

Topic Page: [Edgar, David \(1948 - \)](#)

Summary Article: **Edgar, David**

from *Chambers Biographical Dictionary*

1948-

◆ English dramatist

Born in Birmingham, he studied drama at Manchester University, and was a journalist in Bradford before deciding to write for the stage full time. *Destiny* (1976), a large-scale play looking at the roots of fascism in British society, was produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). His eight-hour adaptation of Dickens's *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* for the RSC (1980) brought his work to a massive audience and won awards in London and New York. *Maydays* (1983), the first contemporary play to be presented by the RSC at the Barbican Theatre in London, was similarly ambitious. Other works include *Entertaining Strangers* (1985), *The Shape of the Table* (1990), which charts the negotiations between a Communist government and the forces acting against it in the autumn of 1989, the television documentary *Civil War* (1991), the radio play *A Movie Starring Me* (1991), many adaptations, including *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1991), and the hit play *Pentecost* (1994), which deals with ethnic strife in eastern Europe. He was appointed honorary professor by the University of Birmingham in 1992. He was commissioned to write his major two-part drama *Continental Divide* (2003) by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and the Berkeley Repertory Theater. Recent plays include *Playing with Fire* (2005), an attack on New Labour, and *Testing the Echo* (2008), on British values and multiculturalism.

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