

Abstract: Quakers, Protestants, and the Narrative of English Religious Persecution

This project combines early modern and Reformation-era primary source material in order to form a comparative analysis of the portrayals of religious persecution in England. For this analysis, the rhetoric employed by both Protestants and the female Quakers is examined. The aim of this research is to determine how female Quakers modeled their narratives of adversity after the Protestant tome, *Acts and Monuments*. The project incorporates material from EEBO (Early English Books Online), journal articles containing overviews of the relevant historiography, and excerpts of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* in order to determine how the Protestants and female Quakers' stories of persecution aligned. This presentation maintains that the persecutions of female Quakers paralleled with the Reformation-era Protestants' trials in seven primary ways: Both groups were subject to societal condemnation for preaching, insisted on charitable acts despite persecution, strategically bolstered their public image, emphasized "plainness," endured condescending remarks from the larger community, held a high regard for religious suffering, and emphasized garnering audience sympathy. Ultimately, the research demonstrates that although *Acts and Monuments* served as a significant source for female Quakers to draw inspiration from, there are a host of additional factors that also determined how female Quakers portrayed their religious trials.