



Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach

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Michael McKeon, author of *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740*, here assembles a collection of influential essays on the theory of the novel. Carefully chosen selections from Frye, Benjamin, Lévi-Strauss, Lukács, Bakhtin, and other prominent theorists explore the historical significance of the novel as a genre, from its early beginnings to its modern variations in the postmodern novel and postcolonial novel.

Offering a generous selection of key theoretical texts for students and scholars alike, *Theory of the Novel* also presents a provocative argument for studying the genre. In his introduction to the volume and in headnotes to each section, McKeon argues that genre theory and history provide the best approach to understanding the novel. All the selections in this anthology date from the twentieth century?most from the last forty years?and represent the attempts of different theorists, and different theoretical schools, to describe the historical stages of the genre's formal development.

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Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #816356 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Johns Hopkins University Press
- Published on: 2000-11-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.00" h x 1.63" w x 6.50" l, 3.36 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 968 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

McKeon's dissections are often breathtaking... [his] anthology is solid, commandingly centered,... superbly energetic and uniquely powerful.

(Marshall Brown *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*)

As comprehensive an account of the genre as you could wish. What a marvelous collection and what a skillful editor McKeon is, marshalling the essays into an argument for the novel as a distinct 'literary historical genre' rather than as one element in a bland, all-embracing narrative theory... The outstanding feature of this fine collection is its firm commitment to the art of the novelist. Throughout, there is a profound recognition of the novel's ability to criticise the existing order, to create new and compelling worlds, to extend our grammar and enlarge our vocabulary for coping with the great dramas of life, love, death and the shoelace snapping when you are late for work.

(Gary Day *Times Higher Education Supplement*)

The anthology provides not only a splendid guide to thinking about the novel, but also a useful warning against assuming that fiction is merely the instrument of those who wish to dampen revolution, forge national identities, and build empires.

(Jonathan Lamb *Studies in English Literature*)

This breathtaking comprehensive collection of essays... is an amazingly ambitious project... McKeon has provided us with an invaluable map of the theoretical and literary-historical landscape surrounding the origins, theories, and developments of the novel.

(Ansgar Nünning Gießen *LWU*)

This is a richly stimulating volume, an invaluable resource and challenging intervention for all serious researchers into the novel.

(*This Year's Work in English Studies*)

As a teaching text this anthology can hardly be bettered.

(David Walker *British Journal for 18th-Century Studies*)

This collection of essays will be *the* anthology for all introductory courses on the novel. The approach through genre theory and history is refreshing, welcome, and long overdue.

(Ronald Paulson, The Johns Hopkins University)

By juxtaposing the classic theoretical texts with recent work ranging from film and cultural studies to postcoloniality and postmodernism, this rich collection places the 'theory of the novel' squarely back on the agenda of contemporary literary and cultural research.

(Fredric Jameson, Duke University)

Michael McKeon may be the only person in the world capable of bringing together sensibly so many positions on so complicated a topic. The selections are judicious and raise most of the issues—theoretical, historical, global—that a twenty-first century book on this topic requires, and McKeon's own commentary is erudite, cogent, and accessible.

(J. Paul Hunter, University of Chicago)

The Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach organizes the study of the novel into a coherent intellectual field. What sets this volume apart from its competitors are McKeon's introductory materials, which develop an original and sophisticated historical argument about the genre. This is essential reading for anyone interested in the novel, in genre theory, or in historical analysis. The collection does for the novel in general what *The Origins of the English Novel* did for its early history. It also reinforces McKeon's position as our premier historian of the genre.

(Mary Poovey, New York University)

About the Author

Michael McKeon is a professor in the Department of English at Rutgers University. He is the author of *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740*, also available from Johns Hopkins.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Megan Snyder:

Spent a free time and energy to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they undertaking activity like watching television, about to beach, or picnic inside the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Do you need to something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Could be reading a book is usually option to fill your free time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of reserve that you should read. If you want to try look for book, may be the reserve untitled Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach can be good book to read. May be it may be best activity to you.

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writer explains the girl idea with easy means. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do not worry, you can easy to read that. The book was compiled by famous author. The author brings you in the new age of literary works. You can easily read this book because you can continue reading your smart phone, or product, so you can read the book within anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can start their official web-site in addition to order it. Have a nice go through.

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