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0521848423 - Memory and Forgetting in English Renaissance Drama: Shakespeare,
Marlowe, Webster

Garrett A. Sullivan

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Memory and Forgetting in English Renaissance Drama

Engaging with current debates over the nature of subjectivity in early modern England, this fascinating and original study examines sixteenth- and seventeenth-century conceptions of memory and forgetting, and their importance to the drama and culture of early modern England. Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr. discusses memory and forgetting as categories in terms of which a variety of behaviors – from seeking salvation to pursuing vengeance to succumbing to desire – are conceptualized. Drawing upon a range of literary and non-literary discourses, represented by treatises on the passions, sermons, anti-theatrical tracts, epic poems and more, Shakespeare, Marlowe and Webster stage “self-recollection” and, more commonly, “self-forgetting,” the latter of which provides a powerful model for dramatic subjectivity. Focusing on works such as *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Dr. Faustus* and *The Duchess of Malfi*, Sullivan reveals memory and forgetting to be dynamic cultural forces central to early modern understandings of embodiment, selfhood and social practice.

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