smith, Logan Pearsall (ed.). *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1907.

- Smuts, R. Malcolm. *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987.
- Sommerville, Johann (ed.). *King James VI and I: Political Writings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Spedding, James (ed.). *The Letters and Life of Francis Bacon Including All His Occasional Works Namely Letters Speeches Tracts State Papers Memorials Devices and All Authentic Writings Not Already Printed Among His Philosophical Literary or Professional Works Newly Collected and Set Forth in Chronological Order with a Commentary Biographical and Historical*. London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1874.
- Stewart, Alan. *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Summers, Claude. *Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment England*. New York: Harrington Park Press, 1992.
- Thomas, Keith. *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500-1800*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984.
- Traub, Valerie. *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Villiers, George. *Letters of the Duke and Duchess of Buckingham Chiefly Addressed to King James I of England*. Edinburgh: Thomas G. Stevenson, 1834.
- Wrightson, Keith. *English Society 1580-1680*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1982.
- Wrightson, Keith. "The Social Order of Early Modern England: Three Approaches." Ed. Lloyd Bonfield, Richard M. Smith and Keith Wrightson. *The World We Have Gained: Histories of Population and Social Structure*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.
- Young, Michael B. *James VI and I and the History of Homosexuality*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 2000.

