In early modern lyric poetry, the male poet or lover often appears not as powerful and masterly but rather as broken, abject, and feminine. Catherine Bates examines the cultural and literary strategies behind this representation and uncovers radically alternative models of masculinity in the lyric tradition of the Renaissance. Focusing on Sidney, Ralegh, Shakespeare, and Donne, she offers astute new readings of a wide range of texts – a sonnet sequence, a blazon, an elegy, a complaint, and an epistle. She shows how existing critical approaches have too much invested in the figure of the authoritative male writer to be able to do justice to the truly radical nature of these alternative masculinities. Taking direction from recent psychoanalytic theories of gender formation, Bates develops critical strategies that make it possible to understand and appreciate what is genuinely revolutionary about these texts and about the English Renaissance lyric tradition at large.

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MASCUlINITY, GENDER AND IDENTITY IN THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE LYRIC

CATHERINE BATES
Masculinity, Gender and Identity in the English Renaissance Lyric

Catherine Bates

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Abbreviations

C        Criticism
CI       Critical Inquiry
EC       Essays in Criticism
ELH      English Literary History
ELN      English Language Notes
ELR      English Literary Renaissance
JEGP     Journal of English and Germanic Philology
MLN      Modern Language Notes
MLQ      Modern Language Quarterly
MLR      Modern Language Review
MP       Modern Philology
OED      Oxford English Dictionary
PMLA     Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
PQ       Philological Quarterly
RES      Review of English Studies
Rh       Rhetorica
RP       Renaissance Papers
RR       Romanic Review
SAR      South Atlantic Review
SCJ      Sixteenth Century Journal
SCR      South Central Review
SEL      Studies in English Literature 1500–1900
SP       Studies in Philology
SQ       Shakespeare Quarterly
SS       Spenser Studies
SSEL     Salzburg Studies in English Literature
St       Style
TLS      Times Literary Supplement
TSLL     Texas Studies in Language and Literature