



Shakespeare and Carnival: After Bakhtin (Early Modern Literature in History)

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This collection of essays is the first to reassess a range of Shakespeare's plays in relation to carnivalesque theory. Contributors re-historicize the carnivalesque in different ways, offering both a developed application, or critique of, Bakhtin's thought.

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Shakespeare and Carnival: After Bakhtin (Early Modern Literature in History) From Palgrave Macmillan Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #7512228 in Books
- Published on: 1998-05-11
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.50" h x .0" w x 5.50" l, 3.10 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 232 pages



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Editorial Review

Review

'There is no concept more productive in Shakespeare studies than Carnival, yet no one more controversial than Mikhail Bakhtin, the critic who taught Shakespeareans to apply it. 'Shakespeare and Carnival' spans this contradiction by reading the plays both 'After Bakhtin' and within ongoing debate about early modern violence. So the essays in this collection find Carnival patterns not only in surprising places - from the Capulets' tomb to the Cardinal's palace - but in startling cultural contexts. Here Jack Cade materialises as the actor Will Kemp; Falstaff arises as a grotesque Puritan; and Paulina emerges as a Shrovetide jester. This is a volume, then, that reminds us of Bakhtin's affinity to Carl Orff - in idealising the tub-thumping 'volk' - but also his lasting relevance to Brueghel, Rabelais and Shakespeare. It will be an indispensable guide whether Shakespearean Carnival is studied for its revellers or its scapegoats.' - Richard Wilson, Professor of Renaissance Studies, Lancaster University '...wide-ranging, generally useful, and often excellent...an important contribution to a field of inquiry in which, as these essays suggest, a great deal remains to be done.' - Modern Languages Review

About the Author

RONALD KNOWLES is Senior Lecturer in English Literature and has taught at the University of Reading since 1971. His recent books include *Henry IV 1&2. The Critics Debate*, *Understanding Harold Pinter* and *Gulliver's Travels. The Politics of Satire*. He has written many articles on Pinter and Shakespeare and is Associate Editor in Britain of *The Pinter Reviews*. Currently he is editing *2 Henry VI* for the Arden Shakespeare.

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