



Government by Polemic: James I, the King's Preachers, and the Rhetorics of Conformity, 1603-1625

Lori Ferrell

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This book is a study of the Anglican Church in the Jacobean period, a time of central importance in English religious and political history. By looking at official words instead of official deeds, the author challenges the recent revisionist position, made by both Anglican apologists and historians, that the reign of James I was an era of religious consensus and political moderation. Analyzing sermons preached and then ordered into print by the king, the book demonstrates that the Jacobean claim to "moderation" and the pursuit of a so-called *via media* were rhetorical strategies aimed at isolating Elizabethan-style Calvinist reformers and alienating their supporters.

Utilizing sources drawn from history, literature, and religion, this interdisciplinary work combines rhetorical and historical analysis in discussing the major religious and political issues of the period: the union with Scotland, the Gunpowder Plot, the Oath of Allegiance controversy, and the forceful elaboration of anti-Puritanism and ceremonialism in the Church of England. Throughout, the author presents evidence for her claim that the discourse of government is the substance of government.

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