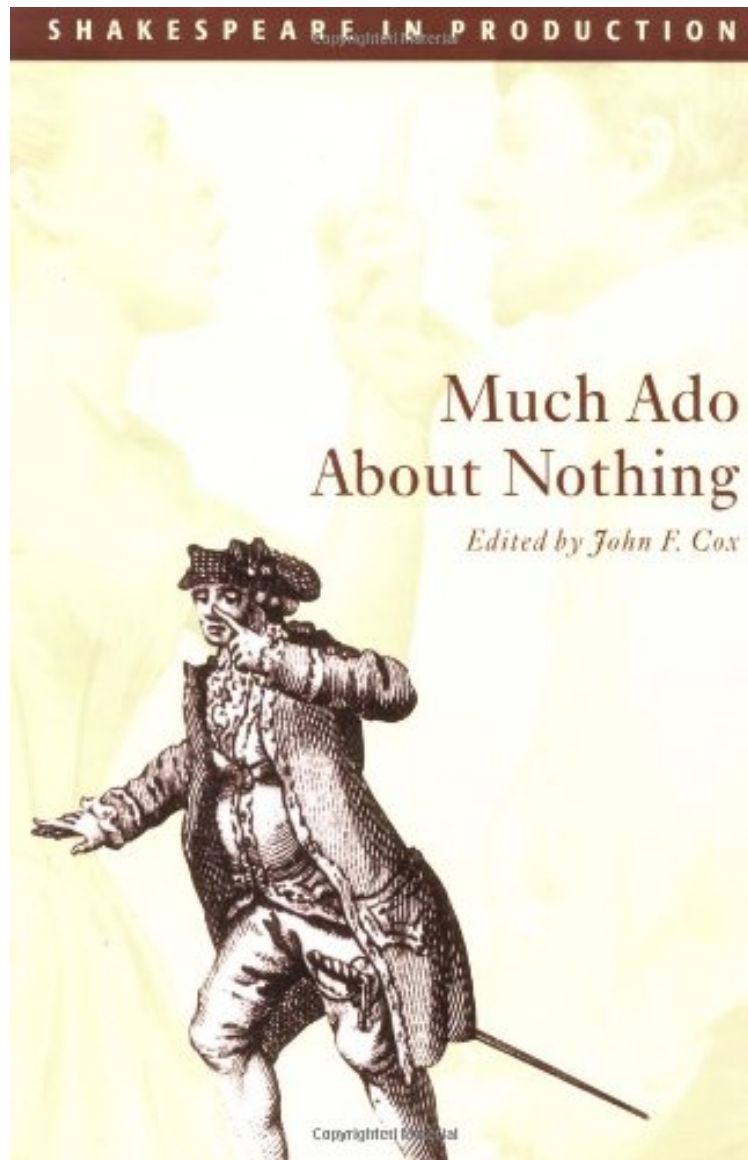


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Much Ado about Nothing (Shakespeare in Production)

William Shakespeare

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William Shakespeare : Much Ado about Nothing (Shakespeare in Production) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Much Ado about Nothing (Shakespeare in Production):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Hoity-toity By HHG. R. Hibbard's introductory essay, while hostile to those speculations by "scholars spending their days in the British Museum", is warmly appreciative of the play in the theater, and comments interestingly on the remarkable revival in LLL's theatrical fortunes since 1927. He suggests

(questionably) that Modernism, and particularly the prestige of James Joyce, prompted a reevaluation of punning wit: "Good puns were being recognized for what they are, a means of bringing two diverse kinds of experience into a sudden, unexpected, and illuminating juxtaposition with one another." Hibbard rightly emphasizes the play's sustained feminism and its readiness both to carry linguistic ingenuity to surrealist extremes and to challenge such exuberance by the unexpected late reminders of the realities of death and labor outside the Arcadian park-land. After examining evidence for the existence of the possible sequel, "Love's Labour's Won", Hibbard concludes: "It seems beyond doubt, therefore, that it did exist, that it was published, and that it has since disappeared. Further than that it is not possible to go." Here Hibbard's reluctance to speculate seems rather severe: the strikingly open-ended structure of LLL strongly portends a sequel in which the four lords meet after their year of probation and, after fresh contretemps, finally win the ladies' hands in marriage. Hibbard's footnotes in the text of the play are somewhat austere, in keeping with his general emphasis on the empirical and verifiable. He frequently deploys readings from OED and anthologies of proverbs; he concisely deciphers the arabesques of punning and the bawdy allusions; and he offers fewer evaluative, thematic, and argumentative comments than became customary in the Arden editions.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Creditable, lucid, and practical edition
By HH
The general introduction to this Oxford edition begins appropriately with a discussion of the possible anti-Semitism of "The Merchant of Venice". The editor Jay Halio claims that the treatment of Shylock is highly ambivalent, so that the character "transcends the type, shatters the conventional image with his appeal to our common humanity, and leaves us unsettled in our prejudices, disturbed in our emotions, and by no means sure of our convictions" (p. 13). After a detailed survey of stage productions through the ages, Halio concludes, "Whether the play is itself anti-Semitic or not depends largely upon one's interpretation, on the stage as on the page" (p. 83). While this is obviously true, and while Halio properly draws attention to a range of ambiguities in the play's depiction of both Shylock and his Christian adversaries, the word "largely" raises a question to which many scholars have offered a challenging, hostile answer. The general introduction also includes: a survey of sources and analogues, enlivened by a summary of Freud's interpretation of the three caskets; a brief account of the 'myth' of Venice, particularly its reputation for impartial justice; an estimate of the play's date (1596-7); and a helpful critical analysis which gives prominence to the theme of "bondage and bonding". Halio's annotation of the text is generally proficient and admirably frank in rendering sexual double entendres and is frequently illuminating in its references to modes of staging; the lengthy note on "Nerissa's ring" is exemplary in both these respects. As with other volumes of the Oxford World's Classics Shakespeare series, there is a good range of pictorial material and a very useful index.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Best version
By Fyoder Larue
Best version. Why? Because it's the closest to Shakespeare. Two Gents was never published in quarto form prior to the First Folio from whence this text comes, except this is cleaned up and in a modern font; none of those 's's that look like 'f's, not cramped into the minimum space possible because paper was hand made and expensive. Later editors would place a high value on consistency, aiming for a product that would be easily digestible by a solitary reader, with correct punctuation, flattening verse into prose where verse pops up unexpectedly. The text of the First Folio, on the other hand, still echos the spoken word, the words of a playwright writing for actors and the stage.

This edition of *Much Ado About Nothing* focuses wholly on the play in performance. Shifting trends in the production of this popular drama are analyzed in relation to the culture of each period since Shakespeare's time, with particular attention to gender issues. A commentary alongside the New Cambridge edition of the text recreates in lively detail interpretations of each passage in a variety of British, American, Canadian stage, film and TV productions. An essential resource for students, teachers and performers, this is also an illuminating book for theatergoers.

"...a much-needed and welcome addition to Shakespeare resources." *Choice* "...an indispensable resource for theatre historians, dramaturgs, directors, or performers." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* "This book could also be very useful to a student of gender, history, and language, especially its detailed information on lines added and cut, on treatments of the play's cuckoldry humor, and on the critics' anxious iteration of such key binaries as sharp/soft, wit/feeling, salt/sweet, and mannishness/womanliness. I do recommend this book for anyone trying to piece together information about the performance history of the play, especially those interested in Victorian and Edwardian productions. Those who are attempting to chart shifts in myths of gender as they shift over the longue dure of culture, or who are researching particular productions or players, will find this edition rich, intriguing, sometimes frustrating, but always informative." *Shakespeare Quarterly*

From the Publisher
Set in a courtly world of masked revels and dances, this play turns on the archetypal story of a lady falsely accused of unfaithfulness, spurned by her bridegroom, and finally vindicated and reunited with him. Villainy, schemes, and deceit threaten to darken the brilliant humor and sparkling wordplay--but the hilarious counterplot of a warring couple, Beatrice and Benedick, steals the scene as the two are finally tricked into admitting their love for each other in Shakespeare's superb comedy of manners.

From the Inside Flap
Set in a courtly world of masked revels and dances, this play turns on the archetypal story of a lady falsely accused of unfaithfulness, spurned by her bridegroom, and finally vindicated and reunited with him. Villainy, schemes, and deceits threaten to darken the brilliant humor and sparkling wordplay--but the hilarious counterplot of a

warring couple, Beatrice and Benedick, steals the scene as the two are finally tricked into admitting their love for each other in Shakespeare's superb comedy of manners. Each Edition Includes: - Comprehensive explanatory notes - Vivid introductions and the most up-to-date scholarship - Clear, modernized spelling and punctuation, enabling contemporary readers to understand the Elizabethan English- Completely updated, detailed bibliographies and performance histories - An interpretive essay on film adaptations of the play, along with an extensive filmography