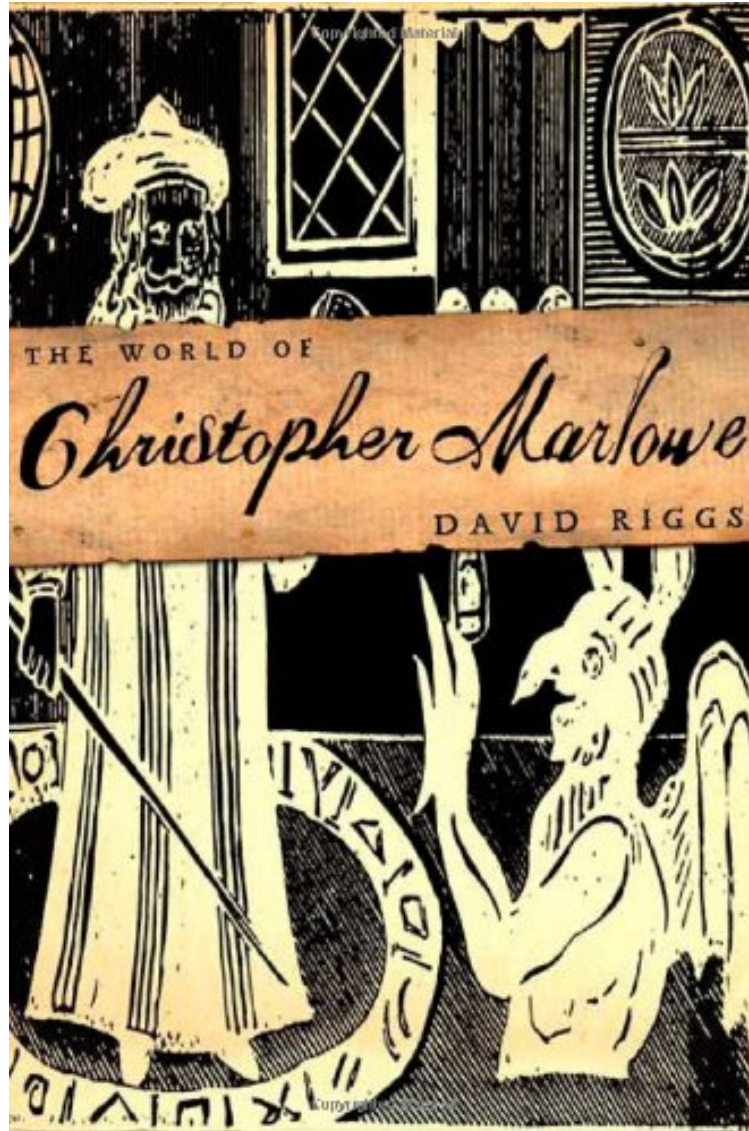


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The World of Christopher Marlowe

David Riggs

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#1081886 in Books Henry Holt and Co. 2005-01-05 2004-12-09Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.92 x 1.38 x 5.98l, #File Name: 0805077553432 pages | File size: 52.Mb

David Riggs : The World of Christopher Marlowe before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The World of Christopher Marlowe:

12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. A Remarkable BookBy M. GoldingChristopher Marlowe, the Elizabethan poet and playwright, was one of the most talented members of his generation. He helped pioneer the use of blank verse in dramatic poetry and used it to produce five masterpieces while William Shakespeare--who was only two months younger than Marlowe--was still finding his dramatic footing. Who can say how great he might have become if he were not cut down (possibly on orders of the Queen, herself) at the age of 29.As a man, Marlowe was the

"unShakespeare". Where Shakespeare was a prudent man who invested his money wisely and was careful not to offend authority, Marlowe was a risk-taker both in his personal life and in his plays. In an age where not toeing the official line was punishable by death, Marlowe never met a line he was not tempted to cross. If this is what got him killed, it also makes him a fascinating person to read about. David Riggs weaves Marlowe's personal tragedy into an exciting volume that I found as hard to put down as any thriller. It is a book I can heartily recommend. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. well worth the time By Andrew Plummer The academic Greenblatt cited this book in an article he wrote, and that was enough for me to trust it. After reading it, I'll have to say while it is involved and expects its reader to pay attention, it's a remarkable book. My fascination with Marlowe was bolstered by it. If you love Marlowe or Elizabethan England, this scholarly but accessible book will hold your interest fast. 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Baxter Very happy with dealer's service.

The definitive biography: a masterly account of Marlowe's work and life and the world in which he lived Shakespeare's contemporary, Christopher Marlowe revolutionized English drama and poetry, transforming the Elizabethan stage into a place of astonishing creativity. The outline of Marlowe's life, work, and violent death are known, but few of the details that explain why his writing and ideas made him such a provocateur in the Elizabethan era have been available until now. In this absorbing consideration of Marlowe and his times, David Riggs presents Marlowe as the language's first poetic dramatist whose desires proved his undoing. In an age of tremendous cultural change in Europe when Cervantes wrote the first novel and Copernicus demonstrated a world subservient to other nonreligious forces, Catholics and Protestants battled for control of England and Elizabeth's crown was anything but secure. Into this whirlwind of change stepped Marlowe espousing sexual freedom and atheism. His beliefs proved too dangerous to those in power and he was condemned as a spy and later murdered. Riggs's exhaustive research digs deeply into the mystery of how and why Marlowe was killed.

From Publishers Weekly Riggs (Ben Jonson: A Life), an English professor at Stanford University, traces the life of Elizabethan poet, playwright and spy Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), placing him in the context of the institutions that both fostered his keen intellect and reinforced his awareness of his lowly class origins (his father was a shoemaker). Riggs suggests that Marlowe, Shakespeare's great contemporary, author of Tamburlaine and Dr. Faustus, may have sought to overcome those origins through his unusual and dangerous career path. Working in the New Historicist vein most recently mined by Stephen Greenblatt in *Will in the World*, Riggs evokes the pedagogical preoccupations of Marlowe's school and university education, revealing layers of intricate detail in Marlowe's formation as a literary artist: his study and translation of Ovid, his innovations in blank verse, and the substance and reception of all of his plays and poetry. While downplaying Marlowe's disputed sexuality, Riggs pays careful attention to the homoerotic and homophobic aspects of his plays, most notably *Edward II*, considering each in its contemporary moral and political setting. Riggs concludes with fresh insights into the mysterious circumstances of Marlowe's violent death. This study balances close literary readings with lucidly presented historical context to give us a portrait of a brilliant but volatile enigma who shunned convention in favor of risk and marginality. 50 bw illus. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist *Starred* A biography of Shakespeare's greatest forebear in the Elizabethan theater must be the product of considerable grubbing and decoding. No portrait of Marlowe (1564-93) exists; he is referred to by several names (e.g., Morley, Merlin) that are spelled and, one would think, pronounced differently; and he had reasons to be untraceable, including the disesteem in which playwrights were held and his work-for-hire as a secret agent, maybe even a double agent, of the factions contending for power in England. Those contestants were the queen and high-church Protestants; the disestablished English Catholic Church and Catholic aristocrats at home and expatriate; and the rising Puritans, who could practically ally with the Catholics. Intelligent young lower-class men like Marlowe, the Cambridge scholarship-student son of an originally itinerant worker, functioned with enormous fluidity among those factions. Basically, Marlowe was a queen's man, but he was often arrested and ultimately murdered, Riggs shows, because he was suspected of being, or about to become, an atheist collaborator with the Catholics. His plays, as Riggs very persuasively parses them, argue that he was indeed atheist; with his reported behavior--rambunctious and blasphemous--they argue that he was antinomian and antiauthoritarian, too. Outstanding social history, detective work, literary analysis, and portrayal of a truly dangerous time and place--Elizabethan London. Ray Olson Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Full-blooded biography . . . We are drawn deep into the sordid realm in which Marlowe fashioned his life and met his violent death." -Stephen Greenblatt, Cogan University Professor of the Humanities, Harvard University, author of *Hamlet in Purgatory*