Between 1550 and 1750, London became the greatest city in Europe and one of the most vibrant economic and cultural centers in the world. This book is a history of London during this crucial period of its rise to worldwide prominence, during which it dominated the economic, political, social, and cultural life of the British Isles as never before nor since. London: A Social and Cultural History, 1550–1750 incorporates the best recent work in urban history, accounts by contemporary Londoners and tourists, and fictional works featuring the city to trace London’s rise and explore its role as a harbinger of modernity as well as how its citizens coped with those achievements. It covers the full range of life in London, from the splendid galleries of Whitehall to the damp and sooty alleyways of the East End. Along the way, readers will brave the dangers of plague and fire, witness the spectacles of the Lord Mayor’s Pageant and the hangings at Tyburn, and take refreshment in the city’s pleasure gardens, coffeehouses, and taverns.

Robert O. Bucholz is Professor of History at Loyola University in Chicago. He is the coauthor (with Newton Key) of Early-Modern England 1485–1714: A Narrative History (2nd ed., 2009) and Sources and Debates in English History 1485–1714 (2nd ed., 2009) and the coeditor (with Carol Levin) of Queens and Power in Medieval and Early Modern England (2009).

Joseph P. Ward is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of History at the University of Mississippi. He is the author of Metropolitan Communities: Trade Guilds, Identity, and Change in Early Modern London (1997) and is the editor or coeditor of several other scholarly books.
LONDON

A Social and Cultural History,
1550–1750

Robert O. Bucholz
Loyola University

Joseph P. Ward
University of Mississippi
To our students
**Contents**

*List of Illustrations and Maps*  
*iix*

*List of Abbreviations and Conventions*  
*xiii*

*Acknowledgments*  
*xv*

*Introduction: London’s Importance*  
1  
1. London in 1550  
   33  
2. The Socioeconomic Base  
   64  
3. Royal and Civic London  
   101  
4. Fine and Performed Arts  
   132  
5. The Public Sphere and Popular Culture  
   164  
6. The People on the Margins  
   219  
7. Riot and Rebellion  
   268  
8. Plague and Fire  
   309  

*Conclusion: London in 1750*  
332  

*Notes*  
369

*Further Reading*  
381

*Index*  
393
List of Illustrations and Maps

Illustrations and maps follow page xvi.

Illustrations

1.1 C. J. Visscher (1587–1652), panoramic view of London from the south bank, 1616, London Metropolitan Archives.


1.3 Robert West (d. 1770), northeast prospect of St. Olave, Hart Street, 1736, London Metropolitan Archives.

1.4 John Thomas Smith (1766–1833), The Old House, Grub Street, London, 1791, Bridgeman Art Library.

1.5 British School (c. 1660), The Common Cryes of London, British Museum.

1.6 Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–1677), interior view of the Royal Exchange, c. 1660, London Metropolitan Archives.

1.7 William Herbert (1772–1851) and Robert Wilkinson (fl. 1785–1825), Procession of Marie d’Medici along Cheapside, 1698, 1809, Bridgeman Art Library.

1.8 Anon., front view of the Guildhall, etching c. 1700, London Metropolitan Archives.

1.9 Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–1677), south elevation of St. Paul’s Cathedral, etching executed 1818, London Metropolitan Archives.

1.10 Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–1677), interior view of St. Paul’s Cathedral’s east end, c. 1656, London Metropolitan Archives.
List of Illustrations and Maps

1.11 Anon., view of Covent Garden from the south, engraving executed c. 1720, London Metropolitan Archives.
3.1 Leonard Knyff (1650–1722), A Bird’s Eye View of Whitehall Palace, c. 1695, Bridgeman Art Library.
3.2 Attr. to Hendrick Danckerts (c. 1625–1680), Whitehall Palace and St. James’s Park, Bridgeman Art Library.
3.3 Marie d’Medici’s drawing room, from M. (Jean-Puget) de La Serre (c. 1600–1665), Histoire de l’entrée de la reyne mère du roy tres Chrestien, dans la Grande-Bétaigne (1639), HOLLIS 009628756, Houghton Library, Harvard University.
3.4 After Lucas de Heere (1534–1584), Lord Mayor, Aldermen and liverymen, Bridgeman Art Library.
4.1 C. J. Visscher (1587–1652), the Globe Theatre, detail from an engraving, 1616, Bridgeman Art Library.
4.2 English School (seventeenth century), the Swan Theatre, Southwark, Bridgeman Art Library.
4.3 English School (nineteenth century), interior of the Duke’s Theatre in Lincoln’s Inn Fields during the reign of King Charles II, 1809, Bridgeman Art Library.
5.1 The Daily Courant, March 11, 1702, The Image Works.
5.2 John Chessell Buckler (1793–1894), view of the Tabard Inn on Borough High Street, Southwark, 1827, London Metropolitan Archives.
5.5 British School (c. 1650–c. 1750), interior of a London Coffeehouse, British Museum.
5.6 Samuel Wale (1721–1786), view of Vauxhall Gardens, etching executed c. 1751, London Metropolitan Archives.
5.7 William Hogarth (1697–1764), Innocence Betrayed, plate I of “A Harlot’s Progress,” 1732, London Metropolitan Archives.
List of Illustrations and Maps

6.1 William Hogarth (1697–1764), The Industrious ’Prentice Out of His Time, plate VI from “Industry and Idleness,” 1747, Bridgeman Art Library.

6.2 Nathaniel Parr (1723–1751), Admission of Children to the Foundling Hospital, 1749, Bridgeman Art Library.

6.3 Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827), Trial in Progress at the Old Bailey, 1809, Bridgeman Art Library.


8.1 John Dunstall (d. 1693), the Great Plague of London in 1665, Bridgeman Art Library.

8.2 Great Fire of London, Dutch School (seventeenth century), Bridgeman Art Library.

8.3 Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–1677), map of the City of London after the Great Fire, 1666, London Metropolitan Archives.

8.4 Anon., view of Monument’s west side, etching c. 1700, London Metropolitan Archives.

8.5 Sir Christopher Wren (1632–1723), plan for the rebuilding of the City of London, 1666, London Metropolitan Archives.

8.6 John Evelyn (1620–1706), plan for the rebuilding of the City of London, 1666, London Metropolitan Archives.

8.7 Frederick Nash (1782–1856), interior view of St. James’s Piccadilly, 1806, London Metropolitan Archives.

8.8 Canaletto (1697–1768), St. Paul’s Cathedral, 1754, Bridgeman Art Library.

c.1 Canaletto (1697–1768), view of the City of London from the north, engraving executed 1794, London Metropolitan Archives.

c.2 John Bethell, two houses in Queen Anne’s Gate, Westminster, early eighteenth century (photo), Bridgeman Art Library.

c.3 T. Rowlandson (1756–1827) and A. C. Pugin (1769–1832), Bank of England, Great Hall, 1809, Bridgeman Art Library.

c.4 William Hogarth (1697–1764), The Rake in Bedlam, plate VII from “A Rake’s Progress,” 1763, Bridgeman Art Library.

c.5 Anon., interior view of the choir of St. Paul’s Cathedral, etching executed c. 1750, London Metropolitan Archives.
List of Illustrations and Maps

1. Anon., view of Temple Bar, etching executed c. 1700, London Metropolitan Archives.
3. Anon., view of the Foundling Hospital, etching executed c. 1750, London Metropolitan Archives.
4. English School (eighteenth century), Grosvenor Square, 1754, Bridgeman Art Library.
7. Canaletto (1697–1768), Ranelagh Gardens, the interior of the Rotunda, c. 1751, Bridgeman Art Library.

Maps

1. The Thames below London Bridge.
2. London in 1550.
3. Whitehall in 1670.
List of Abbreviations and Conventions

TNA:  The National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Kew.

NB: Here, *City* and *City of London* refer to the area governed by the lord mayor and Court of Aldermen, mostly but not entirely within the ancient walls. The uncapitalized *city* and *metropolis* refer to greater London, including the City, Westminster, unincorporated Southwark, and the coterminous parishes beyond the walls.

Where known, the birth and death dates of persons named in the text are given in parentheses after their names. Unless otherwise noted, the dates given after the names of rulers (including popes) are their regnal years.

Spelling in quotations is in the original form except where changes are required for the sake of clarity.
Acknowledgments

This book originated from a suggestion by Bob Bucholz’s undergraduate supervisor, Daniel Baugh, in the fall of 1986, that he might want to prepare a seminar course on early modern London to add to his teaching portfolio. First offered at Cornell in the spring of 1988, the course migrated with Bob to Loyola, Chicago, when he assumed his present position there. In the meantime, Joe Ward had begun his studies in the economic and social role of the London livery companies with Paul Seaver at Stanford. Beatrice Rehl from Cambridge University Press then suggested turning the fruits of that teaching and scholarship into a book. This being a work of synthesis, the authors are utterly beholden to the work of many fine scholars of London, whose names appear all too briefly in the notes. They would particularly like to acknowledge their debt to two magisterial works, Stephen Inwood’s *History of London* and *The London Encyclopaedia* compiled by Ben Weinreb and Christopher Hibbert, revised by Julia and John Keay, trusted companions in our trek through the metropolis, whose influence on the final product will be obvious. We owe another great debt to our home institutions, Loyola University, Chicago, and the University of Mississippi, for purchasing indispensable databases like the Burney Collection of Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century English Newspapers, Early English Books Online, Eighteenth-Century Collections Online, and The Making of the Modern World; providing funding necessary to support the purchase of rights for images; and in Bob’s case, granting a semester’s leave from teaching.

Perhaps above all, this work has benefited incalculably from the input of our students, both graduate and especially undergraduate in Bob’s “History 319: London Life and Culture” class over the past 25 years. Bob and Joe would also particularly like to acknowledge with thanks Bob’s
Acknowledgments

Map 2. London in 1550.
Map 3. Whitehall in 1670.