

Nationalism and Gender in the Eighteenth Century: Queen Caroline Matilda's Misfortunes in Denmark

Janni Aragon é professora do Department of Political Science e do Department of Women's Studies da University of Victoria.

John Christian Laursen é professor do Department of Political Science da University of California, Riverside.

Nationalism and gender expectations create ideological forces of recognized strength. Sometimes they work together, combining to glorify or to diminish people. Sometimes they work at cross-purposes, each one countering the other. In this essay, we will explore several different uses of nationalism and of gender expectations in printed reactions to the scandal around Queen Caroline Matilda of Denmark, a sister of George III of England, in 1772.

The story is dramatic. On the night of January 16, 1772, there was a masked ball at the royal palace in Copenhagen. After it was over, conspirators woke the King, told him his life was in danger, and persuaded him to sign arrest orders for his Queen, Caroline Matilda, and his German-speaking physician and prime minister, Johann Friedrich Struensee. Struensee was imprisoned in the Citadel, and after a kangaroo court trial was beheaded, drawn, and quartered for treason, which included sleeping with the Queen. Caroline Matilda was imprisoned in Hamlet's castle at Kronborg, divorced from the King, and sent to exile in her brother's castle at Celle in Hannover.[i]

Naturally, the scandal was covered in newspapers and pamphlets published all over Europe. Voltaire wrote about it in his correspondence.[ii] Numerous novels have been written about it, including, most recently, Per Olov Enquist's The Royal Physician's Visit,[iii] and several movies and documentaries about the story have been produced. A recent historian made a comparison and contrast with the "Danish Revolution of 1772" one of the keys to his interpretation of the French Revolution.[iv] The tumult also provided an entrée into Denmark for other European reflections on the special role of the press in modern times, such as David Hume's essay "Of Liberty of the Press", which was translated into Danish in 1771.[v]

Our angle here is to examine printed responses to the scandal in its immediate aftermath with particular attention to the effects of nationalism and gender expectations on portrayals and evaluations of the key players. The scandal took place in Denmark, and the King was Danish. The Queen, however, was an English princess. Prime Minister Struensee was German. The Dowager Queen, who organized the coup, was also German. As we might expect, press and pamphlet reports in each country and each different language weighed nationalistic and gender issues differently.

The stereotypes of nationalism dictate that we should expect the English press to favor Caroline Matilda; the Danish press to see her and her lover as threatening foreigners; and the German press to defend the German-speaking Dowager or equally German-speaking Struensee. The stereotypes of gender expectations suggest that the women in

the case should be portrayed in accord with one or more of the stereotypes of weak and helpless victim, scheming harridan, or prostitute, and the men should be portrayed as virtuous heroes or lecherous seducers. Then, of course, various elements of both stereotypes could be combined in supporting or contradicting wholes. We shall see to what extent these stereotypes are borne out by the evidence.

One last stereotype that deserves mention here is the view that people in the eighteenth century lived and breathed their nationalist and gender stereotypes completely, implicitly, and unconsciously, whereas we late-moderns or post-moderns are aware of them and can manipulate them. In contrast to the view that their minds were imprisoned and their behavior determined, we will see that eighteenth century writers could also bring to critical awareness the stereotypes that floated around them, and criticize them as well. But what difference did that make? A further inquiry we have in mind is the question as to whether critical self-consciousness makes an important difference in dealing with stereotypes, and whether we deal with stereotypes of nationalism and gender expectations any better today than they did in the eighteenth century. Naturally, the evidence we provide here cannot settle the question, but it can provide food for thought.

Perhaps we should add that a truly vast amount of material on the scandal made it into print in this period, so our survey cannot claim to be complete; nor is it based on a scientific sample. It is, we hope, a reasonably wide survey, with insights for the study of nationalism and gender perceptions in this period.

Let us start with the English press. One of the first reports was in the *London Evening Post*, dated January 30.[vi] It said that a “Revolution” had been reported in Denmark. “The Queen, it seems, had, for some time, been intriguing with her Physician. Her growing power, and flagrant conduct, occasioned a general alarm, and dissatisfaction, throughout the Citizens of Copenhagen. They suddenly rose, and surrounded the palace... The Queen was made a prisoner. [It appears that] the Queen shall be imprisoned in one of the castles, for life. Upon the news of this event, the levee at St. James’s was forbid” (LEP, 1/30/72, p. 4, col. 3; BJ, 2/1/72, p. 2, cols. 1-2). So far, just a report; not much obvious nationalism or gender expectations except loaded language about growing power and flagrant behavior (but that language could have been applied to a man, too).[vii]

Under dateline of February 1, *The General Evening Post* provided much more interpretive language. It observed that “there is a queen Dowager in that kingdom, who is said to have been ever intriguing during the life of the late king, in favour of a son by herself who is now grown up: that as to the part attributed to the physician, jealousy will go to great lengths; and as the Queen was unhappily debarred from having any native of England near her, except this physician, the most innocent meetings, when ill-naturedly and wickedly misrepresented, will serve to blacken the brightest characters” (GEP, 2/1/72, p. 3, col. 1). Here we have nationalism: the English queen is being persecuted by isolation from her own kind (she could not possibly have chosen to associate only with foreigners!). Here we also have the first sign that national identities had not been pinned down: it is implied that the royal physician is English. Another newspaper reported that Struensee “was neither young nor handsome: nor is he a Scotchman or Frenchman, as has been given out, but a Swiss” (GEP, 2/4/72, p. 3, col. 1). This time Struensee was

probably confused with the king's tutor and companion, who was Swiss.[viii]

Another newspaper used the scandal to excoriate “the effects of a Scotch Education, and [asserted that] the Passions and Principles of a Scotch Favourite [Lord Bute] are now seen in every Branch of the Royal Family” (BJ, 2/8/72, p. 4, col. 3). Another one reported that “The Queen of Denmark's favourite physician is a North-Briton” (G, 2/10/72, p. 4, col. 1). The Scots could, in a manner, exact revenge for such English anti-Scottish nationalism. The *Scots Magazine* reported that the Queen was excused by some “since infidelity to husbands among persons of condition in England was so frequent it was hardly held a crime” (SM, Feb. 1772, p. 61).

The February 1 article also introduces us to two other themes. One is that the Dowager Queen is made to fit the image of the jealous, scheming stepmother. This gender stereotype diminishes active women by ridicule and caricature. The other theme, the nationalist one, is that only natives of England could be expected to provide a supportive ambience for an English princess. The same article goes on to explore the problem of foreign alliances. “On the whole, as few of our Princesses abroad have turned out happy, it may serve to intimidate the rising generation from engaging in foreign marriage connections, but, after the examples of their uncles, to seek that happiness at home, which is not to be found among more high-sounding titles in foreign countries” (GEP, 2/1/72, p. 3, col. 1).

The scheming step-mother stereotype was often repeated. She was “an artful, ambitious, and intriguing woman” (AN, 1772, p. 44). This image could be combined for maximum effect with a description of sexual allure: she was “a woman of exquisite beauty” and the “reputation of her charms was the inducement of the late King to second nuptials. She is said to be of a lively genius, lofty and haughty in her disposition, fond of intrigue, full of art, determined and firm, and implacable in her resentments” (SM Jan. 1772, p. 44). But at least one journal recognized that the Dowager Queen could be redescribed as “a princess of extraordinary virtue, resolution, and abilities, which she has properly and happily exerted, in rescuing her country from a shameful and ignominious foreign yoke” (AN, 1772, p. 73). This was apparently an effort to turn from sexism to anti-foreign rhetoric. It is clear that some writers were aware that the use of sexist stereotypes was almost entirely a matter of partisan rhetoric.

Another report in *The General Evening Post* raises the specter of war. We can probably assume that, then as now, bellicosity provokes nationalism, piques interest, and sells papers. “The politicians at New Lloyd's coffee-house are very much employed in speculative bets upon a war with Denmark: but considerate people imagine that Lord North is much too wise, to engage offensively against any power, merely on account of a family *faux pas*, especially where the conduct of the person to be supported is evidently indefensible” (GEP, 2/1/72, p. 3, col. 1). This report accepts the possibility that the Queen was guilty, and tries to diminish the importance of the matter by calling it a family dispute.

Admitting the guilt of an English princess was evidently conceding too much, so on February 4 *The General Evening Post* reported that “The Queen by many is thought innocent of any incontinency, and that all reports propagated against her virtue are no more than political lyes”; the “insinuations respecting this intimacy” were characterized

as “improbable and ill-founded” (GEP 2/4/72, p.1, col. 2). It recognized the danger of Danish reactions to English nationalism: “It is expected, that the effects of all English subjects will be seized, as a security, lest the Court of England should give orders, out of resentment, for the seizure of ours in that kingdom” (GEP 2/4/72, p.1, col. 2).

Another newspaper reported that “Baron Dieden, the Danish Ambassador, is now at Berlin... It is supposed, that an apprehension for his personal safety in this kingdom, when the late transactions in Denmark should be known here... caused his retreat to the Continent” (G, 2/10/72, p. 4, col. 1).

This story expanded on the theme of the scheming stepmother: “The Queen Mother, Juliana, and her party, are supposed to have... long viewed the Queen Consort with a jealous eye, as a person who has entirely diminished that power which was formerly enjoyed, and yet pretends to. The Queen Consort, young, gay, affable, and obliging, gained all hearts... [But,] A slight indiscretion will be aggravated into a crime by determined enemies...” Then we learn one of the charges against the Queen, which is based on gender expectations: “The ladies of Denmark, unlike our countrywomen, when they ride, bestride their horses like men; but to preserve the decorum of the sex, they wear a petticoat over their drawers or breeches. Unhappily, her Majesty looked upon the petticoat as an encumbrance, and when she hunted, dressed herself *en cavalier*. This was immediately taken notice of by her enemies as a great act of indiscretion” (GEP, 2/4/72, p.1, col. 2; also G, 2/4/72, p. 4, col. 2). The *Gazeteer* mocked this reaction: “the only WELL-FOUNDED charge against her is, that SHE WORE THE BREECHES”(!) (G, 2/10/72, p. 4, col. 2). This suggests that people could achieve some critical distance from gender stereotypes and ironize against them, if doing so would defend their own princess.

Another report on the royal Levee in London reported that “every individual appeared anxious to exculpate a certain young Queen from the heavy accusations urged against her”; there is nothing surprising about this, considering these were courtiers (GEP, 2/4/72, p. 3, col. 1). Even years later, the memoirs of the British Envoy, Sir Robert Keith, denied the Queen’s guilt.[ix] This must be some combination of gentlemanly forbearance and national pride, since both Struensee and the Queen had eventually admitted her guilt.

In defense of the Queen, this report added the backhanded defense that “The Queen of Denmark has not only grown very fat since her marriage, as some of the public prints have observed, but has fallen into a kind of somnolency extremely inconsistent with the spirit of gallantry” (GEP, 2/4/72, p. 3, col. 1). The point had been made the day before in *The Gazeteer*: “The Queen of Denmark, who is not a little inclined to corpulency, used to ride out 30 or 40 miles every day before dinner” (G, 2/3/72, p. 2 cols. 1-2). Even when intended to defend the Queen against a charge of adultery, this sort of reference to her weight must have been demeaning. One might be tempted to say that this sort of remark would only be made about women, but Struensee was also teased and caricatured in popular prints for his weight.

Sabre-rattling continued to appear from time to time. *The General Evening Post* printed a not-so-veiled threat: “No fleet can be sent to Copenhagen till the spring, if ever such measure should be adopted by our Government.” An observer is quoted to say that “if a certain Princess is really guilty of the charges brought against her she may be left to her

fate, and, if innocent, that the injuries she has sustained may be spiritedly resented by her country” (GEP, 2/4/72, p. 3, col. 1). The *Gazeteer* reported that “a fleet of men of war” would be sent, if necessary “to bombard the place” (G, 2/5/72, p. 4, cols. 2-3). Jingoism plays well at home and abroad, so several newspapers continued to suggest the possibilities, even as they denied actual steps: “No forcible means have as yet been thought of at St. James’s” (BJ, 2/8/72, p. 2, col. 1).

A Knight in Shining Armor emerged. Soon, papers were reporting that Ambassador Keith had “declared in a very spirited manner, that if the Queen of Denmark is not treated with all respect due to her birth and rank, the King his master will not fail to resent it” (BJ, 3/28/72, p. 4, col. 3; G, 3/31/72, p. 4, col. 3). A probably-apocryphal letter from the Queen to him was eventually printed by several newspapers. She wrote, “Has the ... [King] my brother, then, abandoned me? Great God, will no one, then, avenge my innocence and my memory? I shall never forget the zeal with which you testified in the cause of innocence”. She took the opportunity to contrast English fairness with Danish unfairness: “Oh! Were I in England, my dear country, where the meanest criminal has the privilege of being tried by his Peers. Am I forgot by the whole universe?” (G, 5/30/72, p. 4, cols. 1-2). Another example of the damsel-in-distress defense came in the form of a report that when the queen met with her lawyer, “after shedding a flood of tears”, she “promised to amply recompense him if he did her justice” (G, 4/28/72, p. 4, col. 1).

Yet another early report warned against judging the young queen too quickly, but reinforced gender expectations. For her to be guilty, can we believe “that in so short a time the lady can forget every virtuous precept, and abandon herself to infamy? My dear countrymen, it cannot be; and until we have a certainty of guilt believe it not... there is too much reason to fear her exalted character, justly acquired with the populace, hath produced in those of rank, envy, hatred, confusion, and ruin.” (GEP, 2/4/72, p. 3, col. 1). If blame there must be, it goes to the German physician: “The Minister, who has the greatest sway there, is well known in Germany to be a bad man” (GEP, 2/4/72, p. 3, col. 1). It added that “our amiable and Royal countrywoman” was the target of plots by a supporter of “the Dowager Queen, whose hatred to the reigning Queen is enormous” (GEP, 2/4/72, p. 3, col. 1). Another paper referred to the Dowager Queen’s “spirit of revenge” (G, 2/12/72, p. 4, cols. 2-3.) “It’s all a cat-fight among jealous and vindictive women” was evidently a popular interpretation: an “Extract of a letter from Copenhagen” published in the same issue reports that “the true cause, it is more than probable, will at last be found to have been the ambition of the Queen Dowager, supported by the machinations of a discarded Minister... The youth and inexperience of the present King, and an artful management of the native prejudices of the Danes, have afforded a very favourable opportunity for these designs” (GEP, 2/4/72, p. 3, col. 1).

However, another source is quoted as blaming the scandal on the Queen’s presumptuousness: “a certain Northern Lady has been infatuated with the idea of being a despotic Queen.” When her royal mother came to visit and expressed surprise at her dress, she answered “Where I reign, I do as I please.” She had obtained “an unlimited power over her husband”, but “was entirely directed and governed by a person every way below her favour, and unworthy of her affection...” (GEP, 2/4/72, p. 3, col. 1). This played to the common theme that the Queen had been out of place in involving herself in politics. “She seems to have inherited from her Mother a mischievous

Disposition to interfere in Politics” (BJ, 2/8/72, p. 4, col. 3). But this could also be a *defense* of her behavior: “The Queen of Denmark’s chief, if not *sole* crime, has been that she dabbled too much in politics, to which the weakness of the King administered frequent opportunities” (G, 2/5/72, p. 4, cols. 2-3). On this account, she was just filling in for the King; and besides, it is implied, Queens are entitled to participate in politics.

The papers are well aware of the power of public opinion in suppressing freedom of expression. Describing Copenhagen, one report has it that “Nothing was to be met with in the streets but ridiculous histories and ballads of [Struensee’s] rise and fall, and caricatura prints and pictures, which people were obliged to buy to prevent their being thought his friends or abettors” (AR, 1772, p. 74).[x]

One report adds that “It is generally supposed the Danes will deliver up their Queen on demand, as previous to her marriage it was expressly stipulated, that, in case of disagreement, she should be at liberty to return to her native country” (GEP, 2/4/72, p. 3, col. 1). Legalism and diplomacy are substituted for war talk.

As of February 8, the *General Evening Post* was still trying to protect the Queen’s reputation. The “recent reports so unfavourable to a great Lady’s fame begin to take a different turn; and the prevailing opinion now is, that she will at last be found to have been most infamously and scandalously traduced” (GEP, 2/8/72, p. 4, col. 3). But war readiness is stressed. New information “calls for the assistance of a British fleet to vindicate, rather than the voice of the British nation to condemn her: the former, we are assured, will certainly be accepted by our Council for that purpose, unless proper restitution is made to this Royal innocent” (GEP, 2/8/72, p. 4, col. 3). Perhaps to fan the flames, it is also noted that “orders have been sent to the Danish Admiral in the Meditteranean, to return with all convenient speed with his squadrons” (GEP, 2/8/72, p. 4, col. 3).

By the issue of February 8-11, the *General Evening Post* carried a report that “A rupture with the Danes many sensible people now imagine to be almost unavoidable... orders have been sent, we are told, to the Hanoverian Commander in Chief, to march a powerful force towards [the frontier with Denmark], to act upon the very first emergency” (GEP, 2/11/72, p. 3, col. 1). The point is made again that English princesses should marry at home: “we married his Majesty’s sister to a King, and are now probably on the eve of a bloody war to revenge her injuries”; “a single year’s war with Denmark (to say nothing of the lives lost) will consume more money than is requisite to make the most brilliant establishment [here in England]” (GEP, 2/11/72, p. 3, col. 1).

By February 15, the *General Evening Post* could report that things were calming down: “as the Queen Consort of Denmark is allowed all the ladies of her Court at the present place of her imprisonment, it is not probable that any design is formed against her life” (GEP, 2/15/72, p. 4, col. 4). By February 25, the *General Evening Post* reported that “The Dowager, I can assure you, has been at the bottom of all this. She is a woman of great intrigue, ambition, and daring spirit.” It was only to fight her that the Queen turned to Struensee: “Necessity, therefore, and not choice, imposed Struensee upon the young Queen”. “People are divided about the infidelity to the King’s bed: and the most violent speak only in terms of surmise, from appearances” (GEP, 2/25/72, p. 3, col. 1).

One set of reports made the scandal out to be the product of German scheming. The Queen and Struensee were thought by some to be plotting “to place a branch of a certain *German Family on the Throne*” (G, 2/3/72, p. 2, cols. 1-2). German affinities were distinctly ambivalent to the British, whose royal line had only recently been imported into England from Hanover. Nevertheless, the *Annual Register* described Struensee as “one of those numerous adventurers, which... abound more in Germany than in any other country” (AR, 1772, p.71). It also took advantage of rosy and self-congratulatory images of the open and public nature of British politics to comment that it “is not however easy to form any conclusion upon events in arbitrary states, where public affairs are locked up in the obscurity of silence and the mystery of intrigue” (AR, 1772, pp. 70-71). It should perhaps be noticed that another journal reported that “there was warm debate in Council... whether the news from Denmark ought to be published in England... [and] a great personage [the King?].... was of the opinion, that the publication of it would be only giving new opportunities for scandal, lies, and defamation, to those who have already made too free with his family” (G, 3/9/72, p. 4. cols. 1-2).

Others pinned the blame elsewhere. According to one report, the “first unpopular Act of the Queen” was the dismissal of certain officials: “The French suggested this Measure, because those Ministers were friends to England”. She went on to participate in several plots, and the Danes “knew the French were at the Bottom of it, and that the Queen was wrapt up in her Physician, who was the Creature of that Interest” (BJ, 2/8/72, p. 2, col. 1). The *Annual Review* claimed that Struensee “was a tool and creature of France” (AN, 1772, p. 73). Other reports went the other way, asserting that the Dowager Queen was “secretly supported by France, and at least countenanced by Prussia”; on the other side were the Queen, Struensee, and “a few foreigners of inconsiderable note” (G, 4/21/72, p. 2, col. 1). This report adds that “the Prussian, and Swedish Courts, were not ignorant of a single operation leading towards the intended effects” (ibid.). One of the benefits of interpreting matters in terms of grand diplomatic strategies is that any possible English fault is lost in a vast maze of foreign conspirators.

As late as April 26, a report was published that asserted that “her Danish Majesty will be soon reinstated in the favour of the King, and the dignity from which she has been so unjustly degraded” (G, 4/26/72, p. 4, col. 1). This was a theme that did not fade away until 1775, when the ex-Queen Caroline Matilda died after a brief illness. British agents and Danish dissidents were plotting a return of the Queen to the throne right up until her death.[xi]

Caroline Matilda and Struensee were also the subject of a large German-language newspaper and pamphlet literature. Some of them were probably instigated by, and perhaps paid for by, the conspirators who carried out the *coup d'état*, such as *Poetical Thoughts on the Hell-Power by which Count Struensee Reigned*. [xii] Others purported to retail conversations in hell between Struensee and his friend Count Brandt. Such pamphlets made it clear that the scandal was a deliberate attempt to flout God’s law and desecrate the King’s bed. But other pamphlets defended Caroline Matilda.

One pamphlet from 1772 was entitled “Secrets Revealed from the Revolution in Denmark”. It relied on gender stereotypes or customs to reject the charge that Struensee was planning to remove the King, elevate the Queen to sole regent, and rule with her:

Denmark had never been ruled by a woman and Struensee could not possibly have expected it to be (II,20,7,p.12). It sought pity on the basis of gender stereotypes by referring to Caroline Matilda as “the best Queen, torn from the side of her husband” (II,20,7,p.15). Struensee was characterized as a patriot, sacrificing his life for his country (p.16).

Another pamphlet, from 1773, prophesied that “Denmark will be so lucky as to see their beloved, guiltless, honorable Queen Caroline Mathilde again” (II,20,4,p. 6). It explained: “The Queen is a Lady who, from the beginning of her residence in Denmark had not mixed in anything but tried to live a calm and enjoyable life, with no affairs, no cabals, and no intrigues of favorites and court parties. She loved her royal husband with a tender love, in complete trust, and in the greatest unity. She was, however, a clever and insightful lady who acted with masculine [männlicher] determination. That was why she made enemies” (II,20,4,p.42-3). This pamphlet plays both ends of the spectrum. On the one hand, the queen is a tender and faithful helpmeet; on the other hand, the pamphlet clearly mocks those who censure women just because they are strong and smart. It goes on to say that “the aristocratic party feared her because she might see through their cabal, and steal the King from them” (p. 43). The recent Swedish novel mentioned at the beginning of this paper follows up on one end of this spectrum by portraying Caroline Matilda as a strong-willed fighter for women’s liberation.

This pamphlet used the Queen’s English nationality as an explanation of her ‘liberated’ personal behavior [freyer Umgang]: “an Englishwoman born to freedom could not take on the oppressed condition of a German or Danish woman” (p. 47). This did not mean she was guilty of adultery, however, the writer averred –and presumably would have been upset to learn the eventually-revealed truth. But he was prepared for that, too. Remarkably, the writer invoked the Roman law precept that “Mulieri propriam turpitudinem alleganti non creditur [a woman’s confession of her adultery is not to be credited]” (p.51). This principle was presumably designed to discredit the testimony of a woman who lies –takes the blame- in order to save her lover. This is pleading in the alternative: the writer could run from celebrating the woman’s strength of character to justifying ignoring her testimony if it went against her interest.

Another German-language pamphlet was entitled “Attempt at a Vindication of Caroline Mathilda, Reigning Queen of Denmark” (1773). It invoked legal principles on behalf of the Queen. They are surprisingly egalitarian. Canon law of the Catholic Church is invoked for the principle that a wife is subordinate to her husband only as far as the purposes of the marriage, reproduction of the species and raising children, are concerned (II,20,8,p.7-8). Another claim is that “marriage knows nothing of master and servant” (p.8). Natural lawyers Hugo Grotius, Wikefort, Barbeyrac, and Binkershoek are cited in the Queen’s defense. To provoke nationalist intervention from England, the author insists that the proceedings against the Queen are violations of the rights of the King of England (p.11).

Two chief points emerge from our analysis. One is that we can conclude from this survey that nationalism and gender expectations were often self-consciously employed for partisan political purposes. Writers for the English press tried to pin the blame on Danes, the French, Germans, and even Scots –anybody but Englishmen or

Englishwomen- and Scots repaid them in kind by blaming it on the English national character. English and German writers played on all of the stereotypes of nationalism and gender expectations when appropriate in defense of their Queen or of Prime Minister Struensee, and fought all of those stereotypes when that was appropriate. We can conclude that as far as writers are concerned, stereotypes are better understood as rhetorical tools available and used for strategic partisan purposes, rather than predetermined mental constructs that shape ideas and behavior.

The second point is that exposing and openly manipulating stereotypes does not make them go away. If anyone thinks that merely drawing attention to nationalist and gender stereotypes guarantees progress in eliminating them, our evidence suggests that it does not. Writers can reject stereotypes when they are not to their advantage, and then invoke them when they think it will help them score some points. They can employ mutually contradictory stereotypes, sometimes even in the same paragraph, without any sense that this may be counter-productive. They can evidently use these stereotypes to convince themselves, or think they can use them to convince their readers, even though they have previously recognized how unreliable, unfair, or misleading they are. This Protean nature of stereotypes may be one of the most frustrating and interesting things

[i] For the background to this coup, see J. C. Laursen, “Spinoza in Denmark and the Fall of Struensee”, Journal of the History of Ideas 61, 2000, 189-202.

[ii] See J. C. Laursen, “Voltaire, Christian VII of Denmark, and Freedom of the Press”, Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century 2002, no. 6, 331-348.

[iii] (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 2001 [Swedish orig., 1999]). See the review in the Book Review section of the Los Angeles Times, December 30, 2001, p. 4. Previous novels include Hester Chapman, Caroline Matilda: Queen of Denmark 1751-1775 (London: Jonathan Cape, 1971). Historical works include Harald Jørgensen, The Unfortunate Queen Caroline Mathilda’s Last Years, 1772-75 (Copenhagen: Reitzel, 1989).

[iv] Michael Sonenscher, Before the Deluge: Public Debt, Inequality, and the Intellectual Origins of the French Revolution (Princeton University Press, 2007), 22-23.

[v] J. C. Laursen, “David Hume and the Danish Debate about Freedom of the Press in the 1770’s”, Journal of the History of Ideas 59, 1998, 167-173.

[vi] Newspapers are cited in the text by date, page, and column number. Abbreviations are: G = *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*; BJ = *Bingley’s Journal*; LEP = *London Evening Post*; GEP = *General Evening Post*; AN = *Annual Register*; SM = *Scots Magazine*.

[vii] Also, the facts were wrong. Rather than a popular uprising, the incident was a *coup d’état* put together by less than a dozen people. Perhaps the conspirators fed writers misinformation in order to hide the fragility of their coup.

[viii] See J. C. Laursen, “Télémaque manqué: Reverdil at Court in Copenhagen” in Patrick Coleman, Anne Hofmann, and Simone Zurbuchen, eds., Reconceptualizing Nature, Science, and Aesthetics: Contribution à une nouvelle approche des Lumières helvétiques (Geneva: Slatkine, 1998), 147-156.

[ix] Mrs. Gillespie Smyth, ed., The Romance of Diplomacy: Historical Memoir of Queen Carolina Matilda of Denmark... of Sir Robert Murray Keith (London: James Hogg, 1849, 1861), 2 vols.

[x] This reminds us of the phenomena analyzed in Timur Kuran, Private Truths, Public Lies (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[xi] See Henry Wheatley, ed., The Historical and Posthumous Memoirs of Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall, 1772-1784 (London: Bickers, 1884), vol. 4, pp. 176-212 and vol. 5, pp. 397-427.

[xii] This pamphlet can be found in the Luxdorph collection of free press pamphlets at the Royal Library in Copenhagen. German-language pamphlets in this collection will be cited in the text by II, indicating pamphlets from after January 16/17, 1772; volume no.; pamphlet no.; and p. number. This pamphlet is II,6,6. See J. C. Laursen, “Luxdorph’s Press Freedom Writings Before the Fall of Struensee in Early 1770’s Denmark-Norway”, The European Legacy 7, 2002, 61-77.