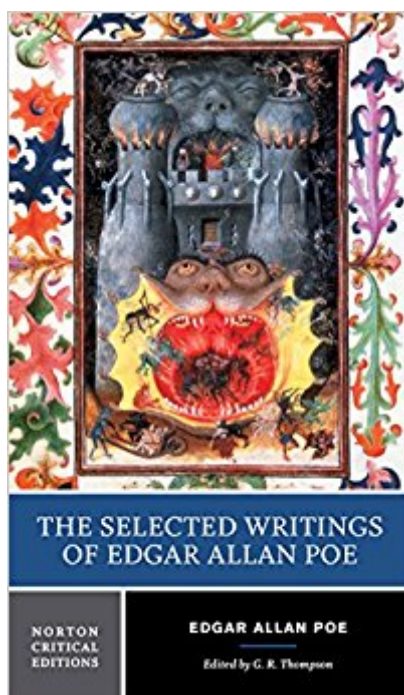


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# The Selected Writings Of Edgar Allan Poe (Norton Critical Editions)



## Synopsis

Edgar Allan Poe's works, with their gothic and often obsessive themes, have had a significant influence on American literature. In this Norton Critical Edition, G. R. Thompson has fully introduced, annotated, and edited each text. "Backgrounds and Contexts" includes fifty-seven carefully chosen documents that illuminate Poe's prolific but short career, among them reviews, prefaces, and correspondence by Poe as well as thematic pieces dealing with Transcendentalism and alternative romanticism, sciences of the mind, sensation fiction, and the South and slavery. Fourteen judiciously selected critical essays address Poe's poetry, fiction, politics, and psychology. Contributors include Floyd Stovall, Robert C. McLean, Richard Wilbur, James W. Gargano, Joseph J. Moldenhauer, Paul John Eakin, Grace Farrell, Liahna Klenman Babener, Barton Levi St. Armand, Joseph N. Riddel, J. Gerald Kennedy, John Carlos Rowe, Terence Whalen, and John T. Irwin. A Selected Bibliography is also included.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) wrote tales of the macabre, and invented or contributed to inventing the detective and science fiction genres. G.R. Thompson is Professor of English at Purdue University. He has published several studies of Edgar Allan Poe, including *Poe's Fiction: Romantic Irony in the Gothic Tales*, *Essays and Reviews of Edgar Allan Poe*, *Romantic Arabesque*, *Contemporary Theory*, and *Postmodernism and the Library of America edition of Poe's Essays and Reviews*.

I have no issue with the content - good organization and representation of stories and poems. However, the font is quite small even for "young" readers. It is very difficult to read for any extended period of time without some means of magnification. For that reason I cannot recommend this edition.

Edgar Allan Poe isn't known simply for his eloquently eccentric writings but also for his crass behaviour. I was surprised to find - through the thoughtful and thorough biography contained in this volume - that much of this may have been pure conjecture and hearsay. What remains, however, are Poe's wonderfully creative and provocative short stories and poems. As mentioned already, this edition is helpful if you're interested in getting to know who Poe was as a person, but it also contains a lot of useful annotations and critical essays. Many of the unfamiliar terms and ideas are nicely explained, while the essays at the back provide information fit for lengthy rumination. All the favourites are here: 'The Raven', 'Anabel Lee', 'Ligeia', 'The Fall of the House of Usher', and the revolutionary 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue'. The major works are accompanied by a short introduction, which offers extra information about the publication of the text and popular views of the time. Of course if you want the full Poe then Mabbott is your man, but this edition makes note of any textual deviations from Mabbott's and contains those helpful critical essays. Thus far my only criticism stems from just how thin the paper is. The problem here is that the text written on the reverse side of the page of the one you are reading can be seen, but it never makes the writing illegible and is of only minute annoyance. It is understandable that Norton wanted to fit it all into one volume and, as such, it is a necessary drawback. Simply put, if you are looking for a fine selection of Poe's writings with additional material, this is the edition to buy.

Purchased for a college course on great literature, this compilation of stories by Edgar Allan Poe features a nice compilation of popular and lesser-known works. Included in this set are poems, tales and sketches, backgrounds and contexts, and criticisms. The background and contexts section contains many fascinating letters and articles written by Poe. They bring the reader deeper into the mind of the author, which brings us closer to removing speculation through the observation of his thoughts. For example, does Poe believe in life after death? His stories, at times, seem to allude to this. Consider "The Facts of the Case of M. Valdemar", which Poe clearly presents evidence, in fiction, of the soul's existence apart from the body. "Eureka", which he describes as an "essay on the material and spiritual universe", was written a year prior to his death. In it he postulates on the

construct of the material universe and our placement in it. Poe writes existentialistically, leaving us, the reader, to speculate on the true nature of his beliefs. Suffice it to say, the totality of text included in this compilation is excellent and gives the reader more than a cross section of Poe's body of work. It expands their understanding of Poe's art and influence to existing fictional genres and the creation of new genres. For the course I'm currently taking, the scope is to reach beyond the classics many of us know. Many of these more popular stories have been created into Hollywood movies, thanks to actors such as Vincent Price. Included in this compilation are many wonderful, lesser-known fictional works. These are too often glossed over. While my course doesn't discuss his poetic contributions, thirty-one poems are also included at the beginning of this compilation. Granted, all the works in this book are freely available on the Internet through selected websites. While they're easily located online, they're not so conveniently found compared to picking up this book. If you're looking for a compilation of works by Edgar Allan Poe that contains not only his poems and fiction, but also criticisms and reviews, your search can end here. This book is highly recommended!

This collection of Poe's writings is fantastic.

The best and most evocative horror writer in existence. Whisks you away to exotic lands of travesty delight!

A great collection of Poe's work along with criticism which frames the literature well.

A fine collection of an often underrated writer, but the print is too small.

Excellent condition. If a Norton Critical Edition is available, it is the one I'll always purchase. Full text with analyses and essays!

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