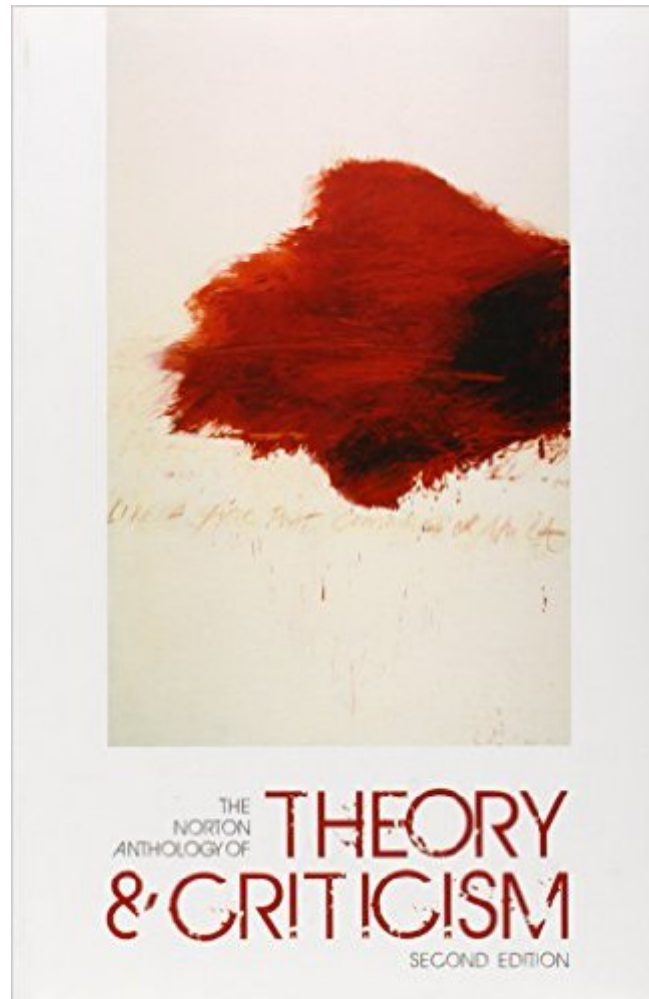


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The Norton Anthology Of Theory And Criticism



Synopsis

The most comprehensive anthology of theory and criticism, now up-to-date and global. The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism is the gold standard for anyone who wishes to understand the development and current state of literary theory. Offering 185 pieces (31 of them new) by 148 authors (18 of them new), The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism, Second Edition, is more comprehensive, and more varied, in its selection than any other anthology. New selections from non-western theory and a thoroughly updated twentieth century selection make the book even more diverse and authoritative.

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Customer Reviews

I have taught both the first and second editions. The new edition has cut the excerpt from Plato's "Ion," has eviscerated Freud's "On the Uncanny" by removing Freud's charming personal anecdotes (about his own experiences of uncanny repetitions), and has made Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" asymmetrical by removing the early discussion of "widow suicide" while retaining the powerful final anecdote about the early 20th century suicide of a distant relation, Bhubaneswari Bhadhuri. Some of these excisions make the theory seem more difficult and disconnected than it is in fuller context. I was disappointed, too, that among the expanded selection in the new edition there is still nothing on animal studies. I would suggest an excerpt from Derrida's "The Animal That Therefore I Am" or an expanded Deleuze and Guattari section (pitifully short now, just about 4 pages) to include an excerpt from their chapter on "Becoming Animal" in *_A Thousand Plateaus_*.

The writings of Gaston Bachelard should also be represented. This nonetheless remains the best anthology of its kind, with its useful biographical and contextual headnotes (some of which are also revised in this new edition), its choice of excellent translations, and its usually helpful footnotes. To squeeze more in this time, however, they really did squeeze out part of the pith of several of their best selections. I did not go back to make a detailed review, but I also had a strong impression that the material from Kant had been edited to the point of unnecessary obscurity in places. You can't eliminate the examples these authors give. They are often the easiest way to the heart of each author's theory. Please, Norton, consider restoring the selection from "Ion" when a third edition is being put together. Overall, I am disappointed in this edition.

I use this book every year, and that indicates my approval. I do not think it is perfect, but it is the best of those numerous collections available. I will try to answer some objections found in other reviews and give my sense of the totality. Some blame the book's expense: this seems absurd given its almost 3000 pages of hard to edit material: the book is well bound with buckram and signatures and the paper -- while thin to allow such massive content (think Bible leaves) -- is low acid and reasonably opaque. My copies have been abused and do not fail (unlike novels at \$12 for 200 pages that yellow and unbind). The introductions are historical, lucid, and more than informed: they supply a reasoned and fair context for the novice. Sure the selections are bimodal, mostly the classics of aesthetic philosophy and then 20th century without the analytics and perhaps too much french fried and committed theory, but these are the leanings of the profession. Much is under-represented: other classical texts, the church fathers by and large, the medievals, much of the enlightenment, no Spinoza (!!!), no Wittgenstein, no Nancy or Macherey, no Deleuze alone, etc. etc. The book then is not flawless and reflects the fashions of study, but it is so far ahead of the others available, it's silly. To acquire separate versions of these texts would cost thousands. A lab book for O chem is 80\$! If you want to sample the absurd mystery of "theory," this massive text is a very good place to begin.

The best thing about this book is the short introduction to each author and their work before reading their essay(s). Included in this introduction is a brief summary of what you are about to read, so when you are trying to figure out what the heck Hegel is taking about when he writes "being-for-self for itself", you've already got that broken down into plain understandable terms in the introduction. Best book for literary criticism EVER!

Dear Norton and Co., Students rarely have just one class a day. Carrying this monster with a laptop, notes and other books is not fun. This thing doesn't have a very structured binding for as big as it is so it gets floppy and hard to balance on a knee or tiny desk while taking notes is impossible. It is so awkwardly shaped that my tiny, nerd-wimpy hands can't lift this with one hand, let alone while juggling a other books and such. The pages are as thin as the NRA's cover story and rip easily and ink bleeds through. At 3k pages, this NEEDS TO BE AN EBOOK. This needs to be searchable and join the new world--and more coverage on newer theories would be great too.

Academic at it's best. A wonderful collection of essays that are particularly useful for those studying English Literature. The pages are tissue thin so some care is required when using this text but because there are so many pages, thicker pages would make the book even heavier than it is.

I am not a professional educator or English teacher, but purchased this book to get a taste of the "French fried" theory and postmodern criticism contained in it- and was not disappointed. Each selection is prefaced with very easy to understand and descriptive commentary by the editors, a not so easy thing to accomplish given the breadth of material and authors included. Most importantly, the commentary and introductions whet my appetite for doing further reading into not only a particular authors work, but also into the reference material and bibliographic information as well. As far as I can tell from my limited perspective, the choices of what to include, and the scholarly reference material, are excellent. I particularly liked the material included by Fredric Jameson, on Postmodernism, which was very clearly written and descriptive. I got more out of the editors summary of Gramsci than out of his actual entry in the book. The book is a beautiful object, very well made, and sturdy. Paper thickness is good, not much transparency. Shipping to me via OnTrac was excellent, very well packaged for a new book in excellent condition. I look forward to years of reading through this synoptic work. My congratulations and thanks to the editors and publisher.

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