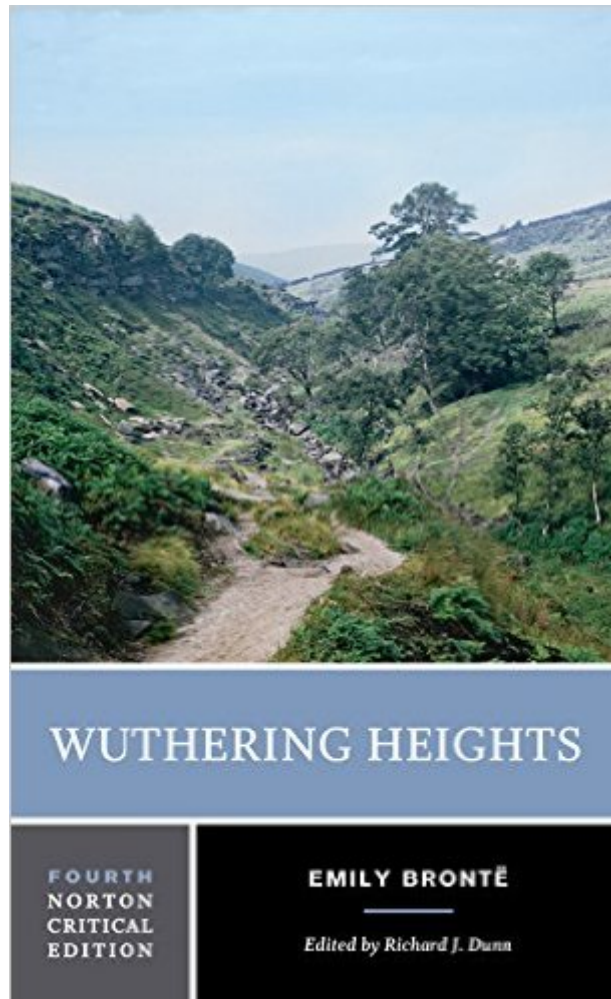


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Wuthering Heights (Norton Critical Editions)



Synopsis

The text of the novel is based on the first edition of 1847. For the Fourth Edition, the editor collated the 1847 text with the two modern texts (Norton's William J. Sale collation and the Clarendon), and found a great number of variants, including accidentals. This discovery led to changes in the body of the Norton Critical Edition text that are explained in the preface. New to "Backgrounds and Contexts" are additional letters, a compositional chronology, related prose, and reviews of the 1847 text. "Criticism" collects five important assessments of *Wuthering Heights*, three of them new to the Fourth Edition, including Lin Haire-Sargeant's essay on film adaptations of the novel.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Rather than delve on the contents of this strangest and strongest of English novels, so intensely poetic in its haunting darkness and otherness, I'll comment briefly on the best editions available for a good first contact:

- Text oriented editions (that is, editions with few materials added: normally an Introduction, annotation, and perhaps Charlotte's Preface and Biographical Notice and some bibliographical indications).
- Oxford World's Classics: authoritative text, good annotation, excellent introduction.
- Penguin's Classics: same as above, everything looks a little shorter but is excellent nonetheless.
- Wordsworth Classics edition. This would be a rather fine edition as befitting this collection, if it had a good 1847 text and not the heavily tampered-with Charlotte's 1850 edition. The text itself reflects accurately that of the 1900 Haworth Edition -a careful one-. The wording changes aren't perhaps so worrying nor is the toning-down of the dialectal tirades -although funny and

useless-. What is worrying is the disappearance of more than six hundred paragraph entries (I mean just the paragraphing, not the contents itself!), that makes for a different -and worse- reading experience. Very good and full -if brief- annotation. Mass-market, glued paperback.⁴ Heather Glen's for Routledge. One of the finest text-oriented editions, especially for the excellent Introduction and Epilogue together with its good annotation, out-of-print for rather obscure reasons. If you find still a very good to fine copy at Canadian branch (or at abebooks.com, it would be a good buy.⁵ Orchises two-volume facsimile reprint of the 1847 edition. No notes nor any additional material. the books are well produced if a little expensive.

Published in 1847, WUTHERING HEIGHTS was not well received by the reading public, many of whom condemned it as sordid, vulgar, and unnatural--and author Emily Bronte went to her grave in 1848 believing that her only novel was a failure. It was not until 1850, when WUTHERING HEIGHTS received a second printing with an introduction by Emily's sister Charlotte, that it attracted a wide readership. And from that point the reputation of the book has never looked back. Today it is widely recognized as one of the great novels of English literature. Even so, WUTHERING HEIGHTS continues to divide readers. It is not a pretty love story; rather, it is swirling tale of largely unlikeable people caught up in obsessive love that turns to dark madness. It is cruel, violent, dark and brooding, and many people find it extremely unpleasant. And yet--it possesses a grandeur of language and design, a sense of tremendous pity and great loss that sets it apart from virtually every other novel written. The novel is told in the form of an extended flashback. After a visit to his strange landlord, a newcomer to the area desires to know the history of the family--which he receives from Nelly Deans, a servant who introduces us to the Earnshaw family who once resided in the house known as Wuthering Heights. It was once a cheerful place, but Old Earnshaw adopted a "Gipsy" child who he named Heathcliff. And Catherine, daughter of the house, found in him the perfect companion: wild, rude, and as proud and cruel as she. But although Catherine loves him, even recognizes him as her soulmate, she cannot lower herself to marry so far below her social station. She instead marries another, and in so doing sets in motion an obsession that will destroy them all.

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