



Northrop Frye on Shakespeare

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One of the greatest literary critics of our time here provides a remarkable introduction to the genius of William Shakespeare through a study of ten of Shakespeare's most popular plays: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, *Measure for Measure*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. The outgrowth of a lifetime of study and teaching, Frye's insights will inform and delight both the expert and the first-time reader of Shakespeare.

"The sensibility and wisdom informing the book make it a delight."—S. Schoenbaum, *New York Times Book Review*

"The most accessible and sheerly enjoyable of [Frye's] books....The effect is that of listening to a fluent, genial conversationalist who loves Shakespeare and unabashedly celebrates him in that high aspect of criticism well called 'appreciation.'"—Edmund Fuller, *Wall Street Journal*

"A boon to both Shakespearean scholars and readers dipping into the Bard's work for the first time. Written with verve, erudition and more-than-occasional humor, this 'summing-up' of 50 years of scholarship will be read with pleasure, profit and gratitude by drama lovers for years to come."—*Kirkus Reviews*
Northrop Frye, professor of English, has been on the faculty of the University of Toronto for almost fifty years. He is the author of numerous books, including the seminal work *Anatomy of Criticism*

Northrop Frye on Shakespeare Details

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Jacob Hurley says

Frye goes through a selected set of plays and gives a general survey on each of them. He's got a very engaging style, very colloquial and casual (as compared to more academic writings) and probably just transcripts for lectures on Shakespeare courses he would teach at Yale. While he never does anything too exciting, he still has some nice readings (especially his take on Measure for Measure which I think is spot-on, and also to a lesser extent for Lear). Again it's pretty short and while he preaches good stuff it's mostly another enjoyable survey through Shakespeare. I mean, it's basically the book equivalent of auditing a Yale course with Northrop Frye on Shakespeare, which I don't think anyone would turn down.

Steven says

focuses on the class system of the time to illuminate WS the historical character...also tries to capture what is going on with WS the poet who speaks to all times and places...too much from the point of view of "the noted critic Northrop Frye" but nonetheless a terrific book

Karen says

Very interesting and informative book that helps explain the plots and characters of Shakespeare's plays-- I wanted to read something like this before I try to tackle reading any more of the plays themselves. Hamlet and Macbeth were fairly easy to read, of course, since I've seen so many productions of both (and seeing the action/story played out on the stage by actors makes understanding the dry text much easier in context) but I wanted a scholarly essay that would help analyze some of the other plays that I haven't yet seen on stage or screen, before I attempt to read them! Recommended for anyone else interested in reading about Shakespeare's work from an analytical point of view.

J. Watson (aka umberto) says

I bought this second-hand Fitzhenry & Whiteside hardcover at the BookExpo XIV (15-25 October) in BKK yesterday (approx. US\$ 4.00).

Claire says

Frye gives a cohesive look at a variety of Shakespeare's plays. He uses accessible but thoughtful language that is informative.

Lazarus P Badpenny Esq says

Don't be fooled by the thumbnail - my old edition is possibly the ugliest book I've ever seen; nevertheless, it's arrived with a day to spare before my assignment is due.

Paola says

- romeo e giulietta
- sogno di una notte di mezza estate
- riccardo III, enrico IV
- amleto
- re lear
- antonio e cleopatra
- misura per misura
- il racconto d'inverno, la tempesta
- la tempesta

peaseblossom says

Also a good read-along, Frye only covers some of the plays, but what he does cover is well worth looking at.

Michelle says

Refreshing + sound + sane about Shakespeare. Has a chapter on Midsummer as well as incidental comments so reading my way through again in preparation. Good job of discussing language, character and place in literature. Frye also keeps the reader and the conversation grounded in the practicalities of theatre.

David Cain says

Wonderful analysis and insight into some of Shakespeare's best plays - my only complaint is that it wasn't ten times longer, or at least long enough to consider Macbeth and Othello.
