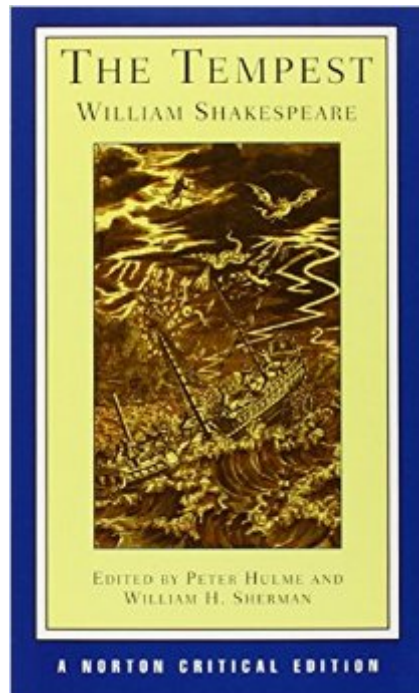


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The Tempest (Norton Critical Editions)



Synopsis

The Tempest presents some of Shakespeare's most insightful meditations on the cycle of life—ending and beginning, death and regeneration, bondage and freedom. This Norton Critical Edition is based on the First Folio text and is accompanied by explanatory annotations. "Sources and Contexts" offers a rich collection of documents on the play's central themes—magic and witchcraft, politics and religion, geography and travel. Writers include Ovid, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Gabriel Naudé, Michel de Montaigne, and William Strachey. "Criticism" collects eighteen responses to The Tempest, from John Dryden and Samuel Taylor Coleridge to Stephen Orgel and Leah Marcus. "Rewritings and Appropriations" includes creative reactions to The Tempest, by playwrights, filmmakers, and poets, among them H.D., Peter Greenaway, and Ted Hughes. A Selected Bibliography is also included.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Norton Critical Edition of the "The Tempest," edited by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman, is my current favorite among editions of the play (edging out, for example, Frank Kermode's old edition for the "Arden Shakespeare" series.) That is more than a casual opinion. "The Tempest" is one of my favorite Shakespearean comedies (the First Folio description), alongside "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and as a one-time graduate student in English, I have spent a lot of time reading and thinking about Shakespeare. It is also one of my favorite pre-modern fantasy stories, and I have

spent a lot of time thinking about that subject as well. (I did a lot of pre- reviewing of fantasy, going back to the days of the Ballantine Adult Fantasy series.) It can meet most of the apparent mix-and-match requirements of current genre fantasy; an intimidating magician with a beautiful daughter, a brash would-be hero, political plots, their elaborate back-story, powerful spirits and a semi-human monster, and comic low-life characters. The main difference (leaving aside the medium and the style) is the question of whether evil is to be punished, or forgiven. Hulme and Sherman have included, along with the standard selections from famous critics, and a welcome assortment of adaptations and parodies, a good selection of modern critical re-visionings, of the play, from various ideological standpoints. (For a much fuller representation, and some responses, see Gerald Graff and James Phelan, "The Tempest: A Case Study in Critical Controversy," now in its second edition.) All of these reconsiderations are at least interesting, and some of them are quite insightful. Not that I agree with all of them.

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