

## Postmodern Theory Steven Best

Although studies on Stephen King (1947-) traditionally belong to the field of popular culture, some of his work, such as *The Dark Half* and *Secret Window, Secret Garden*, - give an insightful perspective on contemporary fiction. Drawing upon methods used in literary analysis and textual interpretation, this book proposes a new reading of Stephen King's fiction as a literary reflection on the artistic identity of the writer and on writing and shows that horrific descriptions do not necessarily exclude metafiction. *Stephen King as a Postmodern Author* aims to serve as an introduction to major theories influencing contemporary American literature, such as narratology, psychoanalysis, postmodernism, and various theories of fiction."

This book argues that there is an ongoing planetary crisis, in both the social and natural worlds, that is of urgent importance. This demands a new politics, a politics of total liberation, one that grasps the need to unite the disparate movements for human, animal, and earth liberation. In the book, Best outlines a way forward despite challenges.

With the publication of his seminal novel *White Noise*, Don DeLillo was elevated into the pantheon of great American writers. His novels are admired and studied for their narrative technique, political themes, and their prophetic commentary on the cultural crises affecting contemporary America. In an age dominated by the image, DeLillo's fiction encourages the reader to think historically about such matters as the Cold War, the assassination of President Kennedy, threats to the environment, and terrorism. This Companion charts the shape of DeLillo's career, his relation to twentieth-century aesthetics, and his major themes. It also provides in-depth assessments of his best-known novels, *White Noise*, *Libra*, and *Underworld*, which have become required reading not only for students of American literature, but for all interested in the history and the future of American culture.

What does it mean to be human today? The answer to this question, which is as old as the human species itself, is becoming less and less certain. Current technological developments increasingly erode our traditional humanist reflexes: consciousness, emotion, language, intelligence, morality, humour, mortality - all these no longer demonstrate the unique character and value of human existence. Instead, the spectre of the 'posthuman' is now being widely invoked as the 'inevitable' next evolutionary stage that humans are facing. Who comes after the human? This is the question that posthumanists are taking as their starting point. This critical introduction understands posthumanism as a discourse, which, in principle, includes everything that has been and is being said about the figure of the 'posthuman'. It outlines the genealogy of the various posthuman 'scenarios' in circulation and engages with their theoretical and philosophical assumptions and social and political implications. It does so by connecting the philosophical debate about the future of humanity with a range of texts, including examples from new media, popular culture, science and the media.

"*The Society of the Spectacle*" by Guy Debord (translated by Ken Knabb). Published by Good Press. Good Press publishes a wide range of titles that encompasses every genre. From well-known classics & literary fiction and non-fiction to forgotten or yet undiscovered gems of world literature, we issue the books that need to be read. Each Good Press edition has been meticulously edited and formatted to boost readability for

all e-readers and devices. Our goal is to produce eBooks that are user-friendly and accessible to everyone in a high-quality digital format.

White shows how postmodernism can inform contemporary ethical-political reflection. Foreword by Ward Churchill; cover design by Sue Coe *The first anthology of writings on the history, ethics, politics and tactics of the Animal Liberation Front, Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?* features both academic and activist perspectives and offers powerful insights into this international organization and its position within the animal rights movement. Calling on sources as venerable as Thomas Aquinas and as current as the Patriot Act--and, in some cases, personal experience--the contributors explore the history of civil disobedience and sabotage, and examine the philosophical and cultural meanings of words like "terrorism," "democracy" and "freedom," in a book that ultimately challenges the values and assumptions that pervade our culture. Contributors include Robin Webb, Rod Coronado, Ingrid Newkirk, Paul Watson, Karen Davis, Bruce Friedrich, pattrice jones and others.

*Postmodernism and Popular Culture* brings together eleven recent essays by Angela McRobbie in a collection which deals with the issues which have dominated cultural studies over the last ten years. A key theme is the notion of postmodernity as a space for social change and political potential. McRobbie explores everyday life as a site of immense social and psychic complexity to which she argues that cultural studies scholars must return through ethnic and empirical work; the sound of living voices and spoken language. She also argues for feminists working in the field to continue to question the place and meaning of feminist theory in a postmodern society. In addition, she examines the new youth cultures as images of social change and signs of profound social transformation. Bringing together complex ideas about cultural studies today in a lively and accessible format, Angela McRobbie's new collection will be of immense value to all teachers and students of the subject.

This latest offering from one of the founding figures of postmodernism is a collection of fifteen "fables" that ask, in the words of Jean-Francois Lyotard, "how to live, and why?" Here, Lyotard provides a mixture of anarchistic irreverence and sober philosophical reflection on a wide range of topics with attention to issues of justice and ethics, aesthetics, and judgment. In sections titled "Verbiages," "System Fantasies," "Concealments," and "Crypts," Lyotard unravels and reconfigures idealist notions subjects as various and fascinating as the French Revolution, the Holocaust, the reception of French theory in the Anglo-American world, the events of May 1968, the Gulf War, academic travelers as intellectual tourists, the collapse of communism, and his own work in the context of others'.

The burgeoning use of modern literary theory and cultural criticism in recent biblical studies has led to stimulating--but often bewildering--new readings of the Bible. This book, argued from a perspective shaped by postmodernism, is at once an accessible guide to and an engagement with various methods, theories, and critical practices transforming biblical scholarship today. Written by a collective of cutting-edge scholars--with each page the work of multiple hands--*The Postmodern Bible* deliberately breaks with the individualist model of authorship that has traditionally dominated scholarship in the humanities and is itself an illustration of the postmodern transformation of biblical studies for which it argues. The book introduces, illustrates, and critiques seven prominent strategies of reading. Several of these interpretive

strategies--rhetorical criticism, structuralism and narratology, reader-response criticism, and feminist criticism--have been instrumental in the transformation of biblical studies up to now. Many--feminist and womanist criticism, ideological criticism, poststructuralism, and psychoanalytic criticism--hold promise for the continued transformation of these studies in the future. Focusing on readings from both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, this volume illuminates the current multidisciplinary debates emerging from postmodernism by exposing the still highly contested epistemological, political, and ethical positions in the field of biblical studies. At last! Everything you ever wanted to know about postmodernism but were afraid to ask. Hans Bertens' *Postmodernism* is the first introductory overview of postmodernism to succeed in providing a witty and accessible guide for the bemused student. In clear and straightforward but always elegant prose, Bertens sets out the interdisciplinary aspects, the critical debates and the key theorists of postmodernism. He also explains, in thoughtful and illuminating language, the relationship between postmodernism and poststructuralism, and that between modernism and postmodernism. An enjoyable and indispensable text for today's student.

*The Global Industrial Complex: Systems of Domination*, is a groundbreaking collection of essays by leading scholars from wide scholarly and activist backgrounds who examine the entangled array of contemporary industrial complexes—what the editors refer to as "the power complex"—that was first analyzed by C. Wright Mills in his 1956 classic work, *The Power Elite*.

*The Cambridge Companion to Postmodernism* offers a comprehensive introduction to postmodernism. The Companion examines the different aspects of postmodernist thought and culture that have had a significant impact on contemporary cultural production and thinking. Topics discussed by experts in the field include postmodernism's relation to modernity, and its significance and relevance to literature, film, law, philosophy, architecture, religion and modern cultural studies. The volume also includes a useful guide to further reading and a chronology. This is an essential aid for students and teachers from a range of disciplines interested in postmodernism in all its incarnations. Accessible and comprehensive, this Companion addresses the many issues surrounding this elusive, enigmatic and often controversial topic.

Massive geopolitical shifts and dramatic developments in computerization and biotechnology are heralding the transformation from the modern to the postmodern age. We are confronted with altered modes of work, communication, and entertainment; new postindustrial and political networks; novel approaches to warfare; genetic engineering; and even cloning. This compelling book explores the challenges to theory, politics, and human identity that we face on the threshold of the third millennium. It follows on the success of Best and Kellner's two previous books: *Postmodern Theory*, acclaimed as the best critical introduction to the field, and *The Postmodern Turn*, which provides a powerful mapping of postmodern developments in the arts, politics, science, and theory. In *The Postmodern Adventure*, Best and Kellner analyze a broad array of literary, cultural, and political phenomena--from fiction, film, science, and the Internet, to globalization and the rise of a transnational image culture. They use the best of modern and postmodern perspectives to illuminate contemporary life and to strive for a just and viable future. Gold Medal Winner in Philosophy--ForeWord Magazine's Book of the Year Awards

Modern/Postmodern: Society, Philosophy, Literature offers new definitions of modernism and postmodernism by presenting an original theoretical system of thought that explains the differences between these two key movements. Taking a contrastive approach, Peter V. Zima identifies three key concepts in the relationship between modernism and postmodernism - ambiguity, ambivalence and indifference. Zima defines modernism and postmodernism as problematics, as opposed to aesthetics, stylistics or ideologies. Unlike modernism, which is grounded in an increasing ambivalence towards social norms and values, postmodernity is presented as an era of indifference, i.e. of interchangeable norms, values and perspectives. Taking an historical, interdisciplinary and intercultural approach that engages with Anglo-American and European debates, the book describes the transition from late modernist ambivalence to postmodern indifference in the contexts of philosophy, literature and sociology. This is the ideal guide to the relationship between modernism and postmodernism for students and scholars throughout the humanities.

First published in 1988. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

Sharon A. Stanley chronicles the emergence of a recognizably modern form of cynicism during the French Enlightenment, by discussing the work of philosophers such as Denis Diderot and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. While recent scholarly and popular commentary has depicted cynicism as a novel, contemporary phenomenon that threatens healthy democratic functioning, this book shows that cynicism has much earlier roots and may contribute to the health of democracies.

Postmodern Theory Critical Interrogations Guilford Press

In 1996 physicist Alan Sokal published an essay in *Social Text*--an influential academic journal of cultural studies--touting the deep similarities between quantum gravitational theory and postmodern philosophy. Soon thereafter, the essay was revealed as a brilliant parody, a catalog of nonsense written in the cutting-edge but impenetrable lingo of postmodern theorists. The event sparked a furious debate in academic circles and made the headlines of newspapers in the U.S. and abroad. Now in *Fashionable Nonsense: Postmodern Intellectuals' Abuse of Science*, Sokal and his fellow physicist Jean Bricmont expand from where the hoax left off. In a delightfully witty and clear voice, the two thoughtfully and thoroughly dismantle the pseudo-scientific writings of some of the most fashionable French and American intellectuals. More generally, they challenge the widespread notion that scientific theories are mere "narrations" or social constructions.

Crystal L. Downing introduces students (especially those in the arts) to postmodernism: where it came from, and how Christians can best understand, critique and benefit from its insights.

This book explores the origins of the academic culture wars of the late 20th century and examines their lasting influence on the humanities and progressive politics. It puts us in a position to ask this question: what to make now of those furious debates over postmodernism, multiculturalism, relativism, critical theory, deconstruction, post-structuralism, and all the rest? In an effort to arrive at a fair judgment on that question, the book reaches for an understanding of postmodern theorists by way of two genres they despised and hopes, for that very reason, to do them justice. It tells a story, and in the telling, advances two basic claims: first, that the phenomenological/hermeneutical

tradition is the most suitable source of theory for a humanism that aspires to be universal; and, second, that the ethical and political aspect of the human condition is authentically accessible only through narrative. In conclusion, it argues that the postmodern moment was a necessary one, or will have been if we rise to the occasion and seize the opportunity it offers: a truly universal humanism might yet be realized even in—or perhaps especially in—this atavistic hour of parochial populism. In this timely volume, the authors systematically analyze postmodern theory to evaluate its relevance for critical social theory and radical politics today. Best and Kellner provide:

- \* An introduction and critique of the work of Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, Baudrillard, Lyotard, Laclau and Mouffe, and Jameson, which assess the varying contributions and limitations of postmodern theory
- \* A discussion of postmodern feminist theory and the politics of identity
- \* A systematic study of the origin of the discourse of the postmodern in historical, sociological, cultural, and philosophical studies.

The authors claim that while postmodern theory provides insights into contemporary developments, it lacks adequate methodological and political perspectives to provide a critical social theory and radical politics for the present age. The authors systematically interrogate postmodern theory to evaluate its relevance for critical social theory and radical politics today. The book contains an introduction and critique to the work of Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari and an introduction to postmodern feminist theory.

Carl Olson is Professor of Religious Studies at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania. His previous books include *The Indian Renouncer* and *Postmodern Poison: A Cross-Cultural Encounter* and *The Theology and Philosophy of Eliade: A Search for the Centre*.

A gargantuan, mind-altering comedy about the Pursuit of Happiness in America Set in an addicts' halfway house and a tennis academy, and featuring the most endearingly screwed-up family to come along in recent fiction, *Infinite Jest* explores essential questions about what entertainment is and why it has come to so dominate our lives; about how our desire for entertainment affects our need to connect with other people; and about what the pleasures we choose say about who we are. Equal parts philosophical quest and screwball comedy, *Infinite Jest* bends every rule of fiction without sacrificing for a moment its own entertainment value. It is an exuberant, uniquely American exploration of the passions that make us human - and one of those rare books that renew the idea of what a novel can do. "The next step in fiction...Edgy, accurate, and darkly witty...Think Beckett, think Pynchon, think Gaddis. Think." --Sven Birkerts, *The Atlantic*

Now in paperback, Fredric Jameson's most wide-ranging work seeks to crystalize a definition of "postmodernism". Jameson's inquiry looks at the postmodern across a wide landscape, from "high" art to "low" from market ideology to architecture, from painting to "punk" film, from video art to literature. Have you heard that language is violence and that science is sexist? Have you read that certain people shouldn't practice yoga or cook Chinese food? Or been told that being obese is healthy, that there is no such thing as biological sex, or that only white people can be racist? Are you confused by these ideas, and do

you wonder how they have managed so quickly to challenge the very logic of Western society? In this probing and intrepid volume, Helen Pluckrose and James Lindsay document the evolution of the dogma behind these ideas, from its coarse origins in French postmodernism to its refinement within activist academic fields. Today this dogma is recognizable as much by its effects, such as cancel culture and social-media dogpiles, as by its tenets, which are all too often embraced as axiomatic in mainstream media: knowledge is a social construct; science and reason are tools of oppression; all human interactions are sites of oppressive power play; and language is dangerous. As Pluckrose and Lindsay warn, the unchecked proliferation of these anti-Enlightenment beliefs present a threat not only to liberal democracy but also to modernity itself. While acknowledging the need to challenge the complacency of those who think a just society has been fully achieved, Pluckrose and Lindsay break down how this often-radical activist scholarship does far more harm than good, not least to those marginalized communities it claims to champion. They also detail its alarmingly inconsistent and illiberal ethics. Only through a proper understanding of the evolution of these ideas, they conclude, can those who value science, reason, and consistently liberal ethics successfully challenge this harmful and authoritarian orthodoxy—in the academy, in culture, and beyond.

This book presents a groundbreaking analysis of the emergence of a postmodern paradigm in theory, the arts, science, and politics. From the authors of *Postmodern Theory*, the much-acclaimed introduction to key postmodern thinkers and themes, *The Postmodern Turn* ranges over diverse intellectual and artistic terrain—from architecture, painting, literature, music, and politics, to the physical and biological sciences. Critically engaging postmodern theory and culture, Steven Best and Douglas Kellner illuminate our momentous transition between a modernist past and a future struggling to define itself.

What do Catharine MacKinnon, the legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education*, and Lani Guinier have in common? All have, in recent years, become flashpoints for different approaches to legal reform. In the last quarter century, the study and practice of law have been profoundly influenced by a number of powerful new movements; academics and activists alike are rethinking the interaction between law and society, focusing more on the tangible effects of law on human lives than on its procedural elements. In this wide-ranging and comprehensive volume, Gary Minda surveys the current state of legal scholarship and activism, providing an indispensable guide to the evolution of law in America.

Providing an important contribution to current controversies regarding history, social theory, politics, and the Foucault - Habermas debates, this work offers a detailed comparison of the transformative uses of history in Foucault and Habermas, using Marx as a modernist contrast. The book clearly illustrates the advantages and disadvantages of each thinker's theory for the productive analysis of history and society, relating the work of each to current debates over modern and postmodern theory.

This compelling book explores the challenges to theory, politics, and human identity that we face on the threshold of the third millennium. It follows on the successor of Best and Kellner's two previous books, *Postmodern Theory*, acclaimed as the best critical introduction to the field - and *The Postmodern Turn*, which provides a powerful mapping of postmodern developments in the arts, politics, science, and theory. In *The Postmodern Adventure*, Best and Kellner analyze a broad array of literary, cultural, and political phenomena from fiction, film, science, and the Internet, to globalization and the rise of a transnational image culture.

Hot new West Coast voice on the Cultural Studies scene

This book offers a history of literary criticism from Plato to the present, arguing that this history can best be seen as a dialogue among three traditions - the Platonic, Neoplatonic, and the humanistic, originated by Aristotle. There are many histories of literary criticism, but this is the first to clarify our understanding of the many seemingly incommensurable approaches employed over the centuries by reference to the three traditions. Making its case by careful analyses of individual critics, the book argues for the relevance of the humanistic tradition in the twenty-first century and beyond.

æWhat is Post-Modernism?' Is it a new world view, or an outgrowth of the Post-Industrial Society? Is it a shift in philosophy, the arts and architecture? In this fourth, entirely revised edition, Charles Jencks, one of the founders of the Post-Modern Movement, shows it is all these things plus many other forces that have exploded since the early 1960s. In a unique analysis, using diagrams designed especially for this edition, he reveals the evolutionary, social and economic forces of this new stage of global civilisation. But why has post-modern culture arrived? In an ironic parable, æthe Protestant Crusade'. Jencks uncovers some hitherto hidden origins: the Modernists' abhorrence for all things sensuous and natural, and their zeal for all things orderly and mechanistic. This pseudo-religion led in the 1920s to the famous ævacuum-cleaning' period, the purgation of values, metaphysics and emotion. In the 1970s it led on to the æProtestant Inquisition' which inadvertently created the very enemy Modernists feared - Post-Modernism; a Counter-Reformation, the reassertion of worldliness, fecundity, humour and pluralism. However, more than one tradition emerged and Jencks, distinguishing two types of Post-Modernism (deconstructive and reconstructive) demonstrates that the former is often a disguised form of Late-Modernism. This takes the de-creation and nihilism of its parent to extremes. The main engine that drives global culture today - post-modernisation, the electronic economy and instant communications network - is analysed in its close relation to other æposts': Post-Fordism, Post-Socialism and the post-national world of trading blocs and unstable nations. Jencks argues that this may result in catastrophe and global governance, or a web of transnational institutions and obligations. The most radical idea of this challenging book is the conclusion: the notion that the post-modern world does not mean the end of metanarratives, but something quite

different. Belief systems are flourishing as never before and, Jencks argues, æa new metanarrative, based on the story of the universe and its generative qualities, will soon create a new world view that will affect all areas. It is a story which grows directly out of the post-modern sciences of complexity and is thus both true and mythic.' Other 'What is...' titles include What is Abstraction?, What is Deconstruction?

This book collects the most important statements of the postmodern theory, including the classic essays of authors such as Lyotard, Haraway, Foucault, and Rorty.

In this book it explores science and technology, makes connections between these epistemic, cultural, and political trends, and develops profound insights into the nature of our postmodernity.

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