

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910810612003321
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Titolo	Communal Justice in Shakespeare's England : Drama, Law, and Emotion // Penelope Geng
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Toronto, Ontario : , : University of Toronto Press, , [2021] ©2021
ISBN	1-4875-3744-1 1-4875-3743-3
Edizione	[First edition.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (276 pages)
Classificazione	cci1icc
Disciplina	016.37
Soggetti	Law in literature Lawyers in literature Law enforcement in literature
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Illustrations -- Preface -- Note on Texts -- Abbreviations -- Introduction: A Double Obligation -- Chapter One From Assise to the Assize at Home -- Chapter Two Judicature in Crisis: Henry IV, Part 2 -- Chapter Three Neighbourliness and the Coroner's Inquest in English Domestic Tragedies -- Chapter Four Repairing Community: Empathetic Witnessing in King Lear -- Chapter Five Communal Shaming and the Limitations of Legal Forms: Henry VI, Part 2 and Macbeth -- Postscript -- Acknowledgments -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	"The sixteenth century was a turning point for both law and drama. Relentless professionalization of the common law set off a cascade of lawyerly self-fashioning - resulting in blunt attacks on lay judgment. English playwrights, including Shakespeare, resisted the forces of legal professionalization by casting legal expertise as a detriment to moral feeling. They celebrated the ability of individuals, guided by conscience and working alongside members of their community, to restore justice. Playwrights used the participatory nature of drama to deepen public understanding of and respect for communal justice. In plays such as King Lear and Macbeth, lay people accomplish the work of magistracy:

conscience structures legal judgment, neighbourly care shapes the coroner's inquest, and communal emotions give meaning to confession and repentance. An original and deeply sourced study of early modern literature and law, *Communal Justice in Shakespeare's England* contributes to a growing body of scholarship devoted to the study of how drama creates and sustains community. Penelope Geng brings together a wealth of imaginative and documentary archives - including plays, sermons, conscience literature, Protestant hagiographies, legal manuals, and medieval and early modern chronicles - proving that literature never simply reacts to legal events but always actively invents legal questions, establishes legal expectations, and shapes legal norms."--
