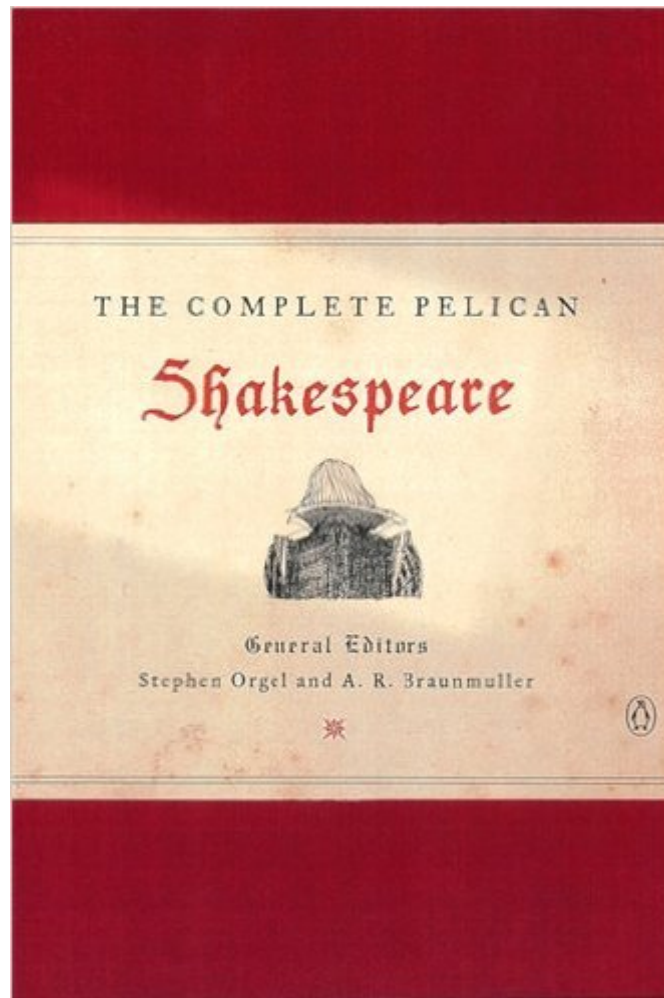


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The Complete Pelican Shakespeare



Synopsis

This major new complete edition of Shakespeare's works combines accessibility with the latest scholarship. Each play and collection of poems is preceded by a substantial introduction that looks at textual and literary-historical issues. The texts themselves have been scrupulously edited and are accompanied by same-page notes and glossaries. Particular attention has been paid to the design of the book to ensure that this first new edition of the twenty-first century is both attractive and approachable.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Pelican Shakespeare is oftentimes overlooked in a very crowded field of complete Shakespeare editions. It faces stiff competition from the likes of Norton (who have more or less monopolized all of literature for college students these days), Bevington, and Riverside. I own all three, but I find myself coming back to Pelican. At first look, one can definitely see why a past reviewer calls The New Pelican Shakespeare "sleeker." It is considerably more compact than the aforementioned heavyweights, and more brief compared even to the first edition. The paperback release, in particular, is ideal for students who need an edition to carry to class (it weighs less than a standard textbook). The reason for this is that, unlike Norton in particular, the annotations throughout the text itself is relatively light. This is pretty refreshing when you just want to get to the plays. The quality of these notes is exemplary. They are cohesive, unassuming, and enlightening. As with the Bevington, line numbers are marked where there is an accompanying footnote - something that saves the reader from having to count between markings and from wondering whether there is any

footnote at all for the present line. Also, general introductory material (a biography of Shakespeare, an essay on Elizabethan theatre, and an essay on the text of his plays) is kept to a bare minimum. These brief essays amount to less than ten pages. This is pretty modest compared to the likes of Riverside or Bevington.

Scholarly, attractive and easy on the eyes, the New Complete Pelican Shakespeare is a delightful entry into the crowded field of mammoth Shakespearean texts. As a teacher, the things I like most about this new edition are the insightful introductions to each of the individual works and the clear, readable text. It has the most attractive page of any of the major Shakespeare tomes. However, the general introduction at the beginning of the text is only fair compared with for example, the Norton Shakespeare. The Norton is much more complete for newcomers to the Bard, while the Pelican is more streamlined and attractive to the experienced reader. The footnotes are good and the method of indicating which line has a footnote is much better than Norton's (which is intrusive) or the Riverside's (which has none). The binding of the book is better than Bevington's or Riverside's and the paper is much stronger and denser than Norton's. Overall this is the toughest book of the major editions, which counts for something when you shell out so much money for a really big book. The text of this edition is good: better than Norton's (Oxford's) quirky text, but not so good as Riverside's grand text. Riverside's is not so modernized as the Pelican's and gives the reader a better flavor of Elizabethan speech and idioms. Both Bevington's and Norton's have attractive color photo sections and copious addenda that the Pelican and Norton Shakespeare fall short of. The Norton is better than the Pelican in this respect, but the Pelican is decidedly brief. If you like near encyclopedic information on Shakespeare's life, criticism, theater, etc., Riverside or Bevington is best.

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