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SHAKESPEARE, LAW, AND MARRIAGE

This interdisciplinary study combines legal, historical and literary approaches to the practice and theory of marriage in Shakespeare's time. It uses the history of English law and the history of the contexts of law to study a wide range of Shakespeare's plays and poems. The authors approach the legal history of marriage as part of cultural history. The household was viewed as the basic unit of Elizabethan society, but many aspects of marriage were controversial, and the law relating to marriage was uncertain and confusing, leading to bitter disagreements over the proper modes for marriage choice and conduct. The authors point out numerous instances within Shakespeare's plays of the conflict over status, gender relations, property, religious belief, and individual autonomy versus community control. By achieving a better understanding of these issues, the book illuminates both Shakespeare's work and his age.

B. J. SOKOL is Professor of English at Goldsmiths College, University of London. Mary Sokol is Honorary Research Fellow at University College London and is also a lawyer. They have collaborated previously on a number of articles and are joint authors of *Shakespeare's Legal Language* (2000), a comprehensive reference work on the vast number of legal terms and phrases used throughout Shakespeare's plays and sonnets.

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For our sisters Nancy Sokol and Lee Langley

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Abbreviations: Shakespeare titles

Unless otherwise noted we cite all Shakespeare texts from the electronic version of the Oxford Shakespeare, edited by Wells and Taylor, 1989. This edition supplies the title abbreviations used in the notes, and the lineation used in the notes and running text. We append a table of the Oxford edition Shakespeare title abbreviations.

<i>1H4</i>	<i>Henry IV, part 1</i>
<i>1H6</i>	<i>Henry VI, part 1</i>
<i>2H4</i>	<i>Henry IV, part 2</i>
<i>ADO</i>	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>
<i>AIT</i>	<i>All Is True (Henry VIII)</i>
<i>ANT</i>	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>
<i>AWW</i>	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>
<i>AYL</i>	<i>As You Like It</i>
<i>COR</i>	<i>Coriolanus</i>
<i>CYL</i>	<i>The First Part of the Contention (Henry VI, part 2)</i>
<i>CYM</i>	<i>Cymbeline</i>
<i>ERR</i>	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>
<i>H5</i>	<i>Henry V</i>
<i>HAM</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>
<i>JC</i>	<i>Julius Caesar</i>
<i>JN</i>	<i>King John</i>
<i>LC</i>	<i>A Lover's Complaint</i>
<i>LLL</i>	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>
<i>LRF</i>	<i>The Tragedy of King Lear (Folio)</i>
<i>LRQ</i>	<i>The History of King Lear (Quarto)</i>
<i>LUC</i>	<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>
<i>MAC</i>	<i>Macbeth</i>
<i>MM</i>	<i>Measure for Measure</i>
<i>MND</i>	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>

x	<i>Abbreviations: Shakespeare titles</i>
<i>MV</i>	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>
<i>OTH</i>	<i>Othello</i>
<i>PER</i>	<i>Pericles, Prince of Tyre</i>
<i>R₂</i>	<i>Richard II</i>
<i>R₃</i>	<i>Richard III</i>
<i>RDY</i>	<i>Richard, Duke of York (Henry VI, part 3)</i>
<i>ROM</i>	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
<i>SHR</i>	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>
<i>SON</i>	<i>Sonnets</i>
<i>STM</i>	<i>Sir Thomas More</i>
<i>TGV</i>	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>
<i>TIM</i>	<i>Timon of Athens</i>
<i>TIT</i>	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>
<i>TMP</i>	<i>The Tempest</i>
<i>TN</i>	<i>Twelfth Night, or What You Will</i>
<i>TNK</i>	<i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i>
<i>TRO</i>	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>
<i>VEN</i>	<i>Venus and Adonis</i>
<i>WIV</i>	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>
<i>WT</i>	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>