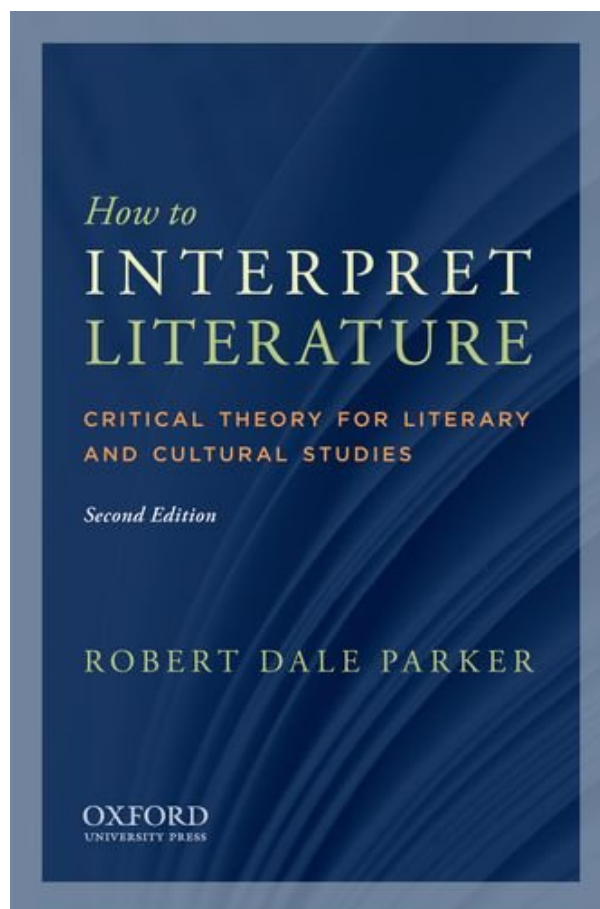
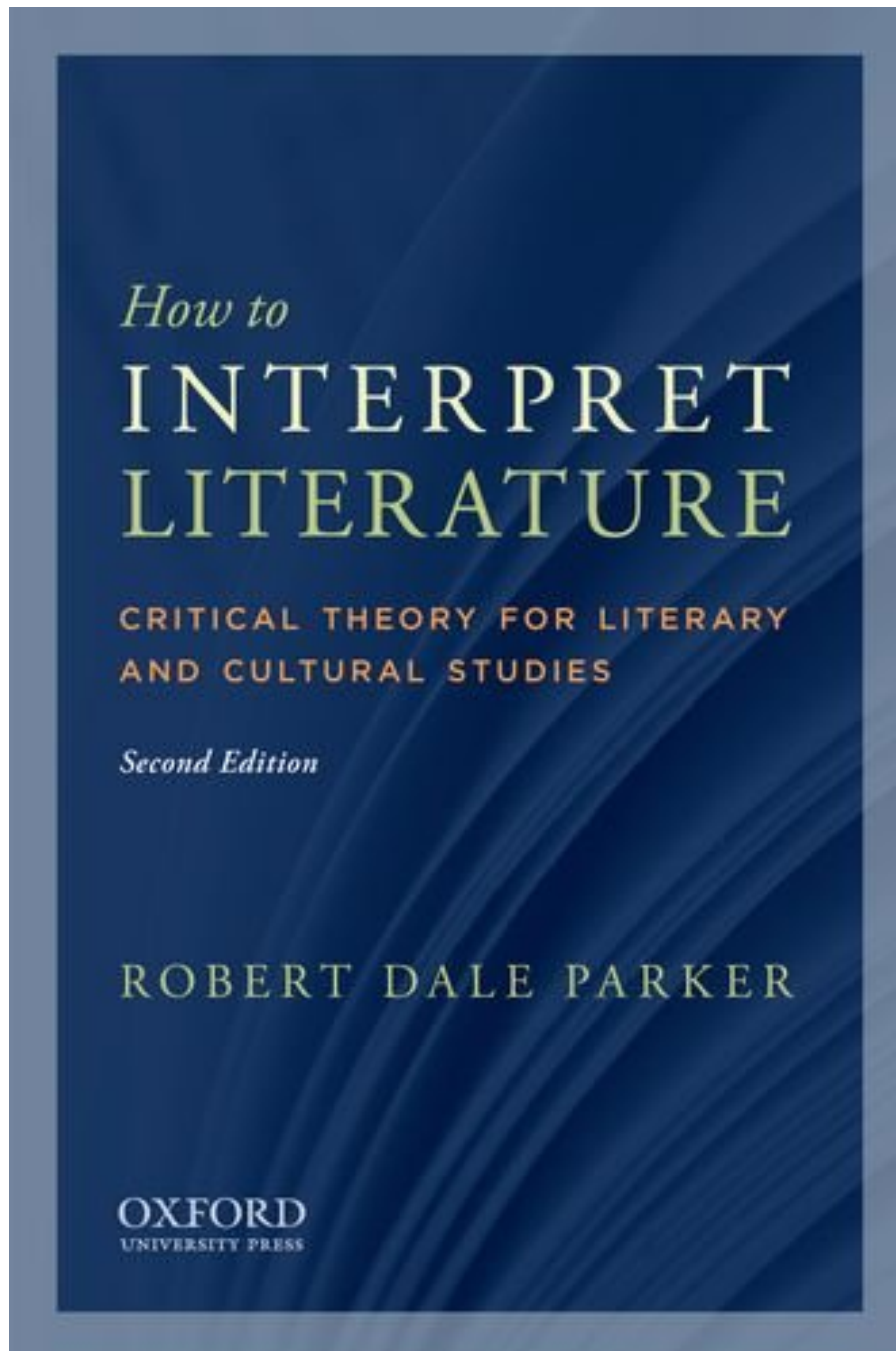


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Review

"A must-read for anyone teaching or seeking to understand literary theory." --Christopher Hogarth, Wagner College
"Robert Dale Parker's examples--personal, literary, cultural, and historical--vividly in often sprightly and unapologetically blunt language what could otherwise be a 'long, hard slog' through extremely intimidating material. His own pedagogical adventures and experiences in teaching literary theory and criticism provide an unexpectedly fresh narrative and contextual perspective." --Tiffany Gilbert, University of North Carolina, Wilmington

About the Author

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Offering a refreshing combination of accessibility and intellectual rigor, *How to Interpret Literature: Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies, Second Edition*, presents an up-to-date, concise, and wide-ranging historicist survey of contemporary thinking in critical theory.

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Robert Dale Parker is James M. Benson Professor of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

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Great, but not perfect.

By Tiffany Caronna

This is an extremely information-dense book; as a survey of literary criticism, it's all you could ask for. From Marxism to Feminism to Deconstruction, each literary theory is explained quite thoroughly, and its key theorists are introduced. And for good measure, the author throws a little humor in here and there (which is nice; it breaks up the monotony a bit).

Really, my only complaint with the book is that as an INTRODUCTION to literature, it's hard to jump into. The author doesn't go to a lot of trouble to thoroughly define some of the terminology. I found myself doing a lot of re-reading.

While I did like this book and would definitely give it a good rating, my recommendation is to have a literary glossary, such as the Bedford Glossary of Literary Terms, handy when tackling it; otherwise, you might find yourself overwhelmed with barely-explained terms and, like me, get stuck in the re-reading loop.

10 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

Recommended for its Clarity and Quality

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This book is an informative survey in critical theory. It's incredibly accessible, but if you want to dig deeper into the concepts, there's plenty of material there. If you're an programmer considering taking an English course, know that this book is to criticism as K&R is to C. It's that good. :) I'll be using it as a desktop reference for all future work in English.

9 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

Way above the competition

By Q

This is by far the best introduction to literary theory for college students. Very clear and accessible, with lots of good examples. Highly recommended for any English student thinking about Grad school or who just wants to be knowledgeable for upper level classes. Of course it needs to be supplemented by primary theoretical texts by the leading theorists, but this book is really the best starting place available, and even students who already have some knowledge will benefit from the clear and detailed analyses of the major theories and theorists. As an English professor, I used to assign *Literary Theory: The Basics* by Hans Bertens (still a useful text, especially for its historical narrative of theory in English studies), but I now find this text by Parker to be far superior.

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