

### Marian Moments in Early Modern British Drama (Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama)

Lisa Hopkins



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Concerning itself with the complex interplay between iconoclasm against images of the Virgin Mary in post-Reformation England and stage representations that evoke various 'Marian moments' from the medieval, Catholic past, this collection answers the call for further investigation of the complex relationship between the fraught religio-political culture of the early modern period and the theater that it spawned. Joining historians in rejecting the received belief that Catholicism could be turned on and off like a water spigot in response to sixteenth-century religious reform, the early modern British theater scholars in this collection turn their attention to the vestiges of Catholic tradition and culture that leak out in stage imagery, plot devices, and characterization in ways that are not always clearly engaged in the business of Protestant panegyric or polemic. Among the questions they address are: What is the cultural function of dramatic Marian moments? Are Marian moments nostalgic for, or critical of, the 'Old Faith'? How do Marian moments negotiate the cultural trauma of iconoclasm and/or the Reformation in early modern England? Did these stage pictures of Mary provide subversive touchstones for the Old Faith of particular import to crypto-Catholic or recusant members of the audience?

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