



Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama (Women in Culture and Society)

Karen Newman

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By examining representations of women on stage and in the many printed materials aimed at them, Karen Newman shows how female subjectivity—both the construction of the gendered subject and the ideology of women's subjection to men—was fashioned in Elizabethan and Jacobean England. Her emphasis is not on "women" so much as on the category of "femininity" as deployed in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Through the critical lens of poststructuralism, Newman reads anatomies, conduct and domesticity handbooks, sermons, homilies, ballads, and court cases to delineate the ideologies of femininity they represented and produced. Arguing that drama, as spectacle, provides a peculiarly useful locus for analyzing the management of femininity, Newman considers the culture of early modern London to reveal how female subjectivity was fashioned and staged in the plays of Shakespeare, Jonson, and others.

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