



# Ben Jonson: Four Comedies (Longman Annotated Texts)

*Ben Johnson, Helen Ostovich*

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This edition of Ben Jonson's four middle comedies places the works in the popular history and culture of the times, 1605-1614, and surveys the influences, both classical and contemporary, on Jonson as a playwright. On-the-page annotations recreate the audiences perception of the plays as performances by commenting on the stage-directions, the self-conscious theatricality of characters and scenes, and the vivid colloquialisms of early modern London that give the dialogue a heightened dimension of realism.

Brief introductions to each play discuss the local settings, sources, theatre history and further readings. The general introduction includes a biography of Jonson, a chronology of the plays and masques, and separate essays on each play, dealing particularly with Jonson's satirical treatments of trends and shams of the day, whether political, social, commercial, or spiritual.



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