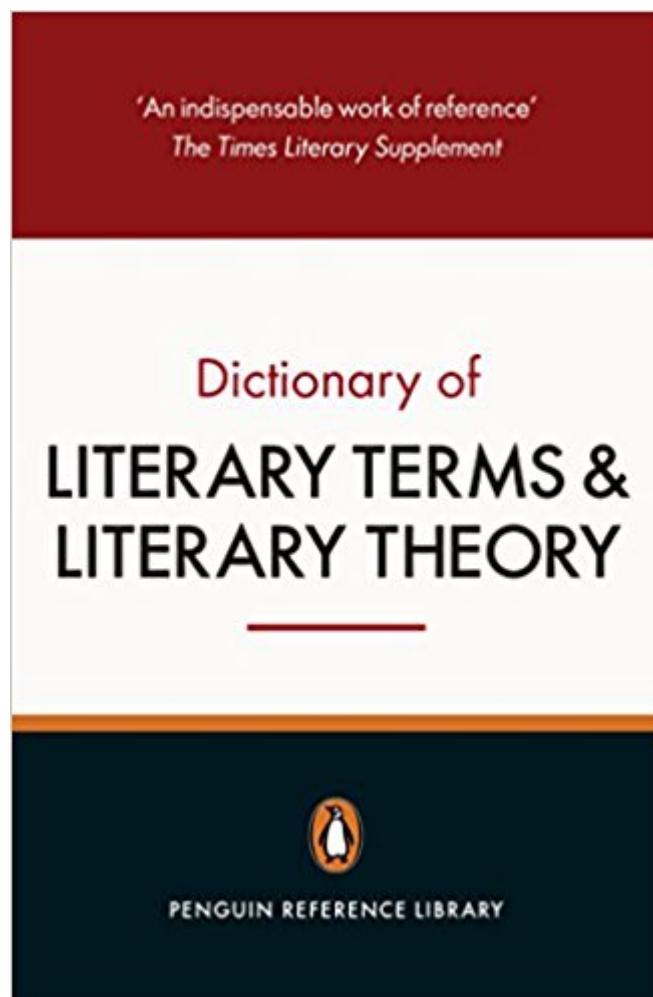


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The Penguin Dictionary Of Literary Terms And Literary Theory: Fifth Edition



Synopsis

'An indispensable work of reference' Times Literary Supplement The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory is firmly established as a key work of reference in the complex and varied field of literary criticism. Now in its fifth edition, it remains the most comprehensive and accessible work of its kind, and is invaluable for students, teachers and general readers alike. - Gives definitions of technical terms (hamartia, iamb, zeugma) and critical jargon (aporia, binary opposition, intertextuality) - Explores literary movements (neoclassism, romanticism, vorticism) and schools of literary theory - Covers genres (elegy, fabliau, pastoral) and literary forms (haiku, ottava rima, sonnet)

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Customer Reviews

Accomplishes cameo wonders of literary history ... generously and urbanely compiled * New York Times * Scholarly, succinct, comprehensive and entertaining ... an indispensable work of reference * Times Literary Supplement *

J. A. Cuddon was a writer, school teacher and academic. Best known for his Dictionary of Literary Terms, he also produced the large Dictionary of Sport and Games, as well as several novels, plays and travel books. He also edited two anthologies of supernatural fiction. He died in 1996. M.A.R. Habib received his doctorate from the University of Oxford, and is Professor of English at Rutgers University. He is the author of seven books, including A History Of Literary Criticism: From Plato to

the Present (2005), and editor of the Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Vol. VI (2013). He is currently writing a book entitled Hegel and the Foundations of Modern Literary Theory.

This addictive dictionary can be (and frequently is, I believe) read from cover to cover. Hundreds of fascinating poetic forms, genres and movements are covered, the definitions are informative and often ironically detached (note the studiedly lapidary comments on Welsh poetry), virtually all major European literatures are taken into account, plus there are comments on Slavonic folklore, Korean poetry, Welsh prosody, and ancient Greek literary theory. The wiring and plumbing of the book, its cross-referencing system, is admirably done and very helpful, luring the reader into a rollercoaster ride across centuries. Another notable quality is the rich number of examples, especially of the titles of a legion of important / interesting / fascinating / demented literary works often buried in the sands of time. Unfortunately, however, many metric and strophic forms must go without illustration for reasons of space: a fact deplored by Cuddon himself in the preface. But this does not detract from the book's worth: its logical structure and lucid explanations, combined with its author's awesome erudition, make this a priceless reference work.

I love this book. LOVE IT. There are great descriptions of all things literature in here. The book is larger than I expected it to be (which is a good thing) and I think it's going to be very useful for my classes... yes, I'm an English major. I purchased the book from thebookguys, and while I did receive the correct book on time, when I opened the package I noticed some things that were wrong with this seller: the book itself smells bad, there are marks on the outside of the pages, it looks like a sticker was ripped off the back cover, and overall looks like it has been used - however briefly. I did purchase a new copy of this book. 5 stars = book 3 stars = seller

I'm using this book for a poetics class and we use it many times a week. Provides all the information I need for class plus some. It looks into historical context of the word, much like the OED does, so it's more well-rounded than a regular dictionary would be when considering the terms in class. I'm going to be hanging on to this one instead of selling it like most folks do when the semester is done.

You get a lot of value for the money with this one. For a reasonable price you get almost 1000 pages of literary information. Every obscure literary term imaginable is here, but that's not why I am taking the time to praise this handy little volume. It's a browsers dream. What I found most interesting were the lengthy sections on genres. There are pages devoted to specific types of

novels, dramas, and poems. There are luxuriously long sections on science fiction novels, crime fiction, pastoral writings, short stories, gothic fiction, comic drama, and a host of other such topics. When you go to the short story section, for instance, you will find 12 pages dedicated to coverage of authors and their works dating from biblical times to the present (1998). I quickly found recommended writers that I hadn't known along with those I was well acquainted with. Although this book was inexpensive, I have spent many times its purchase price buying new books that I found referenced in this Dictionary. There are no individual entries for authors or their works in this book. For that you need to go to books like the Oxford, Cambridge, New York Public Library or Benet's literature reference works. In poetry sections you will find examples of the type of verse being discussed. You will be amused at some of the entries provided under "light verse" and "limericks". There is even a heading for "shaggy dog story". Any weaknesses to the book? Well there are a few. This book has a single author, unlike many reference works that have a group of contributors. This can lead to weak sections that are outside the solo author's expertise. Every reader will find a favorite author or two missing from the genre sections. I was appalled, for instance, to find no mention of Flannery O'Connor in the section on American short story authors. As the author is English, there may also be a slight bias toward English writers. I was also somewhat annoyed that Mr. Cuddon often -but not always- didn't take the time to give a foreign title its English translation. Would it have hurt him to list the Victor Hugo novel as "Toilers of the Sea" instead of "Les Travailleurs de la Mer"? I am a hopeless book addict, and this little reference work really made my day(s).

This book hasn't let me down yet. Everything we've discussed in my British Lit class, as far as literary terms, not the actual stories, I have been able to find in the book. It's been incredibly helpful when writing research papers. It's a great tool to have at your disposal.

I recently started an English MA program and wanted a book with a good overview of lit. theory. This one is great! It brings all terms and theories together in a nice, compact book (I also love the curved-edge pages for quick flipping). EVERYTHING is in here. Norton's Anthology of Lit. Theory is also very good, but it is a compilation of essays. This penguin dictionary provides quick access to basic tenets of theory schools. It also cross-references terms to connect movements and innovations. "Theatre of the Absurd," for example, also leads you to the entries for "Farce", "Happening", and "Pataphysics." Big names in each school of theory are mentioned, as well as major works that reflect particular movements and schools of thought. This book is absolutely essential for anyone

needing a good overview of lit. theory, lit. terms, and the study of lit in general. Highly recommended! (get the Norton Anthology of Lit. Theory too so you can dig deeper once you find it in the Penguin).

sent as gift

It has been more than ten years since I have been in a college level class. As a result, I was really struggling with my graduate level literary theory class until I started using this book. I am very thankful I found this. It is an easy to use reference for students without a literature background. I found the definitions clearly summarized critical theory movements with helpful text references. I will be encouraging my classmates to buy this text.

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