

## 特別講演要旨

### Shakespeare, Sex and Punishment

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Shakespeare's plays and poems are not only replete with sexual references but also represent sexual moods and passions with extraordinary intensity. The combination of lust and loathing expressed in Sonnet 129 is particularly striking. In this lecture I argue that the essential context for understanding these elements in Shakespeare's thinking, and appreciating the effect they must have had on contemporary audiences, is the crushingly harsh regime of sexual discipline that church, state and civic authorities imposed in this period. In London, in particular, there was a multi-tiered system of great intensity. At the local level ordinary people spied on each other and not only reported transgressions to the authorities but denounced each other vociferously on the open streets as whores, whoremasters, bawds and cuckolds. In all twenty-six wards of the city the wardmote inquest met regularly to 'indict' suspects; those found 'faulty' were liable to expulsion from their neighbourhoods. At the apex of city government, the court of aldermen periodically stepped in to make an example: notorious transgressors were publicly shamed by being 'carted' – exposed in wagons trundled round the city streets and markets, with basins ringing before them to ensure maximum publicity. Bridewell Hospital, founded in 1553, was a harsh penitentiary in which not only notorious bawds and prostitutes but also non-professional sexual transgressors (adulterers, bastard-bearers and the like) were 'corrected' with whipping, imprisonment and hard labour. Severe though such measures were, Puritans wished to sharpen them – some going so far as to

demand the death penalty for adultery. These initiatives, coupled with a city of London campaign – hitherto little noticed – against brothels and high-profile prostitutes in the years around 1600, provide the immediate context for understanding not only *Measure for Measure* but also Dekker and Middleton’s *Honest Whore* and Marston’s *Dutch Courtesan* – plays that offer intriguing points of comparison with Shakespeare’s work.

