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## The Self-Fashioning of James VI and I in His Speeches to the English Parliament

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Oral Presentation O8.1

**THE SELF-FASHIONING OF JAMES VI AND I IN HIS SPEECHES TO THE  
ENGLISH PARLIAMENT**

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James VI and I (r. 1603-1625) generally is considered to be England's most scholarly monarch. He authored works on poetry, political theory, theology, witchcraft, and the evils of tobacco, all of which have been studied thoroughly. Peculiarly, and in spite of the fact that his reputation has been improving, his speeches to Parliament have received little attention. A closer look at these speeches provides more insight into the first of the Stuart monarchs. What sort of image was James attempting to project, and how self-consciously was he fashioning a public persona? What rhetorical devices did he employ toward these ends? Was he trying to inform and chastise his subjects, or was he trying to appease them and compensate for his scandalous personal life? Using my general knowledge of literary theories, James's Works, the Journal of the House of Commons, and other sources, I build upon my senior seminar paper and on my research at Worcester College, Oxford, to examine James's speeches and contemporary reactions to them.