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978-1-107-00045-2 - Feminism, Absolutism, and Jansenism: Louis XIV and the Port-Royal Nuns

Daniella Kostroun

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Feminism, Absolutism, and Jansenism

Louis XIV and the Port-Royal Nuns

Feminism, Absolutism, and Jansenism chronicles seventy years of Jansenist conflict and its complex intersection with power struggles between Gallican bishops, *parlementaires*, the Crown, and the pope. Daniella Kostroun focuses on the nuns of Port-Royal-des-Champs, whose community was disbanded by Louis XIV in 1709 as a threat to the state. Paradoxically, it was the nuns' adherence to their strict religious rule and the ideal of pious, innocent, and politically disinterested behavior that allowed them to challenge absolutism effectively. Adopting methods from cultural studies, feminism, and the Cambridge School of political thought, Kostroun examines how these nuns placed gender at the heart of the Jansenist challenge to the patriarchal and religious foundations of absolutism. They responded to royal persecution with a feminist defense of women's spiritual and rational equality and of the autonomy of the individual subject, thereby offering a bold challenge to the patriarchal and religious foundations of absolutism.

Daniella Kostroun is currently Assistant Professor of History at Indiana University–Purdue University, Indianapolis. She is the coeditor (with Lisa Vollendorf) of *Women, Religion, and the Atlantic World (1600–1800)* and the author of “A Formula for Disobedience: Jansenism, Gender, and the Feminist Paradox,” which appeared in the *Journal of Modern History* and won the 2004 Chester Penn Higby Prize by the Modern European History section of the American Historical Association.

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DANIELLA KOSTROUN

Indiana University–Purdue University, Indianapolis



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AN	Archives nationales de France
Ars.	Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal
BN	Bibliothèque nationale de France
BPR	Bibliothèque de la Société de Port-Royal
Ms.	Manuscript
Mss. Ff.	Manuscrits fonds français
UPR	Port Royal Collection, Rijksarchief, Utrecht, Holland

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