Print Explosion

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An Explosion of Ideas 'Papers flew up and Down in every Place' ...so wrote Captain John Hodson in his Civil War diary

Print Power

Print was a powerful new weapon. Each side raced to tell their story first.

Feeding readers

More people could read than ever before and they were hungry for news.

Peacetime Print

After the war, Cromwell and Charles II cheered their own victories and condemned their enemies in print

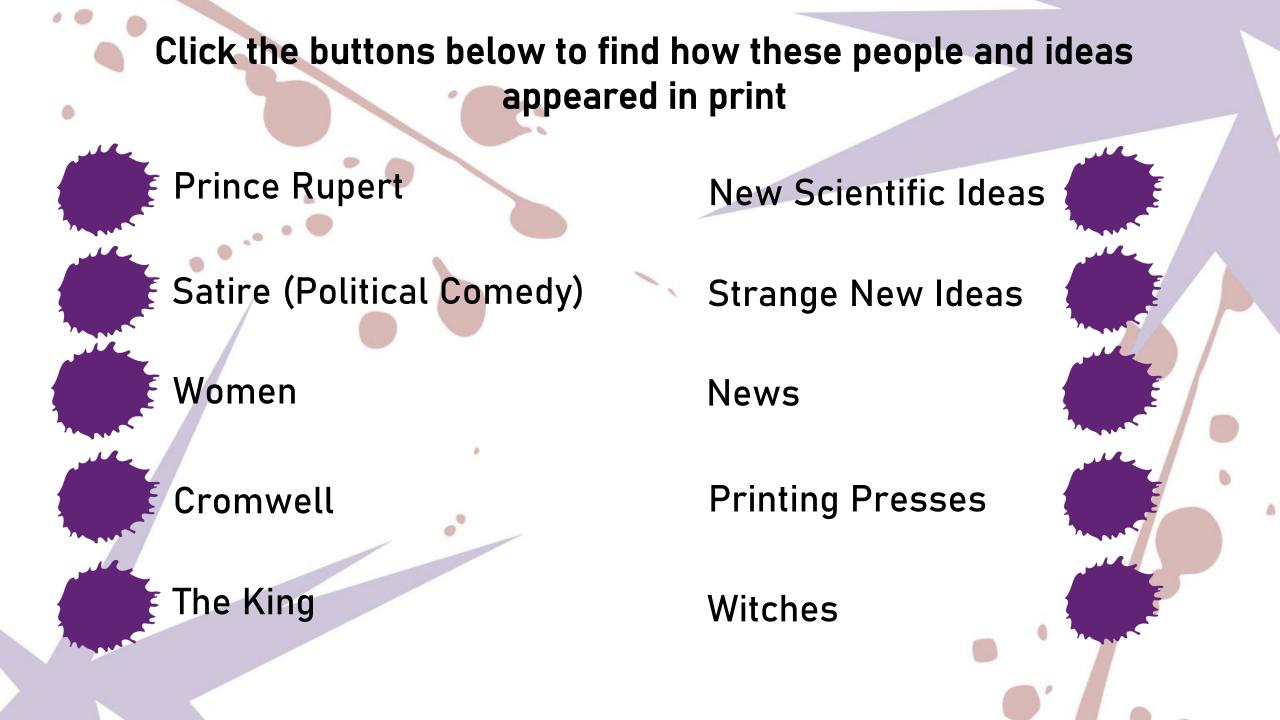
Newspapers, stories, ballads, almanacs, satires, shocking ideas and wonderful scientific discoveries all **exploded** into print.

Our 'Print Explosion' captures just of few of them.

Search by theme

Click one of these buttons to find out more

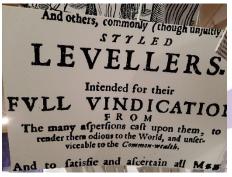
Search by image

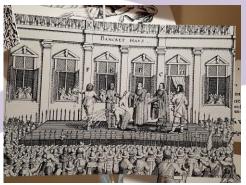


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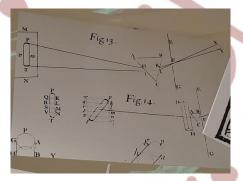






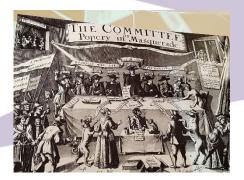


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HUMEROUS

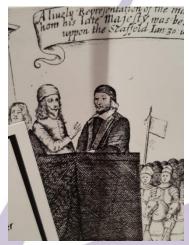
TRICKS AND CONCEITS OF Prince Roberts Malignant She-Monkey, discovered to the world before her marriage.

Also the manner of her marriage to a Cavaleer and how within three dayes space, she called him Cuckold to his face.



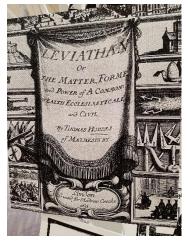






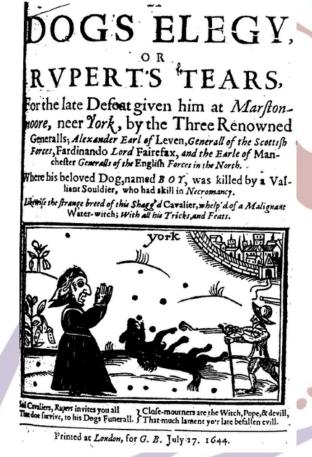


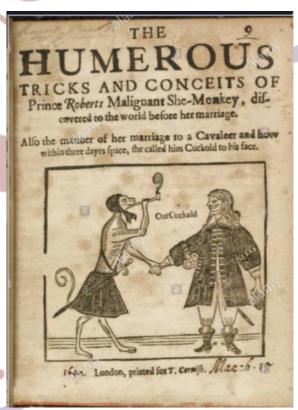


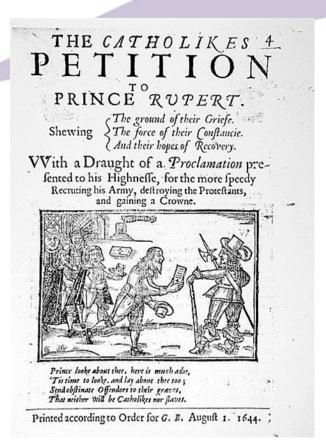












Prince Rupert

The King's nephew and a dashing cavalry commander, Rupert was a popular subject for satire. Click on an image to find out more.

DOGS ELEGY, RVPERTS TEARS.

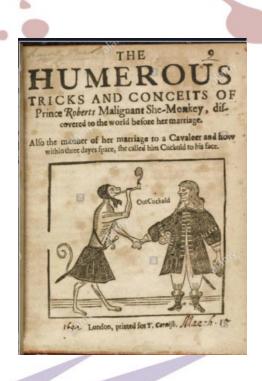
For the late Defoat given him at Marstonnoore, neer York, by the Three Renowned Generalls; Alexander Earl of Leven, Generall of the Scottish Forces, Fardinando Lord Fairefax, and the Earle of Man-chefter Generalls of the English Forces in the North.

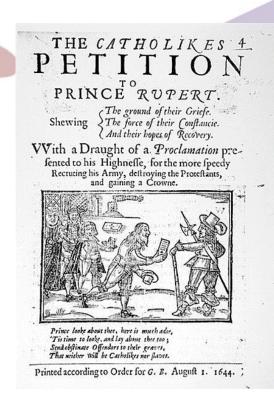
Where his beloved Dog, named B o T, was killed by a Valliant Souldier, who had skill in Necromancy.

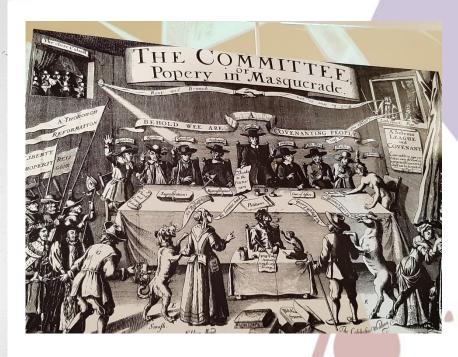
likewife the strange breed of this Shapp'd Cavalier, whelp'd of a Malignant Water-witch; With all his Tricks, and Feats,



Printed at London, for G. B. July 27. 1644.

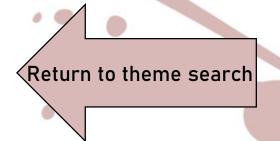




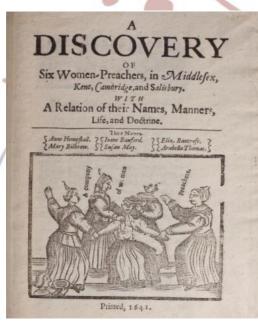


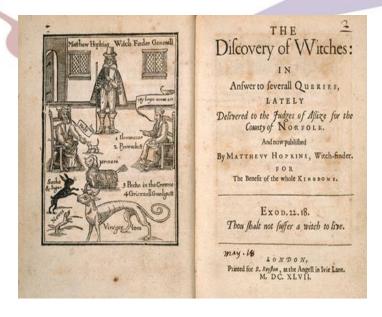
Satire

Current affairs comedy with a political message. Click an image above to find out more.











Attitudes to Women

Click on one of the images above to find out more.

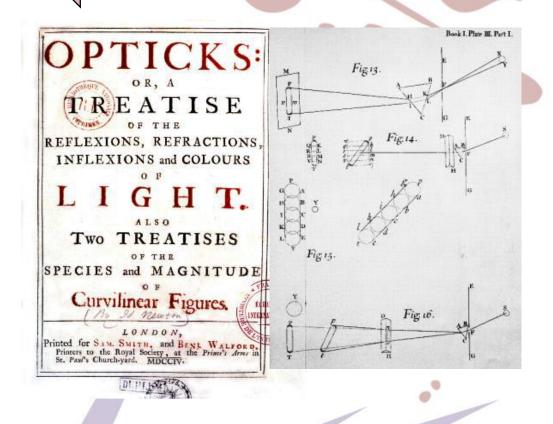


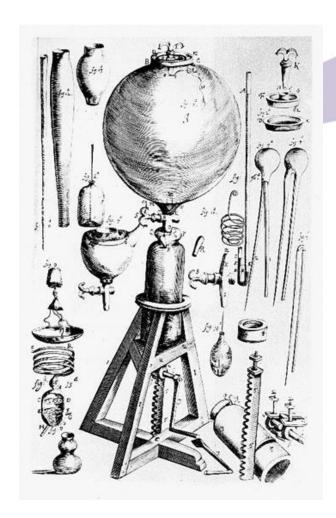


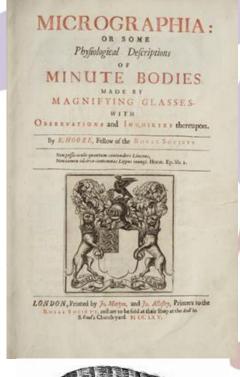


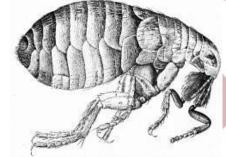
Cromwell

Military hero or agent of the devil? Click an image above to find out more about Cromwell in print.





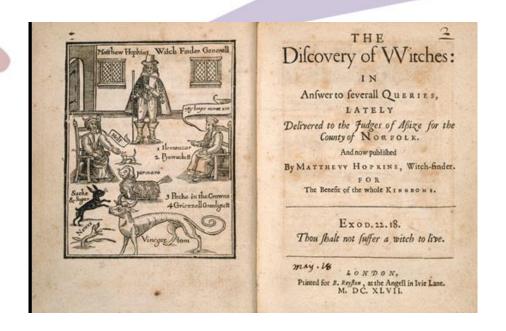




New Scientific Ideas

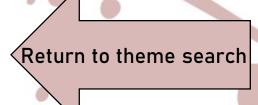
Microscopes, machinery and maths: Click on an image above to find out more.





Witches!

Click on an image above to find out more.









The King Is Dead

Martyr or Tyrant? Click an image above to find out how Charles' death appeared in print.

The Ranters Ranting

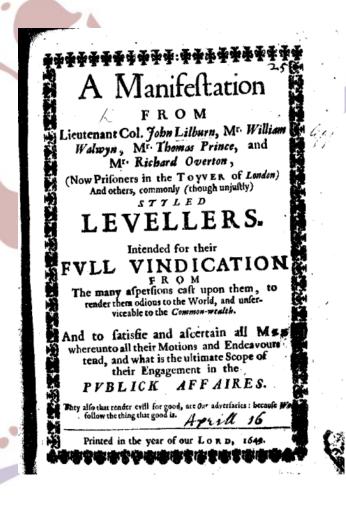
WITH

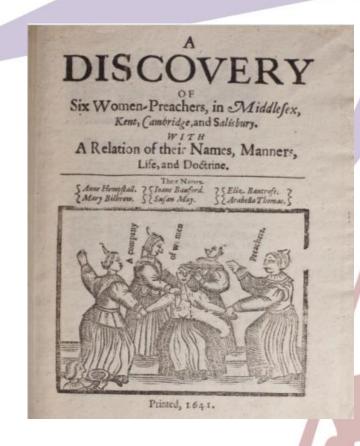
The apprehending, examinations, and confession of John Colling.

1. Shakespear, Tho. Wiberton, and five more which are to and are the next Sessions. And severall songs or catches, which werefung at their meetings. Also their several kinds of mitth, and cancing. Their blatphemous opinions. Their belief concerning heaven and hell. And the reason why one of the same opinion cut off the heads of his own mother and brother. Set forth for the surther discovery of this ungodly crew.



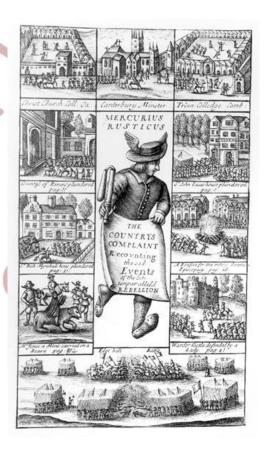
Destable LONDOR Printed by B. Allop, 1650

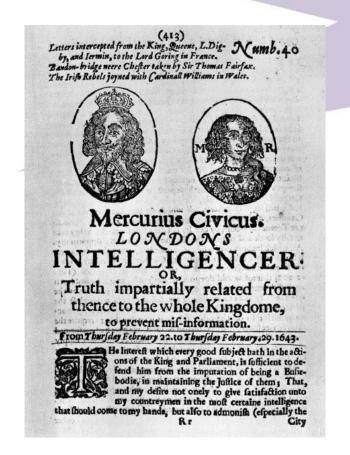




Strange New Ideas

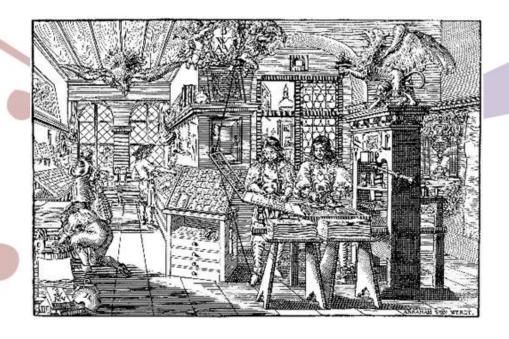
Ranters, Levellers and women! Click on the images above to find out more.





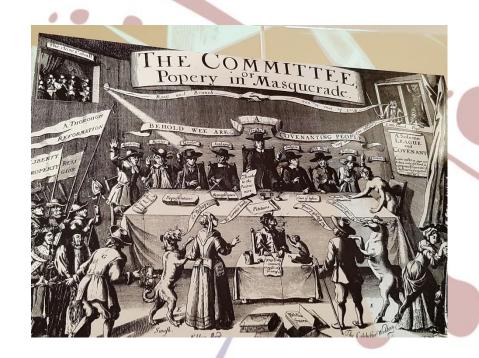
Read All About It

Find out more about these examples of news by clicking on the images above.



How did print happen?

Click on the image above to find out more.



The Committee; or Popery in Masquerade 1680

A satire against non-conformists

In the centre is a table, around which sit a committee of men representing Protestant sects (from left to right: A Muggletonian, a Ranter, a Quaker, an Anabaptist, a Presbyterian an Independent, a Fifth Monarchist, [James] Nailor and a naked Adamite) the table is strewn with a number of papers on which are written for instance "Petitions", "Court of Justice" and "Humiliation".

Petitioners, address the committee: on the left, a woman is saying "No Service Book".

A poorly dressed man, holding the royal crown, leads Viscount Stafford and Archbishop Laud in chains.

On the ground lie a sceptre, an orb and a bust of Charles I.





The Needles Excellency: A New Booke Wherein are Divers Admirable Workes Wrought with the Needle John Taylor 1631 John Taylor, 'The Water Poet,' wrote in the preface of this popular needlework pattern book..

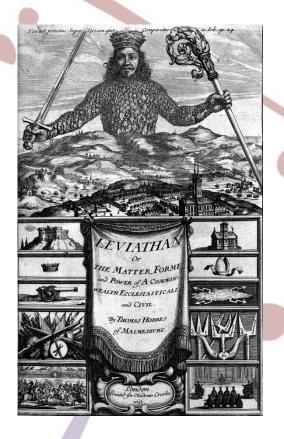
..for my countries quiet, I should like.
That woman-kinde shoulde use no other pike,
It will increase their peace, enlarge their store,
To use their tonges less, and their needles more.
The Needles sharpness, profit yields, and pleasure
But sharpness of tongue, bites out of measure.

He approved of needlework because it kept women quiet and still.

Taylor published other pamphlets that commented on women's behaviour, calling them names like 'Scold Rampant' and 'Tabitha Turbulent'. The pamphlet 'The Woman's Sharp Revenge' struck back, calling him not a water poet but a 'Puddle Duck'.



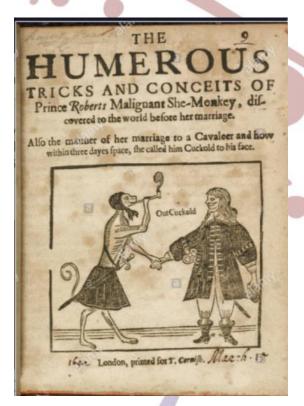




Written during the British Civil Wars, Leviathan argues that chaos can only be avoided by the strong rule of an absolute sovereign. A social contract is made between the people and their King. The people agree to give their some of their freedoms in exchange for protection and the maintenance of the social order.

Leviathan or The Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil, Thomas Hobbes 1651





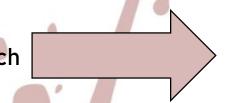
The Humerous Tricks and Conceits of Prince Roberts Malignant She-Monkey 1642 This pamphlet is one of several that made fun of the King's nephew, Prince Rupert of the Rhine.

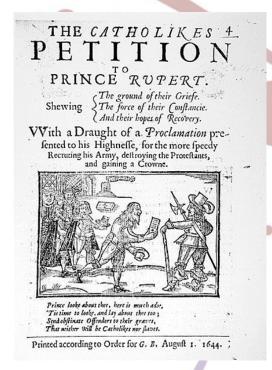
Publicly ridiculing royalty would have been unthinkable before the Civil War.

The pamphlet is doubly insulting. Not only is Rupert marrying a monkey, she is unfaithful to him! A man was expected to be in control of his wife in the seventeenth century and 'cuckold' (a word for a man whose wife was unfaithful) was a shameful term of abuse.





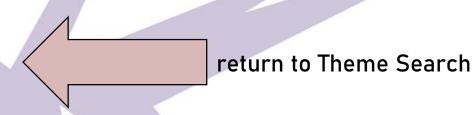




The Catholikes petition to Prince Rupert. Shewing the ground of their griefe. The force of their constancie. And their hopes of recovery.

This Parliamentarian pamphlet accuses the Royalists of Catholic sympathies and the theft of precious resources.

The pamphlet pretends to be a letter from the Catholics to Prince Rupert. They encourage the prince to recruit Protestants. In this way, Protestants will all be killed whilst Catholics stay safe. They offer the prince a suggested proclamation in which the Prince allows his soldiers to have the best lodging and food the country can afford without paying one penny".



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The Parliament of women 1640

This pamphlet makes fun of Parliament. It appeared in the year that Parliament was recalled after 11 years of Charles I's personal rule.

The pamphlet pretends that there is a Parliament of women who want to have "superiority and domineer over their husbands," an idea that was considered both ridiculous and dangerous at this time.

The women want legal and sexual freedom. The 'Parliament' descends into chaos and most of the women stop listening to each other and leave before the end.





A Brief Chronology of the Most Remarkable Passages and Transactions which occurred since his late Renowned Highness, Oliver Lord Protector was invested with the government of the Commonwealth London 1658 This is a Parliamentarian publication celebrating Cromwell's achievements.







The Devil's Cabinet- Councell
Discovered Or The Mistery and iniquity
of the good old cause. Laying open all
the plots and contrivances of O.
Cromwell and the Long Parliament in
order to the taking away the life of his
late Sacred Majesty of blessed
memory 1660

After the Civil War, Oliver Cromwell was declared Lord Protector 1653.

This book was written in the year of the Restoration, when Charles II ordered that Cromwell should be executed after his death. His body was dug up and hung. In this picture he is presented as the devil with horns.

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The Royal Oake of Brittayne (1649)

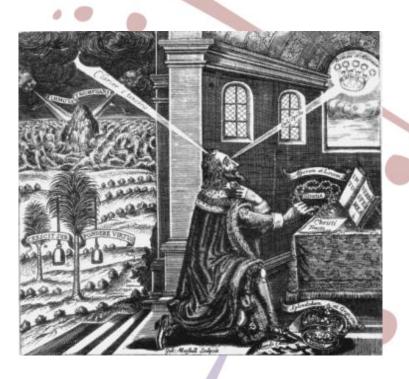
This was the front page of a book called 'Anarchia Anglicana' or 'The History of Independency, It was published in the year of the King's execution. The author of this book, Clement Walker, was arrested and charged with treason. He died in the Tower of London.

Walker was a Parliamentarian during the war but afterwards he felt Cromwell had led Britain into chaos. In this image Cromwell is chopping down the Royal Oak of Britain, a symbol of the monarchy. In the branches of the tree are the royal crown the Bible, Magna Carta and the Eikon Basilike (which you can see in this gallery) Cromwell is standing on a 'slippery place' suspended over hell.

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Eikon Basilike (The Royal Icon) 1649 The is the front page of a very successful piece of Royalist propaganda. The book claimed to be written by Charles I himself and presented Charles as a martyr, like Jesus.

In this image, Charles is leaving behind his heavy earthly crown and looking towards a heavenly one. 'Clariro tenebris' means 'brighter through darkness'. 'Crescit sub pondere virtus' means 'virtue grows beneath weights'.

The book was so successful that it was reprinted many times, even during the Interregnum when Oliver Cromwell was Lord Protector.

The Parliamentarian poet John Milton published Eikonoclastes (The Icon-breaker) in order to justify the execution of the King.

There are copies of both of these books in this gallery





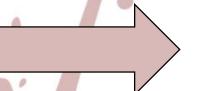
German engraving of the execution of Charles I 1649

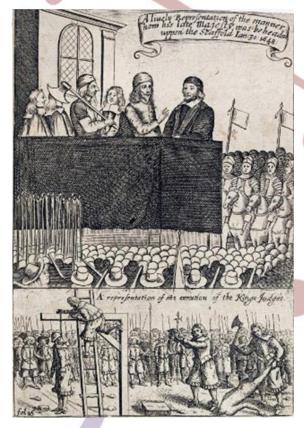
This was printed at the time of Charles I's execution. It is unlikely that the person who created this illustration actually witnessed this event. The executioner is shown wearing a hood. In fact, the executioner's identity was hidden with a crude mask and wig.

The executioner is holding up the severed head of Charles I, whose body is still bleeding. Amongst others, Francis Hacker is standing to the executioner's right. Hacker was part of a local family who fought against his brothers in the Civil War. An eye witness reported that the crowd gasped when the king's head was severed. Another said that the King's head was dropped into the crowd and people dipped their handkerchiefs in the King's blood.

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1660-99 A lively Representation of the manner how his late Majesty was beheaded upon the Scaffold Jan 30: 1648 (1649)

This is a restoration print of Charles I making a speech on the scaffold before his execution.

After the Restoration, Charles I was presented as a martyr. The panel below shows the brutal execution of Charles' killers.

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DOGS ELEGY, RVPERT'S TEARS.

For the late Defoat given him at Marstonnoore, neer York, by the Three Renowned Generalls, Alexander Earl of Leven, Generall of the Scottish Forces, Fardinando Lord Fairefax, and the Earle of Manchester Generalls of the English Forces in the North.

Where his beloved Dog, named BOT, was killed by a Valliant Souldier, who had skill in Necromany,

Unvile the strange breed of this Shage d Cavalier, whelp do f a Malignant Water-witch; With all his Tricks and Feats.



A Dog's Elegy or Rupert's Tears (1644) This Parliamentarian pamphlet tells the story of the death of Rupert's famous and beloved dog, Boye, at the battle of Marston Moor. Boye is lying dead surrounded by bullets. Beside him is a witch who mourns his death. The pamphlet mocks Rupert by describing his grief;

"How sad that son of blood did look to hear One tell the death of this shaggy cavalier, He raved, he tore his wig and swore Against the Roundheads that he'ed ne'er fight more'

Parliamentarian pamphlets suggested that Boye was a witch's familiar or a witch in disguise. Royalist pamphlets made fun of the Roundhead's superstitions by claiming Boye could find treasure, become invisible and catch bullets in his teeth.



The Ranters Ranting

WITH

The apprehending, examinations, and confession of John Colling, I. Shakespear, Tho. Wiberton, and five more which are to answer the next Sessions. And severall songs or catches, which werefung at their meetings. Also their feveral kinds of taltah, and cancing. Their blatphemous opinions. Their belief concerning heaven and hell. And the reason why one of the same opinion cut off the heads of his own mother and brother. Set forth for the surther discovery of this ungodly crew.



Destable LONDOR Printed by B. Allop, 1657

The Ranters Ranting (1650)

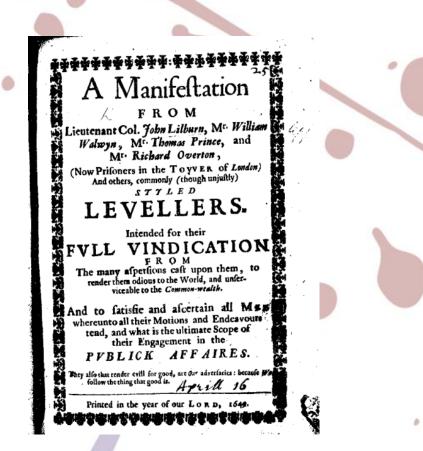
'Ranters' was the name applied to preachers like Abiezer Copp, who emerged after the civil war.

They believed that God was in everything and that sin did not exist.

They rejected organised religion and their, drinking, swearing and free love caused a moral panic.

This pamphlet describes the shocking behaviour of this 'mad' and 'ungodly crew'





'A Manifestation from ..John Lilburn ..and others, commonly though unjustly styled Levellers', 1649

John Lilburne was imprisoned by the King and by Cromwell as a dangerous troublemaker with radical views. Because he and others argued for democracy and male equality, they were nicknamed the 'Levellers'.

Lilburne fought for Parliament but turned against the Republic after the war.

He wrote this when in he was in prison in the Tower of London in 1649. He defends 'The Levellers' against criticism. He says that the new government is wasting an opportunity for real change. He hopes 'the blood which has been shed be not spilt like water upon the ground'







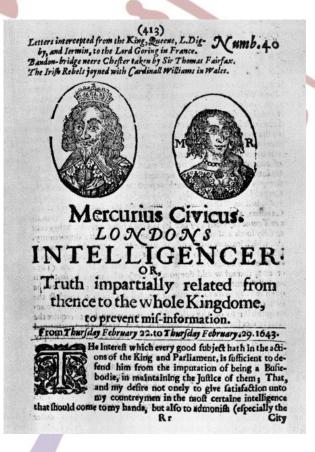
Mercurius Rusticus, or 'The countries complaint of the barbarous outrages committed by the sectaries of this late flourishing kingdom' (1643)

This Royalist pamphlet is part of a series that was printed between June and December 1643 and later reprinted together.

It describes the atrocities committed by Parliamentarian soldiers such as the vandalism of churches.





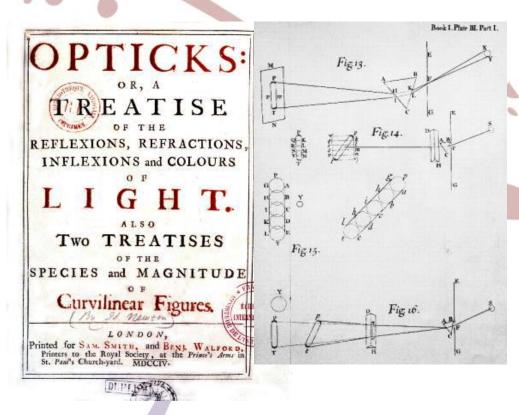


The London 'City Mercury' was a Parliamentarian newspaper.

Both sides in the civil war spread fake news using newsbooks and pamphlets.

Mercurius Civicus





Optics, a study of the nature of light (1704)

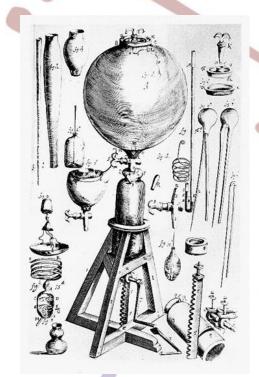
Sir Isaac Newton was a scientist whose study of mathematics, physics and astronomy changed the way we understand the universe. He discovered the laws of gravity and motion and invented Calculus. His famous 'Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy' was printed in 1687.

In his book 'Opticks' he showed that white light was made up of a range of colours.

As well as being a scientist, Newton was Warden and Master of the Mint, President of the Royal Society and an MP.

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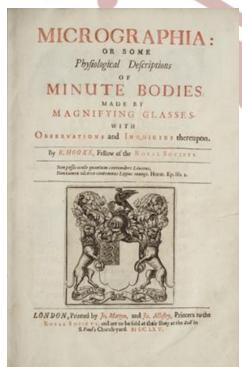
The Works of the Honourable Robert Boyle (1744)

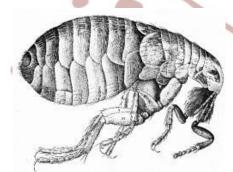
Robert Boyle was a scientist and inventor. He is most famous for 'Boyle's Law' which says the pressure of air is in inverse proportion to its volume.

This is a picture of the air pump which helped him with his seventeenth century experiments.

He made a wish list of inventions which seemed like science fiction at the time. His list included longer life, flying, light that stayed on all the time, ships that sailed without the wind and pain relief.







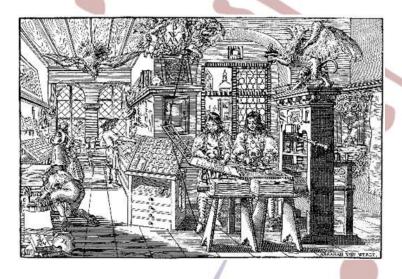
Robert Hooke Micrographia (1665)

This was the first publication of the Royal Society, set up after the Restoration to improve knowledge.

This book amazed its readers with pictures of what could be seen with a microscope.

The book included large fold out pictures of insects like a louse and a flea.





Druckerwerkstatt (Printer's workshop) engraved by Abraham Von Verdt (c1650)

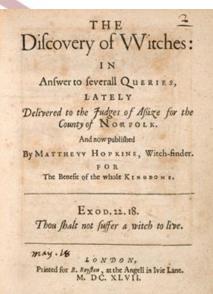
This picture shows how books and pamphlets were printed.

We can see a Typesetter, a Warehouseman dampening sheets of paper and two Pressmen; the Beater inking the type and the Puller removing the printed sheet from the press. On the left hand side is a Proof Reader. The hourglass on one of the shelves of the press showed when it was time for the Beater and the Puller to change jobs.

The room is quite elaborate. It is decorated with a griffin, cherubs holding up Von Werdt's initials and an eagle on the ceiling.







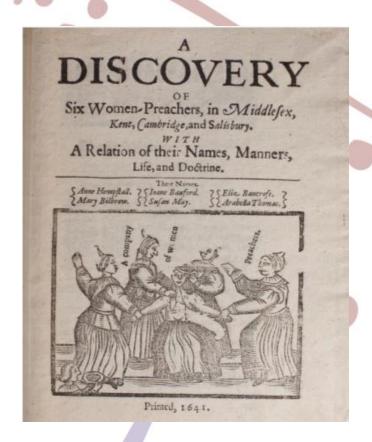
The Discovery of Witches Matthew Hopkins 1647

Matthew Hopkins, the 'Witchfinder General', had around 300 women hung in East Anglia in 1645 and 1646.

In this book Hopkins explained how he recognised witches, for instance by the extra teats on their bodies.

He also defended himself against criticisms of his cruel methods.





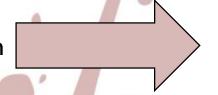
A Discovery of Six Women Preachers (1641)

The writer of this pamphlet describes six women preachers from Middlesex, Kent, Cambridgeshire and Salisbury. He hopes there are no more! He is disapproving of the idea that women 'take their minister's office from them'.

He suggests that their university is at Bedlam (an asylum) or Bridewell (a prison famous for housing sex workers)

The illustration on the front has been reused from another pamphlet, a common practice at this time. The illustration began as the front cover of a pamphlet recording disorderly women stripping and whipping a woman suspected of sleeping with another woman's husband.







The Kingdom's Monster Uncloaked from Heaven: The Popish Conspirators, Malignant Plotters, and cruel Irish, in one Body to destroy Kingdome, Religion and Lawes (1643) This is an illustration from a Royalist pamphlet written during the Civil War.

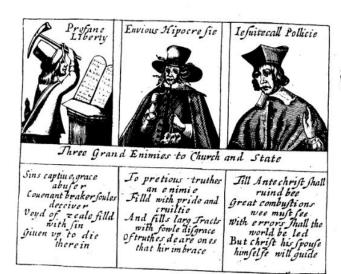
O England looke upon this monstrous Thing, That would our Kingdome unto ruine bring,

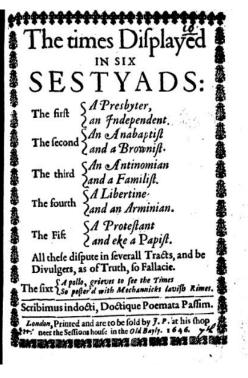
...

Long time it walked muffled in a cloak
Till Straffords head was cut off, then it broke
Out of the cloud, but Heavens holy hands
Hath now uncloak'd it, so that now it stands
In a full figure as this Picture here
Doth make it lively to your view appeare

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The illustration for this book of poetry shows three enemies of state.

Profane Liberty is breaking the ten commandments with an axe.

Envious Hypocrasy has a snake in one hand and three masks in another.

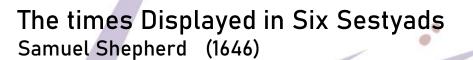
Jesuitical Policy is a priest in a Jesuit's cap and dress.

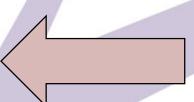
We hear the voices of different ideological groups . For instance, the Presbyter asks

Is not the throat of innovation cut?
Are not our enemies in penfolds shut?
Are not those courts that sacked the commons'
purses

Receiving oft their silver with their curses Abolished?

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1887

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