Names and Naming Patterns in England 1538–1700
Scott Smith-Bannister

This book contains the results of the first large-scale quantitative investigation of naming practices in early modern England. It traces the history of the fundamentally significant human act of naming one's children during a period of great economic, social, and religious upheaval. Using in part the huge pool of names accumulated by the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, the book sets out to show which names were most commonly used, how children came to be given these names, why they were named after godparents, parents, siblings, or saints, and how social status affected naming patterns. The chief historical significance of this research lies in the discovery of a substantial shift in naming practices in this period: away from medieval patterns of naming a child after a godparent and towards naming them after a parent. In establishing the chronology of how parents came to exercise greater choice in naming their children and over the nature of naming practices, it successfully supersedes previous scholarship on this subject. Resolutely statistical and rich in anecdote, this exploration of this deeply revealing subject will have far-reaching implications for the history of the English family and culture.

Pastoral Care from Cradle to Grave
Amy Nelson Burnett

The pastor’s pedagogical role dominated in all aspects of Reformed pastoral care: administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, visiting the sick, and preaching at funerals. Basel retained
certain medieval practices, such as the acceptance of godparents and sickbed visitation with communion, although it modified them in accordance with evangelical doctrine. Other practices, such as emergency baptism by midwives, were gradually eliminated as Basel moved into greater conformity with other Reformed churches. Basel’s pastors shared the responsibility for church discipline with lay officials. Although complaints about individual parishioners persist, visitation reports from the early 17th century give a positive picture of religious belief and practice in Basel’s rural parishes and the development of a Reformed religious culture.

Some Conclusions
Scott Smith-Bannister

This concluding chapter offers a fundamental reinterpretation of the subject of names and naming patterns in England from 1538 to 1700. This conclusion is divided into two parts, a subdivision that both reflects the influence of name-sharing practices and highlights the fundamental differences between the current study and previous work on names and naming. To explain further: this work has found that changes in the names given to children, in the patterning of the distribution of those names, in the sources of children's names in this period, and several other aspects of the history of names occurred as a direct consequence of changes in the incidence of name-sharing between children and either their godparents or their parents. At the end of the period, England may have witnessed one of the more significant events in the history of names and naming patterns. As the proportion of children named after someone else declined a possibility emerged: the possibility that the significance of English personal names was beginning to change.

Single But Not Alone: The Family History of Never-Married Women
Amy M. Froide

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This chapter re-examines the early modern family through the prism of the singlewoman. Rather than lonely, bereft individuals, singlewomen appear (especially in their wills and letters) to have formed significant relationships with relatives and friends. Never-married women were overwhelmingly women-identified, with sisters, mothers, and nieces being the most important individuals in their lives. Singlewomen performed important roles as aunts and sisters, both during their lives and posthumously through their legacies.

Kinship with the Martyrs

Vasiliki M. Limberis

in Architects of Piety: The Cappadocian Fathers and the Cult of the Martyrs

Published in print: 2011 Published Online: May 2011

This chapter addresses how the Cappadocians’ imbrication with their own families merges with their promotion of martyr piety. They use it to forge new relationships with the martyrs and to promote their own families. They were successful because a vibrant sacramental life for the laity was not yet the norm; every pious catechumen could participate in a panegyris for martyrs. They promote kinship with the martyrs as spiritual kinship, open to monastics and laity alike. Basil and Gregory of Nyssa even claimed three saints as relatives: Gregory Thaumaturgus, Thecla, and the Forty Martyrs. Hence, the prestige of their own family went beyond all social parameters. Finally, Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa inscribe their recently deceased kin into the ranks of the martyrs. The Cappadocians succeed in bypassing the need for procreation, since through martyr piety their family’s honor is forever.

Introduction

Scott Smith-Bannister

in Names and Naming Patterns in England 1538–1700

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The naming of children is a common human act of fundamental significance. Its study, in a historical context, has been much neglected, and its importance seldom realized. This book seeks to redress this imbalance. A full, definitive examination of a topic as large as the study
of personal names and naming in England between 1538 and 1700 would involve a lifetime's work: this book has necessarily been based on a series of samples and is a largely quantitative investigation. It begins with an introduction to the subject of naming that surveys the historical literature on this topic. It also discusses contemporary attitudes to names and the function of personal names in the period 1538 to 1700. It examines the relationship between names, naming patterns, parents, siblings, saints, and godparents in England during the period. It shows which names were most commonly used, how these names came to be given to children, and how naming patterns were influenced by social status.

Names, Naming Patterns, and Godparents
Scott Smith-Bannister

in Names and Naming Patterns in England 1538–1700

This chapter is based entirely upon evidence from those parish registers in which detailed mention is made of a child's godparents. It offers an examination of the relationship between names, naming patterns, and godparents in England between 1538 and 1700. In an effort to provide the quantitative evidence with some semblance of context, it draws upon evidence from contemporary diaries and letter-books. The deliberate use of personal names to create or reinforce social ties identifies those relationships that parents think important. Understanding the role of godparenthood is thus essential if we are to understand the history of the family. It is important to note that whilst naming and godparenthood tell us much about family life, these two elements were not always connected. Even at the end of the period, the proportion of children named after a godparent was greater than that named after a parent. Any changes in the names chosen can be related to the prevalence of these two forms of name-sharing practice.

The People with the Children
David Cressy

in Birth, Marriage, and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England
This chapter examines the people involved in the baptism ceremony in Stuart England. The godparents were the principal participants in baptism. The father was responsible for arranging the baptism but he was not allowed to participate in the ceremony. The mother had no part to play in the baptism and she just stayed at home waiting for the customary month before going back to church. This chapter considers the social and communal aspects of baptism, and the festive activity of christening feasts.

The Ministry of Pastoral Care
Scott M. Manetsch

in Calvin's Company of Pastors: Pastoral Care and the Emerging Reformed Church, 1536-1609

Chapter 9 explores the manner in which Geneva’s reformed ministers provided intensive, personal, pastoral care for their parishioners between 1536 and 1609. Calvin and his pastoral colleagues believed that the ministry of the Word required not only the public exposition of Scripture, but also the declaration and application of God’s Word to individual men and women, boys and girls, through the sacraments, corrective discipline, catechetical instruction, household visitations, and spiritual counsel and consolation. This chapter examines some of the most important elements of pastoral care in reformed Geneva, noting the ways in which the ministers maintained, developed, and sometimes deviated from Calvin’s pastoral vision.

Shtetls, Taverns, and Baptisms
Ellie R. Schainker

in Confessions of the Shtetl: Converts from Judaism in Imperial Russia, 1817-1906

Chapter 3 explores the social dynamics of religious toleration and the confessional state from below by examining the spaces of Jewish conversion. The chapter presents a range of conversion narratives.
which locate interfaith encounters at the local tavern as the springboard for migrating to a different confessional community. It analyzes daily social interactions among Jewish and neighboring Polish, Lithuanian, Belorussian, and Ukrainian communities, and how these encounters nurtured intimate knowledge of other confessional lifestyles, facilitated interfaith relationships, and provided access to the personnel and institutions of other faiths. By taking a geographical approach, the chapter presents the western provincial towns and villages of imperial Russia as interreligious zones wherein conversion was predicated on interconfessional networks, sociability, and a personal familiarity with Christianity via its adherents. In exploring forms of encounter, the chapter highlights the role of the local godparent—often local elites or civil/military personnel—in facilitating confessional transfers.