



Shakespeare and Manuscript Drama: Canon, Collaboration and Text

By James Purkis

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How did Shakespeare write his plays and how were they revised during their passage to the stage? James Purkis answers these questions through a fresh examination of often overlooked evidence provided by manuscripts used in early modern playhouses. Considering collaboration and theatre practice, this book explores manuscript plays by Anthony Munday, Thomas Middleton, and Thomas Heywood to establish new accounts of theatrical revision that challenge formerly dominant ideas in Shakespearean textual studies. The volume also reappraises Shakespeare's supposed part in the Sir Thomas More manuscript by analysing the palaeographic, orthographic, and stylistic arguments for Shakespeare's authorship of three of the document's pages. Offering a new account of manuscript writing that avoids conventional narrative forms, Purkis argues for a Shakespeare fully participant in a manuscript's collaborative process, demanding a reconsideration of his dramatic canon. The book will greatly interest researchers and advanced students of Shakespeare studies, textual history, authorship studies and theatre historians.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

James Purkis is Associate Professor in the Department of English and Writing Studies at the University of Western Ontario. He has published articles in journals, including Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England and Shakespeare Survey, and in edited collections, including Shakespeare and Textual Studies (Cambridge, forthcoming 2015) and Editing, Performance, Texts: New Practices in Medieval and Early Modern English Drama (2014).

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