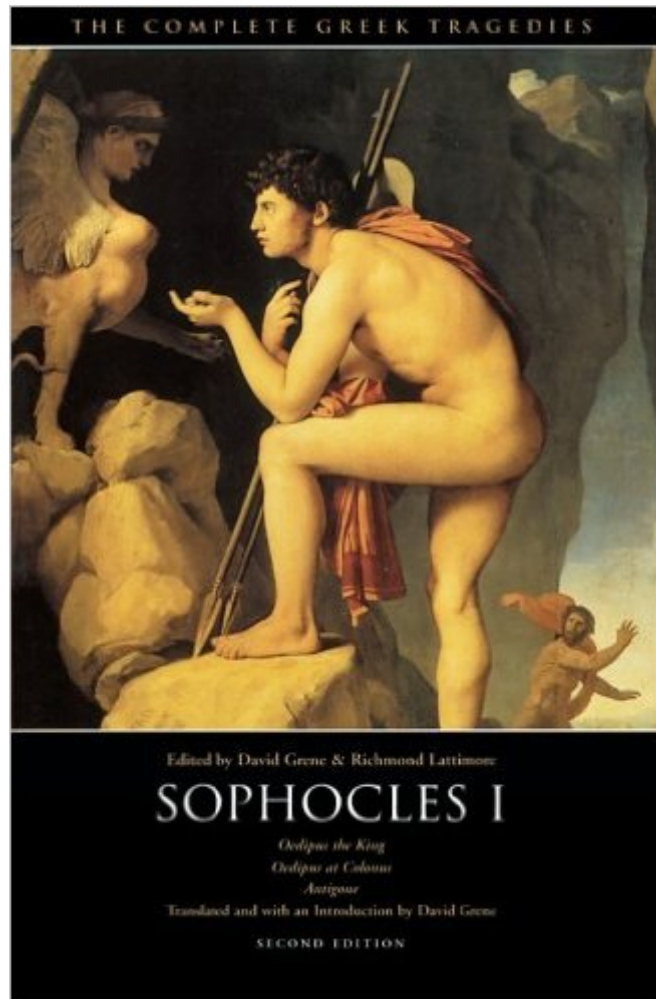


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The Complete Greek Tragedies: Sophocles I



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Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Researching translations is never an easy task, and in this case, where you'll have to search on for the title and the translator to find what you want, it's particularly difficult. Here's what I've found by comparing several editions:

1. David Grene translation: Seems to be accurate, yet not unwieldy as such. My pick. Language is used precisely, but not to the point where it's barely in English.
2. Fitts/Fitzgerald translation: Excellent as well, though a little less smooth than the Grene one.

Certainly not a bad pick.³ Fagles translation: Beautiful. Not accurate. If you are looking for the smoothest English version, there's no doubt that this is it. That said, because he is looser with the translation, some ideas might be lost. For instance, in *Antigone*, in the beginning, *Antigone* discusses how law compels her to bury her brother despite Creon's edict. In Fagles, the "law" concept is lost in "military honors" when discussing the burial of Eteocles. This whole notion of obeying positive law or natural law is very important, but you wouldn't know it from Fagles. In Grene, for example, it is translated to "lawful rites."⁴ Gibbons and Segal: Looks great, but right now the book has only *Antigone* (and not the rest of the trilogy) and costs almost 3x as much. I'll pass. But, from a cursory review, I'm impressed with their work.⁵ MacDonald: This edition received some good write-ups, but I wasn't able to do a direct passage-to-passage comparison.⁶ Woodruff: NO, NO, NO. Just NO. It's so colloquial it makes me gag. Very accessible, but the modernization of the language is just so extreme as to make it almost laughable. You don't get any sense of the power of language in the play.

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