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Edited by Catherine M. S. Alexander and Stanley Wells
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SHAKESPEARE AND SEXUALITY

This volume draws together ten essays of interest to students, scholars and Shakespeare enthusiasts which use a variety of approaches and materials to explore the significance of sexuality in Shakespeare's work. Some consider the erotic effect of Shakespeare's language in his use of metaphor and the transgressive riddle and pun. Others are concerned with expressions of desire (male, female, inter-racial, homosexual and heterosexual) in performance as well as text. A radical re-reading of Shakespeare's Sonnets shifts the sexual focus from a male lover to a black woman. The essays, many of which are reprinted from *Shakespeare Survey*, are introduced by Ann Thompson's freshly considered survey of the topic in recent criticism, and conclude with a new account by Celia Daileader of nudity in Shakespeare films.

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Editors' note

Shakespeare and Sexuality draws together ten important essays, written over the last decade, that use a variety of approaches and materials to explore the significance of sexuality in Shakespeare's work. The chapter by Celia R. Daileader has been specially commissioned, John Russell Brown's piece is reprinted from *New Theatre Quarterly*, and the remainder are reprinted from volumes of *Shakespeare Survey*. Some consider the erotic effect of Shakespeare's language in his use of metaphor and the transgressive riddle and pun. Others are concerned with expressions of desire (male, female, inter-racial, homosexual and heterosexual) in performance as well as text, and a radical re-reading of Shakespeare's Sonnets shifts the sexual focus from a male lover to a black woman.

Elizabethan legal and social history, sexual politics, and writing in a range of genres are used to inform the contemporary settings of the plays and the depiction – and often danger – of desire. Gender-generated theory and criticism interprets subsequent performance on stage and film.

An overview of the trends of the study of Shakespeare and Sexuality is provided in Ann Thompson's introductory essay on the current state of research and scholarship.

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