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## Writing, gender, and state in early modern England: Identity formation and the female subject

Matchinske, Megan, author

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## **Abstrak**

The period from the Reformation to the English Civil War saw an evolving understanding of social identity in England. This book uses four illuminating case studies to chart a discursive shift from mid-sixteenth-century notions of an individually generated, spiritually motivated sense of identity, to Civil War perceptions of the self as inscribed by the state and inflected according to gender, a site of civil and sexual invigilation and control. Each centres on the work of an early modern woman writer in the act of self-definition and authorization, in relation to external powers such as the Church and the monarchy. Megan Matchinske's study illustrates the evolving relationships between public and private selves and the increasing role of gender in determining different identities for men and women. The conjunction of gender and statehood in Matchinske's analysis represents an original contribution to the study of early modern identity.