

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910164917203321
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Titolo	Friendship and its discourses in the seventeenth century // Cedric C. Brown [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Oxford : , : Oxford University Press, , 2016
ISBN	0-19-250813-X 0-19-183343-6
Edizione	[First edition.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource : illustrations (black and white)
Disciplina	820.9003
Soggetti	English literature - Early modern, 1500-1700 - History and criticism Friendship in literature Criticism, interpretation, etc.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	This edition previously issued in print: 2016.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Sommario/riassunto	Cedric C. Brown presents an account of the immense importance of friendship bonds to early modern society. Drawing on new archival research, he acknowledges a wide range of types of friendship, from the intimate to the obviously instrumental, and sees these practices as often coterminous with gift exchange.