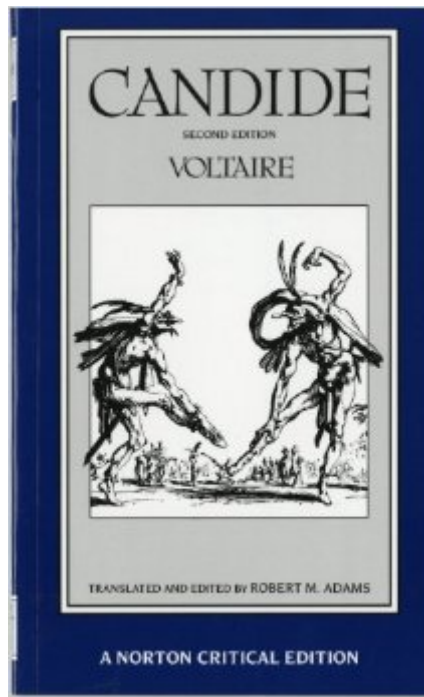


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# Candide (A Norton Critical Edition)



## Synopsis

Robert M. Adams's superlative revised translation of *Candide* provides the basis for this widely adopted Norton Critical Edition. The accompanying apparatus has been revised in accordance with recent biographical and critical materials. The Backgrounds and Criticism sections provide important essays that shed light on major critical issues relevant to *Candide* and to the intellectual climate of the period. In addition to the reports of five English visitors to Ferney, essays by Haydn Mason, Erich Auerbach, Ernst Cassirer, and Robert M. Adams are included. The final section of the edition, "The Climate of Controversy," summarizes the debate surrounding Voltaire's works and includes essays by Peter Gay, Raymond Naves, Gustave Lanson, and John Morley. Also included are a series of quotations about Voltaire by such prominent figures as Gustave Flaubert, Frederick the Great, and Stendhal, as well as the text of "Pangloss's Song," a ballad from the 1956 *Candide*-based operetta by Richard Wilbur.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Ever since philosophers began thinking about the meaning of life, a favorite question has been "Why do bad things happen to good people?". In Voltaire's day, this issue was primarily pursued either from the perspective of faith (everything that happens is God's will and must be for Divine purpose) or of reason (What do these events mean to you, as you interpret them subjectively?). Infuriated by the reaction by some members of the church to a horrible loss of life from an earthquake in Lisbon, Voltaire wrote this hard-biting satire of the human condition to explore these

questions. Before reading further, let me share a word of caution. This book is filled with human atrocities of the most gruesome sort. Anything that you can imagine could occur in war, an Inquisition, or during piracy happens in this book. If you find such matters distressing (as many will, and more should), this book will be unpleasant reading. You should find another book to read. The book begins as Candide is raised in the household of a minor noble family in Westphalia, where he is educated by Dr. Pangloss, a student of metaphysical questions. Pangloss believes that this is the best of all possible worlds and deeply ingrains that view into his pupil. Candide is buoyed by that thought as he encounters many setbacks in the course of the book as he travels through many parts of Europe, Turkey, and South America. All is well for Candide until he falls in love with the Baron's daughter and is caught kissing her hand by the Baron. The Baron immediately kicks Candide out of the castle (literally on the backside), and Candide's wanderings begin. Think of this as being like expulsion from the Garden of Eden for Adam.

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