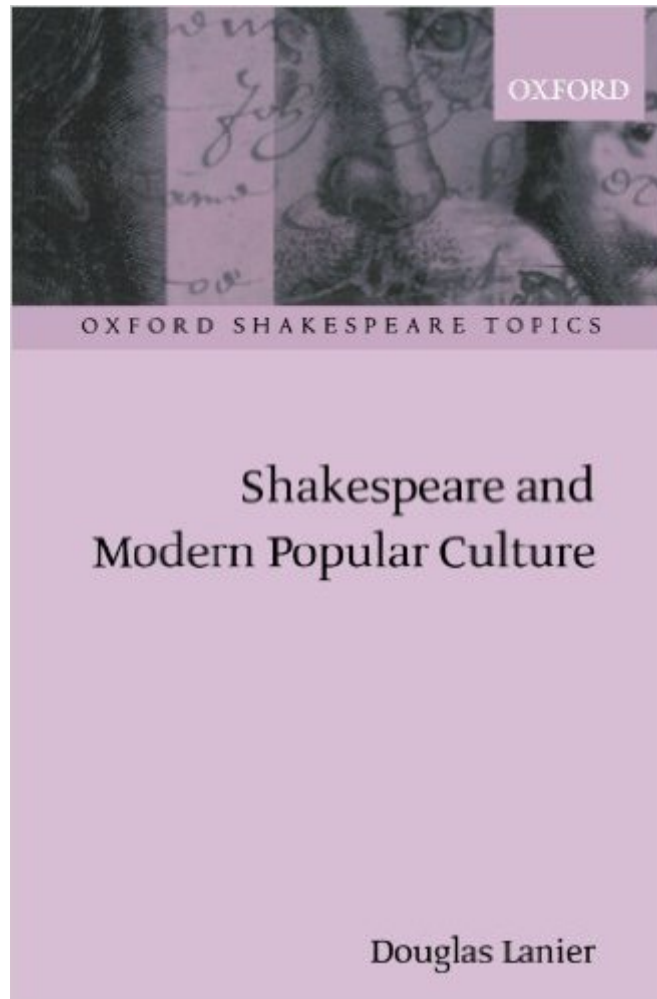


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# Shakespeare And Modern Popular Culture (Oxford Shakespeare Topics)



## Synopsis

Our notions of Shakespeare have been shaped partly by his diffuse presence in films, comics, television, popular novels, kitsch, and advertising. Through a series of case studies, Douglas Lanier examines how modern popular culture has appropriated and refashioned Shakespeare as a cultural icon.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Douglas Lanier provides a fascinating account of how the man Shakespeare has been lionized, sanitized, and satirized over the three hundred years since he was first promoted as England's national poet in the 1730's. Since then, Shakespeare and the plays he wrote for the popular Elizabethan theatre have been appropriated by different cultural factions, both high and low, to advance particular ideas of what constitutes (or does not constitute) "proper" cultural ideals. Lanier examines how this has happened in the past and continues to happen in the present. Each chapter of Lanier's book focuses on a different aspect of what he calls "Shakespop." Lanier skillfully portrays the long historical process of elevating Shakespeare's plays to the peak of English high culture. This process began with the publication of the First Folio in 1623, thereby preserving plays written to be performed in the Elizabethan playhouse as timeless literature. Before long, Shakespeare's works were promoted as emblematic of a natural English realism against the classical standards of dramatic economy in time and action as represented by the Englishman's perpetual enemies, the

French. Lanier offers extensive demonstration that since that time Shakespeare's plays-and increasingly the image of Shakespeare himself as a "natural genius"-has continued to play a leading role in cultural warfare. Alluding to Shakespeare's works or citing them is a means of indicating a connection to high culture or making a protest against that culture. The plays have been used and abused in adaptations and parodies, while the constant reinvention of Shakespeare the man has served to suit different cultural needs, either for the cultural elite or those who feel dispossessed by them.

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