

Renaissance Humanism And Shakespeare

In Part 1 Hill examines the effect of the idea of spatial infinity on seventeenth-century literature, arguing that the metaphysical cosmology of Nicholas of Cusa provided Renaissance writers, such as Pascal, Traherne, and Milton, with a way to construe the vastness of space as the symbol of human spiritual potential. Focusing on time in Part 2, Hill reveals that, faced with the inexorability of time, Christian humanists turned to St Augustine to develop a philosophy that interpreted temporal passage as the necessary condition of experience without making it the essence or ultimate measure of human purpose. Hill's analysis centres on Shakespeare, whose experiments with the shapes of time comprise a gallery of heuristic time-centred fictions that attempt to explain the consequences of human existence in time. Infinity, Faith, and Time reveals that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were a period during which individuals were able, with more success than in later times, to make room for new ideas without rejecting old beliefs.

Almost six hundred years ago, a short, genial man took a very old manuscript off a library shelf. With excitement, he saw what he had discovered and ordered it copied. This book details how one manuscript, plucked from a thousand years of neglect, made possible the world as we know it.

During the Renaissance, moral philosophy came to permeate the minds of many, including the spectators that poured into Shakespeare's Globe theatre. Examining these strains of thought that formed the basis for humanism, Raspa delves into King Lear, Hamlet, among others to unlock what influence this had on both Shakespeare and his interpreters.

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Essay from the year 2010 in the subject English - Literature, Works, Free University of Berlin (Englische Philologie), language: English, abstract: In this essay I will argue that one general concept of order and disorder based on binary oppositions does not apply to Shakespeare's tragedies. Instead it has to give way to a plurality of "orders" and "disorders" or even to the collapse of such a concept. Order can only be deduced from its counterpart and from the characters' actions to restore it; for instance, on a political or moral level. Order also alludes to the mental order and, respectively, to the mental disorder of the disjointed protagonist. Mental disorder, however, covers a range of "disorders" including Hamlet's "antic disposition", Ophelia's clinical madness, temporal rage and passionate love. The reader has either to accept the absurd situation, in which the disjointed individual attempts to restore his notion of "order" or instead face the fact that clear-cut categories are no longer applicable. This was all the more valid for Shakespeare's contemporaries, who found themselves in times of transition; a transition from feudal state to the absolutist monarchy of James I, from one religion to another, where the Act of Supremacy of 1534 marked a radical break with Catholic Rome; from the collective identity of the Middle Ages to Renaissance Humanism, which established a self-dependent individual. In this light, Shakespeare's protagonists do not really seek to restore order, but rather attempt to find some meaning in their disjointed universe and are thus children of their age.

Shakespeare is revered as the greatest writer in the English language, yet education reform in the English-speaking world is informed primarily by the 'market order', rather than the kind of humanism we might associate with Shakespeare. By considering Shakespeare's dramatisation of the principles that inform neoliberalism, this book makes an important

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contribution to the debate on the moral failure of the market mechanism in schools and higher education systems that have adopted neoliberal policy. The utility of Shakespeare's plays as a means to explore our present socio-economic system has long been acknowledged. As a Renaissance playwright located at the junction between feudalism and capitalism, Shakespeare was uniquely positioned to reflect upon the nascent market order. As a result, this book utilises six of his plays to assess the impact of neoliberalism on education. Drawing from examples of education policy from the UK and North America, it demonstrates that the alleged innovation of the market order is premised upon ideas that are rejected by Shakespeare, and it advocates Shakespeare's humanism as a corrective to the failings of neoliberal education policy. Using Shakespeare's Plays to Explore Education Policy Today will be of key interest to researchers, academics and students in the fields of education policy and politics, educational reform, social and economic theory, English literature and Shakespeare. Hamlet and the Vision of Darkness is a radical new interpretation of the most famous play in the English language. By exploring Shakespeare's engagements with the humanist traditions of early modern England and Europe, Rhodri Lewis reveals a Hamlet unseen for centuries: an innovative, coherent, and exhilaratingly bleak tragedy in which the governing ideologies of Shakespeare's age are scrupulously upended. This book establishes that life in Elsinore is measured not by virtue but by the deceptions and grim brutality of the hunt. It also shows that Shakespeare most vividly represents this reality in the character of Hamlet: his habits of thought and speech depend on the cultures of pretence that he affects to disdain, ensuring his alienation from both himself and the world around him. Lewis recovers a work of far greater magnitude than the tragedy of a young man who cannot make up his mind. He shows that in

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Hamlet, as in King Lear, Shakespeare confronts his audiences with a universe that received ideas are powerless to illuminate—and where everyone must find their own way through the dark. A major contribution to Shakespeare studies, this book is required reading for all students of early modern literature, drama, culture, and history.

This work explores Shakespeare's artistic achievements as a blend of the dramatic and lyrical modes. In a series of textual analyses, it traces the gradual integration of the two from 'Love's Labour's Lost' through 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'Richard II' to 'As You Like It' and 'Hamlet', with a final glance at the great tragedies.

A central feature of English Renaissance humanism was its reverence for classical Latin as the one true form of eloquent expression. Yet sixteenth-century writers increasingly came to believe that England needed an equally distinguished vernacular language to serve its burgeoning national community. Thus, one of the main cultural projects of Renaissance rhetoricians was that of producing a "common" vernacular eloquence, mindful of its classical origins yet self-consciously English in character. The process of vernacularization began during Henry VIII's reign and continued, with fits and starts, late into the seventeenth century. However, as Jenny C. Mann shows in *Outlaw Rhetoric*, this project was beset with problems and conflicts from the start. *Outlaw Rhetoric* examines the substantial and largely unexplored archive of vernacular rhetorical guides produced in England between 1500 and 1700. Writers of these guides

drew on classical training as they translated Greek and Latin figures of speech into an everyday English that could serve the ends of literary and national invention. In the process, however, they confronted aspects of rhetoric that run counter to its civilizing impulse. For instance, Mann finds repeated references to Robin Hood, indicating an ongoing concern that vernacular rhetoric is "outlaw" to the classical tradition because it is common, popular, and ephemeral. As this book shows, however, such allusions hint at a growing acceptance of the nonclassical along with a new esteem for literary production that can be identified as native to England. Working across a range of genres, Mann demonstrates the effects of this tension between classical rhetoric and English outlawry in works by Spenser, Shakespeare, Sidney, Jonson, and Cavendish. In so doing she reveals the political stakes of the vernacular rhetorical project in the age of Shakespeare. This is the first comprehensive critical comparison of English and Italian literature from the three centuries from Dante to Shakespeare. It begins by examining Chaucer's relationship with Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, and then looks at similar relationships within the areas of humanist education, lyric poetry, the epic, theatrical comedy, the short story and the pastoral drama. It provides a detailed comparison of major works from both traditions including descriptive and critical readings of Italian works. It shows why English writers valued such works and

demonstrates the ways in which they departed from or tried to outdo the Italian original. Assuming no prior knowledge of Italy or Italian literary history, this book introduces the student and general reader to one of the most important and fascinating phases in European literary history.

"Disknowledge": knowing something isn't true, but believing it anyway. In *Disknowledge: Literature, Alchemy, and the End of Humanism in Renaissance England*, Katherine Eggert explores the crumbling state of learning in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even as the shortcomings of Renaissance humanism became plain to see, many intellectuals of the age had little choice but to treat their familiar knowledge systems as though they still held. Humanism thus came to share the status of alchemy: a way of thinking simultaneously productive and suspect, reasonable and wrongheaded. Eggert argues that English writers used alchemy to signal how to avoid or camouflage pressing but discomfiting topics in an age of rapid intellectual change. *Disknowledge* describes how John Donne, George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, John Dee, Christopher Marlowe, William Harvey, Helkiah Crooke, Edmund Spenser, and William Shakespeare used alchemical imagery, rhetoric, and habits of thought to shunt aside three difficult questions: how theories of matter shared their physics with Roman Catholic transubstantiation; how Christian Hermeticism depended on

Jewish Kabbalah; and how new anatomical learning acknowledged women's role in human reproduction. *Disknowledge* further shows how Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and Margaret Cavendish used the language of alchemy to castigate humanism for its blind spots and to invent a new, posthumanist mode of knowledge: writing fiction. Covering a wide range of authors and topics, *Disknowledge* is the first book to analyze how English Renaissance literature employed alchemy to probe the nature and limits of learning. The concept of *disknowledge*—willfully adhering to something we know is wrong—resonates across literary and cultural studies as an urgent issue of our own era.

The topic of certitude is much debated today. On one side, commentators such as Charles Krauthammer urge us to achieve "moral clarity." On the other, those like George Will contend that the greatest present threat to civilization is an excess of certitude. To address this uncomfortable debate, Susan Schreiner turns to the intellectuals of early modern Europe, a period when thought was still fluid and had not yet been reified into the form of rationality demanded by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Schreiner argues that Europe in the sixteenth century was preoccupied with concerns similar to ours; both the desire for certainty -- especially religious certainty -- and warnings against certainty permeated the earlier era. Digging beneath overt theological and philosophical

problems, she tackles the underlying fears of the period as she addresses questions of salvation, authority, the rise of skepticism, the outbreak of religious violence, the discernment of spirits, and the ambiguous relationship between appearance and reality. In her examination of the history of theological polemics and debates (as well as other genres), Schreiner sheds light on the repeated evaluation of certainty and the recurring fear of deception. Among the texts she draws on are Montaigne's Essays, the mystical writings of Teresa of Avila, the works of Reformation fathers William of Occam, Luther, Thomas Muntzer, and Thomas More; and the dramas of Shakespeare. The result is not a book about theology, but rather about the way in which the concern with certitude determined the theology, polemics and literature of an age.

Connecting Renaissance humanism to the variety of “critical posthumanisms” in twenty-first-century literary and cultural theory, Renaissance Posthumanism reconsiders traditional languages of humanism and the human, not by nostalgically enshrining or triumphantly superseding humanisms past but rather by revisiting and interrogating them. What if today’s “critical posthumanisms,” even as they distance themselves from the iconic representations of the Renaissance, are in fact moving ever closer to ideas in works from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century? What if “the human” is at once embedded and

embodied in, evolving with, and de-centered amid a weird tangle of animals, environments, and vital materiality? Seeking those patterns of thought and practice, contributors to this collection focus on moments wherein Renaissance humanism looks retrospectively like an uncanny “contemporary”—and ally—of twenty-first-century critical posthumanism.

This study contends that folly is of fundamental importance to the implicit philosophical vision of Shakespeare’s drama. The discourse of folly’s wordplay, jubilant ironies, and vertiginous paradoxes furnish Shakespeare with a way of understanding that lays bare the hypocrisies and absurdities of the serious world. Like Erasmus, More, and Montaigne before him, Shakespeare employs folly as a mode of understanding that does not arrogantly insist upon the veracity of its own claims – a fool’s truth, after all, is spoken by a fool. Yet, as this study demonstrates, Shakespearean folly is not the sole preserve of professional jesters and garrulous clowns, for it is also apparent on a thematic, conceptual, and formal level in virtually all of his plays. Examining canonical histories, comedies, and tragedies, this study is the first to either contextualize Shakespearean folly within European humanist thought, or to argue that Shakespeare’s philosophy of folly is part of a subterranean strand of Western philosophy, which itself reflects upon the folly of the wise. This strand runs from

the philosopher-fool Socrates through to Montaigne and on to Nietzsche, but finds its most sustained expression in the Critical Theory of the mid to late twentieth-century, when the self-destructive potential latent in rationality became an historical reality. This book makes a substantial contribution to the fields of Shakespeare, Renaissance humanism, Critical Theory, and Literature and Philosophy. It illustrates, moreover, how rediscovering the philosophical potential of folly may enable us to resist the growing dominance of instrumental thought in the cultural sphere.

Renaissance humanists believed that if you want to build a just society you must begin with the facts of human nature. This book argues that the idea of a universal human nature was as important to Shakespeare as it was to every other Renaissance writer. In doing so it questions the central principle of post-modern Shakespeare criticism. Postmodernists insist that the notion of defining a human essence was alien to Shakespeare and his contemporaries; as radical anti-essentialists, the Elizabethans were, in effect, postmodernists before their time. In challenging this claim Shakespeare's Humanism shows that for Shakespeare, as for every other humanist writer in this period, the key to all wise action was 'the knowledge of our selves and our human condition'.

This collection of essays historicizes and theorizes forgetting in English Renaissance

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literary texts and their cultural contexts. Its essays open up an area of study overlooked by contemporary Renaissance scholarship, which is too often swayed by a critical paradigm devoted to the "art of memory." This volume recovers the crucial role of forgetting in producing early modernity's subjective and collective identities, desires and fantasies.

Seminar paper from the year 2010 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Literature, grade: 1,7, RWTH Aachen University (Institut für Anglistik), course: Shakespeare's Comedies, language: English, abstract: SHAKESPEARE was one of the most famous renaissance writers. His play "Twelfth Night" was written during the English renaissance and maybe overlapped with the creation of the great tragedy Hamlet. The aim of this paper is to analyse in what way Shakespeare presented the characters of the play. Central to this discussion are the contemporary understandings of the human nature as well as the psychological assumptions concerning the mental distraction of people. It is undisputable that CICERO and his work "De officiis" had a great impact on the English renaissance humanists. The term "humanism" is a translation of the Italian word 'umanista' which denotes someone who teaches humanae literae. WELLS rightly claims that "the ruling ambition of the humanists was to recover the values of classical civilisation." Their ideal form of government was "a just society, ruled by a wise and responsible oligarchy." And "a humanist was someone who made it his business to understand humankind." So now the audience of Twelfth Night

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is confronted with an unordered society that consists of characters that absolutely lack the renaissance ideal of how humans should be. It is proposed to show how SHAKESPEARE manages to reorder the mad state Illyria - the setting of the play. Moreover the process of metamorphosing into ideal humans in the sense of the Renaissance understanding will be traced. Since there are reams of publications on SHAKESPEARE'S works a choice of some of them had to be carried out. ROBIN WELLS' monograph Shakespeare's Humanism served as a basis for this paper. WELLS portrays a very detailed image of what concerned the English renaissance humanists. Moreover he classifies SHAKESPEARE and his plays in the contemporary world-view. In order to reconstruct t"

Shakespeare and Posthumanist Theory charts challenges in the field of Shakespeare studies to the assumption that the category "human†? is real, stable, or worthy of privileging in discussions of the playwright's work. Drawing on a variety of methodologies - cognitive theory, systems theory, animal studies, ecostudies, the new materialisms - the volume investigates the world of Shakespeare's plays and poems in order to represent more thoroughly its variety, its ethics of inclusion, and its resistance to human triumphalism and exceptionalism. Karen Raber, a leading scholar in the field, clearly and cogently guides the reader through complex theoretical terrain, providing fresh, exciting readings of plays including Othello, The Tempest, Titus Andronicus, Troilus and Cressida and Henry IV Part 1.

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Revised throughout, the book includes: a new introduction which focuses attention on what is specific to literature's treatment of the human (as epitomised by Shakespeare); a section drawing on new work on literary genres as different forms of engagement Shakespeare at best answers the needs of a particular generation in one country or another. Those needs vary: directors and actors, audiences and common readers, scholar-teachers and students do not necessarily seek the same aids for understanding. Shakespeare is an international possession, transcending nations, languages and professions. More than the Bible, which competes with the Koran, and with Indian and Chinese religious writings, Shakespeare is unique in the world's culture, not just in the world's theatres. Shakespeare's literary and cultural authority is now so unquestioned that it has taken on an aura of historical inevitability and has enshrined the figure of the solitary author as the standard bearer of literary production. It is all the more important, then, to suggest that Shakespeare had a genius for timing—managing to be born in exactly the right place and at the right time to nourish his particular form of greatness. He regularly demonstrates and celebrates the ideas and ideals of Renaissance humanism, often—even in his tragic plays—presenting characters that embody the principles and ideals of Renaissance humanism, or people of tremendous self-knowledge and wit that are capable of self-expression and the practice of individual freedom. Shakespeare himself can be understood as the ultimate product of Renaissance humanism; he was an artist who openly practised and celebrated with a

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deep understanding of humanity and an uncanny ability for self-expression.

The author argues that Renaissance humanism created a system of bigotry and eroded the practice of Christianity, and that Shakespeare attempted to expose and condemn that shift. The book examines six of his plays—Titus Andronicus, The Merchant of Venice, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth—and explores how they satirized humanism's grounding in Aristotle's philosophy of slavery and supremacy.

Shakespeare used characters like Hamlet and Aaron the Moor to attack that bigotry, and his stance against racism and humanism revealed his Catholic faith.

Presents a collection of critical essays about William Shakespeare's play, "Hamlet."

In the first full-length study of Shakespeare's Roman plays, Coppélia Kahn brings to these texts a startling, critical perspective which interrogates the gender ideologies lurking behind 'Roman virtue'. Plays featured include: * Titus Andronicus * Julius Caesar * Antony and Cleopatra * Coriolanus * Cymbeline Setting the Roman works in the dual context of the popular theatre and Renaissance humanism, the author identifies new sources which she analyzes from a historicised feminist perspective. Roman Shakespeare is written in an accessible style and will appeal to scholars and students of Shakespeare and those interested in feminist theory, as well as classicists.

What does it mean to be a free citizen in times of war and tyranny? What kind of education is needed to be a 'first' or leading citizen in a strife-filled country? And what does it mean to be free when freedom is forcibly opposed? These concerns pervade Thomas More's earliest writings, writings mostly unknown, including his 280 poems, declamation on tyrannicide,

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coronation ode for Henry VIII and his life of Pico della Mirandola, all written before Richard III and Utopia. This book analyzes those writings, guided especially by these questions: Faced with generations of civil war, what did young More see as the causes of that strife? What did he see as possible solutions? Why did More spend fourteen years after law school learning Greek and immersed in classical studies? Why do his early works use vocabulary devised by Cicero at the end of the Roman Republic?

This collection of writings brings together Northrop Frye's large body of work on Shakespeare and other Renaissance writers (with the exception of Milton, who is featured in other volumes), and includes major articles, introductions, public lectures, and four previously published books. Spanning forty years of Frye's career as a university professor and literary critic, these insightful analyses not only reveal the author's formidable intellect but also offer the reader a transformative experience of creative imagination. With extensive annotation and an in-depth critical introduction, the volume demonstrates Frye's wide-ranging knowledge of Renaissance culture and its pivotal significance in his work, his impact on Renaissance criticism and the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, and his continuing importance as a literary theorist. Troni V. Grande is an associate professor in the Department of English at the University of Regina. Garry Sherbert is an associate professor in the Department of English at the University of Regina.

Renaissance Humanism developed a fantasy of friendship in which men can be absolutely equal to one another, but Shakespeare and other dramatists quickly saw through this rhetoric and developed their own ideas about friendship more firmly based on a respect for human difference. They created a series of brilliant and varied fictions for human connection, as often

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antagonistic as sympathetic, using these as a means for individuals to assert themselves in the face of social domination. Whilst the fantasy of equal and permanent friendship shaped their thinking, dramatists used friendship most effectively as a way of shaping individuality and its limitations. Dealing with a wide range of Shakespeare's plays and poems, and with many works of his contemporaries, this study gives readers a deeper insight into a crucial aspect of Shakespeare's culture and his use of it in art.

Previous criticism has not adequately discussed oriental aspects of the content of Shakespearean drama. In addition to his portrayal of oriental figures (such as Cleopatra, Othello, and Shylock) and his use of literary genres and motifs that have roots in oriental tradition (such as that of the tragic romance in *Romeo and Juliet*, there are certain key elements in Shakespeare's thought and outlook that can only be properly understood within the larger contribution of the oriental legacy. This legacy has clear relevance not only to the exemplary fate of the lovers in *Romeo and Juliet*, but also to the destinies of such major Shakespearean heroes as *Hamlet* and *Lear*. *Shakespeare, the Orient, and the Critics* investigates the boundaries of oriental framework within works such as *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *The Tempest*. Stylistically, at the heart of Shakespeare's orientalism are two long-recognized features of his dramatic art: his predilection for reversing stereotypes and his sympathy and identification with the alien and the «other.» This can be most clearly seen in the love tragedies of *Othello* and *Anthony and Cleopatra* as well as the romantic comedy of *The Merchant of Venice*. Ultimately, the philosophic underpinning of such works is a special expression of Renaissance humanism that transcends the boundaries of class, race, and culture. Throwing fresh light on a much discussed but still controversial field, this collection of essays

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places the presence of Italian literary theories against and alongside the background of English dramatic traditions, to assess this influence in the emergence of Elizabethan theatrical convention and the innovative dramatic practices under the early Stuarts.

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Â€Commonplace Dissidenceâ€ focuses on the use and treatment of proverbs in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English literature. I argue that despite the prevalence of commonplace books, proverb collections, and other forms of syncretic textual production, reading and writing grounded in humanist theory and commonplace practice were often treated critically or cynically during the period. Focusing on works such as those of Thomas Wyatt, Philip Sidney, William Shakespeare, and John Milton that resist treating commonplaces as universal, approved truths, I recover the dissidence and motives evidenced in the destabilization of inherited proverbial wisdom in order to challenge our current understanding of the ways in which commonplace methods influenced literary production during the English Renaissance. Throughout his career, from the early play *Love's Labour's Lost* to one of his last romances, *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare was intrigued by Russia. Reciprocating that intrigue over the last few centuries, Russia, as so many other countries, has claimed Shakespeare as its own. The essays in this book represent the work of Russian and Ukrainian scholars from three different perspectives: explaining the plays to Russian audiences, discussing Russian theater

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for Western audiences, and dealing with contemporary criticism.

From the fourteenth to the seventeenth century, humanism played a key role in European culture. Beginning as a movement based on the recovery, interpretation and imitation of ancient Greek and Roman texts and the archaeological study of the physical remains of antiquity, humanism turned into a dynamic cultural programme, influencing almost every facet of Renaissance intellectual life. The fourteen essays in this 1996 volume deal with all aspects of the movement, from language learning to the development of science, from the effect of humanism on biblical study to its influence on art, from its Italian origins to its manifestations in the literature of More, Sidney and Shakespeare. A detailed biographical index, and a guide to further reading, are provided. Overall, *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* provides a comprehensive introduction to a major movement in the culture of early modern Europe.

The term 'humanist' originally referred to a scholar of Classical literature. In the Renaissance and particularly in the Elizabethan age, European intellectuals devoted themselves to the rediscovery and study of Roman and Greek literature and culture. This trend of Renaissance thought became known in the 19th century as 'humanism'. Often a difficult concept to understand, the term Elizabethan Humanism is introduced in Part One and explained in a number of different contexts. Part Two illustrates how knowledge of humanism allows a clearer understanding of Elizabethan literature, by looking closely at major texts of the Elizabethan period which include Spenser's, 'The Shepherd's Calendar'; Marlowe's 'Faustus' and Shakespeare's 'Hamlet'.

"Shakespeare the Renaissance Humanist is a study of the moral philosophy that underlay

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the "street" humanism in the mind of Shakespeare's spectator when he went to see Hamlet or King Lear at the Globe. The work examines how his plays reflected the moral philosophy that his spectators were living in their daily lives"

Presenting a background study of honor, the author compares ancient concepts with the sympathetic restatements of them that appeared during the Renaissance. He places Shakespeare's plays in the context of these Renaissance ideas, pointing up the sharp conflict between Christian morality and the revived pagan humanism. He demonstrates by pertinent evidence from the plays that Shakespeare favored humanist values over Christian values. Originally published in 1960. The Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print-on-demand technology to again make available previously out-of-print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press. These editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback and hardcover editions. The goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905.

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