understandably concentrates on the period from 1649 to 1660, it might have strengthened the work if she could have looked just a little more at the legacies of interregnum disaffection. Equally, the "royalist commons" that Boswell sees being fashioned rhetorically through the literature of disaffection could be connected with recent work by Blair Worden on actual broad coalition-building, generated in the movements for a "free" Parliament in 1659–1660.

While these wider implications point to the considerable value of Boswell's work, the nebulous nature of popular disaffection itself poses questions about the specificity of the conclusions that she draws from the 1650s. As she acknowledges, the "chimney men" of the 1660s enjoyed similar powers and met with similar popular opposition to the excisemen of the 1650s. Similarly, though there was a particular association between drink and Royalism, health-drinking was a trigger for seditious speech and gesture in other periods as well. Public spaces and sites, such as the market cross, were locations of popular contestation and defiance well before and well after 1650. There is a danger, too, in Boswell's understandable desire to rethink popular political activity during the 1650s in terms other than allegiance. The connections between "disaffection" and the wider context can, in places, seem evident only when local disputes were repackaged by the contemporary press. For example, while she very deftly shows how Sir Arthur Hesilrige's dispute with the tenants of Eslington, Northumberland was later employed by Royalist writers (themselves borrowing from Leveller commentary) to demonstrate his greed and corruption, she pays less attention to the way in which the tenants themselves appear to have utilized Hesilrige's well-known disenchantment with the Protectoral regime to advance their own cause.

Overall, however, this is a sophisticated and valuable treatment of popular disaffection in interregnum England. The flash points Boswell discusses are generally handled with great care and sensitivity. For example, in discussing reports of seditious words occasioned by health-drinking, Boswell notes not only the political divisions such incidents might reveal but also the perceived threat they posed to values of sociability. Equally, she acknowledges that the reporting of such words was likely driven by multiple factors: financial rewards in the case of some informers and political loyalties in the case of others, but also a desire to preserve these spaces of community sociability from the threat of closure.

In her conclusion, Boswell is rightly wary of drawing any parallels between the exploitation of disaffection in the seventeenth century and modern-day "populist" politics. However, if comparisons of that kind would be inappropriate, this monograph should both provide much food thought for historians of later Stuart popular political culture and shed important light on the "popularity" of Charles II's restoration.

Ted Vallance
University of Roehampton
edward.vallance@roehampton.ac.uk

Clare Brant. *Balloon Madness. Flights of Imagination in Britain, 1783–1786*. Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2017. Pp. 343. $39.95 (cloth).
doi: 10.1017/jbr.2018.122

In 1785, Tiberius Cavallo reminded the readers of his *History of Aerostation* that the ambition to acquire the art of flying "has been the earnest desire, and exercised the genius, of mankind in every age." On one level, balloon madness was a temporary phenomenon—attracting huge public interest for a couple of years—only to fizzle out as aeronauts failed to realize the much-hyped potential of aerostatic innovation. But on the other hand, it was an extraordinary

breakthrough: realizing long-held but unfulfilled dreams, opening up new possibilities, and overturning so many earthbound certainties.

The history of balloon mania left a visible and tangible impact on contemporary art, literature, and fashion, but it is only comparatively recently that the phenomenon has attracted attention from anyone except historians of aeronautical innovation or aerial warfare. Brant's approach is not to provide a straightforward history of balloon mania or the evolution of the balloon but to recreate the "imaginative possibilities" that were raised by the business of aerostation. Balloon flights, as she notes, led easily to flights of imagination. Balloons offered comic potential—particularly in the form of visual satire; they disrupted the traditional norms of orderly behavior, but they could also be turned to provide "ideological ballast": "sensible, stable and reputable behaviors were imaged through balloons too" (11). Balloons provoked the imagination, wonder, and passion of romanticism, but they were described and discussed through the language of reason and the inherited tropes and genres of classical literature characteristic of the European Enlightenment. Balloons are easily seen as harbingers of modernity, but they were also inheritors of much older traditions of magic and supernatural power.

Rather than providing a linear history, this is a book made up of fourteen shorter thematic essays, drawing on a rich archive of diaries, newspaper accounts, plays, poems, satirical prints, and other ephemera that the fashionable frenzy produced. Much of this material was collected by Sarah Banks, despite her brother, Sir Joseph's, skepticism regarding the value to science of aeronautical adventures. The first four chapters address the question of what balloon madness was, how it was manifested at the level of both the collective and the individual, how it differed from place to place, and the behavior of the crowds whose excited interest (and the spectator fees that they paid) sustained the temporary phenomenon. The ten chapters that follow hinge around the contrast between the levity of fashion, modernity, and imagination and the gravity of the balloon's implications for ideas of heroism and kingship, for nation states and aerial warfare.

The passion for aerostation, as Brant shows, was one that spread across Great Britain and Ireland and as far north as Aberdeen. Although dominated by celebrity aeronauts such as Vincenzo Lunardi and Jean-Pierre Blanchard, who carefully curated their reputation in the press, aerostatic adventures were also the province of gentlemen such as William Windham, whose diary provides a tellingly self-reflective account of his motivations and apprehensions; men of science; and the opportunistic adventurers, of whom Banks was so suspicious. The mania for balloons is easy to explain: their novelty, the risk of danger, the new possibilities that they seemed to open up. But they were also resisted: aeronauts were suspected of fraud and imposing on the public. Many "flights" failed with nothing to show, and some even ended in death, and the spectacle of a balloon ascent drew the laborers away from their work and generated potentially riotous crowds where pickpocketing was rife. Small wonder then that "enlightened" monarchs such as Catherine the Great or Frederick II forbad the practice in their territories.

Contemporary satire emphasized balloons as vehicles of folly; they mapped on to the satirical tradition of the bubble, and its associations of speculation, uncertainty, and instability; and they embodied the empty rhetoric or afflatus of politicians. With their inevitably propensity to rise (as well as the appeal of balloonists such as Lunardi to the ladies) they lent themselves easily to innuendo while their very fashionability became a metaphor for the bubble of fashion itself. But balloons could also be the vehicle for more serious sentiment, and contemporary accounts were given an epic dimension through allusions to Homer and Milton while aeronauts were imagined in the company of archangels and emperors or were ranked with the gods. As Brant notes, "It was obvious to many that balloons could lead to secular appropriation of a symbolic realm previously held by God" (192). The elevated language of the sublime by which aeronautical flights were described added further gravitas and respectability to the discourse around balloons.

https://doi.org/10.1017/jbr.2018.122 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In more practical terms balloons posed a challenge to nationalist sensibilities: the peak of balloon madness came at a point when Britain was still bruised from the humiliation of the loss of America. The fact that the balloon was the invention of the Montgolfier brothers and that the most successful aeronauts were French was sufficient to arouse hostility and national affiliations were frequently vociferously expressed in the balloons' decorations. But aerial flight raised new questions—could the regions of the air belong to any one nation?—and, in the prelapsarian innocence of the 1780s before revolution swept away all old certainties of the ancien régime, they seemed to represent the great potential for mankind's common endeavors, undivided by national rivalries. Such irenic possibilities were never realized of course; moreover, aerial flight—as contemporaries recognized—had the potential to change the rules of engagement for nation states and warfare. Conventional borders and fortifications would be rendered redundant by airborne fleets (the language of aerostatics always borrowed from the navy).

This is a book rich in detail, and the mania for balloons that gripped the nation from 1783 to 1786 is securely tethered to the social, cultural, and political context. But context is not everything: following Rita Felski, Brant looks for the lines of affect and affection in understanding how we connect with the texts and objects of the past. This is not simply a survey of the phenomenon of the balloon but, as Brant brings to the fore in her final chapter, a meditation upon what balloons continue to mean for us in the present.

Rosemary Sweet
University of Leicester
rhs4@le.ac.uk

Clive Burgess. *The Right Ordering of Souls: The Parish of All Saints', Bristol, on the Eve of the Reformation.* Studies in the History of Medieval Religion 47. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2018. Pp. 463. $99.00 (cloth).
doi: 10.1017/jbr.2018.123

Clive Burgess has already made All Saints, Bristol, a parish well known to students of English late medieval devotional history. Through his multivolume edition of the church's archive—that is to say, the so-called Church Book, the wills and churchwardens' accounts, and the Halleway Chantry Deeds—he has made available a corpus of source material of quite unrivalled extent for the study of any English pre-Reformation parish. Over the years he has also published a portfolio of articles based on the All Saints' evidence, which between them argue a powerful case for the strength of lay investment in the late medieval parish and the complexity of the structures that underpinned its management. To this already considerable output he has now added a substantial monograph which offers the reader an overview of All Saints' history in the century before the Reformation and, alongside it, an evaluation of what the church's records teach us about English urban religious life more generally. If there is relatively little here that is new—Dr. Burgess having trailed many of his conclusions in earlier publications—whatever novelty the reader may feel is lacking is more than made up for by the impressive scale of the evidence. Here, in a series of chapters covering such topics as lay testamentary bequests, the foundation of chantries and anniversaries, maintenance of the church fabric, and the lay management of the parish, he lays bare the rich tapestry of All Saints' devotional life. We learn of the women who were benefactors of the church: Agnes Fyler, for example, who left her property in the High Street to the incumbent on condition of the celebration of her anniversary each year; Alice Chester, widow of the merchant Henry Chester and a significant businesswoman in her own right, who established a