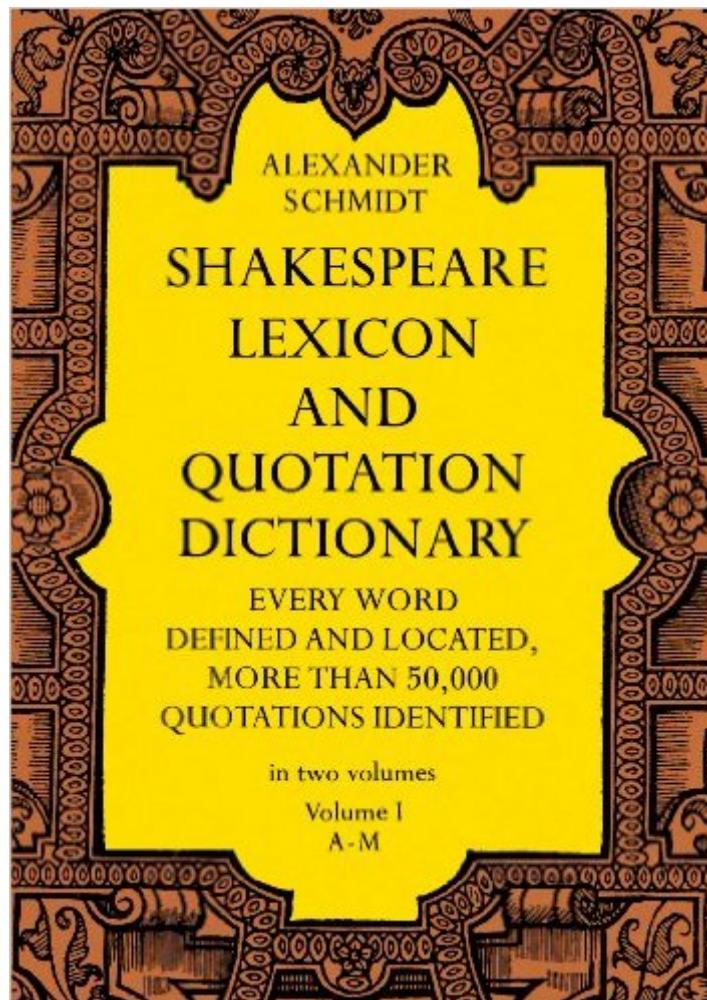


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Shakespeare Lexicon And Quotation Dictionary, Vol. 1: 001



Synopsis

In more than 300 years of Shakespearean scholarship, only one book, the famous Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary, has investigated the meaning of every word that Shakespeare wrote. The lifetime work of Professor Alexander Schmidt of Königsberg, this book has long been the indispensable companion for every person seriously interested in Shakespeare, Renaissance poetry and prose of any sort, or English literature. It is really two important books in one. Schmidt's set contains every single word that Shakespeare used, not simply words that have changed their meaning since the seventeenth century, but every word in all the accepted plays and the poems. Covering both quartos and folios, it carefully distinguishes between shades of meaning for each word and provides exact definitions, plus governing phrases and locations, down to the numbered line of the Cambridge edition of Shakespeare. There is no other word dictionary comparable to this work. Even more useful to the general reader, however, is the incredible wealth of exact quotations. Arranged under the words of the quotation itself (hence no need to consult confusing subject classifications) are more than 50,000 exact quotations. Each is precisely located, so that you can easily refer back to the plays or poems themselves, if you wish context. Other features helpful to the scholar are appendixes on basic grammatical observations, a glossary of provincialisms, a list of words and sentences taken from foreign languages, a list of words that form the latter part of word-combinations. This third edition features a supplement with new findings.

Book Information

File Size: 7354 KB

Print Length: 769 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 048622726X

Publisher: Dover Publications; 3rd Revised and Enlarged ed. edition (August 8, 2012)

Publication Date: August 8, 2012

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00CWR4L18

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #144,102 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #38
in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Reference > Quotations #61 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Literature & Fiction > British > Shakespeare #124 in Books > Literature & Fiction > British & Irish > Shakespeare > Literary Criticism

Customer Reviews

I assign a higher rating to Schmidt's lexicon than to C.T. Onions's *Shakespeare Glossary* (which I have also reviewed) for the reason that, although both compendiums by now do show their age, Schmidt's two volumes (one of course needs N-Z with this one) are all in all in many ways more comprehensive and informative than Onions's single-volume work (even after its updating by Eagleson). Readers of Shakespeare should NOT assume that if they use an unannotated edition (e.g. the Oxford Complete Works) they will understand everything they read if only they consult Schmidt or Onions or both. For one thing, many words in Shakespeare look intelligible from a modern viewpoint, but in fact had a different meaning in Shakespeare's day: an uninitiated reader will miss many such instances if s/he does not use good annotated editions by expert scholars, who provide glosses for well-considered and essential reasons. And I do not even dwell on the need to be aware of bawdy puns (see my review of Onions), or of other specific usages (e.g. legal terms), on which a good deal of new work has been done in recent years. Therefore, purchase of valuable volumes like these should be seen as SUPPLEMENTARY to the use of good, carefully annotated editions. - Joost Daalder, Professor of English, Flinders University, South Australia

Do not order this book. There is a defect in the run of this edition. I ordered, discovered the defect, returned for a replacement, and the replacement had the same defect. It skips at least half of the "b's", jumping about 60 pages, then continues for about 30-40 pages, and repeats the same 30-40 pages again before continuing with the rest of the book.

This is, simply, the essential, definitive guide to the Bard's language. Almost every word in every Shakespearean play is here, and instead of having to guess what the meaning is in relation to the play, each word is listed by play and meaning in each heading. It can even be used for other lexiconic purposes if you're having trouble trying to figure out what Shaw means in one of his passages from "Saint Joan", or Ibsen in "When We Dead Awaken". Unless they suddenly discover a new play by Shakespeare, this reference will never go out of date. And hey, it's not called the "Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary (Vol. 1 A-M)" for nothing, people. You're going to

have to get the other one, but there's no real problem, because this is simply just the greatest lexicon ever for Shakespeare. Your search ends here if you ever need to understand the Bard words.

I got the kindle edition of this book so that I could use it right away. But the kindle edition is useless because none of the terms have been indexed yet. Any time I try to search for a word it won't come up because of this even though the word IS in the lexicon. Instead I have to go to the table of contents, pick the letter in which the word starts in and then turn to each page until the word comes up. If I'm looking for the word "Beguile" I have to go to the B section and then go through all the Ba, Bb, Bc, etc until I get to the Be's and find Beguile. Incredibly time consuming. You're better off just getting the book so you can flip to whatever word you need. There's nothing more useless than a reference kindle book that is not indexed. Now I'm going to have to try to get a refund on this worthless purchase.

I got this so my daughter could research a role in Romeo and Juliet. Unfortunately, the Kindle edition is very hard to use. The text is dumped into an ebook format without any apparent effort spent to take advantage of the format. Finding simple phrases can be very painful. The content is there and the content is extensive, but accessing it is almost not worth the effort.

This is indispensable for any Shakespearean actor or student. Very useful. If you work with Shakespeare on any kind of regular basis, you would do well to invest in the two volumes of this lexicon. I would love to see this digitized at some point, and made into a searchable program which can be used from a phone or tablet. For now, I've found that using the books is actually easier than Googling phrases or words, partly because the answers you'll find in these books are definitive, whereas the information you find online can be of questionable value. As an actor, I'm not interested in finding breadth of opinion -- I want a 'right' answer to my question, and I want it right away. So this lexicon is always by my side when I am doing textwork on any Shakespearean play.

This book is absurd. It purports to be a compilation of definitions of "every word" in Shakespeare, which, if you give that claim half a thought, is pretty much impossible to accomplish. If, however, you accept the premise, be advised that the combination of microscopic print, confounding abbreviations of the plays and characters, and zillions of irrelevant observations and/or definitions render the book useless. The first entry, for example is A, which is defined as "the first letter of the alphabet" (oh,

THAT A) and is noted as appearing in LLL V, 1, 50. Right below that entry are fully three more pages of definitions of...A, crammed into the tiniest font you'll ever see in print. A better source of Shakespearean clarity (to coin a phrase) would be any annotated anthology of his plays. The best overview of the plays in my extensive Shakespeare-reference library is Leslie Dunton-Downer and Alan Riding's "Essential Shakespeare Handbook." It's about 25 bucks and worth many times that.

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