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978-0-521-86904-1 - Male Friendship in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries

Tom Macfaul

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MALE FRIENDSHIP IN SHAKESPEARE AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Renaissance Humanism developed a fantasy of friendship in which men could be absolutely equal to one another, but Shakespeare and other dramatists quickly saw through this rhetoric and developed their own ideas about friendship more firmly based on a respect for human difference. They created a series of brilliant and varied fictions for human connection, as often antagonistic as sympathetic, using these as a means for individuals to assert themselves in the face of social domination. Whilst the fantasy of equal and permanent friendship shaped their thinking, dramatists used friendship most effectively as a way of shaping individuality and its limitations. Dealing with a wide range of Shakespeare's plays and poems, and with many works of his contemporaries, this study gives readers a deeper insight into a crucial aspect of Shakespeare's culture and his use of it in art.

TOM MACFAUL is a lecturer at Merton College, University of Oxford. He has written reviews for *The Times Literary Supplement* and *Notes and Queries*. This is his first book.

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To Alex

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Note on the text and list of abbreviations

Quotations from Shakespeare’s plays are from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd edition, ed. G. Blakemore Evans et al. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997); I have also consulted Arden, Cambridge and Oxford editions of various plays, and have on occasion silently preferred their spelling in insignificant matters; I have also anglicized American spellings of words such as *honour*. I have tried to refer to the best readily available modern-spelling texts of early modern authors.

The following journal abbreviations have been used:

<i>EC</i>	<i>Essays in Criticism</i>
<i>ELH</i>	<i>ELH: A Journal of English Literary History</i>
<i>ELR</i>	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
<i>HLQ</i>	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
<i>NQ</i>	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
<i>PQ</i>	<i>Philological Quarterly</i>
<i>RES</i>	<i>Review of English Studies</i>
<i>RQ</i>	<i>Renaissance Quarterly</i>
<i>SEL</i>	<i>Studies in English Literature</i>
<i>Sh. St.</i>	<i>Shakespeare Studies</i>
<i>Sh. Surv.</i>	<i>Shakespeare Survey</i>
<i>SP</i>	<i>Studies in Philology</i>
<i>SQ</i>	<i>Shakespeare Quarterly</i>