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0521841240 - Privacy, playreading, and Women's Closet Drama, 1550-1700

Marta Straznicky

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PRIVACY, PLAYREADING, AND
WOMEN'S CLOSET DRAMA, 1550-1700

Marta Straznicky offers a detailed historical analysis of early modern women's closet plays: plays explicitly written for reading, rather than public performance. She reveals that such works were part of an alternative dramatic tradition, an elite and private literary culture, which was understood as intellectually superior to and politically more radical than commercial drama. Elizabeth Cary, Jane Lumley, Anne Finch, and Margaret Cavendish wrote their plays in this conjunction of the public and the private at a time when male playwrights dominated the theatres. In her astute readings of the texts, their contexts and their physical appearance in print or manuscript, Straznicky has produced many new insights into the place of women's closet plays both in the history of women's writing and in the history of English drama.

MARTA STRAZNICKY is Associate Professor of English Literature at Queen's University, Ontario, Canada. She has published on Renaissance drama in *Shakespeare Studies*, *English Literary History*, *English Literary Renaissance*, and *Studies in English Literature*. This is her first book.

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For my parents, Marta and Ivan Straznicky

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* * * *

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