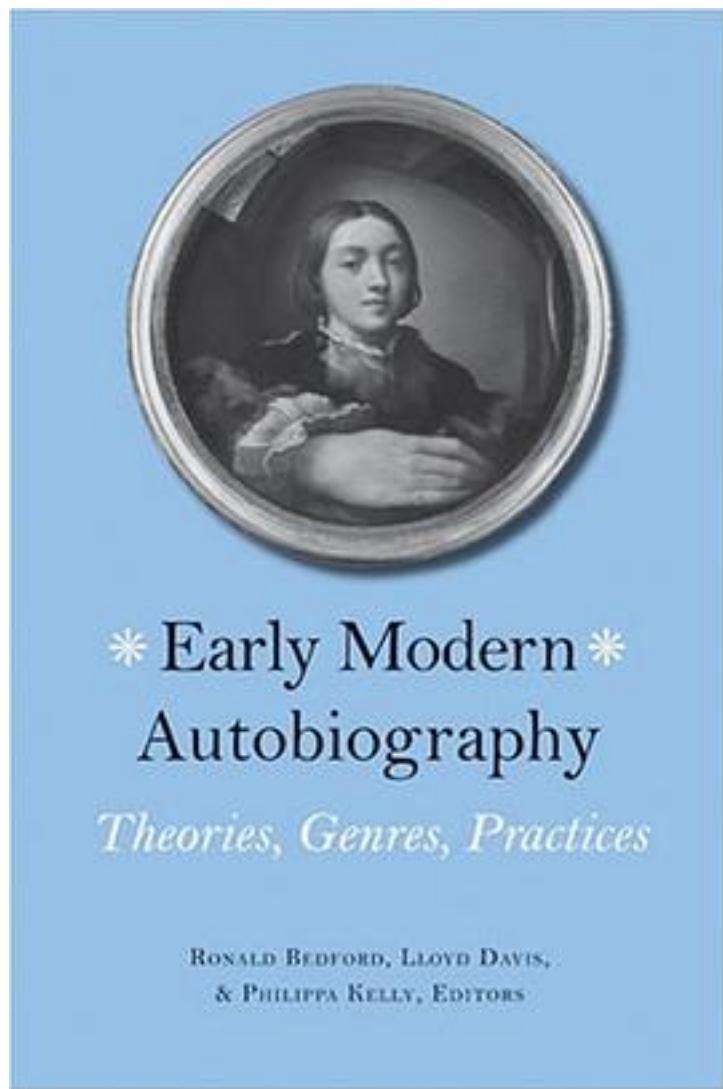


Early Modern Autobiography



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Why, and in what ways, did late medieval and early modern English people write about themselves, and what was their understanding of how "selves" were made and discussed? This collection goes to the heart of current debate about literature and autobiography, addressing the contentious issues of what is meant by early modern autobiographical writing, how it was done, and what was understood by self-representation in a society whose groupings were both elaborate and highly regulated. "Early Modern Autobiography" considers the many ways in which autobiographical selves emerged from the late medieval period through the seventeenth century, with the aim of understanding the interaction between those individuals' lives and their worlds, the ways in which they could be recorded, and the contexts in which they are read. In addressing this historical arc, the volume develops new readings of significant autobiographical works, while also suggesting the importance of texts and contexts that have rarely been analyzed in detail, enabling the contributors to reflect on, and challenge, some prevailing ideas about what it means to write autobiographically and about the development of notions of self-representation. "The idea of the self, as seen from diverse and fascinating perspectives on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century life: this is what readers can expect from "Early Modern Autobiography." A beautifully edited collection, genuinely far-reaching and insightful, "Early Modern Autobiography" makes known to us a great deal about how people saw themselves four hundred years ago."--Derek Cohen, Professor of English, McLaughlin College, York University "Acutely addressing a range of central issues from subjectivity to theatricality to religion, these essays will be of great interest to specialists in early modern studies and students of autobiographical writings from all eras."--Heather Dubrow, Tighe-Evans Professor and John Bascom Professor, Department of English, University of Wisconsin "The essays in this volume show where archival discoveries--memoirs, letters, account books, wills, and marginalia--can take us in understanding early modern mentalities. They document the interdependence of the abstract and the everyday, the social constructedness of self-awareness, local contexts for self-recordation, and impulses that range from legal purpose to imaginative escape. The sixteen chapters open many fascinating new perspectives on identity and personhood in Renaissance England."--Lena Cowen Orlin, Executive Director, The Shakespeare Association of America and Professor of English, University of Maryland Baltimore County Ronald Bedford is Reader in the School of English, Communication and Theatre at the University of New England in Armidale, New South Wales, and author of "The Defence of Truth: Herbert of Cherbury and the Seventeenth Century" and "Dialogues with Convention: Readings in Renaissance Poetry." The late Lloyd Davis was Reader in the School of English at the University of Queensland, and author of "Guise and Disguise: Rhetoric and Characterization in the English Renaissance" (1993) and editor of "Sexuality and Gender in the English Renaissance" (1998) and "Shakespeare Matters: History, Teaching, Performance" (2003). Philippa Kelly is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of New South Wales, and has published widely in the areas of Shakespeare studies, cultural studies, feminism, and postcolonial studies.

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