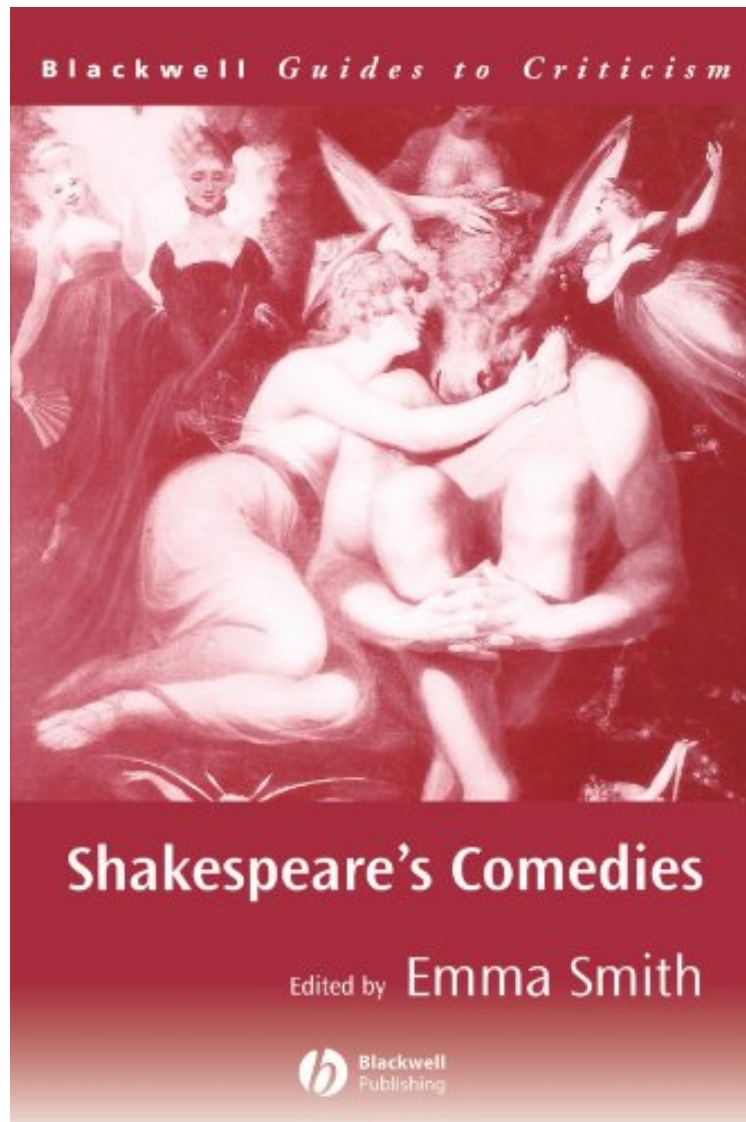


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"clearly designed to make friendly that enormous and daunting edifice of Shakespeare criticism. [...] extremely helpful historical and generic overviews" THES [and talking about all three books together:] "Altogether, either as the source of critical thinking or as reference guides and bibliographies, these volumes will prove convenient and interesting as authoritatively conducted tours of their domains." THES From the Back Cover Criticism of Shakespeares comedies has shifted from stressing their light-hearted and festive qualities to giving a stronger sense of their dark aspects and their social resonances. This volume introduces the key critical debates under five headings: genre, history and politics, gender and sexuality, language, and performance. The Guide serves students of Shakespeare in two ways. Firstly, by presenting ten recent critical interventions in the field of Shakespeare studies, it provides an up-to-date compendium of current scholarship. All the articles are contextualised with brief critical overviews and annotated suggestions for further reading. An additional chapter on pre-twentieth-century criticism is mainly in narrative form but excerpts significant early views by Johnson, Hazlitt and Coleridge. Thus, secondly, the volume acts as a guide to further reading to help students extend their knowledge of Shakespeare criticism. About the Author Emma Smith is Fellow of Hertford College and Lecturer in English at Oxford University. Her publications include *Thomas Kyd: The Spanish Tragedie* (ed. 1998) and *Shakespeare in Production: Henry V* (2000).