



## **Much Ado About Nothing: The Oxford Shakespeare (Oxford World's Classics)**



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*William Shakespeare*

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Sheldon P Zitner (Editor) Sparkling with the witty dialogue between Beatrice and Benedict, Much Ado About Nothing is one of Shakespeare's most enjoyable and theatrically successful comedies. This edition offers a newly edited text and a helpful and critically aware introduction that pays particular attention to analysis of the play's minor characters, and rethinks the attitudes to gender relations that underlie the comedy and determine its view of marriage. Publisher: Oxford University Press Paperback ISBN 9780199536115

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224 pages

Amazon Review

Like *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Much Ado about Nothing* shows Shakespeare moving into a more complex and darker terrain through his exploration of an apparently harmless comical romance. The play revolves around the adventures of the two gallants Claudio and Benedick at the court of Sicily. Claudio falls in love with the governor's daughter Hero, and is eager for his more misanthropic friend Benedick to also find love. Benedick is introduced to the fiery, independent Beatrice, and sparks soon fly as they banter with each other in a more wittier version of Kate and Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Beatrice has some wonderful ripostes to marriage asking why should a woman marry "a clod of wayward marl", whilst Benedick grumbles that "She speaks poniards and every word stabs". Meanwhile, the jealous Don John convinces Claudio that Hero has in fact been unfaithful to him. When Claudio rejects Hero on their wedding day, she faints and is taken for dead. In the hectic final scenes the play moves towards reconciliation between Claudio and Hero, and the tentative admission of the love between Benedick and Beatrice. Famously filmed by Kenneth Branagh in the Tuscan countryside with a cast that included Keanu Reeves, *Much Ado about Nothing* remains one of Shakespeare's most successful comedies. --*Jerry Brotton*. Review

A lovely publication, great explanations, notes and images. (4 star Amazon review) 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

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