

Major Research Paper Presentation

Student: Paige Walker	Date: Wed., May 4, 2016
Time: 11:00 am	Place: MCKN Ext. 2020

<b>Title:</b>	“Faith much Beyond her Sexe”: Lady Eleanor Livingstone and Catholic Survival in post-Reformation Scotland
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<b>Abstract:</b>
<p>“Malicious papist,” Lady Eleanor Livingstone, made a deathbed conversion to Protestantism in 1627. Decades of prior conflict with the Scottish Kirk and her position in the aristocracy made Livingstone’s conversion document a valuable piece of propaganda for the reformers. Livingstone’s interactions with the Scottish ecclesiastical courts, as outlined in the Stirling Presbytery Records, and her conversion testimony shed light on women’s religious experiences in post-Reformation Scotland. Through outright avoidance, exploitation of her position in the royal court, and her manipulation of patriarchal structures and the values of the Kirk to her advantage, Livingstone was able to forestall excommunication until nearly four decades after the Reformation Parliament. Her recusant activities were facilitated by her gender and her class, which permits a gendered investigation into the ways she negotiated her conflicts with the Kirk and the response of the religious institution to such tactics. Her conversion testimony was appropriated by the Kirk to provide an archetypal model of female piety, which further articulates the importance of gender in expressions of faith. Her experiences are demonstrative not only of Livingstone’s own piety, but also the expectations of the reformed institution. Women were active participants in the religious culture of post-Reformation era Scotland and this case study will contextualize Livingstone’s experiences in the broader historiographical discussion of female contributions to the maintenance of Catholicism and women’s roles in reformed Scottish religion.</p>

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