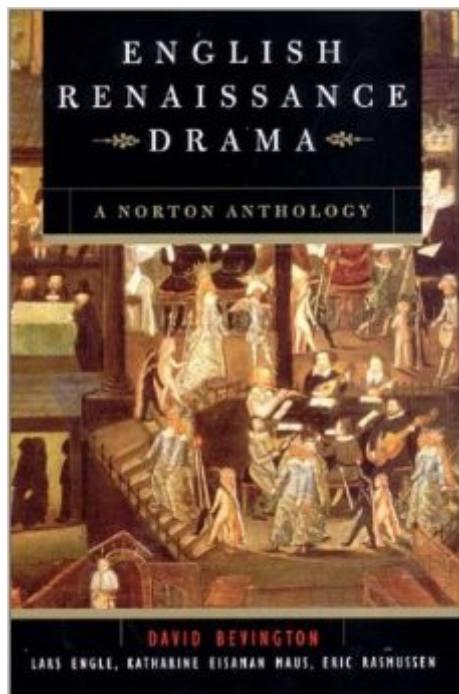


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# English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology



## Synopsis

The most extensive new collection in this field published in more than three decades, English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology surveys the astonishing, and astonishingly varied, dramatic works written and performed in Elizabethan and Jacobean England. Popular in their own time, the 27 plays included here—by Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, John Webster, Thomas Middleton, among many others—reveal why these playwrights' achievements, like Shakespeare's, deserve reading, teaching, and performing afresh in our time. Edited by a team of exceptional scholars and teachers, this anthology opens an extraordinary tradition in drama to new readers and audiences.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is an excellent selection of plays from authors contemporary to Shakespeare. There are some real masterpieces here, such as *Women Beware Women* and *the Maid's Tragedy*, that have been unfairly neglected due to the looming presence of Shakespeare. The editing is generally fine, although perhaps a bit overdone. According to the editors, every second line includes a sexual reference. The introductions to individual plays are helpful AFTER you've read the play. For English Majors and scholars, these plays are an unexplored gold mine!!

Many of the important plays of Shakespeare's contemporaries are included in this excellent collection. In other editions of these plays, the reader is left to his or her own devices, but this

edition has thorough notes and introductions of the type one usually only sees in Shakespeare collections. Plays that one has often read about, but not actually read, such as Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, become wonderfully accessible in this superb edition.

I bought this book for a class on Shakespeare's contemporaries and have enjoyed reading many of the plays in this book including *Volpone*, *The Alchemist*, *Dr. Faustus*, *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Changeling*. The editors have done a great job of helping with the outdated language by giving translations and footnotes that help the reader understand what the playwright wrote and meant. I heartily recommend this book to anyone who wants to know what other plays were like during Shakespeare's time.

I'm very impressed with this anthology. Explanatory notes and definitions are added in all the right places, making the plays easier to understand than any other annotated Renaissance literature I've read (including Shakespeare). I've read about six of these plays and still haven't had to consult a dictionary; the brief definitions in the margins explain nearly all archaic words and phrases. And the notes are always on the same page as the text, no disruptive endnotes! This anthology is, as a result, remarkably readable.

Really enjoy a lot of these plays, and this anthology has great introductions for the history and setting and even a little bit of analysis. Also, there are tons of great notes throughout each play. I've read another Norton edition of classic Fairy Tales and that was great as well.

If you looking for Shakespeare's contemporaries (or if you are adamantly against Shakespeare and looking for some other good English Renaissance plays), this is the book for you. It has good footnotes for all the plays and the intros are well written. It includes Marlowe, Webster, and a lot of other playwrights as well; the plays that are collected are several and thoroughly wonderful. I recommend reading the intro and bookmarking the *dramatis persona* page for recall (these plays have a lot of characters). Overall, great book, which goes well with any Elizabethan or Jacobean class you might be taking.

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