



# Shakespeare and Faulkner

Selves and Others

**KARL F. ZENDER**

*Shakespeare and Faulkner* explores the moral and ethical dilemmas that characters face inside themselves and in their interactions with others in the works of these two famed authors. Karl F. Zender's characterological study offers insightful, critically rigorous, and at times quite personal analyses of the complicated figures who inhabit several major Shakespeare plays and Faulkner novels.

The two parts of this book—the first of which focuses on the English playwright, the second on the Mississippi novelist—share a common methodology in that they originate in Zender's history as a teacher of and writer on the two authors, who until now he generally approached separately. He emphasizes the evolving insights gleaned from reading these authors over several decades, situating their texts in relation to shifting trends in criticism and highlighting the contemporary relevance of their works. The final chapter, an extended discussion of Faulkner's *Intruder in the Dust*, attempts something unusual in Zender's critical practice: It relies less on the close textual analysis that characterizes his previous work and instead explores the intersections between events depicted in the novel and his own life, both as a child and as an adult.

*Shakespeare and Faulkner* speaks to the power of literature as a form of pleasure and of solace. With this work of engaged and thoughtful scholarly criticism, Zender reveals the centrality of storytelling to human beings' efforts to make sense both of their journey through life and of the circumstances in which they live.

**KARL F. ZENDER** is professor of English emeritus at the University of California, Davis. His books include *Shakespeare, Midlife, and Generativity* and *Faulkner and the Politics of Reading*.

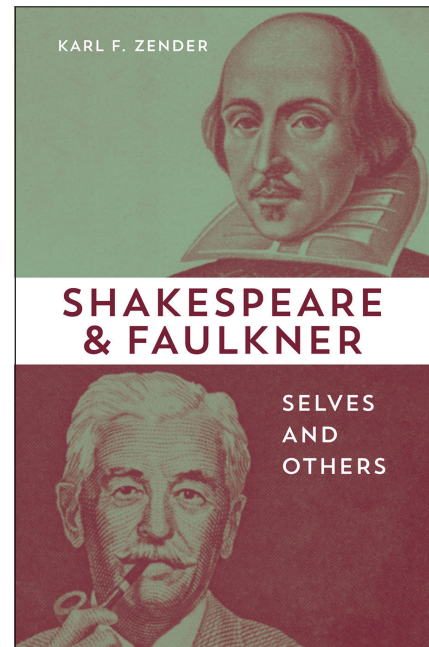
## PRAISE FOR *SHAKESPEARE AND FAULKNER*:

"*Shakespeare and Faulkner* is one of those rare works whose brilliance is so assured that it feels no need to announce itself. If, as Zender says, literature can be a form of consolation, it can also, as he allows us to see, be a form of transformation, of remaking—and not just of the literary characters he so closely examines."

—James R. Kincaid, author of *Annoying the Victorians*

"A model of contemporary reinvigoration of character study, this book forces us to think hard about the phenomenon of reading and about the personal investments each of us makes in the texts to which we are attracted."

—Arthur F. Marotti, *Distinguished Professor of English Emeritus, Wayne St. Univ.*



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