

Shadowplay The Hidden Beliefs And Coded Politics Of William Shakespeare

This book expands upon recent historical analysis of Shakespeare's Othello, which has foregrounded issues of race, colonialism, and feminism, in order to show how the discourse of religion might affect our understanding of this play. It specifically looks at how the discourse of Catholicism, itself a highly contested topic in Shakespeare's world, affects our understanding of Desdemona, whom the play so directly compares to perhaps the most divisive and controversial figure of the entire 'Reformation' period, Mary the Mother of God. Explaining how this comparison is developed and clarified by Shakespeare, this book explores the difference our interpretation of Desdemona's 'Marian' dimension might make to critical understanding of the tragedy of Othello.

Jesuit Intellectual and Physical Exchange between England and Mainland Europe, c. 1580–1789: 'The World is our House'? gathers an interdisciplinary group of scholars to explore the Jesuit English Mission's wider impact within the Society and early modern European Catholicism.

Whereas traditional scholarship assumed that William Shakespeare used the medieval past as a negative foil to legitimate the present, Shakespeare, Catholicism, and the Middle Ages offers a revisionist perspective, arguing that the playwright valorizes the Middle Ages in order to critique the oppressive nature of the Tudor-Stuart state. In examining Shakespeare's Richard II, The Merchant of Venice, Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth, and The Winter's Tale, the text explores how Shakespeare repossessed the medieval past to articulate political and religious dissent. By comparing these and other plays by Shakespeare's contemporaries with their medieval analogues, Alfred Thomas argues that Shakespeare was an ecumenical writer concerned with promoting tolerance in a highly intolerant and partisan age. William Shakespeare's plays are riddled with passages, scenes and sudden plot twists which baffle and confound the most devoted playgoer and the most attentive commentator. Why, for example, didn't Hamlet succeed to the throne of Denmark at the instant of his father's death? (It's not because the Danish throne was elective.) Why does Chorus in Romeo and Juliet promise his audience 'two houres trafficke of our stage' when the play obviously runs almost three hours? How is it that Old Hamlet sent his son to school in (Protestant) Wittenberg but his Ghost was sent to (Catholic) Purgatory? and is there cause-and-effect here? How can Lancelot Gobbo be correct (and he is) when he claims Black Monday (the day after Easter) and Ash Wednesday (the 41st day before Easter) once fell on the same day? And what is a 'dram of eale'? This engaging and lucid book solves these tantalizing riddles and many others.

A Will to Believe is a revised version of Kastan's 2008 Oxford Wells Shakespeare Lectures, providing a provocative account of the ways in which religion animates Shakespeare's plays.

Text & Presentation is an annual publication devoted to all aspects of theatre scholarship. It represents a selection of the best research presented at the international, interdisciplinary Comparative Drama Conference. This edition includes papers from the 33rd annual conference held in Los Angeles, California. Topics covered include Bernard Shaw's use of gardens and libraries in Widowers' Houses, Northern Ireland emergency law in Brian Friel's The Freedom of the City, cannibalism and surrogation in Hamletmachine, Sergei Eisenstein's and Charlie Chaplin's use of the "montage of attraction," and adaptations of classic Greek tragedy in Mexico and Taiwan, among other topics.

For years scholars and others have been trying to out Shakespeare as an ardent Calvinist, a crypto-Catholic, a Puritan-baiter, a secularist, or a devotee of some hybrid faith. In Religion Around Shakespeare, Peter Kaufman sets aside such speculation in favor of considering the historical and religious context surrounding his work. Employing extensive archival research, he aims to assist literary historians who probe the religious discourses, characters, and events that seem to have found places in Shakespeare's plays and to aid general readers or playgoers developing an interest in the plays' and playwright's religious contexts: Catholic, conformist, and reformist. Kaufman argues that sermons preached around Shakespeare and conflicts that left their marks on literature, law, municipal chronicles, and vestry minutes enlivened the world in which (and with which) he worked and can enrich our understanding of the playwright and his plays.

Shakespeare, Dissent and the Cold War is the first book to read Shakespeare's drama through the lens of Cold War politics. The book uses the Cold War experience of dissenting artists in theatre and film to highlight the coded religio-political subtexts in Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth and The Winter's Tale.

Challenging the widely-held assumption that Slavoj Žižek's work is far more germane to film and cultural studies than to literary studies, this volume demonstrates the importance of Žižek to literary criticism and theory. The contributors show how Žižek's practice of reading theory and literature through one another allows him to critique, complicate, and advance the understanding of Lacanian psychoanalysis and German Idealism, thereby urging a rethinking of historicity and universality. His methodology has implications for analyzing literature across historical periods, nationalities, and genres and can enrich theoretical frameworks ranging from aesthetics, semiotics, and psychoanalysis to feminism, historicism, postcolonialism, and ecocriticism. The contributors also offer Žižekian interpretations of a wide variety of texts, including Geoffrey Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice, Samuel Beckett's Not I, and William Burroughs's Nova Trilogy. The collection includes an essay by Žižek on subjectivity in Shakespeare and Beckett. Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Literature but Were Afraid to Ask Žižek affirms Žižek's value to literary studies while offering a rigorous model of Žižekian criticism. Contributors. Shawn Alfrey, Daniel Beaumont, Geoff Boucher, Andrew Hageman, Jamil Khader, Anna Kornbluh, Todd McGowan, Paul Megna, Russell Sbriglia, Louis-Paul Willis, Slavoj Žižek

Speculation about Shakespeare's own religious beliefs and responses to the Reformation have dominated discussions of faith in the playwright's work for decades. As a result, we often lose sight of what's truly important—the plays themselves. By focusing on those plays in several succinct, fluently written chapters, Richard McCoy reminds us of the spell-binding power inherent in works like Othello, As You Like It, and The Winter's Tale and shows why they continue to cause audiences to gladly exercise what Samuel Taylor Coleridge called the "willing suspension of disbelief." Faith in Shakespeare ruminates on what it means to believe in the Bard's plays, exploring how their plots can be both preposterous and gripping, and how their characters seem more substantial and enduring than the people surrounding us in the theater. Informed by Coleridge's "poetic faith," the book discusses what this concept shares with religious faith and how it departs from recent historicist approaches to the dramatist's work. Faith in Shakespeare concentrates more on text than context, finding the afterlife of Shakespeare's language more vivid and engaging than theological controversies. The book confirms its convictions in literature's intrinsic powers by exploring the causes for our paradoxical belief in theater's potent but manifest illusions. Plays that ask their audience to "awake your faith" or "believe then, if you please" ultimately enable us to "mind true things by what their mockeries be." Rather than faith in God or the supernatural, McCoy argues that faith in Shakespeare is sustained and explained only by the complex, subtle, and entirely human power of poetic eloquence and dramatic performance.

Think you know Shakespeare? Think again . . . Was a real skull used in the first performance of Hamlet? Were Shakespeare's plays Elizabethan blockbusters? How much do we really know about the playwright's life? And what of his notorious relationship with his wife? Exploring and exploding 30 popular myths about the great playwright, this illuminating new book evaluates all

the evidence to show how historical material—or its absence—can be interpreted and misinterpreted, and what this reveals about our own personal investment in the stories we tell.

Mixed Faith and Shared Feeling explores the mutually generative relationship between post-Reformation religious life and London's commercial theaters. It explores the dynamic exchange between the imaginatively transformative capacities of shared theatrical experience, with the particular ideological baggage that individual playgoers bring into the theater. While early modern English drama was shaped by the polyvocal, confessional scene in which it was embedded, Musa Gurnis contends that theater does not simply reflect culture but shapes it. According to Gurnis, shared theatrical experience allowed mixed-faith audiences to vicariously occupy alternative emotional and cognitive perspectives across the confessional spectrum. In looking at individual plays, such as Thomas Middleton's *A Game of Chess* and Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, Gurnis shows how theatrical process can restructure playgoers' experiences of confessional material and interrupt dominant habits of religious thought. She refutes any assumption that audiences consisted of conforming Church of England Protestants by tracking the complex and changing religious lives of seventy known playgoers. Arguing against work that seeks to draw fixed lines of religious affiliation around individual playwrights or companies, she highlights the common practice of cross-confessional collaboration among playhouse colleagues. *Mixed Faith and Shared Feeling* demonstrates how post-Reformation representational practices actively reshaped the ways ideologically diverse Londoners accessed the mixture of religious life across the spectrum of beliefs.

Reading literary texts in their historical contexts has been the dominant form of interpretation in literary criticism for the past thirty years. This collection of essays reflects on the origins of historicism and its present usefulness as a mode of literary analysis, its limitations and its future. The volume provides a brief history of the practice from its Renaissance origins, offering examples of historicist work that not only demonstrate the continuing vitality of this methodology but also suggest new directions for research. Focusing on the major figures of Shakespeare and Milton, these essays provide important and concise representations of trends in the field. Designed for scholars and students of early modern English literature (1500–1700), the volume will also be of interest to students of literature more generally and to historians.

A wide-ranging yet accessible investigation into the importance of religion in Shakespeare's works, from a team of eminent international scholars.

The belief that the Virgin Mary was bodily assumed to be crowned as heaven's Queen has been celebrated in the liturgy and literature of England since the fifth century. The upheaval of the Reformation brought radical changes in the beliefs surrounding the assumption and coronation, both of which were eliminated from state-approved liturgy. *Queen of Heaven* examines canonical as well as obscure images of the Blessed Mother that present fresh evidence of the incompleteness of the English Reformation. Through an analysis of works by writers such as Edmund Spenser, Henry Constable, Sir John Harington, and the writers of the early modern rosary books, which were contraband during the Reformation, Grindlay finds that these images did not simply disappear during this time as lost "Catholic" symbols, but instead became sources of resistance and controversy, reflecting the anxieties triggered by the religious changes of the era. Grindlay's study of the Queen of Heaven affords an insight into England's religious pluralism, revealing a porousness between medieval and early modern perspectives toward the Virgin and dispelling the notion that Catholic and Protestant attitudes on the subject were completely different. Grindlay reveals the extent to which the potent and treasured image of the Queen of Heaven was impossible to extinguish and remained of widespread cultural significance. *Queen of Heaven* will appeal to an academic audience, but its fresh, uncomplicated style will also engage intelligent, well-informed readers who have an interest in the Virgin Mary and in English Reformation history.

The fruit of intensive collaboration among leading international specialists on the literature, religion and culture of early modern England, this volume examines the relationship between writing and religion in England from 1558, the year of the Elizabethan Settlement, up until the Act of Toleration of 1689. Throughout these studies, religious writing is broadly taken as being 'communicational' in the etymological sense: that is, as a medium which played a significant role in the creation or consolidation of communities. Some texts shaped or reinforced one particular kind of religious identity, whereas others fostered communities which cut across the religious borderlines which prevailed in other areas of social interaction. For a number of the scholars writing here, such communal differences correlate with different ways of drawing on the resources of cultural memory. The denominational spectrum covered ranges from several varieties of Dissent, through via media Anglicanism, to Laudianism and Roman Catholicism, and there are also glances towards heresy and the mid-seventeenth century's new atheism. With respect to the range of different genres examined, the volume spans the gamut from poetry, fictional prose, drama, court masque, sermons, devotional works, theological treatises, confessions of faith, church constitutions, tracts, and letters, to history-writing and translation. Arranged in roughly chronological order, *Writing and Religion in England, 1558-1689* presents chapters which explore religious writing within the wider contexts of culture, ideas, attitudes, and law, as well as studies which concentrate more on the texts and readerships of particular writers. Several contributors embrace an inter-arts orientation, relating writing to liturgical ceremony, painting, music and architecture, while others opt for a stronger sociological slant, explicitly emphasizing the role of women writers and of writers from different sub-cultural backgrounds.

This balanced and innovative collection explores the relationship of Shakespeare's plays to the changing face of early modern religion, considering the connections between Shakespeare's theatre and the religious past, the religious identities of the present and the deep cultural changes that would shape the future of religion in the modern world. In 16th century England many loyal subjects to the crown were asked to make a terrible choice: to follow their monarch or their God. The era was one of unprecedented authoritarianism: England, it seemed, had become a police state, fearful of threats from abroad and plotters at home. This age of terror was also the era of the greatest creative genius the world has ever known: William Shakespeare. How, then, could such a remarkable man born into such violently volatile times apparently make no comment about the state of England in his work? He did. But it was hidden. Revealing Shakespeare's sophisticated version of a forgotten code developed by 16th-century dissidents, Clare Asquith shows how he was both a genius for all time and utterly a creature of his own era: a writer who was supported by dissident Catholic aristocrats, who agonized about the fate of England's spiritual and political life and who used the stage to attack and expose a regime which he believed had seized illegal control of the country he loved. Shakespeare's plays offer an acute insight into the politics and personalities of his era. And Clare Asquith's decoding of them offers answers to several mysteries surrounding Shakespeare's

own life, including most notably why he stopped writing while still at the height of his powers. An utterly compelling combination of literary detection and political revelation, *Shadowplay* is the definitive expose of how Shakespeare lived through and understood the agonies of his time, and what he had to say about them.

Shakespeare's largely misunderstood narrative poems contain within them an explosive commentary on the political storms convulsing his country. The 1590s were bleak years for England. The queen was old, the succession unclear, and the treasury empty after decades of war. Amid the rising tension, William Shakespeare published a pair of poems dedicated to the young Earl of Southampton: *Venus and Adonis* in 1593 and *The Rape of Lucrece* a year later. Although wildly popular during Shakespeare's lifetime, to modern readers both works are almost impenetrable. But in her enthralling new book, the Shakespearean scholar Clare Asquith reveals their hidden contents: two politically charged allegories of Tudor tyranny that justified—and even urged—direct action against an unpopular regime. The poems were Shakespeare's bestselling works in his lifetime, evidence that they spoke clearly to England's wounded populace and disaffected nobility, and especially to their champion, the Earl of Essex. *Shadowplay* unearths Shakespeare's own analysis of a political and religious crisis which would shortly erupt in armed rebellion on the streets of London. Using the latest historical research, it resurrects the story of a bold bid for freedom of conscience and an end to corruption that was erased from history by the men who suppressed it. This compelling reading situates Shakespeare at the heart of the resistance movement.

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This book is an attempt to show something of the ways in which the Bible and the Christian tradition intersect the language of Shakespeare. *Word and Rite* also focuses on the manner in which rites are efforts to illuminate mysteries: the mystery of marriage, the mystery of baptism, the mystery of confession, the mystery of the Eucharist, the mystery of funerals, and even the mystery of words, in their relation to the Word. Holy objects such as the Fountain of blood may also be considered. Maimed rites frequently occur in Shakespeare, but through ceremony there are attempts to turn mayhem into mystery—especially in comedies. In the words of the author of the Foreword to this book: "In Shakespeare word and rite are as inseparable as word and sacrament in worship...so outward signs of inward truth are linked with words of these plays and with Scripture and with the Word incarnate." This book also explores the ramifications of observing this insight.

This book assesses the key definitions, forms, contexts and impacts of terrorist activity on the arts in the modern era, using historical and contemporary perspectives. Its empirical case studies include theatre, literature, music, visual art, mass media, film and the mores of 'ordinary life.' While its immediate reflective context is Islamic fundamentalist terrorism, the book reviews a broader range of definitions and counter-definitions of 'terrorism', 'state terrorism' and 'states of terror,' examining uses of the terms through a series of comparative analyses. Chapters focus on the intersection of these definitional questions with heuristic analysis of art forms, cultural activities and their socio-historical contexts. This book will be of interest to scholars in art history, terrorism, politics and the media, and visual culture.

This collection of essays opens a new perspective on the interplay of religious conflict and literary culture in early modern England. Placing the focus on negotiation instead of escalation, thirteen distinguished international scholars explore the specific ways available to mediate, displace or suspend confessional conflict in and through literature.

The Jesuit's influence is pervasive, but most especially when the poet/playwright takes up in his own work issues of special concern to the earl in a crucial decade (1593-1604), after Southwell's death, through the religious and political crises faced by the young nobleman during that time."--BOOK JACKET.

The Shakespearean World takes a global view of Shakespeare and his works, especially their afterlives. Constantly changing, the Shakespeare central to this volume has acquired an array of meanings over the past four centuries. "Shakespeare" signifies the historical person, as well as the plays and verse attributed to him. It also signifies the attitudes towards both author and works determined by their receptions. Throughout the book, specialists aim to situate Shakespeare's world and what the world is because of him. In adopting a global perspective, the volume arranges thirty-six chapters in five parts: Shakespeare on stage internationally since the late seventeenth century; Shakespeare on film throughout the world; Shakespeare in the arts beyond drama and performance; Shakespeare in everyday life; Shakespeare and critical practice. Through its coverage, *The Shakespearean World* offers a comprehensive transhistorical and international view of the ways this Shakespeare has not only influenced but has also been influenced by diverse cultures during 400 years of performance, adaptation, criticism, and citation. While each chapter is a freshly conceived introduction to a significant topic, all of the chapters move beyond the level of survey, suggesting new directions in Shakespeare studies – such as ecology, tourism, and new media – and making substantial contributions to the field. This volume is an essential resource for all those studying Shakespeare, from beginners to advanced specialists.

Considering major works by Kyd, Shakespeare, Middleton and Webster among others, this book transforms current understanding of early modern revenge tragedy. Examining the genre in light of historical revisions to England's Reformation, and with appropriate regard to the social history of the dead, it shows revenge tragedy is not an anti-Catholic and Reformist genre, but one rooted in, and in dialogue with, traditional Catholic culture. Arguing its tragedies are bound to the age's funerary performances, it provides a new view of the contemporary theatre and especially its role in the religious upheavals of the period.

Explores and reexamines Shakespeare's theology from the standpoint of revisionist history of the English Reformation.

Healy demonstrates how Renaissance alchemy shaped Shakespeare's bawdy but spiritual sonnets, transforming our understanding of Shakespeare's art and beliefs.

Based on solid research and clear explanations, this book provides a thorough and up-to-date analysis of 10 key facts and fictions regarding the life and works of William Shakespeare. Shakespeare is perhaps the most famous author in world literature. His works have attracted tremendous critical and historical attention, and the world in which he lived has been the subject of hundreds if not thousands of books. But for all the attention given to Shakespeare and his world, arguments continue about what we can say for sure concerning his life and works. This book brings a unique perspective to the ongoing fascination and debate over the life and works of the most renowned writer of all time. The book focuses on ten separate key issues, including Shakespeare's sexuality, his religion, his marriage and family,

his education, and the vexing "authorship question." Each chapter treats a particular topic and provides a section on what people think happened, how the story developed, and what we now believe is the historical truth. This book looks objectively and closely at evidence to provide the most likely explanations for questions that cannot be definitively answered. Using historical primary source documents, it gives readers the clearest possible view of endlessly fascinating topics. Chapters examine popular misconceptions related to Shakespeare's life and works. Each chapter discusses how the misconception developed and what we now believe is the truth behind the myth. Excerpts from primary source documents show readers how the misconceptions spread and provide evidence for what are now considered the underlying historical truths. Chapters cite works for further reading, and the book provides a selected, general bibliography.

Why does Catholicism have such an imaginative hold on Shakespearean drama, even though the on-going Reformation outlawed its practice? Shakespeare's *Unreformed Fictions* contends that the answers to this question are theatrical rather than strictly theological. Avoiding biographical speculation, this book concentrates on dramatic impact, and thoroughly integrates new literary analysis with fresh historical research. In exploring the dramaturgical variety of the 'Catholic' content of Shakespeare's plays, Gillian Woods argues that habits, idioms, images, and ideas lose their denominational clarity when translated into dramatic fiction: they are awkwardly 'unreformed' rather than doctrinally Catholic. Providing nuanced readings of generically diverse plays, this book emphasises the creative function of such unreformed material, which Shakespeare uses to pose questions about the relationship between self and other. A wealth of contextual evidence is studied, including catechisms, homilies, religious polemics, news quartos, and non-Shakespearean drama, to highlight how early modern Catholicism variously provoked nostalgia, faith, conversion, humour, fear, and hatred. This book argues that Shakespeare exploits these contradictory attitudes to frame ethical problems, creating fictional plays that consciously engage audiences in the difficult leaps of faith required by both theatre and theology. By recognizing the playfulness of Shakespeare's unreformed fictions, this book offers a different perspective on the interactions between post-Reformation religion and the theatre, and an alternative angle on Shakespeare's interrogation of the scope of dramatic fiction.

This ground breaking and accessible study explores the connections between the English Reformation's impact on the belief in eternal salvation and how it affected ways of believing in the plays of Shakespeare. Claire McEachern examines the new and better faith that Protestantism imagined for itself, a faith in which scepticism did not erode belief, but worked to substantiate it in ways that were both affectively positive and empirically positivist. Concluding with in-depth readings of *Richard II*, *King Lear* and *The Tempest*, the book represents a markedly fresh intervention in the topic of Shakespeare and religion. With great originality, McEachern argues that the English reception of the Calvinist imperative to 'know with' God allowed the very nature of literary involvement to change, transforming feeling for a character into feeling with one.

Gerard Kilroy here draws on newly discovered manuscript sources to reveal Campion as a charismatic and affectionate scholar who was finding fulfilment as priest and teacher in Prague when he was summoned to lead the first Jesuit mission to England. The book offers fresh insights into the dramatic search for Campion, the populist nature of the disputations in the Tower, and the legal issues raised by his torture. It was the monarchical republic itself that made him the beloved 'champion' of the English Catholic community. Edmund Campion presents the most detailed and comprehensive picture to date of an historical figure whose loyalty and courage, in the trial and on the scaffold, swiftly became legendary across Europe.

This book explores Shakespeare's engagement with the religious culture of his time. It unearths previously unrecognised allusions to the Bible and the liturgy as well as to the medieval mystery plays. It argues that we need to unravel the interpretative possibilities of these religious nuances in order to understand these ostensibly secular plays.

Looks at the life of Shakespeare and proposes that the man was a believing Catholic and that his status as such in anti-Catholic times informed all of his works.

Fulfilling the promise he made in his previous book, *The Quest for Shakespeare*, bestselling literary writer Joseph Pearce analyzes in this volume three of Shakespeare's immortal plays — *The Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet* and *King Lear* — in order to uncover the Bard's Catholic beliefs. In *The Quest for Shakespeare*, which has been made into an EWTN television series, Pearce delved into the known biographical evidence for Shakespeare's Catholicism. Here the popular and provocative author digs into the plays, which were written and first performed during the English crown's persecution of Catholics. English history and literature were taught for generations through the prism of English Protestantism. Of late both of these fields have been dominated in universities and academic presses by modern scholars with filters and interpretations of their own. Though the evidence for Shakespeare's Catholicism has been studied before now, thanks, in part, to the unique contribution of Joseph Pearce, the Bard's genius is being analyzed in the open air of the public arena, the very place where Shakespeare intended his dramas to entertain and edify.

Theatrical performance, suggest the contributors to this volume, can be an unpredictable, individual experience as well as a communal, institutional or cultural event. The essays collected here use the tools of theatre history in their investigation into the phenomenology of the performance experience, yet they are also careful to consider the social, ideological and institutional contingencies that determine the production and reception of the living spectacle. Thus contributors combine a formalist interest in the affective and aesthetic dimensions of language and spectacle with an investment in the material cultures that both produced and received Shakespeare's plays. Six of the chapters focus on early modern cultures of performance, looking specifically at such topics as the performance of rusticity; the culture of credit; contract and performance; the cultivation of Englishness; religious ritual; and mourning and memory. Building upon and interrelating with the preceding essays, the last three chapters deal with Shakespeare and performance culture in modernity. They focus on themes including literary and theatrical performance anxiety; cultural iconicity; and the performance of Shakespearean lateness. This collection strives to bring better understanding to Shakespeare's imaginative investment in the relationship between theatrical production and the emotional, intellectual and cultural effects of performance broadly defined in social terms.

This book follows the recent 'turn to religion' that has been so important to English Studies in the 21st century, and builds on many of the recent biographies of Shakespeare that have explored the playwright's religious views. While noticing biography, the focus of this book is upon the onstage action of *King Lear*, arguing that its 'theodicy' can be understood as the expansion of theological vision. The book makes this argument by drawing on an approach to literature known as 'theological aesthetics,' an approach pioneered by Hans Urs Von Balthasar. Engaging with not only W.R. Elton, but also other Shakespeare scholars such as Jan Kott and Kenneth Muir, it combines theological argument, performance criticism, and dramatic analysis to argue for a theological reading of *King Lear*.

This study concerns itself with a now-forgotten religious group, Spiritualists, and how their ensuing discussions of Shakespeare's meaning, his writing practices, his possible collaborations, and the supposed purity and/or corruption of his texts anticipated, accompanied, or silhouetted similar debates in Shakespeare Studies.

Edmund Spenser's vast epic poem *The Faerie Queene* is the most challenging masterpiece in early modern literature and is praised as the work most representative of the Elizabethan age. In it he fused traditions of medieval romance and classical epic, his religious and political allegory creating a Protestant alternative to the Catholic romances rejected by humanists and Puritans. The poem was later made over as children's literature, retold in lavish volumes and schoolbooks and appreciated in pedagogical studies and literary histories. Distinguished writers for children simplified the stories and noted artists illustrated them. Children were less encouraged to consider the allegory than to be inspired to the moral virtues. This book studies *The Faerie Queene's* many adaptations for a young audience in order to

provide a richer understanding of both the original and adapted texts.

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