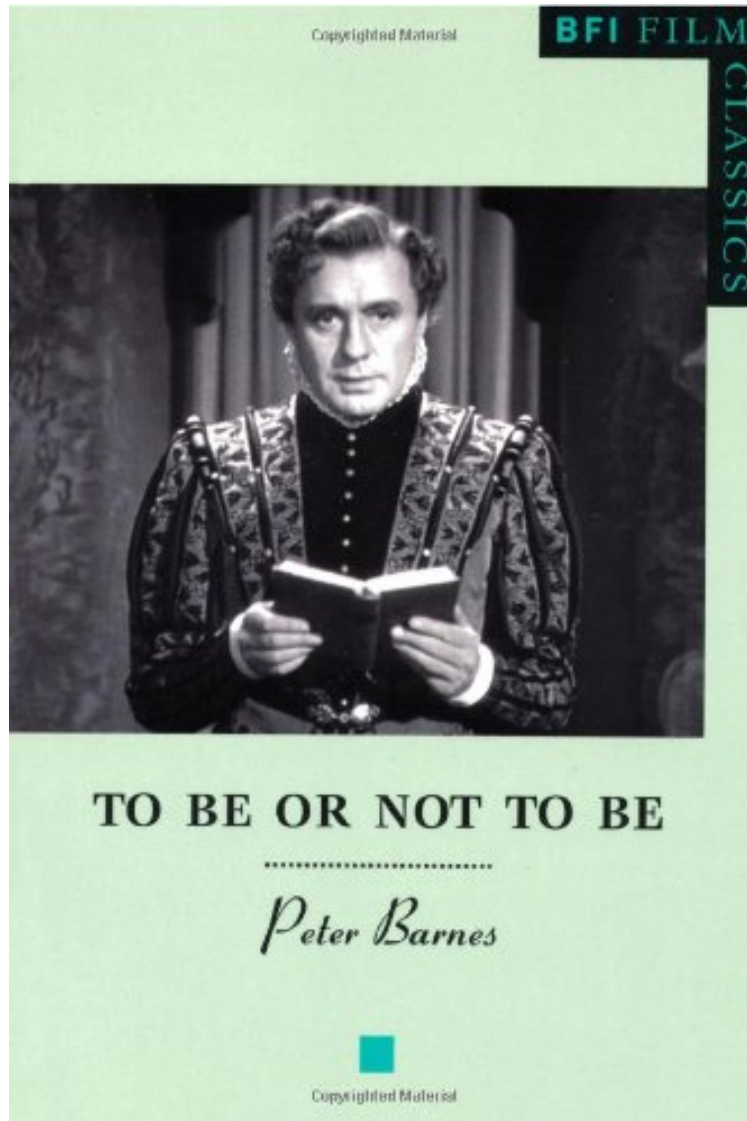


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## To Be or Not to Be (BFI Film Classics)

*Peter Barnes*

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#1198076 in Books British Film Institute 2008-02-27 2008-03-04Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 7.53 x .24 x 5.321, .34 #File Name: 085170919279 pages | File size: 37.Mb

**Peter Barnes : To Be or Not to Be (BFI Film Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised To Be or Not to Be (BFI Film Classics):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy JeffGreat product, great timing.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good read...informativeBy J. WhitneyThis was a required book for my Film Class on Comedy....Comic Mode. The book was informative and an easy read allowing the user to be able to participate in class discussion even without a lot of Film knowledge or background.5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. As

Great as Tura's Acting By Michael Samerdyke This is a very enjoyable discussion of a very good movie. I devoured it quite rapidly. The book isn't perfect. Barnes makes some mistakes (I think he means to refer to Fields' "That Fatal Glass of Beer" and not "Face on the Barroom Floor.") He is also clearly writing for a British audience, since he seems to have no idea how Carole Lombard's death affected the initial American response to the film. However, these are quibbles. While Barnes' approach to the film is not novel, his is the first examination of the film to delve so deeply into the performance of Sig Rumann as Erhardt, as well as the contributions of Lionel Atwill and the "spear carrier" who gets to play Hitler. He pays loving attention to the theatrical details of the movie to such a degree that it will be playing in your mind as you read him. Also, he reprints the numbskull 1942 reviews of the movie, which provide a dark humor of their own. In short, this book is a must for the fans of this film. (As a bonus, he doesn't even mention the Mel Brooks version of the film.)

In "To Be or Not to Be" (1942), Ernest Lubitsch brought his legendary comic touch to the most unpromising situation: life in Nazi-occupied Poland. In this study, Peter Barnes considers what it is to make comedy out of tragedy.

From the Back Cover In *To Be or Not to Be* (1942) Ernest Lubitsch brought his legendary comic touch to the most unpromising situation: life in Nazi-occupied Poland. The film brought light and warmth to wartime calamity, but without trivialising reality. A group of ham actors have to abandon a theatre production set in Nazi Germany as Poland is invaded. Instead they bring their dubious talents to the work of resistance, role-playing and inveigling their way under the noses of the Gestapo led by 'Concentration Camp' Erhardt (Sig Ruman). The central roles of Joseph and Marion Tura are taken by Jack Benny and Carole Lombard and their performances are marvels of comic acting. In this study Peter Barnes considers what it is to make comedy out of tragedy. "To Be or Not to Be" tells us that in the face of the brutality and unimagined ignorance of men in power, one must never lose one's style. "Lose everything but with style, despair can be kept at bay and turned into a small victory." He also shows how the comedy is achieved and in so doing sheds light on the enigmatic 'Lubitsch touch'. Peter Barnes is one of the UK's most respected dramatists, with numerous stage, screen and radio plays to his name. His work has been performed by Laurence Olivier, Alec Guinness, Peggy Ashcroft, John Gielgud and Paul Scofield (among others). He won the Evening Standard Most Promising Playwright award for "The Ruling Class" in 1969 and the Olivier Award for Best Play in 1985 for "Red Noses". His screenplay for "Enchanted April" (1992) was nominated for an Academy Award. About the Author Peter Barnes is one of the UK's most respected dramatists, with numerous stage, screen and radio plays to his name. His work has been performed by Laurence Olivier, Alec Guinness, Peggy Ashcroft, John Gielgud and Paul Scofield (among others). He won the Evening Standard Most Promising Playwright award for *The Ruling Class* in 1969 and the Olivier Award for Best Play in 1985 for *Red Noses*. His screenplay for *Enchanted April* (1992) was nominated for an Academy Award.